

How to Be Bold for the Lord (Part 1)

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[0 : 0 0] all right beloved are you buckled up all right good you need to be because i was rocketing out of my chair studying this over the last few days i love this message it fired me up i like this kind of stuff it's all good it's all good but you know sometimes you're in a season of life where some passages resonate with you and speak to your heart maybe more than others and that was certainly the case with me over the last couple of days so we're in ecclesiastes again yes and my goal is to finish out the book of ecclesiastes with no further interruptions we'll see how that goes that's all in the hands of the lord but that's my plan the title of my message for today how to be bold for the lord how to be bold for the lord we're in ecclesiastes 11 1 through 6 we're going to go ahead and just read the entire chapter together because it's only 10 verses so verse 1 cast your bread on the surface of the waters for you will find it after many days how many of you are familiar with that verse how many of you have heard that before or an adage like that right yes you're smiling marivi yes or something akin to that that people lift from the scriptures cast your bread on the surface of the waters for you will find it after many days divide your portion to seven or even eight for you do not know what misfortune may occur on the earth if the clouds are full they pour out rain upon the earth and whether a tree falls toward the south or toward the north wherever the tree falls there it lies he who watches the wind will not sow and he who looks at the clouds will not reap just as you do not know the path of the wind and how bones are formed in the womb of the pregnant woman so you do not know the activity of god who makes all things so your seed in the morning and do not be idle in the evening for you do not know whether morning or evening sowing will succeed or whether both of them alike will be good the light is pleasant and it is good for the eyes to see the sun indeed if a man should live many years let him rejoice in them all and let him remember the days of darkness for they will be many everything that is to come will be there's our word throughout ecclesiastes hevel futility futility verse 9 rejoice young man during your childhood and let your heart be pleasant during the days of young manhood follow the impulses of your heart and the desires of your eyes yet know that god will bring you to judgment for all these things so remove grief and anger from your heart and put away pain from your body because childhood and the prime of life are fleeting that's good counsel isn't it amen i hear you i hear you well we'll deal with verses 7 down through 10 god willing next sunday we need to take a look at 1 through 6 now let me refresh you just a bit as we move into this together i reminded you last time we were in ecclesiastes 10 we were finishing out that chapter that the world is corrupt now i know that that's a statement of just you know obvious fact to people who've been walking with the lord for any length of time the world is corrupt you were corrupt belonging to the world and jesus saved you out of that corruption so that now you are

incorruptible in the sense that the holy spirit lives in you and you'll be given eternal life that is the promise of god to glorify you give you a new body bring you to heaven for all eternity and put you in the presence of jesus all the time no sin no weeping but for now the world is corrupt so we need we need to see the world in our daily situations from god's point of view the world lies to you and as you buy into the philosophies and ideologies of the world you will learn to lie to yourself so paul tells us in colossians not to be led astray by empty philosophy and vain deceits in the lust of the flesh i want to take you to romans in the way of this introduction and just this little refresher we did this last time in chapter 10 let me remind you of this romans 8 i want to give you a mini theology of the world all right this is a little bitty mini theology of the world that we live in and how we're to interpret that world in a little like a microcosm kind of way so it's romans 8 beginning in verse 20 some of you will remember that we read this last time we were in ecclesiastes 10 for the creation was subjected to futility not willingly but because of him who subjected it who's him in that text god the creation was subjected to futility not willingly but because of him god who subjected it to that in hope that verse

21 the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of god verse 22 for we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now so we noted three aspects of this little mini theology of the world that we live in the first came in verse 20 and it's in the word futility futility it carries the idea of vanity purposelessness or folly foolishness life is broken and full of futility because all of life is in this constrained rebellion against god we live in an anti-god age an anti-god world and we need to be saved out of or from that reality every single one of us buy into that by our nature we're born into it so it is a supernatural spiritual work a mercy of god that anybody is plucked out of that so we are in the world left here to live in the world as the witness for christ but we are not of it any longer we're not defined by it we're not owned by it but we can be unfortunately conformed to it in deceit we want to safeguard ourselves against that so futility then in verse 21 we have the word corruption in the new american standard or decay decay your world is in bondage to decay everything in this life is either dying or falling or falling into ruin you and i both understand there isn't anything on the planet that is going to survive god remaking the planet it's all going to burn everything your bodies that you're in right now won't be the same bodies that you'll have in heaven you'll get a glorified body a body fit for that realm

