

Spiritual Gifts

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[0 : 0 0] All right. Thanks, Alex. I don't know if they're clapping for me or clapping for you, because I was like, yeah, that was a lot of fun. You're great. So before I jump into the sermon today, I just want to have a little family moment to just recognize and celebrate some stuff that our kids in ministry has been doing and was able to do in kind of connection with Operation Christmas Child. You guys have probably noticed it over the last several weeks, how coming in, there was a table outside and you could sign up. And it's a cool little ministry that we've been able to participate and partner with over the last few years for this time. And so what kids ministry did is like, we always are falling short on postage for these things. You know, these things got to be shipped and that's got to be paid for.

And so the kids ministry folks said, you know what we can do? Get our kids participating in this and activate their little faith muscles a little bit. It's like, let's do a little coin drive so they could bring their nickels and their quarters and their pennies, I guess, whatever. And so, man, over the few weeks they did this, they raised \$86.71, which was really cool.

Yeah. Just seeing that, those little steps of faith, it's awesome. And then they threw this collection party and there was like this hot dog dinner fundraiser. And so that little event raised about \$250, a little over that, which is really cool. All that money again, going towards, yeah, the shipping costs for those shoe boxes. But the benefit of that evening was also to get the little kids in to come and experience like what happens with the shoe boxes in greater detail because they are filled with real practical needs that go to kids, you know, in, you know, less fortunate circumstance around the world. But it goes with a connection to the gospel. And it comes actually through a church on the ground where they live. And so the kids got to learn that and do that. And some of them even prayed prayers over the box as it went that God would use it. So in those kind of ways. And so it was just really cool. I think we had some pictures scrolling in the back now, not, not, maybe not, sorry, of that event. Anyways, I just wanted to once say thank you to all those involved. Jen's here. If you guys, if you want to stand, anybody that was there, help setting that event up, participating in that event. If you would just, yeah, just appreciate all that you guys did and all the help. And yeah, thank you. Yeah. And then Corey Kick was, yeah, she was the lady in charge, larger than in charge of this whole thing. She did an awesome job throughout. Those of you don't know me, my name is Jesse Kinzer. I am one of the pastors here. And those who are listening online,

I'm so glad that you're able to listen. I'm continuing on in our series, our fruitful series, which is making the most of your days. And it's actually saying, okay, all of life is, is something to be stewarded. It is a gift from God, every single part of it. And so what does God have to say about that? And so we've looked at a whole ton of things. Some of it is like stage of life stuff. Other things are just things like, what do we do with our resources? And we're going to look at something today, which is something that all of us in the room should be one aware of, but one see as a great opportunity. And so today's topic is on spiritual gifts. And I want to say this right from the get go. If you're new to church, you're here checking out Christianity. It's like, you're already made the big step of like, I'm going to hear about this Jesus. And now you're coming in and spiritual gifts, or maybe a friend brought you and they're cringing because they're like, why did this have to be the sermon today? And the one day I brought my friend, but you know, this idea of spiritual gifts, it can sound strange, but you're in good company because for most Christians, we get a little squirming around this subject if we're perfectly honest. So some of us, probably in the room, some of us have been in church long enough to have heard the spiritual gift sermon before, maybe even quite a few times. It comes up every once in a while. And so it's tempting to kind of want to check you out. I'm just like, I know where he's going to go. I know what he's going to talk about. I can kind of predict which scriptures he's going to use. Or you might be sitting there and we've gone through the spiritual gift sermon and you're like, oh man, there are things about to get really weird, right? And so we could be in one of those camps. My goal today is not to give you the how-tos or to explain every single spiritual gift in detail and how they work. My goal today is for your heart to walk out so amazed at the goodness of God and with a renewed desire or a new desire to pursue his gifts for yourself and for the benefit of the church. And so let me start with a statement that kind of borders on the obvious. There is a lot in the Christian faith that is hard to explain, right?

Jesus was born of a virgin. Like try explaining that to anybody on the street. He also was raised from the dead. Kind of hard thing to believe. He is currently seated on the throne in heaven, ruling in reigning over everything. And then one day he is going to come back and bring peace and order and renew the whole world. Something that every Miss America has tried to do but has apparently failed.

