

Sharing in God's Purpose Together

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- [0 : 0 0] Well, for our home folk, the last few Sundays have been an exercise in, what shall we call it, enduring the reality, the harsh and hard reality that there are those among us who want to sneak in unawares and do damage to our mission, to our hope.
- They want to sabotage and ruin our marriages. They want to distract us away from Jesus Christ. They want to take us away from disciple making and building each other up in the Lord Jesus.
- These men are false teachers. They are among us. They're not only outside, they're among us. They want to come in. And so we don't know who they are.
- They look like us, sound like us, talk like us. They pass themselves off as one of us. They are agents of the devil, according to Scripture.
- And that's a hard, hard, hard thing for us to hear, to understand, and to live in. Because the Scripture tells us that they do come from within.
- [1 : 2 5] These men could be with us for years and then manifest, show themselves for who they really are. It will happen. I don't know when it's going to happen in our church.
- But it will happen. And we need to be ready and prepared and on guard for it. Well, that's been the last three Sundays here at Grace Church. This heavy thing hanging on us.
- And we're not finished. I'm working verse by verse through 2 Peter. And we've just finished chapter 2. We're into chapter 3. We won't be in 2 Peter today. I'm giving you a breather.
- All right? A little bit of a breather from the false teaching thing. And I want to take you into, just for this Sunday, into 1 Timothy. And I want to remind us of who we are as God's family and why that's so important.
- Why it's important for us to guard the truth together. Why it's important for us to labor together to guard our marriages, to guard our children, and to guard sound doctrine.
- [2 : 3 4] So 1 Timothy chapter 3. Paul is outlining the character qualifications for leaders in the church.
- Paul is not giving us a resume of qualifications for expertise in any given area of life or matter of the church.
- He's telling us, these are the kind of leaders that you want in heart, mind, and spirit. And if you will identify men like this, both elders or pastors and deacons, these are the men that you will then follow as they follow Jesus.
- I'm going to pick it up in verse 14. After he has gone through these qualifications for these leaders, these character qualifications in chapter 3, he comes to verse 14.
- Notice what he says. By common confession, great is the mystery of godliness.
- [4 : 0 7] He who was revealed in the flesh was vindicated in the spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory.

The title of my message for today, sharing in God's purpose together. Verses 14 and 15 in this particular chapter give us nothing less than the overall purpose for the writing of the book of 1 Timothy.

So in view of the likelihood of him being delayed in other aspects of ministry, Paul is writing to his young protege in the faith, Timothy, pastoring at Ephesus.

And he says, I write so that. And then he gives his purpose. So what we have here is Paul writing to Timothy and to the believers in the Ephesian church so that they would know how to conduct themselves, hear me carefully now, friends, as the household of God.

How do you live together as God's family? How do you go about life being defined as the family of God?

[5 : 32] Children of the Lord. Children of the King. Brothers and sisters bought with the blood of Jesus Christ. You're blood related.

We are blood related. The bond of the blood that we share in the Lord Jesus Christ is unbreakable. Nothing in heaven or on earth will be able to separate you and I from the love of Jesus as his children.

Amen. We will join him in heaven. We will share eternity together. Look at each other. Get to know each other. Work out your issues with each other.

You're going to be together for a long time with new bodies, worshiping the Lord together. This is a beautiful, beautiful testimony.

First Timothy is a book about God's standards for our ordered family life as brothers and sisters in Christ, sharing in life together in this world.

[6 : 35] In this case, it's the local church in Ephesus. In our case, it's here at Grace Church Williamsburg. And there are other churches that are meeting around our city now.

Some of those churches contain people that are our brothers and sisters in Christ. The church of the Lord Jesus is just that, friends. His church.

We belong to him. As his children, our family life. Hear me. As his children, our family life expresses his nature.

The way that we go about being who we are expresses the nature and character of Christ. That's the point of being the church.

It's to showcase the Lord of the church. How will they know of the love of Jesus? By the love you have?

[7 : 39] That's right. For each other. We're all about being who we are in order to showcase who he is. In our life.

That's our privilege. That's the highest calling that you have as a Christian. Is to live in fellowship and relationship with other Christians so that you showcase the love and character of Jesus Christ.

That's why you live and breathe and have your being. It's all for him, isn't it? Now what we want to do this morning is highlight a couple of aspects here.

Two aspects of our spiritual family life unique to us as God's people. The conduct of our family life and the character of our family life. The first feature that we'll share in as members of God's household then concerns our shared conduct.

Our shared conduct. Again, we'll look at verse 15. But in case I'm delayed, I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth.

[8 : 55] I write so that you will know. Not so that you can guess. Not so that you're left out of information that you need to fulfill this.

No, I am writing so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God. But literally the clause would read like this. If you put it in the Greek and put it in a stiff fashion, it would read like you see here on the screen.

