

What God Wants for Us

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[0 : 00] Thank you so, so very much. It's such a joy and privilege to come into a church for the very first time. And I know you're looking at this guy and you're thinking, what's with the accent?

I come from a great city, probably the greatest city in the world, called Cape Town, on the tip of Africa. And we're one of those kind of, also similar kind of tight family of churches, common ground church.

And we're a tight family of eight congregations in Cape Town. And I serve on the, I'm just speaking American now, we say advance, but I serve on the advance global team.

And total joy. And we're out here doing some planning meetings a week and having some big conversations. But we get to be here on the way into that.

And I sometimes just pinch myself to think, I get to meet some of the most amazing people in the world. We just love these guys.

[1 : 04] What's your name again? Yeah, Jesse and Hayley, they've opened their hearts in their home. They're just the real deal. When you go into a family and their kids are so respectful and amazing.

It's just been such a joy. I'm coming to care for you today. I hope something of what I share with you will make that real.

It's something of a deeper working of the grace of God in our lives. How many of you are in agreement with me that we're living in one of the most crazy times in our whole lifetime?

So I'm really a young guy because I'm only 67. But let me just show off a little before I get there. Now, that's me and the person next to me is not my daughter.

She's my wife of my youth. And we've been married 46 years. Isn't she cool? I mean, she's drop-dead gorgeous, guys. Okay, get with the program, Wallace.

[2 : 07] And there you've got Liberty, Brody, Hunter Grace, Ezra Jack. Very cool name for a bourbon. We're going to register that name. Ezra Jack.

And then there's Noah. And there's Madison. And we, sort of a recent photo that just gives you a little window into my life and my tribe. And they're all so dear to my heart.

And Sue asked me, please send love to all of the oaks here. We say oaks. The people. Oaks. Oaks of righteousness.

And so I've done that part. But I really do want to speak to you from the Word of God. And when you start to hear what I want to speak about, you'll know I'm taking a risk.

It's not because it's unhelpful and not life-giving. It's not kind of the first message you'd preach to people you don't know. And I want to speak to you today on four things that God wants for you.

[3 : 06] And I just love the fact that as Elliot got up here and he pointed us to that sort of scripture that just opens up this amazing, incredible view of Jesus as our heavenly high priest.

Whoever lives to make intercession for us. This God who is for us in Christ is just scandalously wonderful.

And it kind of, whenever I become aware of that, I feel safe. And I so want us in this crazy moment of the world's history, you know, in South Africa and Africa.

Remember when the U.S. economy gets, you know, just sneezes, the whole world gets pneumonia. And we're affected by all the stuff going on here.

We import all our oil. Interest rates are going through the roof. And that political uncertainty or that economic uncertainty feeds political desperation.

[4 : 17] And all the politicians just milk it. And I know you guys aren't like that here. But back in, you know, I just realized you add to that what's going on in the U.K.

And the Ukraine and China. And I'm not one of these eschatological, you know, guys are getting into all the prophecy charts.

I just know that God is in control of the world and history. But it feels like living in this world at this time is a little bit, like, precarious and anxiety-inducing if we don't get a hold of some things.

And the biggest pressure I'm hearing as a pastor is congregations, is people losing jobs, inflation. I want to talk to you about four things God wants for us economically.

And I'm going to give you a passage that maybe you've looked at recently or maybe you haven't.

And I don't want a single thing from you today. I don't want you to think about giving any money.

[5 : 27] I want you to know what God wants for you. And this passage is just so rich and pregnant with assurance.

And that's the motivation of my heart, wanting to anchor more than excite you, wanting to secure you, wanting to prepare you, and also wanting to minister the freedom that comes in the gospel of Jesus when these assurances are in place in our hearts.

Are we good to go? So in 1 Timothy 6, background to the passage we're about to read, Paul is countering some of the heretical teaching going down in Ephesus as he writes this letter to a young pastor.

