

“Faithless and Perverse Generation”

Luke 9:37-45

The events found in our text are also recorded in Matthew 17:14-21 and Mark 9:14-32. We will use some details from those parallel accounts to give us a deeper understanding of this text.

This is a very important and helpful passage for us to study. In this text we see great needs presented, and great needs miraculously met. We see faith, unbelief, and the grace of God. As we look what Jesus did and said on this occasion, there is much application we can make to our own lives.

We will work through our text as a narrative and examine, explain, and make application from each section as they happened chronologically. We will look first at the father’s request, then the miraculous deliverance, and finally the response of the multitude and the disciples.

I. The Father’s Request (v. 37-40)

The beginning of verse 37 tells us when the events in our text took place: the day after the transfiguration. Jesus went up the mountain where His glory as the only begotten Son of God was revealed in a tangible, physical way. Yet Jesus did not see glory as something to be grasped, to be seized and held (Philippians 2:6, more clear in English in the ESV).

Rather, He humbled himself. Jesus did not stay on that mountain in His revealed glory. He came down off the mountain. He came down to minister to the needs of the crowd. Ultimately, He came down to go to Jerusalem and die.

This is a miniature picture of the whole life of Jesus Christ. He left His place of exalted glory in heaven. He humbled Himself and entered His creation as a man. He came to minister. He came to die. He came to accomplish salvation for the glory of God and the good of His people.

The end of verse 37 tells us that when Jesus came down from the mountain there was a crowd waiting for Him. “Much people met him.” Mark’s parallel account gives us a more detailed description of this crowd. Mark 9:14, “And when he came to his disciples, he saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them.” There were the disciples, the general multitude, and the scribes who were questioning or arguing with the disciples.

Out of this crowd came a father. Verse 38 tells us that he cried out to Jesus and said, “Master, I beseech thee, look upon my son.” This man’s son was at the center of the dispute that was going on between the disciples and the scribes. And the reason for this is found in verse 40: the disciples could not help this child.

Look at what the father said to Jesus about his son. First, he asked Jesus to look upon his child. Sinners don’t want the Lord to look upon them in their sin. They seek to hide themselves from God and try to cover their sin. We see this with Adam and Eve in the garden. They tried to cover their nakedness with fig leaves.

And when the Lord came to walk with them in the garden they tried to hide from Him.

But this father desperately wanted Jesus to look upon his son because his boy needed help. We must realize our need. We must realize that there is nowhere else we can go. No one else can help us with our sin. No one else can set us free. By the grace of God, we must have Jesus look upon us. He is the only one who can help us.

In verse 38 the father told Jesus that this was his only child. All of his hope as a father rested in this child. All his hope for a future for his family rested in this child.

In verse 39 the father described his son's affliction to Jesus. First, he said, "A spirit taketh him." There were times when something changed with this child. He came under the influence of something spiritual, something wicked.

Under the influence of this demonic possession the child cried out and he was physically harmed. He was torn, he foamed at the mouth, he was bruised, and his life was in danger. In Mark 9:22 the father told Jesus, "Ofttimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him." It seemed that this demon intended to kill this child.

Some critics have looked at this description and said, "This sounds like a seizure. This child probably had epilepsy or some other condition that caused these

seizures.” However, we know that this was not merely a physical oppression, but it was truly a spiritual oppression. And we know this because of verse 42.

In verse 42 we will see an example of this demonic oppression in the life of this child. And Jesus delivered him from demonic possession. If this was merely a physical condition Jesus would not have had to rebuke the unclean spirit as we see in verse 42.

Consider what a burden this father must have felt for his son. He loved his son, his only son. And he saw his son oppressed, and hurt. He saw his son’s life was in danger, but he was powerless to help. When his son experienced one of these episodes of oppression, he could not stop it. There was nothing he could do to deliver his son from this demon possession. He was powerless to help his son.

But then he must heard of Jesus, this great rabbi who cast out demons. Maybe he heard about his disciples who, as we saw at the beginning of chapter 9, were sent out by Jesus to preach the kingdom of God and were given power to cast out demons. Now, maybe for the first time in his life, this father had hope for his son. He brought his son to Jesus. The father could not help his son. He could not make Jesus help his son. But he did all he could: he brought his son to Jesus and begged Jesus to help him.

