

# Activate

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[ 0 : 00 ] Important announcement. Now today I have an important announcement for you.!

Just hold that. Just to raise the suspense level here this morning. I did a Google search and I found there's a big long list. It's called 119 cool church names.

119 of them. I'm sure there's lots more. There's names like Connection Church, Objective Church, New Tribe, Celebrate Church, Manifold Church, Vibe Church, Stream Church, Pulse Church, Renew Church.

Now we know churches change their names or they pick these funky kind of names. You know the church down the road used to be called Salt Church. Now it's called Encounter.

As we know our former assistant pastor Adam Gibbs had the name Elevate Church. So I'm announcing today the new name for our church.

[ 1 : 13 ] Activate! How does that sound? Of course I'm only kidding, don't worry. I'm only kidding, we're not changing the name. But it's just about activate. Activate. It's a name that sounds a bit sort of upbeat, doesn't it?

A bit exciting, a bit uplifting. But of course we're not changing our name. We've got no intentions of that. But I'd like to talk about activate. Activate. How to activate.

How do we activate our church? How do we get the, you know, when you see the person on the hospital bed and they put the, you know, the two big electrical things on them and they go boom, boom.

To activate. To make that patient come back to life. How do we activate our church? Really it is God's work, isn't it?

As we read in 1 Corinthians 3. Now the context there is Paul talking about himself as the master builder. He's talking about laying the foundation. He's talking about building the building.

[ 2 : 16 ] So there's that analogy, that symbolism. And then there's also the picture of the church being like a field. A cultivated field. It says you are God's husbandry.

It's like you're God's farm. You're a cultivated field. And he says that I have planted, Apollos is watered, but God gave the increase.

God gave the increase. Of course, for us to be activated and really I am talking about a spiritual vein here about something that is really important. That we are activated.

That we do come alive. And really it's God's work. Paul planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. Paul's talking about the church as being like a garden.

And it's as if he planted the seed when he first brought that message to Corinth. As he first brought that message to the people there and he saw souls saved.

[ 3 : 22 ] People were converted. They trusted in Christ. Then another man followed Paul. His name, Apollos. He watered that seed. That gospel seed.

That spiritual growth started there as he gave the Bible teaching and the nurturing. And that seed grew. It sprouted. It blossomed.

It germinated. It budded. It became a fruitful, flourishing plant. Why? Because God gave the increase. It's on him that we depend. You know, I like to say we're not an independent Baptist church.

We are a God dependent Baptist church. We are absolutely dependent upon him. Because he is the one who is the head of this church. He is the one who makes his church increase and grow. He is the one who is the senior pastor of this church. He is the one who brings the increase. The increase is of God. The activation is of God. He is our source. He is the life source.

[ 4 : 20 ] The life source. He is the one who activates us. He sets us in motion. Every one of us. He breathes new life into us. As he breathes the breath of life into Adam, he breathes his Holy Spirit new life into us.

He makes us born again. He gives us his new life. And he creates life. He builds his church. He grows his church. The activation is of God.

Activate. We need God to do it. Sadly, there's a lot of the opposite going on. I put to you, the opposite of activate is deactivate, isn't it?

The opposite is happening. Let me put to you some of the things. This is a bit like my garden at the moment. You know, there's been a deactivation. You know, the flowers droop and the leaves wilt and everything sort of fades.

And thank God for the rain. The opposite is happening in the church of God. Across the world, I put to you, a deactivation. A deactivating.

[ 5 : 22 ] I'm talking the slide, that slippery slope, into complacency and apathy. How easy it is to slip and slide. You see those game shows where I saw a video clip of one where there was this big, long, greasy pole and there was an object at the end and they had to walk across that greasy pole to get to the object at the end.

And it was just hopeless because there was a slipping and sliding. There's a slippery sliding, a slippery slope that's going on today. So, we tend naturally to ease off, to cool down, to cool off rather than to warm up.

