

Faithful Stewards of Kingdom Grace

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[0 : 0 0] Well, good morning, church. It is just wonderful to be here this morning and to have the privilege of preaching the Word of God. My name is David Corrente, and I have the joy of being an associate pastor here.

If I have not met you, welcome. Pastor BK is off on vacation this weekend. He and Daniela have a cabin all to themselves, so they are getting some sweet time together.

So I'll be praying for him to recharge, to be encouraged and refreshed as he comes back next week. And I have the joy of preaching this Sunday and next Sunday as well.

So thank you, music team, for such sweet music to sing to. I just kind of wanted to make a note real quick. What do you do when there's an instrumental? What do you do when, you know, there's a couple of measures and bars in a song, and you're kind of waiting for the next verse or chorus to sing?

Think of it as a *selah* in the Psalms, a moment of reflection. Is that what I believe? Is that how I'm living? Sing, Lord, help me in this moment believe these truths and surrender to them.

[1 : 0 6] Just opportunities to reflect when you have those little moments of instrumentation to think about our Lord and Jesus, especially when the songs are that rich of truth. Let's pray before we go into the Word of God this morning.

Father, we come to you knowing all of this is true by your grace. The King of kings and Lord of lords has given to us a righteousness we could never afford or earn.

So as a church, when we come around your Word, when we get to hear the truths that glorify you and minister to our soul, Lord, I pray that you would humble us.

Grant me the words to say, because you are worthy of it. We thank you and we praise you this morning for the gathering of your people together in worship.

In your Son's precious name, Amen. Amen. Well, turning your Bibles this morning to 1 Peter chapter 4. Turning your Bibles to 1 Peter chapter 4.

[2 : 1 7] This is just going to be an introduction for us before we get to the meat of the sermon from Ephesians chapters 1 through 3. 1 Peter chapter 4, starting in verse 7.

1 Peter chapter 5.

In 2004, the LA Philharmonic had a cello stolen.

The thief ended up leaving it by a dumpster about a mile away. The thief had no idea what he had stolen.

Then a nurse found it and put this cello in the trunk of her car, probably thinking, this is far too nice to be near a dumpster. Let me take it and I can use it for something.

[3 : 5 8] She asked her husband, a cabinet maker, to make an elaborate CD case with this cello, maybe kind of a piece in their living room. This nurse had no idea what was in her possession.

A name can bring instant understanding what one might have in their possession. The thief and the nurse had one of 50 Stradivarius cellos in their possession in the world.

Stradivarius is an instrumental royalty. The Italian Antonio Stradivarius, this very popular Luthier in the late 16 to early 1700s, every instrument that he has made is coveted and puts you in rare historical company if you own one.

There's about 600 left of over the 1,000 he made. And every single one of them has the white glove treatment when they're in the possession of somebody.

And anyone who sees it and is in its presence has this open heart to the reality of what they actually have. This one of 50 left in the world was about 3.5 million just beside a dumpster.

[5 : 28] In the musical world, this name Stradivarius turns head and people instantly treat it with the care it deserves. This instrument restorer who is in L.A., when he heard about the story, he said this, It is so abominable, I get sick when I hear it.

He got sick of the fact that this Stradivarius cello, this very rare instrument, would have been treated with the disregard that it was treated with. It was going to be made into a fancy CD case sitting in somebody's living room.

A master craftsman, Antonio Stradivarius, constructed that cello for musicians to play beautiful music for others to enjoy.

And because of the name that it holds, it is treated with that particular value around the world. Now I ask you, beloved, what do you think of when you hear the word, someone who's given the name Christian?

When where we are is given the name, the church. Do we, do you and I, those who have been made by this master craftsman of creation, this master craftsman of salvation, do we treat those who are his, of his possession, with the value that he places on them and they should be treated with?

[7 : 00] As we make ministry transitions, as two beloved churches become one, it becomes one body, one family, and in the realm of discipleship, especially in the process, in the fall of bringing small groups together, this text in 1 Peter 4 is going to kind of be like the north star in the night.

It's going to be guiding us, taking us on a path to faithfulness and maturity, and we'll hold it up like a mirror and seek to find that it actually reflects what is happening in the homes of these small groups and in the life of our church.

What we're called to be and look like as a church, especially in the small group context. Is this how we're living, treating, serving those among us in the body of Christ?

