

The bonds of the Gospel (Quality: Average)

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- [0 : 00] We'll speak to the Lord's power from the Epistle of Paul to Philemon, verses 13 and 40.
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Mainly, I thought, thereupon the last clause in the 13th verse, the bonds of the gospel.
What unbreakable bonds they are.
And what a company of people are bound together by the bonds of the gospel. No class distinction, no colour distinction, no age distinction.
No social distinction. All one in Christ. They are bound together in what is still called, and has been called throughout the ages, the bonds of the gospel.
- [1 : 37] How lovely they are. How precious to feel these bonds, these ties.
To really know their strength. Their growing strength. That which they really mean to those who are thus bound together.
Not an easy life. Not a cosy pathway to eternal bliss by any means. Not a pathway that pleases the flesh.
But a bond and bonds that entail self-sacrifice. Complete dependence.
God-honoring life. God-honoring life. Self-perfect. To be a base. Christ to be a cross.
- [2 : 43] Many other things that could be known are entailed in this blessed bond and bonds of the gospel.
And there they are. Hidden from the eyes of men. The view down there to those who are favored and found in Christ.
Not because they are indifferent. Better. All more worthy than others of their neighbors. Through the distinguishing and sovereign grace of God.
An example of which you have in this short epistle. In the person who is the center of it. Onesimus. He knew nothing about the bonds of the gospel when he was servant to Philemon at Colossae.
- [3 : 56] The church of God was in the house of Philemon. You can see that from the second verse.
So that there was worship. True worship. As was the only place they could worship in those early days.
They had no buildings. They're like this. They couldn't use the synagogue. So they did the next best thing and worshiped in houses.
Beautiful thing. Just think of it. Having your house sanctified with services. Prayer. And of course this is not confined to those days.
So today. Many have been the sacred meetings in houses. As the hymn-like. As the hymn-writer says.

[5 : 01] For thou within no walls confine. Inhabitest the humble mind. Such ever bring thee. Where they come and going.

Take thee to their home. So that although Onesimus was in this house. Saw these things. He knew nothing of the bonds of the gospel.

He was a servant. Some say a slave. And whilst he was there in this position.

He evidently stole from his master. Or did some other act. Which necessitated him fleeing.

That he fled the house. Left it. Colossae. You children look at your mats. When you get home. You will see it's a long way.

[6 : 09] From Colossae to Rome. He had to go across the sea. Or else by land. A long way round.

But there he went. He ran away. And as we view that runaway servant. What are we going to say on it?

Who's going to pick him out? One who should one day. Take that very same journey. Only under a very different character. He goes straight to Rome.

Where there is very strange work going on. One of God's deep mysteries. That he should. Put his servant.

Called in prison. Not in a barred prison. Like we think of prisons. With huge gates. And iron bars.

[7 : 09] But in a house. And a custody. And he was allowed much freedom. But he was still. Like John Bunyan.

In Bedford Jail. A prisoner. A prisoner. Of honour. Like that sweet account.

Of Bunyan. When the jailer there. Used to let him out. To go home. He had no business to.

But he trusted Bunyan. And one day. The governor came. And Bunyan was back again.

And the Lord. Brought Bunyan back again. To that jail. The jailer said to him. You know what time to come back. Don't you? He wasn't in a prison.

[8 : 08] Of bars. And gates then. But. In a house. What a strange thing. To shut up. Such an able servant of God. In a prison. Or in a house.

He. And give him. Restricted liberty. How mysterious. Are the ways of God. Who's going to hear the gospel. And who's coming.

What is the use of it? And yet. This household. Was most remarkable. Most remarkable.

And one of the sacred houses. Of the Bible. This is. By even the. Men from the royal palace. If you could call it royal.

Were called by grace. They ventured to listen. To the apostles preaching. So that in the. New Testament. Or the acts of the apostles.

[9 : 08] And the epistles. You have a. A considerable. Catalogue. Of names. Not much said. About any of them.

But. There they are. They're all. They're separate work. To do. You can see. One or two of them. Mention. Here. In the 23rd verse.

