

What Does Jesus Think About You?

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Preacher: Walt Alexander

- [0 : 0 0] The following message is given by Walt Alexander, lead pastor of Trinity Grace Church in Athens, Tennessee.! For more information about Trinity Grace, please visit us at TrinityGraceAthens.com.
- John chapter 17, verse 6. This is our Lord. I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world.
- Yours they were, and you gave them to me. And they have kept your word. Now they know that everything you have given me is from you.
- For I have given them the words that you gave me. And they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you.
- And they have believed that you sent me. I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those whom you have given me.
- [1 : 1 2] For they are yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine. And I am glorified in them.
- And I am no longer in the world. But they are in the world. And I am coming to you. This is the word of the Lord.
- Author A.W. Tozer famously said, What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us.
- The quality of a religion, he was arguing, hangs on what it articulates about God. If a religion defines God rightly and biblically, it is right and good.
- If it doesn't, it is wrong. All that is true. But is what we think about God really the most important thing about us?
- [2 : 1 3] There is a story recounted about the 1800s classical scholar Benjamin Jowett. He was one of the presidents of a college in Oxford.
- He was once at a dinner like those presidents go to. And someone came to him and said, Dr. Jowett, we would like to know what your opinion of God is. So this is a classical scholar, one of these bright guys that you want to know what they think.
- And he said, I would think, or I should think in a great impertinence were I to express my opinion about God. The only constant anxiety of my life is to know what is God's opinion of me.
- A great impertinence, and that's not a word we throw around, but a great, greatly audacious for me to think it matters what I think about God. My anxiety is what God thinks about me.
- What we think about God is not the most important thing about us. What God thinks about us is what's most important. C.S. Lewis said it well when he said, I read in a periodical, a magazine the other day, that the fundamental thing is how we think of God.
- [3 : 2 6] By God himself, he says, it is not how God thinks of us is not only more important, but infinitely more important.

But all this begs the question, what does God think about us? What does God think about you? Whether you've been a Christian for six months, or six years, or 60 years, what does God think about you?

Or perhaps you're not a Christian. What does God think about you? Does he think the same thing about you now as he thought about you when you first believed? Perhaps you're on a mountain now.

Surely you know what God thinks of you when you're on the mountain, but do you know what he thinks about you when you're in the valley? Does he think the same thing about you when times are good or times are tough?

Does he think the same thing when your time and energy are spent in serving him? Or when your time and energy are no longer able to be given to those things?

[4 : 30] Does he ever get tired of you? Are you sure he thinks about you what you think he thinks about you? Can you be sure?

Can you be sure what he thinks, or can we be sure what he thinks about us? In our passage this morning, the Lord continues his prayer to the Father.

This is our Lord in his prayer closet, so to speak, that we're overhearing after praying last week as we studied for the things most deeply on his heart that God would glorify him with the glory he had before the foundation of the world.

He turns and begins to pray for his disciples. He prays for the 11. Then, Judas has already gone out into the night. Before he makes specific prayer requests that we'll study in two weeks, he makes clear why he's praying for the 11 and not for the whole world.

He's making a case, so to speak, to the Father, like we might make a message to the Father in prayer. He's making clear why the Father should hear his request about these 11 in a way that he hears, unlike the way he hears all the prayers about anybody else in the world.

[5 : 45] He's unveiling to the Father what he really thinks about these 11 disciples. And these verses are preserved for us.

They're not just for the disciples to be amazed at what he says about them. They're preserved for us because everything Jesus says about his disciples here and everything he thinks about his disciples here, he thinks about all who turn to follow him.

And where we're going is, every Christian belongs completely to God, chosen by the Father and saved by the Son to his delight and the praise of his glory.

Now, I know that's a mouthful, but every Christian belongs completely to God, chosen by the Father and saved by the Son to his delight, that's the Father's delight, and the praise of his glory.

So we're going to break down these little things in three points. The first is all who belong to the Father are given to Jesus. All who belong to the Father are given to Jesus.