this body this body this body this body this body fit for heaven you'll get a new glorified body fit for heaven you see the only thing that's going to survive what god's going to do in remaking this planet are our souls even the souls of unbelievers unbelievers souls will survive and they will survive in everlasting torment torment right now that's the harsh tragedy of the reality that we live in in this place and then finally in the third word that i want to give you groaning groaning and the pains of childbirth we talked about the greek word here sustenazo sustenazo groaning it means to groan along with there is this collective sigh of pain that the world is exhibiting constant pain the pains of childbirth that's sunodino sunodino in the greek to suffer together to be in agony along with so the world is full of futility corruption groaning as in the pains of childbirth that's your little mini theology of the world that we live in and you realize that there are many many many many people if not most of the people if not most of the people on the planet who don't subscribe to that understanding of our world and so they're constantly trying to make their world better through all kinds of means that have nothing to do with jesus nothing to do with eternal realities and one after another they fail they disappoint and they discourage such is the wisdom and the hearts of men it's a bad place to be when solomon tells us repeatedly that life is full of haveel futility vanity adversity he's simply pointing out the truth of this life he's i told you when we started ecclesiastes it gets a bad rap from a number of different commentators and christians through the centuries that it's the book of gloom don't read ecclesiastes it'll just depress you nothing could be further from the truth nothing could be further from the truth it's a book of celebration if you read it with the understanding that solomon's point is all of this is worthless apart from god so look to god and you get a whole nother view because you get a whole nother life and that's the life with the lord the hope the joy the peace the purpose of life are not found in the stuff of this life they are found in life with god that's solomon's message real life purposeful life meaningful life is found in life with god god alone and it's understanding that the life that you live with god is a gift and the very best way for you to show your gratitude for that gift is to live it back to him live that gift of life back to him live it for him you have no stronger greater gift to give god than the life of jesus he's given you so live it back to him to the full now this is a light the fires stoke the furnace get out the heavy artillery and charge that's what this is this isn't go find a hole and hide in it because things are tough this is put your big boy pants on and get out there and make a difference for jesus okay that's what this is and i love it i absolutely love it listen to this ekklesiastes 10 talked about how it only takes a little bit of foolishness to stink up life's moments you remember that but jesus in you taking the new testament reality of how we live now and marrying it to what

solomon's talking about jesus in you is the contrast to foolishness jesus in you is the contrast to brokenness corruption futility jesus takes all of that reality and turns it on its head and makes life worth living even life in this broken place because life without god is pain without purpose life without god is pain without purpose and we see this all around us so even a little bit of foolishness we talked about fouls up situations and relationships that we encounter in life and that's the world that we live in it's not going to change what matters in that reality is your response now you you and i cannot change the world grace church isn't out to change williamsburg we're out to glorify the lord and live for the glory of christ and we leave all that other stuff in the hands of god if god wants williamsburg changed it'll change through him using us ministering but we can't do that right you

