

# Participants in God's Gigantic Plan

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[ 0 : 00 ] Well, morning. So it's true, you're a bunch of crazy people up here in New Bern, and it's wonderful to be around you.

I have never seen so many babies at one time. You should get a hobby or a TV or something, but it's very cool to see all that.

So let me get my, I hate this technology stuff, but I'm trying to keep up with the young guys. So, so really great to be here this morning and to be honored.

Thank you so much. You family, you know that. Your four kids are like our own kids. And I love the team that you have here, the eldership team and the other team, the staff and that.

Some of them are really cheeky people. And when you say that, I'm from Australia. It's way down east. People often ask me, where are you from? Where's your accent? I say, I'm from down east. Far down east, Australia.

[ 0 : 56 ] 36 hours on an airplane to get there. And when we say in Australia, you're a cheeky person, it's a good thing. It means we like you. You've got muscle and energy and nonsense, and we have to deal with you often.

But we like that. It's better than dead people. So you're an amazing team to be around. So to be here today is a pleasure. It's great to see the Stevenses as well. Swansbury sowed them out to you. So you owe us a debt down the road. So here we are this morning at church. And thank you, Jay and Jess, for your welcome.

I'm going to finish off the book of Acts. So it's chapter 10. So it's not the whole book. It's just the little series where we've got to today. And this is my motivation today is to have a little bit of fun. I mean, the passage is really long.

So I'm not going to read it out at the beginning because by the time we get halfway, you won't remember anything that we read because I think it's like 48 verses. So what we'll do is we'll go through it little bit by little bit and watch the story unfold.

[ 1 : 59 ] And there's a couple of things that I would like you to see this morning. The one is, and these aren't my points. I just hope they bleed through in what we talk about. The one is I want you to see how big the mission is that God has for his beautiful bride.

It's ginormous. Every people group on earth needs to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ. I hope that somehow seeps through into our bones by the presence of the Holy Spirit.

The other thing I hope that we get to see is just how active the Holy Spirit is in the life of the local church. It's one of the things that I think I have a growing hunger for that we see more activity of the Holy Spirit, not just on Sunday mornings where there's prophecy and tongues and maybe other things that the Spirit can bring to a meeting like this.

I mean, just a hug and some sweet fellowship. That's Holy Spirit stuff as well because that can heal hearts. But I'm talking in our own lives when we walk into the office tomorrow and there's a little prompting in our heart, go and walk over to Sylvia and just say hello to her and give her a little hug or buy a gift for George, the most horrible man in the whole building and ambush him at the water fountain.

But we live more each day by these promptings of the Holy Spirit because that's how this job is going to get done. And then thirdly, I hope you get your photo album of your pictures of who God is.

[ 3 : 20 ] I hope there's a few new pictures that go in there today. I think he is magnificent. And just reading this, I so often went into worship around this passage of Scripture.

He is so humorous. He's naughty. You know the 11th commandment, we say that at One Hobby a lot. The 11th commandment, I shall have fun in the kingdom of God. Where do you think that started?

It started with God the Father. He does naughty, cheeky things. Fun things. Fun things. You'll see with Peter. It's always like he's saying to the archangels, archangels, come over here. Watch what I'm going to do with old Pete. I'm going to freak him out again. And then I'll use that freaked outness to go and change the world. I think our picture of who God is has got a little boring, a little, you know, bland, a little monochromatic.

And maybe the story helps us with that. And if it doesn't, well, at least we've had a wonderful time. I certainly have had a wonderful time here already. So let me get my glasses and off we'll go. So if you're going to read along with us, we're going to go to Acts chapter 10.

[ 4 : 27 ] And we're going to look at a bunch of stuff there. So we're finishing out the sermon. The gospel has come. Jesus has risen from the dead. Pentecost has happened.

The spirit has been poured out. Churches are being planted. But if you really take a good assessment of it, it would look like this whole thing that Jesus was about is not actually taking off like everyone thought.

It's kind of stalling. The number of people coming to know Jesus. The number of people who are going off on church plants has actually sort of took off. And now it's, what's happening here? And one of the problems was that everyone thought in that particular time that, man, this thing that Jesus had done, it meant that everyone would become Jewish.

