

The importance of knowing you are LOVED

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GREETINGS: It is a great blessing for me to talk to you about the simple message of the love of God from Ephesians chapters 3 and 5. I trust that it will impact you in a very, very big way.

PRAYER: Father, I want to thank You for Your grace and your love. Thank You for the way you care for this world. Thank You that You love us and thank You that we can look at the resurrected Jesus Christ. As we look at what's going on in the world, we know that that is things we see but that is not what we focus on. We focus on You, the One, the Lord, that was raised from the dead. Thank You for the life that You give us, the peace that You give us, the righteousness that You give us and the life that is free from fear of death. Thank You for what You do. Spirit of God, thank You that You speak powerfully through me, bringing the message of life today. Amen

MESSAGE: Today I am going to speak from Ephesians 3 but just before that I want to just bring a short encouragement from 1Thessalonians 4:13 as pertaining to death. We've had a good friend, Shannon Orr, that passed away. Many of you have known her and when somebody that we love passed away, we are just, again, confronted with life after death and all of that. I want to just bring you an encouragement from the Bible and the way Paul dealt with this. I trust that you will find great encouragement.

Shannon was a good friend. She came here with the Women of Grace and preached the Gospel here in South Africa. It was just an awesome time here and also just to know her as a friend. I am very grateful to her. She was the person that the Lord has used to bring me in connection with Connie Witter and everybody in the Tulsa area and I am just grateful, very grateful, for her life. The love that she has for God and the way wherein she spoke and shared that with such a kindness and tenderness and a brokenness of heart, an open heart. She had such a beautiful voice. It was just awesome to have known her and I just want to express my gratitude towards just the way she has loved on Helen and me. The respect that she had for both of us was absolutely awesome.

I want to just share this verse. **1Thessalonians 4:**

13 *But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that you sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.*

14 *For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus Christ* (have died as Believers) ***will God bring with him*** (He is now referring to the Resurrection.)

15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not precede (precede) them which are asleep.

16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds (In the glorification), to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

Paul, clearly, states here that we should comfort one another with these words. What words? The words that Jesus died and that He rose again and those who have died as Believers in Jesus, in the day that Jesus Christ shall return they shall also be bodily raised from the dead. What I find Paul focuses on here is not life after death but the life after the life after death. That is what he focuses on. When he writes words in that way, I find a lot of logic, a lot of understanding, in the way that he words it. He says that you live and you die. Then after we have died, we call it life after death and then there is the resurrection which is the life after the life after death and that is what Paul focuses on. I do believe that the reason why he focuses on that is because there is only true comfort for the human heart inside this logic and inside the truth of the Resurrection.

I remember when my Mom died, and I went and I saw her lifeless body, the only thing that could comfort me was that she would be raised from the dead. That is what brings true comfort because I think it is the very same way with the disciples. When Jesus died, He said, "Father, into Your hands I give, I commit, My Spirit". It is even the same with Stephen at his stoning he says, "Father, receive my spirit." But we find that the people still mourned and they were discouraged at the death of Jesus. When they saw Jesus die, even if He said, "Father, into Your hands I commit My Spirit", there was still a sadness because in the human heart there is a certain injustice that is being done towards a human as pertaining to the body if the body has died. But when we find that when Jesus was raised from the dead, never to die again, that the very same people that were mourning, even after they heard Jesus saying, "Into Your hands I commit My Spirit", they found true joy.

I have found this in my life when I look at the true justification and not the partial justification where we can say that our spirit is in the hands of the Father but where we can look in the true justification, the reason why Jesus Christ has died and why He was raised. The reason He was raised is so that we can be justified in the flesh with eternal life. And I want to say to you that the Apostle Paul says here were these words that Jesus will return and those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, shall not precede those who have slept in the Lord, and have died in Jesus Christ, as pertaining to the glorified body. But Jesus will return. Those who have died, will at His return, be raised from the dead and then we, who believe in Him, shall then be changed. So, we don't have to think that death has conquered those who have died before the return of Jesus. It seems to me as if that was an issue in the time here.

