

## The Treasure Which is the Church, p. 2

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Philemon 1, because there is no other chapter. It's just chapter 1. Paul is writing this letter to the man named Philemon, and as he says in the early verses, "and to the church that is in your house," meets at his house. You know the context. Paul is writing to this quite wealthy man, Philemon, who loves Christ, loves Paul, loves the church, but something interesting has happened, Philemon's slave named Onesimus has robbed from Philemon, has escaped, has ended up in Rome and in the providence of God meets the Apostle Paul probably during his incarceration, he is in prison now, and in his association with Paul, he hears the Gospel. This runaway, thieving slave, Onesimus, has been gloriously saved. Paul and Timothy have fallen in love with this guy. He loves Paul. He loves the ministry. He loves the Gospel. But Paul is telling Onesimus, "Now Onesimus, you know you've got to go back to Philemon, our brother, and get this all right." So he sends Onesimus back to Philemon with the letter and that's what we have here, it's the book of Philemon, and in this letter, Paul is explaining to Philemon how he must receive Onesimus back, but no longer as a slave but as a joint heir of the eternal riches of Jesus Christ, as now a brother in Christ, and Paul is trying to set things up here, will not only there be a glorious reconciliation and new establishment of relationship between the former slave owner, Philemon, and the former slave, Onesimus, because now they are equal brothers, not only is that beautiful transaction about to take place, at least that's Paul's hope, but also Paul wants this to be an illustration for the local church there in Philemon's house that the whole church can see that this type of event, this type of love, this type of forgiveness, this type of restoration, is just an everyday thing for a true church. You know, the church is a treasure. The church is a treasure. That's why I've entitled this "The Treasure Which is the Local Church."

Look at it with me together. Philemon verses 4 through 6. Paul continues writing. He says,

4 I thank my God always, making mention of you in my prayers, 5 because I hear of your love and of the faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus and toward all the saints; 6 and I pray that the fellowship of your faith may become effective through the knowledge of every good thing which is in you for Christ's sake.

I. And I know for you Grace Life Church of the Shoals folks, I started this a couple three weeks ago and realized I really wanted to share this at the conference so I've changed the outline a little bit and did a few different things and so you're going to hear some review but there is some new stuff too, all right?

I. The glories of knowing this personal God. He writes to Philemon and he says very simply here, "I thank," now here is the phrase, "my God." It's not just incidental, it's fundamental. This phrase "my God" is a powerful statement to the personality of God. You see, thanks can be rendered to a person only. He's a personal God. You do not extend gratitude to an abstraction. You do not extend gratitude to a blind force or to a dumb law or to a lifeless object. It requires some one not some thing. There is no religion without a personal God. All these things about jump through these hoops or jump through those hoops, keep these laws and keep these precepts, none of that matters if you don't know this true personal God.

You see, there is no religion without a personal God for religion requires worship and worship requires thanksgiving and thanksgiving requires someone to whom we are thankful. You know about my grandson who had a choking episode. He's two years old. His mama beats on him for about a minute, finally gets him breathing again, but he has some things in his lungs that she can hear. We go to the emergency room and think it's just going to be a nonissue. The next thing we know he's on a helicopter, he's going to Birmingham Children's Hospital, and after it was all over, he is great and fine now. I look back on that and I thought, I'm amazed at the professionalism and the excellence of the hospital here in Florence and this air ambulance helicopter and the Children's Hospital in Birmingham, and just their equipment and just the level of expertise, but you know, I wasn't thankful for the helicopter or the x-ray machine, I was thankful for the common grace that gave us people who could run those things and do those things and perform those tests and achieve those procedures. I just was filled with gratitude. What if we didn't have that? Because it is people, it's the personal aspect that makes it real.

So when Paul says "my God" he is saying to Philemon, "I thank my God, Philemon, for you, and I make mention of you in my prayers." He's saying, "He's my God. I am his and he is mine." This phrase supposes that one has broken with the spirit of self and self-serving and has embraced the service of another. When he becomes "my God" it means he is now my Lord. He is now my authority. I am no longer lord and authority in my life. That's what you do when you come to Christ. That's what you do when you make your profession from the baptistery, you're saying, "I have a new one, I have a new God. All the other gods are gone. All of those are past to me. The purpose and pattern of my life is to serve the one true God now."

