Three Marks of a Healthy Church — Delivery Transcript

Colossians 3:15–17 (CSB) · Wes Terry · Sunday, April 28, 2024 · *Christ Our Hope*

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One of the big reasons why people reject Christianity, according to a lot of studies, most recently by Barna, is the lives of individual Christians. I think to themselves, You say I need this to be saved. You say I need this in order to have peace and happiness in life. But I look at your life. I don't see any peace. I don't see any happiness, and I don't see any transformation whatsoever. So whatever it is that you have, I don't think I need it or want it. And it's a sad reality for many skeptics today that what they see in front of them by professing believers is a far cry from the type of formation that the gospel says it will form and create when rightly understood and embraced.

So one of the things we got to ask ourselves this morning is if I believe that what I believe is true and if I believe that I'm rightly related and reconciled to God then is what I believe actually changing my life? Is my life any different as a result of believing it? And if it isn't, then am I believing the wrong things? And that's really something the New Testament talks about, especially after the Gospels. The way I break down the Bible, I break it into thirds. The Old Testament points to or prophesies about the reality of Christ.

The New Testament Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and maybe even Acts, if you think about it, explains or exposits the reality of Christ. And then all the letters in the New Testament, from Romans all the way to the end, apply the reality of Christ. And one of the things that the New Testament kind of makes clear is that if you truly believe in Christ and if you've been raised with Christ and you died in Christ and you're going to appear again with Christ, then your life is going to become characteristic of the life of Jesus Christ.

Our union with Christ will transform the way we live. And when I was growing up—I say when I was growing up, when I was a wee little preacher, pastor David mentored me. Pastor David used to be the pastor of this church. He pastored this church for thirty-eight years. And he taught me a lot of things. One of the things he taught me was about developing a

preaching calendar, and he said, when you're developing a preaching calendar, it's good to preach on the cross and sin and repentance and all that stuff leading up to Easter.

But when you get to Easter and past Easter, you need to focus, he called it resurrection living. Pastor David's way: resurrection living and sometimes he'd call it the spirit-filled life. And I like that language as well. And basically what he was trying to teach me and what I'm trying to share with you is that if Christ has been raised and you're in Christ, your life will be different. It will transform the way you live your life. And that's basically what Paul's been saying in Colossians 3. We looked at this a little bit last week.

We weren't able to finish it, but he says, if you've been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, set your mind on the things that are above, take off the old, the old man's dead, the old man's gone—Jesus crucified that to the cross and put on the new man and this new man is characterized by love and gentleness and patience and kindness and all of these—the fruit of the Spirit that is mentioned. What I want us to look at this morning though is less about those individual exhortations and more on where Paul transitions at the end of chapter three.

Which is characteristics of a healthy local church. And it may not feel that way at first, but it's exactly what I think Paul is honing in on. So if you got a Bible, we're going to pick it up in chapter three of Colossians. Let's go to verse 10 and then read down to verse 17. And again, I think the focus here is characteristics not of you as an individual as much as how you as an individual are transformed into who God wants you to be through participation in a local church.

So you put on the new self. As putting on the new self, you're being renewed in knowledge according to the image of your Creator. In Christ there is not Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave and free, but Christ is all and in all, therefore, as God's chosen ones, holy and dearly loved, put on compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Bearing with one another and forgiving one another. If anyone has a grievance against another, just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also are to forgive. And above all, put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.

Verse 15 is going to be our focal text this morning, 15 to 17. He says, let the peace of Christ, to which you were also called in one body, rule your hearts and be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell richly among you in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another through psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. And whatever you do, in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Now when you read a passage of scripture like that, at least when I do, I almost immediately want to apply it individualistically. Like, for example, when it says let the peace of Christ rule

in your heart, you might be tempted to think, oh God, I wish I had a little more peace in my life. Talking about peace—people praying for peace in the Middle East. I need peace in my house right now. Or maybe when you read that phrase, let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, you think to yourself I really wish I read the Bible more.