In order that you may know how it is necessary in God's house to live. The you refers to Timothy.

He's writing to a specific person. Yes, Paul is writing directly to him. But, friends, the context, the greater context of Paul's instruction in chapter 2 concerns the wider church family.

Chapter 3, the wider church family. That's what he's talking about. So this is teaching regarding us. If we were working our way verse by verse through all of this, we would have come through a great bit of material talking about what it looks like for us to follow leadership in the church and what godly leadership is in the way of elders and deacons and women serving in the church.

[10 : 17] We would have talked about what it's like for the men to come together and pray in the church. What it's like for us to come around the Lord Jesus in the church. What it's like for us as a church to protect sound doctrine because of a couple of men in the church who were false teachers and shipwrecked their faith.

Hymenaeus and Alexander. We would have covered all of that by now. Where Paul is speaking directly to the issue of how do you behave as the church because you are members of one another.

It's vital teaching. His concern is to clearly spell out this vital knowledge necessary. It's not optional. It's necessary for each of us to live or behave in our life with each other as God's spiritual family.

Now, please don't miss this. Please don't miss his emphasis. Paul is not limiting his teaching to how we're to behave when we're at church. You with me?

We're not talking about now what you're supposed to behave like when you gather to do things like this. We're not. He's not limiting his instruction to that.

[11 : 29] That's a small part in the greater part of your week, isn't it? All right. So we want to expand this and understand that his emphasis, his emphasis is also describing our godly conduct in life as the church.

And I'm going to spell that out. If you're wondering, am I tracking with him here? As the church, as members of God's spiritual family, what difference does it make in your daily life that you are a member of a greater reality?

And that greater reality is what defines you. You are defined by a much, much greater reality than the limit of your own individual salvation.

We have to ask our question. Saved from what? Next question. Saved into what? You see?

Saved from your sin, but saved into a family of saved sinners. As God's family, God has given us life in his name.

[12 : 44] So that we reflect the character of God in all we do as we relate to each other. So we live as a close-knit family.

We look out for the best interests of each other in a spirit of sacrificial love. You can see that in all kinds of places in scripture. We read it in Colossians 3.

You can see it in Philippians 2. It's everywhere. Look out for the greater interests or better interests of others. Put others before yourself. And he's speaking there specifically about your brothers and sisters in the Lord.

Notice this particular passage. I put it up here so that we could just kind of move through it more quickly. Romans 12, 5. So we who are many are one body in Jesus.

And individually members of each other. That's profound. You got to let that sink in. We are members of one another.

[13 : 52] How you live your life and how you relate to this church family day to day personally impacts each person here at GCW. Grace Church Williamsburg.

You realize that. So I could say it this way and I don't think it's stretching it. I'll let you evaluate it. There is no such thing as private Christianity. You with me?

No such thing as private Christianity. Just like there is no such thing as a private sin. There's at least one person who sees all that we do in the way of what we might be thinking as a private sin.

Well, nobody see me do it. Who sees you doing it? God does. We'll just start there. And then everything that you do in the way of that quote unquote private sin has an impact on your soul and your ability to be prepared to minister to other people.

If you're drawing in in personal private quote unquote sin, you're not in a position for the Holy Spirit to use you as a blessing, a channel and an instrument of blessing to other people.

[14 : 55] You're all turned in in your own sin. You're unconfessed sin. You see, this is exactly the kind of thing Satan wants to do to you on an individual level and what he wants to do to us on a family level.

If he can distract you as an individual from devotion to Jesus and service to each other, he'll do that. If he can distract us as a church family, get us focused on things as a church family that distract us from the main thing, keeping the main thing, the main thing he will.

Why not? That's pretty, pretty smart, pretty clever. He's an ancient foe and he knows what he's doing. So it's vital. It's vital.

It's vital. And I need to say this because I don't I don't want to risk that it's downplayed. It is vital that we gather on the Lord's day on Sunday. The Bible mandates that we gather together on Sunday, the Lord's day.

Yes, that's true. That needs to be a huge priority for us in this life. But we don't limit our sacrificial love for each other to when we gather.

[16 : 04] Together. Right. What we do, what we do and how we live out our faith together is based on who we are together.

We are God's family. And so we are members of one another. Now, why am I doing all this? I'm going to make this point over and over, over and over. I'm saying this on the heels of three weeks of teaching you, telling you about false teachers and how they want to come in and disrupt and corrupt and all that kind of thing.

Folks, what we have here together is worth fighting for. It's worth sacrificing for. It's worth whatever it costs us because we are the family of God.

We are members of one another.

This is more than a club. It's more than an event. But you are saved as an individual person. Yes.

[17 : 12] In need of God's forgiveness for your sins. Yes. I'm saved as an individual. I need God's forgiveness for my sins.

That's true. But. You are not freed from sin's power or sin's penalty so that you can do your own thing with your life.