I'm not going to do an exposition on this this week. I'm going to save that more for next week. Because I want this to kind of rule in our hearts as we go through Ephesians 1 through 3.

As Carl mentioned last week, from Colossians 3, that the word of Christ would dwell richly and the peace of Christ would rule our hearts. That word rule, remember, is that umpiring word.

[8 : 14] The deciding call for the scenarios and discipleship in the life of the church. Here's the principle that I'm longing to see. If you look down in verse 10 of 1 Peter 4, that we, having given by God special gifts, employ it serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

That's why I've entitled this series Stewards of Kingdom Grace. And here's the principle that in salvation, a believer is given the necessary resources so they might be used to give those to others.

God created you in salvation and cares for you in salvation so that you might care for others. What you've been given in your salvation is to purposely be used to build up, strengthen, and encourage, and help others in the body of Christ become more like their Savior.

You are a steward of the manifold grace of God. What God has given you in the church is for others in the church.

I want to take a moment and help us understand the heart cultivated here. Turn to Philippians chapter 1. Philippians chapter 1 verse 7. It's a church that Paul wrote to.

[9 : 51] This is a prison epistle. So he is in chains for the cause of Christ. Philippians is really a thank you letter for them providing the means for him in his ministry.

Philippians chapter 1 verse 7. And this is kind of the heart we want to cultivate in discipleship as a church as we steward the manifold grace of God between other believers. Verse 7.

For it is only right for me to feel this way about you all because I have you in my heart. I have you in my heart.

I feel, I have this reality about you as a fellow believer inside of me because of what you have been made in Christ since both in my imprisonment and in defense and confirmation of the gospel you are all partakers of grace with me.

You are all stewards of grace with me because you are all partakers of grace with me. And so because of that reality I hold you near and dear in my heart.

[11 : 04] The way that I think about you the way that I want to serve you the way that I care about you. I have you in my heart. We had a great relationship and it shows here by the letter and but what about if things aren't working out all that great?

How do you explain this from Paul then? Turn to 2 Corinthians chapter 7. Go back to 2 Corinthians chapter 7. And as soon as you hear the church of Corinth and the relationship that he had with Paul you start thinking oh boy.

How do you explain this then? 2 Corinthians chapter 7. Starting in verse 3. I do not speak to condemn you for I have said before that you are in our hearts to die together and to live together.

I've told you this before. Church of Corinth. Church that turned on me. Demeaned my gifts. Demeaned my calling. Followed other pastors and so called apostles.

They even got personal on him saying that he wasn't really much in person. His letters are forceful and strong but when you see the guy in real life it's not that much.

[12 : 36] He's unimpressive and his speech is contemptible they said. Ouch. Did that change Paul's thinking of how he served them?

Of how he was a steward of the manifold grace of God for a church that literally turned their back on him? No he said I've told you this before. I don't even say to condemn you even all the sin that you sinned against me.

I have you in my heart. The way that I think about you. The way that I care for you. The way that I steward my gifts on your behalf. Because it's not about how you respond to me. It's not about what you say about me.

It's about what God has given me and how I give that to you. Paul knew that his gifts and his calling were used to bless the church. There was personal investment because of what Christ had given him.

And it didn't matter the heartache. It didn't matter the grievances. It didn't matter the sin against him. He was a steward of the manifold grace of God in his life and said I'm just gonna lavishly give that pour that out to you.

[13 : 43] Remember in Philippians he said I'm gonna pour myself out as a drink offering on the sacrifice of your faith. I'm gonna do whatever it takes for you. Because of what I have been given.

Now turn to Ephesians chapter 3. This is Paul's mindset. This is Paul's heart. Ephesians chapter 3 verse 1.

Paul says for this reason and we'll get to it we'll be cramming a lot of passages in today. For this reason I Paul the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles if indeed you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace which was given to me for you.

For the sake of you Gentiles this stewardship of God's grace which was given to me and he's talking more about his apostleship here and his ministry towards the Gentiles.

I understand that but here's his thought process in it. it's for you. Two simple words with incredibly powerful meaning that we cannot miss.

[15 : 03] We have these great theological phrases in two words. We have but God in Christ they grip your heart they comfort your soul.