[6 : 44] Like I said, Jesus is making his case here why the Father should listen to these prayers about these disciples. And the first thing he says is, they once belonged to you and you gave them to me.

Last week we pointed out how the repetition of this verb, given, the Father gave authority to the Son to give eternal life to all whom he had given.

And this week, this verb is repeated numerous times, six times in these verses. Look in verse 6, the first two come here. I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world.

Yours they were, but you gave them to me. Jesus is articulating, who are these disciples? Who am I praying for?

Well, Lord, they are the ones that you gave me out of the world. He's saying these disciples are people chosen from the world. Look back in 6, verse 6.

[7 : 49] You gave me out of the world, literally from out of the world. They're not merely in, or they were not merely in the world, they were of the world, cast in the lot of those who follow the course of the world, were blinded by the God of this world.

But Jesus is saying, the Father chose them out. Jesus has already talked several times in this farewell discourse about the Father distinguishing between those who are in the world and those whom he had chosen.

Those who belong to him, the world as it is used in John's gospel, as we've said again and again, for God so loved the world. What is he talking about? He's talking about the world, and it represents those in active rebellion against God.

And so he chose before eternity past, some out of that rebellion to be his own, to belong to him that are in the world, but not of it because they're his.

Look in John 15, 19, we saw this. If you were of the world, Jesus said, the world would love you as its own. You scratch their back, they scratch yours.

[9 : 00] But because you're not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. The contrast, there is a contrast between those who belong to the world and those who belong to Jesus, and it's solely based on those whom he'd chosen.

What Jesus is teaching here, what he's reminding the Father in prayer, is that before the Father sent Jesus into the world, there were some into the world who belonged to him.

They didn't find Jesus, or they didn't belong to God, the Father, after Jesus came. They belonged to him before. In fact, before the Father sent Jesus into the world, all who would follow him were already his.

They were set apart by him. They were chosen by him. And they must have been chosen by grace because they were chosen before they were born. Before they had done anything good or bad.

They were chosen specifically. Look in verse six. I have manifested your name to the people. It's not as though God chose a general group and then got their names afterwards, you know?

[10 : 19] Like we might line up and pass over our passports or our driver's license in a line so that they can write down our name. That's not the way God chose his beloved people. He chose the people.

The certain, specific ones. Specific men and women. So who are these disciples? Are the ones chosen out of the world? They're the ones given to Jesus.

Look in verse six, the second half. Again, yours they were, past tense, and you gave them to me. It's referencing, as we talked about last week, this relationship between the father and the son before time where they set their hearts to save a certain people.

Yours they were and you gave them to me. Now, Christians often think about being, about Jesus being God's gift to us, but we rarely think about us being God's gift to Jesus.

But that's what's going on. Before all time, the father set his heart upon saving a certain people, then he gave them to Jesus.

[11 : 31] Why? So that they might be saved by grace. Undergirding these truths is what theologians call definite atonement. Now, Gil reminded me this week, sometimes it's good for churches and Christians to learn a hard word.

Well, this is a hard word, a hard concept, definite atonement. Some people have called it limited atonement that has issues in the way it's stated. It doesn't capture what it's intending to say.

A clear designation is definite atonement. The idea is, if you'll hang with me for a minute, that Jesus was not sent into the world to make salvation possible for all and therefore potentially not effective for any.

Jesus was not, let me say that again. Jesus was not sent into the world to make salvation possible for all and therefore potentially not effective for any. Jesus was sent into the world to make salvation completely certain, definite and effective for his people.

You remember what the angel said to Joseph? You shall call his name Jesus. Why? For he will save his people. Not might save or try to save or work hard to save.

[12 : 46] He will do it. So that's what these smart guys are trying to get at. But back to our passage. And where this comes in, there were specific people chosen, specific persons chosen for the foundation of the world that belonged to the Father that he gave to Jesus to save.

