

LLC meeting with Wolf Lake on 13 May 2022

# 13May2022 WLLC & LLC Meeting

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

congregation, god, question, meetings, felt, kingdom, sins, word, speak, discussions, forgiven, heard, believers, brothers, matters, faith, jesus, preached, repentance, sinners

13:00

So, let's join our hearts in opening prayer this evening

13:10

and we will pray a portion of God's word that is found that Apostle Paul has recorded for us. In this I pray that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment that he may approve things that are excellent that he may be sincere and without a fence till the day of Christ, being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ onto the glory in praise of God. Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom in the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

14:33

Thought for opening, I would read a portion of God's word that was written on to the believers in close Colossi to the collisions and we will hear these words in Jesus name as follows from the second chapter of Philippians verses five through 11 In Jesus name as follows. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. And being found in a fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient on to death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also have highly exalted Him, and given him a name, which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God, the Father, Amen.

16:13

Tonight, as we have assembled together, we can be comforted knowing that Jesus prays on our behalf. Jesus, in his high priestly prayer, told the disciples, or when he was praying to His Father, Neither pray I for these alone. But for them also, which shall believe on me through their word, that they all may be, it was one, as thou father art in me, and I in the, that they also may be one of one in us, and that the world may believe that thou has sent me in the glory which thou gave us, me, I have given to them, that they may be one, even as we are one. And I have declared on to them by name, and I do well declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them the portion of the Word of God that we read, as I mentioned, was written to the collisions. And much the same as it is always God's Kingdom is a battling kingdom. And it's been for this reason that we are flesh and blood. And the apostle wished to approach those believers of that time

18:19

and to exhort them, to have the mind of Christ. These words are for you, and for I tonight that we could always have the mind of Christ, one towards another. Even tonight, as we have gathered, each of us in our own spot

18:58

I wish to ask each of us to remember the things that God has done for us in our life. Remember the things that Christ Jesus has done for sin, fallen man Jesus, suffered for you and for me. He chose on his own accord, to suffer and die for sin, fallen man. Our text tells us that he thought it was not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation and took upon him the warmth of a servant and was in made in the likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient on to death, even the death of the cross. Tonight, dear brother and sister, fellow traveler and faith, we can rejoice that Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, sacrificed himself for our, for our sins, our trespasses and our inequities. That power of love, that God had toward sin, fallen man, was so great that no power could remove his son from that cross of Golgotha he remained there, because he loved us. And tonight, we can rejoice in our hearts, that Christ Jesus rules and that we can abide in Him. And He abides in us through faith.

21:34

Thought also to allude to some verses from the Psalms. Psalms 19. And let us hear these words. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, oh Lord, my strength, and my Redeemer we are all gathered together, we are sin corrupt. We have no strength of our own. But we live by the grace of God. And it is by the grace of God, that we are found acceptable. However, these words from Psalms reveal on to us that we should take note or consider our life of faith, our words and the meditations of our heart, that are they acceptable for the Lord. It's not for contemplation and consideration for those that sit next to her next to us in the bench tonight. But these words are for our own heart, and our own soul. And

when I have considered these words, I have realized even in this battle, this struggle that not always have my words, or the meditations of my heart, in acceptable in the sight of God. I have realized that flesh and blood that we carry, has often reared its head and I have fell and I even have struggled. I have been hurt. Nevertheless, this does not justify to behave or to think in my own heart toward fellow man in a way that would be unacceptable to the Lord.

24:40

And I even asked now that can I still believe and I encourage you all here tonight in consideration From these words from the songs that you too, could open your heart and to consider your life and your journey, your travel, especially in these recent years that has your words, as your meditations have your heart in acceptable before the Lord.

25:39

And I also wish to encourage you tonight that Jesus lives and he wishes to encourage us through His Word, to uplift our hearts, weary and tired, struggling and weak

26:09

to believe, even now, all of your sins forgiven Jesus name and blood when we consider our times the thought has been expressed that what is the way and we remember even now in recent times with Easter, Oh Thomas, one of the disciples who struggled mightily. He had a lot of doubts and apprehensions. And when Jesus says, that he will go away, Thomas asked our Lord, what is the way

27:18

Jesus said to Thomas I am the way, the truth and the life no man cometh onto the Father, but by me. So considering the way forward, there is a way it's a way that has been opened on to us by faith through Christ Jesus. I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. in Assam Psalms it says that the word is a lamp onto my feet and a light onto my path

28:14

so when we consider these words these words of encouragement and exhortation are found in God's kingdom it's a kingdom of peace, joy and righteousness the Holy Spirit Amen. I guess I think Jim was gonna come and I didn't get a chance to welcome all of the representatives here but I guess on behalf of the congregation now it's not too late but a warm welcome to you.  
[17:09]

Thank you want to ask why don't you want to leave it at that discussion of my favorite quotes

Jim Frantti

Well, first of all, I want to Uh, thank you here in Wolf Lake for inviting us to come in response to the requests that we sent. It's actually my first time I think maybe, I don't know if it is for all of us. But it's my first time in your new sanctuary here, the last time I was here, this was an empty shell of this room. And it's really nice to see it. You have a beautiful facility here. I know you have some progress to do yet on your dining room area. But it's really nice to see what you have done here. It's a beautiful facility.

I just say on behalf of the five of us brothers who have come here that we have come as empty vessels. And we've come with a prayer in our hearts that God would give of his spirit this evening, and help us all. And I know that we are also carried in the prayers of many who were aware that we would be visiting this evening. May God be with us, and may he help us?

The brothers who serve on the LLC board, and those also who served in local congregations here in our North American Zion. I want to say first, that we or they are not any kind of lords over the flock. But we know that those who serve in this way, we call them servants, because that is indeed what they are. The congregations call and place servants to serve here in the North American Zion. And even in coming here, we know that we have been sent only as servants to serve in love for undying souls. And we have been sent and come with many prayers to the Heavenly Father. And I have felt personally that it has been so secure to come to visit with you this evening, knowing that we are all being carried in the prayers of many believers. God hears the prayers of His children.

It has been said that the purpose of the request that we sent to meet – that was sent from the LLC board – was for this reason to somehow push people or congregations out of the fellowship of God's kingdom. And it was sad for me to hear that because that has not ever been our purpose nor our wish, nor our prayer. I think that – I hope that I can speak for all of us here this evening – that it is our prayer that none would be lost. Recently, it was said that the request letter that the LLC board sent indicated that our purpose for requesting this meeting was to push the congregation here out of God's kingdom. I don't know if all of you have seen that letter. But I had read what the letter said when requesting this meeting. It read in this way: "we would now like to send representatives soon to meet with your congregation to share with you our sense of where we are and how we move forward." And I don't think that we can, can read into that any thought or intent of pushing anybody out of this fellowship. During the last, well, at least seven years, I don't know maybe it's been even more, but for sure seven years. We've had many meetings of various kinds. We've had meetings with boards. We've had meetings with LLC representatives. We've had area-wide meetings, we've had congregation meetings We've had meetings with participants from all across the North American continent. We've at these meetings discussed matters of faith and doctrine in the light of God's word. But it seems like despite all of the many, many hours that we have spent in these meetings and discussions, it has not produced one-mindedness and harmony, here in our dear North Americans Zion. On the contrary, it has felt like somehow the divide has become greater. And the number of issues in question have actually increased. We also, I know, have different perceptions from different ones who have attended these meetings and discussions. We have heard both views. We have heard two voices. And it's deeply troubling, because we know there can only be one true and correct voice in God's kingdom in the flock of the Good Shepherd. Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd and know my sheep. And I'm known of mine. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And a stranger will not follow, but will flee from him, for they know not the voice of strangers." [John 10] And so, when the Good Shepherd speaks, when the Holy Spirit speaks in God's congregation, we hear the same voice. We believe that the Holy Spirit

has spoken with love, and it has guided and it has taught at those meetings that I mentioned, on the basis of and in accordance with God's word. Of course, we know that, as Phil has already said, we are all in ourselves sin corrupt and faulty. And so, God uses faulty people to bring His message. And so every speech and every meeting – I was going to say may not have been perfect – but I will say that it certainly was not perfect. But despite weak words, I think we have to say that weak words are not the cause of the division that we have experienced.