Don't allow these two words to have less significance for the reality of what it means for you and how you live and breathe in the life of the church. for the sake of you what I have is for you.

That's what Paul understood that God's grace and salvation God's gift of his apostleship God's guidance and influence in his ministry if you look down at verse 7 of which I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace which was given to me according to the working of his power.

God's grace was made to serve for the sake of the church. I was made to minister I was made to serve. What Paul was given as a believer was not to be internally hoarded but externally sacrificed.

even in Colossians he says in Colossians 125 that it's a stewardship from God for your benefit. What you and I have which we'll get to in a moment cannot be hoarded kept to ourselves and used for ourselves and say well I'm just gonna get to heaven by the skin of my teeth.

[16 : 34] And you might think in your mind well that was the Apostle Paul he's a theological giant I could only dream to be an Apostle Paul.

Yes there are no apostles in the first century since. That was a special stewardship given to Paul but that's why I brought 1 Peter 4 first. So we can't get out of that excuse we can't use that.

You're given gifts spiritual gifts you're given earthly resources. I'm just using Paul an example of how to think when we have what God has given us that we are a steward of it.

And you may be thinking Dave I've heard you say steward 37 times already in 10 minutes. What does it mean? Steward is someone that has given resources and responsibility to care for someone else's property.

You're given resources and responsibility to care for somebody else's property and now we can make that instant connection to what God has given us in salvation back to him.

[17 : 43] That's why we read what we read in Matthew 25. A steward a steward in the original context is a manager of a household or an estate.

A manager of someone else's goods. It was used as a public treasurer in the public sphere. And spiritually it's one who's entrusted with the management in transcendent matters.

Stewardship basically the same word it's the responsibility of management of a household direction or an office. Somebody who is wealthy and says I want you to care for my stuff.

You may have stewards in your own lives. If you run a business and people who work for you they're stewards or you have an investment portfolio that you pay someone to care for your investments.

Paul applies the same idea to his apostleship and the writers of the New Testament apply that Peter applies that to you and your salvation.

[18 : 54] What you've been given. that's why there's so many like what we read in Matthew 25 so many parables of the test of readiness waiting for the master to come home faithful until Christ comes back.

Master goes to a far away land they do not know when he will return they're given money responsibility task to accomplish before that master returns home and then they are accounted accredited for their work.

So this morning while we go through Ephesians 1 through 3 I want us to know what we have first. Before we go about knowing next week what to do with it I want to know what do we have?

What do you and I have? So this morning we're going to go through three magnificently eternal realities in understanding stewardship of salvation.

I realize that that's more of a puritanical title here but I want this to be exciting, encouraging, humbling, sobering.

[20 : 07] I want us to kind of go away speechless because of what Paul writes here in Ephesians 1 through 3 and what we have in salvation and I want us to go I have all of that?

That's what Christ gave me? Little old me? Yes. So in salvation God gives us to steward unimaginable wealth.

This is our first point this morning. We have unimaginable wealth. We have the wealth of heaven given to us. Spiritual wealth.

What Paul is doing for the Ephesians in Ephesians 1 through 3 is reminding them of their heavenly investment portfolio. Ephesus was a port city.

Everything came to ancient eastern Asia through Ephesus. It was a very prosperous city. It was a very wealthy city.

[21 : 12] And Paul was connecting their minds to what they see every single day. You think, you guys think that's wealth? You guys go down to Vancouver? You go to West Vancouver and see the wealth there? This is kind of what Paul is saying.

You think that's wealthy? You know what you have in salvation? You know what God has given you in salvation? So I'm going to go through a couple of these.

So we've got to follow along fairly quickly. Look at chapter 1. Ephesians chapter 1 verse 3. Look what we have first. We have every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.

Look down at verse 7. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses according to the riches of His grace.

Look down at verse 11. Also we have obtained an inheritance. Look down at verse 14. Talking of the Holy Spirit of promise who is given as a pledge of our inheritance.

[22 : 23] Verse 18. What are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints?

Look at chapter 2. Chapter 2 verse 4. But God being rich in mercy. Look at verse 7.

So that the ages to come that He might show the surpassing riches of His grace and kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. Go to chapter 3.

Chapter 3 verse 8. To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ.

Look at verse 16. That He would grant you according to the riches of His glory. glory. Go back to chapter 1.