You know, the Word's in there; it's just not very rich. I haven't been spending time with the Lord like I used to spend time with the Lord. Or maybe when it says to do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, you think to yourself, well, I'd do some things in the name of the Lord, but there's this thing, that thing. I'm not very proud of that, and you start to feel guilty at an individual level about those things. When it says be grateful, you think to yourself, I've just been complaining a lot.

And it's a very individualistic application of this passage. And I think it's kind of muscle memory, it's instinct to read the Bible in that way. But I want to caution you that's not the way to read the Bible. Greg Koukl, great Christian apologist, very clear thinker, he says, never read a Bible verse. It's kind of a shocking way of saying if you're going to read a verse, read it in its context because words have their meanings based on the context that they're in. So they don't get their meaning from the dictionary.

They don't get the meaning from what you feel or think in your mind. They get their meaning from their context. And if you look at the context all of these exhortations to let the word dwell and the peace rule and doing everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, it's not written to a person. It's written to a group of people in the church. Now why do I say that and why do I think that's important? It's because there is a tendency amongst, especially younger people, but I think all people to say that maturity is important, spiritual maturity, that's something I want for my life, but I don't need the church in order to get there.

Case in point, the other day we were going door to door as a church we were doing an Easter outreach event, and I knocked on some guy's door and he was very pleasant and kind, but very matter of fact that he did not do organized religion. which is a bad way of saying I don't go to church. And he pointed to all of these reasons why he didn't go to church, and some of them, you know, were legit reasons. I'm not saying he wasn't wounded by the church. But his conclusion from that is I'll become mature as a Christian by just sitting here in my La-Z-Boy reading the Bible, me and Jesus flying solo.

And that form of Christianity is foreign to the New Testament. There is no such thing in the New Testament as becoming a mature Christian by yourself. Almost all of the letters in the back part of the New Testament were written to churches, to groups of people, and so much of God sanctifying you and maturing you and cultivating you into the man or woman that He's designed you to be requires you to be engaged in the context of community. I think the way I put it in your notes is you can't divorce Christian maturity from Christian community.

They always go together. Which raises the question, of course, Well, I'm not just going to join any church. I mean I've seen churches where none of them mature and the church is a mess. So what does a healthy church look like? And that's the question behind Colossians 3, verses 15 to 17. He's giving us some marks of a healthy church. And there you could say three, you could say two. I'm going to give you three this morning, and if you like taking notes. The first is that healthy churches are governed by the peace of Christ.

They're grounded in the Word of Christ, and then finally they bring glory to the name of Christ. I want to show you these three marks in this text, and then I want us to think about these three marks in the context of our life together. As Broadview Baptist Church because I really believe my maturity as a pastor and your maturity as a man or a woman is dependent on your involvement and engagement with the life of a local church. So first he says to be governed by the peace of Christ.

He doesn't use the word governed, but he says in verse 15, let the peace of Christ, to which you were also called in one body, rule your hearts. So the question is, what does the word peace mean? And again, this is one of those things when you read the word peace, you probably think of something and somebody else thinks of something else. If you're a super anxious person, you think of peace as like oh, I just need some peace. I need less anxiety. I need the absence of anxiety in my life.

But is that what Paul means by the word peace? Because a word doesn't get its meaning based on what you feel. Even a word doesn't get its meaning based on the dictionary, because you can get a dictionary definition of a word, and you got one, two, three, four, five, there might be seven different meanings of a word based on what? Based on the context. Right? So what is the con so if you take this word, let the peace of Christ rule, what does it mean? Well you got to ask the question, what does it mean in its context?

And if you ask the question has Paul used the word peace anywhere else in the book of Colossians, or does he use the word peace anywhere else in his writings? The answer is yes. And one of the ways he uses the word peace is in Colossians chapter 1, verses 19 to 22. And it's in this way that I think he means it. In Colossians 3. He's talking about the supremacy of Christ in all things. This is a beautiful hymn in Colossians 1. And then he says that God was pleased, God the Father was pleased to have all of his fullness dwell in him.

