

# The True and Better Authentic You

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Preacher: Rev. George Sinclair

[ 0 : 00 ]     Father, we give you thanks and praise that we are saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. And we give you thanks and praise that your grace grows us, and only your grace will truly grow us, so that we are fit for heaven, that we are fit for the new heaven and the new earth.

We ask, Father, that you help us to pay deep attention to your word, that, in fact, your word may enter deeply into our lives to form us, so that we, Father, might put ourselves in those postures of obedience, that your grace might work in us most deeply and flower most beautifully for your glory, for the good of ourselves and the good of others.

And we ask this in the name of Jesus, your Son and our Savior. Amen. Please be seated. So, I have a bit of an embarrassing type of way to open the sermon today.

And the reason it's embarrassing is I was sharing with my wife last night about how this week, I had an insight about the text that just sort of like it hit me like this.

It just completely knocked me and helped me to see and understand and realize things in a very, very new way. So, in fact, part of my worry about the sermon, actually, is because it's really helped me to see things in a very, very new way.

[ 1 : 29 ]     I hope I'm not too in... I hope I'm actually... You can understand me. I'm not too all over the place, a little bit like a balloon letting the air out, and it goes all over the place.

I hope I'm clear. But the reason it's a bit embarrassing, potentially embarrassing, is I share this insight, and you all just go, really, George?

That's a sign of you having a big insight? That's pretty pathetic. Like, when I have an insight, it's like this. But it's not an insight. It was just as if God brought something home to me that has changed.

It's helped to solidify or crystallize different things I've been saying and trying to understand the Bible. And when I share it with you, I can guarantee you that you're going to just go, uh, like that doesn't sound much, and I'll just try to explain it.

And part of the thing is, it's an analogy that I've heard used before over the years. And I think it's partially just that God finally wanted to get something through my unbelievably thick skull.

[ 2 : 30 ]     I have a very, very thick skull. I can be very, duh. And part of it is, I think, that I've been meditating so much upon Colossians 2, verses 15 to 23, which we looked at last week, and Colossians 3, verses 1 to 4, which is what I've been meditating upon and studying all this week.

And I think it was just the combination of God being gracious to me. And this analogy actually sort of clicking and making sense in a remarkable way. So now after this buildup, here's your letdown moment.

What effort is required for an apple to become an orange? What effort by an apple is required for it to be turned into an orange, or to turn itself into an orange?

Well, of course, the correct answer is that no amount of effort by an apple will ever turn it into an orange. And no amount of effort by an apple will ever do something that makes it worthy of somehow or another being turned into an orange by some other person, that it can't be forced.

So why is this actually quite a profound statement, even though you all are now profoundly disappointed, thinking that, George, was your great insight?

[ 3 : 45 ] We are going to pray far harder for you, George, in the weeks to come, that you have better insights than that. Well, let's look at the text. We're preaching through the book of Colossians, and we're looking today at Colossians 3, chapter 3, verses 1 to 4.

And as part of the context, just before we read this text, the part that just went on immediately before this, one of the ways that I summarized that text was it sets before us Christians a question.

Will I grow me, or will the Lord grow me? Like a fundamental question. Will I grow me, or will the Lord grow me?

And one of the things that that text looked at in that question is it talked about different types of religious rituals, different ways to be in tune with nature. It talked about different ways to try to develop the mind, different ways to show that the mind has control over the body, different ways to try to have visions, basically almost like a bit of a list, a laundry list, or a shopping list of the different ways that people try to grow themselves.

And the shocking end of all of that was verse 23 of chapter 2, where it says, These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion, in other words, religion that comes ultimately from the self, and asceticism and severity to the body.

[ 5 : 18 ] In other words, it seems to be good, because it seems to talk about you having a very, very deep commitment that you're very, very devoted to. And it seems to have an ability to show that you have this control in general, and you're willing to do without, and general.

So it's all about control. It's all about your devotion. And it seems to be very, very wise. But, the end of verse 23, they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh.

