

Building A Living Model

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[0 : 00] Alright, this morning I want to talk to you about building a living model.! Building a living model. This last Friday, May 1st, was our two-year anniversary of our church, for those who don't know.

And as we look forward to the years ahead, I want to talk to you about this concept of a living model. Before I do that, I want to just briefly tell a little story here about the four-minute mile, by way of introduction.

Some of you guys know this, but for years, so many athletes had tried and failed to run a mile in less than four minutes.

And actually, even doctors and such made it out to be a physical impossibility. Are you familiar with this at all? They literally said, this can't be done. You cannot run less than a four-minute mile.

On May 6, 1954, in Oxford, England, Roger Bannister became the first person to do it. Finishing in three minutes, 59.4 seconds.

[1 : 01] He did it, right? I thought it couldn't be done. Two months later, John Landy ran a mile in under four minutes in a race he lost to Bannister. Steve Scott has run 136 sub-four-minute miles in his lifetime.

In 1997, Daniel Komen of Kenya ran two miles in less than eight minutes. Doubling up on Bannister's accomplishment, the current record is held by Hikam El-Garaj, who ran a time of three minutes, or three, yes, three minutes, 43.13 seconds.

Okay, in 1999. According to World Athletic Statistics, the four-minute barrier has been broken by just over 2,000 athletes.

Okay? So, for so long, a four-minute mile was never accomplished, and then in the 70 years after, the record's blown to smithereens.

What happened? What happened? This quick glance at history would lead you to believe that it was impossible to run a four-minute mile prior to May 6, 1954, but after May 6, 1954, it somehow became possible.

[2 : 19] But we know that's not true, right? It wasn't some miracle that happened on May 6, 1954, where all of a sudden, the impossible became possible, some kind of magic that he performed.

It wasn't impossible before May 6, 1954. It was just invisible. It was just invisible. No one had seen it done before.

The impossible is made possible when the invisible is made visible. Okay? On May 6, 1954, the impossible was made visible by one, making it possible for many.

This is true for so much more than running. And today, I want to look at how it's true with the church. Okay? I've heard so many people say they've never seen certain things in a local church. You ever had these conversations? I remember a very discouraging conversation I had with my family on a trip up to Wisconsin years ago. And they all started saying all these things that they've never seen in a church.

[3 : 23] And then went on to say that they never would. And I'm thinking, wait a minute. Hold up. Says who? Well, it says all of them. And they were pretty convinced of it.

And I'm telling them, I'm like, no. I've seen it. What you're saying is impossible. I've seen it. So they're all connecting around their unbelief.

And I'm like, no, no, no. Hey, I've seen what you say is impossible. But the reason, none of them believe me. They kind of just kind of pushed me off.

And I was like, good grief. But I get it. It's because they've never seen it. And the reason I have faith for it is because I have seen it.

And it takes people to see something. And it takes people also to see it before it's seen. One of my favorite quotes, actually, is regarding Walt Disney.

[4 : 25] Walt Disney had this vision to build the Disney theme park in Orlando, right? But he died before it was finished. And there's a famous interaction between a reporter and Walt's brother.

I think it was Roy. And they're standing in some place where they could oversee the whole park.

And the reporter says to Roy, wow, if only Walt could have seen this.

And Roy looks at him and says, if Walt didn't see this, it would have never existed. And again, this speaks of this seeing of something.

Once you see it, now someone's got to see it. Bannister, with the four-minute mile, he believed it could happen even before it happened. But once he put it on display, over 2,000 other people now believe it's possible and have done it.

And there's a lot of things in the Bible. There's a lot of things about the church that people don't believe. And one of the reasons they don't believe it is they've never seen it.

[5 : 31] And this is one of the great privileges of the local church. Not just that we could be a part of all the good things, like Samir has said. Things like adoption. Things like all the good things we have in Christ Jesus.

But we can actually put on display invisible things. Things not visible to some people. We can experience them and make them visible.

Make the invisible visible. So that the invisible becomes valuable. And so that the invisible, in the eyes of many, becomes possible. Do you believe this? I believe it.

I've seen it happen. And I would love to see it happen in churches all over. I have a firm and strong belief that church can be done the way God wants it to be done.

Why? Because it's his church. Because he says, I will build my church. And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. His church is invincible when it comes to hell.