And Timothy is back to the wall on some of the stuff going on in the church. And there are a bunch of false teachers doing the rounds.

And they are described as people who are depraved in mind and deprived. Depraved and deprived of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain.

[6 : 41] You know, the version that says God is our cosmic butler and we want him to deliver goods and services and all the stuff that will meet our perceived needs but not our actual needs.

The problem is that we often are caught between understanding our perceived needs and our actual needs. And I want to close the gap for us. I want us to close the gap on what we believe and how we start to behave in times of uncertainty.

And so he counters that with these words from verse 6 of chapter 6. And you can follow on the screens or in your Bibles. But godliness as opposed to that.

These guys who think godliness is means that. But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we'll be content with that.

Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil.

[7 : 51] Some people eager for money have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. And then from there on down to verse 17, Paul redirects his attention not to just Timothy and the church.

He redirects his attention to Timothy himself. He says, but you men of God, flee all of this. In other words, we need leadership in the church that understands this stuff. Because if the leaders don't get it, we're in trouble.

And so he's not afraid to really apply this teaching to Timothy. And then he charges him to own the stuff in this passage. And then verse 17.

Now you're a young guy, somewhere between 19 and 23, Timothy. And he's living in this commercial center. There are lots of very influential people, people that have got money. There are probably lots of slaves as well.

We'll see that later. And he says to this young guy, I want you to do something. This must be like the worst thing for a young pastor to have to do. Listen to the language.

[8 : 48] Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain. But to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.

Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way, they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

Just for a bit of context, I would imagine the sort of income bandwidth of the church I lead in the tip of Africa is probably would be less than the average income in New Bern.

But I would say that both of us are probably representative of about the top 5% of global earnings. Just in case you're always comparing upwards.

Time to compare outwards and realize, actually, you guys here in America are a blessed nation. And so are we living in Cape Town.

[9 : 56] It's like living in Monte Carlo versus the rest of Africa. It's like, have you ever been to Cape Town? Anybody here? Man, just a tiny little... Come on, guys. Get with the program.

You've got to come to Cape Town. Okay. And I just want us to understand that, you know, maybe Paul, looking down through the corridors of time, he's preaching to Timothy, but with prophetic anticipation.

He sees us in the room. He realizes that we're going to need some help. And this craziness of the shakeup on the world economy, he's not coming to want to extract.

He's coming to want to assure, anchor, root. And how's this for a key verse in the passage?

Followers of Jesus are to put their hope in God who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.

Let me say it again. Put your hope in God who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.

What kind of God is this? Does this sound like a God who is short on resources?

[11 : 08] Does this sound like a God who is very measured in his generosity? Does this sound like a God who wants to pleasure-proof our lives from good things?

Looks like a good, good father who wants to lavish us with his goodness and his abundance. This is not the hyper-prosperity kind of stuff. This is God wanting to assure us that he'll do everything that's for our good and for his glory at the same time.

This is neither a cosmic sugar daddy nor an absent father. This is a very present father in times of trouble, in times of need.

I want you to drink that in a little. I'm on a full frontal mission to make sure that our hearts are anchored and secured and we're able to say no to some of the loud voices that are anxiety-inducing.

This has been a life verse for me. And I've realized that God is just so kind and he's so good. But he doesn't just give this teaching.

[12 : 23] He wants to give wisdom to us. He doesn't just give us good things. He wants to give wisdom to us and you're going to see it flow out of this. And he wants us to discover the liberating power of economic freedom.

And so here are the four things God wants every Christ follower. And not yet Christ follower. If you're still exploring the claims of Jesus, I want you to lean in and you're going to get a window into how good and how kind God is as we go into this.

Now, if you come back this time next week, I'll share these four things with you. Okay, I'm just being naughty. Number one, God wants to upgrade our personal asset register.

Huh. Rick, you South Africans are a bit strange. It's worse than that. We're crazy. God wants to upgrade our personal asset register.