That in fact, this laundry list, this shopping list of ways that the religions and spiritualities and self-help technologies of the world throughout history, and even today, have attended to try to direct us so that we can grow, and that we can change, and that we can develop.

In fact, at the end of the day, it doesn't stop the fact that there is a deep part in every single human being that still desires to be God. It still desires their God project.

And that these things, in fact, don't work. And then, in chapter 3, there's a therefore, which isn't translated in most versions.

[ 6 : 26 ] It begins like this. And I'm just going to read the four verses. It's only four verses. It's very short and very brief. And then we're going to return to it and sort of unpack it. But this contrast, then, of these things actually don't work, therefore, or if, or since, then, you have been raised with Christ.

Christ. Seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Just pause, and I'll read it again. You know, one of the very interesting things about this is that the very, very first words of Jesus' ministry, like, what are the very, very first words that Jesus says in his public ministry?

His first words that are recorded, of course, in Luke, when he's behind in the temple, but that's sort of, in a sense, a little bit of a coming up for air type of moment, but fundamentally, Jesus disappears.

He stays working with Joseph and his family. Sometime along that, Joseph dies, and Jesus is a carpenter for some 30, well, another 20 some odd years after that event in the temple.

And then the very, very first words of Jesus' ministry are recorded in John's Gospel, and it's a question. And the question is, what are you seeking? It's interesting that Jesus begins his public ministry with a question.

[ 7 : 44 ] Not with a declaration, but with a question. What are you seeking? I mean, that's a very good question for every human being. What are you seeking? And Paul actually then develops this thing here a little bit by, he says, if then, in verse one again, you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

And then he sort of doubles down on the idea, because set, this next part, set your mind, is a different, it's a deeper type of commitment, it's a different type of project than seeking, it's setting.

Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

And I'm going to actually, I think Andrew has up on the stage, on the screen, a more literal translation of verse four. So I've been using the ESV, but from the academic commentary research, a more literal way, the most literal way of translating verse four, is when Christ, your life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

And I'll say that again. When Christ, your life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory. And this, of course, is the Christian hope.

[ 9 : 14 ] You put your faith and trust in Jesus, and when you put your faith and trust in Jesus, he receives you. And Paul has used a variety of images to try to communicate what this is, but it really quite literally means, and I'm using, I mean literally, literally, not like as a sign for heightened, like literally, that what the Bible reveals is that this profound mystery that when I am mere mortal, with all my sins and all my failings, all my strengths, all my weaknesses, all my genetic predispositions towards certain things and away from other types of things, when I call out to God and say, Jesus, will you be my Savior and my Lord?

Or when I recognize that that has happened in my life from my very, very early age, because of course, it's the desire of every Christian parent that their child never have a moment that they don't trust in Jesus.

So this giving of yourself to Jesus can be something that can happen very, very, very young that just grows and develops so that a person might say, I literally, I've never known a time when I haven't trusted Jesus as my Savior and my Lord.

Isn't that the prayer and the work and labor of every Christian parent that that would be the case? But for those of us that that wasn't the case, we say that to Jesus, and Jesus actually, we actually, in a sense, it's not just that we put our hands in Jesus and Jesus stays completely, he is always separate and he's always different, but we actually enter into him.

And the Bible earlier used the analogy in some ways that you can understand when you see somebody, whether an adult or a child being baptized, what you are to understand is that in a sense they are plunging into Christ they plunge into his sinless life, they plunge into his death upon the cross, they plunge into him tasting all there is to taste of nothing left, with nothing left, all there is to taste of death with nothing that's not tasted, they plunge into his resurrection.

[ 11 : 18 ] And in a sense which is true, but we don't know it in its fullness, we actually are also, in a sense, glorified with him and that won't be revealed until, and this is what it's being talked about.

And because of the way we human beings are, when we, in a sense, are immersed in Christ, and this is something that baptism can't symbolize, but it's proclaimed as part of the teaching, but by the way, baptism doesn't do it in itself, right?

That baptism is an outward act to signify what's something that, that's something that only God can do, right? And because of the way human beings are, that when we plunge into Christ and are immersed in him, he comes into us.