[6 : 29] Now, if we build our own church and build our own way, yeah, I got no hope that that's going to last. I got no hope in man's movements. I got no hope that our version of church is going to overcome the gates of hell.

But I believe that his church will. And if we build what he is building, that we will see that. And other people can see and have hope. So the question is, how do we make the invisible visible so that people believe that the invisible is possible?

I want to look at very simple, just three things this morning. Okay. First one is, you have to care.

Okay. You have to care specifically about the church.

You have to have conviction. Okay. You'll never endure discomfort for something you don't have conviction about. Right. You'll never endure discomfort. And there is discomfort that is required to put on display the things that God wants to show forth in his church.

But you'll never endure that discomfort if you don't first have conviction about what the church is supposed to be. For Christians, the best way to appropriately care about something is to know how much Christ cares for it.

[7 : 40] You follow me on that? The best way to have the appropriate care for something is know how much does Christ care about it. You know, Philippians 2.21 has this indictment that is spoken.

It says, They all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ has things he's interested in. One of those things that he's interested in is the church being a certain way.

There are specific things in the Bible that are referred to when talking about the church. It's not one thing. It's not two things. It's not five things. It's not ten things. I count at least 15 different things that the Bible says the church is.

And for us to be convictional about what those things are and to say, Hey, it's not okay if these things aren't expressed through the local church. And I want to do everything I can to see that expressed.

Because I care about the interests of Christ. If Christ is interested in these things, I'm interested in these things. Acts 20.28, when Paul was speaking to the Ephesian elders in Miletus, He said, Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.

[8 : 51] That last phrase there is important. If we want to care rightly, correctly, for the church of God, one of the keys is just remembering, and this is part of the reason we take of the Lord's Table every week, is remembering what was the cost of the church.

Care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood. When we see what it cost to receive the church, we start to value.

We start to value it. If the cost of the church was the blood of Christ, it is a very valuable thing. Because we know the value of anything is what you pay for it. Someone says, Hey man, my house is worth this.

And you walk through it and you're just like, You get ripped off, man. This is not worth this. No one else is going to pay this much for this. But if you look at the church, you'd say, What is the worth of the church?

Why is the church worthy of our time? Why is the church worthy of our effort? Why is there worth in our putting in effort and sacrifice to see the church become what God says it's supposed to be?

[9 : 58] Why? Well, let's look at what was paid for it. The price of the church was the blood of Jesus. The sacrifice of the Son, the sinless Savior.

When I look at it that way, I say, Oh my gosh, this is of great worth. Ephesians 5.25 says, Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her. The price of the church was Christ.

The price of the church was Christ crucified. It's very valuable. What is of higher value than that? It truly is a pearl of great price.

To say, well, Jesus thought the church was so valuable, he gave himself for her. And anyone who says that they love Jesus should walk as Jesus did. 1 John says this. And so, number one, in order to put these things on display, we've got to start with just caring.

And I want to ask you, do you care? Do you care? And how much do you care? At the end of the day, I've had times in my life where I've been convicted, like, I don't care enough about what Jesus cares about. I don't care enough about what Jesus cared so much for that he gave his all for it.

[11 : 04] He paid for it with his very life. I want to care consistently with what the scriptures say is of great worth. And I would say there are, what would be of greater worth than that which Jesus gave himself for?

So let me ask you the question, do you care about the church? Do you care appropriately? Is it just kind of a, well, you know, I get it. I'm a Christian. I should attend a church somewhere on a Sunday morning.

Please. I'm looking around here. I know that the people in this room know better than that, right? You've been around enough to know that that's not what Christ has for us. Christ didn't die so that we could attend Sunday morning services.

It's like, praise God, Jesus died so we have someplace to go on a Sunday morning. Jesus died so that I could fight with my spouse and argue with my kids and getting them dressed on a Sunday morning.

Praise God. That was such a great thing that he did. That's not what he, that's not why he did it. It was so much more than that. I'm not saying that that's the soul. Some of that, you understand.

[12 : 08] But it's so much more than that. It's life together. It's a group of people. It's a people for his own possession, right? He died to purchase a people and that people would be his church.

That people would be his bride. That people would be a family. That people would be light and salt. That people would be an army of soldiers. That people would be the people of God who are possessed by God, okay?

So that's the first thing we gotta care. Number two, we gotta care about the right things. We gotta care about the right things. Okay? So we got three sub-points within the second point.

