

# A Biblical Vision For A New Year

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] Well if we could, with the Lord's help and the Lord's enabling, if we could turn back to that portion of scripture that we read for a short while, consider these verses in Acts chapter 15 and 16.

But particularly I just want to take as our text the words of chapter 16 and verse 8. Acts chapter 16 and verse 8.

So passing by Mysia they went down to Troas, and a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A man of Macedonia was standing there, urging him and saying, come over to Macedonia and help us.

And when Paul had seen the vision, immediately he sought to go on into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.

And so on. Now I just want to begin this evening by asking the question, what is our vision?

[ 1 : 1 5 ] What is our vision? What is our vision as a congregation? What is our vision as Christians? What do we want to see happening in our congregation?

What do we long to see happening in our congregation? What is our vision? And of course our vision should be that God would be glorified, because that's our chief end.

Our man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever. Our vision should be that Christ would have the preeminence, that he would be first, that he would increase, that he would be exalted, that his name would be lifted on high.

Our vision should be that God would be glorified, that Christ would have the preeminence, and that we would receive the blessing. And that we would receive blessing, not because we deserve it, but simply because of God's abundant grace and mercy.

That should be our vision as a congregation. That should be our vision as Christians. But at the beginning of a new year, I think it's good for us just to stop for a moment and consider what our vision is.

[ 2 : 2 8 ] I think it's good for us to take stock of where we are at and just remind ourselves of what our vision should be as a congregation and as individual Christians.

And I believe that this passage in the book of Acts, it gives to us some directions and some instructions on how to implement a biblical vision.

A biblical vision for a new year. That's what it is, a biblical vision for a new year. Now in this passage, or in chapters 15 and 16, we're breaking into the book of Acts.

And the book of Acts, it's a book all about the gospel of Jesus Christ spreading from Jerusalem to Judea to Samaria to the uttermost parts of the earth. And the spread of the gospel, it took place primarily by the missionary endeavours of the apostle Paul.

Where Paul, he went from region to region preaching the gospel and planting churches. Churches in different cities and different regions. Now by the time we come to chapter 15, Paul and Barnabas, they have already completed their first missionary journey.

[ 3 : 41 ] And they've reached as far as Galatia with the gospel. But we're told at the end of chapter 15 that Paul and Barnabas, they're about to embark upon their second missionary journey.

But there's a bit of an argument. There's a bit of contention between Paul and Barnabas. And it results in division. But what I want us to see from this passage, or the passage, the verses that we read, is that Paul and Silas, this man Silas, they ended up in Macedonia.

And they ended up in Macedonia because they were given a vision. They were given a vision. And so from this passage, I want us to draw out five things that can help us have a biblical vision for a new year.

A biblical vision for a new year. And you have it there on your little sheet. Number one, be aware of contention. Number two, be assuring to the Christian.

Number three, be attentive to the call. Number four, be active in the congregation. And number five, be alert to conversion.

[ 4 : 53 ] Be aware of contention. Be assuring to the Christian. Be attentive to the call. Be active in the congregation. And be alert to conversion. That's a biblical vision for a new year.

So we look first of all, point one. Be aware of contention. Be aware of contention. Look at verse 36 of chapter 15. It says, And after some days, Paul said to Barnabas, Let us return and visit brothers in every city where we proclaim the word of the Lord and see how they are.

Now Barnabas wanted to take with them John called Mark. But Paul thought best not to take with them one who had withdrawn from them in Pamphylia and had not gone with them to the work.

And there arose a sharp disagreement so that they separated from each other. Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus. But Paul chose Silas and departed, having been commended by the brothers to the grace of the Lord.

And he went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches. Now the book of Acts, it's an exciting book. Because when you read this book, you can see the gospel is spreading.

[ 6 : 06 ] People are being saved. Homes are being transformed. Churches are being planted. And Christ's kingdom is being established. It's an exciting book. But you know, these verses, at the end of chapter 15, they bring home to us the sad reality that in the midst of blessing, the devil is never far away.

Because where there is activity for Christ's kingdom, there will be activity in the kingdom of darkness. The devil is never far away. And his main objective is division.

Because when something is divided, as you know, it's weaker and it's easier to destroy. And that's why the devil has his name. The Greek name for the devil is diabolos, which means divider.

So the devil is a divider. His main objective and his primary purpose is to cause division. Division between friends, division between families, division between neighbours, division between colleagues, divisions between husband and wife.