Epaphras. My fellow. Prisoner. In Christ Jesus. And then. Marcus. Marcus. Aristarchus.

Demas. Lucas. My fellow laborer. There they are. And. All of them. All of them. Gentiles. And if you look at the 16th of Romans.

That beautiful chapter there. You can see a longer list. Of men and women. Wonderfully brought together. And bound together. In the bond of the gospel.

[10 : 10] To. But. As I've just said. Not to lead an idle life. But to. The. Fellow. Neighbors. And.

Look at the. Earlier. Verse. To. Archippus. A. Fellow. Soldier. Soldier.

Of Christ. Yeah. We all know what a soldier's work is. And it isn't misapplied.

A defender of the faith. So were all these different ones. Men and women. Mary. Says Paul.

Who bestowed much labor upon us. Aquila and Priscilla. Who laid down their necks. For my sake. Peace for the people. And this is the beautiful.

[11 : 10] Picture we have. Of the early church of God. You won't find it on any canvas. You may find.

Some of the beautiful. Pictures. That have been painted. Of scripture scenes. And some of them are indeed. Beautiful. But you won't find one.

Depicting. All these. Saints. These. That are bound together. In the bond. Of the gospel. They are called. Saints.

They would not call themselves. By such a name. That this runaway slave. Or servant. Or servant. Goes straight.

Into the gospel net. It is a very excellent. And perfect view. Of God's sovereignty.

[12 : 07] He did not meet. With. Onesimus. In the church. In the house. No.

He. Could have done. But no. He was permitted. To commit this act.

Whatever it was. Inseminated him. Running away. And then. He went straight to Rome. Why? Why Rome?

Why not Corinth? Why not Ephesus? Ah. And so you may look at your life. And say. Why? Why?

Why? Why? If you have the answer. As Onesimus had it. You will know why. Don't you? In this way.

[13 : 04] God chose his. Gracious. Sovereignty. And this is the. First work. That brings.

Within the bond. Of the. Gospels. This must be so. This is the entrance to it. But.

There is another bond here. That Paul speaks of. In verse 10. I beseech thee for my son. Onesimus. Whom I have.

Begotten. In my bond. Begotten. Means. Born. Here.

Another kind of bond. As I just mentioned. The bonds. Literally. Restricted. The movements. Of God's. Servant.

[14 : 02] For. Now he was about. To be. Freed. As we. Read. In the. Later. Verse. 22.

But with all. Prepare me a lodging. For I trust. Through your prayers. I shall be given unto you. And he was free. For a time. Only for a time.

But he had begotten. This. Slave. Or servant. In. The house. Of his. Bond. God. I say.

This is. The amazing. Work. Of grace. And. It is. Well. For us. To keep our eyes. And hearts.

Firmly fixed. On it. But it makes. Not the slightest. Difference. Whatever. The purposes. Of God. They. Ripen. And are accomplished.

[15 : 01] You may see a person. Fall into. Trouble. And sin. You may see them. Hasten away. From the scene.

Of their crime. Only to run. Into. The gospel. Net. And this is. One of the two ways. In which. God. Saves.

Either. He sends the person. Into the net. Or else. He sends the net. To the person. The net. Came.

To Paul. Or Saul. Of Tarsus. At the gates. Of Damascus. Which way. Did you. Come. Into the. Gospel. Then. Did God.

Come. To you. With it. Or. Did you. Run. Right. Into it. So that it. Makes no difference. Does it.

[15 : 57] It's the work. Of God. God. And I think. I spoke. Of the gospel. Net. Now. Sabbath. Didn't I. And said. That. With regard.

To that. Blessed word. That whosoever. Will. Let him. Take. Of the water. Of life. Freely. This is.

A whole. That. Or a word. That you'll never. Get through. Whosoever word. This embraces. Everyone. Thus.

Called. By divine grace. And it is this. That is so. God honoring. And uplifting. And Christ.

Exalting. The ground. Of rejoicing. To the church. Of God. That with God. Nothing. Shall be impossible. God. So that this.

[16 : 56] Is Paul's. Recommendation. This is what. Onesimus. Carried back. With him. His. Testimonial.