Three things I think we need to care about when we're thinking about the church. Number one, there are three things that the church is to make known. Number one, and this is of utmost importance, is we have to care about the wisdom of God being made known.

This comes from a very important verse in the Bible in Ephesians chapter 3, verses 8 through 11. Listen as I read this scripture. To me though, this is Paul, I am the very least of all the saints.

[13 : 13] This grace was given to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God.

Okay? Already you got my attention. You're gonna bring to light the plan of the mystery. This is something that people have been longing to know. The Bible says even angels longed to look into this.

This is what the prophets could see partially but they didn't see it fully. This is what people have been longing to know all the way up until this point. This plan of God that was a mystery hidden for

ages in God.

Then it says, who created all things so that... Whoa, time out again. Again, he's about to tell us why he created all things. Does he have your attention?

He's got my attention. Anytime God's about to say, hey, I'm not just... I want to tell you why he created all things. Okay? I'm listening. That's a big deal. Why you created all things.

[14:14] So he says, So the reason is what? So that through the church, the manifold wisdom of God may now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.

So God had this plan hidden throughout the ages that the rulers and authorities in heavenly realms would know the wisdom of God through a particular entity called the church.

And this was why all things were created. Oh, come on, Josh. I just read it, right? That's what it says. All things that were created so that a particular entity called the church, through that entity, rulers and authorities in heavenly places would know the wisdom of God.

This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord. We're talking eternal purpose. We're talking the reason earth was created. We're talking the mystery that has been hidden in ages in God.

This is big deal stuff right here. Okay? Paul's unpacking quite a bit. And these, I mean, you could preach on this for a long time. This is big deal stuff. But it tells us, hey, number one, there's a wisdom that God wants to make known, which number one, what is the wisdom of God?

[15:37] The wisdom of God is what? Christ crucified. We see this in 1 Corinthians, right? God wants to display to not humans. So the eternal purpose is the ultimate test of whether or not we are just consumers in it for our own good because the eternal purpose has nothing to do with us.

Do you hear that? He created the earth so that the church could exist to display the wisdom of God to us? No. To rulers and authorities in heavenly realms. Is that offensive to you?

Hopefully it offends your pride. It was meant to. God is fully committed to offending your pride, by the way. He didn't create this to be displayed for us.

We are supposed to, as the church, display wisdom. How do we do that? Through a crucified life. Through a life that is laid down for Jesus and for one another.

The cross should be displayed through an entity called the church so that rulers and authorities in heavenly places would know the wisdom of God. This is a phenomenal thing. This is an awesome thing.

[16:45] Do you have a value for the wisdom of God being made known to entities far above us? Rulers and authorities in heavenly realms. That's one of the reasons why the church exists.

This is the eternal purpose. This is the reason that all things were created, that through the church. Do you believe in that phrase, through the church? This is why we make such a big deal about the local church.

Because the whole earth was created so that that entity could display something. So it's a big deal. It's a big deal. So that's the first thing. We have to care about the wisdom of God being made known.

Number two, we should care about the character of God being made known. In other words, what is God like? Well, how do we know what God is like? Well, Jesus incarnated God.

He is God. And then incarnated who God was into an actual human. Right? So that we could see what God was like. He says, if you've seen me, you've seen the Father.

[17:45] It says that Jesus is the exact representation of God. Okay? So he put on display what God was like. And when he rose from the dead and then ascended into heaven, do we have no longer any representation of Christ in the earth anymore?

No. We still do. And what is it called? His body. What is his body? The church. Ephesians 1, 22-23 says, The church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

So God wants to fill up the world with this picture of who God is. He wants to fill it up with this entity called his body.

Even though his physical body is no longer here, it ascended into heaven, he has his body still on the earth in this thing called the church. And through that, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

He wants people to see what he is like now not through his actual physical body because he ascended. But he sent his spirit and filled up a group of people to now represent him.

[18:58] Right? Ephesians 2, 19-22 says, You are members of the household of God built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone in whom the

whole structure being joined together grows into a holy temple in the Lord.

In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. So he wants the church to be built together. And we're not talking about a building itself.

We're not talking about the walls of a building like this. We're talking about people being built together for what? To be a dwelling place for God by the Spirit so that people could see what God is like.

