

The Working Church

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[0 : 00] 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.

Ephesians chapter 4. Look down there with me in verse 6, or verse 7 rather. I'm going to read on through verse 16. So Ephesians chapter 4, verse 7.

Word of God says, But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift.

Therefore it says, when He ascended on high, He led a host of captives, and He gave gifts to men. In saying He ascended, what does it mean but that He had also descended into the lower regions, the earth?

He who descended is the one who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things. And He gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds, and teachers to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.

[1 : 15] Until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

So that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.

Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into Him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

This is the word of the Lord. When April 2019, people worldwide tuned in to see the roof of Notre Dame in Paris, engulfed in flames.

The cathedral spire snapped like a twig just before sunset, crashing 314 feet into the center of the cathedral. When the spire fell, it smashed through the meticulous hand-carved ceiling from the Middle Ages, made by using 5,000 oak trees.

[2 : 46] Everyone was tuning in because while it was burning, there was much discussion as to whether it would fall completely, as to whether the 28 flying buttresses would collapse those buttresses constructed in 1180, 1180, and bring down the entire building.

Fortunately, those 28 buttresses did not collapse, and the building remained standing. The fact, though, that they remained standing while the building was on fire was a reminder to everyone watching that those buttresses were the reason the structure stood firm.

Without them, the whole cathedral would have tumbled down like a house of cards. Now, the buttresses called Notre Dame to stand in a day of fire, but will the church stand in our day?

In a day of deep division, where lines are drawn all around us, will the church of Jesus Christ stand? In a day of deep confusion about some of the things most fundamental about what it means to be a man or woman, will the church stand?

In a day of unabashed, unashamed individualism, where the vast majority of us make almost every decision with little regard for the people with whom we are called to share life.

[4 : 22] Will the church stand? Now, the church is called, in the New Testament, the pillar and buttress of the truth. That alerts us to how serious the matter is.

We don't expect the culture to affirm truth, right? We should expect the culture, we should be surprised, maybe flattered, when they do affirm truth, but we expect the church to do so.

But will it? Now, the church is not the truth, the church is the institution, though, that God has ordained to proclaim and apply the truth, to guard and protect the truth, to preserve and transfer the truth.

Wonderfully, God did not entrust the truth into you and your family's hands and maybe a few of your buddies. That's not who He entrusted the truth to. He entrusted it to the hands of a people, His people, the body of Jesus Christ.

He is the head of which the church, but will the church keep proclaiming the truth? Will the church transfer the truth? Or will it begin to tell lies?

[5 : 29] Martin Lloyd-Jones, the doctor in England, once said, in these days of exceptional evil, are you doing something exceptional? Or are you just content doing the same routine things?

Well, in these days of exceptional evil, God has called us to something exceptional. He's called us into the church. Last Sunday, we learned how the gospel unites other believers into one body.

We learned how we're members of one another and members of Jesus Christ, a part of His body, this stunning truth. This week, in the next set of verses, we're going to learn how this unity is meant to work out, how it's meant to unfold and take shape in our lives.

It's not the unity of parades or rallies or love feasts. It's so much more glorious than that. It's the unity of a diverse group of people with a wide range of gifts coming together to form a working church, laboring side by side, encouraging one another and causing one another to grow up into Jesus Christ, into the head.

What we're going to see is the church is not a museum for saints, but it's also not merely a hospital for sinners. As one of the reformers used to say, the church is a gymnasium for godliness.

[6 : 52] It's where the Christian life is meant to take shape in a working church. Now, the apostle has two long run-on sentences in these verses. The first sentence is 55 words and covers verses 7 through 10.

The second sentence is 124 words and goes all the way to verse 16. But these long run-on sentences center on the working church, and I want you to have a vision for it.

I want you to be captivated by it. And where we're going is let each one of the church use their ransom life and divinely empowered gifts to help others grow in Christ.

Let each one in the church use their ransom life and divinely empowered gifts to help others grow in Christ. We're going to break this out in three points. The first one is all believers are given gifts.

All believers are given gifts. You know, Paul begins by unpacking and getting into the nature of these gifts. You know, oftentimes I think we start talking about spiritual gifts and we think of spiritual gifts surveys and we kind of fill out the things we like.

[7 : 59] I don't want us to just go there yet. I want us to get a vision for what is radical about these gifts. Now, if you remember last week, you know, the apostle emphasized our unity by saying one, one, one, one, one seven times in verses four through six.