[23 : 30] This is what you have. This is your spiritual investment portfolio. You have everything needed to stand before the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords.

You have been blessed with everything that you need to enter heaven and to live a life that reflects His glory. That's why Paul says here, to the praise of the glory of His grace.

The riches, the wealth of His ability to provide even though you don't deserve it, even though you didn't do anything for it. It's not just a little here and a little there, a little grace here and a little mercy over here, a little forgiveness over here.

No. What you've been given is lavish. Verse 7. The redemption through His blood. Remember, the redemption meaning you needed to be bought back because of your rebellion and your sin.

You had an eternal debt to pay, owed to God which you could never pay. And by the blood of Christ, He forgives that sin according to the riches of His grace.

[24 : 42] Verse 8. Which He lavished on us. This is the word for superabundance. to be extremely rich.

Paul says, because of what you have been given through the blood of Christ, who with death, burial, and resurrection, you have a share in heaven's lavish riches in Christ Jesus.

For your salvation. to cover your debt. If that wasn't enough, you've got to share the whole estate.

Because you have an inheritance. Verse 11. We have attained an inheritance. Having been predestined according to the purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will.

Before you were born. Before your parents were born. Before the person who gave you the gospel was born. Before He said, let there be light.

[25 : 51] You've been given an inheritance. inheritance. You have a share in heavenly estate. Because of what Christ has done on your behalf.

And if you think it's going to be taken away, that's why He says in verse 14, it's given as a pledge. The Holy Spirit is in you, sealing you as the down payment, as the deposit.

So you can have the assurance of faith. He's the eternal security guard and keeper of the treasury so that you know as the Holy Spirit applies the works of Christ in your life.

It's all of God. And you are now His possession. Verse 14. View to the redemption of God's own possession to the praise of His glory.

You are not your own. You are bought with the price. The sons and daughters, the other believers, the church, the flock, they're God's possession. They're God's possession because of what they've been given in Christ.

[26 : 55] They're fellow estate heirs. Romans tells us we're heirs with Christ. And we get to steward this grace.

All of you, those whom He changed, redeemed, transformed, gives you His riches, brings Him glory. glory. Chapter 2, He is rich in mercy.

And we've been given the unfathomable riches of Christ. The surpassing riches, the unfathomable riches of mercy and grace and glory in Jesus Christ.

That's what you have. It is yours because of what Christ has done. I was teaching the young adults on Friday evening about biblical relationships and the hindrances to faithful relationships and one of those hindrances are comparison.

When you start comparing yourself in relationships and you start judging what other people have or don't have compared to what you have and don't have and just how hard that is now especially in the social media world and you don't even know it's true anymore when you look at somebody's house and what they have or how they're living.

[28 : 22] Being more concerned with what you have or don't have in an earthly way. That temptation can rise up when we go into small groups. Comparing yourself, going into homes, what people have, what people don't have, what you have when you hear people's, their trials, their difficulties, their joys, their triumphs.

When you start comparing you can be discontent, you can start getting resentful a little bit, you can start being covetous. All of these things start rising up in your heart because you start thinking in an earthly way about earthly possessions.

You might even get to the point where you're like I don't even know what I have to give. Don't you dare get to that point where you say you don't have anything to give. That was like saying that a classically trained musician with a Stradivarius has nothing to offer the musical world.

You would sit with them and go you're crazy. Do you know what you have in your possession? 30 years of classically trained experience and concert musician and you have a Stradivarius?

Get back on that stage. Go do what you were trained to do. Kind of what I feel like saying sometimes to believers that sideline themselves. Do you know what you have?

[29 : 49] Do you know what you've been given? And you say you have nothing to give? You've been given from Christ. Grace. Mercy.

Redemption. Forgiveness. And you get to give that to others. You get to experience life with others who have been given the same down payment and inheritance and riches.

Don't you dare compare yourself in an earthly way when you know everybody has the same eternally here. we've all got the same.

That's what we're sharing. That's the first magnificent eternal reality and understanding stewardship of salvation that we have unimaginable wealth.

Secondly, we have incomprehensible power. We have incomprehensible power. We have power from heaven to use what he has given us. So how do I use this?