1 Corinthians 3, 16-17. And when you hear the word you in this verse, the Greek in that is plural. So it says, Do you not know that you, plural, are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy and you, plural, are that temple. We are to be a temple that God inhabits.

[20 : 04] That people can see what God is like because they see his body on the earth in this temple. 1 John 4, verse 12 in the NIV says, No one has ever seen God, but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

So what does that mean? From that verse, I can say, Your revelation of the love of God is incomplete apart from people. So if you want to be a hermit and go live in a monastery or go sit in a prayer room for all your time, you're missing it.

It says, No one has ever seen God, but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us. Okay?

Well, is God's love incomplete? No. He's not talking about his actual love. He's talking about the expression of it, the view of it is incomplete apart from real skin of like real people.

Right? Real flesh and blood who are indwelt by God modeling who God is by the way they live in love. This is why we have verses like Romans 15, 7.

[21 : 14] Welcome one another. How? As Christ has welcomed you for the glory of God. When people are welcomed with Christ-like affection and love, they know what God is like because of how we welcome them.

Colossians 3, 13 says, As the Lord has forgiven you, so also you must forgive. When we forgive others the way we've been forgiven, people are able to understand how Christ has forgiven them. Ephesians 5, 25 again says, Husbands, love your wives. How? As Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her. Marriage is putting on display how Christ loves his church.

John 13, 34. Just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. Being able to see how God loves because of how we love one another. John 15, 12 to 13.

This is my commandment that you love one another. How? As I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, than someone lay down his life for his friends.

[22 : 15] In 1 John 3, 16. By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. Do you see this? The character of God being made known when we love one another as we've been loved.

When we forgive one another as we've been forgiven. When we welcome one another as we've been welcomed. We end up being the body of Christ, being indwelt by God. The love of God is shed abroad into the hearts of those around us because they've seen it in a group of people.

It's not theory. We're making the invisible visible. God is not visible. It says, No one has seen God, but when we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

We are making visible the invisible so that people now have faith for it. The invisible made visible makes the invisible valuable. It makes the invisible possible.

Wait a second. I could be loved this way? I never thought anyone could love me this way until, and I for sure never thought God could love me this way, until I saw his people love me the way God loves me.

[23 : 17] And it opened my eyes. It opened my heart. It helped me to experience something I had heard about, I had dreamed about, but I had never seen. Now that I've seen it, now that I've tasted of it, I'm in.

I'm sold. And I want as many people as possible to experience what I've experienced. You see what I'm saying here? Number three, the kingdom of God made known.

We have to care about the kingdom of God being made known. Essentially, seeing the church is like kingdom embassies. What is the kingdom like? 1 Peter 2 verse 9 says, You're a holy nation. And Ephesians 2 verse 19 says, You're no longer strangers and aliens, but you're fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God.

Philippians 3 verse 20 says, Your citizenship is in heaven. So it's a group of people whose citizenship is in heaven, a holy nation of heavenly people. Okay? So think of it like, but we're living in a world that is not ultimately, right now, expressed in the way that our heavenly citizenship is expressed.

as it is in heaven, it is not on earth in all things. But, where the church exists as a heavenly embassy, just like an embassy in another country, all the culture of the country, all the laws of the country, all the rules of the country, are expressed in that embassy.

[24 : 41] And there are ambassadors in those embassies who go to other places and represent the kingdom or the country from where they're coming. we too are to build an expression, a living model of what heaven is like, of what it's like to be ruled by King Jesus, of what it's like to love one another, take care of one another, suffer with one another, rejoice with one another.

We create little pockets of heaven on earth called the church and then become ambassadors of that to people who've never heard of it, who've never seen it. And we say, we speak a message and then we point to an expression as ambassadors where they can experience a part of heaven not just in the words we say but in the life that we live.

This is the kingdom of God being made known. 2 Corinthians 5.20 says, we're ambassadors for Christ. God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ be reconciled to God. Ephesians 6.19-20 Paul says, pray that words may be given to me and opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel for which I am an ambassador in chains that I may declare it boldly as I ought to speak.

Do you see this? Do you have a vision? Do you care about the kingdom of God being made known in a group of people so that what you say about God and his kingdom you can point to?

[26 : 09] You can display it. People can say, oh, I get it. I understand what you're saying. I experienced that the other night in so-and-so's living room. Oh, I get it.