That human beings, in a sense, are like sponges. If you put a sponge and immerse it in water, the water goes in the sponge. And in the same way, Christ enters into us.

And this is the profound and wonderful teaching of the Bible about what happens to us when we are in Christ. But then the question is, how do we grow?

[ 12 : 28 ] Like, how is it that we grow? And what is it that we're going to become? And this is where we go back to my very, very mind-bogglingly unprofound question, how does an apple become an orange?

And the fact is, an apple can never become an orange. But look again at verse 4. Here's the apple-orange analogy coming to completion.

When Christ, your life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory. C.S. Lewis has a very, very wonderful analogy where he talks about the eternal weight of glory.

He's really looking at that wonderful part in 2 Corinthians where it talks about how God is preparing ordinary people like you and me for an eternal weight of glory. And C.S. Lewis has this wonderful analogy that if we were to see now, and I'll just pick Andrew.

He's a good guy. Maybe there's lots of different ways we'd like to be more like Andrew. But if we were to see Andrew, if all of a sudden we were to see Andrew the way he will be when verse 4 is actually true in history, there will be a time when Andrew will see Jesus face to face.

[ 13 : 59 ] And then Andrew will be revealed with Jesus in glory. And we'll know it's Andrew. But if we were to see Andrew like this in the future right now, all of us would in fact have to shield our eyes from his glory and we'd all be tempted to fall down and worship him.

On one hand, Andrew is still Andrew. I mean, the Bible has this very precious promise that in heaven we'll recognize each other. You know, in the story of Jesus at the Transfiguration, people could recognize Moses and Elijah.

You don't lose your identity. But what happens when verse 4 becomes true, the title of this sermon is The True and Better Authentic You.

The True and Better Authentic You. And in some way then, sorry Andrew, I'm going to keep using you. I'm saying your name too much to take out of the audio and it'll also be, of course, on this.

So I'm just using you as an example just because you're sort of over there when I look towards the camera, I can see you and I know you can handle it. But, you know, if you had Andrew's kids on a separate thing, Andrew wasn't around, I bet Andrew's kids could imitate Andrew.

[ 15 : 17 ] I mean, my kids do that to me. Sometimes a bit embarrassing to see how my kids imitate me and I think, I do that? Really? I don't do that and then they imitate me.

Really? I do that? And the quirks of Andrew will be revealed and you'll know it's Andrew but it is a very different Andrew.

He is a very different Andrew to be revealed with Christ in glory and that's the destiny of every person who puts their faith in Christ. And now you get a bit of a sense.

You see, if all of the different texts in the Bible that call us to holiness, to call us to be more like Christ, Christ, well what's that telling us to do? It's telling us to do certain things and stop doing other things so we can become, it's actually part of the steps on this journey that will culminate with us being revealed with Jesus.

And you realize that God isn't making you a better apple, he's making you into something very different. In fact, here's where the analogy breaks down and I'm going to give you a true and better analogy than the one I heard.

[ 16 : 29 ] A couple of weeks ago when I was trying to illustrate something in the book of Colossians that happened to also be Thanksgiving Sunday, those online saw it in a different week but those who are watching the service or entering into the service I should say, not watching but entering into the worship through the online, hopefully you're able to see that there were cut roses across the front of the stage.

And I use the analogy that the Bible, what the Bible says about human beings is that every human being is in a sense a cut rose. Cut roses are dying. They look beautiful.

They smell nice and they look beautiful. And you can do certain types of things like put them in water, keep them in the right temperature, give them a little bit of cut flower food that will keep them looking nice a little bit longer and fresh a little bit longer.

But at the end of the day, they're separated from the ground. They're separated from the rest of the roots and they're dying. They look beautiful but they're dying. And so what happens in grace when you put your faith and trust in Christ is you're connected to your creator.

I looked it up in Google so it must be true because of course nothing in social media as we've discovered from Facebook and Twitter over the last week ever misdirects you. It only gives you the truth.

[ 17 : 45 ] But according to YouTube, you can't take cut roses and graft them back onto a rose bush. It's just impossible. So it points actually to the miracle of grace that God makes you alive.