He didn't give Jesus everyone to save. He gave certain specific persons to save. It's a hard truth. It's the only thing that makes sense of the reception and the proclamation of the gospel in this world.

The truth has been taught throughout John's gospel. Look in John 10. Close to the scripture reading that we read today. It says, You do not believe, this is our Lord, because you're not among my sheep.

My sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me. I give them eternal life and they will never perish and no one will snatch them out of my hand.

You don't believe because you're not among my sheep. Sinclair Ferguson commenting on these verses says here, Definite atonement is efficacious.

[14 : 08] That just means effective atonement. The sheep are first the fathers. They are given to the Son. He lays down his life for his sheep.

They're kept in the hands of the Son and the Father. No sheep for whom Christ lays down his life ever perishes. That's that effective atonement. This idea that the sheep are entrusted to the Father.

He lays down his life and none shall snatch those sheep from his hand. But in addition, Jesus makes the implicit explicit.

Those who do not come to faith were never his own sheep. You do not believe. Now listen to that. You do not believe because you're not a part of my flock.

Our Lord's logic here is striking. It is not you do not believe and therefore you are not part of my flock. Rather, it is you do not believe because you're not part of the flock for which I lay down my life.

[15 : 14] For the definite atonement is effective for those whom the Father has set aside. Now you may be thinking right now, come on man.

Doctrine divides. Jesus unites. Why in the world are we talking about this? Well, it's very important. I do think our passage demands that we talk about it. But God himself is at stake here.

If we say that God the Father could have set aside certain people before the foundation of the world and then just entrusted it to Jesus in such a way that anyone could choose to follow or not, then we have a potential disunity in the Godhead and God is no longer worthy to be worshipped.

Do you understand? Discord in between the intention and the actuality of the Godhead. And so it's very imperative that we think rightly those whom the Father loved before the foundation of the world he gave to Jesus and not one was lost.

But what is also at stake in my opinion is assurance. How can we know for sure we belong to him? How can we know for sure we're his sheep?

[16 : 29] Unless Jesus died to make salvation certain, definite, and effective for his people, then we will never be certain unless we're doing as much as we can.

We'll never be certain unless we're trying as hard as we can, unless our good deeds outweigh our bad deeds. If you will, the gospel will only be heard as demand, not as a gift unto eternal life.

And so where do we go for certainty? We go to these eternal counsels, to the reality that Jesus died to make salvation certain, definite, and effective for all who come to him by faith.

So all that to say, what does Jesus think about his disciples? On this night, as he prays, why is he praying this to his Father?

Father, he's saying to his Father, these ones are the ones you gave me. These are the ones you entrusted to me.

[17 : 38] These are the ones I died for. Father, hear my request for these 11 and for all who come to him by faith because they're the ones you set aside for me.

You know, we live in a culture that's just searching for security everywhere you go. Searching for something to know we're okay. You know, so much of marketing seizes on this, this human desire to feel secure.

You know, we have smoke detectors, but if you just have the battery con, you're going to die. You know, you need wired in smoke detectors. If you ever seen the ads for the fire blanket, I mean, I'm terrified after watching this thing, this fire pops up.

If you don't have a blanket, the whole house is going up in flames. You need that blanket to throw down and fire extinguishers, everything, security system, ammo, investments, everywhere is looking for security.

But the Christian is meant to find security in the eternal counsels of God. Right here in these wonderful truths, these truths are not for public consumption.

[18 : 41] This is Jesus Christ praying to the Father for his people. They're not for public consumption, but they are for private, personal comfort. These are the things that, in my opinion, get you out of bed in the morning.

That I'm not held in somebody's hands who can drop me. That I'm held in everlasting hands. And so Jesus is praying, Father, let me tell you why you should hear these requests. They're the ones chosen by you.

They're the ones for whom I die. Point two, all who are given to Jesus, receive him. All who are given to Jesus, receive him.

In this prayer, as he continues to make his case and asks the Father to answer his prayers, he says, the ones you gave me, receive me. That seems kind of logical.