Now, sit in a room long enough and you start to get cold unless there's a heat source. You know, try it tonight. You'll see it's what happens, isn't it? And friends, I put to you, sometimes it can happen to me.

I can cool down. I can cool off. I can lose that warmth. I need to warm up. I need to activate. Talking about me. You know, I have hopes of seeing a new church planted in Adelaide.

I think there's lots of needs. And when I got some interest on that side of the city, the west side, the northwest side, I followed it up. The most reaction I've had, however, from interested parties has actually been to pull out, to lose interest.

[ 6 : 47 ] It's the natural thing to do, isn't it? The trend is to slippery slope deactivate. I also sometimes see, I'm talking frankly here, fellow believers once active who have become inactive.

It can happen to all of us, can't it? Let's be honest today. I see people taking offense and the devil takes them out. Takes them out. You know, another analogy, another symbol of the war front, of the trenches, of the front line.

What happens? When the flak comes, when the bombs fall, when God says it's time to advance over the top, they retreat.

When God says, let's move ahead. Let's go into enemy territory. Let's take the land. They hunker down in the trenches. And some even turn tail and retreat.

They hide when God says it's time to shine. I see believers who have been all fired up. Then they lose heart and they become weak and ineffective.

[ 8 : 08 ] It can happen to all of us. I'm talking tonight. Take heed lest you fall. You that think that you're standing so smartly and uprightly, take heed lest you fall.

Check that out tonight, six o'clock. I see men and women, formerly pillars of the church, now ground to dust, overcome in sin and failure.

I see strong believers attending soul winning, prayer meetings, Bible studies, strong supporters of the church, of the ministry of this church. These are the ones sticking their heads above the trenches, taking the enemy fire.

Then the devil gets his target sights on them and bang, bang, they're gone. He takes them out. They're in the devil's crosshairs and bang, they're gone.

The devil has taken them out. He's made them ineffectual, ineffective, inactive. He's deactivated them. They're gone. Fallen.

[ 9 : 09 ] Fallen. Astray from the body of Christ. It grieves me to see that. And you see, the devil wants to deactivate you, doesn't he?

To deactivate you. But God wants to activate you. How do we guard ourselves in such a situation, in such a context? The word tells us, Ephesians 4, 27, neither give place to the devil.

Don't give him an inch. Don't give place to the devil. Don't give him place. What are ways that we can give the devil place in our lives? You could think for yourself, hey, there's some things, yeah, God's been convicting me about this or that.

Unforgiveness is a biggie, isn't it? Unforgiveness. You know, I went to a secular training event. It was run by a Christian man, but it was a secular context where it was training people about

self-development and how they can be more confident and capable.

But he was a Christian. And he had a talk about forgiveness. And he talks about having a forgiveness conversation. And he was appealing to this group of really secular students in a secular setting to challenge them to think about, is there someone you need to make a call to?

[10:31] And he said, straight after this, I want you to get your phone out and make that call. Make that call. Have a forgiveness conversation. A forgiveness conversation.

Now, I thought when he was saying this, I thought, look, I'm a pretty forgiving kind of person. I don't hold any grudges. There's no one that I really feel like I've not said sorry to or not forgiven.

I'm not holding any grudge or bitterness in my heart towards anyone. And I was scratching my brain and he challenged me. He said, oh, Andrew, have you thought of someone that you need to say I'm sorry to, someone you need to forgive?

And I said, look, I just really can't think of anybody. I just, I don't, I don't hate anybody. I just, I don't hold anything against people that have hurt me. Or, and I don't feel like I've hurt anyone else, myself, really.

I was scratching my head just to think about it. And then afterwards I thought, oh, no, I just, there is someone I couldn't make that call to, but it's going to be hard. It's going to be hard for me.

[11:32] It was the, my previous boss. And, you know, God bless her. God love her. But she, she was a, she was a tough girl. And she was a pretty strong boss.

And, and, and she was pretty brutal with me at one point. She might be watching this, but, but, you know, she, she gave me a telling off in a formal way about something I thought was quite a trivial matter that she could have just had a conversation with me about.