I understand. I experienced that the other day when so-and-so helped me with this and so-and-so cried with me. When so-and-so watched my kids as if they were their own.

When so-and-so cared enough to speak into my marriage. When so-and-so adopted me as a single person and is just like I was a part of their family. I understand this reality you speak of in the gospel because it's lived among a group of people.

Heaven has come down into a particular group of people and it's called the church. Some groups of people would say, oh, we want to see that everywhere. Yes, we do want to see that everywhere.

But some people want to do that by aborting the means that God has created to bring that everywhere. We're not revivalists seeking revival. We are Christians who are ambassadors for Christ who build an experience of that demonstration of people in the context of church and then seek to be ambassadors of bringing as many people into that as possible.

[27 : 24] But the core place that that's happening is what Jesus in his eternal purpose created the whole earth for that through the church this would happen. There's no other means.

There's no other means. It's through the church. And when you get a vision for that you do Romans 1, 11 to 12 you say things like I long to see you that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you.

That is that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith both yours and mine. This is an expression of the kingdom of God together where we're both encouraged because we're with each other.

It's Hebrews 10, 24 to 25. Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works not neglecting to meet together as is the habit of some but encouraging one another all the more as you see the day drawing near.

It's a group of people who are encouraging one another strengthening one another building a strong foundation of kingdom reality on earth as it is in heaven. That's the church. But it doesn't just sit there and enjoy this on earth as it is in heaven with a bunch of Christians where they're in it the context of church where it's all about us and we're never outward focused and we have no vision for mission.

[28 : 35] it's a group of people who are a holy nation experiencing on earth as it is heaven but then functioning as ambassadors of that kingdom ambassadors of that holy nation who are constantly going out to the world and saying come experience heaven come experience the good news of the gospel of the kingdom right?

The gospel of the kingdom the good news an ambassador is a trumpeter of the good news of the kingdom and he's always experiencing it among his local church so he's not as Brendan Manning puts it a spiritual travel agent handing out brochures to places he's never been. He's been there. He knows it. He's experienced it. And he's able not only to speak it and not just speak it as someone who wishes he's been there who's dreamt about it who's read about it but has actually experienced it and then his words have so much more power because he's not speaking theory he's not speaking about something he's never seen or experienced he's saying no listen I've been there I've experienced this come experience the good news of the gospel of the kingdom come experience it this is what the good news is this is why it's so important that we are convicted about building on earth as it is in heaven about building healthy churches that model this a living model of what we're talking about this is why we're so zealous about this this is why Jesus said in Psalm 69 and then quoted it in John 2 when he made a whip and cleared out the temple zeal for God's house consumes me it's a consuming zeal to see these local churches be expressions of heaven on earth so that as ambassadors we're not speaking of things that have no weight that have no glory that have no reality okay the impossible is made possible when the invisible is made visible what are we making visible can we make visible healthy church do you know how many people I come into contact who do not believe that healthy church is possible I mean it's at epidemic proportions I'm not discouraged though because I have a promise that he will build his church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it and so I talk to some people it looks like wow it looks like the gates of hell are prevailing it looks like these people would never believe that there's healthy church and I say really my God will be thwarted by these things I don't think so this is the one undefeatable okay thing that God has created it's the church it cannot lose it cannot lose when it when it is going against the gates of hell it will prevail and we can have confidence in that but man my heart beats and longs to see as many healthy churches as possible so that those who have experienced horrible experiences in church or they've started to think this isn't even possible that they can see no this is possible and the good news is in fact that it is good news it's awesome when we can make the invisible visible some people have never seen good church leadership can we put on display good church leadership as elders are appointed as other people rise up into other positions of leadership in the church can we put on display what good leadership looks like can we put on display what a plurality of leadership looks like instead of one man shows that have one point of failure and have no biblical precedent in the scriptures but like healthy leaders working together disagreeing well with one another working through things together can we do that can we put that on display we can can we put on display church as family not just having the language of family but the experience of family there's nothing more disillusioning than having the language of family without the expression of it don't get so enamored and dreamy about the language of family when we're not willingly opening up our homes and our hearts and our schedules to create real atmospheres of family amongst us you really want to disillusion someone talk about family without actually putting skin in the game to create it and to experience it let us be the kind of people that don't speak of something that we don't know but that really we can function as a family can we make the impossible possible by making the invisible visible with being a church on mission some people think there's no