Look what he says. But godliness with contentment is great gain. For you brought nothing in. You're taking nothing out.

[13 : 34] You've never seen a hearse with a trailer. But if you have food and clothing, we'll be content with that. Too often we forget to affirm all the good things we have.

Too busy perusing on the stuff we don't have. Do you ever get those calls? I was in the car with Jesse. And I think in one trip he had like three calls. Those guys who seemed to know him incredibly.

But on the phone it says telemarketer. And you know what's coming. I get those in Cape Town. It just drives me crazy. I pick up the phone and I say, Hi, Rigby Wallace here.

Oh, hello Rigby. How are you doing today? And then I know the pitch is coming. And whether that's in telemarketing or whether it's on television, all the ads, there's a very subtle thing going on.

People are, this whole strategy trades in discontent. It's shouting and screaming to us that what you are living with right now is inadequate.

[14 : 42] I went into a banking hall room the other day and there's this big beautiful picture of a person lying on a lilo with a martini in their hand and palm trees and beaches and everything.

And underneath is written, Treat yourself to the holiday you deserve. I just was so amazed that they knew what I deserved. They really, they really.

But this is what advertisers do. They rob us of our self-respect and our contentment and then they sell it back to us at the price of the product. And folk, that is a global phenomena.

Here in America, it just gets perfected. I was just trying to watch the golf. I'm a golfer. The number of interruptions I get with ads, I want to protest them. I want to say it's ridiculous.

But I mean, that's how these TV stations, you know, pay the bills and all that. So I get it. So I just want to, I want us to be so careful about this thing called comparison.

[15 : 43] Jonathan Edwards years ago, as an 18 year old, preaches this message in New England on Christian happiness. And he spoke on three reasons why every Christian can be completely happy and content.

Are you ready for this? Number one, all your bad things in this life will turn out for good. If you're a follower of Jesus, all your bad things will turn out for good.

If God is with you, then as Romans 8 28 says, he will find a way to walk with you through them, the bad things, so that even the bad things will in many ways have good effects in your life and in your heart.

I'll say some of you guys in this room today are walking through some bad things, some really challenging things. I want to just eyeball you and I want to say to you with fatherly love and affection based on this verse, God is with you in this and he can turn that stuff for good if you trust him.

Second, your good things can't be taken away from you. What good things? Well, you're adopted into the family of God if you're a son or daughter. The Holy Spirit has been put into your life and is eventually going to transform you into a being so glorious, something far greater than your aspirations or anything you can even imagine you will be.

[17 : 09] Your sanctification, glorification, some of my paraphrase coming in here, can't be taken away from you ever. It's yours forever.

You can't lose it. And thirdly, the best things are still to come. So when Paul says, when I see imminent death, torture, 39 lashes, imprisonment, it doesn't bother me in 2 Corinthians 11.

Why? Because even an early tragic and painful death is not ultimate. Eventually, you're going to be transformed into a being so glorious, et cetera, beyond anything that you can imagine.

Eyes not seen, ears not heard, what God has prepared in advance for those that love him. And you will live forever with God in a new heavens and a new earth.

Our little brief time down on this planet is like a burp against the backdrop of eternity. So the big point here on this first thing is you're richer right now than you could ever imagine.

[18 : 19] You have been justified and in the mind of God, you've already been glorified. Bank it! You are his. And no ultimate evil has the last word in your life.

The second thing God wants for you is what God wants to protect us from being trapped in the wrong cycles. This is his wisdom to whether you're on the high scale of income or lower scale. It's for everyone. And I want you to see his fatherly care coming through here. He says, those who want to get rich, dad's getting nervous. fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires.

Now, desires are God-given things. We create it to desire. We have got all kinds of appetites and those things within the riverbanks of God's wisdom and will are beautiful gifts of our good, good father.

But those whose, those natural desires, God-given desires, when they become disordered, when the desires turn our hearts out of control, turn our hearts into idle factories.