And of course, what we see in these verses is division in the church. The devil is a divider. And you know, we're not immune to the devil's handiwork.

[ 7 : 22 ] We've seen it. We've witnessed it. We've witnessed it in the past and in recent years. The devil is never far away. And in this case, he certainly got in between Paul and Barnabas.

Because Paul and Barnabas, they were just about to embark on their second missionary journey. They were going on a journey to encourage the church and to spread the gospel and plant more churches.

But the devil got in and the devil caused division. Because Paul, he wanted to go back to all the places that he had preached the gospel to see how they were doing.

That was his pastor's heart. He wanted to see how these Christians were. But Barnabas, he wanted to bring with him this young man called John Mark. Now, John Mark, he is the man who later wrote the gospel of Mark.

But Paul thought that it was a bad idea to take John Mark with them. Not only because it was going to be a difficult missionary journey. But also because, as we read there, on their first missionary journey, John Mark abandoned them.

[ 8 : 28 ] He left them in Pamphylia. That's what it says in verse 38. Paul thought best not to take with them one who had withdrawn from them in Pamphylia. And had not gone with them to the work.

But Paul didn't want to take with them also because, well, through past experience, Paul thought that John Mark shouldn't come.

But Barnabas, he wasn't having any of it. Barnabas was determined to take John Mark with him. Probably because John Mark was the cousin of Barnabas. But, you know, let's not think that Paul had it in for this boy called Mark.

Because when we read the letter to the Colossians, we see that John Mark, he became vital to Paul's ministry. But this contention, this contention between Paul and Barnabas, it led to division.

And we're told in verse 39, there arose a sharp disagreement. So that they separated from each other. Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus. But Paul chose Silas and departed, having been commended by the brothers to the grace of the Lord.

[ 9 : 39 ] Paul and Barnabas, sadly, they parted ways. And they parted ways over something that was so small and so trivial. And, you know, that's often the case.

For those who have been friends for a long time, just like Paul and Barnabas, and they've been through so much together. And yet all it takes is one argument. And for the devil to get in, and it causes chaos.

And, of course, disagreements and divisions, they can sometimes easily be prevented by just apologising. Arguments can be disarmed by admitting that it's wrong.

Or that you were wrong. Sorry. You were wrong. And, well, it's not worth arguing over. But, you know, far too often disagreements and divisions, they're caused by pride. Where we don't want to admit that we're wrong.

We don't want to humble ourselves and say sorry. And we dig our heels in. And we don't let it go. But, you know, that's not the teaching of the Bible. That's not the example we have in Jesus.

[ 10 : 43 ] Because when we even go to the Lord's Prayer, we consider the Lord's Prayer. Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. That's the teaching of Jesus.

We're to be forgiving. We're to be humble. And, you know, in his commentary, John Calvin, he calls this argument between Paul and Barnabas. He calls it a light matter which might have been easily ended.

And Calvin says that we should be cautioned by this passage. That unless the servants of Christ take great heed, there will be many chinks in the chain through which Satan will creep in to take the peace that is among them.

And so, the lesson is simple. But hard to put into practice. Be aware of contention. Because if there is contention between you and someone else, we're to try and resolve it quickly and peacefully.

And not let it escalate into something that it's not. You know, David put it so clearly to us in Psalm 34. He said, depart from ill. Seek peace.

[ 11 : 55 ] Pursue it earnestly. Depart from ill. Do good. Seek peace. Pursue it earnestly. And so, in order to gain a biblical vision for a new year, we need to be aware of contention.

But then, secondly, we need to be assuring to the Christian. Be assuring to the Christian. Look at verse 1 of chapter 16. Paul came also to Derbe and to Lystra.

A disciple was there named Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer. But his father was a Greek. He was well spoken of by the brothers at Lystra and Iconium.

Paul wanted Timothy to accompany him. And he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in those places. For they all knew that his father was a Greek.

And in these verses, we understand how the apostle Paul came to know this young man called Timothy. Because we're told that Paul and his new partner Silas, they travelled to Derbe and Lystra and later passed through Iconium.

[ 12 : 58 ] They were all towns and cities in the region, as you can see, from southern Galatia. And there in southern Galatia, Paul met Timothy, who was a Galatian.

Timothy was only a young man. And as we know, he was young in the faith. And Timothy was told about the need to have faith in Jesus Christ by his Jewish mother, Jewish convert to Christianity.

His mother, we're told here, she was a believer. And Timothy's mother, she was probably a believer because she heard Paul preach during his first missionary journey.