I don't even understand how we can be a church on mission I don't understand how small families of believers can be on mission to specific people and places and do it in a way that we're engaged and excited it is possible I've seen it I'm seeing it here at Christ Church let's continue to put that on display can we put on display healthy church membership so often people get nauseated when you even mention the topic of membership but I think it's one of the most beautiful biblical realities and when it's played out well it is powerful it is impactful and it points to heaven can we put on display healthy church discipline some people balk at the idea of church discipline and say oh really you're a church that does church discipline I can't tell you how much fruit I've seen I'm calling the wayward soul back to Jesus through church discipline it bears fruit because it's God's idea can we put on display gospel centrality having our motivation and our fuel be the person and the work of Jesus in a gospel dense culture where it's it's everywhere it's everywhere everything we're doing is because he first loved us 1 John 4 19 can we put on display a freedom to confess sin just talking to a brother the other day who was a part of another church in another state and he lived there for multiple years and he ended up falling into some sin in his marriage some sexual sin and he ended up confessing it to them and you would have thought he said something to them that they'd never heard before and they looked at him with kind of like kind of they didn't say it but they basically said it we don't do

that here kind of thing you know and it's like what?

[34 : 48] and there's churches like this where it's like no no no we don't talk about our sins what about a church that has all their identity and their worth and the person and the work of Jesus Christ so that they're free to share all their foibles and failures free to confess their sins free to lose because they have everything in Christ and so they can lose their reputation they can lose what people might think of them because they know that Jesus loves them not for who they are but for who Jesus is and what he's done if we put that on display can we make that visible can we make suffering together and rejoicing together visible can we make an all of life expression of church visible rather than just this compartmentalized you can get this Jesus but you can't touch that can we make that visible with joy so that people come in and say wow this sounds like way too much and we say it is apart from Christ but in Christ it's all joy it's joy it's pleasure can we put on display healthy marriage can we put on display healthy marriage

I remember one of the main reasons I wanted to get married as a young person is because the youth group that I was a part of at the time that I was helping pastor at the time more more kids than not were coming from divorced families and they had no clue because they'd never seen it they didn't know what a healthy family looked like and I wanted to get married and have kids so that I could make the invisible visible I wanted people in broken families to be able to see no it's possible it's possible can we put on display healthy marriage can we put on display healthy parenting child discipline can we put on display disciplining our children in a loving way in a consistent way so that our kids rise up and call us blessed and people don't look upon them with scorn can we put on display an orderly kids an orderly family orderly large families who love Jesus some people think it's so spiritual to have a bunch of kids if you have a bunch of kids and they're disorderly all you did would just create more disorder if you have a bunch of kids and they don't love Jesus there's no blessing in that that's a curse you're just creating a bunch more people who don't love Jesus there's nothing spiritual about a large family unless it's stewarded but can we put that on display can we put on display spiritual fathers and mothers can we put on display healthy dating can we put on display this reality which so many people have no grit for that Jesus Christ died so that people could be free from lust

I'm not talking about for one week or two weeks I'm talking about for their whole life can we put on display that lust isn't something that guys just need to settle and say this is just the way it is I know many guys who believe that who no longer believe that and they walk out freedom from lust it's possible and God wants us to put it on display can we put on display healthy gender roles can we put on display charismatic gifts that aren't charismatic wackiness but like real solid biblical reality that builds up the church can we put on display those things we can and we will by God's grace and I'm asking you to believe for these things I'm asking you to believe for a church that this is possible and it has nothing to do with any of your own strength or wisdom this is God's church if this lands on you as burden I have good news let it go it's not your church Christ's church isn't your church Christ's church isn't my church it's his church we co-labor but he's ultimately the one building his grace is sufficient and hey trust me

I get stressed about church stuff I have many times when I read that verse that Paul says about the anxiety of the church is I feel it but at the end of the day I just gotta say it's not my church Jesus is building his church he loves and cares for her like I could never love and care for her like you could never love and care for her and he's building something that the gates of hell cannot prevail against that is assuring but it leaves me to my last point here you have to count the cost you have to count the cost it is costly to have a church like I'm talking of it is costly now there's a cost that is death unto death and I don't know about you but I'm not really into death unto death that's not even that's not cool just die for death's sake nah not really I don't really like that Jesus never told us to die just for death's sake it was always always death unto life death unto life our death our sacrifice our giving up of our lives is to experience the life of Christ if you believe that then you can gladly give everything you have to purchase the pearl of great price or the treasure in the field and you can do it like the guy who did it did it in his joy in his joy do you have joy in your sacrifice some of you are like oh my gosh