That God takes you a cut rose and by faith and trust in Jesus, God connects you back to the source of life. But here we see something very, very different.

It isn't just that God is making better cut roses. If every human being outside of Christ is a cut rose, in Colossians 3, verse 4, you're a sequoia.

You're a full-grown sequoia. One of those trees that are so old and so big, you can cut a hole in the bottom and drive a car through.

So how can I cut rose? You see, so here's the thing, and this is the big shocking thing to me that really just brought things home to me in a very, very different way. And actually, if you could just put up the first point, Andrew, there's actually, there's only one point.

[ 18 : 52 ] There's only one thing that I want you to try to remember. The best thing of all would be if you memorized verses 1 to 4. But I've tried to summarize verses 1 to 4 and the message of it is, in light of his death upon the cross for you, set your mind on Christ in all his risen, sovereign, Trinitarian glory.

It's as if you've been raised with Christ and Christ is seated at the right hand of God the Father.

There's the resurrection, there's the death, you've died with Christ. That's also in that text. It's in verse 3, for you have died with Christ and your life is hidden with Christ and God. When Christ, who is your life, appears and you will also appear with him in glory.

And verse 2 is the command, set your mind, not on things that are above, not on wispy things, like not on just little visions about what rivers will look in heaven. No, you set your mind on Jesus, on Christ.

And you set your mind on Christ where he's seated, which means he's ruling, he's conquered, it's accomplished. It's a picture of sovereignty and it's a picture of him at union with the Father, his Trinitarian glory.

[ 20 : 09 ] And so the command is, in light of his death upon the cross for you, set your mind on Christ and all his risen, sovereign Trinitarian glory. But here's the thing, I'm going to unpack this idea a little bit more in the next couple of moments.

If you understand that the end of the story isn't that you will be a far better cut rose than you are today, but you're going to be a sequoia, then you realize that only God can do that.

So all of the texts in the Bible that talk about you becoming more like Jesus or more Christ-like or more holy, what are those doing? They're all talking about the day when you were with Jesus and you were in the new heaven and the new earth and were the life of the Father to the Son and the Holy Spirit.

That life is the life that makes you alive and their love is the love that inflames your heart that you just long to enter into more and more and more and more for all eternity, not only by yourself with others.

And that holiness is becoming more like Christ, more fit for that. And then you realize it's describing a sequoia and you're a cut flower and that sequoia is your final destiny.

[ 21 : 30 ] And so much of what self-help is and so all of the things that were being talked about in chapter 2, verses 15 to 23, 16 to 23, about asceticism and devotion and control and in tune with nature, all of those things are just better ways to be a better cut flower.

And God wants to turn you into sequoia. And that means all you can do is place yourself in a posture of obedience where God can do the work that only he can do, that grace can do the work that only grace can do.

Give you a bit of an analogy for it. It's not an analogy, it's a story. You know the very first miracle that Jesus performed and the very first miracle that Jesus performed is the story of Jesus turning water into wine.

And in that story, you can go back and read it in John 2 if you want to read it later on for yourself. But it's a very simple, very simple story. Jesus and his disciples had been invited to a wedding and a wedding feast in those days would go for seven days and it was a great faux pas, an unbelievably terrible faux pas to run out of wine.

And so Jesus' mother must have been related or had some connection to the people putting on the wedding reception. And she's worried about what's going on and all frustrated with what's going on and in the midst of her worry and frustration, she has a couple of sharp words to Jesus and say, Jesus, do something.

[ 22 : 57 ] And then Jesus says, and there's a whole other bit of the sermon about it's not my time, and then she just says to the servants, whatever Jesus tells you to do, do it. And so Jesus, when his mother is left, says, okay, take these big stone water jars that will hold literally, you know, hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of liters of water, fill them with water, and take them to the director of the feast.

And they do what Jesus says and by the time they put in the water, water, water, water, water, look at it, water, well, Jesus said to fill it with water, I filled it with water, trudge it over, and by the time it gets to the master of the feast, it's the best wine that they've ever had.