But if you remember John 1, you know, you remember the great passage John 1, he came to his own, his own people did not receive him. But all who did receive him, he gave the right to become children of God.

[19 : 46] Tying these verses together and helping us to understand. Look at verse 6. The end, he says, and they kept your word. You gave them to me and they kept your word. They proved to be yours because they kept your word.

That's verse 6. Verse 7, though, they came to know that everything you have given me is from you. You see the repetition of that word given again. Verse 8, for I have given them the words that you gave me.

They received them. They have come to know in truth that I came from you. And they believe that you sent me. Now it's striking after the opening, or verse 6, after talking about and praying about the eternal counsel of God, Jesus moves immediately to their human response in real time.

That's the way the Bible often goes when it talks about God's sovereignty and human responsibility. It has no trouble emphasizing the absolute sovereignty of God in such a way that it never reduces human beings to robots or pawns.

It has no trouble saying that God is 100% sovereign from beginning to end, and yet human beings are 100% responsible for how they respond to him and whether they receive him.

[20 : 58] So he's praying for these disciples, not merely because they were given to the Son before eternity passed, but because in real time they came to him and they trusted him.

The Bible wonderfully helps us understand that God is absolutely sovereign in all that he saved, yet in the mystery of the way it works out, no one who does not want to be saved is saved, and no one who wants to be saved is condemned.

Now I know that's a big mouthful. But when Jesus is making his case to the Father, why the Father should hear his request, when Jesus is telling us what he thinks about these disciples, he said, they kept your word.

They received me. A lot of crowds followed Jesus, but these ones followed him for real.

They're the ones who received him, who believed in him, who kept the word, who left everything to follow him. Now, a part of you should want to throw a flag right now. Not at me, but at the text, at the Lord.

[22 : 12] You want to say, wait, wait, wait. Are you sure you're talking about the same disciples? Remember Taylor's passage two weeks ago. The Lord said, you will soon scatter and leave me alone.

You're big and tough, but you're going to leave me completely alone. How can you say they believe in you? How can you say they have kept your word?

Now, some say Jesus is speaking in a future sense that they will, they will one day keep his word. They will one day follow him when they regather in Jerusalem and wait for the power to come on high.

But I don't think that's what's going on here. I think what Jesus is making clear here is that those who belong to him are not those who obey him perfectly, but those who trust in him completely.

And so he prays for these disciples on the night that they will forsake him. He prays for them. He celebrates how they kept his word. They left everything to follow him.

[23 : 16] Can you imagine the comfort they felt when they remembered this prayer in the morning? On Sunday morning, as they waited for the spirit to fall on high.

Can you imagine the comfort, the help Peter found? Jesus knew they would fail him, but he still said they are his disciples, his followers, because the relationship was never built that way.

The same is true for you. You may find little beauty in your Christian life. It may seem to be just dust and ashes.

That's what it can feel like. You may see all the imperfections, blemishes, and defects in your walk with Jesus. You may be sick with grief.

You ever been sick with grief at your missteps? Buried in condemnation at your many failures. You may feel your life is an entire waste for the cause of Christ.

[24 : 20] You may even assume that because of your many flaws, Jesus is a bit ashamed of you. He's embarrassed like a hip teenager is of her silly little brother.

Ashamed like a father is of his continually stumbling adult sister. Want to keep you in the recesses. Keep you in the wings.

But this is what Jesus says. That's one of the ones. who kept my word. Who followed me. That's the one of the ones who believed me.

That's the one of the ones who set their affections on me. But what did they receive about Jesus? So Jesus is commending them for receiving him. But what did they receive?

What did they come to believe about him? Look in verse six. He says, I have manifested your name to the people. What is the name of God?

[25 : 18] You remember the story of Moses when the Lord appears to him in the bush and he speaks to him. He says, go to Egypt and call out my people. And he says, who are you? He says, I am who I am.

Well, Moses is thinking that does not help. That does not solve anything. Later, when Moses experiences some of his character, he says, Lord, when he experiences his kindness and his forgiveness, he says, show me your glory.