We've heard the voice of the Good Shepherd. And we believe that we walk with his flock, in his footsteps, in the footsteps of the former sheep. But I know that some who have come as representatives of your congregation here have had a different perception and have felt they've heard a different voice, and have themselves spoken with a different voice. And it has felt to us that it is a voice that is somehow opposing God's spirit and his congregation. And it's deeply troubling. God's Spirit doesn't divide. God's Spirit builds unity. It gathers the believers in unity of faith, and it enlightens. The perception that has come from some of your representatives of God's congregation here in North America is troubling. We see this North American Zion as God's Zion. I know I personally see it that way, as a golden candlestick, where the Holy Spirit dwells, and where the Holy Spirit teaches according to God's word, and where salvation through Jesus Christ is both offered and preserved. It has been to me in my life as a believer, a kingdom of grace and forgiveness. But we have heard from some of the representatives, also from this congregation, that they see a congregation in North American Zion that is maladministered wrong type of governance of the house of God, law minded teaching and a place where fear prevails.

I have to say, Dear friends, it's not my perception of the North American Zion. This has been a long and tiring time, I think for all of us. And it has felt like we've reached a point where continuing those discussions that we've had over the last seven years, and the debates, have not brought us closer together, that continuing those won't resolve anything. God's Kingdom is not a divided kingdom. We realize this, I'm sure you also realize that we can't continue as a divided flock. The Bible tells us clearly that there is one shepherd and one sheep fold. But I say sincerely that we have great love for your undying souls. Already in coming here, those of you that I've had a chance to greet are some who have been dear friends, who I remember, as dear friends. And so, we do come here with that kind of love for your undying souls. And we do not want any to be lost. Yet, we don't see a way forward as a divided flock. It seems like it's time for each one of us here tonight to ask himself or herself. Where am I? Which voice do I wish to follow? In which flock do I wish to travel? It is a personal question, because we aren't saved by anyone else's faith. And we don't find salvation in anyone else's faults. But we need to ask ourselves personally, where am I? Have I battled against and criticized God's Zion here in North America?

We recognize that there may be some who are somewhat hardened or entrenched in the positions they've taken. And of course, human pride can be an obstacle. But I think that there are also others who may have been misled or are simply confused, and unsure. In fact, I know that to be the case, because I have talked personally with some of you here who have said that what is happening is confusing to you. So, in either case, it feels like the time to choose is here with us. And so, we come really with this plea. That if you find yourself in need, that you could find the strength and that God would give the grace that you could repent and travel once again with the flock of the Good Shepherd, where the Lord Jesus Christ is found.

Sometimes, we have been asked this question, what must the Wolf Lake congregation repent of? And my answer has been nothing. A congregation doesn't repent. Faith is personal. We can only take care of our own matters. Repentance doesn't happen as a group. But it happens

personally, as we all, I think, know and have experienced in our lives. Each person has to choose his or her own path, and each must believe for him or herself. It feels like without repentance and caring for matters, this current division will become some kind of a formal separation, which I think none of us want. But if it happens, it would be simply some kind of manifestation of the spiritual division that has existed and persisted and it feels like it has even grown.

So, if you would indulge me for a moment, I would like to speak about my own personal psalm. This is my own personal experience that I want to share with you. I think some of you know, but probably not all of you know that. I was lost in the last heresy, the heresy of 1973. I went into that heresy. Of course, the reason, I know, was sin. But I also have to save that, at that time that led up to that heresy, it was, to me, a very confusing time, I was confused. And I tried to listen to both sides, I had friends and I had family on both sides of those issues. And I tried to listen to both sides. And I couldn't take a clear position. And, in fact, what happened was, when the separation came, I was lost into the heresy. I was there for more than three and a half years. It wasn't a joyful time in my life. I didn't have peace. I didn't have peace of conscience. And I prayed for peace. I used to sit in the services of those in the heresy. Oftentimes, the words that were spoken were words very much like the believer speaks, but they didn't give peace. Because without the Holy Spirit, it's not a living word. And I would sit there in the pews like you're sitting tonight, and I would pray in my heart, Dear God, if this is your kingdom, let me feel peace. And I would leave and I didn't feel peace.

Finally, God awakened my conscience. I became so distressed. I had many questions. I was still finding fault with the believers. But I wasn't happy with where I was. I had many questions. And I thought, if I can get an answer to my questions, then I can know which way is right. But that's not how it works, is it? We don't understand first and then believe. Understanding comes from faith.

So, God finally gave strength to me and my wife. One evening, we went to visit with an older believing couple in our area there in the Copper Country, whom I had known from when I was young. We called them and asked, could we come to visit? And we went to their home, and we sat at their kitchen table. And, I told that couple that I have some questions that I'd like to ask and discuss. And I'll never forget the answer from that older lady. She looked at me and she said, we will try to answer your questions. But she said I don't understand very much. She said, but I know this. My sins are forgiven, and I have peace with God. And you know, that simple answer stopped me. I had to stop and think: what's the most important question? And then the thought that occurred to me was, if I leave this house this evening, and if I don't repent, maybe God will never call me again. It was a scary feeling because Jesus said, No man can come unto me except the Father draw him. When I thought about it, I realized that all my questions weren't so important. What's important is that I can repent and believe. And God gave me the grace to humble, to simply ask, Can I have my sins forgiven? And that older couple joyfully preached to me the gospel. And then I found a peace that I hadn't had for all those years. It was a peace with God. It was the kind of peace that Jesus said, My peace I give unto you, not as the world gives. And you know what happened? My questions became unimportant. I had doctrinal questions and other questions, practical ones, they became unimportant. I was so joyful that my sins were forgiven, and I could travel in the flock of the Good Shepherd, that they became unimportant. Over time – actually, when I look back – over time, I realized that God gave answers to many of my questions over time. And he didn't answer some of them at all. But I actually forgot what they were, I could not today tell you what my questions were, honestly. Because they became so unimportant. And so, dear friends, I want to say like that dear elderly believing lady said so many years ago to me. I don't understand so much. There could be many

questions that could be posed about Christian doctrine or the depths of God's word, that I don't understand. But my sins are forgiven and I have peace with God. I'm traveling in this kingdom of grace and forgiveness. And I've been cared for here – carried with love and cared for with grace and forgiveness. I haven't experienced a place that is law minded in its teaching, where there are some governing bodies, where there's fear, where we live in fear, at all. But a place of love and grace and forgiveness.

The letter to the Hebrew says, Today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts. That's the message that spoke to me that evening so many years ago. God makes no great demands. But humble to repent, even if you don't understand everything that has taken place, or have answers to all of your questions, like I was. But if you hear the calling voice of the Good Shepherd, repent, take care of your manners. From God's Kingdom, the gospel is always freely and joyfully preached.