All the men would go and get circumcised. All the women would do whatever Jewish ladies have to do to be part of a Jewish community. And that would be, that would be God's people. And they never understood for a moment that, man, God's vision is much bigger than just a just a bunch of Jewish people who know Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

It was for every man, every woman, every boy, every girl, black, white, yellow, pink, purple on this earth. And I think we need to lift our eyes again and be reminded of that too.

[ 5 : 39 ] I certainly do. That when I go into the garage to buy a cold drink, Jesus died on the cross for that man. When I go to Walmart and take something back because I bought the wrong thing and the lady helps me out there and all the rest of it, Jesus died for that lady.

Not just for this on Sundays. And it's fantastic. Your second service thing, it's a great announcement. And I promise you at first it's going to be stretching, but you'll look back in a few months and say it's the best thing we ever did. Because just more people will have more options to come.

It's the American way and you'll grow. And who knows what else God has for you. So the church had spread through Judea, but the only people who were getting saved were Jews.

And there were some Samaritans, but Samaritans were not Gentiles. Samaritans were half Jewish, half Gentiles. So they weren't really Gentiles. It's like this whole thing's stalling. It's nosediving. And so God starts to intervene into this stuff.

And so there's all sorts of parts to the story, but it's one of the most important stories in the book of Acts. It's repeated four times because it's so important. And it's a story that needs to get into our hearts because folks, even in the day that we live in, we can have some prejudice in our hearts about other people, other race groups, other nationalities.

[ 6 : 58 ] We need to have a Jesus heart where he died for everyone, every single person. I mean, I spoke to a Marine guy recently and some of his mates were killed in some of the things that he had to do in Iraq and those places.

And for a long time, he just had this hate for Muslim people and Arabic kind of looking people. And God has been doing something in his heart that there's this growing love for all people.

It doesn't matter who they are. Jesus died for them all. And that has to happen for us as well if we're going to live in all that God has for us. And let me say this as well. Well, I think the Holy Spirit shows up when we have a heart that's for all people because that's what he's about.

He's not just about one or two little groups. And if we want more activity of the Holy Spirit in our lives, in our homes, in our kids' lives and in the life of the church, man, it's got to be a place that's so big hearted, the Holy Spirit can't have help being there.

I mean, you've all been to parties at different people's homes. There's certain people when they invite you in a night to a party, we can't wait to get there. What must we bring? We'll get there early because this is going to be a jam. Then there's other people who invite us and it's like, let me just check.

[ 8 : 08 ] Have we got anything on that day? We do now. Not lying. I'll quickly make an appointment. Because you know, if you go there, I don't want to be at that. It's so horrible and boring and they just

moan about the economy and all that all the time.

So if we're a bunch of Christians just moaning about everything all the time and why isn't the church growing? Why do I have to get out there and tell someone about Jesus? Why is the Holy Spirit ever going to show up at that? Except to correct you and fix you and me.

But when it's this, people are like, second service? Yeah, let's get on with this. We can't wait to get to number three and four service. Can't wait to move in a cross over there.

Can't wait to build a boat and have church on the water. I promise you. When that's our heart, Holy Spirit shows up. Because that's his job. To come and make Jesus real to people.

Come and take all that burns in our hearts for him and turn it into vision and make things happen.

So the gospel has not advanced that much. So we're going to have a look at a little bit at that this morning and mention the couple of things that I'd love you to see.

[9:15] So number one, quickly, let's look at Luke's account of this conversion. There's been this conversion of a man called Cornelius. He is a Roman soldier. He's in charge of about 100 troops. He's a really important guy.

And he has come to know, or he comes to know Jesus Christ in the next few moments. So Cornelius has a vision. And I want you to see, folks, how God is just so cool.

Over here, Cornelius is living in a village down here at Caesarea. Over here, Joppa, Peter's hanging out on the roof, hungry and wants some food. And God drops some food down three times in a big blanket.

We'll get to that in a moment. It's kind of like a funny part of the whole story. And so over here, God sends the Holy Spirit to give that guy who's a soldier a dream and a vision and all that kind of Holy Spirit stuff. And over here, he does the same thing for Peter.

And you think, what have the two got to do with each other? But when you look at God and how he does stuff, they are totally connected because that little moment will result in that guy coming to know Jesus and the whole world being open for the Gentiles to come into the kingdom of God.