He says, I cannot let my glory. You can't see my full glory, but I will pass before you and you'll see my back. But here, Jesus says, the Lord says, no one can see my face.

But here, Jesus says, I have manifested your name. I have revealed it. I have enfleshed your name. I have revealed who you are, what you're all about. I have showed the world your character.

That's why he emphasizes so carefully how everything he's done is what the Father's done. Look in verse 7. I know everything you've given me is from you. That's what they've come to see. I've given them the words that you gave me.

[26 : 21] There's this intimate relationship between Jesus and the Father and what he is trying to put on display. Jesus spoke similarly early in the gospel when he says, I cannot do nothing. I can do nothing of my own accord.

Whatever the Father does, the Son does, the Father knows, shows himself in all that the Son does. What is he trying to say? What is he putting on display? Jesus is saying, I am not a solo project.

I am coming to display and make known the eternal God forever for all people to see what he's like. This is the reality. Jesus did not come to live his truth.

Jesus did not come to be true to himself, to display himself, to express himself. He came to make the Father known. No one can see God, the only God, the true God.

Jesus Christ has made him known. Look in verse, or actually, look in Charles Ross. He helpfully says, from the manger at Bethlehem to the grave of Joseph of Arimathea, from the Jordan to the brook Kedron, from the Mount of Transfiguration to the hill of Golgotha, the whole of Christ's life, his suffering and death.

[27 : 32] I, and afterwards, his resurrection is nothing but the most lucid and blessed revelation of the name of God by which he should be known to us.

What was Jesus doing? He was peeling back the veil. You want to see what this God's like? Look at Jesus Christ.

If you've ever been in a conflict with your spouse, not that I've ever experienced such matters, or a close family member, you've heard it said or you've said, you always do that.

Absolutes like that in a conflict mean things are going, nowhere, very, very, very fast. But when Jesus says, I've manifested your name, he's saying, I've showed them, Father, what you always do.

I've showed them what you're always like. I've showed them that you always refuse to give what they deserve.

[28 : 55] I've showed them that you're always slow to anger. I've showed them, Father, that you're always abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness. Lord, I've showed them, Father, that you're always welcoming back repeat offenders.

Repeat offender? Come on in. I've showed them, Father, that you always stay, that you always rejoice in going good, that you're always welcoming home the sinner. I've showed them, Father, in three years what you're always up to, what you never stop doing, what no vacation days or furloughs or days off allow.

What you always do is what Jesus reveals. I've manifested your name. Isn't that amazing? There was always uncertainty in the relationship between Israel and the church.

I mean, Israel and the Lord. What's the guarantee this God will always be like this? It's through Jesus Christ we gain the great certainty in his enfleshing and displaying the name of God.

So how could anyone not receive this Christ? How could anyone not follow him?

[30 : 25] One of my favorite verses, I mean, some ways it just relates to not one of my favorite verses, that's so overstated, but Matthew 28, like right before Jesus ascends.

He's ascending and some doubted. You know, I just love that because that's the way we are, isn't it? After this portfolio, some still doubting, but soberly, John tells us that many did not receive him because they loved the praise of men more.

Look in John 12, which we have for you. Isaiah said, these things, talking about a prophecy about the Lord in Isaiah 53, because he saw his glory, that is, the Lord's glory, and spoke of him.

Nevertheless, many, even of the authorities, believed in him, but for fear of the Pharisees, they did not confess it, so that they would not be put out of the synagogues, for they loved the glory that comes from man more than the glory that comes from God.

Now, just before this prayer and this meditation on so much glory, this is what we have. There's a glory that blinds men and women from the glory of Christ.

[31 : 41] That's the glory that comes from man. Follow the logic. That's still up there. Yeah. Follow the logic of it. They did not confess because they were afraid. But he continues, they did not confess because they love the glory that comes from man more than the glory of God.