You see, true vital spirituality is intentionally personal. He is personally my God but remember, while he is personally my God, he is not contained by me and he is certainly not exhausted by me, he's not limited to me, and he is not defined by me. Just pause here a minute. Evangelicals in Christendom in general have a terrible, vile, idolatrous problem of trying to make Jesus and God the Father out to the image they are comfortable with. He's not defined by us. We yield and submit to him as he is. Though he is personal, he is

separate and objective from us. He's not only for my good only any more than the sunshine can be held as private property. He is my personal God but does good to all men, but especially to those who receive his Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. So there are glories and as Paul is writing to Philemon, I think he just wants to hit on that note, "Philemon, I thank my God," because he knows for Philemon it's Philemon's God too. We know this God, this true, this only God, this personal God.

II now: how thankful we are for faithful brethren. How thankful we are for faithful brethren. I don't know what's happened to our screen but it's wanting to put everything up high. Maybe we need to buy a new projector, you reckon? We haven't had them pushing 20 years. Technology hasn't changed that much, has it? But anyway.

How thankful we are for faithful brethren. Paul says here in verse 4, "I thank my God always, making mention of you in my prayers." As Paul is there in that Roman prison, he thinks about Philemon and he knows Philemon is one of those who has given ample and consistent evidence of having experienced the new birth. He's given evidence that he has moved from loving the things of the idolatrous Gentile world of impurities and immoralities and he's turned his heart to serve Christ and he loves the church and he loves the things of God.

Paul also is talking about here his fervent devotion to the churches, and as leader of the churches, he teaches us something here. This is an insight I want you to grasp and that is the more we possess God, the more we are possessed by God and the more upward will be our gratitude and the more outward will be our service to those who are his. As a preaching pastor, I want to preach the word so that the Spirit of God causes you to know him better, to glory in him more, to wonder over him more deeply, and then your passion and praise to him will increase vertically but your service for him will increase outwardly. "I thank God," Paul says. Paul was deeply thankful for the genuine faith and the true fellowship he has found in his friend Philemon, and of course, in the whole church that meets in Philemon's house.

Now in verse 5, he says some particular things, because, I am thankful "because I hear of your love and of the faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus and toward all the saints." Now he begins with, "I see this love for the saints," then secondly he says, "and your faith toward Jesus Christ." Now normally we would expect those to be the other way around. Your faith, God has to bring you to saving faith before you begin to grow and have a love for other saints of God. The love you have for the church, the saints of God, is something that grows after you have faith but Paul reverses them as he talks to Philemon, but I think Paul is up to something here. He wants to emphasize love first because he wants in a moment as the letter is further read, he wants to point out to Philemon, "Now I want you to live out some special Christian love because Onesimus is coming back and it's going to take real God-wrought love in your heart to say it's over, it's forgiven, you are welcome back."

I really think that's why Paul puts love for the saints before faith in the Lord Jesus Christ but, look, these two always go together. Just like heart and lungs are separate yet they are

one in this fact that one cannot exist without the other, so faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and love for the brethren – listen – always always always exists together. If you know somebody and, boy, they know their Bibles, boy, they are brilliant in theology, boy, they have a passion for the truth, but you don't see hardly any love for the church, something radically is missing in their faith. Faith in Christ and love for the church always go together. Now there are certainly times when people need to grow and grasp this. Young Christians may not get it that well. I understand that but I mean long-term those two always thrive together.

You see, faith takes Christian truth and makes it personal convictions. Love takes Christian truth and makes it into personal activity. Love for the saints specifically is the daughter of faith and the mother of good works. We cast our faith toward Jesus Christ and we cast our love for Jesus toward his saints, his church, the body of Christ. 1 John 4:20 reminds us, "If someone says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen." When Saul of Tarsus was struck down on the road to Damascus and he became the Apostle Paul, of course, but when he was struck down the Lord Jesus spoke to him and said, "Saul, why are you persecuting me? You see, when you attack my children, you're attacking me. We just go together. If you love me, you'll love my children. If you love me, you'll love my church." And always for you visitors here today, I always balance this when I'm preaching this to my people because I have experienced and many of you, probably the great majority of you experience being in Christian church settings where unfortunately it's a very unhealthy church, and unfortunately perhaps the majority of people there are not truly born again. They are church members but they are not God's family, and you don't feel that special Holy Spirit-wrought love for them, and the reason you don't feel it for them is because they don't have the same Spirit you've got and it can be frustrating and weird to you, and that's normal in a very carnal and weak church that has had a lot of easy-believism. So this kind of love only flourishes where there is a healthy preaching of the Gospel and a biblically healthy understanding of conversion and a strong percentage of the folks there are truly regenerate born-again Christians. You see, as a stream of water always flows downhill, love for Jesus always flows to the brethren, to the local church. There are simply no exceptions except for the things that I have pointed out by the fact that maybe somebody is young in the faith and untaught and it has to develop over time in your hearts.