Your Christian life and your life as a member of God's family at Grace Church Williamsburg. Those things are inseparably interwoven. Your individual walk with the Lord and that walk as it relates to the individual walk of other members of our church family.

Those are interwoven. They're supposed to be brought together, not made to compete. What Satan wants to do is make them compete. That's called strife, disunity, selfishness or self-regard.

We want to be self-forgetful people. This is what we're called to. Well, let me show you a couple of scriptures that deal with this.

- [18 : 25] This aspect that you have been freed in Christ, but not free to do your own thing. Look at this. This is Peter weighing in. Act as free men or women and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil.

Notice use it as bond slaves or slaves of God. So the first aspect of this freedom, use your spiritual freedom in service to God.

You have been set free from sin to serve God, no longer serving self and Satan. That's pretty clear. But now look at what Paul says as he tag teams with Peter on this.

For you were called to freedom, brethren. Only do not turn your freedom, your spiritual freedom from sin into an opportunity for the flesh.

But through love, serve one another. So in the first instance from Peter, serve God. Use your spiritual freedom to serve the Lord. That's your calling.

- [19 : 32] In the second instance, use your spiritual freedom to serve each other. Does that sound a lot like the two great commandments? Love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul and strength and love your neighbor as yourself.

That sounds a lot like that, doesn't it? We're just connecting the dots. We're talking about conduct as the family of God. You are adopted into God's spiritual family and you are made a member of God's household.

So you are members of each other. That's the point that we're belaboring here a bit. We're over and over. We want to get that clear and put across.

The value. Now, look at this. Let me say it and then I'll put it up here. Just hear it. The value you place on serving as a member of this local church family.

Reflects the value you place on serving Jesus Christ. Now, let me put it up there and let you see it. The value you place on serving as a member of this local church family reflects the value you place on serving Jesus Christ.

- [20 : 52] Didn't we just see that in the verses prior? Use your freedom to serve the Lord. Use your freedom to serve each other. They're not mutually exclusive. They're both and.

As you serve this family here, you reflect the value you put on serving your Lord.

Because look around. These are his people. These are the people he went to the cross for. These are the people he shed his blood for.

These are the most prized and precious possessions that he has. And they're sitting right next to you. How much of our lives are being spent investing in what God says is most precious?

That's the challenge, isn't it? The world wants to tell us to pursue all kinds of things. God tells us there's only a few things that are chief.

- [22 : 00] Priority. Ultimate. As a child of God, you have brothers and sisters to share your life with.

And the blood of Jesus Christ is the precious, precious bond that links you together in a true spiritual kinship. Do you realize there's no other group of people on the planet that can boast that?

You're unique. You're unique. You're unique. You're unique. Not even other religions. Because they don't honor the master.

They don't honor the Lord. They don't know anything about the blood that binds us together in the bond of peace. Friends, this spiritual kinship means we are all members of one spirit.

That's the Holy Spirit. One body, one family, one mission, one mind, one hope, and one faith. Serving one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.

[23 : 07] And that's all from Ephesians chapter 4. I'm not making this up. Your love for this church family.

Your service to this church family. Your investment in this church family. All that comes from your love for service to an investment in the Lord Jesus, who is the head of this church.

Greg and I are not the head of this church. We're under shepherds of the great shepherd. Jesus is Lord of our church. Let me put it in another way.

You can't separate your life as God's child from your life as a member of God's family of children. You know, our kids can grow up and abandon everything that we've taught them and walk away from everything that we stand for.

Your kids could one day look at you and say, I don't want to have anything to do with you anymore. But in your heart and in your mind, do they stop being your kids?

[24 : 24] Never. Right? Never. They could say anything and do anything. That will never stop them from being your kids. God loves us.

And there's nothing that will ever stop us from being his kids. That's his heart for us. We share in a precious, precious bond with each other.

And it's the bond of loving Jesus together as his kids. One of the things that we help protect each other from is isolationism.

I thought about using the word individualism. But it's what we do with our individualism that matters.

We isolate. Christianity is not a spectator sport. You've probably heard that. Christianity is not an individual sport. It's a team sport.

[25 : 33] And so one of the things that you and I help do with each other is protect each other from isolating ourselves. Privatizing ourselves. And thinking that we have a right to do that.

I'm entitled to my me time. And if my me time needs to be a time away for a while. Here's what we're going to do here at Grace. This is how we are.

You're just going to have to get over it. We're going to hunt you down. We're going to come get you. And throw our arms around you. And bring you back. That's what we do.

Because that's what our Savior does for us doesn't he. It's just a wonderful sentiment to know. It's a reality. As God's children we can never ever be lost.

You might say things like this. You might say I feel a little lost right now. But you're not lost. God knows exactly where you are.

[26 : 33] And he knows your heart better than you do. You can't be lost in the arms of your Savior. You can't. You say I lost my way.