And you know, what's interesting is that when Timothy is a young minister in Ephesus, later on, Paul writes two letters. He writes two letters to Timothy in order to encourage him in his ministry.

And in his second letter to Timothy, Paul mentions that Timothy's mother was called Eunice. And Timothy's grandmother was called Lois. And that they were women of sincere faith and genuine love for Jesus Christ and his church.

[ 14 : 04 ] But you know, what we see in these verses is that Paul took Timothy under his wing. Paul mentored Timothy. And he taught Timothy. And he encouraged Timothy.

And he challenged Timothy about the Christian life. And how to live the Christian life. Paul was a father in the faith to young Timothy. And Paul says of himself that he viewed Timothy as his own son in the faith.

And as his son in the faith, Paul sought to be assuring to Timothy as a Christian. He sought to comfort him and encourage him as a Christian.

Paul spent time encouraging Timothy in his Christian walk. And pointing out all the pitfalls of the Christian life. And the dangers that a Christian can face.

Paul invested time in Timothy. Because Paul taught Timothy as a young Christian. And Timothy learned from the experience of Paul.

[ 15 : 07 ] And you know, at its most basic level. The relationship between Paul and Timothy was discipleship. Paul disciplined Timothy. And even when Timothy became a minister.

That discipleship and that encouragement, it didn't stop. Because when you read Paul's letters to Timothy. They're full of love. They're full of compassion. They're full of encouragement to this young minister, Timothy.

And you know, that's what we need to be like as a congregation. That's the vision that we need to possess as Christians and as a congregation. We need to be like Paul. Who saw potential in young Timothy.

And we need to invest our time and energy in young Christians. We need to be assuring to the young Christian. We need to encourage the young Christian.

We need to get alongside the young Christian. And teach them. And challenge them. And spur them on. We need to take seriously our role in discipleship. Because that's the Great Commission.

[ 16 : 11 ] The Great Commission of Jesus is go and make disciples of all nations. It's not go and make converts. As important as that is. But our commission is to make disciples.

And we're to disciple one another. We're to look out for one another. We're to care for one another. We're to have fellowship with one another. And that's why I believe trying to do a Bible study together is so important.

And by the way Colossians will start at the end of January. It's good for us to come together in an informal setting. It's an opportunity for us to study the Bible.

To ask questions about the Bible. To learn from one another. To share with one another about our experiences. Because that's what the word fellowship means. It means sharing.

And that's what we're to do as believers. We're to share with one another. We're to encourage one another. We're to build one another up. We're to challenge one another. To holy living. And to living godly lives.

[ 17 : 13 ] We're to have fellowship with one another. And we're reminded down in verse 5. That when we have fellowship with one another. The churches are strengthened.

The church is strengthened in the faith. The church is strengthened in the faith. So we are to be assuring to the Christian.

We're to be assuring to the Christian. And so in order to gain a biblical vision for a new year. We need to be aware of contention. And we need to be assuring to the Christian.

Then thirdly we need to be attentive to the call. We need to be attentive to the call. Look at verse 6. And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia.

Having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. And when they came up to Mysia. They attempted to go into Bithynia. But the spirit of Jesus did not allow them.

[ 18 : 09 ] So passing by Mysia. They went down to throw us. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A man of Macedonia was standing there. Urging him and saying.

Come over to Macedonia. And help us. And when Paul had seen the vision. Immediately we sought to go on into Macedonia. Concluding that God had called us. To preach the gospel to them.

Paul, Silas and young Timothy. They travelled through South Galatia. Preaching the gospel in various towns and cities. And they encouraged believers in their faith in Jesus Christ.

And they persuaded others to have faith in Jesus Christ. But we're told that when they went through the region of Galatia. They were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to move north. To preach in Asia.

And then they tried to go towards Bithynia. Which is north of Galatia. But again the spirit did not permit them. And you know with that we might question.

[ 19 : 10 ] Well how did the spirit tell them not to go to these places? And the simple answer is. We don't know. We're not told. It could have been by direct revelation. Or an inward conviction.

Or an outward circumstance. Or even a combination of all these things. But how the Lord told Paul is not really important. What is important.

Is that Paul was submissive to God's will. Paul was willing to follow God's plan. And not his own plan. Paul was willing to put all his plans on hold.

And put the Lord first. And you know does it not remind you of what the Lord said about his plans. In Isaiah 55. For my thoughts are not your thoughts.