Now, a word about faith here. He says, "I see your faith." He says, "I am thankful for your love for the brethren but I am thankful for your faith." You see, faith in Christian understanding is believing, and I like to use the word "resting" in what the Scripture teaches of Christ; believing what God says of his Son, Jesus Christ. It's that, "I personally place my rest, my trust, my confidence in Christ and what he has done and what he has performed on my behalf." Faith is not believing many things the Scripture says about Jesus, but it's faith toward Jesus that saves us. Just believing as true what the Bible says of Jesus is not necessarily saving faith. It's our hope, it's our trust, it's our confidence in someone that saves us. You see, we need to look at it this way: it's not faith in the resurrection, it's faith in the resurrected one that saves us. It's not faith in the truth of the cross, it's faith in the Christ who died on the cross. Yes, the doctrine of the facts of the

theology are very important but it's the person who did these things that captures our hearts, is the object of our faith. It's not the trust in the great theological truth of righteousness, it's that Christ is my righteousness. That's saving faith, it's faith in someone, not just some abstract teaching.

In Paul's experience, Paul is one who has had this saving faith and he is one who has shown this great love for the saints. We know the Apostle Paul after he was converted, we see this in Acts 9, he is taken to a local church and he talks about how the ministry of the church began to eat him up. In 2 Corinthians 11:28, for example, he says, "I have this intense concern for all the churches." Where did this intense concern for all the churches come from? He got saved. Are you with me? He got saved. When you get saved, you love Jesus and you always begin to grow to love what Jesus loves. That's why long-term the local church clarifies everything. See how a man, see how a woman handles life in the local church, how their heart goes out to the local church, how they are faithful and committed and stalwart toward – and I'm talking about a biblically healthy church, not one of these things that aren't really having enough Christianity in them to even be called churches anymore – I'm talking about there is a decently healthy church, watch a person in that context and in time they will be exposed for what they really are because if you love the Christ, love the church, you will love the church of the Christ. It's always that way. It's always that way.

Paul's whole apostleship was about the building up of the churches across the known world and the preaching where there were not churches and the establishing of new local churches in local church fellowships. So back to our main context here. He's sending Onesimus back to Philemon and he's going to use the reconciliation event, if you will, of Onesimus being forgiven and reconciled back to Philemon, as a model, as a teaching point for the local church saying, "This is how local churches bond together. This is how local churches stay together. This is how we love one another because God has changed us to have the capacity for such a glorious forgiveness and reconciliation," as he is hoping will be modeled between Onesimus and Philemon. You see, God knows, and I say God knows, God doesn't know, he created it this way. He saved us and designed us in our salvation to desperately need one another. If you're a Lone Ranger and you can do it on your own, and you can be the pastor of your household, and you can teach your own kids, and you can baptize your own kids, and you can just be king of your own spiritual kingdom, and you don't need the church, I'm going to tell you what you are, you've just said Jesus Christ is a liar because everything in the Scripture speaks of him having designed us to have to have each other. You need a faithful preacher or you will die spiritually. You need each other or you will die spiritually. And the pastor needs you desperately or he will die spiritually. We have to have each other.

Do you remember the ice storm we had a while back? I remember pulling up at my little farm where I deer hunt and I pulled into the driveway and all of those little pine trees, I say little, maybe 15 feet tall was the average height of them, all of them were just bent over like this. It was beautiful in a way but I thought, "I hoped one day I would get some money out of those pine trees, now they are just like this." So I called my forestry brother and said, "What's going on? Is it all over?" He just kind of laughed and said, "No." He

said, "If you'll look out in the woods, every one of those pine trees leans on each other." And he was exactly right. I only had very very few broken trees but only the trees who were on the road that were not surrounded by the other pine trees broke. All the rest of them just leaned on each other. That's a beautiful picture of the church. We have to have each other and some of y'all need to get to where you are here a little more so we can lean on you a little bit. Amen. There are some of you that I get to going like this and you ain't there and it's bad. It's not good.