Learn from the example of this father. All of us have people we love, people we care deeply about, who are under the oppression of sin, self, and Satan. Maybe it’s a co-worker, or a friend, or a child, or a spouse, or a parent, or some other

family member. We love them, we care for them, but they are lost. They are not born-again. They are dead in trespasses and sins. They are under spiritual oppression.

It might not be as obvious as the oppression suffered by the child in our text, but it is just as dangerous. Sin is the way of death. All that sin does is destroy. The more people give themselves to sin, the more they are given over to sin. The weight of sin's oppression compounds until a person is totally overcome. And to die in such a state is to pass from oppression to judgment. To die in sin is to pass into death eternal. There is no hope in our natural state, dead in trespasses and sins, under the bondage of sin, self, and Satan.

When we see someone we love under such bondage we are burdened for them, but we also realize that there is nothing we can do to help them. We might be able to help treat some symptoms of spiritual oppression. We might be able to stop them from physically hurting or destroying themselves, like this father who pulled his son out of the fire or out of the water when the demon tried to kill him. But ultimately, we cannot deliver someone else from spiritual bondage.

What can we do?

What must we do?

Follow the example set by the father in this text. Bring them to Jesus. Tell them about the Lord. Tell them about the deliverance found in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Tell them about the deliverance you have experienced in salvation. Model

the gospel in your life before them. Share the Word of God with them. “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.” (Romans 10:17)

Ask Jesus to help them. Pray for them. Beg the Lord to be merciful and save them. You can’t do this for them. You can’t make them come to the Lord in saving faith. You can’t make Jesus save them. But what you must do is tell them about Jesus, share the Word of God with them, the gospel which is powerful unto salvation. And pray for them, intercede for God’s mercy on their behalf. Abraham was bold enough to intercede before God for Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 18). May we boldly intercede for those around us who are on their way to a fiery judgment.

What happened when this father brought his son to Jesus? Look at verse 40: “I besought thy disciples to cast him out; and they could not.” When this man arrived with his son, Jesus was up on the mountain. But 9 of the 12 disciples were available. And remember, back in Luke 9:1 these men had been given “power and authority over all devils.” Not some. Not most. Not all but those that require prayer and fasting. All. They were given “power and authority over all devils.”

But the disciples could not cast this demon out. They had the power. Jesus gave them the authority. But they were not able to help this child. This man came to the ministers Jesus had appointed and they failed him.

What did the father do when the ministers of Jesus failed? Did he go home with his son, dejected and defeated? Did he give up and say, “Well, I guess the

reports I heard about Jesus were wrong.” No. He cried out to Jesus: “Master, I beseech thee, look upon my son.” This father’s faith was not in the disciples, but in Jesus. He cried out to the object of his faith.

Again, may we learn from the example of this man. If you spend any length of time in church, or in Christian circles in general, you will be failed by the ministers of Jesus. If you put your faith in me, I will fail you. I hope I don’t. I labor not to fail you. I pray that God would keep me from failing any of you in any way. But I know my frame. I know the weakness of my flesh. If you put your faith in me, I know that I will eventually fail you. If you put your faith in Bro. Bell, he will eventually fail you. Or Dicky, or Cloyd, or Jim. We are ministers of Christ in this local church body, but we are fallible men.

Sometimes, tragically, pastors or other Christian leaders fail in major ways. Many pastors have fallen by the wayside because of terrible sins and they have had to be subject to church discipline. Many pastors have fallen by the wayside because of heretical teaching and they have had to leave Bible-believing churches, either by choice or because of church discipline. Some pastors and Christian leaders have proven to be apostate. They totally walk away from the faith. This is nothing new, in the first century John wrote about this. I John 2:19, “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.”

How should we handle such failures? What should we do when we are failed by the ministers of Christ?

Look past the man and look to Christ.

Our faith is not in the minister, but in Jesus Christ. The preaching of the Word of God is not efficacious because of the man, but because of Jesus Christ. The ordinances of the church are not means of grace because of the men who administer them, but because they are ordained by Jesus Christ for His body, the church. Christian leaders will fail you. As Spurgeon said, “The best of men are but men at the best.” Don’t build your faith on men. Build your faith on Jesus Christ. He will never fail you.

