

Our Lord, Come!

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 05 July 2026

Preacher: Colin Horne

[0:00] 1 Corinthians 16, starting at verse 10. But it was not at all his will to come now.

He will come when he has opportunity. Be watchful. Stand firm in the faith. Act like men. Be strong. Let everything that you do be done in love. Now I urge you, brothers, you know that the household of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia and that they have devoted themselves to the service of the saints.

Be subject to such as these and to every fellow worker and laborer. I rejoice at the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus because they have made up for your absence, for they have refreshed my spirit as well as yours.

Give recognition to such people. The churches of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Prisca, together with the church in their house, send you hearty greetings in the Lord.

[1:33] All the brothers send you greetings. Greet one another with a holy kiss. I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. If anyone has no love for the Lord, let him be accursed.

Our Lord, come. The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you. My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen. Amen. Well, indeed, this is the end. We've reached the conclusion to Paul's first letter to the Corinthians that we have in our Bibles.

And to use the illustration from the last time that we were in 1 Corinthians together, we are aiming to pick every last morsel of meat off of the bone in this letter.

I actually had someone two weeks back come to me expressing just a gratefulness for Paul's letter to the Corinthians. And they said in passing, it was so good that we were in that letter. And I said, there's one more week to go.

[2:40] We're not done yet. Every last bit of meat we want to get. And frankly, we could keep going, truly. But we're going to have this be our last.

So Paul is wrapping up the letter. The last verses have now been read. He's come to the end. And we'll see tonight that Paul is doing something here at the very end of his letter that he also did at the very beginning.

And that is Paul's weaving themes from the body of the letter into the conclusion. So if at the beginning of the letter we were introduced to very important themes that we would soon have Paul dive into more deeply, well, now that we've come to the conclusion, Paul is doing review with us.

He is helping us to remember all that he taught in the heart of the letter. So this is, in a way, something of review tonight. Now, I know we have a lot of family in town.

Welcome to the review of 1 Corinthians. This isn't a lengthy passage. These aren't lengthy parting words, but there is a lot that Paul packs into these verses tonight.

[3:55] And we'll see that as we walk through this passage. So here's how we're breaking down our text before us tonight. We have three points. And each point deals in numbers.

We have two last reminders. We have five terse commands. And finally, one powerful plea.

That just sounded better to me than eight points. So our three points broken down like the 12 days of Christmas. Two last reminders. Five terse commands. And one powerful plea.

So let's begin. Let's look at the last two reminders that Paul gives to us. And you'll see them if we jump down to verse 15. We're going to be a little out of order tonight, but we're going to start in verse 15.

And let me read again verses 15 to 21 to see these two final reminders. Now I urge you, brothers, You know that the household of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and that they have devoted themselves to the service of the saints.

[4:58] Be subject to such as these, and to every fellow worker and laborer. I rejoice at the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus, because they have made up for your absence, for they

refreshed my spirit as well as yours.

Give recognition to such people. The churches of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Prisca, together with the church in their house, send you hearty greetings in the Lord.

All the brothers send you greetings. Greet one another with a holy kiss. So the two final reminders that we find here in our passage tonight, they come attached with examples.

We see here first, Be subject to humble leaders, like Stephanas and his household. Now this is the second time in Paul's letter that he brings up the household of Stephanas.

He's already mentioned him and his family back in chapter 1. He told us what seemed like in passing at that point, that he baptized his household, he thinks.

[6:05] They were in fact the only individuals that Paul can remember himself baptizing in Corinth. Now that makes sense. As we come now to the conclusion of Paul's letter, that these were some of the very first converts in the region.

That's what Paul tells us here in chapter 16. Stephanas and his household, some of the first converts in Achaia. Now the term there, that's translated as first converts.

That's a familiar one to us, though we might not notice it in our English translation. We've seen this term before. It's the word that's more literally translated as firstfruits.

Now remember back to chapter 15, when Paul was talking about the Lord Jesus, and he indeed was the firstfruits of the resurrection. Well, these believers here, they were the firstfruits of conversion in that particular region, the region where the city of Corinth is.