[10:18] It's one of the most important stories. And if you expected a God who walked down there, knocked on his door, hello, Mr. Soldier person, you need Jesus. Here's a full spiritual laws track.

Read it. Get back to me if you're interested. God is not working like that. We've got to get on board with what he's doing and how he is doing things in the days that we live.

So he was a very religious man. Acts 10, it says, A Caesaria, there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion of what was known as the Italian cohort. They were kind of elite guys.

A devout man who feared God with all his household, gave alms generously to the people and prayed continuously to God. He was a religious man, but he was not a born again man.

I was, you know, as a young guy, I went to boarding schools. One was an Anglican. One was Methodist. I went to church more times than most of you have been in your whole life. I did not know Jesus.

[11:17] I was religious. And if you're a visitor today, that might be you. You're here because Grandma said, come to church with me and I'll buy you lunch afterwards. And he said, Tom, I'm a good guy.

I do try and read my Bible. I do pray now and then. I do say grace over my food. But there's a difference between religion and a relationship with Jesus. This is what's going here in the story.

And so an angel appears to Cornelius in Acts chapter 10 verse 3. It says, about the ninth hour of the day, he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God come in and say to him, Cornelius.

And he stared at him in terror and said, what is it, Lord? And he said to him, your prayers and your alms have ascended as a memorial before God. And now send men to Joppa and bring one Simon who is called Peter.

He is lodging with one Simon, a tanner whose house is by the sea. Now that just tells you a few little things about Peter. He's a naughty guy. Because he's staying at a guy who does tanning of skins.

[12:20] He's standing in his home. And as a Jew, you should not be doing that. Because that guy had to be around dead animals. And so Peter's a bit of a, he contradicts himself here. You'll see in a moment. So there's this announcement.

Go fetch the guy. I, God, have got a plan to get you born again and into the kingdom of God. I wonder how many plans God's got around our lives and to use us and get us into other people's lives so that we can bring them to know Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

Maybe you're a good cook. And so he's got a plan for grandma to give you her ancient oak table that's worth millions of bucks so that you can plunk people down it. And your wife cooks food that when they eat it, they see angels singing and shouting.

And you lead them to Jesus Christ right there. Maybe you're the best car mechanic in town. And you just fix people's cars for free because you are part of God's sneaky, loving plan to win lost, folks.

He's got a plan, folks. And we make his plan so boring. Go to church. Sing some songs. Hear a great preach from Jesse or the other guys. Go to work. Greet people. No, it's like we're these little secret Navy agents.

[13:30] Remember, we say this every week. You go out the door and we're sending you out. I always imagine my congregation down in Swansburg, we're dressed in Navy SEAL little wetsuits and out we go. We're going to go.

Look where we're going to bring the gospel. Here's a moment. Lady at the till at Walmart hasn't got enough money to pay for her bread. So you take out some money and pay for her bread and get her phone number and phone her a week later to see if she's fine.

And the Holy Spirit's moving and using us. So Cornelius sends two servants and a devout soldier to Peter.

Acts 10.7. When the angel who spoke to him had departed, he called two of his servants and a devout soldier from among them who attended him. And having related everything to them, he sent them to Joppa.

So Cornelius has had a vision. The next part of the story is Peter has a vision. It's like God's doing this setup. You've got to see how multidimensional this God is that we serve.

[14:33] You've got to fall in love with him over and over again as you look how he operates. So Peter has a vision. The next day, and Peter's more earthy.

Peter's up on the top of this little house from what I understand. The next day he's praying and he's hungry and Peter has a vision. I've got to tell you, you should check in Scripture how many times God works around when we're hungry and need food.

And if he can work our lives around food, how much could we be doing when we have food for people and they come and sit at our table and we love on them? Look how often Jesus did that. Go take your Bible to market.

Look how often Jesus, in conjunction with the Holy Spirit, sat down, ate with people, and all sorts of God stuff happened. And you could say to me, I don't know why I'm laboring the food thing, but I'm going to anyway.

You could say, Tom, I'm a useless cook. They come to my house, we will be phoning and calling ambulances. Then buy some stuff and dolly it up nicely. Or get someone in the church who knows how to cook.

[15:33] Get them to come and help you. But man, that's a thing we've all got to do. And so he uses this food thing with Peter. It's just interesting how often Jesus does this. So let's read the story here.