Shall we call that? What a good. Testimonial. To have. Isn't it? People write. To us. For. A. Testimonial. I've given a good many. In my time. For some of our young people. A good many. A testimonial.

What you know. Good about. And what you know. Bad about. A testimonial. Isn't all good. You know. It.

Wouldn't be a testimonial. At least. It wouldn't bring true. If it sang. The praises of the individual. Would it? And nothing else. Your testimonial.

[17 : 55] Has got to be balanced. And so has mine. Onesimus. Carried this testimonial. With him. I don't suppose. For one minute.

He knew what was in. But this. Sacred. Testimonial. Says. I. Veseech. See. For my son. Onesimus.

Whom I have begot. In my bonds. Which in time. Past. Was to thee. Unprofitable. But. Now. Profitable.

To thee. And to thee. But. What a remarkable. Thing. For. Philemon. To open this. Testimonial. I know.

We mustn't indulge. In fancy. But. You know. It must have been. Wonderful. To see.

[18 : 51] The look on. Philemon's face. And upon the face. Of Onesimus. When they came.

Face to face. Again. When the. Uh. Overflowing. Grace. Of God. Brought.

These two men. Back. Together. I say. This is the bond. Of the gospel. And you won't.

Break it. It was never. Broke. And. Uh. It was. The. Remarkable. Bond. Of love. Whatever.

Had existed. Between them. Before. As regards. Man. And. Servant. And master. Uh. Was now.

[19 : 47] Completely. Done away with. Verse 16. Not now. As a servant. But above a servant. A brother. Below. Especially. To me.

Of course. It must be. To have a seal. Given to one. For their. Ministry. Uh. Must. Of course. Be. Especially.

To me. This is one of those. Great. Uh. And rare. Blessings. That one receives. In the ministry.

Especially. Yes. Especially. To me. But. Uh. The credential. Is good. Uh. And you see. How. Brief it is. Uh. There's no need. To bandy words. Or to enlarge. Is there. When you've got. A good subject.

[20 : 42] Okay. The reality of it. Will ring true. And you don't need. To embellish it. Though it was. With this. As these two men. Came together. Once more. I say. This is the. Uh. Uh. Uh. Bond of the.

Uh. Gospel. And the. Uh. Remarkable way. That God. Brings his people. Into it. So that. Taking this. Uh. As. Uh. The. Uh. Standard. Of divine truth. Which it is. Uh.

There is no other way. Into the gospel. And the bond of it. Than through the door. Of. Conviction. As I said. Our Sabbath. And this.

[21 : 39] Uh. Being begotten. If we were to stop. And. Consider this. Begotten. How many here. We cannot tell. Can we. Are already begotten. And if we take nature's. View of it. Uh. So far as being quickened.

And. Uh. Jesus teaching. You must be born again. Well. It isn't an instantaneous work. Is it? That is visible. Uh.

Upon the surface. By their proof. She shall know. And it is this. That is the work.

Which Paul delighted. To. Uh. Tell. The Philemon about. So that he is. Begotten. This is the entrance.

[22 : 37] Born. Called. God. This gospel bond. Is. Uh. Renowned. Renowned. In time. Because it has in it.

Therefore. Love to God. We love him. Because he first loved us. This is the foundation of it.

The puttings of it. Nothing. Outside of it. It is this firm foundation. Which the believer rests upon.

God. Now this is very clear to him. Because. He can see it. Uh. From the negative point of view.

Uh. Much better than he can from the politics. And the negative point of view is this. That. Had not.

[23 : 39] To quote a hymn writer. Thy love. Prevented mine. I ne'er have chosen thee. Those who are in the bond of the gospel.

Will. Uh. Say with united voice. That it was not. My work. Not my choice.

Not my doing. They will give every honor to God. That he began with them. And it will be absolutely clear for them.

Uh. Whatever man may say. Or however they may be tempted. They will have this. As a sacred ray. Of every light in their heart.

That it was the work of God. That. Began. This. At once. Nunifies all efforts of the creature. To.

[24 : 37] Offer the gospel. To sinners. Or to bid them come to Christ. And be saved. If they will. This nullifies all the vanity. Of free will.