Now let me tell you this, I can tell you all week to fill stone jars with water, it'll never turn into wine. I can tell you that all week, it doesn't do it.

But what happened? Only God can turn the water into wine. That's one of the very first proofs of Jesus' divinity, that Jesus turns the water into wine. It's one of the story-picture ways whereby his divinity is portrayed.

But it's an act of grace that only God can do. But what's the posture that's needed for God to do what only God can do is to be obedient to something that he's provided and asked you to do.

[ 24 : 21 ] And when you put yourself in a posture of obedience to something that God has asked you to do, you don't really know what he's going to do. And part of that is because I'm completely and utterly addicted to being a better-cut flower.

I am deeply addicted to being a better-cut flower. And so God keeps surprising me in my life because he has no interest in making me a better-cut flower.

He's making me into sequoia. He's making me into a being that will one day be revealed in the presence of Jesus, in all of Jesus' risen, sovereign, trinitarian glory.

So it is with this very, very simple command. If you could now put up, here's in a sense what the big picture is to how Paul is going to begin to describe this.

And every week it's the same type of an idea that we're looking at the means of grace. It's not the complete means of grace. It's like one of the means of grace is Bible reading. Like reading doesn't actually change or transform you, but the Bible, God wants us to read his word.

[ 25 : 36 ] And when we read his word, it's like filling the jars of water with water so that God can turn the water into wine. Like another means of grace is actually being part of an online service or part of a local church.

We all know, like going to a hockey game doesn't change you. Going to a reading group doesn't change you. Just hanging out with other people doesn't change you. But God has said that one of the means of grace is that Christians gather together in public worship and when you do that out of obedience, it's filling the water pots with water.

And what is communion? You can snack on crackers and juice or wine all day and if you did, all it would do is give you probably diabetes and extra weight and an alcohol problem.

Drinking wine doesn't do anything for you. nor does eating unleavened bread. But Jesus told us to regularly gather and have the bread and have the wine and that's filling the pots with water so Jesus can turn the water into wine.

And Paul sets before us another set of means of grace, different aspects of postures that we enter into out of obedience because Christ has said to do it.

[ 26 : 59 ] And one of the things we're going to say, there's a bit of effort in it, but one of the things we're going to see and the reason and well, here's the big picture. The first one is this. It was what happened in chapter two and it's a question.

Will I grow me or will the Lord grow me? That's the first thing. That was the first, that's the big question. In a sense, when I wake up, well, not when I first wake up because when I first wake up I can barely function.

After I've started to have some caffeine in my system and some toast and I can start to function, the question before me for the rest of the day is will I grow me or will the Lord grow me? Will I commit this day?

Will I double down this day and set my mind on my cut flower project? Or will I let the Lord grow me? And this isn't a couch potato approach to growth by the way because there's going to be next things that happen but that's the fundamental question.

Will I grow me or will I let the Lord grow me? And then the second thing which is we're looking at today is this. Set your mind on Christ crucified and risen or as I've put it in light of his death upon the cross for you set your mind on Christ in all his risen sovereign Trinitarian glory.

[ 28 : 11 ] In light of his death upon the cross for you set your mind on Christ in all his risen sovereign Trinitarian glory. And then the third thing which is what we're going to look at next week which is verses five to nine is put off sin.

These are all aspects of the same type of the same it's an aspect of the means of grace. Put off sin. I'll talk a little bit more about that but we'll talk in a moment but we're going to talk about more next week.

And then the fourth thing which is verses ten to fourteen is put on virtue. For those of you who are very very concrete in your thinking it's really as a matter of in a sense you know the question is posed to me not just in the morning but as the day goes through and as the week goes through am I going to pursue a cut flower project or am I going to let God grow me into sequoia?

Will I grow me or will I let the Lord grow me? Okay well the first thing that he's asked me to do is to set my mind in light of the crucifixion this death upon the cross to set my mind on Jesus in all his risen sovereign Trinitarian glory.

And the other thing he's going to want me to do is to like I'm not going to take my shirt off but take off these pieces of clothing that I have that are really sin.