God will give understanding. as you need it. But above all, He will give peace to your heart and conscience. Don't leave here tonight troubled. Don't leave here confused. Don't leave battling against God's congregation here in North America. This is for me, a call to those of you who are lost and confused, for those who may have fallen here from faith, for those who might have battled against God's kingdom. I pray that those matters can be cared for tonight. Jesus said, where two or three gather in my name, I am there. And where he is found, there is also found a fountain of grace against all sin and defilement. Again, I thank you that you have invited us to come to visit tonight. And I pray that God would open matters here in our midst. [42:57]

Pat Lake, moderator

Well, I got a stand here, so somebody better talk. There's some time for discussion, so raise your hand if you'd like to speak. Leslie

Leslie Ylitalo [44:25]

It's always been hard to know how to start. But we know that over the more recent times there's been, you know, calls to repentance. But I guess my question is: what is the issue that people need to repent? You know, I visited with Wolf Lake members, you know, maybe not a lot, but the ones I've visited with, you know, we've talked about some of these doctrinal issues that were, you know, like, withholding, continual forgiveness, over righteousness. And it seems like you know, there's discussions and then we kind of move on to the next one, and there's not really been clarity on those. But then it became well over a year ago, we came to this issue where the current majority of the congregations, especially in the Midwest area, decided not to send speakers to Wolf Lake and Minneapolis. So, this is one issue that's kind of front and center. It's undeniably here. I don't like to use the word groups, but I guess for practical purposes, I'll use it today. I think that there's a group that feels it was a sin to refuse to serve Minneapolis and Wolf Lake. Perhaps the other group feels that it was maybe revealed in the congregation. And you know, I myself felt that it is against Scripture not to send speakers. So, I don't know. And I guess, – I don't have anything more to say on that. But I guess, what are people supposed to repent of? And I don't mean this at all in, you know, a negative or sarcastic way, but I honestly don't know what it is that people need to repent of. I'm sure we're all faulty. I'm sure there's been faults. Wolf Lake members are faulty, as well as everybody else. So, this call to repentance. I think it needs to be clarified as to what it really is. I don't know what it is. [47:36]

Lucy Karvonen [48:20] speech in Wolf Lake on 13 May 2022

What Leslie brought up, that has been something that has troubled me. Because my understanding is that we've been still considered to be believers. But yet the word was not preached here. The visiting ministers quit coming. And God's Word does say that if someone's erring, we need to speak to them. And the word was not spoken by the visiting ministers. They all quit coming, I thought, and I believe that was not right, according to God's word. But for all my many faults and sins, could I have them forgiven? [49:30]

Bruce Johnson [49:45]

My question is, who is being disobedient to God's word? When I look at the actions that have taken place in the last seven years – What are these actions? Are they according to God's Word? Who is being disobedient? I'm gonna just gonna read something out of Psalms 18, verse two. "The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, My God, my strength, in whom I will trust, my buckler and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower." As I stated, we had a national meeting last May. And I've asked some ministers and board members. I thought we were going there to discuss the issues. And ask this question. What doctrinal issues did we ever discuss in two days of sitting in these meetings. And I do believe that Christ is the cornerstone of this congregation. And he dwells here in spirit and he is holding our hands, and he does know us by our name. And we have suffered greatly. And there are scars by the actions that have been taken against us. [51:44]

Sue Johnson [51:55]

I just want to agree with what Phil [Alajoki] said. The only way forward is through Jesus Christ. And that's who I want to follow, Jesus Christ. And all of my words and meditations of the heart have not always been correct. Can I have them forgiven?

Bruce Johnson

And I, too, for my part would like to ask for forgiveness for many wrong things, bad things or whatever. I have said. Can I believe that forgiven? [52:27]

Lori Alajoki [52:39]

Okay, so I have a question. Roger and I freely discuss this at home. My 13 year old daughter asked us I never used the word charges with us. The word she used she said What are the charges? They said well I don't know except that were said to be fighting against the kingdom of God. So I'm wondering what what does that constitute? And there's a verse in the Bible but I lost it now but it says something about By this we know that we have I'm trying to find it have the love of God in a textbook keeping His commandment does anyone know his what verse it is?

1:05:45

But anyways, okay, John, First John, five, to buy this. We know that we buy this we know that we love. No, that wasn't the verse either. Anyways. So if an individual is endeavoring to stay in the Word of God, which I eat, despite being a sinner, I believe that I am. Can I also be in a position that I am fighting against the kingdom of God? I don't believe that is possible. Maybe somebody could speak to that?

1:06:46

You can bear with me this might take a little while. Don't know if Jim should be standing up there where Pat is it might be easier so he can answer these questions. But you had said the Holy Spirit does not divide. But my question is, who's who's been dividing here? I feel like the wolf like congregation that's here and everyone else's, you know, doesn't want our ministers doesn't send their ministers doesn't want anything with Wolf Lake. So if the Holy Spirit doesn't divide who's been dividing? Now, so we have to, you had said, we have to ask ourselves, where am I? Where am I do? Does God sit in my heart? Does God sit in your heart? Or myself personally? If I didn't have God in my heart these last two years, I don't know where I'd be. I felt the love and prayers of many believers. And I felt I have felt God's presence here in my heart personally. If he wasn't there, I'd probably be curled up on the bottom of my bed at him. And then you tell me tonight, I have to choose choose what I have God right here. I'm not gonna go into unbelief. I can't because that's not where I find peace. I'm sorry to be pointing all these at you. But you had brought this up in your in your introduction. And you also said in the last heresy that one elderly person you had talked to and she said What did she tell you my sins are forgiven and I have peace that's all I have to believe. it. Was

1:09:59

a Oh, Jim had mentioned that there's been some talk that, you know, maybe that the congregation was going to be driven out or whatever. I don't remember exactly what he used. But you know, there have been some speeches that have been, you know, Penn alluding to something like this. There was a sermon in Rockford last Sunday, where it was said the separation is here. The time the battle is over. And there's no more discussions. And I understood that this same kind of announcement was made in Monticello. So if these kinds of statements are being said, it doesn't feel like something is black or what better word brewing? Or who? I guess my question is, what decides when the battle is over? We also heard that in a speech at the Monticello big meeting a couple of weeks ago. So I guess I'd like a little bit discussion maybe on that tool. Lucy.

1:11:43

It just also occurred to me that when we had one of the meetings, it was in the

1:11:51

old part that someone had asked to call, like, maybe Finland. And I couldn't understand then why would someone's asking for help?

1:12:12

That it wouldn't even be considered that why wouldn't Finland have been called other gifts are also needed. And although the LLC has also been blessed with the grace from God,

1:12:38

none of us are above that I really was sad that it wasn't even considered. And I recall now that the brother who had asked about it had been more or less told. This is my remembering anyway, that one should trust with what they have. The LLC was there. That's the impression I got that we didn't need to go any further. And I did not think that was how it should have been because we should always be able to call others if needed. My law

1:14:26

Well, to begin with, I guess I would hope that the state statement that there shouldn't be any more discussion would be retracted. A big part of the problem I see right now is that there's quite a disconnect between some of the accusations that are being made against Wolf Lake and what I perceive to be reality. And I think similarly, Jim mentioned that there's been accusations against the LLC leadership that don't align with what he sees as reality. If so perhaps we could discuss some of these matters with empathy where we seek to understand things from the other person's perspective. And I think, ideally, we would understand the other person's perspective well enough that we could describe the situation as they see it. And they would agree with our description of it.

1:15:28

Another point I wanted to bring up was a couple of weeks ago at the Monticello meeting in Jim's opening presentation. He said something along the lines of I may not get this quite right. But nobody is believing today because they were convinced of correct doctrine. By by somebody else, and I guess the question I would pose this, can we be persuaded by God's word? A verse from Romans comes to mind when Paul says, let God be true, but every man a liar. We shouldn't be persuaded if somebody says something, because of their position. We have to be persuaded of the truth by God's word. One point of the LLC position statement says that we believe that God's word is Christian faiths highest authority, and thus Christian faiths, guiding principles and doctrine must be examined and evaluated in the light of God's Word.

1:16:46

So with this in mind, I get when we have some of these doctrinal points that have been a point of contention over the years, it seems that we ought to run to God's word for the answers. And I guess, on the other hand, if there's personal offenses, whether it's bitterness, or other offenses that have happened between people, those are to be taken up at a personal level.