This is Jesus Christ. So Jesus is the fullness of God in bodily form. And it was through Jesus Christ that God reconciled everything to Himself, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace. How did he make peace? Jesus made peace through his blood shed on the cross. Once you were alienated and hostile in your minds, you could tell by the way you were living, but now he has reconciled you by his physical body. Through his death to present you holy before the Father, so on and so forth.

So what is peace? Well peace isn't just the absence of anxiety, at least not according to the Apostle Paul, at least not in the book of Colossians. Peace for him has everything to do with the absence of hostility between you and the Lord, but not just between you and the Lord, but also between you and other people. This is why, by the way, I think Paul says peace to which you were called in one body. He's focused on peace in the local church between people. This is, I think, why Paul said in Christ there is not Greek and Jew.

Circumcision and uncircumcision was just a way of saying Greek and Jew. Scythian, barbarian, slave and free. These walls of hostility that the culture had erected and that we previously operated underneath those walls of hostility have been torn down through the death of Jesus Christ on the cross. And so that peace, that supernatural peace that Jesus inaugurated through his death on the cross—that's what needs to rule in the church. Now can you imagine a church where the people within that church, even though everywhere else in the culture they hated each other and were trying to fight each other or kill each other—when it comes inside the local church, they're supporting one another, praying for one another, and loving one another.

That is a supernatural community. This, by the way, really came home to me when Audra and I went to Israel right before everything went crazy over there. But we were over there and the tension was thick, right? You could tell. It was tense. Like there were protests outside of our hotel every night. And some of you could explain that tension however you want. Some make it a thing between Islam and Judaism. Some make it a thing between Israel and Palestine. The point is that there is hostility between Arab, Muslim Palestinians and Jewish people in Israel.

But when we would visit a handful of these churches, you saw something supernatural. Because former Jewish Israelites were worshiping alongside and in deep friendships with Islamic Palestinians. And the pastor told us this is our greatest evangelism strategy. The transformation of these relationships grows the church itself. It's like the supernatural power of the gospel that broke down these walls of hostility that we literally see on the news every single day. People trying to kill each other inside the local church, they're loving each other. That's the peace of Christ ruling. And could you imagine a church?

Could you imagine if this church had that kind of love between people? Whether it's different generational perspectives or different racial perspectives or cultural perspectives that if it wasn't just a you can get along with people in this church so long as you come from this background or have this cultural attitude or X, Y, or Z. What if it was a church that was extremely diverse in all of those respects. But even though there was all of this incredible diversity, that diversity was subsumed and united underneath this supremacy of Jesus Christ and that what they shared in common through Jesus overwhelmed and took precedence over what would normally separate them outside the walls of the church.

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts to which you were also called in one body. That is a healthy church. That is a supernatural church. That's a church where the gospel is actually working and Jesus is actually ruling and reigning. And that kind of church changes people. It transforms people and it draws people in who need transformation. He says to let it rule. What's the word rule mean? Its word picture is that of an umpire. Anybody ever played baseball growing up? You know umpires are either your best friend or your worst enemy.

They call the balls and the strikes. And this picture is basically Jesus sitting on the throne of your heart as an umpire, and he's saying, this is allowed, this is not allowed. This is an idol creeping up in your life. You need to snuff that out. This is helpful. You should probably say this. Speak it; make it said. And then well this is not helpful. This is actually going to tear down, not build up, so why don't you just hold your tongue? Which I don't always do a good job of doing, but you know that's sometimes when I do hold my tongue it's Jesus saying, hold your tongue, Wes.

That's the peace of Christ ruling in your heart, not just to give you the absence of anxiety, but to create peace between relationships that display the beauty of the gospel. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts to which you were called in one body. Secondly, let the word of Christ dwell in you richly. teaching and admonishing one another through psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. This is another one of those words that you got to ask the question, what does the word word mean? Because the word word is a very elastic word and could mean a lot of things.

