

# A Desperately Needed Letter

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Date: 17 April 2016

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- [ 0 : 0 0 ] Well, please do have a seat. Thank you so much, Neil, for starting us off so well. If you're visiting us, you're very welcome. If you're not, we'll just about tolerate you for the evening.
- We're in 2 Timothy. I've been excited about this letter for many years. I'm excited about getting to go through it together. I think it has so much to teach us, so much to challenge us with, so much to encourage us.
- So tonight we're just going to kick off with the first seven verses. I call this sermon a desperately needed letter.
- And hopefully by the end, if you get nothing else, you'll understand why it is a desperately needed letter. A desperately needed letter when it was written to Timothy, but also a desperately needed letter for each of us here today.
- I wonder, what do you see on the screen? What do you see on the screen? 13 or a B.
- [ 1 : 0 8 ] What would help you decide whether it was a 13 or a B? A bit of context, wouldn't it? So that is obviously a 13. That is obviously a B.
- Context really helps us get what the meaning of something is. Or for example, say you've got this text message. Just taking the dog out for a walk.
- I mean, probably the most boring text message. But if you set a bit of context to the text message, it may become slightly more relevant. So if you've got this text from someone suffering from severe depression.
- Just took the dog out for a walk. That would be a reason to rejoice. They managed to get out for a while with the dog. If it's from your son who's supposed to be revising for important exams tomorrow, it might be a source of great annoyance.
- What are you doing taking Fido for a walk when you should be doing algebra? If this is from your dad who is looking after your dog who's just had an operation and is recuperating.
- [ 2 : 1 8 ] Great times. Rover is walking. Good to know. Thanks, Dad, for keeping me informed. If this is from your wife and you don't have a dog, that's a source for real concern.
- She having a slight episode. If this is in South Korea where they really like eating dogs, you might be quite terrified that Alfie might end up as a kebab.
- Context brings deeper meaning and real understanding. If we can really get behind words and why they're written and who they're written by and what they're for, then it springs off the page and becomes much more relevant to us.
- There's an ancient Greek cliché that translated says text without context is pretext. Text without context is pretext. So if we tonight could get behind the context of this letter, understand the characters involved in the situation into which it is written, then I think we'll see this letter in new light.
- This week, as I've really dug in and, you know, marinated myself in a kind of not creepy way into Timothy, it's popped off the page in new and quite brilliant ways.

- [ 3 : 41 ] If we get why Paul writes this letter to this man in his situation, then the relevance of this message will cut to our hearts, hopefully like never before.
- This has been just what I've needed to study this week. So quite apart from anything you get off it, it's been fun. Let me pray and I'll read these first seven verses and then we'll get to work.
- Father God, thank you that you know us. You remember how we're formed. You remember that we're dust. Father, that you've called us to be involved in your work.
- And Lord, we want to confess that at times it's painful. At times it's far from glamorous. And very, very often we want to give up.
- And so with this letter ministered to us tonight by your spirit, may we hear your voice. And may you bring about categoric Jesus glorifying change.
- [ 4 : 46 ] In who we are and what we do. Father, bless us in Jesus name. Amen. To Timothy, verse one. Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, in keeping with the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus.
- To Timothy, my dear son, grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. I thank God whom I serve as my ancestors did.
- With a clear conscience as night and day, I constantly remember you in my prayers. Recalling your tears, I long to see you so that I may be filled with joy.
- I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice.
- And I am persuaded now lives in you also. For this reason, I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.
- [ 5 : 54 ] For the spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline. And so firstly, I want us to look at the cast.
- The cast. Who is involved? Well, this is written, you don't need to be a genius to work it out. His name is the first word in the letter, Paul.
- Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God. And who's it written to? It's written to Timothy. And so let's get a bit of a sense of the timeline.
- The apostle Paul who writes this letter is converted very swiftly after Jesus's death, burial, resurrection and ascension. Around 33 or 34 AD.
- That is when he meets the risen Lord Jesus on the road to Damascus in Acts 9. He then pretty swiftly embarks on his first missionary journey with Barnabas to Cyprus and southern Galatia.
- [ 6 : 58 ] Does this for about three years between 47 and 49 till 47 to 49 AD. Acts 13 and 14.
- On this missionary journey, he visits a place called Lystra. That is significant. Just put that in the back of your mind. Lystra. First missionary journey.
- In 49 AD, we have the Jerusalem Council where everyone gets together to work out how Gentiles are to be part of the church. Straight after that, they go on their second missionary journey.
- But as we looked at last Sunday night, Paul and Barnabas have a bit of a Barney, having a Barney with Barney over a guy called John, who's also called Mark. They go their separate ways.
- So Paul and Silas go to Macedonia and Achaia. AD 49 to 52. One of the places they revisit is Lystra.
- [ 7 : 56 ] And in Lystra, everybody says, oh, we've got this guy. He's a bloke. You need to watch. His name is Timothy. Everyone speaks well of him. And Paul says, I'll take him along.