And creature righteousness. It at once. Finishes. With one. Fall blow. All the errors. Of Satan.

And darkness. That you can be saved. If you are willing to be saved. If you are willing to be saved. It is God's work first.

And all scripture testifies. To this. As regards the personal testimony. Of individuals. Here you have a case.

And. Philippine. That. Is face to face. With this remarkable. Change. In his one time service. This.

[25 : 37] Therefore. Is the. Beginning. The love of God. To you. And to me. This is a vast.

Matter. For meditation. And thought. And thought. Isn't it? Why? Why? Do you not know what this is?

Is it not one of your. Secret thoughts. In. Your. Life. Why. Was I made.

To hear his book. You look. At yourself. In. The days. When you were. Without hope. And without. God. In the world.

Remember. What you once were. And you can see it clearly. And you know. That in those days. You. Had no desire.

[26 : 37] For. Anything to do. With. God. Or. As we call it. Commonly. Religion. You were.

In the world. You were of it. You had nothing. That you wanted. Besides. God. You. You. So. That. Looked at. From this. Point of view.

You have a very. Clear view. That. This strange. Work. Was wrought. In you. Much. Against. Your. Prayers. Or. Desires. If you had any.

It. It is. It is. This. That magnifies. And honors. The. Work of God. In salvation. But this is. The. Beginning.

And the discovery. Of the. Bond. Of the. Gospel. Now. How long. This. Lasted.

[27 : 32] That is. How long. Onesimus. Was. With Paul. We don't know. This. Is.

Not. Revealed. To us. Except. By. The. Research. Of. Such. Men. As. Archbishop. Usher. And those.

Who have. Worked out. The chronology. But not many years. Two or three. This. Was written. From Rome. Where Paul.

Was. Of course. And it was. Carried. By. Onesimus. Back. To. Colossus. Paul. Wrote. Some.

Six. Epistles. From Rome. Galatians. Was. Written. From Rome. Ephesians. Was. Philippians.

[28 : 26] Was. Colossians. Was. That's. Four. Second. Epistle. To Timothy. Was. Written. From Rome. The second.

Imprisonment. Of the Apostle. I'm. Now. Ready. To. Be. Offer. Time. Of. My. Departures. Had. Dero. Was. About. To. Take. His.

Head. And. This. One. Was. Written. From Rome. What. A. Wonderful. Thing. Correspondence. Is. It. To.

Be. Able. To. Write. One. To. The. Other. In. The. Gospel. Bible. What. Blessed. Things.

Are. Put. On. Paper. Between. The. The. The. Lord. People. Look. What. Has. Been. Written. Over. The. Century. Look.

[29 : 19] At. The. Sacred. Nature. And. The. Mellow. And. Reality. Of. Those. Old. Correspondents. And. Their. Letters. God.

Has. Long. Used. This. Means. Of. Blessing. His. People. And. Often. A. Means. Of. Opening. Their. Eyes. Of. The. The. The. Is.

The. Is. The. Evidence. Of. The. First. Works. Of. Grace. The. Bonds. Of. The. Gospel.
But. He.

Speaks. Of. Ministry. That. He. Might. Have. Minister. Unto. Me. What. Kind. Of.

Ministry. Does. Such. A. Man. As. Paul. Need. Then. From. Such. A. Newly. Converted.
Character. As.

[30 : 13] Onesimus. Whatever. Use. Can. Onesimus. Be. To. A. Mature. Saint. Like. The. Apostle.
Paul. What. Is. This. Ministry.

Which. Brings. Us. Again. To. The. Great. Scope. Of. The. Bond. Of. The. Gospel. That.
Is. Ministry. One. To. Another. That.

Paul. Needed. To. Be. Minister. To. What. Does. He. Say. Of. Himself. In. Verse. Nine.
Yet. For. Love's. Safe.

I. Rather. Beseech. The. Being. Such. An. One. As. Paul. The. A. The. Age. Now. We.
Can. At. Least. It. Could. Be. Understood. I.

Can. Understand. This. Much. Better. Now. Than. I. Could. Once. Over. The. Last. Two.
Weeks. How.