So given that, it makes sense that Paul, who was very instrumental in bringing the gospel to the region, planting the church in Corinth, would have also baptized them.

[7:15] But Paul doesn't bring up Stephanas and his household to remind the church that he had baptized them. No, he brings them up to remind the church of their devoted service to the saints.

He brings them up to recognize them, to commend that they be recognized, to commend them for their faithfulness from the very beginning until now. He brings them up as yet another example of those who are doing the work of the Lord.

We have seen often in 1 Corinthians of late, Paul bringing up people for us who are doing the work of the Lord, that we might be exhorted to do the work of the Lord ourselves.

Paul has put himself forward as an example. Last time we saw, he put Timothy forward as an example. And now he's putting the household of Stephanas forward as well.

They have devoted themselves to the service of the saints. They've labored for the Lord and for his people. And so what was the church in Corinth to do? Well, Paul tells us, be subject to such as these.

[8:24] Put yourself under these kind of mature believers. Some of the first believers in that region. Listen to them. Learn from them.

Perhaps you could even say, follow them as they follow Christ. Now doesn't that remind you perhaps of the problem that Paul addressed at the very outset of the letter so very long ago in our memory?

chapter 1, the problem of following leaders that were being elevated based on worldly standards? Well, Paul is now saying, here are leaders worth following.

Not because Stephanas and his household spoke with words of eloquent wisdom. Not because they were worthy of being followed in the world's eyes. Not because they were wise according to worldly standards.

But because they devoted themselves to the service of the saints as they served their Lord and Master Jesus. That's why Paul puts Stephanas and his household forward.

[9:31] Because they served just like their Savior who came not to be served, but to serve. And to give his life as a ransom for many. They followed the pattern of their Savior, not the pattern of this world.

Now, what does that look like? Very practically speaking. Well, Paul answers that for us. What does it look like to devote yourself to the servants of the saints?

To the service of the saints? Paul says, here's an example. This is how they did that. And it's a very personal example to Paul. He says in verses 17 to 18 that Stephanas, along with these other men, who themselves were perhaps members of Stephanas' household, these men came and they visited Paul.

They visited him. It's possible that they were the ones who actually delivered to him the letter that the church in Corinth had written. Remember, we've seen many times, starting back in chapter 7, that Paul has made reference to a letter that the Corinthians had written.

He'll often say, now concerning this matter, now concerning this matter. And in chapter 7, he began by saying, now concerning the matters about which you wrote. Throughout the letter, Paul has quoted the Corinthians, seemingly quoting from the letter delivered to him.

[10:52] And it's entirely possible that Stephanas had delivered that very letter. But that's not what Paul here is highlighting about their visit. He doesn't say here why they came.

That's not his concern. That's not what he's eager to share. No, he's eager to share not why they came, but what they did in their coming. They refreshed his spirit.

They refreshed his spirit. This reminds me of how the brothers from the Roman church did the very same thing for Paul. In Paul's letter to the Romans, he anticipated his coming to them.

He anticipated that he would come to visit the church in Rome. He said in Romans 15, 32, so that by God's will, I may come to you with joy and be refreshed in your company.

And Paul was refreshed in their company, but not the way that he anticipated. It wasn't by his coming to them as he thought would happen, but by their coming to him as he was coming himself into Rome in shackles.

[12:05] He was a prisoner. Some of the brothers from the Roman church, they came and they met him on the road. And Acts 28, 15 tells us, on seeing them, Paul thanked God and took courage.

The brothers in the Roman church, they refreshed his spirit. What an impact their presence made on Paul. These Christian brothers who cared enough to find him and to minister to his soul, they loved him.

not just in word, but in deed. Well, Stephanas and his household, they did the same thing. They refreshed Paul's spirit, he says.

They refreshed his spirit with their presence. So they didn't come to Paul for their own benefit. They didn't come to Paul looking to gain something from him.

They didn't come to Paul so that Paul could give to them. They came to Paul to give of themselves for Paul's sake. They labored for the Lord as they loved their brother.