1:17:32

I would like to take a moment. And each of us could follow along by opening up the back of the songbook. Let's read the Creed, the Apostles Creed together. The beginning it says I very first word. For me. That's my name. I put my name right there. I say I believe in God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried. He descended into hell. The third day, he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sit at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty. From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

1:19:17

To me, personally, I believe in God and in his son though first when someone would come to me and say that I do not

1:19:33

what a great dishonor to my God. And my Lord, tell them that I am not worthy when he has called me by my name

1:20:02

Nancy

1:20:12

in addition to a down just said, we have been called heretics in the wrong spirit on believers and whatnot in the last few years, people have stuck reading us.

1:20:39

And they can't explain why. We've asked for explanations over and over. And there have been no explanations coming to reveal. Why is this happening? And then, and then it seems that there's been so much bad talk against Wolf Lake congregation. And some of it is absolutely false. And it just continues around and around and around the American Zion. And, and it doesn't stop. And I know it's not each person's error. But how do we stop that kind of bad talk?

1:21:57

The verse I was alluding to earlier is from one John to And hereby we do know that we know him if we keep his commandments.

1:22:15

There's the part in First Corinthians 13, it's often read at weddings. And I was gonna read the new NIV version. I think I've heard that version read at weddings. I'll start as chapter first Corinthians 13. I'll start at chapter four, verse four. Love is patient. Love is kind, it does not envy it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self seeking is not easily angered. It keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil, but rejoices with the truth and always protects, always trusts always hopes, always perseveres. So earlier it was I don't recall how it was said something about what the way forward is. How about we take this from Corinthians where it says it keeps no record of wrongs. Let's remember that Christ has wiped the slate clean for us and we can do for each other. And the way forward is to gather around Christ and somewhere in the Bible it says Christ is the word let's visit around the word and always keep hope always persevere. Nicole

1:24:47

when Jim was speaking, and that God Spirit does not divide you gathers and enlightens.

1:25:04

Which is true

1:25:07

this thought in question have been on my heart that we wrote all these meetings the message has come that it's you know, you haven't gotten closer but further away or however it's.

1:25:46

And then I just really feel think that that division

1:25:53

really got a really happened when our speakers were first disinvited from other congregations, and with no enlightenment, to our congregation as to why our speakers were no longer

welcome. And when this happened, I can speak for myself that I also felt like the love from other congregations. Was not. Or it was hard for me to think that I would also be accepted into the other congregations in North America when this when our servants weren't welcome to preach. And just from my personal relationships, I really felt division that people now had doubts about our congregation and doubts about our faith and mine personally. And it really drove a wedge between believers in North America. And then the next thing, which I think was even another great division was when we're no longer being served by other servants. And there's this perception then that from these letters and different things that have gone around to congregations, that the divide is only gotten greater, after all these discussions, and my thought is, how can the divide get any closer when this continuing when when other congregations and believers continue in it the situation of Our servants not serving and us not being served. But the perception from these letters is it's that it's our fault of our congregation that this division is wider. So I guess my question is, was this the work of the Holy Spirit? If the Holy Spirit calls gathers and enlightens Was this the whole work of the Holy Spirit that divided I personally don't think that it could be. Sheila

1:29:22

I had the opportunity to spend time with my mom and dad when my dad was second and live in his last days, though his hearing was getting poor, so when he get phone calls, he would put it on speakerphone. And there was a phone call from one one individual who's a speaker that said that they've had meetings and we need to get everybody on the same page to not greet these people. And and another conversation this was the speaker again and this one is from the works at the LC office that they are not believing correctly. So I messaged both of these individuals. And the other one said that I'm not at liberty to discuss this with you. But this you know, to hear directly from these people. And then I brought my mom to visit her sister and a lot there was a house full of people there. And I went around greeting people and they would shake my hand and say, it's nice to see you that it wasn't you know, I'm glad you came. And it just happened over and over again and finally I said wow, nobody's greeting here. This is really sad. So this is it is troubling. It's it's Where's this coming from? I believe that Christ was in my heart. I have that love. I pray to god I believe in him I trust in Him nobody can take that faith away from me. It's it's so dear in my heart

1:31:34

question is what person can sit at the foot of the cross

1:31:43

and tell somebody they're not worthy of those blood drops of Christ?

1:32:21

We've heard this evening several times that from both Geum and from members of Wolf Lake, the Holy Spirit gathers Bible also speaks of the Holy Spirit speaking the words that Christ has taught one particularly pivotal woman, for me, was attending attending that October 6, southern Minnesota boards meeting

1:33:01

and I believe it was 2020 the words of Jesus Christ were read there and it was reported after that meeting that that was a foreign voice

1:33:20

is God's word a foreign voice is the word of God become the stumbling stone The other thing that crossed my mind was that if that were if that was the guiding hand of the Holy Spirit

1:33:46

it was not a unifying action to draw people together but it was a command action say that boy you were a bad children and by golly we're gonna show you

1:34:09

that's what it was that may not have been the heart with which it was done. What that was the result of that action

1:34:29

and then it was continual, continued from Minneapolis then towards Lake as well. The thought then crossed my mind that if these a word of God is the foreign voice and has been admitted to be so

1:35:04

Where does that find you? Or I or any of us? It seems that it couldn't be more clearly than the words of Christ Himself and yet the action of that meeting was contrary to the words of Jesus. For Emily

1:36:43

son I hope God will give me words I'm not a speaker.

1:36:50

I have prayed and I prayed. My one goal is to reach the heavenly shore and we have all gone through such a troubling time.

1:37:05

And I'm like the woman and Jim's story. I don't know much but I know my sins are forgiven. And I have peace and we have gone through a lot of pain here. Browns have turned against us family has turned against us. I don't know where all this hatred is coming from but it is out there it's been very painful to not have speakers come serve us it's been very painful to see those who have served us taken relieved of their duties. This to me seems very wrong. This is not God's plan I wish to have my sins forgiven I am sinful like all others can you bless me too?

1:38:26

Know I have taken speaking turns in meetings and whatnot. I have not always been clear nor concise and may have been either spoken wrong or been interpreted wrong that I would like to hear that if he cannot be forgiven lastly

1:38:57

just want to take one more speaking turn. We're all great sinners. We all have faults, so whatever man or there may be but I just want to speak to your brothers that have come here.

1:39:20

You are all dear brothers to all of us. And I'm saying this in all love that you if it wouldn't be sold that you have found that you have caused offense in these matters. Especially in this issue of not sending speakers here. At God, God doesn't demand anything but if you desire you can believe all those sins forgiven in Jesus name and precious blood. And I know that the Wolf Lake garnered Asian will gladly forgive you all the offenses that have happened Jove carry

Carey Simonson [1:28:20]

So, I don't know where I'm going to start nor where I'm going to end. But we have to be with you this evening. And, you know, we have come because we have been sent much love and prayer. And I'm happy to hear the freedom to ask the questions. And it's good that they can be asked. And of course, you know, [it] would take a long time to begin to answer them.

So, you're telling me to get to your point then already. But when we're – where would I go? Maybe I'll start with this. I was in an evening in Tyrnava, Finland, where we're living now. And there was an evening about the history of God's congregation [Ari-Pekka Palola's presentation]. And there it was spoken how someone had many years ago spoken about a division in North America in this way. America is a very amazing country. As people, of course, traveled here, and we're amazed of it's plentifulness. But not so amazing that there can be two spirits of God, two groups of God's kingdom [Aarne Vasunta at a meeting in Oulu in 1934]. And there through that discussion, as it was presented, the different battles that have happened. [Yet] God guided yet his one flock in mutual faith and love.