[5 : 18] The point that I'm making is that our salvation is hard to believe because there is a spiritual dimension to it, right? But, and here's a big one. It says when we're saved and what happens to us is that we go from being spiritually dead to being spiritually alive. Ephesians 2 puts it this way in verse 4, but God being rich in mercy because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses. It's another word for sin. What did he do? He made us alive together with Christ.

By grace you have been saved. So we see this death to life language here that the gospel talks about that affects us personally and impacts us and that is good news. It's good news for you and me.

Like we're ripped from the grip of death and judgment. But if you look closely, you begin to see something else. It's more than just about us that it's drawing our attention to. You see the nature of God the Father. How does it describe him? It says he is rich in mercy. What else does it say?

His great love it talks about. His great, not just love, his great love with which he loved us. See the gospel is not only what you're saved from, but also what you're saved into. And salvation for you and me means that you get to live in the Father's generosity. Now let me say this. There is a real danger to the prosperity gospel that promotes God as a cosmic butler or a genie at your beck and call to give you whatever you want when you want it. But there's a counterpart to the prosperity gospel. And I think it's also unhelpful and it's also extreme and it's also dangerous. And it's the austerity gospel.

A gospel that severely impoverishes God's true nature. It sees God as distant, demanding, uncaring, harsh. He's stingy with his mercy, with forgiveness, with his blessings. And so we can slip into this view that God gives us just enough to string us along and keep us dependent on him. And this poverty gospel holds out a God who offers us a bread line rather than a banqueting table. And yet the gospel, the Bible throughout, it paints a very different picture about who God is. It says that when we are saved, we are lavished with the Father's blessings. Look at these from Ephesians 1. Now this is a bigger passage of scripture, but just as I read it, I want you to listen just how generous the Father has been to you and to those who are saved into Christ. Ephesians 1 verse 3, blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every, can you say every? Spiritual blessing in the heavenly places. Even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love, he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons, as daughters through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has blessed us in the beloved. Talking about Jesus. In him, in Christ, we have redemption. Redemption. We are saved. We are rescued from the power of sin. We are redeemed through his blood, which is the forgiveness of our trespasses, our sins, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight, making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ, as a plan for the fullness of time to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. That is a majestic passage on the Father's lavish generosity towards us. Look at what it says. What we have in Christ. He gives us every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms. He adopts us. We are chosen by the Father. He bought us out of captivity to sin. He bought us out of sin's power over us by Jesus's blood. We are forgiven of our guilt for our sins by Jesus's blood, which means we are released from the punishment of our sin by Jesus's blood. And this is a pretty awesome and impressive list that Paul's laid out for us, but he's not even finished yet. In verse 11, it goes on to say this, in him, again, in Christ, we have obtained an inheritance.

[10:38] If you're in Christ, you have an inheritance, a rich inheritance from a generous father, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory in him, in Christ, you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, listen up, what happened? You were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit. Now, everybody should be jumping up and down and going, ah! Who's this Holy Spirit? Verse 14, he is the guarantee, the NIV says down payment of that inheritance until we acquire possession of it to the praise of his glory. So, Paul is telling us, in Christ, you have an inheritance. You have obtained an inheritance, kind of. And in verse 14, it says, we haven't quite acquired full possession of this inheritance just yet, but we have received this guarantee. We have received this down payment. So, how do we do that?

How does this inheritance come to us partially? How is it partially experienced and realized in our lives today, right now, in our life? Well, we have to go back to verse 13, in him, in Christ, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel, and believed it, you were sealed, sealed with the promised Holy Spirit. There it is. That down payment isn't a money, isn't money. It's not an asset. It is God himself. We are sealed with the Spirit. And if you're not blown away by this yet, I hope to change your mind. This sealing is more amazing than we might realize at first. See, in the ancient world, a person of authority, like a king, would make edicts and ordinations. And he would seal those things. He would ordain certain things, and he would seal them by pressing a signet ring into wax.