You've got to understand God saved you because I need you. I need you. I was thinking about all of this work God has opened the door for. Do you realize this is four decades for us to see this come about? Four decades of prayer and work and giving and going to have what God has given us. I need to know, men, or you just listen to me, as your pastor, I need to know I can count on you for the next couple of decades before I wear out and die that you will stand with me in this work. I'll tell you, I've got a stirring about it. I don't know what God is doing, that we are a part of...this isn't a faddish gimmicky thing. We've gone the long long haul on this and in God's grace we have done it the right way and by the book. I need to know I can lean on you and I hope you feel like, "Well, I can lean on my pastor. He's going to get up and preach the word to me every Sunday or die trying." That's what you need from me but I need you and we need each other. We are pine trees in the ice storm of an ungodly world. We've got to have each other.

You know, a biblically healthy true local church is not the wellspring of life but – listen – it is the region where the wellspring flows from. The local church is the seat and the center of our witnessing for Christ and our working for Christ. All of the Christian ministries must yield to the centrality and the foundation of local church work.

A little more insight, a little more thoughts on love here. Paul points out that their faith, and he's talking about Philemon's in general but in a way since he is addressing this to the whole church, he says that clearly in the earlier verse, the faith he sees in all of them, all the household was shown in their great love for each other and this word "love" is the word "agape," and you understand the word "agape" is a word that the Apostle Paul invented. He created a new word because he says, "When I look at the Greek culture and use the words the Greek culture has for love, they have a love for brotherly love or familial family love, they have a word for sexual or romantic love but," he said, "those don't work. Those are too weak." So he made up a new Greek word because the love Christians have for one another is special and God-given. God gives you, you know, I can be in the mall, I can be anywhere and see a baby and sometimes just seeing a baby I just think, "Wow, I love that baby." They are just glorious, aren't they? Babies are just great as long as somebody else is raising them at the time. They're just great. Your heart just goes out to them. That's a common grace. Pagans have that, amen? But when I get around you guys, there is something in my heart that says, "I love those folks. I'd die for those folks. I want to live in fellowship with those folks." God did that in my heart. That's not common grace, that's redemptive grace that changed me like that and changed you like that; gave us this bonding, this attraction to one another.

So in the construction of this verse, Paul is asserting that love for the saints is the test of true saving faith. Now sometimes it has to grow and be developed but there ought to be at least the germ there. Something keeps you coming back after on those Sundays you say, "I think I've listened to old Noblit the last time I'm going to." No. No, something keeps pulling you back, keeps pulling you back despite my weaknesses, failures, unattractive aspects in my personality or whatever. Do you know what? God has done something in your heart that pulls you back to the body. Have you understood that the church has survived a lot of poor pastors and poor preachers? That gives me some hope.

A compass, you see, always turns to the invisible north pole. Always. You get a compass and it's going to move to the north pole. It's going to point that way, but consequently it points toward any object that's lying due north of where you are, and that's what happens when God saves you, he puts a compass of love in your heart and that compass of love always points to Jesus and everyone who is in Christ is the object of that love too because it points to them too. Always points to Jesus. So as you run around the world and you get a little bit worldly over here and you get a little bit weak and you get a little bit carnal over here and, "Woo, I like this! I like that!" But something in you if God has saved you, here you come right back to Grace Life Church of the Shoals. There is just something in me that wants to be with those people. I want to be around that preaching. I want to be around that fellowship because God put a love compass in my heart that always points to Jesus and always points me to his children.