[13:12] They labored for the Lord as they devoted themselves to the service of the saints. Do you see what kind of example Paul is putting forward to us?

These are the kinds of leaders worthy of imitation. These are the kinds of leaders to be subject to. These are the kinds of leaders to follow. Not the kind that put themselves forward and take every opportunity to promote themselves.

That's the problem of chapter 1 that Paul addressed. No, the kinds of leaders that take every opportunity to humbly serve the body of their Savior.

That's who we're to follow. Be subject to humble servants, to humble leaders like these men. So that's the first reminder in these final instructions.

Now here's the second reminder. Greet one another with warm affection like Aquila and Prisca and the church that's gathered in their home.

[14:13] So again, examples attached to this reminder. And we see this Christian love in the greetings that Paul passes along. These aren't mere formalities.

Paul isn't just saying hello on behalf of some others because, well, that's the thing that you do in a letter. No, this is an expression of warm fellowship.

This is a reminder of the bond that unites us in Christ. the Corinthians have fellowship with the churches in Asia, with Aquila and Prisca and the church in their home.

Because we see there not just greetings are sent, we see hearty greetings are sent from these other believers. Maybe your translation says warm greetings. But even more than that, hearty greetings, warm greetings in the Lord.

Again, not just friendly hellos. Even the world can greet warmly. But these are greetings in the Lord. Here is this clear, this outward expression of Christian fellowship.

[15:23] This letter is tied together, really, by that theme of Christian fellowship. We see it in the beginning and we see it in the end. You go back to chapter 1.

Look at how Paul opens the letter. He says in verse 2, to the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours.

Do you see the emphasis that Paul places upon the bonds that we have in Christ to every other Christian? There's no Christian exempt here. Called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We've been joined together. Called to be saints together, as Paul says. Joined to one body. The body of Christ. He is the Lord of all those who call upon His name in every place, both their Lord and ours.

So we're united together because we're united to Christ. Again, here's some good review for us. Paul went to great lengths in chapter 12 to teach us this truth.

[16:49] He said there, for just as the body is one and has many members and all the members of the body, though many, are one body. So it is with Christ.

Those are special bonds. And so those special bonds call for special greetings. So we greet one another with a warmth, with an affection that we reserve for family.

Now, we greet family with greater affection than a stranger on the street, I would expect. How much more warmly, how much more heartily should we greet our spiritual family bound together with the blood of Christ?

And so we do. We greet one another with a holy kiss, Paul says. Now kids, just to be clear, we aren't kissing one another at church and you don't need to begin doing such things, but we take the principle of that holy kiss.

That's a warm affection. And all those in Christ, we greet one another in that way. So we've seen the two last reminders and those examples attached to those reminders.

[17:59] Now let's consider the five terse commands. And those are found now back in verses 13 to 14. Be watchful.

Stand firm in the faith. Act like men. Be strong. Let all that you do be done in love. So here are these five short, punchy commands.

They are verbs in the imperative form, meaning they are commanding us to do something. And the first four of those commands all really tie together.

They are commands that you would expect to hear on the battlefield. Paul is calling the Corinthians to this firm conviction. He's calling the Corinthians to this moral fortitude.

And it all begins with being on their guard. So he says, be watchful. Now what were the Corinthians to be watchful of?

[19:02] Well again, we can trace this back to near the beginning of the letter. What were they doing? They were letting the influence of the world into the church. They were evaluating leaders based on these worldly standards, this worldly criteria.

They were thinking themselves wise in this age, to use Paul's words from chapter 3. Though what is the wisdom of this world? It is folly to God. So instead of humbling themselves before God, instead of rightly recognizing their humble position before Him, what were they doing?

They were puffing themselves up with pride in these outward appearances. That was the influence of the world, working its way into the church. And how did that happen?

The church had let its guard down. Consider Paul's second letter to the Corinthians. He said these famous words, chapter 10, verse 5. We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God and take every thought captive to obey Christ.

That is what it looks like to be watchful. Guarding against arguments and lofty opinions and philosophies that the world puts forward.