We can take this application down further. All disciples of Jesus Christ are sinful, fallible people. If you spend enough time around any Christian, they will fail you, they will hurt you, whether they intend to or not. And so often when that happens, especially when it happens in a church setting, it’s handled very poorly by the person who was failed. Someone is hurt or offended, so they go and cause all sorts of other problems. Or they just leave the church body where they were hurt and they go start again somewhere new. Or sometimes they just stop going to church altogether.

We don’t come to church to be around perfect people. We come together as a local manifestation of the body of Christ to worship God together. We are to minister to one-another, care for one-another, love one-another, and do good to

one-another. When we fail a brother or sister in Christ, or an unbeliever, we should go to them and apologize and do all we can to make things right. And when we are failed by a brother or sister in Christ we must remember that our faith does not rest in Christ's disciples, but in Christ. May we learn to be gracious and merciful to one another when we fail as we remember how God has been gracious and merciful toward us. Our faith is built upon Jesus Christ, not His disciples.

So far from our text this morning we have looked at this father's request. He could not help his son, but he brought him to Jesus and he asked Jesus to help him. When the disciples failed to help, he did not leave. He cried out to Jesus in faith, trusting Him to help his son.

Next, we will look at the miraculous deliverance recorded in this text.

II. The Miraculous Deliverance (v. 41-42)

In verse 41 Jesus responded to this whole situation. These words from Jesus may seem strange or surprising. Jesus said, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, and suffer you?" Who was Jesus talking to? Who were these words directed toward?

There is a great diversity of opinions among Bible-believing Christians on this point. Some think Jesus was talking to the father of this boy. Others think He was talking to the disciples. Or the scribes. Or the multitude in general. It could be all the above.

At first glance this language seems too strong if applied to the father or 11 of the disciples. The father had at least some measure of faith as he brought his boy and cried out to Jesus, hoping Jesus would help him. In Mark 9:23 Jesus challenged this man and said to him, "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." And he responded with this beautiful confession of faith: "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." That's a prayer we would all do well to echo. And we know 11 of the 12 disciples had true faith, Judas Iscariot being the exception.

These words seem better suited to the multitude or the scribes. The vast majority of the general multitude had no faith in Jesus. They had seen many, many miracles, yet they still did not believe. They were faithless. And not only faithless, but they had perverted the grace of God. They had twisted and rejected God's gracious revelation in His Word and in the person of Jesus Christ. These words from Jesus seem especially suited to the scribes who we know from the parallel accounts were arguing with the disciples before Jesus came down the mountain.

I would suggest that Jesus said these words for the benefit of all of them. Everyone present could take warning and admonition from these words. Jesus appears to be quoting from the Old Testament. Specifically from Deuteronomy 32:5, "They have corrupted themselves, their spot is not the spot of his children: they are a perverse and crooked generation."

The disciples lacked faith to deliver this child from demonic oppression. Jesus told them that in Matthew 17:20. The father's faith was weak by his own admission: "I believe, help thou mine unbelief." (Mark 9:24) The multitudes saw the miracles of Jesus but their hearts were hard and they ultimately rejected Him. The scribes were leaders in the national rejection of Jesus as the Christ, the Messiah. They were a faithless and perverse generation.

This strong rebuke was not given by Jesus to hurt them, but to warn them, to shock them out of their spiritual slumber. May we take it as a warning as well. Times are very different, but we also live in a faithless and perverse generation. May the word of God shock us out of our spiritual lethargy: "O faithless and perverse generation." Show us, Lord, where we are faithless. Show us where we have perverted Your grace. Awaken us to these spiritual realities.

Jesus continued verse 41, "How long shall I be with you, and suffer you?" For God to be among sinful people, for God to allow sinful people to continue in their faithlessness, their unbelief, is for God to bear us, to suffer us. God owes us nothing but justice, He is longsuffering toward us in His mercy. Jesus expressed this weight of God's longsuffering toward the wicked here, in His humanity.