And this signet ring would leave an imprint of an image unique to that king. And that image would represent that king. And anything signed and sealed was irrevocable. It couldn't be undone, even by the king himself. You know, it's an interesting story. If you've been raised in church, there's a story of Daniel and the lion's den. And if you don't know that story, you're new to church. Basically, Daniel is this guy that believes God, and he prays a lot, and he's in a foreign land called Babylon. And these guys, they don't like Daniel because he is, like, doing really well, and they're jealous of him and his favor with the king. And so they say, how can we get Daniel in trouble? And so they go to the king, and they say, hey, king, we have this little idea. What if for 30 days you make this edict that is irrevocable, and you say that anybody who prays to any other god except for you needs to die?

And so the king says in his pride, he says, well, that's a pretty good idea. I like that, you know? And so he does that, and then they find Daniel doing what Daniel does. Daniel played three times a day, and they said, busted, gotcha. And so the king woefully, because he loved Daniel, he said, man, I got to keep to my edict, even though I don't want to do this, and I got to throw you in the lion's den. So they throw Daniel in the lion's den, and then look what happens.

And a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet, and with the signet of his lords, and that nothing might be changed concerning Daniel.

[14 : 34] There it is. Now, here is the beauty of the rest of this story. We're going to get to how this correlates to the sealing of the spirit in a moment. Now, in this moment, this edict, it looks impossible. Like the king couldn't even change it, right? It was like lights out for Daniel, but it was overcome by Daniel experiencing a kind of resurrection. He goes into a lion's den, and a stone is rolled over the entrance. He is put in there. He is done for, right? By all means, he was dead, but God comes, and he shut the lion's mouth. He was not consumed.

Now, here is the gospel correlation. Jesus did the same thing. He was not consumed by death and the grave either, because Jesus rose from the dead and conquered the grave. And so, because of that, the old seal of the law was broken, and we now live under a new and better seal. And everything God has said over us in Christ, every promise he has made to us in Christ is assured and irrevocable because of that sealing of the spirit. In one sense, it means this seal is upon everyone through faith in Christ. In another sense, it means the spirit won't leave you. He is with you. He is dwelling in you. And all those things are amazing, and all those things are important. But here is another incredible thought about this. This new and better seal, the Holy Spirit, he is alive, and he is at work in us, which means the Father's generosity is experienced through the Holy Spirit. And if you're skeptical, how come I can't say that word? If you're skeptical about this, let me appeal to the authority of Scripture. Ephesians 3.14 says this, for this reason, I bow, this is Paul praying, he's saying, hey, Ephesians church, this is how I pray for you guys. I bow my knee before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of his glory, he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his spirit in your inner being. So, Paul is praying for these

Christians in Ephesus, and he prays to the Father. Is he praying that, man, Lord, make their lives so much better, make them wealthy? No, he says, he prays that the Father, from his abundant storehouse of glory, that he would generously strengthen their inner being. And then Paul connects some important dots for them. He says, the Father's strengthening grace. That grace comes through the Holy Spirit.

That thing that we are sealed with. And what does that mean? The Holy Spirit's role in our lives, the Holy Spirit's role in your salvation and my salvation, is to communicate the Father's grace to us. And here is how that works itself out. In the very next verse, 17, it says, so that, all this strengthening stuff through the Holy Spirit, why do we need it? So that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, that you being rooted and grounded in love may have strength, there's that word again, for what? To comprehend with all the saints, all who have been saved in Christ, what is the breadth, and the length, and the height, and the depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge.

Why? What does that do that you may be filled with all the fullness of God? The wording here is absolutely elegant. It is telling us what the Holy Spirit does. He infuses us with divine power, a heavenly power, a strength beyond our own strength, an ability beyond our own, and he brings it into the depths of our beings. And he fills us with that power. And with that power, with this power alone, we are able to comprehend the immeasurable love of Christ and what that means. And the more we dwell in him and he in us, the more we are filled with the fullness of God. And with that phrase, being filled with the fullness of God, it's less about measure and it's more about completion. It's more in a sense of we're going to be so filled with the fullness of God, we will be lacking nothing.