We need to do a little bit of surgery before we go along because his dad's a Gentile and his mom's a Jew. It's quite a recruitment process. But he goes along.

Beginning of that, about 49 AD. But later on, they go on their third missionary journey to Asia and Macedonia, including at least two years spent in Ephesus.

Another one for the back of your mind, Ephesus. Acts 19 to 21. Things then get worse. The end of Acts is all about imprisonments and captivity.

Caesarea in Rome. In prison, he writes 1 Timothy around 59 AD. He writes 2 Timothy around 64 AD. And we're not quite sure of the date.

[ 9 : 02 ] But history would tell us he's beheaded in Rome, 64 to 67 AD. The cast gives us the timeline.

Why is it important? Because by the time Paul writes 2 Timothy to Timothy, the two have had a ministry association, a partnership in the gospel for 15 years.

Their lives have been intimately entwined. Timothy saw what Paul did. Timothy's brought up to do what Paul does.

15-year apprenticeship under the apostle Paul. Secondly, from the timeline, at the time of writing, Ephesus Evangelical Church is 10 years old.

It's well established. It was planted in the second missionary journey. 2 Timothy's written about 64 AD.

[ 10 : 11 ] 10 years old. The banner committee got together. They've got some new things on the wall that they did for the anniversary. Timothy's 15 years, Ephesus 10 years old.

The cast that are involved in the letter. But we see that Ephesus Evangelical isn't all sweetness and light, rainbows and unicorns.

In fact, it's chaotic. We know more about the church in Ephesus than we do any other church in the entire New Testament. We know a whole chapter about how it's planted, Acts 19.

We have Paul meeting the Ephesian elders on the beach at Miletus, Acts chapter 20, where he gives them a big speech. We have a letter written specifically to Ephesus which imaginatively is called Ephesians.

About the health and organisation of the church. We have one Timothy written to Timothy who's the lead elder, who's the pastor, who's the overseer in Ephesus. And we have two Timothy.

[ 11 : 19 ] Timothy's still in Ephesus. And they even get a letter from the Lord Jesus himself in Revelation. We know more about Ephesus than any other church.

And at the time of writing to Timothy, it's chaos. And there's three reasons the church is in chaos. The church has gone rogue.

Let me show you how the church has gone rogue. Acts chapter 19. Paul planted the church.

And it was a work of great breadth. Look at Acts chapter 19, verse 10. Paul preaches in the synagogue. He then lectures daily in the hall of Tyrannus.

Verse 10, Luke's editorial comment, this went on for two years, so that all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord.

[ 12 : 23 ] That is incredibly broad. It would be the equivalent of Bruntsfield Evangelical Church preached the gospel all the time for two years until everybody in the Lothians heard the word of the Lord.

But probably size-wise till everybody in Scotland heard the word of the Lord. Massive. It's a work of great breadth. But see Acts 19, verses 18 to 20.

It's also a work of great depth. Many of those who believe now came and openly confessed what they had done.

This city that's absolutely drowning in magic and sorcery and witchcraft. Many of those who believe now came and openly confessed what they had done. A number who had practiced sorcery brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly.

When they calculated the value of the scrolls the total came to 50,000 drachmas. In this way the word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power.