And over the last seven years, there have, as we've heard, been many discussions. And the congregations, especially in the Midwest, have wished to speak to – we're talking now to Wolf Lake – to the representatives that you have sent to those meetings. And [we have] listened also to those speeches by those representatives. And we have had to – both groups, as someone said – admit that there has not been love, there has not been unity. And although America is an amazing place, it's not that amazing that there could be two kingdoms of God. There is only one. And therefore we have come and have been sent also with prayers and love that you who have risen against God's kingdom, that God could open you to find yourself and repent. And if God doesn't open, then it's a difficult place. I can only tell you one example of what my father shared with me once when he was in need of care. And the brothers came to speak to him. He did not see; he did not understand. But he said, if this is how they see me, then I need to repent. And he was able to humble himself and repent. And he said, it was only after repenting that he then was able to see where he was [and] where he was going. Even if you do not feel that you can see, maybe you can see this, that you are at odds with the Zion here in North America, that you are not in the love and the unity, that you do not have the same understanding and the same mutual fellowship that you have had years before when we have eaten from the same table [and] served together.

And so, we can try to answer some of these questions. But I think the call comes again that today if you hear [his voice], harden not your heart; humble yourself to seek for repentance. And then when you repent, God will give you understanding, as he wishes. [1:35:23]

Pat Lake: Anybody else [1:36:06]

Jim Jurmu's speech in Wolf Lake on 13 May 2022 [1:35:55]

I need to say that during these meetings when there have been the representatives that have come from different parts of our continent and there when we have listened to the speeches, I have to say that – not in recent meetings but – in not too distant past meetings. There have been those times when representatives from Wolf Lake have spoken in a way that I could not agree with. I don't have a specific example today. But then they would leave. I haven't felt that the criticisms or the rebuke or the calls for repentance have been to drive anyone away. Because we've acknowledged that there are two groups. We've heard that from those that have been present there There should not be two groups. And we all acknowledge that. And I felt in those meetings that the Holy Spirit had spoken there. And I've heard, and I'm not saying necessarily from Wolf Lake, but I've heard afterwards that the Holy Spirit didn't speak there. And this is an example of how there are two groups. The Word of God says that we would try the spirits. And there is a spirit that is battling against God's Spirit. And the way that can be defeated by the believers is that we would, when we have listened to another voice, or we have become offended, to the point where now we rise up in battle against [God's kingdom]. And God reveals that to us, that we will repent. Each one of us experiences when we fall into sin, and the

Holy Spirit rebukes us, it's not easy for our flesh to go to care for those matters. But when we do, the love and the peace and the freedom is restored.

I felt this way, that we have acknowledged that there are differences. We've heard that some have not joined with those thoughts that were expressed there. But what I heard there at those meetings has comforted me.

So, the Spirit of God is battling against another spirit. There aren't two kingdoms of God or two right ways. There's only one. And I appreciate the freedom that has been here to share. And I believe that there are those that have been hurt. I believe that. The enemy of souls wants to teach us or to tell us that we have reason, because of how we have felt we've been treated and what we've experienced, not to care for our own matters. But we could walk together in one. But it feels like I have not heard people speaking evil of Wolf Lake. But personally, I have wondered, has Wolf Lake been content going their own way? And that's been a question that comes to my mind. It seems that we become further and further apart. We don't join together in the same understanding at the meetings we've been at. And now recently, maybe even the freedom to speak at the most recent meetings hasn't been there for some. But that doesn't restore the unity, that the Spirit of God that calls gathers and enlightens. So, we are faulty. And yet, the children of God have been concerned. And it's not just to some, but we've heard even at the national meetings, that this concern is broad. And so this is why we have wanted to come, not knowing what to say or how to say it, but to speak what we believe in our hearts. And I believe in my heart that we can walk together in unity, if we are able to care for that, what God reveals to us when we have gone against and begun to murmur and begin to give in to the voice of the enemy when he says you're right, the others are wrong. Jesus says, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. Let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. Dear friends, I know that and I've heard the confusion that some of you have experienced, and you're wondering, why? And I can't answer those questions. The question of what we would repent of? I can't look into your heart, you can't look into mine. But God is the one who reveals. And when God tells us to go and take care of our matters, we want to care for them. And we can ask God to reveal unto each one of us, have I gone the wrong way? And He reveals it to us through His children and through the loving call of his spirit. [1:43:35]

Dan Lake:

Jim, I would have a question. Could you take just a moment and explain what repentance is and what rebuke is?

Jim Jurmu [1:44:00]

Is that Dan? Yeah, okay. Yeah, I can't give you the answer, a theological answer. But I can say to me repentance is a change of heart and rebuke is the voice that God through His weak children speaks to us or through His Spirit. I've even sat there in the services of God's children and I found myself convicted in my heart and I've wished to repent and then to care for those matters. And then battle against continuing in that way. And then Jesus says, Repent and believe the Gospel. [1:45:06]

Sam Roiko [1:46:05]

I, too, like the others, have appreciated the questions that you have asked and the thoughts that you have expressed. I guess, I don't come here with anything prepared, but a few thoughts, I guess, to one of the bigger questions that has come up. And it seems like it has caused offense,

namely, that the two speaker brothers you have here in Wolf Lake have been disinvented or not allowed to serve in other congregations. And now more recently, servants haven't been sent here from other congregations. And as if, and I guess this thought expressed that this was maybe a clear, divisive action. And I guess, seeing it from the perspective that you have expressed, I can see how that would be confusing and troubling.

But I guess I would rewind even to the years before those actions were taken, when there were many meetings and discussions that had taken place. And at the minister's camp in 2016, when both Phil [Alajoki] and Darwin [Lake] were there, and we had such precious services and discussions. And it seemed like matters were taken care of, and that we could go forward in unity. It was so, at least to me, as a newer servant, such a joyful matter. But then it became clear, not very long after that minister's camp, that something had happened. And in the visits and discussions that took place then, there was, I suppose this, this question or concern, were matters really taken care of? Or are we all still together as one? And so, that was a question. What happened when Phil and Darwin came back here and spoke to the congregation of what had happened at that minister's camp? And it felt like the enemy put, or did not allow matters to remain taken care of, but put something there. And in the course of those next two years, then, it felt that the discussions and the meetings that were held, as Jim Franti expressed, didn't resolve matters or bring unity. And I suppose it was the fall of 2018, when Cokato had Phil not serve. And then meetings were held that winter. And in December of 2019, when we came to the meeting [in Wolf Lake] and wanted to visit, matters weren't resolved. And then the actions that happened in the Minneapolis congregation, as Joe [Wuollet] alluded to that meeting. And [the meeting of] this October of 2020, have, I suppose, brought this matter to the fore of this congregation and her servants? And I suppose these matters are not new matters to God's kingdom and these questions have been questions in previous battles that have taken place.

In fact, during the time of the Small Firstborn Heresy, that was one of the questions and concerns when those three speaker brothers [Krekula, Kaikkonen and Juntunen] from Finland came to serve those in open heresy here in North America. And those brothers quoted the same words of Jesus, that the Bible says that we must go preach. But we rightly know that Jesus gave this Mission Command. But there was another command that Jesus gave before he gave the Mission Command. He gave this commandment to his disciples that Maundy Thursday evening. "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another, as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall, all men know that ye are my disciples if they have love one to another." [John 13:34, 35] What happened in the 1930s is that those brothers went against the wishes of the believers to serve, and put the Mission Command ahead of the commandment to love. And first is the commandment to love one another. And Judas Iscariot had departed. And to these disciples, then Jesus says, you have this command that you love one another. And then to them after he rose from the dead, He gave this Mission Command to go and preach. And it feels like maybe not the exact same situation as previously, but a different flavor, that the Mission Command has been put ahead of the commandment to love one another. When in those meetings and discussions that took place, there was the desire to visit about the matters, and that matters could be taken care of. As Paul writes to the Corinthians, in the 12th Chapter of how all the members would have the same care one for another. And in that same way, when we have a part of the body, of our own body, that that is hurt or wounded, we wouldn't go and begin using that finger, if it has a bandage on it, but we take care of it and baby it and restore it so that that wound would be healed, before we begin to use it. And I would view and see that the actions that have been taken, have been done in this love that we need to care for these matters, so that unity could be restored and that we could walk together as one. And then, if God would will, then we can do the work together. And that is my hope and prayer, that

none would be lost, that these wounds of sin would be healed and that we could do the work together again. [1:54:45]

Kathy Niskanen [1:54:55]

I'm not from this congregation. We were in Phoenix for many years. Now we moved to Menahga. So, I haven't been to any meetings. But Jim's [Frantti] speech. I felt such peace and love. And my spirit answered his spirit. But I also, listening to the people speak tonight pour out their hearts that they all want to believe and stay in this kingdom. And as far as talking about repentance, Many [people] asked for forgiveness. And to me that's the same as repentance, asking for forgiveness. And about the 1930s and all that business. I don't know about that.