And really there was nothing to it, really. I didn't see that I've done anything wrong. But nevertheless, it did hurt me. And eventually, well, I'm out of that job now. I gave my, gave her notice.

And it's, it's over now. And, but she's still my referee. So she's kind of, you know, potentially she might have to make a reference for me. So, but no, I made that call. She didn't answer.

But I left a message and I said, I'm sorry for how I might have acted if I didn't act in a, maybe as professional way as I could have. And I'm doing a self-development course.

[12:33] And there was a challenge to, to say sorry to people that you need to say sorry to. So I made that call. And it was a pretty tough thing to do. And this challenge from this, this man who was presiding over this thing is, think about, is there someone you need to say sorry to.

Something you need to bury the hatchet. Even when you think, it's not my fault. She did the wrong thing. You know, have that forgiveness conversation. That can help set you free, can't it?

Because unforgiveness is giving place to the devil. It's bitterness in your heart, holding something. Think about that. You might have to think about, okay, I'll have to make that call after this.

Because I know that I need to make something right. I need to say sorry about how I handled that. You don't have to go into any great detail over it. But it can be real for you.

Yes, someone has wounded me in the past and I still haven't got over it. Deal with it. Say sorry. Put it to rest. Put it behind you. It's quite a cathartic thing, isn't it?

[13:40] Letting go of that that's hurt you. Make that call. Deal with that baggage. Neither give place to the devil.

First, I couldn't think I had a grievance against, but there was something that I had to get it sorted. Just to close that page, that chapter, even if you feel you are the injured party, just be humble and make that call.

Whether they receive it or act upon it, it's up to them, isn't it? And people did in that course. There were some people who were kind of testifying in this secular training session about the liberating experience it was for them to let that unforgiveness go.

But even the Christian context, let's be real today, the devil wants to deactivate you. And he wants to take you out. His crosshairs. He's wanting to find some space.

Don't give him space. Mental space in your head. Don't give him space. Don't give him place. He's intent on his mission to deactivate you. You see some people and they get activated, don't they?

[14:51] I see people activated when you drive to church and they're out there in the pouring rain kicking a ball of air around and everyone's cheering and yelling and they're getting soaked.

I did that as a kid playing soccer in the pouring rain. You just play, don't you? Rain, hail, sleet or shine, nothing stops them. They've been activated. Activated to follow their sport, to follow their

dream, their hobby.

Nothing will stop them because they've been activated. They get fired up. They get energised because it matters to them and they work hard at it. They don't miss training.

Nothing will stop them. Nothing is too much trouble. They are determined. You see people like that?

New fad faith, new fad diets, diet crazes, they jump on the bandwagon.

Oh, it's the Atkins diet. It's the keto diet or whatever it is. They get the new fad but then the fad fades. The fad fades.

[ 15 : 51 ] The enthusiasm wanes. I see some people and look, don't feel condemned. I'm not putting you on a guilt trip here but I've seen people that were more zealous than they are now.

I saw them come Sunday nights. Now it's like they only come Sunday mornings or it's like they've drifted.

There's been a deactivating, a deactivating. The devil loves that. He wants to take you out. He wants to take you out. Whatever he can do to distract, to detour, to deactivate you.

Some people used to come every week. Now they come kind of just hit and miss a little. Just every so often. Look, there might be reason for that. Please bear with me.

We're not into condemnation here but I'm wanting to edify. To say, hey, maybe this is true for me. Maybe I'm being deactivated without me realising it.

[ 16 : 50 ] Inch by inch, little by little. It happens gradually. They just chill out. You know when the explorers go to the North Pole or the South Pole, it's just little by little the frostbite sets in.

Just a little cold, a little chill, Blaine. A little chill, a little discomfort. And gradually the cold gets colder and colder and they die. Is it the attraction of Sunday penalty rates?

That can be a reason. Well, I could lose money if I come to church. For some, it's like fellowship is not a priority. There's always an excuse. A birthday party. It's interesting when you actually see what the Bible says about birthday parties.