I'm losing my way. I don't know who I am. Let me tell you something. Every morning I get up. I know exactly who I am. And exactly what I'm supposed to do. Every morning. I'm a child of the living God.

And I've been called and given breath this morning. To live for his glory. I don't know what's going to happen. When I walk out that door. But I know who I am. And I know what I'm called to be and do.

And there's nothing that can change that. I can be distracted from it. But I'm not lost. I may wander.

What's that saying? All who wander are not lost. Is that Tolkien? So anyway. Here we are.

[27 : 31] Some of us come from hard family backgrounds. That's true. Some of us. Have some stories about how we were raised. That are pretty rough.

Pretty hard to hear. But friends. All of us come from families who sinned. Right? None of us come from perfect families.

Spiritual family life. Spiritual family life. Is unfamiliar. And challenging to us. We don't.

We don't come into spiritual family life. With a wonderful framework for it. Even if you're raised in a Christian home. You're raised in home. With sinners. Who are trying to live for Christ.

And some of us were raised in homes. Where there was no Christ. That's what I was raised in. Spiritual family life. Is not intuitive. So.

[28 : 31] What do we have in scripture in this passage? Look. Paul emphasizes the relationship. Between who we are. And what we do. What he says next.

Notice what he says next. He's going to give us three descriptions. Of us. As God's family. In verse 15. Look at it with me again if you would.

We're just going to wear out verse 15 here. But in case I'm delayed. I write so that you will know. How one ought to conduct himself in. Here it is. The household of God.

Which is the. Church of the living God. The. Pillar and support. Of the truth. Here are the three descriptions then. We are the household of God. We are the church of the living God.

And we are the pillar. And ground of the truth. Those describe. Who God. Made us. To be. And consequently. How the Lord would have us behave.

[29 : 32] So our godly conduct. Even though we haven't taken it apart. And said do this. Do this. Do this. Our godly conduct. Flows from our godly character.

In other words. We should behave in accordance. With who we are. And so we begin to understand. From scripture. That because we've been made. This spiritual family.

Because we've been purchased. Into a family. We were purchased away from. One family. Bought away from. One family.

That's the family of. Sin and death. And transferred. Into. The kingdom of light. So we're in a different.

Family context. Now we're defined. By an entirely. New. Construct. Paradigm. Concept. Of who we are. What we are. Why we're here.

[30 : 28] That's the spiritual. Exchange. That takes place. As we come to know Christ. So now we're defined. As completely new. And different people. It's radical. It should look that way.

It does sound that way. To other people. And that brings us. To what. Paul wants to tell us next. Then about these things. Our shared character. Let's just go through that. Real quickly.

The first thing. That he tells us. Is that we are a. Household. We are the. Household. Of. God. Which is very important. If you look at the.

Idea of a household. As he expounds on it. In verses. Look at verse. Four. With me. Chapter three. He must be one.

Who manages. His own household. Well. Keeping his children. Under control. With all dignity. Who's he talking about here? Who? An overseer.

- [31 : 25] An elder. A pastor. So a pastor. Needs to be one. Who manages. His own household. Well. Keeping his children. Under control. With dignity. But if a man.
- Does not know. How to manage. His own household. How will he take care. Of the household. Or the church. Of God. Then if you look.
- At verse 12. Deacons. Must be husbands. Of only one wife. And what else? Good managers. Of their children. And their own.
- Households. So Paul has this. Concept. Of household. In mind. As he begins. To talk about. The way that you. And I live together. In the greater. Idea.
- The greater. Concept. Of being. A spiritual. Family. Now here's the question. Whose. Household. Is this. What does it say? God's.
- [32 : 21] Not yours. Not yours. Not mine. God's. And so. Whose opinion. Reigns supreme.
- In this family. Yours. Or mine. Oh. God's. Right. That's right. Amen. And aren't we glad? Aren't we glad?
- We are the better for that. Looking to God. In his opinion. Of all that we need to be and do. We are the household. Of God. We belong to God.
- He's ultimately responsible. For the life of this family. That belongs to him. Oh. Praise the Lord. We take our instruction. For family life. From him. I remember.
- I remember. The first time. This truth. Came on my heart. We were out in California. At Grace Church. Sitting under the ministry there. And they were teaching me.
- [33 : 17] About biblical shepherding. And I remember. And I remember. Coming to this. Awareness. Through this book. That God. Is sovereign. Over his church. We belong to him.
- And he is going to take care of his church. You say. Jeff. You had two master's degrees. From seminary. You've been in ministry. For how many years. Before that dawned on you. Yeah. But it got in.
- It finally got in. I just sat under good teaching. And I. And I learned. This is God's church. Jeff. You don't have to have all the answers.
- And be the hero. You just get up there. And. And do what you do. And help others do what they do. And. And I'll run my church. I'll build my church.
- You do your part. And you help them do their part. And I'll build my church. You know how freeing that was. Man. Let me show you something.
- [34 : 15] About this household. From the book of Ephesians. I think it will encourage your heart. You turn to Ephesians with me. And.
- In chapter one. You and I take all of our instruction. For. The life of our family.
- From. The Lord. And in Ephesians one. Verses. Three. Through five. God.
- Himself. Made you. A part of his family. That's the first point. I want to make. Under this heading. Blessed be then. The God and father. Of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- Who has blessed us. With every spiritual blessing. In the heavenly places. In Christ. Just as. He chose us.
- [35 : 13] In him. Before the foundation. Of the world. That we would be. Holy. And blameless. Before him. In love. He predestined.
- Us. To adoption. As sons. Through. Jesus Christ. To himself. According to the kind. Intention. Of his will. I say again.
- God himself. Friends. Made you. A part of his family. That is God's doing. His initiative. And his doing. From. A to Z. God put you.