[ 13 : 32 ] It's a real work of the Lord when people are confessing sins openly. so caught up with the holiness of God that they must get right with him and they pour out all their sins.

They burn their scrolls 50,000 drachma. If these people a drachma is one day's wage if they're getting the new living wage 50,000 drachmas is about 2.6 million pounds.

Burn them. a work of great depth and a work of great a work of great breadth and a work of great depth. So by the time we get to verse 27 we get Demetrius the silversmith calls everyone together in the trade guild and he says there is a danger not only that our trade will lose its good name but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis will be discredited and the goddess herself who is worshipped throughout the province of Asia and the world will be robbed of her divine majesty.

Just imagine if God worked so graciously and powerfully in Edinburgh that everybody who is trying to make money out of illicit means has to complain because their source of income has completely dried up.

If all the strip clubs down in Toll Cross started to lobby the city halls because they couldn't make a single penny because no one wanted to go because God had worked so thoroughly in Edinburgh the city is being completely reformed by the gospel it's a work of great depth but it's now a work in great danger so by the time we get to 1 Timothy the first pastoral epistle to Timothy in Ephesus we read some terrible things have happened 1 Timothy 1 verse 3 as I urged you when I went into Macedonia stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain people not to teach false doctrines any longer or to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogy such things promote controversial speculations rather than advancing God's work which is by faith this church in Ephesus has started to teach things that are not from God so chapter 1 Timothy 3 verse 14 although I hope to come to you soon

[ 16 : 03 ] I am writing to you with these instructions so that if I am delayed you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's house which is the church of the living God the pillar and foundation of the truth Timothy's in Ephesus and Ephesus is in real trouble it's chaotic it's disordered Paul wouldn't write verse 14 of chapter 3 of 1 Timothy if things were all going well he's writing it to say you need to put it in order because it's chaotic and there's false teaching going on everywhere and so 2 Timothy comes a little bit later on a few years later maybe 5 or 6 years later and what's Paul saying now keep going keep going keep going in what I've called you to do keep doing what I command it why because the church is still in peril the church is still having real difficulties the church is still roguish and going more rogue

Timothy is still there to bring re-reformation to Ephesus to the struggling band of believers that are fragmenting and spreading each and every way just imagine if you're Timothy you got a letter from your mentor saying you need to sort it out and here's how to do it six years later you get another letter things are just as bad Paul says keep going keep doing it don't give up church has gone rogue secondly the leaders have gone feral they've gone wild the leadership at Ephesus has been thoroughly trained they had an intense eldership course and the example of the apostle Paul himself for those two and a bit years while he was in Ephesus they have an intense refresher course on the beach of Miletus they were given everything that they needed

I know this is a bit of a paper chase but just flick back to Acts 20 the first thing we see is they knew Paul's way of life Acts chapter 20 verse 18 when they arrived he said to them you know how I live the whole time I was with you from the first day I came into the province of Asia he says you know you know what I did you know how I conducted myself verse 34 at the end of his speech you yourselves know that these hands of mine have supplied my own needs and the needs of my companions in everything I did I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak remembering the words of the Lord Jesus himself it is more blessed to give than to receive they knew Paul's way of life they had a model to follow they weren't just left to kind of make it up as they went along they had a precedent and they had Paul's charge verse 28 of Acts 20 keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the

Holy Spirit has made you overseers be shepherds of the church of God which he bought with his own blood that's what he says he shows them what to do and he tells them what to do he charges them be shepherds keep watch over the flock they have Paul's charge verse 32 of Acts 20 they have God's resources now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified they don't lack instruction they don't lack a model they certainly don't lack resource Ephesus is a church that is well catered for but Paul is a realist he knows Ephesus is in the real world and that Ephesus is made up of sinful people and so he gives them a warning in verse 29 I know that after

I leave savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them so be on your guard remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears they had everything they needed and they have this stark warning be careful be watchful be on your guard there's wolves about and even some of the people in the room who look white and fluffy have actually got really sharp teeth and they'll come and they'll show and they'll draw people away and this flock the flock brought with the precious blood of the Lord Jesus won't be spared and once you understand this you start seeing it everywhere in 1 Timothy and 2 Timothy you see just the impact that the wolves are having so with your really well worked fingers back to 1 Timothy which seems to have moved from the last time I found it 1 Timothy 1 verse 19 let me show you a few of these verse 18