[31 : 07] Grateful. I. Have. Been. For. Help. To. Be. Minister. Unto. When. I. Feel. Nature.
Decaying.

When. I. Feel. The. End. Of. My. Labors. Approaching. The. Better. Longer. Side. Of.

My. Ministry. Here. In. This. Church. Coming. To. An. End. What. A. Sweet. Thing. It. Is.
To. Be. Minister.

Unto. You. Who. Been. Called. By. Grace. Are. Called. To. Minister. How. Much. Did. You.
Do. In. The. Last.

Week. To. Minister. To. The. Needs. Of. Others. What. Heart. Have. You. To. Minister. To.
The. Needs. Of. This.

[32 : 00] Church. Minister. To. My. Needs. Why. If. The. Apostle. Needed. To. Be. Minister. To.
Surely.

We. To.

Equally. To. Be. Minister. To. Could. This. Newcomer. Minister. Oh. Yes. He. Could. But.
Surely. You.

May. Say. He. He. Did. Know. Enough. The. Bonds. Of. The. Gospel. Soon. Teach. You.
Know. That. There. Work.

To. Be. Done. The. Things. Of. God. Aren't. Just. Run. On. Wheels. Without. Some.
Propelling. Influence. Behind. Them.

[32 : 53] The. Church. Of. God. Our. Little. Church. Here. Isn't. Just. Run. On. Wheels. Without.
Anybody. Behind. Them. Now. Our.

Church. May. Be. Small. It. Is. But. There's. Heavy. Responsibility. So. It. Is. With. Every.
Church. There.

Is. A. Ministry. To. The. Need. What. A. Remarkable. Thing. This. Is. That. God. Should.
Make. Us. Interdependent. And.

To. So. Encourage. Us. When. Anyone. Comes. Forward. To. Minister. To. Our. Need.
What. Does. This. Mean. Well.

It. Means. H. E. L. P. That. What. It. Means. Help. You. Say. Well. I. A. Woman. Can. I.
Do.

[33 : 47] Anything. Well. You. Look. At. Your. Bible. Did. The. Women. Do. Anything. In. The. Days.
Of. Old. Indeed.

They. Did. A. Good. Deal. Didn't. They. They. Were. All. Bound. Together. To. Administer.
As. The.

Apostle. Says. To. My. Needs. You. May. Be. Young. Don't.

Think. That. You. Are. Useless. Will. Don't. Think. That. You. Are. Useless. You. May.
Say. Well. I. Don't. Want. To. Put. Myself. Forward.

No. We. Don't. Want. You. To. If. You. Do. We. Shall. Soon. Detect. It. But. If. You. Are.
Prompted.

[34 : 39] By. Love. Put. Yourself. Forward. Yes. Never. Mind. The. Devil. Step. Tations. And.

Say. Saying. To. You. Well. You. Are. No. Good. There. Not. Much. You. Can. Do. Can't.
You. He. Will. Keep. You. Back. You. May.

Be. Sure. Of. That. He. Does. He. Does. Keep. People. Very. Very. Much. Back. Very. So.
Today. In. The. Churches. Of. God. He.

Keeps. Many. An. Onesimus. Back. He. Holds. Them. Back. He. Says. Well. You. You.
You. You. You. You. You. You. You. You. You. You.

You. You. You. You. You. You. Can. Do. You. You. You. Your. Time. Is. Too. Fully.
Taken. Up. Is. It. I. Tell. You. One.

[35 : 31] Of. The. Ways. That. You. Can. Minister. To. The. Needs. And. That. Is. To. Come. To.
The. Prayer. Meeting. Yes.

Or. You. Say. I. I. Don't. Know. It. Only. A. Prayer. Meeting. How. Is. Only. I.

Know. The. Doctors. Don't. Today. Feel. Your. Pulse. They. Take. A. Little. Notes. Of.
That. They. Are. They. Used. Two. Years. Ago. Why.

I. Don't. Know. But. I. Do. Know. This. That. The. Prayer. Meeting. Is. The. Pulse. Of. The.
Church. I.

Know. That. And. Where. There. Is. A. Meeting. There. Will. Be. A. Gathering.
Circumstances. Permitting. Oh.