[30 : 59] It seems out of my ability, out of my capacity to steward. We feel that way sometimes, right? Somebody gives us a task to do and I feel ill-equipped. That's what we do here.

That's what our job is as pastors, to equip the saints for the work of ministry. But first we have to understand that we have power to use the gifts of what we've been given. It's not some sort of self-help.

Be a better version of yourself. This is not your power. It doesn't come from you. God supplies it. Every blessing, every spiritual need you have to steward, God gives you the power and the ability to use it.

Ephesus was not only a prosperous town, but it was a very idolatrous town. There were many gods that would kind of dominate the spiritual atmosphere and some being more powerful than others and one of them being Artemis.

the fertility goddess. They called it the queen of heaven. The fertility goddess that could produce life. Ephesus was full of magical practices as well and just go to Acts 19 and read about what was happening in Ephesus and what the believers did by burning their books of magic because they became believers and it was actually very costly for them to do so.

[32 : 21] These were expensive books. It's like someone lighting all of your university books for four years on fire going, do you know how much I spent on those things?

They gave it up because they're in Christ now. In Ephesus there were gods and goddesses and magical practices that they sought to bend the laws of nature and control the spiritual and physical forces.

people who are in the Bible. And by God's grace Paul spent three years there opening up the word of God day and night with tears but also performing powerful miracles to reveal the true power of God in connection with the gospel.

So Paul uses this language in Ephesians 1 through 3 just like the riches, just like the wealth. He wanted them to show what was really powerful in their life. just like what they needed to hear what was really wealthy in their life.

We are stewards. We manage the power that God gives to us in salvation to accomplish his purposes. Go back to chapter 1. Chapter 1 verse 19.

- [33 : 34] And Paul does this in his letters frequently where he tells you what you have and then he tells you how you're going to use it because of the power that you have. Look at verse 19. So he wanted them in verse 18 to know the hope of their calling and the riches of the glory of the inheritance of the saints and what is the surpassing greatness of his power towards us who believe.

These are in accordance with the working of the strength of his might from which he brought about in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at the right hand in the heavenly places.

Paul wants you to be very aware of this. The power of God and how it works in your life. The surpassing greatness. These superlatives, right?

The unfathomable riches. It's purposeful. The strength of his might. He keeps piling on these words. But where is it going?

Verse 19. Verse 19. Towards us. Who believe? Power of God in salvation, spiritual wealth, spiritual giftedness, our stewardship.

- [34 : 53] He gives it towards those who believe. God has this divine power which is incomprehensible to human understanding. And how does he use it?

He uses it towards believers. Towards us. In verse 21 and 22 it is an uncontested power.

An uncontested power. The same work that he brought out in Christ. Death, burial, resurrection, ascension. Verse 21. Far above all rule and authority and power and dominion and every name that is named not only in this age but also in the age to come.

It will go unchallenged. No one can overcome it. It was revealed in the supreme fashion of Christ's death, burial, resurrection and ascension and he gives that same power to the church.

And he put all things, verse 22, in subjection under his feet. And gave him as head over all things to the church. Which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

- [36 : 02] You're lacking nothing to use your spiritual gifts and the riches that you have in Christ. You're lacking nothing. You have incomprehensible power that's given to you to steward what you've been given.

God supplies the grace, the power, the capacity for us to use. Look down to verse 7 of chapter 3. Back to this word minister.

Of which I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace which was given to me according to the working of his power. That same word working is the same word in chapter 1 verse 20 where he said he brought about it in Christ.

He worked it out in Christ. That same power there works as the same power as I preach the gospel. According to the working of his power that word ministers, that word for deacon.

He's just serving God as the task and responsibility to preach the gospel as a part of his stewardship as an apostle. You've been given the same power that Paul has been given.

[37 : 15] His gift and his calling might be a little bit different. But you have the same power to love the church, to sacrifice for the church, to serve the church, to teach the church, to disciple in the church, to confess your sin within the church, to forgive sin in the church, to bear burdens in the church.

To make a meal, to greet someone at the front door, to prepare a house, to have a conversation, to just listen to somebody when they're having a hard time, to sit down and pray for somebody, to send somebody a text, send somebody a verse, say I was thinking about you, here's what's on my heart.

That's not your effort. You didn't drum up enough physical thought processes to do that. That's the spirit of God working in you.