One Lord, one faith, one baptism. One God and Father of all. One hope to which we are called. The emphasis of one is carried forward into our passage. Look in verse seven.

Grace was given to each one of us. Each one. Look down in verse 16. It uses the same phrase though we interpret it a little bit different.

He says, when each part, so each one is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds up in love. And so this idea of one threaded through last week's passage but it brackets this week's passage whereas last week emphasized our unity in one body, in one spirit.

This week emphasizes our individuality in this one body. grace came to each one of us.

[9 : 08] Each one of us. Look at the apostle includes himself there because in chapter three he talked about the grace of God was given to him as an apostle to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to the Gentiles.

And grace was given to him. Grace was given to you. These gifts are divinely given, given to us by Christ. He is the head.

He gives the assignments. He gives the gifts. Divinely given by him. Also divinely empowered by him.

Now in 1 Corinthians 12 it uses this word for spiritual gifts. It really is a word. It says grace gift. That's literally what the word is. Well it's very similar here. It's grace that gives this gift.

It's a very similar thing he's saying. You know we often think of grace as unmerited favor with God through Jesus Christ. God's riches that Christ accepts. God's riches at Christ's expense and that's a wonderful thing.

[10 : 04] But grace is also power. Titus 2 tells us the grace of God trains us to renounce ungodliness and to live self-controlled upright lives in this present age.

And so grace is power on display. And so it is the power of God at work in his people. That's what these gifts are. One theologian says gifts are God going public among his people.

But before the apostle continues and tells us how these gifts work out he tells us how they were given to us. He quotes Psalm 68. Now this is a little bit uncommon.

We haven't seen the apostle quote a verse like this in all of Ephesians so far. Now it's not surprising that he quotes Psalm 68 in many ways because Psalm 68 is about how God is victorious over his enemies.

He finds the strangers, a family. He gathers together a congregation. I say that's not surprising because that's what Ephesians is all about. It's about Jesus Christ who is victorious over every rule and authority and power and dominion and it's about the church that he gathers to himself.

[11 : 22] But there is a problem. In the verse he quotes Psalm 68 it says God led a host of captives and received gifts from men. Now that's not too uncommon if you think about a victor going and conquering an area would often receive spoils from the victory just like when God delivered the people out of Egypt they left with their coffers stuffed full of gold and all sorts of things they were given some of the spoils of God's victory.

But Paul says when he quotes this verse is that he didn't receive gifts but he gave gifts to men. Now what is going on is just a little sleight of hand by the apostle.

And there's just dozens and dozens of pages to try to figure out what exactly is going on. I think the best explanation is that Paul is an inspired author of the New Testament.

It's not as if Paul didn't know what he was doing. Inspired author of the New Testament adapted Psalm 68 to align with what Christ has done.

So Christ is victorious over sin and death as we learn in chapter 1 he's over every rule and authority and power and dominion and when he gets victory he does not receive gifts but gives gifts.

[12 : 54] Now you've got to think about this in the context of first century religion where all of it is built on what gifts you bring to the deity to the pantheon of gods in a city well Jesus Christ is so different he doesn't receive gifts he doesn't need your gifts but he gives gifts and when he ascended in heaven he gave gifts that's what it's trying to make clear in these verses he gave gifts but he gave them for a purpose look back there in verse 9 it's striking the way the apostle includes this when he ascended on high he wants to remind us that saying he ascended meant that he also descended into the lower regions of the earth he lived like a man and that same one who lived like a man ascended far above all heavens but what?

so that he might fill all things and so what's going on here is he doesn't receive gifts he gives gifts because he wants to fill the earth that he left with his glory it's so much more than a talent that you might have or a skill you might perform it's about filling the earth with the glory of Jesus Christ that's where he's going all throughout this epistle that he might fill all things even as all things will one day be united in him as chapter 1 tells us now so often we assume God is only at work in the spectacular in the local church God's only powerfully at work when Abigail sings a solo when Daniel prophesies or when Taylor teaches or whatever Miss Coyman's back there in TG Kids dropping knowledge we think that's when God's at work but the actual reality is all the gifts are divinely given and empowered by grace empowered by God remember a couple years ago