[ 29 : 40 ] And then the other thing he wants me to do is to put on virtue as defined by the Bible. That's what we're going to look at the following week in verses 10 to 14.

And then the next two steps we're going to look at in one sermon and then the next step is to let the peace of Christ rule in my heart to let Christ's word rule in my heart and my life to let it to let it happen.

And then the final thing is to do everything and anything. It isn't saying just do religious things. It says do everything and everything. Do those of you who work in the civil service do your day.

Those of you who are in politics do your day in politics. Those in business those stay at home moms or stay at home dads or retired people do everything that has to be done today to the honor and glory of God giving thanks to him.

And that's what Paul sets out between chapter 2 verse 16 and chapter 3 verse 17. And we're going to look at a bit of them. Every week this is going to be up here so we can remember the whole picture.

[ 30 : 48 ] So the first question is will I grow me or will the Lord grow me? Will I pursue my cut flower project being the best cut flower I can possibly be? I'm going to be the fittest cut flower, the richest cut flower.

I'm going to be the longest lasting cut flower I can possibly be. Will I let the Lord grow me? And the first step in this little model of letting the Lord grow me is to set my mind.

In light of Christ and his death upon the cross for me to set my mind on Jesus on Christ in all his risen sovereign trinitarian glory. Now here's one of the interesting things about this is that setting all can set their minds on things because all of us do.

A couple of weeks ago one of our youngest grandchildren we got a little video of him and he's just learned how to stand. He can't do anything other than stand.

But he had this huge desire to pick, I can't remember what the object, it was to pick this object up. Here he is, a little tiny six month old kid and his mind was set on this.

[ 31 : 55 ] And all of us who have young kids or who've seen young kids, young kids can get their mind set on something. In fact, we've had some times when the kids, by the way, today, every kid here should get a chocolate bar afterwards.

They've been so fantastically behaved and parents are saying, no, don't give them chocolate bars and I have to live with them on chocolate highs for the rest of the day. But they've been very, very well behaved.



But we all know that a kid can all of a sudden go into a complete screaming fit in church. Why? They have their mind set on something and their mom or their dad doesn't give it. And their response is to explode. And one of the reasons that all of this is so that it's in fact a normal human thing that we set our minds.

And here's one of the things that we discover. This is why I say it's not that we don't do any effort. It's not a couch potato thing. I'm just going to be here like this is so nice. This is spiritual growth. I just sit on a couch.

I do nothing except eat potato chips all day and God grows me into sequoia. No, no, no, no. There is some effort because the effort is if you start to set your mind on Christ, if I come before God and say I want to set my mind on Christ, I start to realize there's a bit of a struggle because the fact of the matter is I already have my mind set on different things.

[ 33 : 11 ] So do you. Your mind can be set on lust, can be set on anger, can be set on revenge, it could be set on your God project, it could be set upon being rich, it can be set upon fears, it can be set upon your profound insecurity, younger people seem to be getting smarter and better than me and it's set on my insecurity, it's set on my failure, it's set on my doom, it's set on getting that girl, getting that job, getting that loan, getting that house, getting that car.

It's only when we want to set our minds in Christ that we discover that that mind is already set on all sorts of things. And that's one of the reasons we have to put off. It's because my mind is set on that lust, that anger, that greed.

And I say, oh Lord, that's part of my cut flower project. Lord, help me set my mind on you, in all your risen Trinitarian glory and sovereignty, and help me to put off that anger, put off that boasting, put off that pride, put off that greed.

Just one other little bit of an analogy. You see, this, by the way, helps us to understand a little bit about the weird way that God seems to work with us. You see, and it's one of the mistakes churches make when they say five steps to financial health according to the wisdom of the Bible.

Well, that implies that God wants you to be a better cut flower. But if God doesn't want you to be a cut flower, well, he's going to sort money out in your life, but it's going to be like in a weird way.

[ 35 : 05 ] And maybe he'll make you very rich, by the way. I mean, God has different things. He knows how we're all wired and will be wired in different types of ways. But at the end of the day, as we all know, we make money thinking money will serve us, but what always happens is that we serve money.