Anyways, I think this congregation should be held in love with Zion. And I think both sides need to come together with love and forgiveness. And I know the devil has been busy saying, I heard this and I heard that. And that's going on and on. And I think it needs to be preached from the pulpit about both sides: Let's come together with love and forgiveness. That's all I can think of to say right now. [1:56:30]

Milo Lake [1:56:45]

A question I have for Sam [Roiko] is, do you believe it's possible to be justified in disobeying one of Jesus' commandments out of love for our brethren? Or out of love for our brethren, would we always follow His commandments? And another thing is, it seems that at this point, all of the faults that have been directed toward Wolf Lake have been summarized in this statement that we're battling God's Kingdom. And I guess to me, that's a vague statement, accusation. And I'd like some clarity on what it means to battle against God's kingdom. Does it mean to oppose something doctrinally? That's [to] question doctrinal things. State wrong doctrinal things. Or what specifically? [1:57:50]

Sam Roiko [1:58:32]

I guess to Milo's question. I wouldn't want to stand on what I think. But I would want to stand in the same love of what the other brothers and sisters think and feel. And that I would not put myself in a situation that goes beyond what the other children of God think and feel. That I would be humble enough to hear what the Spirit says in the congregation. And even though I wouldn't understand, I would want to humbly accept that. [1:59:05]

Kathy Niskanen [1:59:15]

another thing I forgot about is when they asked the ministers to step down here, I think the congregation should have left them stepped down, even though we couldn't, you couldn't understand everything. But when there was confusion or whatever going on, I think that would have been the right thing to do. But I also feel that ministers from other congregations then would be allowed to come and speak here

2:12:37

Yeah, Matthew, it says here, therefore, whosoever here at the scenes of mine and do it them I will liken him on toy wise man which built his house upon a rock. Rock is Christ Lucy

2:13:05

we just heard where love is first, and then go out and speak. I did not find love when ministers stopped coming here, that was not the love of God

Marv Wittenberg's speech in Wolf Lake on 13 May 2022 [2:01:05]

Yeah, dear brothers and sisters, we come here this evening with – to be honest – fear and trembling. We didn't come here with any kind of prepared speeches. And it's been nice to hear the open psalms. I can share mine. Jim [Franti] shared his psalm. I can share mine. As a young boy, [Jim] fell into that heresy that I grew up with the scars of. One parent [was] in [the heresy] and one parent [was] believing. So, all through our childhood, parents didn't fight over faith matters. God gave the one parent that wasn't believing the mind and the heart to allow us children to come to church and be in God's kingdom. And as children growing up in a divided house, it was hard in the sense, as you can imagine, one parent is believing and one is not. As little ones, the one parent that wasn't believing preached the gospel up to a certain point. We obviously went to the services of God's children. But when there were funerals [and such], we'd go to the other parent's church and hear the same gospel preached. You'd hear very similar words from the pulpit. So, then what was the difference? You can only reflect on the fruits. There's no unity here. There's no unity of spirit. The Holy Spirit is what is different from God's kingdom. And that's the difference that separates God's kingdom from all other churches in the world. So many churches hold God's word near and dear. But there's only one kingdom on earth that has the Holy Spirit. And that's the difference. And dear ones, my own father shared. You may know, he went to Vietnam. He fought there. Some people [heard]. He probably never really shared. But he grew up with the scars of that, too. He went to war. Men died there. He said he'd rather go there again and go through that, than go through another heresy. So, we see the power of a battle in the kingdom. And a battle in the kingdom, dear brothers and sisters, is a battle of spirits. There's only one Spirit. And when there is the spirit, it's the spirit of unity and peace, as we've heard tonight. And the spirit that guides in the foundation of our faith, as we heard tonight. The rock is the Lord Jesus. That's not changed. God's Word is near and dear and the highest authority, as we've also heard. So then what's different in this battle? I've been out west, so haven't been in many of these meetings. But I've been around now and traveling in these recent months, and at the winter services. I don't know how many here were able to dial in. But we heard the voice of the Good Shepherd. They were so loving, in freedom and joy and peace. I can't put words to it. People that you hadn't seen in months or years, to sit down and feel that same connection of the spirit. It's something we feel and we can't really articulate. Well, we can't describe it. But it is a feeling that answers between God's children. And when we think of this Holy Spirit, then, in God's congregation, as a spirit, as brothers asked to serve. That's a question that all of us brothers asked to serve have had to face this question. Okay. How is it then that these brothers in Wolf Lake are not being asked to serve other congregations? But what will I do in my congregation? I can only speak for myself, dear brothers and sisters. But if I have words that confuse or cause division in God's congregation, I want to rest. I don't want to be there at the pulpit. But please care for me, dear congregation. So, if I was in a situation here, where some congregations are saying, don't come. But my congregation is saying, stay and serve. That's troubling. It's something that doesn't add up there. And so it's a prayer then that I could rest.

It's not anything that is guided. I have to come back to myself, then whether I go or not. I'd have to trust that as guided by God's Spirit. There's no power on earth that could stop a brother from

serving there at the pulpit if God wanted brothers here. But for some reason, we're not able as individuals really to say or to explain or that, but to trust God that guides His kingdom. Thine is the Kingdom. So, none of us are able to have our own self, our own power, understand this even, but trust that God's Spirit guides his congregation. And it's for this reason. There is a different spirit in God's congregation. And to hear even brothers and sisters – I want to be open and free with you – to hear that there's different confirmation schools going on here. It's troubling. That's not unity of spirit. That there would be this freedom and joy – servants traveling and serving here and servants from here serving elsewhere, if we were in the same unity. So, something's changed. We know that in the end, it's unforgiven sin that removes faith from the heart. It's nothing else. And when we think about this matter of what should I repent from? It's God that touches the heart. We think of that prodigal son. He was there [in the far away land] and he lost his faith. He wasn't able to [ask], what must I repent of? But he realized that God showed him his condition. He was with the pigs. We remember his words. I will arise and go to my father. And I will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and I'm no more worthy to be called thy son. Do you remember what happened? He went and was cared for. His father greeted him and the servants then cared for him. And it's the same call, Dear brothers and sisters tonight. Many, many, many around God's kingdom, carry this discussion in prayers. They don't want to see any congregation cut off or left. The prayer of all the believers is that no one would be lost. It's this humble plea from the children of God [for those who are] battling against God's kingdom. Have I been against the spirit in God's kingdom, the children of God and the voices in the meeting? Have I gone contrary to that [voice] and see things differently? And [do I] have a different thought in mind? Can I hear that voice of the Spirit in God's congregation? We have many, many prayers that God could help this evening.  
[2:08:05]

Lucy Karvonen [2:08:22]

2:20:58

My prayer has always been where you hear that there's always a root of a heresy. And I pray that I am not a root of a heresy. But I have one more thing that's on my heart and conscience. And that is how would the Holy Spirit not send ministers to our congregation? When they were? We were still in the love of the congregations? How does one justify not sending speakers even to an earring? CONGREGATION? Where was the Holy Spirit by not sending ministers to our congregation? Where was the love for our undying soul not to come and speak the word that I do not understand? [2:09:40]

Pat Lake [2:10:10]: It is a quarter after nine.