I watched this documentary documentary on Kirk Cousins he was a quarterback unfortunately had a really rough year but he was a quarterback for the Vikings but before that he was a quarterback for the Redskins so he was drafted by the Redskins played behind RG3 took a while to get somewhere but he was there for eight years or something like that and in this documentary it tells about the first story going back to Washington to play the Redskins so here's Kirk Cousins by that time has become a very successful professional quarterback and the scene takes him onto the field before the game it's his first time back his wife flew in with him so they could meet all their friends he's walking around talking to old coaches and people like that but what struck me is he began talking to everybody on the grounds talked to the security guard he talked to these people maintaining the grounds he talked to all the workers in the place one particular scene of one of the groundskeeper comes up to him and says

Kirk I beat cancer and you see Kirk's face flush with emotion and tears and he says praise the Lord what that gave us a little window into is what Kirk Cousins came to appreciate if the Redskins don't play football if all these people don't do their job and here he is a window and a man who understood that well the church is the same way if we were all heads or all arms or all eyes or all big toes or something silly like that we would be a very strange looking body and we wouldn't function so well God's made it like that and I love to see the grace of God on display in this church this is a working church that loves to serve whether TG Kids or One to One or Tech or Setup one of the guys

I've grown to love watching him serve and set up is Joel Church just the joy he spreads everywhere he is when he's setting up chairs and the banter you hear going back and forth that's what happens in the church the grace of God is on display God's going public that's what Sunday mornings are about it's hard for me not to think about the Ephesians when they first heard these words and we know based on some of the passages we've already handled there was deep division in this church most likely between Jew and Gentile division based on their background there seems to be deep discouragement Paul tells them to not be discouraged in chapter 3 it appears they're losing hope losing faith that God is at work but when they hear these verses they're reminded of how the grace of God came they're reminded of those first days when they were all worshippers of Artemis the Greek god in the area and they began to sell it all and burn it all to celebrate grace had invaded their lives and that's what joined them together as a church and it's invaded our lives as well and brought us together point two not all believers have the same gifts so all believers are gifted by grace but not all believers have the same gifts after unpacking the nature of these gifts as these divinely empowered gifts from the exalted

[18 : 38] Christ Paul continues to talk about their function we immediately see that not all believers have the same gift now this is implied look in verse 7 grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift it's implied that unlike all of us being joined into one body in one spirit grace comes to us individually in different gifts for different purposes he continues in verse 11 and says and he gave the apostles the prophets the evangelists the shepherds and teachers to equip the saints for the work of ministry for building up the body of Christ he gives some now this is not exhausted we see other spiritual gift lists in the New Testament but he gave some to be prophets and apostles and evangelists shepherds and teachers but all are engaged in the work of ministry all are engaged in the saints doing the work of ministry building up the body of Christ on the one hand from these verses you should we should be able to say

I need leaders to help me now the smart guys wrestle with whether the apostle Paul is talking about functions in the church or whether he's talking about office holders and I think it's a little bit blurry but the idea is God has an order to the church he gave the apostles the prophets the evangelists and shepherds and teachers the commonality between each of these gifts is their teaching gifts their ministry of the word gifts in the bible leadership is a gift from God it's not a four letter word like it's often assumed to be in our culture it's not anarchic Christianity is not anarchic biblically leaders are not elected nor do folks climb the ladder achieving various milestones leaders in the church are gifts from the exalted Christ strikingly he doesn't say he gives just a gift he gives a person so the Lord gives apostles now there's no more added to the twelve

Paul was the last one who saw Jesus untimely he said he was born untimely but he saw the risen Christ on the road to Emmaus or the road to I forgot but Damascus goodness that's going to drive me nuts for like three minutes so thank you on the road to Damascus there is a road to Emmaus in the bible too but we'll save that for another Sunday so there's no more of the twelve but the spirit of this we do see in the new testament when there's people sent out that's what apostle means sent one sent out from established churches to pioneer new churches new works of ministry we see that in Barnabas Julia other people in the new testament the Lord also gives prophets now these are not capital P old testament prophets based in the new testament these are those who spoke words for the encouragement edification and consolation of the saints similar to the way Agabus did or Philip's four prophesying daughters now they only get half a sentence in the whole new testament but I think that's fascinating what was going on in this household well it's not authoritative prophecy but is for building up as we've enjoyed in our congregation this morning and at other times the Lord gives evangelists now all believers are ambassadors of Christ called to make the appeal of the gospel and yet there are some who are especially gifted in making known the ministry of the gospel or the message of the gospel teaching others to do the same