It says, The next day as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the housetop about the sixth hour to pray. And he became hungry. Isn't it amazing how when you begin to pray, you get hungry?

And he became hungry and wanted something to eat. But while they were preparing it, he fell into a trance. And saw the heavens opened and something like a great sheet descending, being let down by its four corners upon the earth.

In it were all kinds of animals and reptiles and birds of the air. And there came a voice to him, rise, Peter, kill and eat. Now remember, Peter's a good little Jewish boy. He's behaved and obeyed all the dietary laws.

But Peter said, By no means, Lord. There's a contradiction. How can you call God Lord and say no to an instruction he's just given you?

[16:34] It's ridiculous. We do the same. Maybe you don't. I mean you. Holy looking bunch. I do that. Oh, Lord. No. If we're going to be a people of the Spirit, we're going to have to let him use us and take some risks with us.

Walk out on the water, flatten our face. At home group, we all laugh about it. Pray for each other again. Let's try again. People of the living God.

People of the Spirit. Bringing the good news all over the earth. Fell into a trance and saw the heavens open, something like a great sheet descending, being let down by its four corners upon the earth.

In it were all kinds of animals and reptiles and birds of the air. And there came a voice to him, rise, Peter, kill and eat. But Peter said, By no means, Lord. For I've never eaten anything that is common or unclean.

And the voice came to him again a second time. What God has made clean, do not call common. It's a big deal.

[ 17 : 39 ] This is a massive moment in the history of humanity. And a sheet descends from heaven with all this food there.

Voices kill and eat. I mean, it says reptiles. I mean, what would a reptile be that you'd want to eat? Peter objects.

He's never eaten. He's been a good Jewish boy. Hey, the gospel's come to us Jews. Why should I eat this stuff? The voice tells him what God has cleansed. Don't you call it common.

If God has cleaned it, you can eat it. The vision is repeated three times. Up again. Up again.

Can I ask you how many times God has to speak to you and me before you're here? Are you a four-time guy? 89-time guy?

[ 18 : 40 ] I don't know, man. And Peter was a three-time guy. Look at his track record. Jesus said, You'll deny me three times before the cock crows. Denied Jesus three times.

And Jesus restored him back three times. Remember, with the barbecue on the beach, he said, Peter, do you love me?

Peter, do you love me? Peter, do you love me? The sheet came down three times. There was three people at his gate. It's always just this three thing with Peter.

And the Spirit instructs Peter. These men from Cornelius arrive. They're contemplating this vision. And Peter's contemplating his vision. So the two things are going on. God's having a good laugh in heaven. Like watching this unfold. His will's going to be done. And Acts 10, 17, it says, Now while Peter was inwardly perplexed as to what the vision that he had seen might mean.

[ 19 : 40 ] See, Peter was not dumb in understanding that when God does something like that, he's trying to say something. What is this about? And so he's sitting there.

What is this about? So it's good. He's meditating on it. And then these guys arrive and say, Hey, God told us. And Peter starts. Oh, it's him again. He's up to something. Now while Peter was inwardly perplexed as to what the vision that he had seen might mean.

And behold, the men who were sent by Cornelius, having made inquiry for Simon's house, stood at the gate and called out to ask whether Simon, who was called Peter, was lodging there. And the Spirit tells Peter to go.

Don't doubt anything. This is God. And that same Spirit and that same whisper that he heard in that moment. Folks, you and I, if we know Jesus, can hear that every day of our lives.

And if we haven't heard that for a while, we've got to retune ourselves to hearing the Spirit's voice and listening to the Spirit. Acts 10, it says, verse 19.

[ 20 : 46 ] And while Peter was pondering the vision, the Spirit said to him, Behold, three men are looking for you. Rise and go down and accompany them without hesitation, for I have sent them. So Peter receives the men, he takes brethren with him, and he goes down to Cornelius' house.

God's up to something here, and Acts 10, 21 carries on. And Peter went down to the men and said, I am the one you're looking for. What is the reason for your coming? And they said, Cornelius, a centurion, an upright and God-fearing man who is well spoken of by the whole Jewish nation, was directed by an holy angel to send for you to come to his house and to hear what you have to say. So he has invited them in to be his guests. When it says there, to hear what you have to say, he's not talking about what Peter thinks about the latest economic conditions in Israel.