Into his family. By grace. Through faith. Then. In this next point. God himself. Keeps you. In his family. Praise the Lord.

If you look at. Verses 13 and 14. In him. You also. After listening. To the message. Of truth. The gospel. Of your salvation.

[36 : 07] Having also. Believed. You. Were. Sealed. In him. With the Holy Spirit. Of promise. Who is given.

As a pledge. Of our inheritance. With a view. To the redemption. Of God's own possession. To the praise. Of his glory. How do you know.

You're sealed. Or you're a saved. Christian. That you're. Do you have the Holy Spirit. Living in you. Because that's God's pledge. That's God's seal. That's God's guarantee. That he has stamped you.

As his child. And that when. That final redemption. Comes. He'll bring you to glory. With himself. Does the spirit. Live in you. That's the seal. That's the test.

God himself. Keeps you. In his family. By the power. Of the Holy Spirit. And nothing. Nothing is powerful. Enough to change that. And then finally. Look at this. God himself.

[37 : 02] Grows you. In his family. Doesn't just leave you. Where you are. In terms of your maturity. He grows you. Verses 14. Through 19.

Who has given us. As a pledge. Of our inheritance. With a view. To the redemption. Of God's own possession. To the praise. Of his glory. For this reason. I too. Having heard of the faith. In the Lord Jesus.

Which exists. Among you. And your love. For all the saints. Do not cease. Giving thanks. For you. While making mention. Of you. In my prayers. That. The God of our Lord.

Jesus Christ. The Father of glory. May give you. A spirit. Of wisdom. And of revelation. In what? The knowledge.

Of him. I pray. I pray. That the eyes. Of your heart. May be enlightened. So that you. Will know. What is the hope. Of his calling. What are the riches. Of his glory.

[37 : 57] The inheritance. Of the saints. And what is the surpassing. Greatness. Of his power. Toward us. Who believe. These are in accordance. With the working. Of the strength. Of his might.

Which he brought about. In Christ. When he raised him. From the dead. And seated him. At his right hand. In the heavenly places. There you go. God.

Made you. A part of his family. Keeps you. A part of his family. And grows you. In his family. That is all. The grace of God. Working in your life. As part of this family. Friends. You are secure.

With God. As your father. He always has. And he always will. Lovingly. Manage. His own household. Well. So.

Our shared. Christian fellowship. At this church. At Grace Church. Williamsburg. Is unique. In our community. This shared.

[38 : 55] Loving. Fellowship. Among us. Is precious. To God. And it is our privilege. To share in it. Together. You see.

You don't have to come to church. You get to. You get to. One day.

You weren't part of God's family. And then by grace. Through faith. You were. And now you are. You get to be with each other.

And you get to serve each other. And you get to do for each other. You get to serve each other. And that matters. It matters to God.

And it matters to you. Why does it matter to you? Because Jesus matters to you. One day he didn't matter. And then he did. And now what matters most to God.

[39 : 53] Matters most to you. So friends. What am I saying all this for? Given the threat. Of the false teachers. And false teaching. That we've been talking about.

I wanted to emphasize. God's fatherly care for us. And I wanted it to be a comforting. And encouraging blessing. In your life. As we share in this.

Mission together. In other words. I'm just trying to say. With all of the realities. That we face. In false teaching. False doctrine. False teachers. All the threats. That come against the church.

We just want to be reminded. We're God's people. God's got his hand. On our church family. We need to look to the Lord. So I need to say. A few more things. Before I end. All of this family love.

All of this fatherly care. Is expressed in passages. Emphasizing the one another's. Of loving. Sacrificial investment. Let me say it again. The kinds of things.

[40 : 48] That I've been talking about. Are emphasized in passages. That deal with the one another's. The one another's. Of how we love each other. How we sacrificially. Invest in each other.

We could go to numbers. And numbers of them. But I want to show you one. That kind of slam dunks. The whole issue. And it's in Hebrews. Chapter 10. Hebrews chapter 10 friends.