This verse reminds us that that God does not approve of sin, but He suffers sin to continue for a time. When we consider the sinfulness of the world and our own sinfulness, we should be in awe at the longsuffering mercy of God. Some people ask: If God is good, why does He allow so much terrible wickedness to

continue in the world? The answer is His longsuffering mercy. God suffers the wicked for a time.

We need to be very careful when we complain or when we are tempted to complain about the wicked. “I wish God would destroy the wicked. God should stop all the bad people in the world from doing bad things.”

God has done that before. The flood in Noah’s time. Everyone perished under the judgment of God save Noah and his family. That’s an example of divine justice.

Often we want to see God’s judgment come upon others, especially when their wickedness bothers us. But we must remember that God suffers our sin as well. We don’t want justice from God, we want mercy. Praise God for His longsuffering mercy and do not squander God’s mercy. Tomorrow may be your dying day, today must be your repenting day.

The time of God’s mercy will come to an end. He is not eternally longsuffering. Judgment will come. Scripture clearly warns about the coming judgment. But for now, God suffers the wicked as the gospel command goes out into all the world, “Repent and believe the gospel. Flee from the wrath to come.”

After Jesus delivered this reproof, at the end of verse 41 He said to the father, “Bring thy son hither.” If this account ended after the reproof from Jesus in the first part of verse 41 this would be a very sobering passage, but there would be perfect justice on display. For their lack of faith, for their hard-heartedness, for

their sin, these people would receive what they deserved. God would have allowed them to go unchecked on the path they had chosen. That would have been just. But man's lack of faith, man's hard-heartedness, man's sin does not prevent God when He intends to show mercy.

Jesus called for this child to deliver him from his oppression. Jesus would do what the disciples could not do for lack of faith. Jesus would do what the boy's father could not do for lack of power. Jesus would perform a sign and wonder the multitude did not deserve to witness. Jesus would do what the scribes didn't believe He could do. Jesus would deliver this child from bondage.

At the beginning of verse 42 we see an example of the demon-possession this child suffered under. As he was still approaching Jesus the devil that possessed him threw him down to the ground and tore at him. This shows us two things.

First, it demonstrates the true nature of this child's suffering. This was not merely a physical malady. This was the result of spiritual oppression. This boy was demon-possessed.

Second, it shows us how the wicked respond to the judgment of God. We can all agree that demons, fallen angels, are wicked. As this demon approached Jesus he knew that he was about to face the judgment of God, at least the temporal judgment of God. He was going to be driven from his prey. He would not be allowed to torment this child any longer. Jesus was going to rebuke him and drive him out. In the last few moments that he had possession of this child, he tried to do

as much damage as possible. This demon's settled rebellion against the Lord, his Creator, was manifested in this moment. Though he knew he had no hope in victory, he was settled in his defiance.

Such behavior is not exclusive to fallen angels, but it is seen in fallen mankind as well. Three times in Revelation 16 we are told that men under the terrible judgment of God will blaspheme Him rather than glorify Him in repentance. They know they are under the judgment of God. They know that their sins are the reason for their judgment. But they will not repent, rather, they blaspheme God. See the destruction is drives us toward. Sin is a cruel master and it only leads to destruction and death.

At the end of verse 42 we see the miraculous deliverance Jesus Christ effected for this boy. He had been tormented for a long time. He was tormented in that moment. But Jesus delivered him. Never again would this boy be subject to the oppression that we have seen in this text. Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, healed the child, and delivered him again to his father.

Notice that there was both a spiritual and physical aspect to this miracle. Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit that possessed this boy and delivered him from that spiritual bondage. Jesus also healed him from the physical effects of that spiritual bondage. In our text we are told that the demon caused this boy to tear at himself. In Mark's parallel account we are told that the demon had cast the boy into fires at times in an attempt to destroy him (Mark 9:22). You can imagine how

this boy's body might have been injured and scarred from this spiritual oppression. When Jesus delivered him, Jesus also healed him. This boy was made whole. What a miracle. What a beautiful and incredible display of God's power over both the spiritual and physical realms of His creation.

So far from our text we have looked at the father's request, he brought his son to Jesus and he cried out in faith. Then we looked at the miraculous deliverance recorded in this text. Jesus gave a strong rebuke for the faithlessness that He was surrounded with, but this rebuke was followed with mercy. Jesus delivered this boy from his oppression, healed him, and restored him to his father. In verses 43-45 we will see the response of the multitude and the disciples.