and i don't have the power to do that we'll just be so frustrated in all of that mess so we look to the lord what matters in all of this reality of brokenness is how you live in response to god in that brokenness now derrick kidner is a commentator that i read in study as i'm doing this together he summed up the transition from chapter 10 to chapter 11 as a sensible caution leading to a sensible enterprise now i'm going to unpack that for us as we go so if you're kind of scratching your head what does that mean hang on chapter 10 emphasized a sensible caution a wise biblical spiritual outlook on life that has you being critical in the sense of discerning you're cautious you're spiritually evaluating you're looking you're weighing up biblically what you're seeing you're interpreting from an eternal perspective what's happening so you have this wise settled spiritual caution about your life that was chapter 10 in large part he's saying that because foolishness abounds you need to be cautiously discerning about what's going on around you you need to be biblically alert to the spiritual realities involved in the contrast between human wisdom foolishness and god's wisdom in the daily matters of life now in chapter 11 the emphasis is a sensible enterprise i'm going to put that up here for him pedro on the screen a sensible enterprise i want you to see this we're talking about in chapter 11 a spiritual readiness a spiritual initiative innovativeness resourcefulness so this is god's call for you to wisely invest in what matters most to god to make a difference for the lord in your sphere of influence this is a call to arms this is a call to charge to have a holy spiritual boldness to your life we don't run and hide we don't stick our heads in the sand we trust a sovereign god who's in control we live prudently we live wisely we live cautiously in the sense that we're evaluating we're trying to understand but we don't let that cause us to run away or as you'll see do some other things we use all of that to help us understand the best course of action forward but always forward always forward right what's the guy that said um i'm not retreating i'm attacking in a different direction i love that that's right that's right you you're going to get one chance at this in this life we need to make the most of it so chapter 11 divides into two primary actions of obedience we're going to deal with just the first one you have to come back next week to get the second one or listen in and it's all got to do with wisely investing in what matters most to god so this first obedient action this action oriented aspect of life that we want to use to help counter this brokenness and this paralyzing fear that people live in is this be bold in faith that's my next slide did you put it up be bold in faith would you put that one up there for me pedro be bold in faith verses one through six and then this if you'll add the next one for me let's see yep so what i'm talking about it means to have a wholeheartedness towards god evident in a holy boldness towards life so this is living wholeheartedly for the lord and it gets evidenced in this holy boldness it is a fearless faith and notice the object of that fearlessness god so this isn't macho man or macho woman i don't know what a macho woman is but it isn't that this is i trust my god i know who he is i know he rules the world i know he's got all of this under control so this is a wholeheartedness towards god evident and a holy boldness towards life a fearless faith in god leading to and i love this an eager obedience to please him in every aspect that you're eager to get out there and get in the fray why why would you be eager to get out there and get into the fray of this brokenness in this mess that we call our world because you want god to be glorified that's why because you want to get out there and put god on display winter diamonds at their most beautiful and brilliant when you put them up against a dark background and throw the light on them and they spew pop ah that's the life that we want to live for the lord you get out there in the darkness and live in the light now again remember what chapter 10 taught us understand what you're walking into go in eyes wide open right this isn't just charge in and be a martyr you're trying to weigh the best course of action but you are acting you're doing something that's that's the the weight of this message so what does it look like as we live life as god's gift in holy boldness so i adapted four responses of this wholehearted life from another commentator michael eaton i read a number of different people just weighing this stuff up was what i like to do and thinking about all that they say and invariably i'll come to yeah i think this guy's kind of on this and then i'll just follow that i'll just dive deep and mine it as much as i can so with michael eaton i wanted to adapt some of what he said and tweak it a little bit and that's so i'm giving him the credit for some of this in the way of the overall picture all right so we have four responses of this wholehearted obedience that we're talking about in living a holy bold life before the lord and for the lord and the first is this we're going to put it up on the screen the first one is trust trust god in the adventure that is life trust god in the adventure that is life it's verse one it's the [20 : 43] word cast is where i'm getting this from cast and it means if you look at your text cast your bread on the surface of the waters cast means to send out to let loose so send out let loose and the idea here involves risk now i'm being very candid with you in this it involves risk due to what

solomon's been telling us for 10 chapters life is full of twists and turns now we just have to accept that right off the bat we're not denying it we're not being pollyanna about this we're being very realistic we have to make a very accurate assessment a a very careful accurate recon of the situation if you will we size that up we weigh that up and we weigh up a course of action that will help us meet the objective what is the objective the objective is to live a holy bold life putting god on display to a dark world and it may cost us our lives to do that it involves risk risk if you look at chapter 8 you might remember me telling you ecclesiastes 8 right at the end i told you that just like in mark chapter 8 in ecclesiastes is a huge transition point at the end of chapter 8 he basically sets up the rest of the book okay i've told you everything i want to tell you in the way of laying the foundation for what you really really need to understand now i'm going to take 9 10 11 and 12 and really drive it home so at the end of chapter 8 he says this verse 16 when i gave my heart to know wisdom and to see the task which has been done on the earth even though one should never sleep day or night you you might remember i was saying that this is a guy who's saying i am pouring everything i have into trying to understand what it means to live for god in this broken place i'm even losing sleep over it i'm forfeiting sleep because i'm so wholehearted about this then verse 17 and i saw every work of god remember he was the wisest man to ever live apart from the lord jesus and what did he conclude and i concluded that man cannot discover the work which has been done under the sun there is a significant element of what god is doing in the world what god is doing even through the lives of his people that we cannot and will never understand this side of heaven and we need to accept that that doesn't have to deter us from being faithful he says even though man should seek laboriously even though we should go at this with everything that we have which is what solomon's been doing he will not discover and though the wise man should say oh i know i know he cannot discover so solomon's setting us up here and saying and you'll even have people in the christian life who will come up with these formulas and these ideas and these ideologies and say oh i figured it out i got the key and solomon's saying nope there is only one interpretive key to the christian life and it's not a secret it's not secret knowledge it's plainly written in scripture it's been prophesied for hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of years it's a name it's a person who is it jesus amen it all starts and stops and has its sustenance right there jesus christ so trust trust life is full of twists and turns there's much about god's caring control