Beginning in verse 23. Please. Please. Think about this verse. In the context. In the context of you being. Brought into. By grace through faith. This wonderful spiritual family.

The greater family of God. And for you now. The local family. And it's expression here. At Grace Church. Verse 23 of chapter 10.

Let us hold fast. The confession of our hope. Without wavering. Do you see that? That is our mandate together. Friends. That we share in. You and I.

[41 : 50] Are to hold fast. The confession of our hope. That's the gospel. Without wavering. Together. For he who promised. Is faithful. See we are looking to a faithful God.

Verse 24. And. Let us. Consider. How to stimulate one another. To love. And good deeds. Not forsaking.

Our own assembling together. As is the habit of some. But encouraging one another. And all the more. As you see the day. Of Christ drawing near. Do you see that mandate?

That's a sobering. Clear mandate. For us. As God's people. Gathering together. In order that we will. Hold fast together.

And remind each other. And encourage each other. In what is true. What is important. What is vital. What is necessary. We come in here. Every week. With the trappings.

[42 : 47] And all of the. Of the world. Hanging all over us. It's in our heads. It's everywhere. We've just been in it. All week long. We come in here. To start a new week.

On the Lord's day. And we get reminded. About what's important to God. Who we are in Christ. How to battle against personal sin. How to confess.

How to come before the Lord. To receive grace. That we need. For moving out into this week. And glorifying him. When we come to church.

I know. We come thinking. I hope that we'll. I'll get this. Or this. What about. I want to be useful. To God today. I want to be a blessing.

To someone. Lord. Not only help me. Receive a blessing today. But I'm getting up. And I'm making the effort. To go. And assemble. And gather. With my brothers and sisters. Because I am.

[43 : 44] Anticipating. I am. Asking for. And looking for. Opportunities. That I would be a blessing. To others. I want to bless.

My brothers and sisters. You know. I don't feel like. Going to church today. Or when I. You know. All the stuff we fight. But I want to be there. Because I want to be. Useful to you.

In building up. My brothers and sisters. In the Lord. Because we've all had. Weeks like this. What a. What a radical way. To think about church. Church life.

Because. We end up. This way. Shucks. One more reminder. That it's not about me. Yeah.

All right. Let's do a few more together. Let's look at church. Real quick. We are the church. Of the living God. Church is simply. The assembled ones. The gathered ones. It's not a reference.

[44 : 42] To believers. In the worldwide church. In this context. What's he talking about? Contextually. He's talking. About the church. As it refers. To a local body. Of believers.

Applied to us. We are the. Assembled. Believers. Who are the local body. Of Jesus Christ. Known as. Grace Church. Williamsburg. We are the local.

Expression. Then. Of the living. God. You hear that? We are the church. Of the living. God. We are Grace Church. Williamsburg.

Of the living. God. God. We worship. The living. The living. God. Not some. Cold. Dead image. Not some. Idea. About God. Or ideal.

Not some. Religious. Thing. We worship. God. The creator. Of the universe. We live. And move. And have our being. In this living.

[45 : 38] God. That's. Acts. 17. 28. Folks. Each of you. Who make up. Our local church family. Are alive. In Christ. Because you are.

God's. Workmanship. That's. Ephesians. 210. You are. God's. Personal. Craftsmanship. And while.

There's. Not another one. Like you. In God's. Workmanship. You are. Part of. Many. Many. Aspects. Of his. Workmanship.

Sitting all around you. Each one. Unique. Each one. Special. To Jesus. Each one. A critical. And vital. Part. Of what.

Makes this. Body. A body. A functioning. Living. Breathing. Body. The church. Is not an institution.

[46 : 34] It's a living. Organism. You're the church. We say. We come to church. But we know. What we mean. We come to a. Place. Where we all. Have agreed.

To gather. In a central. Location. But we're. The church. We are. This. Wonderful. Body. Of the living. God. I want to share. Real quickly. This.

Quote. With you. I loved it. It's brief. But I really. Appreciated it. The expression. Here. Of the living. God. That expression. Emphasizes. The church.

Is a dynamic. A dynamic. A dynamic. Body. An entity. Alive. With the presence. Of God. Oh. I love that. Are we. An entity.

Alive. With the presence. Of God. When people. Come into. This place. And observe. Us singing. Worshiping. Praying. Do they. Have a sense.

[47 : 26] Of not only. Our humility. Before a sovereign. God. But do they. Do they. Have a sense. That we are. Alive. With the presence. Of God. Oh. Will you.

Pray that. Prayer. With me. God. Make us. Alive. With your presence. Help us. To express. And that will. Look different. Ways. Folks. Some people.

May raise their. Hands. In times. Of worship. Praise the Lord. Some people. May thank God. Thank you. Lord. Praise the Lord. Others. May be. More.

More. Contemplative. In the. In this manner. It. It. May look. Different ways. But. The. The. Issue. Is. Are you. Enthusiastically. Alive.