Three ideas here about this love we have for the saints. First of all, it's an identifying love in that we begin to love the excellencies of Jesus that we see in each other. And I see that in you. I hope you see it in me. And I see it as the years and the decades have gone by. I've seen your sweetness grow, your humility grow, your love for sound doctrine grow, your love for the truth over all grow, your love for the saints grow. I see the excellencies of Christ in you and I love it. I just love it. I like being around you and you're the kind of people than I do any other kind of people. I can go to a Tennessee ballgame and enjoy that. I'm a Tennessee fan, watch them lose, whatever. But I'll be honest with you, if you Alabama fans don't feel this way, you are backslidden: it makes me a little bit sick because I think most of these people are getting excited over something that doesn't matter much and it's not long before I say, "That's fun. I enjoy that. It's common grace, but I want to get back to what I really enjoy. I want to get back to where the compass of my heart really points to and that's the saints of God that love Jesus." And by the way, you constantly need the abrasive sandpaper of sanctification a good local church gives you. Some of you young guys out there, you love Jesus. I know you love Jesus but you're also foolish because you're young. Do you know how I know? I was young and foolish. Now I'm old and foolish but I was young and foolish. As a matter of fact, the more you grow in Christ, the more foolish you think you probably are but you need the holy sandpaper of solid brothers and sisters and older men of God to keep you on track.

I had a young minister challenge me not long ago on a doctrinal issue and this young minister knows our ministry well, and I had another brother who said, "If he had been in your church and done that, your men would have smacked him down." He said, "Even if the pastor is wrong, you are 26 years old, what in heaven's name do you think you're

doing correcting a man who has got four decades of faithful ministry under his belt?" Are you hearing me? Can I just say this out there? Our younger generation needs a great big dose of humility. Not our kids. I see it in our kids and I thank God for that. You just go out in the world in general and all these millennials are just cock-full of themselves. I'll tell you what they need, they need to be loaded up on boats, at least the young men do, and taken over to the shores of Normandy and cast out on that beach while the blitzkrieg from the Nazis is pouring down upon them. It might make a man out of some of them. Do you know what the problem with the millennials are? They are too soft. They haven't done nothing. And I'm so sick of seeing them march in the streets and demand this and that. I'd like to kick – well, I had better not go there. They need to grow up. They need to grow up but I'm thankful that Grace Life...and that pastor was right when he said, "If that guy had done that in your church in a public setting, your men would have set him down," and I said, "That's exactly what would have happened." Not because I'm special but any pastor that has been faithful for four decades, you ought to respect them, you ought to honor them, and that's part of the love that God puts in our hearts.

We love the excellencies of Christ we see in our brothers and sisters. Secondly, we grow and have this heart of compassion for one another. There is something in us that says, "I'll help anybody in the world I can help who is hurting but I have a special desire to make sure my brothers and sisters are cared for." A special love. The Bible says as far as possible do good to all men but especially to the household of the faith. Then you love the way God has made it all to function, the way he put it all together. You see, listen to me, God saves his own church, he structures his own church. He said all of you have spiritual gifts and you are to use your spiritual gifts this way. Small group ministries is a biblical way to organize. We use those small groups. I've given you elders to oversee, lead and preach and teach. I've given you deacons to minister and care. And all of it comes together and God saves his church, he structures his church, he sanctifies his church and he sustains his church, and when you see all that coming together, you just love it and you think, "Man, God is wise. God is powerful. I love the way he made this work." You just love the church. You love what God is doing in it and through it.

III as we are moving along: grasping the treasure which is church fellowship. Grasping the treasure which is the church or church fellowship. Look at it there in verse 6. He says, "Paul," and he mentions the word "prayer" again, he says, "I pray that the fellowship of your faith may become effective through the knowledge of every good thing which is in you for Christ Jesus." Now Brother Barry King said about his text he preached to us earlier in the conference, we have scholars going everywhere with what this verse means, and I think they radically miss it. Here's why they radically miss the point. Do you know why they radically miss the point? Because they don't get the local church. They try to interpret Scripture with a light view of the local church but you've got to interpret Scripture with a heavy, weighted, central view of the local church because this is written to Philemon and the church that's at Philemon's house. If you forget that, you'll miss it.