It is a clear understanding, if you take his dream and vision, and now what's said here, you know something about God that I don't, that I don't have.

I need you to come and tell me. And we are surrounded by people, everyday folks, who need us to tell them. Now, I'm not encouraging today that you become that crazy person at the office, that, you know, everyday you're in there and you're playing a guitar at your desk and singing carols or something like that, and you're going around to people and, you know, prophesying over them and all the rest of it.

[ 22 : 14 ] I think there's much better ways. How about just starting to pray for some of the people you work with? Keeping your ears open for those same people.

Pick on someone. Pick on one person. Whether you've got to pray for 10 years or one day and just love on them. Say, Holy Spirit, give me openings. You know, that lady comes over and asks you something.

How do you raise your kids? They're so good. I don't know what I'm doing wrong. And God just starts to do amazing things. Peter arrives. Cornelius got his whole family there.

Close friends there. He's going to spread the gospel, this guy. And on the following day they entered Caesarea, Cornelius was expecting them and he called together his relatives and close friends. Call together your relatives and close friends and tell them.

Demonstrate to them the good news. He falls on his face, Cornelius, and starts worshipping Peter. And Peter, to his credit, deflects the attempt by Cornelius to worship him.

[ 23 : 16 ] I'm sure he may have been tempted just a little bit. And then Acts 10, 25. When Peter entered, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshipped him. But Peter lifted him up saying, Stand up.

I too am a man. And something was starting to drop in Peter's head. Where before he thought the gospel was just for Jewish nation. They were the chosen ones.

He started to say, Hang on. God's up to something here. He's doing it again. And just as he's a man and I'm a man, I'm not worthy of worship. Only he is. And he is not worthy of any worship.

Only the living God is. And something is changing in his heart. And folks, our hearts should be changing every day to think more like the king. We should be looking out every day.

What are you up to today, God? And some days it feels like he's gone on vacation. Let's be honest. You know he's there. If something really bad happened, he'd be there. And the crew here would be there for you.

[ 24 : 17 ] But there's other days where all sorts of things are happening. You get a puncher after you just put brand new tires on. And then the guy at the place can't come and fix it. And someone stops and fix it for you. And at the end of the day, you look back and say, Oh my gosh.

God was knitting this whole tapestry and doing all sorts of things. I think we miss so many things that go on in our life. We just, oh, the car broke down again. God, are you up to something? No? Okay. I'll fix the car. Let's wait for tomorrow and see if you're doing something there. Peter explains his presence is a violation of Jewish custom. Here we go.

He should not be in these heathen's homes. He should not be in the homes of Gentiles. And he explains this is not how it should be.

But, he uses this great theological word, but. He says, I should not as a Jew be in your home.

[ 25 : 13 ] That's the one truth. But. And when you get the but, whatever comes after the but. This is a great theology. I'm going to write this book one day. When you say but, you get the theology that comes after the but.

Remember, here's an example. Jesus says, Lord, he's in the garden of Gethsemane. He's about to be slaughtered. He says, Father, let this cup pass from me. But. Not my will be done.

Yours. What was before the but gets blown away. What's after the but, that's what we get. And Peter says, I shouldn't be in your home. But. Because of the thing going up and down with all the food and all the rest of it.

You're getting a vision from God. I now understand that the gospel is for everybody. And I can be in your home because of that. It is one of the most radical moments in the New Testament.

And it should be a radical moment in our own hearts. Of how we look at all peoples. We live in times where.

[ 26 : 17 ] So much prejudice. So much hate. We should be the most loving, kind people around. Does that mean we've got to agree with everything? Of course not. But man, each person on this earth is made in the image of God.

And you may have learned some weird theology. And I lived in South Africa in really weird times as a young boy. Really weird times. And I heard some really weird theology that's nowhere to be found in scripture.

I had to find a moment to let God do something in my heart. So I could love all peoples. We have crazy neighbors. Crazy relations. That one auntie who comes to Christmas.

You might be here this morning. Jesus loves you. And we love you. He explains to Peter.

Why he was called Acts 10 29. And so he says. When I was sent for. I came without obligation. Objection. I asked then why you sent for me. And Cornelius said.