With the presence. Of God. In your life. Is Jesus. Living in you. Radically. Making a difference. In you. Is that obvious. I've. Once.

[48 : 19] Had a guy. Tell me. He was. In his. Sixties. When he was. Telling me. This. And. I. I was. One of. Several. So. He wasn't. Targeting me. I don't think.

Let me think about. Was he. Targeting me? He said. Jeff. There are no. Grumpy. Christians. And. I thought. Well. Yes. There are. I've. I've. Been a. Grumpy. That's. What he was. Saying. No.

Grumpy. Christians. No. More. No. Grumpy. Christianity. Okay. That doesn't. Reflect. Well. On. Our. Lord. That doesn't. Exude.

An. Aliveness. In. The. Lord. Jesus. Friends. God. Is. Alive. In. Us. God. Is. Alive. In. Us. We. Are. Not.

A. Man. Made. Institution. We're. A. God. Created. Living. Organism. And. That's. A. Beautiful. Irony. For. Us. To. Think. About. We. Are. The. Product. Of. God's. Heart.

[49 : 11] And. Hands. Think. About. That. We. Are. His. Workmanship. We. Are. The. Product. Of. God's. Heart. And. Hands. Now. Think. About. This. In. Our. Unbelief.

Before. The. Lord. Our. Heart. And. Our. Hands. Made. God. In. Our. Image. Those. Were. Idols. Of. Our. Hearts. In. Salvation.

God. Remakes. Us. In. The. Image. Of. His. Son. So. By. God's. Grace. God. Grants. Us. The. Privilege. Of. Being. In. This. Local. Expression. Of. His. Family.

We. Are. The. Household. Of. God. We. Are. The. Church. Of. God. We. Are. Also. Finally. The. Pillar. And. Ground. Of. The. Truth. The. Pillar. And. Ground.

Of. Truth. And. It. Simply. Means. Call. Pillar. Means. Column. Ground. Means. Support. Or. Foundation. Pillar. And. Ground. Are. Most. Likely.

[50 : 04] References. To. The. Temple. Of. Artemis. Or. Diana. Which. Was. One. Of. The. Seven. Wonders. Of. The. Ancient. World. At. This. Particular. Time. So. People. From.

All. Over. The. Ancient. World. Would. Flock. To. Ephesus. Gigantic.

Mammoth. Columns. In. This. Temple. Hundred. And. Twenty. Seven. Of. Them. Many. Of. Them. Were. Inlaid. With. With. Jewels. And. Precious. Stones. Most.

Of. Them. Were. Gilded. In. Gold. Can. You. Imagine. One. Twenty. Seven. You've. Seen. These. Pictures. These. Massive. Columns. Roman. Columns. And. All. Holding.

Supporting. These. Buildings. Can. You. Imagine. One. Hundred. And. Twenty. Seven. Of. Those. Filled. With. Jewels. And. Overlaid. In. Gold. It. Was. Quite. An. Impressive.

[50 : 59] Site. And. It. Was. Of. Course. When. They. Did. These. Kinds. Of. Things. They. Meant. To. Impress. That's. Why. They. Did. It. Here's. The. Problem. Each. Of. Those. One. Hundred.

And. Twenty. Seven. Pillars. Represented. An. Untruth. Of. The. Pagan. People. Who. Worship. There. They. All. Stood. For. Untruths. The.

Analogy. Is. That. We. The. Church. We. Are. The. Pillar. In. Support. Of. God's. Truth. The. True. Truth. If. You. Will. As.

God's. Household. We. Support. And. Safeguard. The. Truth. Hearts. To. Sound.
Doctrine. And. To. Living.

Out. That. Truth. Doctrine. Matters. Well. God's. Truth. In. Scripture. I. Want. To. Share.
This. Quote. With. You. God's. Truth. In. Scripture. Is.

[51 : 52] The. Sacred. Saving. Treasure. Given. To. Sinners. For. Their. For. For. Believers. For.
Their. Sanctification. And. Edification. That. They. Might. Live. For. Churches.

That. Tamper. With. Misrepresent. Depreciate. Relegate. The. Secondary. Place. Or.
Abandon. Biblical. Truth. Destroy. Their. Only. Reason. For. Existing.

And. Experience. Impotence. And. Judgment. Wow. Colossians. 128. Is. Where. I'll.
Conclude.

If. You'll. Turn. There. With. Me. Colossians. 128. Now. Those. Of. You. Who've. Been. A.
Part. Of. Our. Church. For. The. Last. Four.

Years. When. We. Constituted. As. A. Church. A. Little. Over. Four. Years. Ago. Know.
That. We. Adopted. This. Verse. As. Our. Foundation. Verse. If. You. Will. We.

[52 : 55] Proclaim. Him. Jesus. Admonishing. Every. Man. And. Teaching. Every. Man. With. Is.