[20:20] Taking all of those ideas and evaluating them against the truth of God. The truth of His Word. Taking every thought captive to Christ. That's being watchful.

That's being discerning. So the world says, evaluate leaders based on how eloquently they speak. Or as Paul would later say, are they of noble birth or not?

How impressive is their lineage? The world says, evaluate leaders on how powerful their presence is. Their charisma. And Paul says, hogwash. That's the world's way of thinking.

That's not to be yours. Because what the world says is wise really is foolishness in the eyes of God. So, be watchful against worldly ideas.

But of course, that's not all that Paul says. That's not all that he's driving at even in this command. The review is more comprehensive than that. Not just worldly ideas, but so closely tied to that, worldly living.

[21:23] Because right after addressing the wisdom of the world and all of the divisions in the church in those first four chapters of the letter, what does Paul get into in chapter five?

The sexual immorality that is present in the church. And it's not just present, it's being accepted. Paul says, you're arrogant.

Paul says, your boasting is not good. So, instead of mourning this sin and dealing with this sin, it's not just left unaddressed, but in some sense, it's being celebrated.

In some way, this sin is being put forward. It's like a product getting to be the window display in a department store. So, Paul rebukes the church for this. And he asks this very pointed question in chapter five.

Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? A little leaven works its way into the whole lump of dough.

[22:26] A little sin works its way into the whole church. And soon, sin is minimized. It's excused. It's tolerated. It's accepted.

It's even celebrated. So, Paul says, be watchful. Even as Jesus himself said, watch and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

So, yes, be on guard against the subtle acceptance of false teaching. And, yes, be on your guard against the subtle acceptance of worldly, sinful living.

Be on your guard against the influence of the world. And who is the world under the influence of?

Oh, the power of the evil one. Satan prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

So, what does 1 Peter 5, 8 tell us to do? Be sober-minded. Be watchful. The world says, think like us. The world says, live like us.

[23:29] And as we've seen time and again in 1 Corinthians, how we think and how we live go hand in hand. Wrong thinking leads to sinful living.

And right thinking, it ought to then lead to godly living. Again, review from chapter 15. You think wrongly about the resurrection.

Believe false teaching about the resurrection. What was the example in chapter 15? The teaching that there was no resurrection of the dead. That the dead won't be raised.

Well, how will that affect the way that you live? If you deny the resurrection of the dead, well, then you'll say things like, let us eat and drink. For tomorrow we die.

This is all there is. So get all that you can out of this life for yourself. Live for the passing pleasures of this life rather than the unending pleasure found at God's right hand.

[24:29] Do you see how we need these commands as well? Be watchful that this kind of thinking doesn't get through the filters of your head and your heart.

Because the sinful living is then so sure to follow as your head and your heart grow complacent.

That very spirit of complacency the Lord Jesus addressed as he taught in the temple.

In Luke 21, 34 speaking on the end of the age and he gave the same command that Paul gives here. Jesus said, but watch yourselves lest your hearts be weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and cares of this life and that day comes upon you suddenly like a trap.

And so the second command following the command to be watchful it follows very naturally here in verse 13. Stand firm in your faith.

Take your stand. Don't budge in your Christian resolve. Again, here Paul is thinking in the same way that Peter thought in his letter.

[25:45] And so we saw that Peter said be watchful be sober minded your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour. Then verse 9 resist him firm in your faith.

Same idea from Paul. Be watchful stand firm in the faith. And Paul has gone to great lengths in this letter to show the firmness of the gospel itself.

To show that our confidence is well founded in the gospel. To show that our faith is indeed on solid ground just as we sung already this evening.

Look back at chapter 15. Paul lays out the truth of the gospel. And he says there in verse 3 Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures.

He tells us there in verse 3 that he was buried that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures. And he tells us that he appeared to so many. And then Paul lists for them all of the people that the Lord was appearing to in great detail.

[26:58] And Paul does that. He goes to great lengths. He gives us this list of witnesses to give us confidence. To reassure us that yes, our faith is reasonable.