[19 : 31] John Calvin spoke about that our hearts are idle factories. We make of many of the good things that God gives us, we make them into God things, small g, ultimate things, like, if I lose this, I'll die.

And it's not true. And so, I want you to see that this New Testament passage seems to know some things about what we're contending with, how we steward our desires that we don't know.

And he says that the downside is it plunges people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, and we're not getting into that.

Some people, eager for money, have even wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. So, question. This is a little bit of an interaction with us, a little bit of fun, okay?

I'm hoping I'm going to crack the nod to be invited back. but, this is going to be, you don't, nobody puts hands up, but here's the question we're going to answer. Is it possible to be under money's power and not know it?

[20 : 46] Hmm. Okay. closer to home. How would you know if you're under money's power? I'm glad you've asked this question. Five ways you could know it.

Number one, you're under money's power if you're talking about it all the time. Jesus said, out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks.

It's a dead giveaway. So, now, be kind to each other. Mom, Dad, it's Father's Day. Let him off the hook. Don't go to him and say on Father's Day, you talk too much about money. But, it's a good thing to audit in our hearts.

Would you agree with that? Okay. Secondly, when we exaggerate its power, have you ever, man, if we just earned \$10,000 a year more, our lives would be absolutely incredible.

and, you know, the jury was out. Now, the jury's back in and the jury says, your life will not be any better than it was that if you were earning, I think the figure used to be like \$40,000 a year.

[21 : 56] You know, I'm not making a science of that, but this notion to keep pushing what we need to be happy. It's wonderful if you earn 10 times that per month.

That's not the issue. The issue is we exaggerate money's power to secure our happiness. Thirdly, you could be under the power of money when it controls your choices.

It's like, like, I got this new little iPad and then I wanted to get the little tarpy thing that goes with it. What do you call it? A keyboard. Yeah, yeah. Okay, I'm dating myself.

Okay. And Jesse helped me to get my nice little thing because it's half price here versus, and I just think it's cool. But you know what? The moment I looked at it, I got this little bit of panic attack around, I should have got the one with the tracking pad because I think I'm deprived.

Honestly, why did I settle for this one for like just like \$30 more? I could have had the track pad.

That's the, we exaggerate, it's power. It can't make you happier and it shouldn't control up.

[23 : 05] I actually am so glad I just got what I needed that I didn't go silly and flirt with all the extras. But if anybody wants to give me the upgraded version, I'm happy to receive that from you.

That is properly a joke because the whole talk is about what God wants for us, not from us. And here's the fourth one. Very, how do you know you're under the power of money?

when it starts to define our identity. 1929, you know the story, here on Wall Street, stock exchange crashes.

One day, stock exchange crashed by 12% on the Monday. On the Tuesday, it crashes by another 13%. Pension funds, people's, you know, financial worth, acid base just plummets and the rest of the week it keeps going down.

And then there was those tragic stories of people jumping out of buildings. Why? Because they confuse their net worth with their actual worth.

[24 : 19] Identity starts to be shaped by what you own, what you have, where you've been, what you drive. Folk, identity that is outsourced to culture or the business world or identity that is insourced to me feeling responsible to self-generate who I am is dangerous.

The only identity that we should be giving ourselves to the one that's been outsourced to Christ in Jesus, God has adopted us, made us his own outside of what we own.

And the last reason, last evidence of being under the trap of money, we experience overwhelming loss when we give it away.

It's like grief. And I want to free us today. I want you to understand it's not. It may be that the default setting is stinginess of the heart.

I've come to understand I don't think it's always there. I think it's fear. We're afraid that if it's not under our control, wow, we're in trouble.

[25 : 36] And God wants to break that off us because if you can't trust your good, good father and what that does is when we're able to release it, it's a wonderful thing. But I'm not nudging you toward releasing, I'm actually wanting you to see how trustworthy God is.