I think of Jim Donahue my friend who's this wonderful evangelist loves to train people in proclaiming evangelism evangelism is a discipline but it also is a gifting for certain people finally the Lord gives pastors and teachers if you look down there in verse 11 you can see these two share a close relationship there's one article the shepherds no article before teachers now that's preserved from the original the shepherds and teachers that's where the conjunction is as well so there's supposed to be this tight relationship for these two gifts I don't think it means they're the same gift necessarily I think the tight relationship is meant to say while all teachers are not called to pastor all pastors are called to teach we know that from 1st Timothy 3 and Titus 1 they're supposed to be apt to teach but that doesn't reduce all the teaching down in a local church but the pastors serve as authoritative teachers in the church and each of these five gifts together serve to equip the saints for ministry the Christian life the Christian you know the church is not a business but if you viewed it as a business the idea was not that the pastor is to be the professional

Christian sometimes I think people relate to me that way now you lay off hard drugs so that I don't have to you know or you avoid opulence so that I don't have well that's not the way it works sorry to burst your bubble that's not my calling you know you go to a physician because you do want him to know more than you as much as you did dear or Dr.

[24 : 18] Google before you got there you're going to him because you want him to know more same thing with a lawyer but not always the case or that's not the idea with a pastor a pastor's calling is not to do all the work but to equip the saints to do the work of ministry strikingly we use minister when we talk about pastor but the word for ministry here is used for what the church does a working church they're the ministers or at least ministry is not reduced what's all this mean there's an order to the church for your good I know I'm preaching to the choir here but God means for you to grow up under the leadership of a local church now if you're in this church that might not sound like good news when Charles Spurgeon was a boy he says the church he attended while away at school was lousy one of the people he had learned much from though was a cook at the school that he attended he attended a boarding school one day he noticed that the cook this lady he learned a lot about the scriptures from was going to the same lousy church he's like what in the world is going on so he says why do you go to such a place she replied well there's no other place of worship to which

I could go he responded but it must be better than this better to stay at home than to hear such stuff she answered perhaps so but I like to go out to worship even if I get nothing by going you see a hen sometimes scratching all over a heap of rubbish trying to find some corn she does not get any but it shows that she is looking for it and using the means to get it she warms herself by the exercise that might be all the warmth you get this morning but she's getting at something important the order of the church is for our good the church is an institution the Lord Jesus designed it that way he gave gifts to men to lead serve and govern the church it is not good as is the habit of some to assume that we don't need the institution of the church I remember that that's always an argument that seems to make way and it's not biblical we don't need the institution of the church we'll just do it with our family we're fine studying the Bible of God with our family with a few friends or whatever but that's not what the New

Testament prescribed John Calvin gets in our face when he says we must allow ourselves to be ruled and taught by men this is the universal rule which extends equally from the highest to the lowest the church is the common mother of all the godly Cyprian said that God is our father you cannot have God as your father if you don't have the church as your mother church is a common mother of all the godly which bears nourishes and brings up children to God kings and peasants alike this is done by the ministry those who neglect or despise this order choose to be wiser than Christ woe to the pride of such men I say I'm preaching the choir here because you guys love your pastors and it's real humbling to serve you deeply humbling on the other hand from these verses we should be able to say others need me to serve them if the call of a pastor is equipped the saints for the ministry then the call of the saints is the ministry grace was given to each one of us the body only grows when each part is working properly that word for ministry just means serving that's the deacon word from Acts 6 and 1st

Timothy 3 but that's your word you have a ministry did you know that you have a ministry you have the work of ministry what's the work of ministry where's it going what's the purpose of it to build up the body of Christ to strengthen and help the body of Christ Paul brings together two metaphors as he did in chapter 2 the church is a building it's a temple it's far more glorious than Notre Dame or St.