Well maybe when you think of word, you think of this. That's not what Paul had in mind, right? Because the Word of God—sixty-six books of the Bible—didn't exist in Paul's day. They had the Old Testament, they had a lot of scrolls. The New Testament was in the process of being written, but when Paul said word, he wasn't talking about you and your quiet time, doing your devotionals with a completed canon. He means something else. So what does Paul mean? Well remember the little tip I gave you earlier, how do you know what a word means?

It's not its dictionary meaning, it's not what you feel it means, it's what it means in its context. Has Paul ever used the word word in the book of Colossians before? Well yes, he has. If you read just a few verses down, he actually defines the word word in chapter 4, verse 2. Or verse 3, he says, at the same time, pray also for us that God may open a door for us, that God may open a door to us for the word. Okay, Paul, well what is the word? Well the word is to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I'm in chains.

So the word means mystery. Yeah, problem solved. Wait, whoa, whoa. Mystery? What does mystery mean? Mystery is actually a pretty common word in the New Testament. It's the Greek word mystērion. It means something that was previously concealed, but now it's revealed. Still fuzzy, right? So what is the mystery? Well if you ask Paul that question, he

actually uses the word mystery a lot outside of Colossians and in Colossians, but one of the times that he talks about the mystery inside of the book of Colossians is in chapter 1, verse 27.

If you back up, if you've got your Bible in front of your face, if you go to chapter 1, verse 25, he says He's talking about his ministry. He said, I have become, I Paul, have become a servant of God's word according to God's commission that was given to me for you. What to do? To make the word of God fully known. a.k.a. verse 26, the mystery hidden for ages and generations, but now revealed to his saints. So it's the thing previously concealed. Now revealed. What is the mystery, Paul? Verse 27.

God wanted to make known among the Gentiles the glorious wealth of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. In other words, the mystery is the gospel. The mystery is that we were dead in our trespasses and sins, but that God made us alive together with Jesus Christ through his death on the cross. And just as Jesus died, we die to sin. And just as Jesus was raised from the dead. We are raised to walk in newness of life. And just as Jesus is seated at the right hand of God, ruling and reigning, we are with him, hidden in him, having our lives transformed as the kingdom of God comes more and more in its fullness.

And just as Jesus is going to return again someday, so also are we going to appear with him. That's the mystery. The mystery is Christ in you, the hope of glory. And he says of this mystery a little bit later in chapter 2 verse 2—he's praying for the church in Colossae—I want your hearts to be encouraged and joined together in love so that you may have look at this language. Just like the word richly in Colossians 3, I want you to have all the riches of complete understanding and to have the knowledge of God's mystery.

What is the mystery? In a word, Christ, because in Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. So everything you need to know is in the person of Christ. It's in his story, it's in his person, it's in his work. It's in what he has done, is doing, and will do. And I want you to know that word. I want that word to be at home in you. I want you to be at home in that word. With richness, fullness, wisdom, knowledge, and if that is happening in the context of a local church, then it's a healthy church not just that the pastor preaches the Bible or that the sermons are somewhat biblical or that he says he believes the Bible, but that as the Bible is preached and taught that the person of Jesus is revealed and people see him and are drawn to him and compelled by him and saved by him.

That's what it means for the word to dwell richly. Now some of your translations don't say among you, they say in you. Let the word of Christ dwell in you. By the way, the word dwell is the Greek word for home. It means for it to be. You know how like when you're at home, it's kind of like your safe place. Sometimes that's good and bad. Sometimes you're so safe you can be a total jerk. But the point is people see the truth about you that they otherwise wouldn't see. Your family gets a version of you nobody else gets.

Sometimes Audra just says, I'm glad you hold part of yourself back just for me. She means it sincerely. I promise. It's not that I'm a different person in public than I am in private. It's just that at home I can relax. I don't have to be on. That's how you want to be with the word. You need to become vulnerable with the gospel. You need to become your best version and worst version of yourself because the gospel can address you in either case. You want to become loyal to the gospel just like you would be loyal to your family.