That's the power of God and salvation to say I am going to bless this person through you because you thought of them and you're praying for them. Now go tell them that you're praying for them and you thought of them. That's supernatural power.

It's not from you. Your gifts and your abilities and how you work in the life of the church, that is supernatural. The power to witness to a watching world of what Christ does for poor, weak, wretched sinners who are undeserving of all of this.

[38 : 45] Do you know how we show off Christ according to Jesus himself? By our love for one another? By this you know, the world will know, you are my disciples.

By the way that you love one another. So when you think about small groups and you think about coming together with one another, as you think about discipleship in the church, think about small groups that are completely dependent on the power of God to accomplish everything that God wants in that group.

Think about what could happen. Think about how more godly, more mature. Think about how burdens are born, how you walk through trials together.

How you pray for one another, how you think about one another, how you interact with one another. As you press on towards the upper call of God in Christ Jesus. How lives can be changed for Christ because you're depending on what God has given you and you're using the power that he's given you to use it.

Third point. Magnificently eternal realities and understanding the stewardship of salvation. We have unimaginable wealth, we have incomprehensible power, and we have irreplaceable relationships.

[40 : 13] Irreplaceable relationships. How does this all translate? Okay, now you've got your stuff, your heavenly stuff. Now you have the power, the capacity.

You know you have the power. Now what do you do with it? Where does it go? I have unimaginable wealth to give. I have inconceivable power to use for my giving.

Where do I use it? Those who have been given the same inheritance. Going back to the original context, what's happening in these letters, Ephesians and Colossians, as you know, have whole sections on the family life.

How you sacrifice as a husband. How you give to your wife the same way that Christ gave to the church. And ladies, how you submit to your husband. How you give yourself as a helper to him as he leads the home.

Children, as you come under the instructions, obey your parents in the Lord. He gave these instructions because of the downgrade, the fracturing, the celebration of the downgrade and the fracturing of home life in the Greco-Roman world.

[41 : 22] So he is retuning the fork here about what it means to be a part of the family of God. Brothers and sisters in Christ.

Paul tells Titus, right? There's older men, you bring up the younger men. Older women, bring up the younger women. Paul tells Timothy in 1 Timothy chapter 5, you treat the older ladies like mom, you treat the older men like dads, you treat the same age categories as brothers and sisters.

That's how you treat people in the church. Imagine an orchestra just walking off on their own down the street with the same sheet music and striving to play that sheet music all thinking that they're gonna make the same sound as if they're in a concert hall together, doing it at the same time.

That's how we live the Christian life sometimes. I'm just gonna do my Christian thing over here. I'm gonna go do my Christian thing over there. I don't need the church.

Maybe I'll show up this week, maybe I won't show up next week, depending on the whims of my feelings and what I got on that week. We want these small groups to be something that you prioritize.

[42 : 46] We want discipleship in the life of the church, something that we prioritize because it's commanded. Make disciples of all the nations. That's what we do as a church.

We make disciples. So discipleship is our focus as a leadership. And if we're just off all doing our own Christian thing, that's what the orchestra is doing. They're all walking down the street playing the same sheet music.

There's no leadership. There's no glorious sound. There's no appreciation. There's no praise.

There's no clapping. You have been given a spiritual family. You've been given irreplaceable relationships right here that you will spend all of eternity with.

That is the way that God is wanting us to treat each other. Go back to chapter one. We know in family life, right?

[43 : 51] How irreplaceable people are. And this is what we have. This is what we've been given as a new status in verse five.

He predestined us to the adoptions as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself. We have a new life-giving stature.

We were once children of wrath, chapter two, verse three says. But now we are adopted as sons and look down at verse 17.

that God through our Lord Jesus Christ the Father of glory your Father which exists among you and your love for all the saints.

For this reason, verse 15, I heard in the faith of Jesus Christ which exists among you and your love the faith that's among you your love for all the saints. Does not cease giving thanks for you while making mention for you of you in my prayers.

[45 : 10] That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ the Father of glory may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation and the knowledge of Him. That's what He's doing as your Heavenly Father.

Cultivating your relationship with Him. Sorry, I read verse 15 which is a little different than verse 17. You have a new status.

You're an adopted child of God. You have a new Father of glory. And go to chapter 2 verse 18. We have access through Him we have our access in one spirit to the Father.