Peter's it is a temple that has no physical address no zip code it's people all throughout the world but it needs to be built up it needs to be reinforced it needs men and women who take their standing take their pose it needs to be expanded it's it's a building it needs to be built up it's also a body he gets down into this in 15 and 16 it has all these different parts it has shoulders knees and toes it has a head that's in heaven they all need to work together no part is unnecessary no part is unneeded you are needed the work of ministry is not for you to watch the work of ministry is you to dig in put on the waiters as my friend would like to say roll up your sleeves and get busy working Charles Spurgeon gets in our face too if we've been confronted by Calvin we can be encouraged by Spurgeon he says when you bewail the world's iniquity let not your emotions end in tears mere weeping will do nothing without action get on your feet ye that have voices and knowledge go forth and preach the gospel preach it in every street and lane of this huge city ye that have wealth go forth and spend it on the poor and sick and needy and dying not on your creature comforts the uneducated the unenlightened ye that have time go forth and occupy it in deeds of goodness ye that have power in prayer go forth and pray ye that can handle the pen go forth and write down iniquity every man and woman to their post every one of you to your gun in this day of battle now for

[30 : 29] God and for his truth for God and for the right let everyone who knows the Lord seek to fight under this banner I love that he gets in me I just it's not just that I want you to see others need you I want to see this is what you were born for I'll never forget becoming a Christian in the summer of 2001 and stumbling into a local church and my life was never the same I was 21 years old and stumbled into Cornerstone Church at Knoxville I was talking to Bill this week and he goes when you first I was thanking him I had just been working on this and he said when you first came it wasn't pretty hair all over the place a bandana on your head he said I saw so many guys like you and to think you're still in the church so humbling I dropped out of college because I was sick of throwing away money for something

I didn't know what I wanted to do I started working at Walmart and I joined the church and I was working at Walmart in the dairy section making sure you had Pillsbury products every week and was working in the dairy section and the church came around they had their first building fund this little church had a dream that God would give them a building I have a dream that God would give us a building but 21 years old I had this building fund brochure with a literal mustard seed on it because we had a mustard seed of faith that God was going to do a work and I put in my pledge \$25 a month and it could have been the happiest day of my life I'm not kidding I wept which is not too surprising to most people in here but I danced I wanted to scream from the top of my lungs because I finally found out that my life is not about me and your life is not about you either you're meant to be numbered among the people of

God that's what God is doing God is not out to save isolated individuals who just roam into eternity but to build his church to put them on a mission to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ and I just got to tell you one thing that's not related to the message but is to that story this morning my friend Bill has already announced or will be announcing that Cornerstone Church paid off their building today yes when we had that little mustard seed of faith it was a seven million dollar building we might as well have bought Mars you know this was not going to happen it was not going to happen and yet God loves the prayers of his people and he loves it when his people are brought up into the church and you may think I love Jesus but I don't love other Christians and you know what sometimes I completely agree I don't really love the church you may be coming around but still holding back you may be dipping your toe in just a little bit you may not be in you may not be serving at all you may be a member but you may not be serving my prayer is not merely that you would see others need your serving you do need to see that but my prayer is that you see that you are meant to be found in the bride of

Christ it is the plan of God this is the stuff that should dazzle you there will be a lot to dazzle you this week on the TV Super Bowl and all this this is the miracle this is the wisdom of God this is what is stunning God is building a church with hell deserving sinners like you and me it's the plan for the world point three but the gifts of all believers are vital for growth so all are gifted not all have the same gifts but the gifts of all are vital for growth after unpacking the nature and function of these gifts Paul unpacks the purpose of them why do we need the church why do we need the gifts and service of others he said until we all attain the unity of faith and the knowledge of the Son of God so there's this idea that until we get to eternity we need the church why because we need to grow because we need to grow the passage is driving home the need for change and growth is emphasized and here that idea of a building is pushed home it begins and ends this passage we are a building under construction you are under construction

I am under construction we are a people under construction it adds this metaphor of childhood look in verse 13 until we all attain to the unity and the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God to mature manhood to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ so that we may no longer be children tossed to and fro we are the images of a young child growing up when a child is born they're immature they're dependent on mom and dad for everything they need someone to feed them clothe them change them soothe them gradually they grow up too fast you know they begin to talk express their desires learn to cook clothe themselves get stronger learn how to work they become more mature so it tells us that we're kind of like that we're growing up but we're not just immature we're unstable is what it's saying we're like boats tossed to and fro we're unsteady unbalanced we're often overcome children are like this are often overcome by the moment overwhelmed by emotion overpowered by peer pressure one of the great follies of our cultural moment is how we're encouraging and enabling unstable children to make life altering decisions it wasn't meant to be that way your child is immature unstable they need a parent you know children especially teenagers are unstable not just because of what they don't know but because of what they think they know