Neither are your ways my ways declares the Lord. But as the heavens are higher than the earth. So are my ways higher than your ways. And my thoughts than your thoughts.

[ 20 : 09 ] You know it's not our responsibility to question the Lord's plan in our life. Our responsibility is to be obedient. And that's not easy to do.

But that's where the blessing is. The blessing of the Lord is in obedience to the Lord. And Paul was obedient to the Lord. Because he humbly submitted to God's will.

And he awaited the Lord's direction. And you know that's what it's like sometimes. Sometimes we don't know what's going to be ahead of us. And we don't know what's going to happen.

But you know we just need to trust that the Lord knows what he's doing. And that his ways are perfect. You know Paul was attentive to his calling to go to Macedonia.

We're told in verse 9. A vision appeared to Paul in the night. A man of Macedonia was standing there. Urging him and saying. Come over to Macedonia and help us.

[ 21 : 07 ] And when Paul had seen the vision. Immediately we sought to go on into Macedonia. Concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them. After being obedient to the Spirit's leading.

Paul was given direction. As to where he and his companions should go. And through a dream Paul was called to go to this place. Macedonia.

Paul was given a vision. To go to a people. In need of help. And you know I love the words of verse 10. When Paul had seen the vision.

Immediately we sought to go into Macedonia. Concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them. When Paul grasped the vision. When Paul had been given clarity on what he was to do for the Lord.

He, it says, he immediately. He immediately, without any delay. He sought to go to Macedonia. There was an urgency. There was a passion.

[ 22 : 08 ] There was a desire to serve the Lord. There was this calling from the Lord. And that was the reason Paul went to Macedonia. It was for one purpose.

The Lord had called him. He was obedient to the Lord's call. To preach the gospel to these people. And in this we have to see that when Paul was given a vision.

He was attentive to the call. He was attentive to the call. Because the Lord had a purpose for Macedonia. The Lord had a purpose for the people of Macedonia. And the Lord had a purpose for Paul.

And you know, the Lord has a purpose for me and you. The Lord has a purpose for me and for you. And we are to be attentive to the call upon our life.

Because as Christians, the Lord has given to each and every one of us a calling. You might not be called to stand in a pulpit. But we are all called to preach the gospel.

[ 23 : 09 ] We are to preach the gospel by our life. And by our witness. We are, as the Bible says, we are to be living epistles seen and read of men. We are to be walking Bibles.

Because we might be the only Bible that someone ever reads. But what will they read from your life? And my life? What kind of gospel do we proclaim?

My friend, we need to be attentive to the call. You know, the Apostle Peter, he put it so beautifully when he said that the Christian. The Christian, he says, is part of a chosen generation.

A royal priesthood. A holy nation. And a peculiar people. And he says that we should show forth the praises of him who called us. He called us from where?

Darkness. Into his marvellous light. And we are to show forth the praises of him. Why? He says, because we were once not a people. But we are now the people of God.

[ 24 : 09 ] We had once not obtained mercy. But now we have obtained mercy. So we have received a call. And we are to be attentive to the call. To show forth the praises of him who called us from darkness.

Into his marvellous light. We need to be attentive to the call. And so in order to have a biblical vision for a new year. We need to be aware of contention. We need to be assuring to the Christian.

We need to be attentive to the call. And then fourthly, we need to be active in the congregation. We need to be active in the congregation.

Look at verse 11. So setting sail from Troas, we made a direct voyage to Samothrace. And the following day to Neapolis. And from there to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia.

And a Roman colony. We remained in this city some days. And on the Sabbath day, we went outside the gate to the riverside. Where we supposed there was a place of prayer.

[ 25 : 10 ] And we sat down and spoke to the women who had come together. And so on receiving direction from the Lord, their missionary journey took them through the city of Neapolis.

And then on to the city of Philippi. And we're told that Philippi was a leading city in the district of Macedonia. It was a wealthy city. Because it was, it was, Philippi was a city built upon, on commerce.

It was where many people travelled to and from in order to trade their goods. And one such person that was travelling to and from Philippi was this woman, Lydia.

We'll see her in a wee moment. She was a seller of purple. But you know, it's remarkable to think that this missionary journey had brought Paul and his team, you could say.

It had brought them into Europe. And the church that they planted in Philippi, it was the first European church. And although they were a small and fragile church, the Philippian Christians, they were active in their congregation.