So the injustice that we look at when we see a human body die, when we look at Shannon and she got cancer and passed away, when we look at that even if we would have the thought that her spirit is in the hands of God, there is still something inside us that says, "Yes, we are happy but true joy can only be found in the full restoration of the human body." I want to say that is where I find my comfort. And I think that when somebody has passed away, and we think of the afterlife, let us not lose out of sight, the absolute importance of the bodily resurrection. No person would be fully complete outside of the restoration of the human body to full eternal life. In the very same way as what Jesus would not have been complete should He have died and just said, "Father, into Your hands I commit My Spirit" and His body stayed in the grave. It would have been a defeat. It would not have been called a victory.

So, we can know that Jesus was raised. It is an historic fact. We even now have the Spirit of Jesus and the Spirit of God, the Spirit of life wherewith we are sealed unto the day of redemption according to Romans chapter 8 which is the redemption of our bodies and to the adoption of eternal life. Church, I have just found that anything that's in the scripture that is so clear, as we meditate and ponder upon that truth, it just yields the peaceable fruit of His life, we have peace in our hearts. And to Shannon's family and her friends, I want to encourage you. I want to say to you that, yes, we do mourn because we miss her. I think of her beautiful smile. I think of just how when she would get a deeper understanding of the goodness of God, how easily the tears would flow of gratitude... just who she was as a person. When she was here in South Africa, I could have gone to any of the ladies where they were preaching that Sunday, but Helena and I chose to go with her because I just enjoyed her ministry so much! I just thought to go there, never thinking it would be the last message that I would sit in a service where she would preach.

I want to encourage all of you that the restoration of Jesus Christ is not partial. Completeness, wholeness, is in what we have seen in the Resurrected Jesus. And that is what salvation is all about and we will find Jesus Christ return to this earth. We're not living on this earth for no reason. God has dreamed with us on this earth and each one that has believed upon Him shall be raised bodily. This is what the Bible says that what the mind could not have thought about, what is above what we could ever ask or think, God has prepared for us who love Him. So be encouraged. I would like to pray for you.

Father, I want to thank You that we can, right now, pray for Shannon's family as well as all of her friends, people who have known her. I thank You, Lord, that You come and You encourage us with a knowledge of the resurrection. Thank You that You heal their hearts. Thank You, Lord, that You give them wisdom and how to handle this in these times by focusing on the finished work of Christ. And, Lord, Your work wasn't finished on the cross. Your work was finished when you were raised and ascended on high and from there we will see completion manifest in us. Thank You for the finished work as pertaining to the atonement plan which is the Ascension. Thank You, that we, from there, can behold this life and those who have passed away, who have died, who have, as Paul said, "Have fallen asleep." Thank You, Lord, that we can never give into death. That the closest we can ever come to death is just to say that it is a sleep. A person that sleeps is alive and thank You, Lord, that You have come to give us eternal life and You will wake us up out of the grave. Thank You, Father, that every person that hears this can be comforted with the words of eternal life. Amen and amen

Let us get right into the message. I'm going to read from Ephesians chapter 3. As I read this this week and studied it out, it seems to me as if the Apostle Paul was in a difficult situation. The Jewish Jews and Gentiles were persecuting people in Ephesus. The persecution that they were placing on them was basically saying that the more you believe in Jesus, the more we are going to punish Paul. It basically worked out that way. The more the church was growing and the more churches were planted, the more upset people would get because they would think this Paul that we have in jail here, is actually indirectly responsible for the growing of the church and for the church even being there. Remember they believed that Jesus died and was buried. Some would even believe that He wasn't buried. Some would say that it wasn't the tradition to bury people that were crucified. Their bodies got thrown in the ditch there and the dogs and the ravens ate them. They didn't have the privilege to be crucified which is not a historic fact. If you go and read the old Roman laws you find that there was an opportunity. It was like a side little law kind of a thing but there was an opportunity for people that were crucified to be buried.