[36 : 29] Yes. Is. This. Ministry. To. The. Needs. Indeed. It is. And. I. Say. Again. You. May. Be.

Young. You. May. Think. Well. You. Won't. Make. Much. Difference. Won't. You. It. It. Is.
This. Service. You. See. That. Has.

Got. To. Be. So. Self. Effacing. One. Of. The. Evidence. Is. That. The. Love. Of. God.
Working. In. A. Sinner's. Heart. Is. This. That. He. Says.

I. Such. A. Poor. David. I. Can't. Do. Any. Good. I. Can't. Be. Of. Any. Hell. This. Is. The.
No.

You. Can't. Not. Of. Yourself. But. There. You. Looking. In. The. Wrong. Place. It. Not.
There. You. Got. To. Look. About. It.

[37 : 26] Is. His. Work. That. Really. Matters. This. Is. The. Bond. Of. The. Gospel. Serving. One.
Another.

Helping. One. Another. And. When. You. Come. To. This. You. Come. To. The. Door.
The. Church. We. Read. Nothing. Of. Onesimus.

Being. Baptized. Nothing. At. All. It. Is. Not. Something. That. A. Great. Parade. Is. Made.
Of. In. The. Scripture. We.

Don't. Read. That. Peter. John. James. And. Matthew. Luke. Or. Any. Of. Them. Were.
Baptized. But. We.

May. Be. Sure. They. Were. They. Couldn't. Be. Consist. If. They. Were. Peter. Couldn't.
Be. Baptized.

[38 : 19] If. He. Wasn't. Baptized. Himself. Paul. Made. No. Parade. Of. The. Ordinance. Of. Baptism. He.

He. He. Didn't. Keep. A record. Of. The. People. That. He. Baptized. He. Says. This. To. The. Church. Of. Corinth. Beside.

Which. He. Said. I. Know. Not. Whether. I. Baptized. Any. Other. It. Is. That. Humble. Door. Isn't it? That.

Humble. Entrance. But. We. Believe. The. Bond. Of. The. Gospel. Is it? We.

Believe. It. Has. That. Gospel. Bond. Which. Christ. Ordained. That. His. People. Should. Walk.

[39 : 14] In. The. Same. With. The. Ordinance. Of. His. Table. This. Where. The. Bond. Is. Tightened. You. See. And.

This. Is. One. Of. The. Beauties. Of. The. Gospel. Bond. It. Doesn't. Slack. Off. It. Tightens. I.

Know. If. You. Walk. Contra. And. If. You. A. Backslide. Either. Outwardly. Or. In. Heart. I. Know.

If. You. Rebell. Against. God. That. Bond. Will. Loosen. In. Your. Feeling. I. Know. That. You. Are. Treading. Your. Own. Light. And. Set. Darkness.

In. Your. Own. Pathway. But. This. Is. The. Great. Beauty. Of. The. Gospel. Bond. That. To. Walk. Obediently. Tightens. It.

[40 : 10] You. Won't. Know. Until. You. Done. It. It. It. It. It's like everything else. All these things have to be proved.

Take the ordinance of marriage. How sweet a courtship can be, can't it? And yet, you see, when a year or two has passed over the heads of the newly married couple, things begin to wear.

Begin to realize what the step means. It doesn't diminish their affections if their affections are real, does it? But they could never foresee what that marriage bond was going to be.

So with joining the Church of God, you cannot foresee what that marriage bond was going to be. What's going to happen? You may be full of fears and anxiety with regard to whether you'll dishonour God and bring a shame upon his holy name, which you fear you may do.

You'll have to leave that then as you have to leave it now with him. He will keep you then as he keeps you now. He will keep you now. Oh, yes.

[41 : 39] You must not think that you're going to be let to walk alone like the children do. And when they can walk, the parents soon let go their hands in pleasure.

They say, yes, they can walk. Look at the joy when the child takes the first few steps across the room.

It may tumble down afterwards. It's only natural. But with regard to the things of God, you'll always want the Lord to hold your hand.