And so, their fear, their being afraid, was really an inverted craving. It was a love as well that blinded them from the glory of God.

They wanted safety. They didn't want to die. They wanted to be, they didn't want to be seen as one of those disciples who followed this crazy guy.

I've been meditating on the movie Teen Wolf this week. If you remember that movie, it's actually very, very odd if you think back, but it shows you what the 90s were doing or 80s, I don't know.

Michael J. Fox, who was the heartthrob of the world back then, realizes he's in high school trying to pick up girls and play basketball and different things like that.

[32 : 50] He realizes he's a wolf. His dad's a wolf, so yeah, I guess that's the way it works, you know. Apple didn't fall far, but he realizes he's a wolf. He has these powers when he turns into the wolf.

He has the ability, he was kind of a scrub on the basketball court, but he starts dominating in basketball and winning and controlling everything and everything seemed to be falling in place for this little odd Michael J. Fox high school kid that didn't fit in.

He's picking up the hot girls in the high school, winning all the games, but then he realizes somewhere along the way that all that love for the wolf was a love for the praise of men.

His friend Booth says, I don't like you as a wolf. I like you as Scott. That's what happens. You know, we think about the praise of men like a little seventh grade problem.

It's not true. The praise of men is damning many souls to hell. It is. This love for the praise and approval and applause.

[33 : 57] You don't have to have a hundred people on your Twitter or Instagram or whatever you're on for people to become addicted to it. And so, it's not something they saw that wasn't right in Jesus Christ that blinds them.

It's the love for the glory that comes from men that blinds them and drives them away from Jesus Christ. And it's always the way. Praise, applause, social media like, acceptance in the inner circle of the who's who is all it takes to snuff out the glory of Jesus Christ.

Point three, all who receive him glorify him. All who receive him glorify him. In this prayer to the Father as he concludes this case, he says, the ones who receive me bring glory to me.

I glory in them. He returns to that distinction in verse 9 between the world and those for whom he gave to the Father.

The Father gave to him. Look in verse 9, I am praying for them. I'm not praying for the world but for those whom you've given me. Another use of that given verb for they are yours.

[35 : 23] Now, it's not as though Jesus never prays for the world. One of the most provocative verses in the New Testament when Jesus looks over Jerusalem and says, oh Jerusalem, oh Jerusalem, how often I have longed to gather you to myself.

But he's not praying for the world on this night. He's praying for his disciples. He's praying for the ones you have given me for they are yours. Look in verse 10. He's back to this language, all mine are yours and yours are mine.

Anyone can pray all I have is yours. We sung it today. But who can pray all you have is mine? This striking meditation between the Father and the Son.

Earlier he said, yours they were but you gave them to me. Now he says, yours they are. All who were given to Jesus to save now belong to the one true God.

He's been discharged. He's done his duty. Now he's returning back to the Father. The idea, all mine are yours and yours are mine. They're bound together, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and all these are bound into the intimacy, peace, blessing, and joy that binds the Godhead together.

[36 : 43] And then he says, and I'm glorified in him. Now obviously they saw the Father's glory just like the glory they would have seen at the wedding at Cana.

This revelation that this is not a mere man. But I think something else is going on here. They, I am glorified in them.

He's saying, they are my delight. They are my joy, my treasured possession. This is the glory that comes from God.

Obviously God is absolutely glorious, but the glory that he gives, the praise that he gives from God to his creatures, he's saying that God would care for them, that God would chase them down, that God would guide them, that God would bring them home, that God would delight in them like an artist does his artwork or like a father does his son.

It's the weight of glory, as C.S. Lewis helpfully said. And what Jesus is pointing out, he doesn't merely welcome them in, he delights over them. These are the ones from the Father gave them, he paid all the penalty for their sins and paid the debt for their sins and now he glorifies, he glories over them, rejoices over him.

[38 : 13] I think that's why there's so many images of joy in heaven. The angels rejoice over one sinner who repents. The servants announce, enter into the joy of my master.