[36 : 43] Mark Twain once said when I was 14 my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around but when he got to be 21 I was astonished at how much the old man had learned in seven years when we become children we're like that we're immature unstable we don't know what we don't know we're vulnerable we're I when we're isolated and alone we're vulnerable every person that I've seen make shipwreck of their faith they've wandered first from the church before they've wandered from Jesus Christ why because they are his people his body every wind of doctrine threatens us look down there it's like a wave or it creates waves carried about by every wind of doctrine these truths are flying around our information age it's hard to keep your head up all the winds of doctrine human cunning so not merely just the mere wind but human cunning people that are out for themselves out for power and prominence you see that they are false teachers they have a microphone though and that's what makes it difficult to know they can publish a book anybody can publish a book now at

Amazon and so that and a bus ticket will get you a ride on a bus you know but every wind of doctrine human cunning is not loneliness or cancer or job loss or a worldly culture the ever present danger of the church according to the New Testament is being lured away from the truth so what is this body formed for it's formed to keep you from being lured away to keep me from being lured away and as we serve one another and speak the truth to one another we grow up that's suddenly you know if you're reading through this passage for the first time that speaking the truth in love in verse 15 jumps off what happened we were talking about gifts we were talking about building one another up and suddenly speaking the truth in love confessing the truth in love I think the idea is there's an order to the church God's given people to preach the ministry of the word but the ministry of the word doesn't stay in the pulpit wonderfully it runs all over the church confessing the truth so you don't need me to preach the gospel merely to you you need brothers and sisters to preach this truth to you that's what happens with the ministry of the word when it takes hold of a church

Sinclair Ferguson said it like this the ministry of the word produces itself in the ministry of people this is what happens when the word of God as it were jumps from the pulpit and starts running around in our lives that's what we want to do in and through our gifts and our serving is to get the word of God to run around in our lives to build us up as a church to build us up in love to build us up into Christ who is the church supposed to look like it's as if threading through these passages is an image of Jesus coming into sharper and sharper focus verse 13 we are to attain the unity and the faith of the knowledge of the Son of God we are to attain this knowledge of the Son of God Jesus Christ we are to grow up into mature manhood who is the man that we must grow up into we are to grow up it continues right after that into the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ and in verse 15 it just kind of explodes we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head into

Christ that's where this is all going wonderfully this passage begins with the exalted Christ at the right hand of God the Father on high dispensing his gifts onto his church that they might fill the earth with the glory of the knowledge of Jesus Christ well it ends with Jesus Christ with this church looking up to him and growing up into him in every way so wonderful growth is not just being kind more you know or being more generous or being more balanced or getting your work life balance into check that's not what growth is growth cannot be severed from Christ who is our life and who gives life to our dead mortal bodies and so the church is growing up into the outline of him who takes our breath away our Lord and Savior the Christ in a well-known story the wife of one of the generals of King

Cyprus of Persia is accused of treason and condemned to die as soon as her husband realized that his wife has been condemned to treason he rushes to the palace burst into the throne room throwing himself on the floor like any good man would do he says oh king take my life instead of hers let me die in her place Cyprus by all accounts a noble and extremely sensitive man is touched by this author of my life in exchange for yours replies love like that must not be spoiled by death so he gives the husband and wife back to each other letting the wife go free of her crime of treason as the two walk away happily the husband says to his wife did you notice how kindly the king was when he looked upon us and he gave you the pardon the wife said I had no eyes for the king

[42 : 48] I only saw the man who was willing to die in my place I hope loved that's what this is about I have no eyes for anyone else my eyes are riveted on the king Christian life begins when you see the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ you can't see this unless you're born again but when you see him he's worthy of all the sacrifices and the life of the Christian it begins with this sight the life of the Christian continues as we never take our eyes off him our Lord our Savior our treasure our head so in these days of exceptional evil are you are you doing something exceptional or are you content doing the same routine things let's build a church you are so humbled by you so humbled to serve you

I think you get this but if you want I want if you don't I want you to get this let's throw our lives into the church build the church not just in this area all the mcmennites or whatever Laura said in this area let's not just build a church here let's build a church all throughout East Tennessee throughout the world proclaim there is news of a better country of a king did not hold on to his life but gave it away for you and for me for hell deserving sinners I offer you the gospel of Jesus Christ in Adam all die but in this man in Jesus Christ you cleaned in by faith all will live forever let us pray

Father in heaven we thank you for the privilege of sitting under your word and thinking on these things pray for help now give us grace Lord we love you we praise you we thank you in Jesus name amen to to to to to!

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