But some of these people didn't even believe that Jesus was buried. They didn't even believe that He died for anyone or anything. They believed He was a criminal. He was never raised from the dead. And now they found uproar in certain places and kind of a violence, not because of the church or not through the church. But there were people that, for political reasons, didn't like the church. They also didn't like that they come and now say that this man is actually the Son of God or God incarnate and that He is the Lord meaning He is the ruler over Rome and the ruler over all other gods and so forth.

We need to understand that the Roman Empire tried to have peace between the different religions. If one religion comes and say, "Our God is the God over all the other gods" it immediately causes turmoil and tension and strife. That was basically what was preached. Paul was now going through even more difficult times as the church in Ephesus was believing and as Paul was writing from jail to the Ephesians, he said, "Listen, don't stop believing because I am suffering. Continue in your faith." Then he prayed and said, "I pray that Christ may strengthen you."

Paul's prayer: **Ephesians 3:**

16 That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; ("Strengthened with might" there, contextually is about that you will be strengthened to continue in the Gospel although I and other Christians are being persecuted for the Gospel.)

17 That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

18 May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;

19 And to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge, that you might be filled with all the fulness of God.

What Paul is basically saying here is, "Yes, you are believing in Jesus but my prayer is not that you stand a little bit back and make it just a private thing. But, I want your minds to expand, your thoughts to expand, as pertaining to the Gospel.

I want you to comprehend.” (The word, comprehend, katalambano, which means to grab ahold of and make use of and experience this knowledge of Christ or this love that you are in.)

I want to just focus on that love, the love of God, because Paul comes and he basically says here: “I wanted to comprehend with all the saints what is the dimensions of this love.” If you refer that back to chapter one, it is basically saying, “I want you to know the love of God as pertaining to the effect it will have on your life now and what it holds for us in the future.” The conclusion that he comes to here is that, as we see these dimensions of the love of God that passes all knowledge, that we will be filled with the fullness of God. So, the fullness of God is connected towards the love of God. The love of God that there is in Christ is something specific. It is more than just an emotion. It is more than just a feeling although it all starts there. It starts with a heart that has compassion on people going through difficult times. You might be watching this and going through a difficult time.

This morning I preached to our local congregation via zoom meeting and I know there are people in our congregation that have lost a salary. Some people lost their jobs. Other people lost their business on account of this coronavirus and what is going on in the world. People are sitting at home and don't have a job and also have travel restrictions on them because of the covid19. They are bombarded with news of racial tension, and all those kinds of things, and everything that politics holds. It brings a person to a place where your heart really feels desperate for life. I felt this week to just preach this message on the love of God where Paul says that as we understand the love of God, we will be flooded with the fullness of God. So, the love of God is directly connected with the fullness of God.

Proverbs 4:18 *But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shines more and more unto the perfect day.*

As we understand the love of God and we are being justified in our belief in Jesus Christ, we are justified with a brighter and brighter shining forth and experiential knowledge of the love that God has for us in things like the fruit of the Spirit and peace and removing fear and also knowledge in how to handle difficult situations.

As an introduction, what Paul is saying here is, “I don't want you to be afraid of having your mind exercised and expanded and your knowledge greater. I don't want you to be ashamed of making use of Jesus although it might make life a bit more difficult for me in jail. Just as people see what you are doing and threatening you saying that if you continue with this, we are just going to kill Paul. Don't be afraid of that. Continue in your revelation of how much God has loved you. Grab ahold of these things. My prayer is that you will see the dimensions, how high, how wide, how deep and how long. You find the three dimensions with an eternal time aspect connected to that like a four-dimensional thing there. I want you to grab a hold of this because, as you grab a hold of this and believe upon this, it is called just. And you will find that this light shines brighter and brighter and brighter even until the day of the Lord--- that full and perfect day when we see, as I said earlier in this message encouraging people as pertaining to those who have slept in Christ, that day of the Resurrection. So, it's almost as if I am saying, and what Paul is saying here, that the love of God manifests now what will be in the future.