[ 27 : 26 ] Four days ago about this hour. I was praying in my house at the ninth hour. And behold a man stood before me in bright clothing. And said. Cornelius your prayer has been heard. And your arms have been remembered. Before God.

Send therefore to Joppa. And ask for Simon. Who is called Peter. He is lodging in the house of Simon. Atana. By the sea. Shouldn't have been in the house of Atana. Holy Spirit's doing something. God's up to something.

The orchestration in the spiritual realm going on. Awesome. And Cornelius and his household were ready to hear. All things commanded by God.

It says here. So I sent for you at once. And you've been kind enough to come. I love that there. Peter you're so kind to come and tell us about the gospel. Let's be kind people.

Going everywhere. Now therefore we are all here. In the presence of God. To hear all that you've been commanded by the Lord. Oh what a setup. Peter's sermon quickly to the household.

[ 28 : 21 ] It begins with a full perception. That God shows no partiality. So Peter opened his mouth and said. Truly I understand that God shows no partiality. But in every nation.

Anyone who fears him and does what is right. Is acceptable to him. So on the top of the house. There's God's been working. And it's continued to grow in him.

And change in him. And the Lord has put the Holy Spirit on Peter. And then it says in chapter 10 verse 36. And as for the word that he sent to Israel.

Preaching good news of peace through Jesus Christ. So here he brings the good news. He is Lord of all. You yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea. Beginning from Galilee. After the baptism that John proclaimed.

Our God anointed Jesus of Nazareth. With the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing. And all who were oppressed by the devil. For God was with him. And then he was killed.

[ 29 : 16 ] And he was raised from the dead. Eyewitness saw him. By the truckloads. People who really knew him really well. And he has now commanded the apostles. Which means messengers.

To go and proclaim him. And as ordained by God. To be the judge of the living and the dead. To go and tell the world that he is the savior. Folks none of us in this room are apostles.

But we are an apostolic people. Because apostle means to go and give a message. So maybe you're not John. Or you know some of these great apostles. But we are apostolic in heart.

That's Jesus heartened us. To go and share the good news. Of Jesus Christ wherever we go. He has commanded the apostles to proclaim him. As ordained by God. To be the judge of the living and the dead.

And they were commanded to preach that. Teach that through Jesus' death. Your sins can be forgiven. And you can have a new life. And as he's talking about that.

[ 30 : 17 ] And we're drawing to a close. The Holy Spirit falls on that room. And there's just Holy Spirit chaos. Have you ever been in a meeting like that? Some of you probably nervous me even saying that.

And I get that. I really do get that. I understand that. But do you see there's something else going on here? God setting all this stuff up. And the Holy Spirit's like right there on the edge.

He just cannot wait to get involved. Because he's got a part to plan people's salvation. Drawing them to the Lord and all the rest. While Peter was still speaking.

How rude. Holy Spirit just can't hold himself back anymore. Ah that's it. I love that. And the believers from among the circumcised.

Who had come with Peter. Were amazed. Because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out. Even on the Gentiles. For they were hearing them speaking in tongues. And extolling God. And Peter declared. Jewish Christians had come with Peter.

[ 31 : 18 ] They suddenly realized the gospel is for everyone. People are speaking in tongues. And all the rest of it. And I made a quick list. Of when does the Holy Spirit show up? Just this is a very basic list.

Holy Spirit comes to exalt Jesus. Because that's what the Holy Spirit's job is. Is to make Jesus look amazing and wonderful. He can't help himself doing that. And he does it when we talk about the peace that Jesus brings.

Go and look in your Bible. You see when Jesus. When we talk about Jesus' peace. The Holy Spirit shows up. That he's Lord of all. Holy Spirit shows up. He anoints with power. And spirit. When we tell people that Jesus is stronger than Satan. And sin. The Holy Spirit shows up. When we tell people that he rose from the dead. The Holy Spirit shows up. When we tell people that he is the final judge.

Of all things. The Holy Spirit shows up. When we tell people that he is the source of the only true forgiveness. Available to mankind. The Holy Spirit shows up. And more and more.

[ 32 : 17 ] I don't know about you. I want to live a life where the Spirit of God shows up. So I'm going to do some things that attract him. And bring his presence. As best as I know how.