[ 22 : 09 ] Timothy my son I am giving you this command in keeping with the prophecies once made about you so that by recalling them you may fight the battle well holding on to the faith and a good conscience which some have rejected and so have suffered shipwreck with regard to the faith some have given up what about chapter 4 verse 1 the spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons such teachings come through hypocritical liars whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron the end of 1 Timothy chapter 6 verse 2 these are the things you are to teach and insist on if anyone teaches otherwise and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching they are conceited and understand nothing they have an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy strife malicious talk evil suspicions and constant friction between people of corrupt mind who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means of financial gain just at the very end of the letter his closing words

Timothy guard what has been entrusted to your care turn away from godless chatter and the opposing ideas of what is falsely called knowledge which some have professed and in so doing have departed from the faith be careful there's some false teaching around it's in 2 Timothy we're finally going to read some of 2 Timothy you'll be pleased 2 Timothy 2 verse 14 keep reminding god's people of these things warn them before god against quarreling about words it is of no value and only ruins those who listen do your best to present yourself to god as one approved a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth avoid godless chatter because those who indulge in it will become more and more ungodly their teaching will spread like gangrene among them are hymenaeus and philetus who have departed from the truth chapter 2 verse 23 don't have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments because you know they produce quarrels and the lord's servant must not be quarrelsome chapter 3 verses 1 to 8 is all about false teaching chapter 4 verses 3 and 4 let me read those for the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine instead to suit their own desires they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear they will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths

Ephesus the leaders have gone feral those that have been supposed to be communicating the truth are starting to get weird they're starting to talk about myths they're quarreling there's genealogies there's controversies and Timothy is there the lone salmon swimming upstream against all this stuff just imagine being Timothy some people speaking in pulpits who are preaching anything and everything but the gospel how would you feel well I think on the back of two Timothy we can say this that Timothy seems to have gone quiet in a church gone rogue because the leaders have gone feral the real strain is seen on two Timothy Timothy is struggling under the strain one Timothy was written about everything that he should do to organise the church by the time he gets to two

Timothy it's gone so bad that he just wants to give up and I think when we see that that Timothy is really struggling I think this letter takes on whole new life few years after Timothy tries to reform the church it's just as bad and the false teaching persists and I think we have quite a low view of Timothy actually I think Timothy we think he's a bit of a mummy's boy with an upset stomach who always needs to be told about his mum and his grandmother to keep him going I think we pretty much get it from 2 Timothy 1 verse 7 that we read for the spirit of God gave us does not make us timid but gives us power love and self-discipline so we read into that that Paul is talking about Timothy and isn't it weird how we have timid Timothy the two kind of go together I don't think

Timothy is timid at all I think outside of the apostles he's probably the greatest pastor greatest elder I think we ever get to read about Timothy is a trusted dynamic and good man in a crisis kind of guy I don't think there's anybody in the new testament who should garner more respect than this faithful servant Timothy his experience is second to none he has had ministry association from the apostle Paul for 15 years he has worked side by side with him and he's been deployed by Paul as the troubleshooter to the most difficult churches Corinth is going mad who does he send Timothy Philippi's rupturing because of Euodia and Syntyche these two powerful women who are factionalizing the church and fighting with each other who does he send Timothy he's an experienced leader he's a good man for a crisis he's co-authored some of holy scripture 2

[ 28 : 23 ] Corinthians starts Paul an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God and Timothy our brother to the church of God in Corinth together with all his holy people throughout Achaia he also writes Philippians Paul and Timothy servants of Christ Jesus to all God's holy people in Christ Jesus at Philippi together with the overseers and deacons he gets his name on the front cover of Colossians he gets it on one Thessalonians two Thessalonians and Philemon he's helped he may have only been inking the quill but that's more than any of us are going to get to do so Timothy co-authored scripture he's a trusted apostolic emissary so the person carrying the letter also carries the message of the letter we read in 1 Thessalonians we sent Timothy who is our brother and co-worker in God's service in spreading the gospel of Christ to strengthen and encourage you in your faith 1