So the big point is we're more vulnerable than we realize. So number one, God wants to upgrade our asset base. Number two, he wants to help us to escape the money trap.

And the three ways that Paul goes on, we don't have time to get into it all, is the first way to escape it is start to understand what contentment looks like. Godliness with contentment is great gain, the Greek word for great gain there is mega wealth.

It's like there's no money that can buy mega wealth. This is ultimate wealth. And you and I can be mega happy when we discover what it means to be content.

And that's a whole sermon series on how to develop contentment. We've done some of that in our own home base. Paul, who's written to Timothy, writing to Timothy, also writes to the Philippians and he says, I know how to be in want.

[26 : 55] He says, I can live with seasons where it's not all easy like we're living now. And he says, and I know how to have plenty. Between those two poles, he says, I've learned the secret of being content, whether I've got a little or whether I've got a lot.

I've learned the secret of being content. Now I'm going to blow some bubbles here. What's the secret to being content? I'm so glad you've asked this question.

He's learned the secret. What's the secret? I can do all things through Jesus Christ who strengthens me. That's not a fridge magnet scripture that you quote when you're about to write, do your driver's license or write an exam or think I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

No, no. The application is we can live a life of contentment because we are indwelt by the most faithful, beautiful, wonderful, covenant-keeping God.

Second way to break the money trap is through understanding of grace. Was it Martin Luther who said, by all means get the gospel into your people, but if needs be, beat it into them.

[28 : 14] What he's trying to say is there's this gap between what we say we believe and how we behave and God's trying to say to us, oh, my grace is sufficient for you.

When you understand grace, you're not having economic panic attacks. He wants us to know that we brought nothing into the world and we're not taking anything out of the world and everything else to resolve our inner anxieties of fig leaves.

When Jesus died on the cross, he was naked so that he could clothe us with his covenant faithfulness and favor. he became vulnerable and defenseless on the cross that we can be secured and anchored by his covenant grace and goodness.

And the third way to beat this money trap, and we'll do the last two quite quickly, the third way we beat the money trap is through learning the discipline of simplicity.

Listen to what Paul says. If you have food and clothing, be content with that. That's the danger of finding a verse and saying, here's the proof text for what we really need, just food and clothing.

[29 : 40] Are you happy with that? Does that really excite you on Father's Day? Just food, just clothing. Now Paul's just saying, I want you to set your heart, whether it's food and clothing and a car, 21st century.

Where is food and clothing and a house? The issue is, avoid the law that says you need bigger, better, faster all the time.

Start to settle down and realize your happiness is not at stake around, just be content with less and live a little simply. What's he saying? Because the next minute he says in verse 18, if you are rich, then be rich in good deeds.

So there are people who got more than food and clothing. So you can't camp at the one pole, you've got to see the totality of this God who gives us everything for our enjoyment.

So here's what Paul is saying. Paul is saying actually in your heart, no matter where you live or where you are on the socioeconomic scale, never let luxuries become necessities.

[30 : 47] Enjoy the luxuries, they come, but they are not the things that are going to secure your happiness. And sometimes it's about I want to learn the joy and the blessedness of living on less so that I can give more.

Okay, third thing God wants for us, he wants a higher maturity for us as good stewards of his blessings. I want you to see it's so clear there he's addressing immaturity.

I'm going to show you what immaturity looks like. Are you ready? Command those that are rich in this world not to be arrogant. Arrogance. That's immature.

People who think that they're better than others. I've got a group of influencers that key people that influence stuff in our city and in business and I started a group for these men called the Influences Forum and every week I would say, guys, I just want to remind you, you're not better than anyone. Over and over and over because everybody tells them they are better than everyone. In the business place they get the parking bays, the hierarchy, the fringe benefits, all of that stuff. They feel so entitled.

[31 : 54] The gospel serves notice on that and says, stop being so arrogant. You jerk. It doesn't say jerk, I just added that for effect. Do you say jerk in your country? Okay.