So when he says here, "I am praying, Philemon, that the fellowship of your faith," who is he talking about when he says "the fellowship of your faith"? He's talking about just Philemon? No, because the last word of verse 5 is "the saints," the church, your church



fellowship, the brothers and sisters in your church, and he says, "I'm praying that the fellowship of your brothers and sisters in the faith will have its effective outreach, will have its effective, rather, outcome." As you grow as a church, as you get the church, as you grasp what God does in saving, sanctifying, sustaining his church, when you are a part of that and your love for one another grows, you will begin – and notice how he continues it here – through the knowledge or the recognition of every good thing which is in you for Christ Jesus. He said only when you get the church, only when you experience healthy church life will you begin to appreciate and recognize all the good stuff God has for you. It's almost like if you've got something that you really love to do and you really love to buy those things and it's kind of your hobby and you're always looking for the latest twist on it, maybe you're a mountain climber or something and you want the latest gear, you have to go in the door of that shop that specializes in that and look at all the stuff. That's kind of what Paul is saying. He's saying, "I hope that y'all keep fellowshiping and growing spiritually as a church so that you will increasingly recognize, you'll start getting the treasures God has given you." If you're not deep into serving God, deep into loving for church, deep into advancing the cause of the church, you're missing the treasures God has for you. It's the treasure which is the local church.

So we need to understand the foundational centrality of the church and that's why you pastors visiting with us this week, you've got to have a 20 year vision. You've got to keep on keep on keeping on. Every time you want to quit, you just keep on keeping on, preaching the word of God, trying to be biblically healthy, and slowly like popcorn, God regenerates people in that congregation and they begin to start tasting it and seeing it and drawn to it. They begin to grow in a love for one another and they begin to grasp, "This is a treasure that doesn't exist anywhere else on earth. We're part of something that is beyond and above and greater than anything else."

So when I talked about in this last session I wanted to challenge you to continue with a robust commitment to the purposes of God, this text fits it perfectly because Paul is writing to Philemon and saying, "I want you guys to get God's purpose in the church." Because you miss everything if you miss that. You miss everything. You're just doing this kind of individualistic religious thing that every other cult and every other religion of the world does.

Now, there is a point I need to point out here in the overall flow of this context and that is that Paul is saying, "Philemon, I hope the fellowship of the local church in your house keeps moving right along in love and sweetness and in unity and enjoying Christ, and you increasingly know what a treasure that is, and by the way, there is a little personal matter that fits all of this whole context, Philemon. His name is Onesimus. You know him. He robbed from you. He ran away. I'm sending him back. Now, part of the treasure of the church is that we deal with things righteously and biblically and we don't cause problems and splits and divisions and ugliness. We forgive each other and go on, amen? So Philemon, when Onesimus gets back, now you model from your heart one of the great great treasures we have as a local church family, that we forgive, we reconcile, we forget and go on together for the glory of God."

So this little episode of Onesimus restored back to Philemon is part of Paul giving the whole local church there in Philemon's house another view of the treasure which is the local church. In other words, as Philemon says, "He's my brother in Christ. He is no longer a slave. I forgive his debt. He's not only reconciled to me, we're going to take him into the whole church family." And when that whole event takes place with the beauty of it, the sweetness of it, the self-denying aspect of it, the forgiveness from Philemon's heart, the reconciliation, the rejoicing of the church in seeing the Gospel enable men, Gospel changed men enabled to do this beautiful thing together, that's another precious gem in the treasure which is the local church.

Are you with me, church? And you know, here at Grace Life Church, are you listening to me this morning? Here at Grace Life Church, we have gems like that popping up every week. Are you listening to me? And for you visiting pastors, this is the truth and it's not because we're special, it's because we've stayed at it longer than most: we have things every week that would cause real damage and real troubles in your average congregation. I won't say your average church because I don't think most of them are churches, but in your average they would cause real problems but because we've grown and we have matured and we love Jesus, we've just learned to forgive, forget, and we get reconciled and make it one more gem in the treasure that is the local church. Do you get that? Who could write this stuff other than God?

So I challenge Grace Life Church of the Shoals, I challenge every pastor and every church represented here today: gird up your loins, lash yourself in and say, "God, no matter what comes, hell or high water, difficult season, factions, divisions, people trying to ruin me, I'm back in the game with a robust conviction and commitment to fulfill God's purposes in the local church that my members might growingly and increasingly sense the great treasure the church is." Now listen, here it is, here's all of it right here: and when the church grows like that, the world looks and says, "That's unique. That's bigger than anything the world has. That's more glorious than anything the world experiences. God must be doing that." And he gets the glory. And that's why the church is the church, to reflect him and show his glory to the ends of the earth. And all God's people said? Amen.