[ 26 : 19 ] They may not have been active in evangelistic outreach or street preaching or door-to-door evangelism. All of these things, they have their place and they're beneficial to some degree.

But what the congregation of Philippi was active in was something we can all be active in. And something we can all be involved in. And that is prayer.

Because we're told in verse 13, And on the Sabbath day we went outside the gate to the riverside, where we supposed there was a place of prayer. And we sat down and spoke to the women who had come together.

On the Sabbath day, a group of women came together to pray. And it's not clear if these women were already converted prior to Paul meeting with them.

But I believe that these women, they are the reason why Paul received his vision to come over to Macedonia and help them. They had gathered together for prayer.

[ 27 : 21 ] And they were praying for the Lord to send help. And you know, I love the way the authorised version puts it. Because it says that Paul and the others, they came to the place where prayer is wont to be made.

The place where prayer is wont to be made. Which means that these women, they gathered often. And they gathered regularly. To pray for their community.

To pray for their city. To pray for their region. To pray for their nation. These women were active in their congregation. As they gathered together to pray.

And that's what we have to be active in too. We have to be active in gathering together for prayer. Because it's an activity that we can all be involved in.

We might not be able to go door to door. We might not be able to preach on the street. We might not be able to be part of this evangelistic outreach. But we can all be active and we can all be involved in prayer.

[ 28 : 22 ] Because this is the place where prayer is wont to be made. This is what Jesus terms as the house of prayer. This is what we often call the prayer meeting.

This is the place where we should be most active. We should be active in prayer. Active in learning. Active in fellowship. And everyone who can be here.

I know that there are many who can't for various reasons. But those who can be here. I know it's tiring to come on a Wednesday night. I've been where you are. I've had to sit and listen to somebody else preach.

After working all day. But if we can be here. We should be here. Just to pray. To be active in the congregation. To hear a word for our soul.

To encourage us on the way. We're to gather together for prayer. You know Spurgeon. As you know. He's often referred to as the prince of preachers. But Spurgeon knew that the success of his ministry.

[ 29 : 26 ] Was down to his active congregation. Spurgeon repeatedly acknowledged the Lord's blessing upon his ministry. As the direct result of his congregation's faithful praying.

They were active in the congregation. And in Spurgeon's eyes. The prayer meeting was the most important meeting of the week.

He wrote a whole book about it. Called Only a Prayer Meeting. And I'm sure that you've heard before. That when visitors would come to Spurgeon's church. He would take them to the prayer room.

Down in the basement. And Spurgeon would say to the visitor. As he opened the door. Here's the powerhouse of the church. This is the engine room. And you know just like the engine room of a ship.

Without a hot and noisy engine room. There's no motion. And there's no movement in the ship. And so it is with the engine room of the church.

[ 30 : 27 ] If the prayer meeting is not filled with hearts that are burning from within. And prayers that are passionate for the Lord and his cause. Then there will be no motion. And there will be no movement of the spirit.

My friend we need to be active. Active in the congregation. We need to be prayerful. Both publicly and privately. For those in our congregation.

And for those in our community. There is an endless list. Of petitions to pray. But we're to bring them to the Lord in prayer.

We're to cast our burdens upon the Lord. Why? Because he cares for us. He wants to hear. So we need to be active. In the congregation. And so for a biblical vision.

For a new year. We need to be aware of contention. Be assuring to the Christian. Be attentive to the call. Be active in the congregation. And then lastly. We need to be alert to conversion.

[ 31 : 25 ] Be alert to conversion. Look at verse 14. One who heard us was a woman named Lydia. From the city of Thyatira. The seller of purple goods.

Who was a worshipper of God. The Lord opened her heart. To pay attention to what was said by Paul. And after she was baptized. And her household as well. She urged us saying.



If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord. Come to my house and stay. And she prevailed upon us. The result of these women. Actively praying.

In their congregation. Was the conversion of sinners. The result was conversions. And that's what we see in the rest of this chapter. You can read it when you go home.

It's a wonderful chapter. Because the first person who was converted. In Philippi. Was this wealthy woman. Called Lydia. Lydia was a wealthy woman. Because she was a seller of purple.

[ 32 : 23 ] And purple was a royal colour. That was worth a lot of money. But what's beautiful about this passage. Is that Lydia came from Thyatira.

Which was in the region of Mysia. You can see it on the map. And it's a place that Paul had already passed through. And yet here is Paul. He's now in Philippi. In Macedonia.