I've heard this before heard it in past churches you're freaking me out Josh I get it I've been that person being freaked out as well by someone else saying it and all I can say to that is real things happen from real broken people that are hard to overcome but Jesus is the same yesterday today and forever and he's calling us to believe him and to trust him and to say once again just like Paul

said I die daily it's a daily choice it's a daily to say you know God I'm having a hard time trusting today I've met a lot of your people that are really hard to trust and I'm sure God understands because he happened to walk on earth with those people and they betrayed him they killed him he knows about people who can't be trusted he knows about people who betray he knows about people who treat you poorly Jesus knows he is a sympathetic high priest isn't it amazing that the one we serve can relate to us because he's our high priest and he went through what we went through that's an amazing thing he's not asking us to give ourselves to these realities thinking oh this is a walk in the park he knows he knows and he's with us and he'll never leave us or forsake us and some of us have maybe felt like the church through the church that we've been forsaken by God and maybe you never thought of it that way because we thought oh actually

[41 : 13] I was forsaken by people but deep down what is underneath the hurt from being forsaken by people is a pain that God himself has forsaken us and I want to say to you with full confidence God has never forsaken God has never forsaken you and he will never leave you he will never forsake you he will be with you always how long to the very end of the age and then he's going to come back and bring us to be with him so that's a good promise but it costs it does cost God is not we have to be honest about it to say hey we want a church like this but it doesn't cost anything would be I'd be I'd be a salesman selling you something that's not real and I can't do that Luke 14 28 says which of you desiring to build a tower does not first sit down and count the cost whether he has enough to complete it I'm asking you if you consider the cost of a church like that I'm talking about an invisible church that we want to make visible that we're starting to do in these two years and I praise God for that but it's going to continue to cost and a lot of times it costs more than we'd like to pay so we need to remember what do we need to remember well 1 Corinthians 15 58

NIV says always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord and I love that that's not the end of the verse why how because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain some of you maybe the devil has told you over the years that your labor in the Lord was not in vain or was in vain maybe you looked at certain things you've given yourself to that didn't turn out the way you wanted them to they didn't turn out the way you had hoped they would and the devil says see that was in vain that was vanity you gave yourself to something that had no worth you gave yourself to something that didn't go as you thought it was you gave yourself to something that failed maybe and God says here always give yourselves fully when always how much fully to what the work of the Lord why because your labor in the Lord is not in vain someone needs to hear that this morning that your labor in the Lord is not in vain did you hear what I said your labor in the Lord is not in vain so why do we give ourselves to this stuff why do we give ourselves to seeing the invisible made visible so that the invisible can be possible for a group of people who have been disillusioned we do it because our labor in the Lord is not in vain our labor in the Lord is not in vain

Tom Brady in his Hall of Fame speech you're quoting Tom Brady yeah I'm quoting Tom Brady and his Hall of Fame speech said to be successful at anything the truth is you don't have to be special you just have to be what most people aren't consistent determined and willing to work for it no shortcuts consistently believing that the impossible is possible and being determined to work for it to be displayed is what is required it's consistency if you want a church that you haven't experienced you have to do something that you haven't done do you hear me if you want a church that you've not experienced you have to do something that you haven't done to keep doing the same thing you've always done expecting to have a different church experience is a fool's errand we have to be willing to count the cost be consistent and put in the work and I'm thankful that there's a group of people in this room that have shown over the last two years that you're willing to do it and for that I'm proud to be a part of it I'm excited to be a part of it I am grateful to be a part of it you guys are some people that I really appreciate and what you've done this last two years is powerful it's powerful to see the work that you guys have put in hasn't always been easy but you guys have done it and you're still doing it and you're putting in the work and you left certain things that were hard to leave you left certain things that were much easier and you said no we want to make the invisible visible for a group of people that haven't seen it yet and so we're doing this thing called Christ Church and for that I applaud you for that I say well done and I say don't let up don't let up keep going because Luke 18 27 says what is impossible with man is possible with God let's build a living model for God's glory and the good of those who don't yet believe that the impossible is possible amen amen