But that's another subject. Someone's coming over. I need to stay home. Well, tell them you've got another commitment that you need to keep. Schedule your life around that.

Invite them to come to church with you if there's a clash. Now, there are reasons why it's not a good idea to come to church. For example, if you've got a contagious disease, please don't come.

[ 17 : 56 ] That's a good reason. That's a good reason. So what about you? It's a personal question, isn't it? Activate our new church name. No, not really. But we need to be activated.

We need that personal transformation. A faith activation. Be active, not passive. It's about going to war, isn't it? It's getting our head above the trenches.

And when the direction is advanced, we don't retreat. We stop playing games. We put away childish things. Put away childish things.

Now, what is childish things? What do children spend their time doing? At times, just, you know, what do adults tend to spend their time doing these days?

Or the Facebook, you name it. Look, I'm guilty. What is it going to take to deactivate you? To distract? Maybe it's an offence. Oh, how dare he say that about me?

[ 18 : 57 ] Right. Yes. I've had someone. There was one woman I know. She said, I've worked like a dog for that church. It's like she had this thing because she was working so hard for the church and there's some offence that, oh, you know, they take it personally.

Christians can be just as bad as non-Christians. We can take umbrage, can't we, where we can get an offence, something I say or I don't say, what I do or don't do, someone you sat next to, or you get drawn away by some other loves, you fall into sin, false doctrine, and before you know it, you are deactivated.

It's what the devil wants to do. I put to you today, let's be conscious of this and neither give place to the devil. So it could be you're off the field.

You're not in the game. You aren't even in the stadium anymore. You aren't even following it on TV. Some are on the bench because they are in the sin bin, literally.

That's what they do, isn't it? If they sin, they get put in the sin bin. Now, some of our best players have been taken off the field. The devil loves that.

[ 20 : 20 ] The devil has taken them off the field. Let's not be in there. Let's not make the same mistake. Amen. Guard yourself from sin.

Neither give place to the devil. Maybe you get weary in well-doing. That can happen. You're tired. Well, sleep when it's sleeping time. Harvest when it's harvesting time.

There is a time to awake, to be wide awake. I put to you that sometimes that deactivation process, it's slow and subtle like cancer. You know, it's a reality that I could have cancer and not even know it.

Slowly spreading, eating away. The deactivating can be like that. Before you know it, you've cooled down, you've been deactivated. You're in the sin bin, taken off the field.

And along with you, your whole family. Because you are setting an example. The devil loves this strategy. He loves to build strongholds.

[ 21 : 25 ] Strongholds. The Bible talks about strongholds. You could call or define a stronghold as, someone has put it, a strategic point of operation.

A stronghold, this kind of fortress that's built. This stronghold, it's like a base, a reference. It's built up. And with strongholds, people dwell there.

They live in the strongholds. They get at home there. It becomes their address. They stay there.

Strongholds are built, built up. Like this great big fortress, this castle.

I remember as a kid seeing castles in England. Hundreds of years old. Still standing. They've been built. Another thing about strongholds is that they can be deconstructed.

Thrown down. Now, what am I talking about? I'm talking about strongholds. Strongholds in the mind. There's good strongholds and there's bad. Good and bad. For example, we see that our Lord himself is a stronghold.

[ 22 : 30 ] Nahum 1 verse 7. The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble. And he knoweth them that trust in him. The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble.

If you're in a day of trouble, do you want to make sure he is your stronghold? That you dwell in him. That you dwell in him. He dwells in you. You find your strength. You find your protection.

You find his care in the stronghold. That's a good stronghold. But the Bible talks about bad strongholds. For example, 2 Corinthians 10 verse 4.

The context talking about spiritual warfare, of a battling, of a fighting going on. And he tells of the need to pull down strongholds.

This is talking about the strongholds of the enemy. Have you ever been part of pulling something down? I know I've seen some demolition work in my younger days. When my mum and dad used to buy houses and then just about demolish them and rebuild them.