For the sake of the recording, my name is Jesse Kinzer. He says, not to be arrogant, second mark of immaturity, nor to put their hope in wealth.

He's coming back to that again. Stop believing the lie. Don't put your hope in wealth. So immature people are arrogant, feeling entitled, and just bigger, better, faster all the time because they think it's going to secure them their happiness in uncertain times that we're living in.

We need to get a little bit more of this. And what's the opposite of that, which looks like maturity?

And he says, don't put your hope in wealth, which is so uncertain. Suddenly we're seeing the uncertainty side, interest rates going through the oil prices, war in Ukraine.

Where does it end? Reserve banks just pushed your rates up, and then we get pneumonia down south from your little cold you get over here. Okay. Thanks for that person who laughed at my joke rather back there.

[33 : 21] He says, put your hope in God. Don't put your hope in wealth. Maturity is a God-centered, God-focused, God-dependent life.

Put your hope in God who richly, richly provides us with everything for enjoyment. Now some of you think you need a Porsche.

You know what some of us need? We need to go for a walk and smell the fragrance of some flowers. Just don't go walk near Jesse's place where there are rottweilers. That was dangerous.

I'm having this great fellowship time with the Lord. And this, anyway, I don't want to get started. No, no. When we move from being arrogant and hoping in wealth to being humble and hoping in God, we start to experience everything as a gift of God's grace.

It is so freeing. You celebrate the all of life way more beautifully. We start to learn to give at the levels the Bible calls us to give. Because we're not afraid anymore.

[34 : 30] Our hope is in God, who richly provides us. We're not thinking that our God has a scarcity problem. We don't project onto God the uncertainties of this world and we don't dilute God's goodness because the world has changed.

Yes, we live in this world and we'll get a few little bumps and scratches along the way. I love that thing where Paul writes to the Ephesians and you know what's happened in chapter 4.

He's addressing probably slaves that have come to faith and then Paul says this which is remarkable. He said, let them who steal, that's how they survived.

They steal. They were dishonest. They come to faith in Jesus. Let those who steal no longer steal. Let them work with their hands that they can pay their own bills.

no, it doesn't say that. Let them work with their hands that these new gospel defined sons and daughters will put their shoulders back and evidence the fact that they are transformed by grace and are now occupied by the operating system of heaven.

[35 : 49] Grace 1.0. There's no 2.0, there's no 3.0, it's never needed any updates. It is perfect. He says, let those who steal no longer steal.

Let them work with their hand that they may have something to share. What I want you to see the miracle here is God is not primarily wanting to be our great need meter. The greater need is to be transformed so that our lives start to express gospel grace, that we begin to see the grace of God. And Paul goes way beyond. Yes, of course God wants to pay the bills and help us get through that. He wants you right up front, brand new Christian, I want you to know that every salary check, every dividend, anything you get, I want you to learn to release it to me.

I want you to others. The big point is right now, every one of us are either moving forwards or backwards. You can be saved and have this gap growing in your life between what you believe and how you behave.

What God's wanting to do is rescue us. Hang on, you don't have to be afraid. Grace is flowing and I want you to learn to express it because that is a mark of maturity. Let me give it to you.

[37 : 03] The ultimate mark of maturity is when more grace flows through you than to you. And it's amazing, Paul's arguing that for a brand new Christian, brand new Christians in the church.

Last point, last point, am I doing okay on time here? The pastor always says that to the visiting preacher. But are you guys feeling you got like root canal treatment now? Is this difficult to listen? Because the last point is I think the clincher. That's really helpful. All of them are very important. But this fourth quote is God wants to share a really hot investment tip with us.

God wants to invest us to invest offshore to secure the best possible returns. There's no need here. There's no project that the church is marketing.

This is about how we relate to God in times of uncertainty. God wants us to know as in the future we start to respond to gospel projects and all that kind of thing.