[19 : 11] See, the measure and fullness of God's love, man, it is so unfathomable. It is so immeasurable that you will be surprised and delighted with every new experience of it. And that is the beauty that we have in Christ. That is why we are called to abide in him and he abide in us. You can't live off one hit of that one day. It's just like, it is so immeasurable. It's going to keep flooding into your life and flooding into your life and flooding into your life. Now, I want to say that we are talking about things that are pretty high and lofty here, right? I mean, it is, we have these finite mortal minds and we are trying to comprehend an infinite and eternal God. I mean, that's a part of like, it's both the majesty of the passage we just read, but also the difficulty to try to parse it out and fully comprehend it.

But think about this, man. Try to fully grasp how God could always exist as uncreated before time, right? Like, think about that. So before there was anything, there was God. And then you kind of think about, well, what did that look like? So God just always kind of existed and you want to go back and you want to try to pose some kind of starting point because our brain needs to do that.

It makes sense to us. And yet we can't get there because God says, hey, guess what? I've always been, right? And then try to grasp the idea of a God so immeasurable that like everything has their existence in him. Like he permeates the whole universe as large as the universe is, but guess what? It's all contained within his person. As big and infinite as the universe is, God's even bigger.

I mean, try to wrap you, at some point you just start getting mind cramps, right? That's what happens. And thankfully, our relationship with God and being filled with his fullness doesn't end where our brains start cramping, right? This knowing him, like it's a pursuit in knowledge and trying to wrap our minds and be wowed by the majesty of those great truths. But this knowing is also a kind of knowledge that comes from intimate union. It comes from experience with him. It's the taste and the touch and all those things. Taste and see that I am good. And this is what it means to live in the Father's generosity. We live with the Holy Spirit dwelling in us, filling us, communicating the richness of God's grace to us. And all of this, what it does, it strengthens us in our inner being. It makes us strong.

It brings us vitality. That's what verse 16 is getting at. But this begs another question. What do we need all this strength for? I mean, I don't need strength in order to receive my wife's love. Well, maybe sometimes I do. But God wants us to be strengthened for a reason that goes beyond us.

[22 : 08] Verse 20, a few short verses after what we just read, it says this, Now to him, he was able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think according to the power at work within us. It's talking about the Holy Spirit there. To him, the Father, be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations forever and ever. Amen. And then it says, I therefore, now because of all that I just said, everything that I said about with being strengthened by the Holy Spirit, strengthened by his power and everything that we have in Christ, I therefore, Paul, as a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called. So the Holy Spirit, in one sense, is how we experience living in the Father's generosity. It's amazing, but it is married to something else. The Holy Spirit empowers us to live out the Father's generosity. And as he do that, by giving us spiritual gifts. There's an indivisible correlation here. The more that you dwell in the Father's generosity through the Holy Spirit, the more you will live it out. See, the Father's generosity, it is an activator. That grace that comes to you, the Holy Spirit that communicates that to you, it's an activating thing.

It's catalytic towards ministering his grace to others. And just a few verses down from what we just finished reading in Ephesians 4, 7 to 12, it goes on to talk about these gifts that Jesus gave to his church after he ascended into heaven. And it also goes on to talk about why he did that, right? He did that for the purpose for all the saints to be equipped to do the work of ministry. Not just some people, everybody. If you are in Christ, these gifts come to the church that you can be equipped to do the work of ministry. And ministry is a word that simply means serving. You can do the work of serving according to the purpose that God has established for his church to do. So we can't just stop at the Holy Spirit is this gift for me that I just like it to just sit in his presence and enjoy him and get the good feels. And I'm not, I'm not poo-pooing that. I'm not saying that's the wrong thing, but it's, it's, it's that, but it's way more than that. Yes, he is the gift that proceeds from Jesus. Yes, he is the gift that proceeds from the Father, but he is the gift who comes bearing many gifts. And here is why. 1 Corinthians 12, 4 to 11. And you're like, oh, finally we got to the, the gift passage. There it is. Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same spirit. There are varieties of service, but the same Lord. And there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all and everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the spirit for the common good. For to one is given through the spirit, the utterance of wisdom. And to another, the utterance of knowledge, according to the same spirit. To another, faith by the same spirit. To another, gifts of healing by the one spirit. To another, working of miracles. To another, prophecy. To another, the ability to distinguish between spirits. To another, various kinds of tongues. To another, the interpretation of tongues. All these are empowered by one and the same spirit who apportions to each one individually as he wills. Now, I just want to say this before we go any further. In the church world, there is debate about which of these gifts are still in operation and which aren't. And I want to acknowledge that there are really good people, really faithful people who are all going to heaven on both sides. Okay? All right? But I want to say this to you. Our church believes the spiritual gifts haven't stopped. That is where we stand. We also acknowledge that these gifts can be misused and cause damage when used selfishly. I don't know what your kids are like, but mine don't like to share the gifts that they are given. Especially the ones they really like. Or they misuse their gifts, like hanging on their soccer goal and it breaks. You're just like, yeah, that wasn't monkey bars.