Jim Frantti's second speech in Wolf Lake on 13 May 2022 [2:10:30]:

I was looking at the clock, too. I noticed that time is marching on. I just wanted to speak, dear brothers and sisters, friends here, openly and hope that my words can be received with charity because I know that it's easy to speak with faulty words. But first of all, I appreciate the fact that so many of you have spoken openly and freely here tonight. It's good that we're able to do that. And it's good that we're able to raise our questions. I don't have answers to all of your questions at all. As I said in the beginning, in my comments, and I said it from my heart. I don't understand all that much. But you know the question, for example, that's been asked a couple of times or more here about the sending of speakers or the calling of speakers. I can't give an explanation

to that, I have to say. I wasn't – because I'm not from any of these neighboring congregations or anything. I wasn't a part of any of those discussions or decisions. And so, for me it was just a matter that I wanted to trust that God's Holy Spirit guided in those things. And beyond that, I don't have the wisdom to answer the question. But I would lovingly say even if that question can't be satisfactorily answered, is that the central question tonight? Is that what we want to somehow let ourselves become stuck on so that we can't move forward? Because I feel like if matters can be cared for and unity and love restored, that whole question will go away and things will be much different.

The thing that I especially wanted to comment on, though, is this. You know, when Jesus taught about even the matter of caring for one another, he taught this way. First of all, take care of the beam that is in your own eye. And then you can help your brother to care for the mote that is in his. And that's a teaching that really applies to each of us. I often think of the Apostle Paul's words when he wrote to Timothy near the end of his life. And he didn't feel like in all his years of serving and believing that his faith was so strong, and that, somehow he had become a better believer. But he wrote to Timothy, this is the faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into this world to save sinners of whom I am chief. [1 Tim.1:15] And that statement applies to each of us. And so, when we see ourselves as chief of sinners, it seems like, then we don't so readily see the mistakes or the faults in others. But as the Bible says, charity covers a multitude of sins. [1 Peter 4:7]

But, you know, the question has been asked about questions or concerns, for example, regarding some in the congregation here. I have to say that, from discussions on the board over the years, the LLC board, or in my home congregation as well, I have not heard questions or criticisms of the Wolf Lake congregation. You know, and that's just my personal experience. But the questions that have been raised, have rather come from some from this congregation at some of our meetings. For example, the question has been brought about forgiveness. Is there ever a time when the believers cannot preach forgiveness? Or the question about our sins, [are the sins] past, present and future already forgiven, so there's no need for the gospel? Or the question about the robe of righteousness or about watchmen on the walls or the doctrine of confession or the doctrine of justification. We have heard all of these questions brought up, but they haven't come from elsewhere. We've heard it at some of our visits with, for example, brothers from this congregation. We've heard a lot about the errors of the 1970s and 1980s. In fact, very recently, there was a podcast done by Antti Pentikainen and Phil Alajoki in which there was a lot of discussion about the errors of the 1970s and 1980s. And those we have to openly acknowledge happened. And they have been discussed openly at meetings that I've been at. Those who were involved in becoming dry and in the caretaking of those years, to my knowledge took care of their matters. They've gone to rest. And it feels like if we can't forgive those matters that have been forgiven and put them behind, it just brings us down.

I haven't very often shared this, but I'll share it here. First of all, I received the grace of repentance on December 26, of 1976. So, those years after that – I wasn't aware of all of [what was] going on with meetings and some of the caretaking, like it may have been [for] some of you here. But I had also gotten into a state of joining with those who were critical of the AALC board at the time, and I had to be cared for. My father was cared for. And as I shared with the brothers here on our drive up, when I look back now, I feel like that care was, well, if I could use the word overkill. He was actually bound. But he repented. And after that, he was so joyful to be believing that he never spoke a negative word about those who had been faulty caretakers. He was just thankful to be believing. And my own personal thought was, if he could forgive and forget those errors, why would I hold on to them? You know, it only hurts ourselves if we hold on to matters of the past with unforgiving hearts. And so, we have also heard, and I speak now,

what I've heard myself directly at some of our meetings, that we have been taught wrong in North American Christianity for decades. And when I heard that, it was like, that pulls the whole foundation out from under me, because since I've been believing, God's kingdom here in North America has been my refuge. It's been my shelter in the midst of this world. It's where I want my care to be. And if the North American Zion has taught wrong for decades, where does that leave me, or all of us? And so those questions, they haven't come from elsewhere directed at Wolf Lake. They have come from some folks here and elsewhere, not only here. So, I think that there are some of you here – I sincerely believe that there are some here who are not aware of all that has been said in some of the discussions and meetings that we have had. And so you wonder, why, why haven't ministers served here? Why haven't the speakers here been called? Why does it feel like there's questions about Wolf Lake? I understand why you would feel confused about that. I'm not at all pointing a finger or criticizing you for that. My heart goes out to you, in fact.

But, in the end, I think the question that we have to ask is, Have I looked at the North American Zion with a critical eye? Because I've heard now tonight even many comments: here's how Wolf Lake has been treated wrong. But then I ask, Are there sinners here in Wolf Lake? Or is it only elsewhere, those who have treated people wrong here? I mean, I don't question that some [people] have made some mistakes and treated some of you poorly. I don't question that at all. But in the end, don't we have to each turn the question back on ourselves. And that was what I intended when I said in the beginning, don't we need to ask, Where am I? Because it doesn't help me one bit – the rest of you – if I can show your faults, and I don't care for my own. And so that's the hope and the prayer in which we have come here this evening, is that each one sitting here could ask. Have I been critical? Have I fought against [God's kingdom]? Have I been promoting a different doctrine? Have I separated myself somehow from the believers? Leslie [Ylitalo] asked the question early on about what must people repent of? And I understand Leslie's question. But in the end, how can anybody tell someone else? This is what's on your conscience. I think when God awakens the conscience, we find ourselves to be sinners. And no one has to tell us that I need to care for my matters. When I found myself in heresy, and God awakened my conscience, not one soul told me, you're in heresy. God did that work. He awakened my conscience. And I knew I needed to repent. And so in the end, we don't repent because someone told us we have to. Certainly there is this side, if we have offended someone, we would want them to come to us and tell us, because sometimes we can unintentionally offend, and we want to care for those matters. But I think the question tonight is to ask, do I find myself tonight as a sinner? Do I find myself as someone who has battled against [God's kingdom]? How does North American Zion look? Certainly God's Kingdom is all believers wherever they are on earth. But isn't this Zion of North America a part of that? Isn't it a part of the Golden candlestick? Isn't it a part of that mother that takes care of us? And, you know, if that's where we want to remain – in the care of the congregation mother, God's kingdom, and traveling with the flock of believers – then God's Spirit urges us as our conscience feels in need, to care for our own matters. And then God will give us strength. God will answer questions as we need them answered, and we can go forward as a united flock. It's the power of the gospel. When Paul writes about the gospel, I often think about those simple words, when he says it is the power of God unto salvation. I don't find anything else in the Bible that is called the power of God except the gospel. And that's been my source of strength to travel. [It] is to be able to live of the gospel. And I think that's what we all need. Because after all, aren't we all sinners? None of us is better than the other. We're all sinners.[2:26:10]

Pat Lake

2:38:54

nobody else need to say something or should we wrap it up or even if you'd like to you can  
basin a lot

2:39:21

a lot of thoughts that bounced around in my head tonight. Thank you guys for coming. It's been good kind of been going through this for many years. It's been very hard on our Concord congregation. They feel that we've had a lot of trials a lot of hardships. But one thing it's always been clear, we're never not wanted to, or we've never wanted to go our own way that I've ever heard. You know, we've always wanted to, you know, stay with God's kingdom. Remain believing It's a lot of a lot of trepidation a lot of fear that even for me personally with this meeting tonight I've also had a lot of trials a lot of doubts fears that ask Could I have those forgiven to me? Becky