Thessalonians is written to strengthen and encourage the believers in their faith and it's sent with Timothy who does exactly what the letter should do in the flesh encourage and strengthen you in your faith he is also an exemplary model of a believer these words in Philippians I hope in the Lord to send Timothy to you soon that I also may be cheered when I receive news about you I have no one else like him who will show genuine concern for your welfare for everyone looks out for their own interests not those of Jesus Christ but you know that Timothy has proved himself because as a son with his father he has served with me in the work of the gospel so wonderful bio from the apostle Paul himself so he sent to

Ephesus and Ephesus has got worse and so then we get to Timothy some years later and in it there's twenty eight exhortations twenty eight imperatives Timothy is told to fan into flame to not be ashamed to join with Paul in suffering to keep the pattern of sound teaching to guard the good deposit to be strong in the grace of Jesus Christ to entrust the gospel to reliable people to reflect on what Paul is telling him to remember Jesus Christ to keep reminding people of the gospel to warn people before God about quarreling to do his best to present himself as an approved workman to flee the evil desires of youth to pursue righteousness love and peace don't have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments be aware of the times and the trouble in the last days don't associate with those who have sham godliness continue in what you have learnt preach the word keep your head in all situations be on your guard why would

Paul write those commands because Timothy's struggling why does he need to preach the word because he's gone quiet why does he need to be on his guard because there's people there who want to devour the flock of God why does he want to why does he talk to continue in what you've learnt because he wants to give up why would Paul write such clear instructions if Timothy was doing fine you wouldn't write this letter I'm a you would write I'm about to go Timothy see you at the end you wouldn't write this which is just do this keep doing this be on guard about that Timothy is on the brink of giving up wouldn't you after six years when things haven't got any better surely as Paul sees and hears about the problems in Ephesus the chaos in the church the disruption in the leadership the strain on Timothy he says

I must write him a letter don't shrink back don't sit down keep on going do what I've charged you to do this is not a pointless correspondence Paul is not writing one of those Christmas letters that everyone gets and nobody cares about this is to be real courage given to Timothy who's struggling so with that in mind let me read you the first the three to seven again I thank God whom I serve as my ancestors did with a clear conscience as night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers recalling your tears I long to see you so that I may be filled with joy I am reminded of your sincere faith which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and I am persuaded now lives in you for this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands for the spirit for the spirit of God and I fear but gives us power love and self discipline doesn't that change how you read that fan into flame why does he need to fan it into flame because he's going out the fire for serving the Lord

[ 34:18 ] Jesus is going out smoldering away getting choked out by all these things so what does he say fan it into flame keep on going how does Timothy feel he feels all alone against this great swathe of falsehood that's coming against him so what does Paul do he says I'm praying for you Timothy and then he connects him to all these relationships verse 4 Paul says we're close I'm with you in this I recall your tears I long to see you and when I see you I'll be filled with joy nobody's filled with joy when they see Timothy in Ephesus they go oh here's the old school guy who's just not moved on from Paul what does Timothy do he says think about your grandmother Lois your mother Eunice you know like those pictures you take of your loved ones when you're away remember them verse 5

I'm reminded of your sincere faith what does he say at the end of the verse and I'm persuaded this faith now lives in you could it be that Ephesus has got so bad that Timothy even doubts that he's a Christian because it's gone so bad this outstanding Christian leader against such brutal relentless opposition does his quiet time in the morning and feels God is far away and that he's just a sham and not the real deal I am reminded of your sincere faith which I'm persuaded now lives in you fan it into flame the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands I didn't get it wrong Timothy you're not in the wrong place you're not unequipped or incapable of doing this task and so what is this letter really all about it's about continuing to do the right things even when everything's going wrong that's what