As we understand that and to the measure that we understand that in a greater way, in us here. So, it is very important to understand the love of God. From that we can extrapolate the following that to the measure wherein we grab a hold of how much God loves us and what this love means, we will experience God in our lives. We can also say that in the area where we are not seeing victory in our lives, we can say that is the area where we need to understand more of the love of God towards us. As long as I see shortcomings in my life now, I just say that to me it just says there's more to understand about God's love for you. It is not a message of condemnation anymore. It is a message of, "There is more good for you. Have your heart even enlarged to see and believe on the love of God."

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Very practical... if something in my life happens which I don't want to happen or if I live in a way that I feel is not right, I don't go and beat myself over the head from the morning until evening. All I am saying is, "Well, God, obviously there is more of Your love that I need to know and understand and I am absolutely open for that. And from there, I will just see more of Your fruit manifest in my life." If you sit with fear, anxiety, as pertaining to finances and your business and the future and all those kinds of things, the Scripture says that when it comes to money, don't you know that you have a heavenly Father that cares for you! What it basically says is that all of our anxiety as pertaining to finances and all those kinds of things can be directly linked to knowing that we have a heavenly Father that cares for us.

So how I get rid of fear as pertaining to the future, politically, money, and all those kinds of things, is by going and sitting down and saying, "Father, I want to, just from Your Scripture, and from You convincing my heart, I just want to see how You are a Father that cares for me. Look at the birds of the air, they don't sow or reap or gather into barns. The lilies of the field don't possess bonds. They don't toil, don't do any of those things. They have, basically, nothing that they have built up for themselves, in this world, that they can fall back to, but You care for them. You care for them and I want to know that as You care for the birds, I am of greater worth and I also want to know Your love for me." That is how the provision of God works. The provision of God is not a works' provision but a worth provision. Scripture says, "Are you not worth more than the birds and the grass of the field which today is and tomorrow is gone?" What He is saying is that God has come through the Father and granted eternal life to us where we can exist forever with God. And from that perspective He is saying, "Look how God cares for you! You are worth more than the birds. You are worth more than the grass of the field which has a beautiful flower today and is gone tomorrow." What Jesus is saying is, "As you know this, you will find that works and fear, all plans and whatever thing we think we need to do to try and secure a future for us... or another way of saying it is, making a living, as we try to make a living, it will all fall away in knowing we are offered life, offered a living... but eternal living! Glory to God!

When we look at the word, love, I just want to go back to Webster's definition because every time I read it, it just takes my breath away. It is so beautiful to look at this definition of what love is and then to see how God loves us.

The definition of love, and we are connecting it to Ephesians 3, where it says that we can understand how deep, how high, how wide the love of God is, is something that can be applied in everyday life. And to think that God loves that way towards us is just mind blowing. Here it is: **Love is an affection of the mind excited by beauty and worth of any kind.** So, if we say that God loves us, we have to say that we have an effect and it brings affection to the mind of God. And it is not just excited by God just being good in the sense of saying, "I've got no reason to do anything for these people." No, it talks about the value that is looked at. So when we say that God loves us and we want to study the dimensions of the love of God and what it means, I think it is very good to start with the basic definition of what love is and then link it into the actions of love that Jesus and the Father has in preserving our lives forever. It is an affection of the mind that is excited by beholding beauty and worth of any kind. That is what it is about.

So, we find that the mind of God got excited, or made alive if you want to call it like that, or it was put into action. Why? Because of God beholding our beauty and our worth. **It is also excited by the qualities of an object which communicate pleasure, be it sensually or intellectually.** So, what it says is that we, as humans, communicate pleasure to God intellectually. We know it is not an essential way here and the definition is also being used towards people and couples and all those kinds of things, but we stimulate God intellectually. We affect His mind and excite Him because when He beholds us, He sees beauty, He sees worth. He sees qualities that communicate pleasure to Him and it excites Him intellectually. That is amazing!