[37 : 59] This will help us. Now in South Africa, the way the global economy works, when we're in trouble, all our pension funds, they try and invest rand-based stock into either euro, pounds, or dollars.

At the moment, it's a mess because they just don't know how to actually secure value. And I think that's what God is saying when he says, command people who are economically empowered to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share, drum solo, in this way, they will lay up, say the next two words, for themselves, themselves is one word by the way, I just messed up there, they will lay up for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

I want to go back to that burp eternity illustration. Friends, we are not temporal beings in an eternal world. world. We are eternal beings in a temporal world.

This world is earmarked to be transformed, renovated, renewed into a new heavens and a new earth. And those who have been born again, who have been regenerated, who have been made new in the gospel, are right now being apprenticed in the burp for life in the eternal.

And I don't know what that all looks like. I think Paul is arguing with Timothy, if you really love those guys in the church that are economically empowered or in your cities or wherever you go, if you really care for those people, come on them to start to invest offshore.

[39 : 55] Now notice, Jesus said, don't lay treasure up for yourselves on earth where moth and rust creep in and where thieves break in and steal.

Lay up for yourselves, Jesus said. And Paul is just echoing what Jesus said. Gospel, you can bank this, Jesus said. Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven. I've heard a long, it's been a long time since I've heard people talk about laying up treasures for yourself in heaven.

It's like, oh, just let it all flow out of you. God's not really interested in you. Just suck it up. You know, be baptized in lemon. It's miserable having to be generous. You know, no, he's not doing that. He's saying, I want you to know that what you give, whether it's in an EFT or out of your wallet or an act of kindness, you cannot ever, ever, ever, ever lose what you give in Christ's name for the forward movement of the gospel.

Here's the magic. Your future returns are literally out of this world. world. This is an over-the-tough promise of God who says, in addition to blessing us with all things for our good and for his glory, God wants to convert temporal wealth, because that's what it is, temporal wealth in our hands into eternal wealth to our credit in the coming age.

because it doesn't get better than that. Let me say it again. God, in addition to blessing us with all the wonderful things we have and we're rejoicing and we thank him, all things for our enjoyment, God now wants to convert what he's put into our hands, temporal wealth, into eternal wealth with your name on it in heaven.

[41 : 58] He wants to credit. Paul writes to the Philippians, he says, it's not that I need anything from you, Philippians chapter 4, he says, I'm saying this because I want you to have this generosity where you've sowed into my life for translocal ministry.

He says, I want this to convert into something for your credit in the ages to come. And so then, the question is, how do we do that?

I'm so glad you've asked this final question. First, the default setting of learning just to do good. God is able to make all grace abound to you that you having all sufficiency at all times might just abound to every good work.

Within the river banks of what God has entrusted to you, but there's something about doing good. Use money in a way that helps the mission of Jesus in the world. Secondly, be rich in good deeds. Now, this is like, don't just throw your check at a problem. You bring some muscle to the moment. You invest yourself a little. Some of those projects of building houses and all of that, yes, thank God for the money, but sometimes being present as a person, interacting with beneficiaries, which we're learning in a toxic charity is about throwing money at things where we don't actually build the relationships with the beneficiaries.

[43 : 21] It has a personal element to it. And then finally, learn to be liberal and generous. And then he says this. This is the clangor. This is the creme de la creme.

This is like, God says, you get this right, in doing this, you'll take hold of the life that is truly life. Does this sound like God is trying to extract, or does God say, I want you to have life?

Jesus said, I want to give you life in its abundance and he's saying, I want to give you life. I want you to get life by being more like me, God is saying.

I want you to find your highest joy in doing good. I want you to experience the freedom that comes with being a means of grace to the world.

this point here. Hot investment. You can't take anything with you. You brought nothing into the world.

[44 : 20] That's obvious. But we somehow feel like when we get to the end of our life, what's going to happen? No, you can't take anything with you either. But you can send it on ahead.