Our faith is well founded. You can put all of your eggs in this basket. Your faith has a solid foundation. So then you can stand firm upon it.

Stand firm in this firmly founded faith. You know, when the ground is solid underneath you, you walk very confidently upon it.

But when the ground gets shaky, well, your steps become shaky as well. Kids, have you ever been to a park that has what I will call in very non-technical terms a wobbly bridge?

As you walk across it, it shakes on you. All the rest of the playground is firm, but that one spot, it's shaky. And what happens when you get to the wobbly bridge?

[28:04] You slow down. You're a little less confident. You're a little less sure. If you are Cal, our son, he will get a bit whiny and he'll start to reach out for mom or dad and he'll cry because why?

He's going to fall. He was confident everywhere else on the playground, but he gets to the wobbly bridge and now, not so much confidence as he tries to walk across. Well, there's a lesson for our faith in this.

Paul has helped us to see in this letter the gospel that we've believed isn't like a wobbly bridge. It's like a firm platform. So stand firm in the faith, Christian, because you can be sure that what you stand upon is firm.

The gospel is firm. Your faith is not in vain. Christ is risen. He appeared to so many as proof of that. He's alive in heaven even now to return one day again.

So we ought to have a great confidence. And with that great confidence should also accompany a great courage. And that's what we're commanded next.

[29:12] Paul says, act like men. That's the third terse command given to us. Or your translation might say, be men of courage. And then let's bring the last command in there as well.

Be strong. That's like the fourth battle command that's given to us here in verse 13. Now when you couple together be courageous and be strong, you can't help but think of Joshua and God's command to him.

Be strong and courageous. So what are we to be? We're to be unwavering. We're to be fearless. We're to be uncompromising in our faith. Now I want to address this.

When Paul says, act like men, Paul is not literally honing in on just the men in the congregation and only addressing them. No, he's still talking to men and women here in these parting commands.

This is a command for all of us who are in Christ. So why does he say, act like men? Well, because the root word in that command is the Greek word for man.

[30:17] So yes, men should be characterized by courage. That is gravely lacking in our world today. A masculinity is under attack. So I don't want to gloss over the fact that yes, men are to be courageous.

Boldness and bravery should characterize us. Courage to lead. Courage to be at the helm. Courage to be the head in the home, in the church.

We are tasked by God to be the protectors and the providers. Courage should characterize us as men. Yet we shouldn't read this as a command to only men here.

While Paul is certainly using battle language, the battle here is spiritual. It's a spiritual battle for all Christians, men and women alike. We are engaged in this battle.

So it's not as though Paul is exempting women here from being courageous. That's not the case at all. Even as God has given us distinct roles and responsibilities.

[31:23] If you want more review of that, go back to chapter 11. We see the goodness of all of that in God's design there in chapter 11. But what Paul is doing here, it's less about the distinction really between men and women, and it's more about the distinction between adults and children, between spiritual maturity and spiritual immaturity.

And again, Paul has addressed this for us. Go back to chapter 13. Paul talks about childishness versus maturity. There he said, beginning in verse 11, when I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child.

When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. Now, of course, Paul is not saying that only men give up childish ways.

No, adults, men and women, give up childish ways when they reach maturity. He's talking about a fully grown, mature adult. That's the force behind what he's saying here.

Not contrasting men from women, but children from adults. And he's already rebuked the Corinthians for, not for being women, but for being childish when they should be mature. [32 : 45] He gave that rebuke in chapter 3, verse 1. He said, but I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ.

I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now, you are not yet ready. So now come back to chapter 16. What's Paul's exhortation?

Act like men. Grow up. That's the exhortation to the immature. We need steel in our spines. We need to be courageous. We need to be strong.

That's to characterize the Christian. You see, in all of these commands, we are being called to firm conviction. We are being called to an uncompromising faith, to hold fast to the truth, to be unashamed of the truth, to be unwavering in our commitment to the gospel.

Do you remember how Paul described our relationship to the gospel in chapter 15? It's the gospel that we've received. It's the gospel in which we stand.