[ 23 : 33 ] You know, some things have got to be torn down. You know, like the doer-upper, you've got to pull it down first and then do it up. You know, there's that sense of some things have got to be destroyed and then built.

Have you ever been part of pulling something down? It's quite easy to smash things and destroy things. Some people wreck churches. Some pastors wreck churches.

Some people build churches. As far as the bad strongholds, we do need to bring in the demolition crew. But then be constructive about building up what is good and godly and God-glorifying.

You know, there's a poem that goes like this. And look, I'll put this disclaimer out there. There is a little Masonic reference in this poem, which obviously we don't support Freemasonry at all.

Of course, it's of the enemy. But I'll read it anyway. And you get the picture here. A builder or a wrecker. As I watched them tear a building down, a gang of men in a busy town with a ho, heave, ho and a lusty yell, they swung a beam and the sidewall fell.

[ 24 : 41 ] I asked the foreman, are these men skilled? And the men you'd hire if you'd want to build? He gave a laugh and said, no, indeed. Just common labour is all I need.

I can easily wreck in a day or two what builders have taken years to do. And I thought to myself, as I went my way, which of these roles have I tried to play?

Am I a builder who works with care, measuring life by rule and square? That's the bad bit. Am I shaping my work to a well-made plan, patiently doing the best I can?

Or am I a wrecker who walks to town content with the labour of tearing down? Oh, Lord, let my life and my labours be that which builds for eternity.

You know, we can be a wrecker or a builder. We need builders. We need to be builders. But in the context of the bad kind of strongholds, these ones, there is a place to demolish things.

[ 25 : 39 ] Like the prophet Jeremiah, he said, I've come to pull down and to build up. We've got to pull things down. We've got to destroy the enemy's strongholds, as it were, the enemy's place of possession.

And we've got to build up our stronghold in terms of our faith in Christ, to build our faith, to activate that. So there's things that are set against us.

I urge you today just to think about this in your context, in your life. And let's bring in the wrecking crew, as it were, to pull down, to smash down anything that is against God.

Mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. We need weapons of warfare that are not carnal, not fleshly. We need spiritual weapons. So let's do that. Let's also build up what is good.

As I say, my heart and what I've seen in all many years of time, but especially of late, God wants to decommission you.

[ 26 : 44 ] Sorry, rather, the devil wants to decommission you. The devil wants to decommission you, but God wants to commission you. The devil wants to deactivate you.

God wants to activate you. We've seen how people can be deactivated. Give place to the devil, whether it be unforgiveness, whether it be some lack of resolution, whether it be a lack of surrender. There's things not surrendered. There's strongholds, there's things built up that it needs a demolition job. On the other hand, what will it take to activate you?

Let's look at the positive side now. How can we get activated? To activate, it means to put into action. It means, yes!

It's almost like you've got to have the Nike, isn't it? Just do it. Or Optus. Yes! Say yes to God. How can we be activated?

[ 27 : 48 ] I'm not meaning to sound like a slick salesman here or anything, or use overly used worldly kind of analogies, but there is that sense where, yes! We must say yes to God.

How can we build into our lives what is healthy and good? How can I grow as a Christian, so I can grow and my family can see me grow? I can bless them. They can see my example. For some, it can be just some minor things that need action.

Some minor thing that will deactivate them. A change happens. Someone I know died last week and had to be revived.

They were revived. Someone we know. They're not a believer that I know of. And we send her some flowers. Something happens that can be an activator.

Sometimes it can be a bad thing. We would consider it, wouldn't we? A bad thing. I just about died. I did die. I came back to life. I had to be revived. We get that wake-up call, that reality check, that close shave, that close call, and it can change our perspective on things, that we realise life is short.

[ 29 : 06 ] This is temporary. This vessel that, you know, you can see how I spend millions on having a, what do they call it, a total makeover, you know.

You get everything just right. You dye it. You cut it. You shape it. You get a nose job. But this, it's all temporary. This is going to go in the ground and the worms are going to eat it.