And that's what gospel faithfulness calls forth in us. not because not because God is wanting to give us hoops to jump through.

It's because God is calling us to take hold of the life that is truly, truly life. So let's just wrap it up. God wants to help us in four ways.

One, upgrade your asset register. And Jesus is the most perfect example of this. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, though he was rich. For your sakes he became poor.

That you through his poverty may be rich. So that we can learn to live in gospel reenactment. We who are rich in favor and grace and new identity and new possibility start to evidence the very life of Jesus.

[45 : 24] What a beautiful gospel reenactment cycle. Secondly, God wants to protect us from those cycles and traps through teaching us grace, contentment and simplicity.

Thirdly, he wants to coach us toward maturity in intentionally saying, Lord, I want more grace to flow from me through me than just simply every prayer.

God bless me, my cat, my goldfish. Okay. And finally, he wants to help us by giving us freshly in these times of uncertainty to know that there's no political solution for the world, guys, for any of our countries.

There's no political solutions. God wants to give us an eternal offshore focus. And what I love about this passage of Scripture, it's like God is moving toward us in such kindness and tenderness.

He knows what we really, really need and he knows that all our fig leaves, human efforts aren't adequate. He sends his son and he says, there's a new possibility.

[46 : 34] We're going to go to communion now. We're going to break bread and of course, Paul writes to the Romans and says, he who spared not his own son, maybe you can grab your little wafery thing and the band's going to come up and we're going to, how many of you struggle to do these things?

Honestly, my wife says, oh, you are a gorilla. Give me that thing and does it for me and all that.

Let's just see. Oh, what do you know? I got my, no, I got the juice.

What did I do wrong? Oh, there we are. Okay, got it. Oh my dear, this is beautiful. Okay, let's aim a little higher now from just these little things.

Paul writes to the Romans and he said, he who spared not his own son. Ultimate act of generosity. How much more will he also with him, with this death of Jesus freely give us all things?

How can we be anchored in God's covenant faithfulness? Not our covenant faithfulness, his first.

He gave his own son. On the night that Jesus was betrayed, let's take the bread, took the bread and he says, this is my body broken for you.

[48 : 00] why does God put this meal at the center of our gatherings as communities of faith? Why does he put this meal over and over?

You need to hear it. God is for you. You look to the cross, he spared not his own son. Jesus said, my body broken for you. And then he takes the cup and he says, this is the new covenant in my blood which is shed for you.

Maybe you doubted whether you mattered. Maybe you knew to church trying to understand if your life has worth. You know, the raw material of God's family is the wicked.

Romans 4 or 5, Paul says, God justifies, makes righteous, wicked people. I mean, it's just mind-blowing. He does it through what he did on the cross.

He died for our sins and he was raised for our justification. So, wicked people, there's nobody better than anyone else in the room. Just Jesus is perfect and by his love we're being progressively perfected.

[49 : 09] It doesn't get better than that. And we do it together as a family. So, let's eat this broken bread which represents the broken body of Christ who says, I'm for you, whatever your name is,

hear him whisper that to you.

Let's drink from this cup, hear him say, I blood shed for you and maybe you want to turn to a person next to you and just bless them, say his body, his blood, his body broken for you, his blood shed for you and then we'll land with a song.

Let me pray first for us. God, thank you for the scandalous miracle of your grace and your goodness. Thank you that you broke into history 2,000 years ago in Jesus.

You came to fetch us, came to reach us. you came to gather us, came to secure us, you came to anchor us and you've been doing it ever since.

Thank you for the preaching of the word of God today. Won't you freshly secure us in your love? Won't you remind us of your covenant faithfulness? And as we eat this bread and drink this cup, help us to celebrate just how good and how wonderful and gracious and kind you are.

[50 : 23] I commend to you the God who is for you today as you eat this bread and drink this cup. Let's go for it.