So through Christ and because of the eternal security guard the down payment the deposit of our inheritance we have access to God.

We have access to our Heavenly Father. So we exist together so that we can have access together.

[46 : 28] We have wealth together. We have power together. As He continues here verse 21 the whole building being fitted together is growing into a holy temple in the Lord in whom you are also being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.

Did you see that word? Being fitted together. Growing into. Being built together into. That's why we can't be separate.

Separated. Individualized Christians. We cannot be a brick that is outside of the wall.

You're being built together as a family. We are being built together as a dwelling place. I just love that language just taken from the Old Testament where they had the tabernacle and the temple and God would dwell with His people and we have that now in us through the Holy Spirit.

The people of God would gather together in the Old Testament and the glory of God would descend and everybody would know God is there. Make no mistake about it. Sometimes we forget God is here among us by the way we treat one another as if our Father is not in the same room with us.

[48 : 08] As if He's not looking over us. As if He doesn't really care about us. As if He's neglectful or He's using His time somewhere else. Now our Heavenly Father is caring for us.

Watching us as His children in the same way that you watch your children. The same way we watch the children around here. The same way that you care for my children which I'm so grateful for.

we're a family that cares for one another because of what we have together as fellow heirs in Christ.

These are irreplaceable relationships because you will see each other one day face to face in heaven together. You know sometimes in our worst moments as parents say you have this name why don't you act like it right?

It's not a great moment but sometimes we need to think I have the name of Christ on me. How am I responding to others who have the name of Christ?

[49 : 16] Am I treating them with the care and love that is worthy of Christ? And you're like Dave I think I've heard that terminology before. You're exactly right.

Turn to chapter 4 verse 1 in Ephesians. Therefore because of everything in chapters 1 through 3 because of the unimaginable wealth, incomprehensible power, the irreplaceable family life therefore I the prisoner of the Lord implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called.

so you live your life that's what this word walk means. You live in your normal ways of life in a manner worthy of that calling.

You compare here's what I have in Christ, imaginable wealth, incomprehensible power, appreciable family life, here's me. Do they match? Are they striving to match?

Desiring to match? Being disciplined, being cared for by a more mature man or woman and by the leadership to try to match? Am I in the direction going the way of a manner worthy of which I have been called?

[50 : 48] With all humility and gentleness, verse 2, with patience, showing tolerance for one another and love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

We are not the unity makers. We're the unity preservers. We have unity by the spirit and what we have as a family of God because of what he's given in Christ Jesus.

We work diligently to preserve what the spirit has already produced in peace. We have peace, now we need to work at it. It takes work.

Your homes take work, don't they? Your relationships take work. You dwell together. You live life together. You have joys together. You sin together.

You have weaknesses together. You have strength together. You depend upon each other together. If you were given a strad of various to care for and the musical community knew about it, would it amp up the responsibility in your heart to give the white glove treatment, make sure it's cared for properly and rightly because you know everyone's watching?

[52 : 16] Well, your Father in Heaven is watching and He knows. Just as Dave said in praying for about Matthew 25, He's not looking to condemn, He's looking to strengthen, looking to empower.

He wants you to grow as His child. He wants you to develop. He wants you to mature. He wants us as a body to do that together. So when you hear the name Christian, you hear the group of Christians being called the church.

church, I pray that you understand what you have and what we have and as we will learn next week, we'll go back into 1 Peter 4.

Let's start working these things out together to the praise and the glory of God's grace. Let's pray. Father, we thank you.

What can we say? How can we respond? Lord, I pray we respond in faithfulness, that we're those that you give a little and that we're faithful stewards of and that we manage what you've given to us.

[53 : 37] and that we can just have more, more faithfulness, more gospel proclamations, more discipleship meetings that produce fruit.

We are stewards of what you have given us, Lord. What a sobering reality, Lord, but what an exciting reality that we have as we grow as a church.

So, Father, we get to respond even now as we get to sing to you. Let these truths reverberate in our hearts as we sing and as we get to hear a testimony and a baptism of what you have done and what you have given in salvation, Lord.

We get to respond right away to this and I pray that with all the power that mightily works within us, Lord, I pray that we sing it out and we live it.

We thank you and we praise you in your son's precious and holy name. Amen. Amen.