[33 : 55] It's the gospel in which we are being saved. And it's the gospel that we must hold fast to. You see, the Corinthians were tempted towards the world's way of thinking.

They were tempted towards the world's way of living. They were letting false teaching into the church. They were letting sinful living into the church. They needed a wake-up call. Paul gave it to them.

In chapter 15, he said, wake up from your drunken stupor, as is right, and do not go on sinning. And then he gives the wake-up call here again as he closes out his letter.

Do we need that wake-up call in our lives? Be watchful. Stand firm in the faith. Act like men. Be strong. Now that's verse 13.

Then we come to verse 14. And Paul gives us this wonderfully balanced perspective. He's given us the commands for battle. And now he gives us the command to love.

[34 : 58] Yes, we need firm convictions. Yes, we need to live courageously in this world, but not without love. So Paul says, let all that you do be done in love.

Now, if we were told this morning and rightly so, that freedom has been hijacked by the world, the word for freedom has been hijacked, I think we could also say that the word for love has been hijacked.

What does God have to say about love? This love that is to characterize all that we do. Chapter 13, beginning in verse 4. Love is patient and kind.

Love does not envy or boast. It is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way. It is not irritable or resentful. It does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth.

Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Biblical love is full of strength and biblical strength is full of love.

[36 : 09] Without strength and resolve and courage, we become overly agreeable and tolerant of sin. And without love, we become hardened and calloused and puffed up with pride.

So we need firm convictions and we need to be full of love. Indeed, if we are firm and sure of our biblical convictions, we of all people should be the most full of biblical love.

Paul brings these two things together very beautifully in 2 Corinthians chapter 5. A firmness of convictions and yet also a fullness of love. It's in 2 Corinthians chapter 5 beginning in verse 14.

Paul says, the love of Christ controls us because we have concluded this. And now what follows here are those firm convictions.

What has he concluded? That one has died for all, therefore all have died. And he died for all that those who live might no longer live for themselves, but for him who for their sake died.

[37 : 23] And was raised. That's firm conviction at its finest. Paul is not wishy-washy at all about who we are, about what Christ has done.

He is crystal clear in all of that. He's standing firm in the faith and that firm stand is full of love. Christ's love for us is clear there.

He died for us. Our love for Christ is clear. We now no longer live for ourselves, but we live for him. We're compelled by that love. And even our love for others is clear.

We take this message of good news to them, that they might hear, that they might believe as well.

So do you see then how these terse commands in chapter 16, they tie together.

We must heed them all. So be watchful, stand firm, act like men, be strong, let all that you do be done in love.

[38:27] Five commands that Paul drives home at the close of this letter. Now all five of these verbs, I already made mention of it, all of us who love grammar here, they are imperatives, they're in the imperative form, meaning that they're calling on us to do something.

now there's one last verb in the imperative form that we must see, and it's the final point this evening, but we surely should not think of this last verb in the imperative form like the other commands that we just considered.

We should think of this not as a command, but as a plea, and it's a plea directed not at us, but to Christ. It's a plea that we ought to make to Him.

Our Lord, come. We see that there in verse 22. Our Lord, come. And here once more, Paul circles us back to the very introduction of his letter, where there in chapter 1, in his thanksgiving to God for the Corinthians, what does he talk about?

But none other than the return of Christ. He says in chapter 1, verse 7, you are not lacking in any gift, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[39:54] God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Like the Corinthians, we are waiting for the revealing of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We are waiting for that glorious day. Well, now here at the end of the letter, we get a sense of what that waiting should look like. And it's like everywhere else in the Bible.

The idea of waiting for the return of Christ is always with eager anticipation. Meaning, when the Bible talks about waiting for Jesus, don't think of the waiting room in the doctor's office.

Dry, boring, stale, sterile, HGTV show on. Just passing the time until your name gets called. That's not the kind of waiting that we're to do.

We're to be eager for Christ's return. Our plea is to be Lord, come. We yearn for Him. Our hearts burn for His appearing. And on top of that, there's eager anticipation.

[41:01] And there is work to be done. We have work to do as we wait. So this is a very active waiting. Again, get the doctor's office out of your mind.