III. The Response (v. 43-45)

The beginning of verse 43 tells us the general response of the multitude to this miracle: "They were all amazed at the mighty power of God." They were astonished at this display of the power of God manifested through the person of Jesus Christ, as they should have been. They knew that this was the power of God. They were right to be amazed at this mighty power.

This sense of wonder was universal. Verse 43 says everyone wondered at all things Jesus did. The power of God was so manifestly obvious in the life of Jesus that the multitude could not help but be amazed at the mighty power of God.

But this was not the first time nor was it the last time that the multitudes were amazed at the miracles or message of Jesus. Several times throughout the gospels we are told that the people were amazed or astonished by what they saw Jesus do or heard Jesus teach. Yet in the end, these multitudes rejected Jesus.

Take warning: it is not enough to be amazed at Jesus. It is not enough to be astonished as you consider His miracles or His teaching, or His love demonstrated in the gospel. Do not be amazed at Jesus and then go on to judgment unrepentant and unconverted. We should all be amazed by the mighty power of God demonstrated in and through the person and work of Jesus Christ, but we cannot stop there. By the grace of God may all of us be amazed at Jesus, and then be humbled before Him in faith and repentance, acknowledging that Jesus is the Christ, God's appointed Messiah.

While the multitude was amazed and wondered at the things which Jesus did, He turned from them and addressed his disciples. Look at what Jesus said in verse 44: "Let these sayings sink down into your ears: for the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men." Jesus instructed His disciples to take special note and remember what He had just said.

It's possible that Jesus was referring to the rebuke He gave back in verse 41: "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, and suffer you?" These words remind the disciples that, though the crowd was amazed at the power of God revealed through Jesus, they were a faithless and perverse

generation. They would not receive Christ. Let us make application to ourselves: don't grow comfortable with the temporary favor of the world because the world and Jesus are on opposite paths. The world is on the path of sin and death. Jesus is the way of life. They cannot go together. The world's favor is temporary at best.

It's also possible that Jesus was referring to what he had taught back in verse 22 of this chapter: "The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day." At this time in His ministry, the people were in awe of Jesus. They were astonished at His miracles and His message. But as we have already seen, they were looking for a temporal Messiah.

You remember the feeding of the 5000 earlier in this chapter, a miracle that is record in all four gospels. John's account of that miracle tells us that Jesus "perceived that they (the multitude) would come and take him by force, to make him a king," (John 6:15) This is what the people wanted: a temporal messiah who could fix their temporal problems.

As we continue in Luke, even as we continue in this chapter, we will see that the disciples had a similar vision for Jesus' future. They imagined Jesus reigning over an earthly kingdom with pomp and power. They debated amongst themselves about which one of them would be the greatest in this kingdom they imagined would shortly be established.

Jesus warned the disciples to quell these vain and miss-placed hopes of a temporal kingdom. “Let these sayings sink down into your ears.” The Son of man must suffer many things. The Son of man must be rejected of the elders, chief priests, and scribes. The Son of man must be slain.

So far removed were the men of Israel from being delivered into the hand of Jesus that Jesus told his disciples that the opposite was, in fact, true. At the end of verse 44 Jesus said, “For the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men.” The men of Israel would not be delivered into the hand of Jesus, Jesus would be delivered into their hands.

When Jesus Christ returns in glory He will establish his physical kingdom, but until then, His kingdom is not of this world. This is what Jesus told Pilate in John 18:36, “My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.”

This is an issue that the church has struggled with throughout her history and still struggles with at different times and to different degrees even today. We are so tempted to look for an earthly kingdom. We want something tangible. Something we can see. Something we can feel. Something we can experience here and now in our flesh. But we must remember that Jesus is building His kingdom, His church, in the hearts of men. This is primarily a spiritual work. May we follow the example

of Abraham who by faith sojourned as if in a strange country, looking for a city whose builder and maker is God. (Hebrews 11:9-10)

The disciples did not receive this message. Look at their response in verse 45. There are three parts to this verse. First, “they understood not this saying.” They heard what Jesus said. These words were not strange and mysterious. Jesus did not speak to the disciples in riddles. They did not understand because they would not understand. They would not receive this because it did not agree with them. Their hopes and aspirations for Jesus and an earthly kingdom, and their place in that earthly kingdom, stopped their ears and kept them from receiving and understanding what Jesus had said. They understood not this saying.