when i use the terminology caring control i'm talking about his sovereignty the fact that we serve a wise and sovereign god who who gives caring control over all that he's made nothing escapes the notice of the lord right a sparrow falls from heaven and dies does god know about that you you would have asked me how in the world does god know all that i'd say because he's god that's it that's all i know because he's god he's big you can't put him in a matchbox can you now this is not matchbox theology this is biblical theology there's a lot about god's caring control over your life that you cannot understand and folks listen to this part and you shouldn't try to figure it out you're not called on the lord to try and figure all that out look you've got to let go of trying to control the unknowns and the potential outcomes of your life some of us want to control stuff too much that's god's domain outcomes and the way things happen and and how how broad god makes your ministry or affects the uh the the uh usefulness of your life that's in the hands of the lord you got to concentrate on going deep you you focus on going deep i'm going to devote myself to know this god to love this god to give my life to this god and then you trust god to take that life and make it what he wants whatever it is and whatever it will be god's calling us to action so to trust god with your daily life is not let go and let god yuck no it is not that it's this it's trust god by obeying what you know god says you see that's a lot better than let go and let god it's obeying what you know god says it's rooted and grounded in reality truth truth that's been made known to you where in the word who said it the word in the bible absolutely that's one of the reasons that greg and i constantly talk about a high view of scripture and a high view of god we don't put god in our little matchbox and we don't take the bible and say oh oh yeah we've got this thing kind of figured out we know what's going on there's there's so much to this that we will never be able to understand because we serve a big sovereign god so we camp out on what we do know we operate based on the light that we're given which is a plenty isn't it could you not spend four more lifetime studying this book and never mind all of its treasures me too absolutely so i say again to trust god with your daily life isn't let go and let god it's trust god by obeying what you know he says so the issue becomes a daily matter of will you will you pour your resources into temporal efforts to control what god is not making known or will you obey god by investing yourself in what he has made known to you in scripture where will

you spend your life and solomon is trying to tell these young people don't waste your life trying to figure out god and all of the elements and nuances of god's work in the world he's like he's saying i tried that i spent an adult lifetime and i couldn't figure it out you stand no chance so don't waste your life and he says do this instead this is the message do this instead

all right that's what we're dealing with you say jeff what are we what are so where are we getting all this from the word cast cast we haven't we haven't passed that yet we're still doing cast now listen to this cast is an imperative it's a command it's a call to action on your part so the grammar here in greek is giving us the mood and the sense and the motion this is a call to arms man cast get busy casting is a bold response of faith in god that's going to come out here but what does god define this casting as all right i'm supposed to cast well what is that well that concerns the second response so pedro i'll throw this one up there for him this is number two under this little little outline we're doing commit commit your valuables to what god says is valuable in life we're still in verse one now let me just i'll probably say this again let me just tell you one of the reasons i'm taking time to do this with verse one and then we'll finish i will get there you'll see one of the reasons i'm doing this is because verse one lays the groundwork for the way that we need to interpret the rest of the book not not just the rest of chapter 11 but it takes us all the way in to three-fourths of chapter 12 if we're not careful to use verse one as an interpretive key here we're going to misunderstand when we get look at verse uh chapter 11 um verse 9 right in the middle of the verse follow the impulses of your heart and the desires of your eyes well that's terrible counsel because everywhere else in the bible it says don't trust your heart don't follow your heart don't live by sight live by faith well the only way that we're going to be able to interpret that correctly is to understand what he's telling us in verse one and then we apply the principles that i'm giving you right now in verse one to the rest of it and we say oh okay and it'll start making sense so commit your valuables to what god says is valuable in life where do we get that from cast your bread cast your bread this refers to your livelihood what you use to help sustain you in the physical realities of this life so these these are your goods your resources in life that you know and recognize and attribute come from the hand of god for living a meaningful life here before the lord does the lord care that you have food to eat sure he does clothing to wear absolutely transportation to your job absolutely etc etc now what he's saying here is you need to commit all of that to god and to what god says is valuable so this is a call away from spinning life the way you think it ought to be lived or coming to the conclusion that it's my life i'll do with it what i want to do you were bought with a price it's not your life jesus is your life big difference all right so cast and commit mean prudent action now catch this part as responses to god's providence you're casting you're committing and all of that's being done in response to god you see this is faith