When God is looking at you, He saw beauty, He saw somebody that is very beautiful, somebody that brings Him pleasure, a being that has qualities that stimulates Him intellectually... and this person is lost. For this person is being oppressed by death and everything that surrounds death and leads to death. So, when God beholds you and as we study these scriptures, we have to come to a place where we say, "God, how do You see me?" When God beholds us and as we tap into how He sees us, we have to know that there is a strong emotional component to this. Wherein God feels emotion, where God feels compassion, where God feels empathy from where He's moved over into actions which can preserve our lives forever.

As you behold your child that might be lost... Some of us might have children that might be lost. They don't believe in Jesus and are out in the world on drugs and don't want anything to do with you. As you behold that child, it is impossible not to feel a compassion. It is impossible not to behold value and beauty because that person is part of you. You had a dream for that person and as you behold that person, you have a compassion. Maybe some of us have come to the end of ourselves where we don't know what to do anymore. But we have a God that is more powerful than us and as we behold that person, God in the very same way, and even in a more powerful way because he's got a better revelation of who that person is, He is moved in His inner being to bring that person to life. He doesn't behold and look at a person that is lost and say, "I rejoice in the death of the unrighteous!" No, He does not! The heart of God is salvation because He loves people.

And as we behold our loved ones that might not be believers or might be atheists, or might even be against Christianity, but we have something inside our hearts that wants them to have life, that wants their lives to be preserved forever. How much more not God! Here we find that Paul comes and says, "I want you to have your heart enlarged. I want it to be strengthened to continue to understand what this love of Christ is all about. It is about the fullness of God manifesting in us bodily." And he clearly says that as we understand the dimensions of God and grab ahold of it, the end of that is to be flooded with the fullness of God. You cannot be filled with the fullness of God through the works of the law. You cannot be filled with the fullness of God by doing 10 steps and trying to have a breakthrough. You cannot! You can't have the fullness of God by prospering financially or even your generosity. You cannot have the fullness of God by bodily health. Not at all! You cannot have the fullness of God by your exercise or any of that. The fullness of God, according to Paul, is only accessed by Katalambano, meaning grabbing a hold of the love of God knowing, comprehending by grabbing and understanding what this love means. And as we grab ahold of the love of God, we are filled with the fullness of God.

I can testify about that. What fills me today, what fills me fruit of the Spirit, also fills me emotionally and intellectually, is the thought of God looking at me as we have read here and seeing beauty and worth and qualities which communicate pleasure and that stimulates Him even intellectually. That touches my heart. It just brings this absolute fulfillment to me and that is the same for you. So, I want to encourage you in this simple message today. I want to say this to you, old and young, and especially for young people. There are some young people hearing this: Your Mom and Dad cannot fulfill your emotional tank for you. Your Mom and Dad cannot bring you to a place where you feel fully satisfied. No iPhone or iPad or friends can stimulate you in a way where you feel full and satisfied. Only the love of God can do that and the way you access that is not just by listening to a message or any of those things. The way that you are going to access that is to say, "Well, I see Mom and Dad are believing in Jesus but I am going into my room or a place where you are alone where you just have that moment where you say to God, "God, here am I. it is just You and me. I want to know Your love. I want You to reveal Yourself to me." As you do that, you will find, in the time to come after that, God, in a way only He knows how to, will start to reveal and speak to you about His goodness, about His kindness, about His faithfulness towards you as well as your value.

I find that my heart is not full because I find how valuable I am. I find that my heart is full on how the God, who is above all value, above everything that we can ever think or dream, is in love with me and how He has come and done everything to preserve my life forever.

When you look at the love of God in Jesus Christ, the Bible says in John 3 that, He gave His Son so that we will not perish but have everlasting life. So, the love of God is basically expressed in, and I want to just use a normal word here that we can kind of understand, in longevity. That means that as we as humans, love somebody, we don't want him to die because we want him with us. As I said in the beginning of this message about Shannon Orr, we want her to live long. We want her to become a hundred years or at least as long as what we live. We want her with us. We don't want her to die. We want her to live. The very same chain of thought is used when the Bible talks about the love of God.