2:41:06

it has been asked what is battling against God's kingdom. So here's what it says in Ephesians chapter six, verses 10 through 17, finally my brother and be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. Or we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness, in this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the day in the evil day, and having done all to stand. Stand therefore having your loins girt, about with the truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and on your feet, and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, and above all, taking the shield of faith, where with ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked, And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And in John, verses, first chapter, John, verses one and two, in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same in the beginning, the same was in beginning with God. So the questions, how are people fighting against the kingdom of God? Do we not have to stand with the Word of God in God's kingdom? And I don't think you know, some of the discussion or some of the things that I can remember that had been discussed, of course, the issue of forgiveness do we always forgive, like Jim said, you know, we always in God's kingdom, in your first statement, there happily preached the word of God, or the forgiveness of God and which is in chapter in Mark. Or I suppose it's in a few of the Gospels too, but it is here, in Mark 11:25, and 26. But and if you and when you stand praying, forgive me, if he have ought against any, that your father also which is in heaven may forgive your trespasses. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven, and forgive your trespasses. So there have been statements in the past that there's times we don't forgive. I believe that God there God has is all powerful, but I don't know that man has the option to just say, well, in these systems, system situations, we don't forgive course when talking about the command to go and preach, and that's also Matthew 28:18 to 20. And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me and heaven and earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever whatsoever I have commanded you. And lo, I am with you always, always, even unto the end of the world. And there's been we've heard in the past has been cautioning against reading God's word that you shouldn't read God's word too much, which, to me, seems very strange. How are we justified

there's been nice things so in my understanding the though The issue is these different things that have been preached and taught, which are not according to God's word. That's the problem. And you know, things have I think if we start straying from Scripture and saying, and you know, there's been times we've heard, or it's been said, that sometimes the church love Christ isn't doesn't apply in situations Well,

2:45:29

if we, if we're not sticking to the Word of God, then how what do we stand on that? And how do we have

2:45:43

a place to start? And I think, from what I've heard in the many discussions or presentations, I haven't ever heard that any lady from here has just disagreed with me in the presentations.

2:45:59

But I think that's that's that to me that, from my understanding, that's that's the issue is is there's been these different teachings, which aren't necessarily scriptural. And then then this teachings changes. But that's so is. I don't I don't know that these these different issues have been studied in the light of God's word everywhere. And I think there probably have been other things that I can't think of right now. But

2:46:31

you know, I think there needs to be more discussion on these different issues. And what what does the Bible say on these different things that have been spoken about in in different ways? I think I think that's where we need to be going.

2:46:50

And I don't think it should be out, yeah, who said this or that or whatever. We should be looking. What does the Bible say, and I am I in? Do I believe the words of the Bible is, I think, that's, that's where we have to stand. In Matthew 2237, to 40, it says, Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and this is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. And and one last one, I think, is something to think about. I have written down here. What does this mean in Matthew seven verses one and two, where it says, Judge not, that you not, that ye be not judged? For

with what judgment ye judge, you shall be judged, and you and with what measure ye meet, it shall be measured unto you.

2:48:16

Well, that is my my thoughts that we should be that yeah, studying these things. And freely having discussions about about these issues, having open discussions about about the issues and

2:48:48

and like I said, not not to say well, so and so sad or so and so, but what are we following? Are we following God's word is that he's he he is he, he is the highest authority and we should be following him how and how do we follow god versus man? My understanding is that we would we would it be in accordance with the Bible if we're following God in that man? I can say like Paul or relate to Paul being a chief sinner and have not always felt the love of Christ towards fellow believers. And I asked God I have my sins and failings forget

2:50:09

those he had a common joke

2:50:21

forgive me for speaking again, I apologize. But what Becky brought up, I was thinking that brothers need to come back. And, for instance, even regarding forgiveness, I grew up believing that if a drunk man asked you for forgiveness, you didn't forgive him, because how could he understand what he was asking for? That's wrong. And is that how everyone here believes? Or? I hear a lot about I heard, I heard, I don't want to hear about I heard, I want to know. Like, for instance, why we're, what error? Did Phil and Darwin have? What was the wrong doctrine? And talk about the different? Well, like Becky said, I think we need to have so that we all understand God's word according to His written Word. I hope that makes sense. I do think that we need more visits. And yes, it's been a long, seven years, I guess it's been that long. But these are men's, women's souls. There shouldn't be a time limit. Be patient. God is patient, we need to be more patient.

2:52:10

Go ahead, Joe.

2:52:12

If I might, I thought two things struck me with a couple of the of the speeches there.

2:52:26

Sam had mentioned that he would seek to be an the unity of the fellow travelers. And I don't disagree with that one. But as long as they're in a unity with Christ and the word First, be on unity. On something contrary to God's word, is easy for broad as though but to be unified with God's word first. And then unify yourself with those that also unified themselves with Christ. The other the other thing I thought, must be addressed that Jim had mentioned one, Jim Franti that is mentioned one issue. And it was interesting arithmetic in my mind that coming automatically to the conclusion, that because Christ died on the cross once, therefore, there is no need for or a confession or absolution or preaching the gospel. It's an improper conclusion. And it's not what has been said. Rather, if we had read from Romans, I don't happen to have a Bible here with me. But if we had read from Romans that it creates is that that is not imputed Because grace died or all once well had no glory.

2:54:32

Lucy's comment about patience. It's been a long, seven years. I agree. Noah, he preached for 40 years, and I don't know if her records that he was tired, but he kept preaching. You're not one the soul repented. But yet he did what God wanted him to do. And we've talked maybe someone mentioned some They want the path to what lights our path? How do we know the way to go? Psalms 119 105. Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path. If we have aired here in Wolf Lake, please show us with the word. I do not want to stray from the word because my soul salvation is at stake. And I'm teaching my children the same way I believe. So thus, their souls are at stake if I'm wrong. But if I'm right, and I veer away from it, then we got trouble there too. So we must go the word and show the air as even a brother's Brother's Keeper is the tell them the fault. It's all we can, if there is a fault, we can point it out. Also, it's not necessarily telling someone I don't know what your fault is. Examine yourself. I thought the preaching of God's kingdom was you can believe all your sins forgiven. You don't need to dig deeper. Because all you find there is sin. Christ has paid for all of them. And you can believe them all forgiven.

2:56:30

Leslie be after that? We'll try to I won't look anymore.

2:56:40

Sorry, I promised not to speak any more about just one quick comment. When Becky and Lucy talked. I thought that's a really good idea that we would start having discussions on some of

these issues. You know, nobody wants a division. Let's start visiting about issues that are troubling us. Let's let's forget that the division talk for now. Yeah,

2:57:10

I think in my closing comment would be the same that from my perspective of the meetings I've attended the doctrinal issues, there may have be some divide there. But if we can't go to God's word and find the answer, instead, it's I don't know how we come to any resolution or so I would I would just say this that I would like to see the discussions continue. But let's do it around God's Word, we know the answers are there. And if we can be shown to be wrong, myself included. That would be a wonderful thing. But if we we have to agree that the word is the foundation of our faith, it's God's word. So with that, let's join together in the closing benediction. The Lord bless us and keep us the Lord make his face shine upon us and be gracious unto us. Lord, lift up his countenance upon us and give us peace, in the name of the Father, the Son, Holy Ghost, amen.

2:58:47

I just wanted to say that I don't think anybody here feels like they're not a sinner. I, I believe everybody is fully aware of their own sinfulness. But it's difficult when somebody says to repent and you don't know what you're supposed to repent of. You said repentance is a turning away of, of a turning away and a change of heart. But if you don't know what the what the air is, or whatever, it's it's it's difficult to do, but I just want to say I don't believe anybody here. Feels like they're not a sinner. I think I think we all acknowledge our sinfulness.

3:01:40

Right Yeah No,

3:06:26

no no name is

3:06:37

you