And God doesn't want to make us a better cut flower where we're way better at serving money than other people. He wants us to be a completely different type of person where money isn't what our minds are set on.

It doesn't mean we don't, you know, count our change or look at our bank statements, but actually what he wants to do is to make us into the type of person that generosity is what drives us and governs us.

Like what drives us and governs us is a profound sense of trust and confidence in him. And that profound trust and confidence at the end of our story isn't being a better cut flower, but the end of our story is that we will die and appear before Jesus and that we will be revealed in glory, participating and drinking and breathing the love of the father for the son and the son of the father, consuming their goodness, their beauty, and as we consume their beauty and their truth and their goodness and their justice and their mercy and their kindness, we are changed from one degree of glory to another.

And just as the father and the son don't think they have to grasp on anything, but that what fundamentally characterizes them as a confidence in their giving and receiving and a confidence then to be unendingly generous, that's what God wants to form us into.

[ 36 : 58 ] Where generosity and confidence is the air we begin to breathe as we prepare to be a sequoia for all eternity. So it's a very interesting thing, a mentally handicapped person can set their minds on things, little babies can, and all of us are doing it all the time.

And God is saying, lay down what your mind is set on. In light of Jesus and his death upon the cross for you, set your mind on Christ in all his risen, sovereign, Trinitarian glory.

glory. You're going to come to realize that you keep forgetting, and you're going to come and realize that you already have your mind on a whole lot of other things, but, and there's nothing, you know, the mere fact that we all set our minds on things show that there is nothing magical about setting your mind on something.

The heart of all of this is that Jesus has told us to do it, so that when we begin to develop the habits through the day, and at different times in the day, to say, Lord, help me to set my mind on Christ right now, in all his risen, sovereign, Trinitarian glory.

What are you doing? You're putting water in the stone pots. That's all you're doing. You're putting water into the stone pots.

[ 38 : 28 ] It's a means of grace. It's a means of grace. The wonderful thing about all of this is that we're going to fail.

I fail, you fail. We all have to pray for each other. That's part of why church is so important. But God sets before us these wonderful means of grace. Set your minds in light of Jesus and his death upon the cross and his for you.

Set your mind on Christ in all his risen, sovereign, Trinitarian glory. And as you face the challenges of the day, as you face your insecurities, your fears, your successes, your failures, remember this.

You are now walking, when you put your faith and trust in Christ, you are now walking on a, you are now in a new story. And the end of your story, the end of your story, not because of your excellencies or your successes, the end of your story, is you are revealed in the presence of Jesus, completely and utterly transformed for all eternity.

That is the end of your story. I invite you to stand. I think I forgot to ask you to put the means of the general thanksgiving up, but that's fine.

[ 39 : 52 ] We'll just pray. Oh, no, you do. You do have it. Good for you, Andrew. Way to go. Let's say this. You'll notice, by the way, this phrase means of grace is actually in this very ancient product of the English Reformation.

So I invite you to pray this with me, and then I'll just say a very brief prayer in closing. Let's pray. Almighty God, Father of all mercies, we are unworthy servants to give you most humble and hearty thanks for all your goodness and loving kindness to us and to all people.

We bless you for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life, but above all for your inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ, for the means of grace and for the hope of glory.

and we beseech you, give us that due sense of all your mercies, that our hearts may be unfeignedly thankful, and that we show forth your praise not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up ourselves to your service, and by walking before you in holiness and righteousness all our days, through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with you and the Holy Spirit be all honor and glory, world without end.

Amen. Father, help us to grasp the significance of the means of grace. Help us to die to our cut rose project, and Father, to put ourselves in postures of obedience as you prepare us for glory.

[ 41 : 29 ] And we ask, Father, that you would help us to set our minds on Christ. In light of the cross, set our minds on Christ and all his risen sovereign trinitarian glory. Help us to do it today, this afternoon, tomorrow, and the next every day until we meet together once again, to gather as part of your people yet another one of your means of grace.

And we ask this in the name of Jesus and all God's people said, Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.