And then Peter says. You've got to be baptized. He commands them. Because as most of you know. But in case you're a guest here. When you have met Jesus as your Lord and Savior. And they take you out to the river here. Maybe not. Take you out to the pool over there. And they put you down under the water. And bring you out. It is telling the whole world.

I have died to the old self. I'm coming out new. And. He is my Lord. It's not just the.

I'm saved now. I'm new sort of thing. It is a declaration publicly. He. Is. My. Lord. And Peter commands it.

[ 33 : 13 ] And baptism is a commandment. I'm not sure why you laughed about the river. Is that really toxic or something. I don't know. Okay. So Peter commands them to be baptized.

So we close with a few observations. Number one. Religious people need salvation. That could be you today. Being a good.

You know. Kid in your folks home. Gone to church. All that. Grown up. Still go with grandma. To Christmas service. But you don't know Jesus.

Sir man. With humility. I want to say. You. You are a religious person. In a good way. You. You do what's right. But until your heart. Meets the king. Nothing's going to change.

Jesus didn't die for you. To go to church a lot. And pray a lot. And all that. He died to be your savior. And live in your heart. And he can do that today. I learned that quickly.

[ 34 : 12 ] When I first came to the south. I learned a few couple of things here. When I first got here. One. I learned some American south. It was a. Get it done son. That was the first thing I learned. When I got here.

And I use that regularly. And then I asked. Maybe the second or third person. I met at one harbor. You know. I was just at the door. And people were coming in. And like. Hey. How are you? Where are you?

You know. How long have you been. Coming to church? And. I said. No. No. From the. I was born on a Wednesday or something. I was in church Sunday. I've never missed church once. Ever. I said.

When they got me home. They took a little Bible. Put it in my little baby carry thing. And that Bible has been by me. And I'm like 48 years old now. But they didn't know Jesus.

It was so fascinating. When I first got here. How many of those people I met. Been in the south. You know. You got a church from the day you're born in. But you don't know the king. You can know him today.

[ 35 : 15 ] And then we hear this thing. If you go to church and do good. Then you can go to heaven. No. You can't earn anything to get to anywhere. It's all on Jesus. Don't. Don't try and earn it. But. And this man who was devout.

And feared God. And all the rest of it. He needed salvation. Gave alms generously. All these things. He still needed salvation.

And we have tons of good friends. And family members. That are really good people. But they need Jesus. And we. Are the little spies. That have been placed there. To somehow start drawing them.

And praying. And you know. Putting tracks under their pillows. I don't know what you're going to do. Do some stuff. And he will declare to you a message.

By which you will be saved. To you and all your households. So. Being religious. Doesn't get you. Anything. Another observation.

[ 36 : 12 ] Just two more. The gospel is for all nations. All people groups. Peter. Perceived that he's not a respective person's gods.

In fact it says. All. God desires that. All men. Get saved. Whether they. Koza. Zulu. Chinese. Etc. Etc. Swan's.

Burians. New Burians. Or whatever you call. People up here. He desires. All people. To get saved. And then finally.

The. The. Gospel. Culminates. In baptism. Acts. 10. 42. 42. And after this. We'll do communion together.

Says. And he commanded us. To preach to the people. And to testify. That he is the one. Appointed by God. To be judge of the living. And the dead. To him. All the prophets. Bear witness. That everyone who believes in him.

[ 37 : 08 ] Receives forgiveness. Of sins. Through his name. And then he says. In Acts chapter 10. Verse 17. Going onwards. We got to be baptized. I want to encourage you.

If you know Jesus. As your savior. And you haven't been baptized. There's a whole crew. Ready. What's the chances. Of you being at a church today. That has a whole bunch of water. Right next door to us. Hope you have great faith.

If you're a visitor here this morning. I obviously don't know. What your spiritual condition is.

But if you don't know Jesus. That's a terrible place to be. But you can walk out of this building. With him in your heart today. I think salvation.

For me. It's a little bit like Christmas. With kiddies. It's like you buy your grandkids. These really cool presents. And you put it out. And you say. This is for you. Malachi. And Malachi's got to believe.

[ 38 : 07 ] It's for him. Constantly say. Oh no. No. It's for Lincoln. No. It's for you Malachi. Come on. And they go. And they take it. And they rip the stuff off. And whatever's inside. Becomes part of their lives.