And he's preaching the gospel. And while he's preaching. The Lord opens Lydia's heart. A woman from Mysia. And you know I can't help but think. That this woman.

She wasn't at home. She wasn't in her home town. Or her home city. And yet. I can't help but think. That one of the women in the congregation. They must have invited Lydia.

To come to their congregation. Someone must have asked Lydia. To come to church with them. And it was that invitation.

[ 33 : 19 ] To maybe a stranger from Mysia. That invitation changed Lydia's life. Because under the preaching of the word. The Lord opened Lydia's heart.

And you know it should be an encouragement to us. It should be a challenge to us. To ask people to come to church. To invite them to be under the preaching of the gospel. Because as we know the preaching of the gospel.

It's the power of God unto salvation. And we should never assume that someone knows that church is on. And that they're all invited to come. We should never take for granted that people think about coming to church.

Because they don't. And if we invite someone. And they say no. That's fine. It's not nice. It's not what we want to hear.

But that's up to them. It's a free offer. Our responsibility. Is to ask. Our responsibility. Is to be alert to conversion.

[ 34 : 19 ] Because the Lord can save. Save anyone. And we see that in this chapter. Because the Lord saves. In this chapter. The rich. The poor. And the indifferent. The Lord saves Lydia.

A rich woman. Who's a seller of purple. The Lord saves a demon possessed. Slave girl. She's in complete poverty. Being used and abused. And the Lord saves this Philippian jailer.

Completely indifferent to the gospel. The Lord's able to save anyone. And he's able to bring anyone. To that point in their life. Where they're asking. As the Philippian jailer asked.

What must I do. To be saved. But you know. We need to be alert to conversion. We need to get alongside. Those who are. Maybe interested. Or those who are seeking.

Or even those who are. Completely. Indifferent. And we need to ask them. We need to encourage them. To come to church. We need to encourage them. To believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

[ 35 : 19 ] Because when they do. They will be saved. And so at the beginning of another year. We see in this passage. Maybe an obscure passage to go to.

But in this passage. We see five pointers. To help us have. A biblical vision. For a new year. Be aware of contention. Be assuring to the Christian.

Be attentive to the call. Be active in the congregation. Be alert. To conversion. That's a biblical vision. For a new year. And may we seek to have that vision.

And implement it in our lives. Both as Christians. And as a congregation. May the Lord bless these thoughts to us. Let us pray.

O Lord our gracious God. We confess that. All we are not what we ought to be. But we give thanks to thee.

[ 36 : 19 ] That thou art the God who has promised. To begin that good work in us. And bring it on to completion. We pray that thou wouldst. Enable us to be humble. Enable us to have a servant like heart.

Enable us Lord to be like Jesus. To reach out to those in need. To have a willingness to. To speak to them. To encourage them. To encourage the fellow believer.

And to encourage those who are still strangers to thee. That we O Lord would be. Like Barnabas. Sons of encouragement. And that we O Lord would.

Would serve thee aright. Help us to have a vision. A vision Lord for another year. That we might bring glory to thy name. That we might give Christ the preeminence.

And that we O Lord as a congregation. Would receive blessing. Not because we deserve it. Because we don't. But that we might receive blessing. Simply because the word of God.

[ 37 : 16 ] Who is gracious and merciful. Long suffering and abundant. In goodness and truth. O Lord remember us then we pray. Continue with us we ask. And keep our eyes firmly fixed upon thee.

Knowing thee as the author. And the finisher of our faith. Cleanse us we pray. For Jesus sake. Amen. We shall conclude by singing the words of Psalm 123.

Psalm 123. Just the first two verses. Verses. Verses that.

Remind us that we're to lift our eyes towards the Lord. As servants and as handmaids. So servants for the boys. Handmaids for the girls.

We're to look to the master's hand. And keep our eyes firmly fixed upon them. O thou that dwellest in the heavens. I lift mine eyes to thee.

[ 38 : 23 ] Behold a servant's eyes to look. Their master's hand to see. As handmaids eyes. Her mistress hand. So do our eyes attend. Upon the Lord our God.

Until to us. He mercy send. These verses. To God's praise. O thou that dwellest in the heavens.

As I lift mine eyes to thee. Behold a servant's eyes to.

Their master's hand to see. As handmaids eyes.

Her mistress hand. So do our eyes attend.

[ 39 : 32 ] Our home. Our home. The Lord. The Lord. Until to us.

He mercy send. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. The love of God the Father. And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

Be with you all. Now and forevermore. Amen.