Not only are you to be excited as you wait, which we're never excited at the doctor's office, you are to be active as well, which would be very strange if you were active in the doctor's office.

Be active. There's work to be done. That was the point that Paul was driving toward in chapter 15. He concluded all of that wonderful teaching on the resurrection, and the return of Christ, and the glory that awaits.

And he didn't just say, now wait, it's going to be awesome. Just sit tight until your name gets called. No, we have work to do, don't we, brothers and sisters?

What did Paul exhort us to? To labor for the Lord. That's one of the verses that we just keep coming back to in these last few sermons. We're to be always abounding in the work of the Lord.

[42:05] Laboring for him. And as we do that good labor, we're longing for him at the same time. Remember how Paul said at the end of chapter 15, because your labor is not in vain.

How do we know it's not in vain? What assurance do we have that it's not in vain? Because eternity awaits us. We have all of eternity with the Lord. We're longing for him so we don't labor in vain.

As we share the gospel, as we make disciples, as we pour ourselves into others, doing the work of ministry, we labor knowing that in the Lord, our labor is not in vain.

So what does waiting look like in the Bible? Oh, there's an eager anticipation And there is much activity, much work, much labor. So, yes, as we labor, we say, our Lord, come!

We long for him. So we labor, we long for him, and we love him. Don't we? Don't overlook the fact that our cry is for our Lord.

[43:12] Not just the Lord, no, he's ours. He belongs to us. What a marvelous thought that is. And we belong to him. What a marvelous thought that is as well.

I am his, bought with his blood, no longer my own, and he is mine. This is a longing that is filled with that warmth and affection, like a Christian greeting.

We're so eager for his return because we want to be with him. And we look forward to all of the wonderful blessings that are wrapped up in him when he does return.

But look at Paul's words there in verse 22. Before this plea, there's a proclamation. Paul says, if anyone has no love for the Lord, let him be accursed.

If you are outside of Christ tonight, let those words serve as a sober warning to you. You will be accursed. You will be condemned on judgment day.

[44:17] There will be no blessing for you, but only curses. So turn from going your own way. Turn from loving yourself. Run to the only Savior.

And see his great love for sinners such as you. And you will find that that Savior is ready and willing to save. So turn from your sins.

Trust in him that you might not be accursed, but blessed on that final day. And what blessings await us who are in Christ. For all of us who cry out, our Lord come, we are eager for his return.

Why are we eager? Well, we've heard it in chapter 15. Glorified bodies. that will inherit the kingdom of heaven. A kingdom that Christ will rule and reign over with perfect righteousness.

All things subjected under him in that day. The son himself subjected to the father. As Paul says, that God may be all in all, preeminent over all.

[45:20] He will be shown to be as he truly is. supremely glorified as his rule is realized in all its fullness. That's the day we long for.

That's the Lord we long for. That's why we should so earnestly Make that plea, our Lord come!

Because we long for him. We long for him because we love him.

We love him now. But think about how great that love will be on that day. all the more fully, all the more completely then when we see him revealed.

You'll love him for all of eternity with an unending love. For love never ends. And you'll love him into eternity without any sin. Nothing hindering you.

Nothing entangling you. Nothing distracting you. Nothing pulling at your heart. No lesser things that your heart will foolishly chase after. just him.

[46:23] All your joy. All your delight. All your satisfaction found in him. So what else can we cry? What else would be our plea but our Lord come?

Let's pray together. Heavenly Father we come before you now in prayer making that very plea to be our prayer.

Father we pray that your son would come. We pray that he would come to make all things right.

That he would come to establish his kingdom in all of its fullness.

That we might enjoy him forever. That he might be a crown of diadem to us. Father we pray as we wait that you would be our help. That we would be doing the work of the Lord.

So strengthen us we pray. Make us eager for Christ and make that eagerness to overflow into an abundant love for those around us. That we would be sharing Christ with them.

[47:23] That we would be living holy righteous lives hastening the day of the Lord. We pray all of these things in Jesus name. Amen.