Humans, as mortals, die. God knew the only way He can preserve our lives forever is if he could conquer physical death so that humans, bodily, can live forever. That is what He did in Jesus when He raised Him from the dead.

As we are thinking on the love of God and how it was expressed, we find that God looks at man and says, "I don't want them for ten or twenty or fifty years or a hundred and twenty years, when I can communicate and be with him. I want them forever!" Therefore, He comes and He conquers that which would take us out of life, which is mortality, and we find that that is where the love of God is expressed. The Word became flesh and lived amongst us. Jesus Christ entered death, conquered death, and now offers longevity, eternal life, that can never end. And He gives it to us for He forever wants to be with us!

The beautiful thing about God and what He did in getting this right is that the Word, or what we call the Son of God, one of the persons in the Godhead, had to put on flesh. And as the Son put on flesh, the Word was incarnated into flesh and died and was then raised. He was raised with human flesh meaning that He can never change from that. Jesus will forever have a physical body! There's a beautiful scripture, which we will go into that, which says that man will leave father and mother and cleave unto his wife for they are one flesh. For the wife is flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone. And in the very same way, Jesus is in heaven now, with a physical body, will leave His Father's house and cleave unto His wife and return to this earth to forever be with us. And He now, through the power of conquering sin and death, is cleaning us and beautifying us with the words of eternal life and there will be a day when He will come back. But we also find that the Father will not abandon Him or us but we will be under the rulership of His Father and we will find that God will be all in Jesus and all in us and so we will be one with Him. It is a love story that is not just a story. It is a reality. It is a truth. It is **the** truth whereby we are saved.

I want us to quickly go to **Ephesians 5** and I am going to read this from the Message Bible. This is very, very powerful! It talks a little bit about marriage here but that's not what we are going to focus on.

22-24 Wives, understand and support your husbands in ways that show your support for Christ (I like that he used the word, support, interchangeably with the word, submission, which is very beautiful. It just gives a beautiful and a different perspective on what submission is. It means to stand for that and to be with the husband, to support the husband in what he does instead of just domineering.), ***The husband provides leadership to his wife the way Christ does to his church, not by domineering but by cherishing*** (The way Christ leads us is by cherishing us. The love of God leads us. As we start to see how God cherishes us and how His way of cherishing is defined in how He would go, literally, over land and sea, come hell or high water, as we would say. It doesn't matter what it is! He would go through that to preserve our lives forever! As we see that God doesn't want any part of us to perish, He wants us as a complete human to be fully preserved forever.

As a baby is born, what brings us joy is not the whole concept of a spirit is now given to a body. That is not what brings us joy when a baby is born. When a baby is born and presented to the mom, we find that what is presented to the mom is a complete little human being and we are happy for this life. We say, "Look at the life!" And that is what God sees when we are born and He says, "I cherish that life and I will preserve that life forever more! That is why He became a human. And as He became a human, He says that He will be raised up into immortal human flesh and so have the rule over humans and so preserve our life, or the life of God in us, forever. That is what it is all about.

Let me read this again: ***The husband provides leadership to his wife the way Christ does to his church, not by domineering but by cherishing*** (God wants to cherish us. He cherishes our lives. Amen! As we understand this cherishing, we are led by Him. We are led by Him, I want to say, in the dimension where we know that He cherishes us on how to treat people, how to be a good husband, how to be a good wife, how to run our business and all those kinds of things. It is born from this cherishing.)

So just as the church submits to Christ as he exercises such leadership (leadership not the domineering but by cherishing. So, we can say, "Just as the church submits to Christ as He leads us by cherishing us", ***wives should likewise submit to their husbands.***

We need to submit to God's cherishing of us. How did He cherish us? He cherished us by saying, "I give you eternal life as a free gift." He cherishes us by saying, "I provide you peace and joy and not by your own works but by conquering physical death and offering you eternal life as a free gift." Now, we submit to that. We look at that and we say, "Thank You, Lord!" And we dig into that. We delve into that and we are saying that we want to understand that. That is how we are submitting to His cherishing.