you're responding to god in faith based on god's providence what does that mean based on what god's providing instead of living a life thinking in terms of what you don't have what's not getting done what's not happening looking at your neighbor other christians or other people and saying but they have but look at what they're doing but but but no envy no jealousy no no human to human comparisons this is about you walking faithfully with your god and taking what god is giving you and making the most of it for god not for your kingdom for his do you see how the lord is taking everything about the brokenness of this world and where where people put their emphasis because they're broken and turning it on its head and saying yeah everything they would use for themselves i'm now challenging you to use for my glory god's why because you're in this world but you're alien to it you don't belong here it's like you're on loan and one day you'll die and you'll go be with the lord for all eternity what are you going to do with what you have now you're going to invest it in the kingdom so listen folks listen to this now the more god provides the more god expects of you in making these kinds of wise investments the more you have the more god expects you say jeff how can that be i just said it because what you have comes from god so folks i'm telling you it's a tremendous trust relationship isn't it it's faith now i want to give you if i can just want to take a few minutes and i want to give you a new testament slant on this a new testament slant on this so we're going to go to matthew 25 okay matthew 25 just hold your finger there in ecclesiastes and this is jesus teaching on what we understand and know as the parable of the talents talents the money in verse 14 jesus begins this way for it is just like a man about to go on a journey he called his own slaves his servants and he entrusted his possessions to those servants all right now what's happening here with this entrusting is they are being given a stewardship the master of the house is saying i'm going to entrust my goods to you and it's up to you now to be good managers and it's going to get real specific verse 15 so to one of the slaves he gave five talents to another he gave

two and to another one now this is the key each according to his own ability you see that god will portion out to each of us according to our own ability do you see how this reflects on a sovereign god who knows his people he knows his kids he knows what you can handle all right each according to his own and then the end of verse 15 and he went on his journey so now the master leaves the slaves are in charge immediately the one who had received the five talents went and traded with them and gained five more wow okay that's great in the same manner the one who had received the two talents gained two more so these guys are doubling but he who received the one talent went away dug a hole in the ground hit his master's money oh man now after a long time you see the passing of time key in on that now after a long time so these three servants have been living in these decisions for a long time things have compounded now they're living in the consequences of these decisions after a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them the one who would receive the five came up and brought five more saying master you entrusted five talents to me see i've gained five more his master said to him well done good and faithful slave you were faithful with a few things i will put you in charge of many enter into the joy of your master that's good you're faithful with a little god will give you more also the one who'd received the two talents came up and said master you entrusted two talents i gained two more his master said well done good and faithful slave you were faithful with a few things i'll put you in charge of many things enter into the joy of your master boy i tell you that enter into the joy of your master that's that's good stuff isn't it that's what we want to hear and the one also who would receive the one talent came up and said master now if you've seen this happening with the other two and you're the third guy i'm looking for the door there's no way i'm going to walk up and face this dude i'm looking for the exit but he goes up and he's such pride and the one also who had received the one talent came up and said master i knew you now this is so i knew you to be a hard man reaping where you didn't sow gathering where you scattered no seed that is some pride and i was afraid and went away and hid your talent in the ground see you have what is yours his master answered and said to him you wicked lazy slave you wicked lazy slave you knew that i reap where i didn't sow and gather where i scattered no seed then you ought to have put my money in the bank and on my arrival i'd have had received my money back with interest at least do that so what we have so far see this is a contrast you got one way the way the world thinks the third slave's thinking like the world and operating like the world and so he has a certain take on how his master ought to see this hey dude you didn't lose anything you're getting back what you gave that's a pretty cool thing all right fine i didn't go out and double it like the other ones but i didn't lose it either this is the way the world thinks but god thinks a different way and so what did the master say you wicked lazy slave and see this is how the world reacts they're all offended now because god's saying you wicked person when they think they ought to be given kudos and brownie points because they didn't do some such and such or they weren't as bad as such and such god doesn't do it like that everybody's on the same measuring standard you know what it is jesus and his righteousness and so everybody's in the same boat when you measure that way we all fall short desperately short tragically short deathly short that's why we need jesus righteousness credited to our lives to make us righteous in the sight of god well he goes on 28 therefore take away the talent from him see everything that he was given now is taken away and give it to the one so god will take it away and give it to somebody else who will use it for the kingdom for to everyone who has more shall be given he will have an abundance but from the one who doesn't have even what he does have shall be taken away boy this is this is hard isn't it scary throw out the worth look at now throw out the worthless slave into the outer darkness in that [40 : 56] place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth that's hell that's hell so what are we talking about take full advantage of your spiritual opportunities and do not be found fearful wasteful or lazy so the two servants who made wide investments wise investments they did so in response to their master that was the key they considered their master what would the master have me do and they went out and they acted in response to their master was it a risk they took a risk for the master worked out well the third thought mainly of himself he was covering his bases so the two faithful servants represent believers who prudently take action to serve the lord with what the lord provides the emphasis with solomon and with jesus is with wise action and it's a counter to these three things this wise action of taking what god provides and using it for the kingdom making it useful to god laying down everything before the lord it counters these three things hoarding indifference and recklessness this message is not about you charging out there reckless it's certainly not about you hoarding all your stuff and trying to protect it because the world's a bad