You know, let's get the perspective right. Amen? What's it going to take to activate you? Maybe an accident. God forbid. A close shave. Wow, I nearly got a T-bone there at that intersection.

Someone you care about dies and you start to re-evaluate your own life. You get activated. It becomes a catalyst for change for you.

What's it going to take? A change of circumstance. Maybe a change of job circumstance. As in my own life, I had to re-evaluate. I'm still torn.

[ 30 : 10 ] Should I go and get another job or should I trust the Lord and see this church grow? That's my heart. I'd rather say no to the job. Trust God. What's it going to take to activate you?

Perhaps sickness happens. A tragedy. You get the wind knocked out of your sails. It can be an activator, can't it? It can be. Brother, sister, to activate us.

To get us out of the critic's corner. So we walk out of our pity party and we close the door on that and say no to that and yes to God. We get rid of our offence.

We close the door on that. We build a bridge and we get over it. It's time to activate. To reactivate. God's got a mission for you and he wants you to grab it with both hands.

And I'm not meaning to preach works here, but there's a sense where he has a work for you. He has something for you to do. To reignite your passion, your first love.

[ 31 : 10 ] You must activate. And the motive, to God be the glory, that's our motive. They need to face up to where we're falling down. And as a church that we can rise up to the challenges that we face so we can be unashamed for the strong delivery of God's word.

Every one of us as delivery, boys and girls, messengers of this mission. And something we don't apologise for it. It is time to man the battle stations.

The church needs to rise up. God uses his people to do his work on planet earth. He doesn't send angels to witness, I put to you, he uses men and women.

Think of, for example, the situation in Acts chapter 8. There's a man here in the middle of nowhere heading homewards from a time of worship, the Ethiopian eunuch.

He'd come from Ethiopia to Jerusalem to worship. He'd travelled for days and days to get there. Now he was on the long journey home. And now he was heading homewards. And he had the scriptures in his hand.

[ 32 : 21 ] And he was open at the very pages of the truth of salvation, of the man despised and rejected, of the man wounded for our transgressions, acquainted with our grief.

And we hid, as it were, our faces from him. And now he was heading homewards. The words in front of him, the words about the Messiah in Acts chapter 8.

But the man from Ethiopia needed a communicator. God didn't send an angel. He grabbed a man. And he put that man where he had to be. The Ethiopian was thinking, how can I understand except someone show me?

The point of this story in Acts 8 is testify. Testify. God wants us activated. And he shows us how. In Gideon's time, we know the story of the man assembled for army, for the fight. And God told Gideon, no, that's too many.

[ 33 : 28 ] That's too many. That's too many. He whittled it down to just 300 men. And Judges 7, we hear about the 300. Judges 7 from verse 18.

Gideon says, When I blow with a trumpet, I and all that are with me, then blow ye the trumpets also on every side of all the camp and say the sword of the Lord and of Gideon.

Now we've got a trumpeter in our midst here, but I want to get him to do the sound effects. But you can imagine what that sounded like. Yeah, we've got another. Whoa, have we got 300 here this morning?

You know, we've got the, Gideon blew the trumpet. And then everybody blew the trumpets. Come on, everybody. No, there's that sense. Imagine what it would have sounded like in that black night, in that dark night, in that night of darkness, when suddenly this huge roar, this blaring sound, and then the sword of the Lord and of Gideon.

And verse 19 of Judges 7, it says, Gideon and the hundred men that were with him came unto the outside of the camp in the beginning of the middle watch. And they had but newly set the watch. And they blew the trumpets and break the pitchers that were in their hands.

[ 34 : 38 ] These clay vessels containing the lamps, the torches. And verse 20, it says, they broke them and they held the lamps and the trumpets in their right hand.

And they cried, the sword of the Lord and of Gideon. And Judges 7, 21, they stood every man in his place round about the camp and all the host ran and cried and fled. The 300 blew the trumpets. And with those trumpets blaring, as they broke the vessels, they revealed the blazing lamps. 300, just 300, put to flight these many thousands.