25-28 Husbands, go all out in your love for your wives, exactly as Christ did for the church—a love marked by giving, not getting.

How does God lead you? How are we led by God? We are led by God by looking at what He gives us. What did He give us? He gave us the only begotten Son. What is the only (and I use the word, "what" her and not "who"). What is the only begotten Son? The only begotten Son is the firstborn from physical death and what He gives us, the love that He gives, is marked by what He gave. What did He give? He gave to us a resurrected, glorified human Jesus, who He then appointed as Lord over sin and death in our lives, leading us. And He gave Him as the aid and the help and the ruler, bringing us to the fullness of God. That is what He gave us. And as He gave us this gift, let us study this gift out. Let us see what the dimensions of this gift is.

Many times, and I find and I've seen that when someone gives a gift and it's in a packet and it's not even opened. And when it's opened, let's say it was a cellphone, you can take the phone and switch it on and say that it can make calls but what about exploring the dimensions of that gift? What can that gift do? It can take pictures. It can surf the internet. It can get emails. It can be used as a road map with GPS.

I mean there are so many things you can use it for. You can just think of the dimensions of what you can use a cell phone for these days.

In the very same way, as we are being led, and this is how God leads us: He leads us by giving something to us and what He gave us is Jesus. Let us study out the dimensions of what it means when He gave us a resurrected Jesus, His only begotten Son, that we will not perish but also have eternal life preserving, see that just newborn baby, preserving the life of that baby. If I say to you that we want to preserve the life of a baby, are you saying, "Well, we need to see just how this baby's spirit can go to heaven." Or, when I say, "Let's preserve the life of that baby, are you thinking of it as pertaining to having that baby not die and live as a human?" No, that's what we think. That's the natural thing we can think. That is what God thinks when that baby gets born. That's what God thought when you were born and that was His plan from the beginning.

Husbands, go all out in your love for your wives, exactly as Christ did for the church—a love marked by giving, not getting. Christ's love makes the church whole.

Maybe you're not feeling whole today. The only thing that can make you whole, and it will make us whole to the point that even bodily we will be whole, to never die. But, emotionally... let's talk emotionally. What makes you whole, as pertaining to your view of the future, as pertaining with your relationship with your husband and wife and children and family and friends and business and so forth, it makes you whole as a preacher, is the love of Christ... Christ's love... the Messiah, and what He has come to do for us, Understanding and grabbing a hold of that makes us whole.

The Bible says in Hebrews chapter 1, in these last days, He has spoken to us through the Resurrected Son, who, after He has washed away all of our sins, went and sat down at the right hand of majesty. Now, He speaks to us through that Son. Those words evoke our beauty as we understand what God is saying through the Resurrected Jesus. So many times, we want to say, "What is God saying" We open the Old Testament and we want to read. Or, we want to say, "What is God saying?" and we open the writings of Paul and we want to read. Yes, we can see what God says through that but the voice doesn't start in the Old Testament. The voice doesn't start in the New Testament or the writings of Paul. The voice of God, to you, starts at the revelation of the Resurrected Jesus at the right hand of the Father. Everything that Paul could ever have said, everything any of the Old Testament prophets or writers could ever have said, is all taken together and fully expressed in intent, in meaning, and full expression in the Resurrected Jesus. Who He is and what He is and what it promises is what God says about you as pertaining to your value, your future on why you are here and why this earth is here, and all those things.

Christ's love makes the Church whole. His words, the message of eternal life, evokes beauty in us. In other words, He sees the beauty but He is now bringing forth that beauty.

His words evoke her beauty. Everything he does and says is designed to bring the best out of her, dressing her in dazzling white silk, radiant with holiness. God dresses us, through Christ, in dazzling white silk expressing our holiness, our beauty and our value in what He did in Jesus Christ. And that is what we need to hear from Him all the time.

And that is how husbands ought to love their wives. They're really doing themselves a favor—since they're already "one" in marriage.