place that's wrong and it's certainly not about being indifferent to the suffering that we see going on around us folks what god provides in the way of resources and opportunities you sensibly and shrewdly invest in wise enterprise which will please god you're making investments that will please the lord all of it is in reference and response to the lord now this is where wholeheartedness comes in am i wholeheartedly committing to christ do i have a wholehearted love and devotion to jesus in the way that i see life the stuff of life the direction of life the purpose of life in contrast is the third servant see he professes to know and serve his master doesn't he you see that he professes to know and serve the master just like the other two but his allegiance is superficial and selfish how do we know that well by the actions of his life toward his master how do we weigh the profession of any christian how do we weigh that are we're not supposed to judge each other i'll tell you what we're supposed to discern you don't think greg and i try to discern the people who come into our church and profess jesus especially when they come to the place they want to join the church we don't let those people stand before you and recommend them to you for membership until we have carefully and prayerfully vetted them as to one primary thing are they truly in christ we go as far as we can go and that's as far as we can go well we don't have a crystal ball can't see into their hearts what do we look at we look at and we listen to their life their life not just the profession they're making now what what if what kind of person have you been over the last year what's your life look like then we don't know we weren't with you so we go as far as we can in addressing that why because there are plenty of people who make a profession but they're not really in the lord and their life will bear testimony to that

this is a wholehearted commitment to god and the actions of your life toward your master will reveal who you belong to so the greatest failure in this servant's relationship was the relationship to his master it was a lack of stewardship toward the lord isn't that interesting that i just preached four messages on stewardship in the church and here we are in chapter 11 talking about being faithful stewards to god he needed to be a faithful steward with what his master provided but here's what he did he set aside what was valuable to his master for what he deemed valuable i won't do it god's way i'll do it my way he made a conscious choice he didn't act in wisdom he did his own thing he failed and then he blamed his master did you catch that oh i knew you to be a hard man so i hedged my bets baby i didn't want to stand before you haven't lost that talent so here you go you get your talent back it's all good we're even steven here and his master said you wicked lazy slave i bet you he went what and then what happened to the slave did he say well let's give you another shot where did the slave end up in hell do you see why people hated jesus they hated him you see why the pharisees who were false teachers and religious fakes do you see why they hated jesus because he said stuff like this and it revealed who they really were it put them in sharp contrast with people who really did love god and were looking to the messiah for salvation they weren't they hated him for it now back to ecclesiastes that was just a little side note in ecclesiastes we have this cast your bread on the surface of the waters all right now look on the surface of the waters most likely has the idea of commerce it's particularly maybe involved in the seafaring trade ships were loaded and sent across the oceans to sell to buy to trade so most of the commentators felt like this was an allusion to shipping which solomon was into big time you can see this in kings first kings where he had ships coming and going every three years there was this fleet going out and coming back it was a big big big big deal you know there weren't any walmarts they had to go out and get this stuff and bring it back so that's what they're doing anything anything then could happen in the time it took for these ships to come full circle to leave do their business and then get back now listen to this there was risk involved the ships might sink right that happened all the time they might be delayed they might be robbed or they might not come back at all for some reason so it was a necessary and worthwhile risk commentators were divided about verse one being interpreted as maybe an analogy to being charitable to other people cast your bread on the waters it'll come back in other words give a lot give to a lot of people add it to seven and then no go even to eight so maybe find lots of different people and give your money out to them and make the investment take the risk be kind there are some who said yeah that's what this is all about there were others who took the commerce approach now it's more about ships and business transactions that's the analogy here