That was a soccer ball. That was a soccer goal. But here's the thing. My wife and I, we don't blame the gifts and stop giving them. We teach our kids how to use them correctly. And to share them with generous and kind hearts. So when they do that, the gift becomes a blessing. Both to them, but also to a friend and a sibling. To those around them. Which is the point of the spiritual gifts. It says in verse seven, they are for the common good. Right? They're not there to build your platform. They're not there to build your profile. They are there for the common good. Who's that? Well, that is the church. That is the people around us. So how do they do that? How do they benefit the common good? Well, these gifts, we have to realize, are how God extends his grace to us through us. Okay? These gifts are how God extends his grace to us and through us. And here, we have to take a quick pause for a necessary study in Greek. And I promise you, it'll be fun. And we will hopefully walk away more stirred in our faith than our minds being wowed. So throughout the New Testament, there's this Greek word, which is translated grace. And it always talks about, it's always in reference to God. And it's this word charis. C-H-A-R-I-S. And it's a word that refers to God's unmerited favor, his unmerited kindness towards us by which we are saved. Now, what is interesting is that word is a picture of a master or someone in authority extending himself in kindness towards his inferiors or his servants.

literally the word means to lean toward, right? Leaning towards somebody with blessing. Now, that is pretty incredible. That picture is a pretty incredible thought when we think about salvation as God's grace to us, right? But what is fascinating for our subject today is that the Greek word translated as spiritual gifts is charismas. So it's the same root word, C-H-A-R-I-S.

And then they add a little mass on the end. It's the same thing. And it literally means gifts of grace. So how does God do charis toward us? How does he extend himself in kindness and love and blessing into our lives with unmerited favor? Through his charismas, through his spiritual gifts.

[29 : 09] It's his grace flowing to us, through us, to one another. So when we gather together and we're coming with a gift and a spiritual gift that this passage says the Holy Spirit has a portion individually as he wills, right? And these variety of gifts and we're operating them, what happens?

Well, we get to feast together on more of God's grace. There's more of his grace flowing in us and threw us into the room. Think about this. We all just had Thanksgiving, right? Some of us, we probably had some big family get-togethers, my family get-togethers. They were epic. I love Thanksgiving and I love Christmas. We always went to my grandma's and my mom's, my grandma Vanderhoof, my grandpa Vanderhoof. We'd go there, aunts, uncles, cousins. I mean, it was a party. But you know what made it extra special? It was that everybody brought their best dish, okay? Like my grandma, she had the turkey nailed down. Like the best turkey in the world. And somebody would bring green bean casserole, which was amazing. My one aunt, she had these like, we called them once a year rolls because the only time we ever ate them was on Thanksgiving and they were the most amazing rolls. She had to literally bake like, like for every single one of us kids, just like, they're probably going to eat 10. So I have to account for 10 for each kid. You know, I mean, we would get down on those things like you couldn't believe. And then the mashed potatoes and the, you know, on and on it goes. But everyone brought their best dish. And what did that mean? Is when we sat down to eat and we feasted, we got the best food.