So you want the word to dwell, but is it in you or among you? That's the question. If you're reading ESV, KJV, NASB, it says in you. Let the word dwell in you. Which focus more on the individual, you know, reading the word, memorizing the word personally up in here in your heart. But the NIV and the CSB, they say among you. Isn't that that's kind of interesting, is it not? Who's right? I think if you pressed Paul, so the Greek preposition is the word en—like e-n, not i-e-n. It's not English, it's Greek.

It's a preposition that could mean in you, it could mean among you. I think if you press the Apostle Paul, which is it? Does the word need to dwell in the church or does the word need to dwell in my heart? And Paul would say, yes. Absolutely. It needs to dwell in your heart and it needs to dwell in the church. Because it doesn't matter if you've got the word in your heart, if your church isn't proclaiming the word and teaching the word and letting the Word do the work, then the Word is not going to sanctify the body of Christ, as Jace mentioned in his prayer in Ephesians.

Jesus washes us, he sanctifies us with the washing of the water with the word. It's got to dwell in you and among you. In all wisdom. Which again he's prayed that in Colossians chapter 1. What is wisdom? Wisdom isn't just knowing what to do. It's knowing when to do it and how to do it. It's not just having knowledge, but applying knowledge. Wisdom is knowledge applied. And so what he's saying is I don't just want a church full of people who know Jesus loves me, died on the cross for my sins, is going to come again someday.

I don't want people to just think that up here. I don't want it to just be head only. I want it to translate to the heart. And I want it to translate from the heart to their hands and their feet. I want them to be wise in how they take the truth of the gospel and apply it to their life. Pastor Taylor often talks about the gospel gap. The gap between what people believe about the gospel and actually applying it to their normal lives, their marriage, their finances, their workplaces, their complex brokenness.

Paul is saying, I want that gap to close. I want the word to dwell so richly among you that you teach and admonish one another in all wisdom. That people learn how to apply the truth of the gospel in their daily life. And so that's what our church should be about. We should be about teaching and admonishing one another with the word. In all wisdom. Teaching means to like inform the mind, admonish means to warn, to kind of more focused on the behavior. All of that's great, right? We want a church like that.

But when I typically think about that kind of enterprise in the context of a local church, I think about teaching and preaching. The word dwells through teaching and preaching. Preaching teach the word. But that's not what Paul says. He doesn't say it's pulpit work that makes the word dwell. He doesn't even say it's small group work. that makes the Word dwell, even though small groups are great, right? You one-on-one, you're opening the Bibles, you're applying it to your day-to-day lives, but that's not what Paul says. It's not that we teach and admonish one another through preaching or small groups or deep groups or home groups.

What does he say? He says you teach and admonish one another through singing. through singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. So for those of us who are tempted to think that the singing is just what you do before the good stuff, this is a rebuke. Right? But those of us who sit out there—I better not say that—and wait for the music to get over before you come in, because that's where real church happens. No, it's not. Listen, as a preacher, this pains me to say, but the singing portion of a worship service is the most formative. the most powerful, it has the most shaping influence.

Why? I don't know why. I talked to Taylor about this this week. I said, why do you think Paul says singing? Because he doesn't just say it in Colossians, he says the same thing in Ephesians 5. He says to be filled with the Spirit, singing. songs, hymns, and spiritual songs. So being a Spirit-filled Christian, being a Word-centered Christian, you better learn to sing, baby, because that's how it happens. Why? Why singing? Well if you think about it, I asked Taylor this. He said, I think you can make an argument for the existence of God based on music.

It's totally superfluous in a naturalistic, atheistic worldview. There's no need for singing. If we're just meat puppets trying to survive, singing is irrelevant. Why do we sing? We sing because we're created by a God who is both the encapsulation of truth, yes, but also goodness and beauty. This world is beautiful. God's creation is beautiful. We have a yearning for beauty. We're drawn to it because of this image of God in us. And something about singing activates that in our hearts. I don't know. It's why music is so powerful. It's why what you listen to really matters.