and then there were others who thought nah this is more of an agricultural nuance maybe here crops and you never know will the rain come it's a risk so you know plant crops in a lot of different places and hedge your bets kind of activity so is the analogy to almsgiving is it to farming or is it to

seafaring well here's what I did I have one I lean toward but it doesn't matter which one you pick because each one of those will help drive the point right and so I'm just going to talk to you about the point here it is listen I've settled on the main idea that casting onto water means that you make your investment even though you can't know what will happen because action is better than inaction you cast it on have you ever thrown seed on water I have I've seeded many many many acres of fields by hand using one of those strap it on big old spreaders big old things and you fill it up and right

I've done it behind a tractor too but you do a lot of that if you've ever seen it fall on water or you're doing along the edge of the water what will happen to the seed is it hits the water and gets wet right it goes away or it sinks or it floats away or you come back 15 minutes later where's the seed but if I'm sowing it along a path or a road or something I can see it on the soil as I go I might not see it in the grass but I see it in the soil and so that's how I keep up right I'm looking for where I was where it's you cast it on the water you don't know you don't know that's the main idea the main idea being even though you don't know action is better than inaction so get busy don't be distracted by the fact that you can't figure out what's going to grow what's not going to grow is it going to be rained on is it going to be drought see he's trying to help balance this folks he's trying to take chapter 10 where he's talked about being prudent and cautious and spiritually sensible as you discern and weigh up and look and try to think this thing through but then he's saying now don't stay there don't camp out there now get busy decide on the course of action and commit and trust the Lord so it's you're not being reckless you've done all of your homework now act get busy for God the clock's ticking let me tell you you see this gray hair right the grayer I get the more urgency I feel Mike

I do I've asked God Lord I want to come to heaven I really do I want to come to heaven but I've asked the Lord will you give me some more time to work there's so many things I want to do for you still that's the only reason that I want old age really and that's no offense to you or to my wife or to anybody you know I'm like Paul it's better for me if I come and be with the Lord but better for you if I stay kind of thing because you want to serve people you want to reach out to people you want to help you want to encourage you you want to be merciful I have three unsaved children I want to I'd like to see them saved before I go to be with Jesus if there's something that I can do with that then I'll stay here and and I know you feel that way all right here's number three here's number three we're going to put it up here on the screen watch watch for God's faithfulness in life all right where do I get that from for you will find it for you will find it so here's the promise of return on your investment now this is really sweet because we've been talking about all this stuff that you'll do and you just don't know here's God saying oh you'll get a return

[53 : 11] I guarantee you'll get a return this is the promise of return realize then realize your return on your investment could be different from it could be less than or it could be more than you expected it could be entirely different from the return that you think you're going to get it could come back in a return that you're like wow I didn't think that I would have that happen or that the Lord would do that or your return may be a lot less than you thought again let me just say I spent I spent years raising children homeschooling being in church baptizing them everything what have I gotten for my return grief because they don't love the Lord now what do I do with that you see how real this is do I whine do I go hide do I say it was all worthless do you know what happens if I say that

I besmirch the Lord I say oh this sovereign God had me and Suzanne do all of that and then it didn't turn out the way we thought it should turn out so God you know what you let us down yeah Mike's going oh don't go there brother that's exactly right bad place to be so Solomon is telling us no no no no no you will find it I might die and they may not come to the Lord before I die but you know what I'm hanging on to you will find it you will find it and so I keep praying right in that what you do we live in this terrible broken place where there's fear and all the fear it's palpable you go out there and you can cut the fear with a knife we see it everywhere people need to see people who are not afraid afraid but we're not afraid because we're better than them we're not it's not that we're not afraid because you know we're more more macho than they are or made out of better stuff than they are we're not afraid because we know who's in control doesn't it come down to that you don't know any more than I know what what Christmas is going to bring you may not even be here for Christmas what's Christmas going to look like with all this stuff going on