And we feasted well. And we feasted lavishly. And you know what? There was more than enough, always. Think about that. That is the idea that we get. When we come together, we have an opportunity to not stand in a bread line, receiving something from one person. And as a grace coming through one person, we have a chance for as we come together using the spiritual gifts that the father has a banqueting table for us. When we come together, his gifts and his grace through you to others.

But this requires a shift of thinking for what our gatherings are supposed to be about, right? We usually just come to receive. But what if we showed up not just to receive, but also, Lord, how can you use me? Right? We show up thinking, Holy Spirit, I just want to discern what you're doing in me and around me so that I can be blessed, but also be a blessing to others. Now I want to say this.

Going back to that passage in 1 Corinthians 12, we read, we talked about the varieties of service and the varieties of activities. And we look at those things and we say yes and amen to those things, right? Man, we'll come to serve in hospitality. We'll show up for kids' ministry, music, and media. And those things are good. And we should do those things. And they count. And they, like a lot of grace flows through that. And God delights in that. But it is only two of the three things mentioned in that passage. We often forget about the first one, the varieties of gifts.

[32 : 25] Now you might be thinking, Jesse, you're saying that you'd like to see people have words of wisdom, knowledge, prophecy, miracles, healing when we gather. And I'm saying yes. Why? Because my theology convinces me that God wants to manifest his goodness and bless his children through his spiritual gifts.

gifts. The gifts are how God goes public with himself. How he shows his glory. How he shows his care and his kindness and his love and his goodness, right? They're one of the ways that we experience that. Now, how that gets worked out in the service, that may raise a lot of questions for you. It may make you nervous or it may make you excited. And I'm not suggesting that everything's going to be turned into open mic night and it's just like shout your little moment from wherever you're sitting at.

No, no, no. God is a God of order. He's not a God of chaos. Our job as elders isn't to manufacture God's presence in a meeting. That's nobody's job. Only God can do that. We can't manufacture it.

We can't create it. But what we can do and what we are called to do is we're called to steward it. Now, the question for us is how can we all move forward together in this pursuit without losing the plot? Which can happen? The Corinthian church is proof at how you can be passionate for the gifts and that go terribly wrong. In one sense, it's on us to encourage you and to provoke you and to stir you up and explain how the different gifts work in these various environments and to give room for them but also maintaining order at the same time. But it's also on you to study up on these things and to seek them for yourself. 1 Corinthians 14 verse 1, it says, Paul says, pursue love and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts. The Father wants us to eagerly desire and ask for his spiritual gifts.

You know, in Luke 11, Jesus was teaching his disciples how to pray. And in that lesson, he also taught them persevere in prayer. Your prayer needs some perseverance. In fact, he uses the analogy, you got to ask, you got to seek, you got to knock. But this persistence speaks more to the spiritual need in and around us, what we're asking and seeking and knocking. And look at the example Jesus uses. Verse 5, and he said to them, which of you has a friend, which of you who has a friend will go to him and at midnight say to him, friend, lend me three loaves, for a friend of mine has arrived on a journey and I have nothing to set before him. And he will answer from within, do not bother me, the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed. I cannot get up and give you anything. I tell you, though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, but because of his impudence, he will rise and give him whatever he needs. So notice why this man is persistent. He is aware of the needs of his friends. He doesn't have the ability to meet their needs with his own resources, but he knows someone who has what his friends need. That's what's happening.

[35 : 37] That's what's happening. And take this as a mark of maturity and Christ likeness. When you both see the need and are moved with a deep desire to see those needs met. Now, spiritually, we are all in need of more of God's grace. We are, all of us, me included. We are both the persistent man asking for bread, and we are the hungry friends needing bread. But you know what? God is always the bread supplier.

He always is. And you know what? He loves to do that. Why? Because he is a generous father full of lavish grace. So then it logically follows that eagerly pursuing the gifts is eagerly pursuing the father's generosity for others and for the common good of the church. And this all comes back, whether you're going to do this or not, this all comes back to who you believe the father to be and your understanding of the father. Does he generously and lavishly extend himself to his children and through his children or not? And the other question is, are you one of them?