Timothy is about that even when the church is crumbling around your ears keep doing what's right even when it looks like it's all going wrong Timothy wants to give up Paul says fan it into flame trust in the spirit God has given you that gives you power to continue love for those that are unlovable and self discipline that even when every part of you wants to give up you say no I must for the sake of the Lord Jesus so what are we to make of this letter well I did a little cartoon it looks like this it's the good ship Brunsfield which has been renamed the SS complacency and I think this is what this letter tells us it tells us not to be complacent about our church you can imagine

Ephesus so proud we were planted by Paul himself we had two and a half years of his itinerant ministry amongst us I'm sure everyone thought we're gonna be fine they're not fine it's all gone wrong the wheels are falling off Brunsfield has a great past planted well been involved in loads of good things seen seen people grow and mature and come to faith but let's be very clear if it can happen to Ephesus evangelical it can happen to Brunsfield evangelical God's working in the past is no guarantee for the future good churches go bad and so what's the remedy don't be complacent we can't be complacent we've got to keep on investing investing in each other investing in the scriptures investing in the work that



God has called us to do because it won't just happen and things get weird very quickly when we take our eyes off Jesus don't be complacent about the church secondly don't be complacent about yourself I'm sure when the elders of Ephesus gather on Miletus nobody thought they would be a false teacher nobody oh yeah Paul we get it we get you we'll continue it don't worry five years down the line they're the ones preaching myths they're the ones causing controversies they're the ones confusing the sheep when we finished Cornhill Dick Lucas spoke to us at the graduation ceremony and he looked at all of us and he said you're now the most dangerous people in the world don't be false teachers it's quite a warning he said a few other things it was quite a long sermon actually but that's the two things I remember with the gospel in your hand and the ability to teach the bible you're dangerous don't be false teachers so what have we got to do we got to keep digging into this word we've got to not take the gospel for granted we've got to make sure that what somebody's saying here matches with what's going on here because if we start to drift even just a degree down the line we're miles away from the lord Jesus and are just teaching what is not right don't be complacent about yourself don't be complacent about your leaders i could speak after 10 years of gospel ministry that there are times when you just want to give up when you're on the bus and you go past car phone warehouse and you go i'd love to work in there pretty much because you only have to see most customers once where the imagined loneliness of christian leadership is paralyzing and the strain is almost too much do you ever think i'm sure the people in ephesus never thought that timothy cried every night when he thought about the work that he had to do and the strain that was bearing down on him and the fact that he was all alone in it because everyone else had gone everywhere else so keep remembering leaders the leaders of the church keep remembering each other keep remembering that there's really difficult times that even when it's really hard and things are going wrong that we would hear what paul says to timothy that even when it's all going wrong keep doing what's right be praying for each other be investing in each other keep on encouraging each other do you know paul and barnabas had a bit of a stramash timothy would give anything to have barnabas by his side in ephesus somebody who is the son of encouragement one more story and then i'm done i remember when i came to the church good times 27 years old didn't know anything and i remember one dear old boy came up to me first sunday and he put his hand on my shoulder and i thought oh this is a touchy-feely church it wasn't it was fine um he said to me we'll never tell you you're doing a good job but if you don't hear from us just assume that you are and

[ 42 : 56 ] at the time i thought oh that's quite it's quite encouraging it's not encouraging at all because encouragement unsaid is discouragement it's just true and so whatever anybody does here whether it's their first go or their five thousandth go if you've got something from it then to encourage people is a really good idea scary thing is is by the time we get to revelation ephesus is still in trouble and what does Jesus say keep doing the right things even when it's going wrong let me pray father God we want to keep going we want to keep the gifts that you've given us burning brightly for you used by you for your glory father we don't want to be those that give up and sit down we don't want to be those that get sidetracked and start wandering off into myths and difficulty we don't even want to be coasting lord father we want to be dynamic believers part of a vibrant community that is making real gains in and for your kingdom so lord may you keep encouraging us may we keep looking to your son depending on your spirit and encouraging each other and father may we do all of it for the glory of the lord Jesus that even when it goes wrong would we keep doing what's right would we keep doing what you call us to do and would we trust results with you and we and would we say that if we've got Jesus we've got more than enough father bless us and help us in Jesus name amen