Now I'm not saying you burn all your secular music like my mom did when I was a kid, but it matters, all right?. So it's forming you and shaping you. And so what Paul's saying in the context of a local church, your singing is how you teach and admonish one another. So when we were singing in worship this morning and you were singing out loud some of these truths, it wasn't just that you were singing it to God, other people could hear you. Even if you weren't a great singer, they could still hear you.

And God does something through that process that makes the Word dwell in us. So if that's true, that means a couple of things. Number one, if you're a worship leader, as I used to be, you need to pick songs that are doctrinally true, right? You need songs that teach the truth

about Jesus. There's a lot of new songs and a lot of sometimes even old songs that were not quite all the way true, right? Maybe tweak a little bit. It rhymed well, but it doesn't fit the Bible. No, we want to sing songs that are doctrinally true.

They don't have to be doctrinally rich, right? They don't have to be a systematic theology. It's not T4G every Sunday up in here. But they need to be true. Second, they need to be congregational in their focus or their orientation. It's okay to sing songs that say I and me. But even better to sing songs that say our and we because we're singing it together as a congregation and as we sing it together we're actually singing to one another. We need to have a congregational orientation in our songs. A lot of newer modern music I love listening to on the radio, but it's very personalized, very individualistic.

And I think that's part of why we have such an individualized approach to spirituality in our culture that is foreign to the New Testament. More our, more we. They need to be songs that promote maximum participation. People always complain these days about men not singing in church. How come men don't sing in church? Some men don't sing in church because they're unregenerate sticks in the mud, they're just miserable. I don't know. Some men don't sing in church because the songs that are sung in church are not manly. They're weak and effeminate and it just it creates too much estrogen in their body, so they get all scared and fold their arms.

I'm just kidding, I don't think it creates estrogen in their body, but it's just one of those things. So well, if we want maximum participation, maybe sing songs that men can sing as well. But also songs that women can sing. One of the big reasons why people don't sing in church is the key is an unsingable key. There's songs that are on the radio that are awesome, but they're sung by professional musicians. When you plug them into a local church setting, everybody's like, I ain't singing that. I don't sound like Michael Jackson.

Not up in here, no. No, you need to be in a singable key because everybody can sing them in that way. Things to think about. Now when it comes to that's for worship leaders, when it comes to being a worshiper, I think what Colossians is saying is you need to be singing from the heart. Jesus rebuked worship that was lips only. They honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. In vain do they worship me. I don't accept it. It's empty. You're wasting your time. So we need to sing from the heart.

So just because you don't like a song doesn't mean you can't sing that song from the heart. It's not about you. It's about the Lord. So sing to God from the heart. But also, he says, to do it with gratitude. And this just kills me. I wish sometimes some of y'all could come up here on the stage and look at y'all's faces, which today is not too bad, but sometimes You just look bad. Like you look mad, you look angry, you look like I'm about to kill somebody. Like you say one more word, I'm coming up there.

And maybe that's just our own insecurities and stuff like that and I get the whole like when your face is resting, you just look mad. I think they have a name for that that I can't share from the stage. I got one of those faces like when my face is at rest, it looks like I look like a jerk. So I get it. But when you're at church, why not just smile a little bit? You know you've got that resting face. So just smile. Be grateful. Jesus saved you from sin.

He transferred you out of the domain of darkness and brought you into the kingdom of his beloved Son. Why not give joy to the Lord and be happy when you sing? That will do more than you know to let the word of Christ dwell richly in our hearts? Finally, a healthy church is marked by people who bring glory to the name of Christ. Chapter 3, verse 17, whatever you do, in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

This language is so comprehensive, right? It's whatever everything. So in each and everything that you do. And then he broadens it out even more than that, whether it's word or deed. Mouth work, hands-and-feet work, everything needs to be done in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. So I think what he's trying to capture is it's not a Sunday only bring glory to God on Sunday. It's every day. It's not only in what you say, it's also in what you do. It's not only in what you do, it's also in what you say.