As the band comes up and we seek to respond, I want to say to those who are in the room, maybe hearing this, maybe you're not yet a follower of Jesus. The father, I want to say this to you, the father doesn't come to save perfect people. He came for the needy. He came for the broken. He came for the sinful. He came for the helpless. And if you are becoming aware of that in your heart, man, I am the needy.

I am the sinful. I am the helpless. I want to say to you, Jesus is your only hope. He is your only answer. Your hope for salvation lies in the generosity of the father who sent his only son to die for your son.

And in a moment, there's going to be opportunity for you to respond. There's going to be a prayer for you to pray up on the screen. And I want to encourage you to pray that and receive the lavish love of the father through Jesus Christ. Now, if you're here and you're already a follower of Jesus, there are two offers of God's generosity to partake of today. One offer is communion, which we're going to take in a moment.

[38 : 03] And this is a meal in which we feast on the sign of the father's lavish generosity towards us. He so loved us that he sent his only son to die in our place so that we could become his sons and his daughters. Because of that, we get to feast on the bread of heaven and live. So that's offer number one.

And here's the other offer. Because I want to invite you to stand and join me in asking to be filled with the fullness of God. Ephesians 3 passage says, to be filled with the fullness of God. Do you want more of the spirit by which you can know and experience the father's lavish generosity? Do you want more of the spirit who is the seal, the assurance of your salvation? Do you want the spirit's gifts so the father's grace can flow in greater measure in you and through you to bless those around you? And if you're in that place, would you stand with me just as a sign of your earnest desire for these things?

And I want to say this and encourage you, you know, I think there's like postures that our bodies can take that helps our hearts. And I know when I'm looking for something or somebody's going to place something into my hands, I kind of open them up, open up my arms to receive them. And so if you got faith for that, I'm not saying you have to do that. And I'm not even saying if you don't do that, God's not going to do something, but it could help our hearts. And so I'm not saying you got to do this, but if you're comfortable with this or you're comfortable with this, or if you're comfortable with this, or if you're comfortable with this, whatever it is, go for it. But I just want to give us a moment to just quietly for you ask, seek, and knock. Lay a hold of the throne of heaven, that throne room of grace, that throne where Jesus Christ sits as King.

who has sent the Spirit to us, where the Father is, who has sent the Spirit to us, who lavishes us with great grace, and come and say, Lord, I want more of this Holy Spirit. Father, give us more of this Holy Spirit.

Lord, Thank you.

[41 : 05] Thank you.

But we ask because you're a good father and you're a generous father. Jesus said, good fathers on earth, they know how to give good gifts to their children.

How much more will the father give the spirit to those who ask? And so we're coming and we just want to lay a hold of heaven. We want to say more, we need more of you, Holy Spirit.

We are these hungry friends that need bread and we are the friend of those friends who is without. And Lord, we know that those around us are also hungry in need of this bread.

They're in need of more of your grace. We're all in that place. And so we need that. We want more of you, Spirit. We want more of you, Spirit, not to be braggadocious as believers to say, oh, we got something that you don't have and better than you.

[42 : 24] But because we want to live out this life in a way that is a blessing towards others. We want to see the people to our right and our left and ahead and behind.

So we just want to see those in our family and our neighbors and our friends, those people in our work. We want to see them, we want to see your grace, your very self, your very presence extended to them through us, through these gifts that you have promised us that come through the Holy Spirit.

So we want all of that. Lord, we want all of that. We don't want to live in an impoverished gospel. We want to live in the fullness of the gospel. We don't want to seek after health and wealth.

We just want all of the grace that you have for us. That we may be filled with the fullness of God. We want to be filled with the fullness of God.

We need that for ourselves. And we need that for the sake of others. That you might be glorified. That your work in them might be brought to completion.

[43 : 34] Help us to stay hungry for this, Lord. I just pray this wouldn't be just one moment. Pray that we would go home and we would remember, oh yeah, ask, seek, and knock. I pray we would wake up tomorrow hungry again for more bread.

For our souls. We would go and we would say, oh Lord, more of you. Spirit, more of you. Fill me. Stir in me the spiritual gifts. Cry out for them.

Amen. Amen. Amen.