This side of the water and the other side of it. Oh, yes. Make no mistake about that. Nevertheless, this is his command.

This is his love. This is the pathway of obedience. This is what it entails. Now you look at the cross.

[42 : 41] Some of you may be exercised about this. And you little realise what a long length this struggle it was going to be.

How your flesh was going to muster together all its powers and all its arguments. And how you were going to dwell upon your inability and unfitness.

And what a host of armaments you would raise against this. And say, yes, well that's impossible. Well, let one touch of the love of God, and I pray God it may, touch your heart, those armaments will all go.

Yes, they'll all go. After all, they're valueless, aren't they? They're valueless.

You're looking at things as you see them. Whereas the just shall live by his faith. The ministering unto me in the bonds of the gospel.

[43 : 59] One of the common remarks, or commonplace remarks, I should say, as regards ministers is this. that certain persons are a seal to their ministry.

A seal to their ministry. A seal is something which signifies an affirmation, a sepulch. I haven't had many seals for my ministry.

I remember the first one. A woman who afterward confessed that she hated the sight of me.

Yes. That's the sort of seals you will. They are seals. When the love of God constrained, you see, there are many that hated the sight of the Apostle Paul.

But when the love of God constrained, there is that remarkable effect. A complete change.

[45 : 05] The things that were once hated, and the people that were once hated, and the ministry that was once hated, is now love.

And where this bond is, therefore, it's called the bond of the gospel, and it's a gospel that commands ministration.

Pay one another's burdens. Don't live a semi-detached life, or come to the house of God once a week, and think that's the end of it, and maybe some poor soul needing your comfort, your help.

Oh, you say, we leave that to the minister, do you? I know we're not a large company. But if there is one thing that always stood out in the Lord's dealings with me, it's this.

Always to visit my people with their sins. They know me well enough to know that I don't run in and over their houses when they're well, and when they can come for the sanctuary.

[46 : 28] But when they're sick, when they're ill, that's the time they need ministrations. Or how many times have I gone to yonder hospital day after day, day after day, for both of my deacons, and this one too, that's recovered today.

You'll need it, so shall I. I say, I say, we must not think that this service and the bond of this gospel is something that we can just pass by and say, well, yes, I mean, if you will, you'll be moved by love.

You'll be moved by love. And that's the strongest force that this earth knows. Yes. Yes, much as promised.

And if God move your heart by this love, you will know what it is to be in the bond. But, I said it grows tighter.

It grows tighter with the years and with the experience. What sort of experience?

[47 : 53] Why? Forbearing one with the other. You see, we've got a lot of force. We've got some peculiar ways.

People don't know us until they get to know us. We are to bear and forbear one with the other in the bond of the gospel.

Each to hide a brother's cause. Not to pass them over without conventioning them if it should be necessary. At this great question of the theme and the moat of the punter.

And this struggling can remove the beam out of a brother's eye or the moat rather and you've got a beam in your own. Or it's an intensive pathway.

Labour. Ministry to the wants of others. Ministry, as Paul says, to the necessity of saints. Look at the rich reward there is in the bond of the gospel in ministering to ages.

[49 : 15] Those that were almost, I am going to say, despised. Rich in faith. Look at the work of grace in their hearts.

You were tacky, so to speak. Get near to it. How beautiful this all is. Oh, how rich the church of God is with those blessings which he has blessed against this wonderful bond of the gospel.

And now ministering, says Paul, to me, is Paul the aging. and now the prisoner of Jesus Christ.

Shut up. But oh, how welcome of a day. But when this old Esimus comes to his house as a total stranger and hears the gospel preach and is convicted by that gospel and begotten by that gospel, what are you going to say about Paul?

only this, that he was a mere instrument at all. He had nothing whatever to do with Onesimus coming all that way.

[50 : 36] And so it is with God, you see, with this blessed bond. He will have the glory. I will say before I sit down that I came here this morning with an entirely different text on my mind.

Entirely different. And it was only in the best for you about five minutes to 11 that this word fixed itself on my heart to bond with the gospel.

I'll leave it there. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.