And an early commentator noted, just by the way, that the Greek letter which means 300 is tau, which appears as the shape of a cross. So since there's a, there's a divine work here.

300, 300 were activated and it's the work of the Lord, isn't it? It's the work of the cross that brings a great victory. We must do more than pray. We must act.

[ 35 : 36 ] May we see the world through the Lord's eyes. Receive that energy boost. Lord, activate me. Activate me. Let me break the vessel and shine.

Let me blow the trumpet and see you do a work. The victory came as these men trusted God's call and obeyed him.

Notice with Gideon's army they simply unveiled that which was hidden, God's light shining through them. We are meant to be, the word tells us, a glorious church.

Glorious. Glorious church. That's another good name for a church. Glorious church. That's what we're meant to be, isn't it? To flourish, to switch on, to shine.

What a shame when opportunity is lost. I've had that happen and I think, I could have said something but I didn't. There was a door open to talk to someone and I didn't take it.

[ 36 : 37 ] Opportunity lost. That's something we can never regain. Let's not settle in the company of the deactivated.

Make the change. Shift camps. Change sides. Hit the life on switch as it were. Ask the Lord to give you that rocket fuel to activate, to ask him to equip you, to empower you, to enable you, to make

that call.

I'm sorry. Close the door. It's gone. Forgiven. I'm forgiven. They're forgiven. Neither give place to the devil.

I'm going to go forward. It's time to stop playing church and activate. Activate. Now some will criticise the church. They will look at the church and find fault.

You know, you see on Google you get these ratings and people can write some nasty things. I've looked at one about one church and it was pretty nasty what they said about how the pastor preached and whatnot.

[ 37 : 40 ] Sort of a bit unnecessary. Finding fault. You know, I find fault. I watch what we do at times and I think, wow, that wasn't very good. I find fault with the preacher of myself.

But really, the church is us. All of us. Now here's another good name for a church. I'm stretching here again. Church are us. That's what it is, isn't it? Sometimes we say, this church is, you know, it's just not for me.

I don't like it. I don't like the people. I don't like the preaching. I don't like the songs, the music, the musician. No, she's just perfect. But, you know, there's this sense where the church are us.

It's us. We are the church. And if the church is failing, if the church has some fault in it, maybe the problem is me. Don't blame others.

Look at yourself. It's time to activate. It's time to thrive. Think about the early church. It was activated. And sometimes it was trouble that activated them. It was trouble that got them motivated and moving.

[ 38 : 47 ] It was by trouble. For example, at the stoning of Stephen, you know the story in Acts 8 where it tells of Saul consenting to Stephen's death. There was a great persecution. Verse 1, they were all scattered.

They carried Stephen to his burial, made great lamentation. Verse 3, Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering every house, hailing men and women, committing them to prison.

He was dragging them by whatever he could grab out of their houses, taking them and throwing them in prison. Listen, verse 4 of Acts 8, it says, they were scattered abroad.

They went everywhere preaching the word. God had told them to go but they were kind of in this holy huddle as it were in Jerusalem. God had to bring some unsettling so that they could be activated.

Sometimes we get unsettled. That's a good thing. Isn't it? It was a dreadful time really for the church but God was in it. Philip then, he took the word to Samaria and there was much rejoicing, great joy.

[ 39 : 59 ] God wants to activate us so we can bless, so we can reach others. How can I activate? That's your question today. That's your homework. That's for you to prayerfully seek God for.

How can I activate my gifts? How can I stay activated? Don't cool. Watch out for the signs of deactivation and turn the corner. Don't take that track.

God's plan is activation. And just to close, some scriptures here, the word tells of abounding, of this, of an activating, of these various things.

Can our faith be more activated? Colossians 2 talks about built up in him, established in the faith, abounding therein. Our faith can be activated, can't it?

To trust him, to trust him more, trust him for your life, trust him for your future, trust him for your family, trust him for your needs. Have that activated faith, abounding faith.