The Lord himself endured the cross for the joy set before him. What is the joy? The joy is the delight over the father, over his children. The endless overflow of exclamation and joy over those for whom he died and saved.

I was blown away by this reality when reading a story about the five missionaries who were killed in Ecuador in the 50s.

You probably heard their story from Elizabeth Elliot, her book, *Through the Gates of Splendor*. Those five missionaries in the 50s, Jim Elliot, Nate Saint, Pete Fleming, Roger Udarian, and Ed McCulley.

Some time ago, I read the end of the story. It kind of blew me away. Nate Saint's son has gone back to Ecuador. Elizabeth Elliot went first and led a number of them to the Lord as well as Nate Saint's aunt.

[39 : 34] And then Nate, the son of, Nate Saint's son, Steve Saint, has gone back to Ecuador many times and seen the conversion of many of the Waldani people, including those who murdered his father.

One of the things Mr. Saint has done is try to discover what happened that day. That's one of the things lost to history. What happened on this day on the beach there in the jungle in Ecuador?

What incited the Wydani people? What did they think was going on and what did they think these men were trying to do? What were they afraid of? You know, it's an important question. In the process, he discovered one of the things all the people there saw and heard.

Mr. Saint describes it in his own words. He said, Dawa, and I'm quoting him now, one of the three women told me that she had hidden in the bush through the attack, hearing but not seeing the killing of the five men.

She told me she had been hit by gun pellets in the wrist and just above the knee. The men had shot off warning shots to try to drive the tribesmen away from them.

[40 : 46] Apparently some of those had landed near her because she was on the far side of the narrow river. She also told me that after the killing, she saw outsiders above the trees singing.

She didn't know what this kind of music was until she later heard reports of Aunt Rachel's and became familiar with the sound of a choir. She's saying in her own language that she saw, heard a choir of voices singing.

over the beach. Two others confirmed that they heard the singing and saw what Dawa seems to describe as angels along the ridge of Palm Beach.

Another verified hearing strange music. said he saw something more like lights moving around and shining, a sky full of jungle beetles similar to fireflies with a light that is brighter and doesn't blink.

What in the world are they talking about? Now, what in the world are they talking about? The angels rejoicing. Lord says precious in the sight of the Lord are the death of his saints.

[42 : 15] What are they talking about? These angels must have been saying, these are some of the ones the father gave to Jesus. These are some of the ones the son died for.

These are some of the ones who received the son. These are some of the ones who refused the glory that comes from man. Let them come home. The angels are the Lord's messengers.

His workers out there in the world. We don't talk about them a lot because it's a little embarrassing but it's true biblically. The angels are out there in this world and that's what they saw. Suddenly this veil is ripped between heaven and earth and they see that God delights in his people.

The plan of salvation is not to rescue you from hell. It's not even merely to give you fellowship with God which is an unspeakable privilege. It is to bring you into the eternal delight of the Godhead.

It is to bring you into that room into which you never thought you would belong but you belong because of Jesus. Because he did everything that was necessary. So the glory that comes from God is so much better than the glory that comes from man.

[43 : 22] It is the delight of an eternally good and loving father and his son and his holy spirit. spirit and so every Christian belongs completely to him.

And eternity will not be long enough to unpack all that that means. Chosen by the father, saved by the son to his delight, to the praise of his glory forever and ever and ever.

father in heaven, we hide under these things. We do want to stand in the stabilizing reality that all whom you have given to Jesus belong completely to you and that includes us.

Lord, we long to rest in these things, to stand tall, to be protected from so many of the temptations and sins which assault us. So help us.

Lord, we offer ourselves to you sincerely and completely, Lord. We don't want to play fast and loose with you. We cling to you.

[44 : 41] Thankfully, your right hand upholds us and so we have peace. In Jesus' name, amen. You've been listening to a message given by Walt Alexander, lead pastor of Trinity Grace Church in Athens, Tennessee.

For more information about Trinity Grace, please visit us at trinitygraceathens.com.