And that is the free gift. That is in this room today. By the spirit of God. His name is Jesus. And right where you're sitting. Sir or ma'am. Young person. Older person. You can just close your eyes.

For a moment. And say. Jesus. I get it now. I am a sinner. I have unholiness in my life. But I see the gift. Like I've never seen it before.

Will you be mine today? And if you do that today. Come and tell some of the dudes up here. So they can pray for you. Get you on that journey. And get baptized.

We'll find a nice place for you. To do that. The rest of us who know Jesus. How's your picture of God? Is that growing on a daily basis?

[ 39 : 05 ] Your photo album of who this great God is? Do you see him bigger? Or is he just some grumpy old guy on a seat? Grandpa reminds you of you. Or every day do you see him in action and looking after you and caring for you.

And you. Oh my gosh. How's it going with the promptings of the spirit in your life?

When you're ugly at home and you feel the Holy Spirit prompt you like. Go and ask forgiveness. No it wasn't my fault. So it won't. What's that got to do with anything?

Can't we reconcile even if we're the one offended? Doesn't that take real godliness to do that?

How's your promptings going? So. We're going to do communion together.

You should have a little cup. If you haven't got one of these.

[ 40 : 14 ] If you put your hand up. We'll quickly get one. I think they were all on the seats. So we. We're going to put a scripture up on the screen.

That I'd love us to read together. But before we do that. Let me just remind you. This little pot. With a little piece of wafer. And some juice inside.

Reminds you and me of the greatest gift of all time. And that is Jesus our King. That Jesus came to this earth willingly. And allowed his body to be absolutely smashed to pieces.

For you and my sin. And then his blood was poured out. His blood was pure from sin. And somehow. I don't know how it all works.

We'll see when we get there. But that blood was collected or something. And it was brought before the Father. And say Father. Here is the sacrifice of Jesus your son. And they checked it out. And it was pure.

[ 41 : 15 ] It paid the price. For your stuff. And my stuff. And so every time we do this. We remember that. And before you drink of this today.

I know you do this here. And it's such a cool thing. Jesse was telling me about it. Why don't you.

Just don't rip it off. And do the thing. Because we've got to go now. Lunch and all the rest. But just take a few. 15 seconds.

10 seconds. Just meditate. Where am I at? In my walk with the King today. Do you need to do some business with him? Do you need to go for a walk this afternoon? And talk with him? Or right there in

your seat.

Say. Oh God. I've dropped the ball. Forgive me. Walk out of here. Free. And get on with it again. So. We've got the scripture.

We're going to be able to get up. Chappies. Yeah. Okay. So let's read this together. Alright. It's the famous communion passage. From 1 Corinthians. So I'll kick us off. For I receive from the Lord.

[ 42 : 12 ] What I also deliver to you. That the Lord Jesus. On the night. When he would pray. Took bread. And when he had given thanks. He broke it. And said.

This is my body. Which is for you. Do this. In remembrance of me. In the same way. Also. He took the cup. After supper. Saying. This cup.

Is the new covenant. In my blood. Do this. As often. As you drink it. In remembrance of me. For as often. As you eat this bread. And drink the cup. You proclaim.

The Lord's death. Until he comes. Whoever. Whoever. Therefore. Eats the bread. Or drinks the cup. Of the Lord. In an unworthy manner. Will be guilty. Concerning the body. And blood of the Lord.

Let a person. Examine himself. And then so. Eat of the bread. And drink of the cup. For anyone. Who eats. And drinks. Without discerning the body. Eats and drinks.

[ 43 : 06 ] Judgment. On himself. That is why. Many of you. Are weak. And ill. And some have died. But if we judged ourselves. Truly. We would not be judged.

But when we are judged. By the Lord. We are disciplined. So that we may not be condemned. Along with the world. So Father. We thank you. For this time of fellowship today.

Thank you for. The stories of. These guys we have talked about. In the Bible. But Lord. This is our story. We are talking about today. Where we walk with you.

And know you. And love you. We want to be your people. We want to be part of this. Great.

Amazing. Unfolding story. In all the earth. Of the gospel going forth. Churches being planted.

And so Lord. Thank you for the bread. Your body broken. Thank you for the juice. Your blood shed. And we drink this in honor. And remembrance of you today. In Jesus name. Amen.

[ 44 : 03 ] Enjoy folks.