Do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. So the big question is what does this mean? What does it mean to do in the name of the Lord Jesus? Is that like don't take the name of God in vain? Don't—which by the way doesn't mean oh my gosh. It's ascribing to God things that he would not approve of. That's taking the name of God in vain. So if you say of God what he would not say of himself. You've taken the name of God in vain. But I don't even know if that's what this means.

I think the meaning of this is very related. Giving thanks to God in everything. So again to find the meaning of a word, you've got to look at its context. Paul does talk about giving thanks to God in every circumstance in Colossians chapter 1. And he specifically hones in on giving thanks to God because of what Jesus has done through the cross. Giving thanks to God the Father who has enabled you to share in the saints' inheritance in the light. In other words, God made it so that you could be saved.

Which by the way you need to know your salvation is not something you did for yourself, it's something God did for you. Even the ability to believe, the ability for to hear the gospel, God sent that preacher, he sent that message, he quickened your heart. God enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light, but he's rescued us this is explanatory statement of salvation. He has rescued us from the domain of darkness and he has transferred us into the kingdom of the Son he loves. This word kingdom just unlocked it for me.

Because I think of think of yourself as a citizen of a kingdom. Don't think of yourself as an American, because you are one, most of you. Or maybe trying to be. If you want to bring glory to the nation of which you are a part, you speak good about the nation, you celebrate the nation, you live as a, you live according to the laws of the nation. That's what it means to do it in the name of the nation. Well, it comes to the kingdom of Christ if doing everything in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ I think it's a recognition that all of my life is underneath the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

He is king of kings and Lord of Lords, which means He is king of my life. And so what I say and what I do, I want it to represent king Jesus well. I want to be an ambassador of king Jesus. I want to be able to interact with people in such a way that my interaction with them points them to the Lordship and the kingship of Jesus Christ. I want the actions of my life, I want the way that I live to communicate and show to people that Jesus is king of kings and Lord of Lord specifically of my life.

So do everything in your life to point people to king Jesus. And this is not a very fun word or attractive word, but that boils down to obedience. Live according to the laws of the king. Walk in joyful obedience to king Jesus and his commands. That's how you bring glory to the Lord. You can glorify the Lord by singing. Certainly, you can glorify the Lord by saying glory, glory, glory. But more powerful is you living a transformed life. Monday, Tuesday, Saturday, Sunday, living a life that has been totally revolutionized. By the reality of Jesus Christ in your hearts.

Because he died and you died with him. He was raised and you were raised with him He is seated in ruling and reigning at the right hand of God, and you are resting content underneath the sovereign control of the king of kings and Lord of Lords. And he will one day come again and you will appear with him in glory. And so my hope is built on nothing less than Jesus, his blood, and his righteousness. People who live in that way, that's game-changing. People who belong to a church who are filled with other people who live in that way, that's game-changing.

That's how we change the world. If you, as a non-believer, walked into that kind of church where there was supernatural peace between people, and it wasn't just cold-hearted legalism being preached, but it was the personality of Jesus Christ. In everything and the worship and the preaching in the small groups, it's just like Jesus was up top at the center, center stage, that kind of church. Draws people in, transforms their hearts, leads them to bow the knee to king Jesus as Lord and changes the world. And that's what I want our s our that's what I want our church to be.

Is that what you want our church to be? I hope you would say Amen. But we can't create that church. Right? This is something the Holy Spirit creates. That's the point of Colossians three. And so I want us during our response time to pray to the Lord for these marks. Lord, would

you make our church a church marked by the peace of Christ, governing our interactions relationally? That we be grounded in the Word of Christ, specifically our singing. Let our singing be singing that sanctifies our soul, that draws us into the throne room of God's grace.

That teaches and admonishes one another. And we want to be people who don't just act one way on Sunday but a different way on Monday through Saturday. But we want to be people who are ambassadors of the king every single day of the week. So that people might come to know and believe and be themselves transferred out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of the beloved Son. So let's bow our heads together and close our eyes and if the Lord has a