²⁹⁻³³ ***No one abuses his own body, does he?*** God is not going to abuse you because if Jesus abuses you and speaks bad about you and all the time says how ugly you are and everything that you do and abuses you as a servant, a slave, that would be like abusing your own wife and it says here that it would be like abusing your own body. If we look at people today who abuse their own body and do self-mutilation and all those kinds of things, we say that there is something wrong and that person needs help. And Jesus is not going to do that. He's not going to harm His own body.

No, he feeds and pampers it. That's how Christ treats us, the church, since we are part of his body. (Listen to this:) ***And this is why a man leaves father and mother and cherishes his wife. No longer two, they become "one flesh."*** So as long as what Jesus is in heaven and we are on earth, it is at a place where Jesus will say, "My body...(now He does have a physical body but My kind, My people, are in this earth and I want to bring them to Me and I want to go to him. That is why, as He is coming to the earth, we will meet Him in the air, or we will meet Him in that glorified body. And that is where we will meet Him as He comes to the earth to live with us forever more.

The narrative, the dynamic, that Paul is using here is of a man leaving father and mother, cleaving unto his wife and starting a family there. Why? Because they are one, one body! King James says that we are flesh of His flesh and bone of His bone. That is what it is expressing, saying that we are one with Him, saying that He is coming to us! That is absolute love language. The Bible says that Jesus was given to the church. This is marital language of pre-arranged marriage. If Jesus was given to the church, it is like me saying, "I give my son to somebody's daughter." And that person says, "I give my daughter to your son and they will be one flesh and have a family of their own.

In the very same way, the Father said, as a Father, "I give My Son to the church", which is you so that we can be one flesh with Jesus. And as Jesus became mortal flesh and now was glorified to have immortal flesh, never to die, and we are one flesh with Him, it means we have the hope of eternal life bodily. And that is how He is preserving us forevermore. Isn't that absolute good news! There's much that I can still say about this but I think this is enough to encourage you in the good news of Jesus.

What you can go and do after listening to this message, say, "God, this message has encouraged me and maybe now I am going to have a meal and take a nap and all those kinds of things as what you normally do on a Sunday. Do all of that but I want to encourage you to take time where you sit alone, each one of you, young and old, children, parents, anybody, and say, "God, I heard what Bertie preached but I want to know more about that for myself. Here am I. Thank You that You speak to me." Maybe you won't hear a voice or something. It might just be that which you speak to God and that is the end of it and then you just continue. But, from that sincerity, speak that to God. Go to God and you will find how He continues, and in a greater way, as we continually have that relationship with God, reveals His love for you and floods you with His fulness.

As the scripture says, the just is like a light that arises in the morning and then at noonday we find the fullness of the glory of that day. That is how our justice will be and how the life of the just would be as we are hearing the love of God. Amen

Father, thank You so much that I can come right now and pray for everybody that is hearing this message. Thank You that You flood us with Your goodness and Your love and Your kindness. Thank You that I can say, just in front of everybody here, I can say, "Lord, I just want to know the depths of Your love. I want to understand the hope of Your calling. I want to understand what You have inherited in us. I want to just see how all of this works and I want to see the dimensions of that. I want to understand Your kingdom in a very deep way. Thank You for the depths where I can't understand it. But I want to say that my mind and my heart is open for Your fullness."

Father, as I pray this, I think of people hearing this and I thank You that they are encouraged by this Word and that they will just see more and more of what You have done in them, just happen over and over and over and how they are washed by the Word of the Resurrection. They are washed by the word of Your acceptance and love for them as You behold their beauty and value. As that excites pleasing thoughts of acceptance and kindness and it excites You even intellectually, stimulates You to the point that You say, "Let Me preserve them forever."

Father, as much as what You are our destination, we find that Your destination was also to be with us! It is mind-boggling! Thank You for Your love, oh God! Amen and amen

Thank you so much that I could serve you. I will see you again this week as I upload messages on Facebook. God bless.....