How. We. Are. Applying. God's. Truth. Mandate. To. Our. Own. Church. Family. Our.
Church. Culture. Here. At. Grace. In. Our. Efforts. To.

Obey. The. Lord. And. Our. Efforts. To. Encourage. Each. Other. In. Family. Life. And.
How. We. Guard. Ourselves. Against. False. Teaching. Colossians. 128. Kind of.

Captures. All. That. And. Sums. It. Up. For. Us. So. If. You. Ask. The. Question. What.
Here. In. Colossians. 128. What. The. What. Is. We.

Proclaim. What. Do. We. Do. We. Proclaim. We. Herald. We. Testify. We. Speak. The.
Truth. In. Love. And.

[53 : 51] Then. Who. Let. Me. Put. These. Up. Here. For. You. So. You. Can. Follow. Along. And.
The. Who. The. Who. Is. Him. It. A. Person. It. It. Not. A. Concept. It.

Not. An. Idea. It. It. Not. A. Nice. Sentiment. We. Are. Calling. People. To. Christ. We.
Proclaim. Him. Jesus. How.

How. Do. We. Do. This. By. Admonishing. Teaching. With. All. Wisdom. Admonishing. Is.
Warning. Teaching. With. All. Wisdom. Whose. Wisdom. Jeff's.

Wisdom. Greg's. Wisdom. Your. Wisdom. No. The. Wisdom. Of. The. Lord. In. Scripture.
So. This. Is. Systematic. Instruction. In. Obeying. God's. Word. And. That's.

What. We're. Doing. Here. Right. Now. That's. What. We. Do. When. We. Gather. For.
Our. Men's. Breakfast. That's. What. We. Do. When. We. Worn.

[54 : 54] As. We. Teach. With. All. God's. Wisdom. And. Then. Why. Why. That. We. Might.
Present. Each. Person. Man. Woman. Boy. And.

Girl. Complete. In. Christ. Every. Person. In. Our. Church. Family. Presented. To. Jesus.
As. Full. Mature. Grown. Up. In. Christ. Like. Character. And. Conduct.

So. Friends. We. The. Family. Of. God. We. Are. To. Uphold. The. Truth. Of. God.
Individually. And. Collectively. In. This. World. So.

That. People. Can. Be. Saved. And. Sanctified. As. They. See. Jesus. Living. In. Us. They.
Receive. The. Testimony. That. Jesus. Lives. Jesus. Lives. That.

The. Mission. We. Never. Want. To. Lose. Side. Of. That. Main. Track. Mission. That.
We're. Living. Out. The. Relationship. That. You. And. I. Have. With. The. God.

[55 : 46] Who. Is. Truth. Should. Bear. Directly. On. How. We. Live. Our. Lives. As. Servants. And.
Family. Members. Of. His. Truth. We. Are. The. Household.

Of. God. We. Are. The. Church. Of. The. Living. God. We. Are. The. Pillar. And. Ground.
God.

I. Thank. You. Personally. For. The. Physical. Stamina. To. Do. This. Today. I. Perhaps.
Take. That. For. Granted. Sometimes. And. Then. You. Remind. Me. That. All. That.
We're. Able.

To. Do. In. The. Way. Of. Serving. Jesus. And. Each. Other. Is. By. Grace. Through. Faith.
So. Thank. You. Father. For. The. Marvelous. Way. That. You. Touch. Us. In.

The. Way. Of. The. Spirit. In. The. Truth. You. Minister. To. Us. You. Help. Us. To. See.
You. In. Scripture. As. We.

[56 : 43] See. The. Life. Of. The. Lord. Jesus. Christ. As. We. Read. About. The. Wonderful. Ways.
That. Your. Apostles. And. Prophets. Instructed. Your. People.

Times. Of. Old. Us. Grace. Church. Williamsburg. And. We. Pray. That. You. Help. Us. To.
Continue. To. Bind.

Our. Hearts. Together. In. A. Sweet. And. Wonderful. Unity. And. Sense. Of. Peace.
Together. I. Pray. For. The. Several. Families. Who.

Were. Out. Today. Three. Or. Four. Families. Lord. Who. Were. Absent. I. Pray. That.
You. Will. Minister. To. Their. Hearts. Father. And. That. As. They. Are. Absent.

You. Will. Help. Them. To. Sense. Truly. That. That. We. Miss. Them. And. That. We're.
Praying. For. Them. They. Are. Not. For. For. For. Thank. You. For. These. Souls.

[57 : 35] Who. Came. Out. Today. May. You. Bless. Them. Dear. Lord. Bless. Them. With. The.
Knowledge. Of. Your. Will. In. All. Of. These. Wonderful. Ways. That. We've. Talked.
About. Today.

As. We. Own. Who. We. Are. In. Christ. We. Thank. You. In. Jesus. Precious. Name. And.
For. His. Glory. Amen.