I don't know but I know who does and so I just take my little share of my stuff and I may and I invested in the kingdom as best as I know how and I just keep trusting the Lord and I keep watching you will find it thank you Lord you will find it Jeff all right but Jeff has to realize but it may come back

to you in a form different from what you thought and it may be less than or more than you expected but the issue is that what you invest from the master on behalf of the master is never wasted or unrewarded that is the promise for every Christian what I invest from the master on behalf of the master is never wasted and never goes unrewarded but there's this next part reward after many days maybe a long time may not be your timetable you may have to wait to heaven for that reward that's okay we are not measuring success on this earth by what we get on this earth in that something that brings us to their final response of all of this wait this is this is number four Pedro wait wait for God's rewards in life after many days cast your bread on the surface of the waters for you will find it after many days patience now let me ask you is it right to pray for and cultivate patience in your walk with God you know I've actually had people say to me don't pray for patience God doesn't want you to do that because that's a way of asking for testing to come into your life but being tested is how we grow yes pray for patience cultivate patience in your life and in your walk with the Lord so this is living by God's timetable not the world's not yours so you evaluate and you interpret by God's truth you take a hard look at these realities you take a biblical look you do some biblical recon biblical assessing look you need to be a thinker we need more Christians who think can I say it this way I'm not saying I'm trying to say it polite Revy will let me know later if this wasn't polite not because she's bad or I'm saying I'm giving I'm saying Revy you have my permission don't be a cow don't move and get in line we don't need that we got a lot of that going on today be a Christian who loves Jesus make a difference for him be different because Jesus lives in you don't be different to be different be different for Jesus remember I preached a sermon from Mark entitled rebel with a cause remember James Dean rebel without a cause that movie Jesus was a rebel with a cause he was a rebel but it was all purposed and what did he say the purpose was I don't say anything that the father didn't give me to say I don't do anything that the father didn't give me to do I do the will of my father that's us if we're going to deny ourselves take up our cross and follow Jesus we don't need to be moo cows who get in line and follow the world we need to be people who love the Lord so you are spiritually watchful for God's faithfulness to you you're responding to life with faith in God and his good work in all things shoot I said I do six verses there's no way I've been going for an hour yes in conclusion good grief well verse one was very important yeah well we'll do verses two through six next week because I like I said and that's the next thing I have in my notes the other verses are interpreted by the principles in verse one so this is a good place to stop thank you for letting me take the time to unpack this stuff with you listen this is so important because again this is the balance from chapter 10 that tells us to be to be carefully prudent in life to be thinkers to be discerners that's good but then to take that that discernment to take that understanding and put that understanding into motion on behalf of the Lord you guys have probably heard all kinds of interpretations about cast your bread on the surface of the waters as listen people in the health wealth gospel use this a lot to say you go out and you do this and God will guarantee that you'll get back and in spades I once had a guy tell me this he told me he said one of the reasons that we have people in our church giving to the limits that they give which is huge they were very wealthy and the pastor was very wealthy is because they have been told time and time again the more you bless the pastor the more God will bless you well what a great game right that's not what this is this is all about being a blessing to other people because you're wholeheartedly devoted to Christ you're willing to give your life away and all that you have to see other people blessed to be a difference for Jesus to honor Christ all right beloved I love you guys thank you so much for your attentiveness please don't forget that we do have a Thursday night gathering this week right Greg at the at the garrison home if you'll be there around 630 or so we'll snack a little bit and then we'll jump right in we'll have a lot of things to cover okay all good oh we're starting at six oh be there at six because we're starting at 630 sharp I just got the word yes all right let's pray together well father God it's so wonderful to turn in your word to the truths that help us understand how to live life for you for making a difference for Jesus to help take ourselves out of the equation in the sense that we're not being prideful or arrogant or we're not trying to shame people or guilt people we're certainly not approaching them with arrogance and conceit and haughtiness Lord that we're we're heartbroken we're heartbroken over the fear that that grips our society today we're heartbroken over the way that people are reacting to this this threat so Lord help us to be salt and light help us to carefully calculate ways that you can use who we are and what we have to reflect and honor Jesus to these folks to give them the hope of heaven and help them look to a sovereign God and a gracious Savior thank you for these brothers and sisters who allowed Greg and

[63 : 52] I to come and do this kind of preaching and teaching and challenge thank you for their prayers and their love and their kindness thank you for their patience as they see their pastors growing in faith as well and in our friendship and thank you Lord for our wives thank you for Suzanne and Marivi in the way that they love us so unconditionally and serve so faithfully behind the scenes doing so much praying staying steadfast and thank you for all of these folks Lord that you're using to help this this place called Grace Church not only survive but thrive and offer the hope of heaven we thank you for the word and thank you most of all for Jesus in his name we pray amen you