[ 41 : 02 ] 1 Thessalonians 3 talks about increase and abounding in love towards one another and towards all men. Our love can be activated, can't it? Our love can grow cold, wax cold.

Our love, we can lose, leave our first love. Let our love be renewed, let our love be reactivated, let our love be abounding, so that we love and keep on loving, even the unlovable, as it were.

We reach and teach, we minister, we love all. Let's not hold hatred or despising in our heart towards anyone, but let our love abound one toward another and toward all men.

That's pretty, that's all inclusive, isn't it? Love towards all men. No one excluded. 1 Thessalonians 3 verse 12. The third one there, 2 Corinthians 9 verse 8.

God is able to make all grace abound toward you. Grace. Wow, I could use some more grace, can't you? Oh, you're already there.

[ 42 : 06 ] But I need some, I need some grace. All grace, so that you have all sufficiency, abound to every good work. Lord, give me grace. Give me grace right now.

Give me grace. Another one there, Philippians 4 verse 17. Tell us about fruit, abounding to your account. God wants us fruitful, fruitful. Not like that wilting plant that I showed you before, but a flourishing, growing, abounding, activated plant.

Blossoming, budding, producing fruit from your life, abounding to your account. 1 Thessalonians 4 verse 1. Paul tells us of receiving of the Lord, how you ought to walk and to please God.

Our walk, it's a day by day. Now some people think as they live the Christian life, it's like a firecracker and then, no, it's a walk.

Day by day, hour by hour, moment by moment, walking with Jesus. It's an abounding walk, it's an abiding, it's an activated walk.

[ 43 : 12 ] Why? To please God. That's where we want to walk, in that direction. The next one, now the God of hope, filling you with all joy and peace in believing that you may abound in hope.

We've got a hope, we've got a confident expectation. That's the sense of it. We have got an expectancy. We've got a trust in the Lord that we have a blessed assurance that Christ is coming.

And a familiar one, which I love to quote, in closing, is that last one there. 1 Corinthians 15, 58.

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.

For as much as you know that, your labour is not in vain in the Lord. Activate to abound in the work of the Lord. You will abound.

The results may not be immediate, but they will happen. It won't happen overnight, but it will happen. Amen. Activate. Let's pray. Lord, we thank you that you are the one who increases your church.

[ 44 : 21 ] Increase our faith, Lord. Help us to be a people abounding, activated in every dimension. Lord, guard us, we pray, that we neither give place to the devil in any capacity.

Help us to deal with whatever is an obstacle. Lord, help us to overcome, that we can have victory in every dimension. Lord, that we can pray for those who are off the field, as it were, at this time, that you'll draw them back, Lord, to fellowship.

Help us, Lord, to not make the same mistake, to fall, to fail, just to cool down, Lord, guard us from that. We want to warm up, not cool down. Help us to be such a church, a glorious church, the church are ours, an activated church, a church on fire for you.

Lord, help us, we pray. Activate every believer here that today might be a turning point where we see, yes, I'm going to draw a line in the sand and I'm going to say yes to you.

I'm going to surrender, Lord, whatever it is that I need to so that I can be a brighter, shining Christian. Lord, help each one of the situations of testing, of trial, of burdens, of health constraints.

[ 45 : 33 ] Lord, we know there's limitations yet, Lord, we know each one of us has your call and, Lord, we can do as the woman in your word where of her it was said, she hath done what she could.

That's all you ask us to do, Lord. She hath done what she could. Lord, let it be to your praise. We pray if there's any present here, hearing this, Lord, that know you're not, that you would activate them and make them, Lord, to grant them that new birth, to make them alive again, spiritually alive, to be made a new creation in Christ Jesus as they put their trust in your work at the cross, dying on their part, rising to life, that you can be their ever-living saviour and give them that new life, that abundant life, life more abundant, Lord, and that we, each one, as such a people, can be encouraged to further grow and that you will bring the increase, Lord, in your church.

It's your work. Lord, we surrender to your work in each of our hearts. Be glorified in your church, Lord, we pray, in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.