Second, “it was hid from them, that they perceived it not.” Some have suggested that the Lord hid it from them, possibly to spare them excessive sorrow at the prospect of His suffering, betrayal, and death. But that doesn’t match the pattern of Jesus teaching His disciples about his suffering. And moreover, what Jesus shared with His disciples was ultimately a message of hope. Yes, He must suffer and die. But He would be raised the third day. Raised victorious.

Jesus did not hide this from the disciples. The disciples hid this from themselves. They had created a paradox between what they thought and what Jesus taught, and because they could not reconcile these things, it was hidden from them.

Finally, “they feared to ask him of that saying.” Why were they afraid to ask Jesus to explain this to them? They may have feared reproof from Jesus for

their hard-heartedness or dulness to receive spiritual things. Never fear to ask God for wisdom. James 1:5 says, “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.” And remember, a father corrects a son in whom he delights (Proverbs 3:12). It is better to receive reproof than to go on in ignorance or confusion because we fear reproof.

The disciples may have also feared to ask Jesus to explain this lest they were made to understand. At this time they were in a happy delusion. They may have feared that Jesus would awaken them from their willful ignorance.

What a rich and challenging passage for us. As we close let’s remind ourselves of some key points of application for our lives.

Like the father in this text, may we do what we can, what we must, for those around us who are in spiritual bondage. Bring them to Jesus: share the Word of God with them, the Gospel of Jesus Christ is powerful unto salvation. Intercede for them before the Lord. Beg the Lord to be merciful in their salvation.

Like the father in this text, may we all remember that we look in faith to Jesus, not any man. The ministers of Jesus may fail you. The disciples of Jesus may fail you. If you place your faith in men it will be derailed when men fail you. Look past the man and look to Jesus Christ. He is the foundation of our faith. Our faith rests on Jesus Christ.

May we remember the strong rebuke Jesus delivered on this occasion when He said: “Faithless and perverse generation.” May we be awakened out of our

spiritual lethargy. The time is short. Our Lord is returning. We have a gospel commission. We live in a faithless and perverse generation. We must be awakened to our duty before God and our fellow man.

We should be amazed at the longsuffering mercy of God we see demonstrated in this passage. Jesus said, “How long shall I suffer you?” Remember that God in His mercy suffers the sins of men to go on for a time. Praise God for his mercy! If God were to judge all wickedness immediately all of us would have faced God’s judgment before we ever knew His saving grace.

We see in this text that the sinfulness of man does not prevent God from showing mercy.

Do not harden your heart under the longsuffering mercy of God. His mercy does not mean that He approves of sin. His longsuffering does not mean that He will never judge the wicked. No, God’s longsuffering mercy gives space for repentance. The day of judgment will come. On that day there will be no mercy found outside of Christ. Tomorrow may be your dying day, today must be your repenting day. Flee to Christ.

From the response of the multitude in this text we are reminded that it is not enough to wonder at the person and works of Jesus Christ. They were in awe of the things Jesus said and did, yet in the end they rejected him. Do not join the multitude in their rejection. It is not enough to be in awe of Jesus, you must repent and believe the gospel.

This text reminds us not to be enamored with the temporary favor of the world. The world is on a path of sin, judgment, and death. Jesus is the only way to the Father. He is the path of life. These two paths run in opposition to each other. Do not be allured by the passing favor of the world, stay faithful to the straight and narrow way.

And finally, this text reminds us that Jesus is building a spiritual kingdom. We are very prone to the temptation to try to build an earthly kingdom, either in our own lives or in the life of the church. We want something tangible, something we can see and experience in our flesh. But Jesus came to establish his kingdom in the hearts of men. His primary work now is the building of this spiritual kingdom. May we, like our faithful brothers and sisters who have gone before us, look and labor for the glory of God as we do our part in establishing the kingdom of God in the hearts of men.