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Grace Fellowship Church, Port Jervis, New York

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He Who Has Seen Me Has Seen the Father

John 14:8-11

Prayer: *Father God, we just, again, we thank you for the incredible gift that we are celebrating this day, we celebrate the cross in particular on the first Sunday of the month, and Lord, as we do that this morning, we just, again, we pray for your presence, we pray for your Holy Spirit's ability to look deeper into your word to see more and more of who you are and to understand more and more, we give our love to you. Father, give us the grace of your Spirit's presence, we pray, and make these words of permanent value, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.*

Well, like we said, this is the first Sunday of the month and as you know, this is the day we remember Christ and his cross. And Jesus on the night before he died, met with his disciples for the last time for one final Passover supper as described in Matthew 26 which says this: *Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you,*

for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." Jesus took bread, and he took wine and he offered them both up as symbols of his flesh and of his blood and then he asked the disciples to eat the bread and drink the cup in order to symbolically eat his flesh and drink his blood. And then he asked them to repeat this remembrance of his sacrifice on a regular basis, and that's what we are doing this morning. This is what we call the Lord's table. And we celebrate it once a month and we do that by meditating on what the Lord Jesus Christ did for us on the cross, by examining ourselves, asking God's Holy Spirit to point out areas in which he is convicting us of sins, by confessing our sins and then by participating in the elements. *John 6:53* says: So Jesus said to them, "*Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.*"

Well, we've been following the life of Jesus, we're in the fourteenth chapter of the Gospel of John which opens by saying this in *John 14:1*, says: "*Let not your hearts be troubled.*" These are Jesus's words. He says: "*Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and*

prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also." Well, so far so good. Jesus is telling his disciples to believe in God, to believe in himself and believe in the preparations that are being made for their future, but then Jesus goes out on a spiritual limb, so to speak, he says this in verse 4, and he says: *"And you know the way to where I am going."* And in fact they had no idea, that is, his disciples had no idea where Jesus was going. In verse 5 it says: *Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him."*

So Jesus tells the disciples that to know him is to know the Father, and then he adds *"From now on you do know him and have seen him."* And Jesus again speaking to Philip, says that to see him is also to see his Father. And we saw last time what Philip's answer was all about, and we saw that when Philip made his answer, we understood that there was much that he still had to learn in terms of both seeing the Father and the Son. This is the answer. This is John 14:8. *Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me*

has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves." See, Jesus is incredulous. Philip has been with Jesus for years now and he still really has not seen Jesus or his Father because Jesus says, "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father."

And what I want to do this morning is I want to speak a little bit more about what it means to really see Jesus. Now, I want to say, first of all, that sight itself is a gift from God. And make no mistake about it, it is a gift that God alone gives, and that is spiritual insight, the ability to see that Jesus Christ alone is the path to eternal life and salvation that by faith in his death on the cross we can be made right and given Christ's righteousness. That sight, that comes from God alone. And it comes from God alone because all of us are born spiritually blind. *2 Corinthians 4:4* says: *The god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.* I mean, God refers to this very planet that we live on as a place known as the darkness. Spiritually speaking, we all grope around in this

darkness and most of us do so thinking we are basking in light. See, even more serious than our blindness is the delusion that our spiritual eyes are 20/20. And Jesus's primary goal in his ministry was clearly stated right at the outset by him in *Luke 4:16*, he says this: *And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read. And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind."* Countless times Jesus offered to cure blind spiritual eyes, and more often than not he was met with scornful resistance by the spiritually blind who are insulted at the offer. And you know, Jesus had no cure for that kind of blindness. All he had for that was judgment. He says this in *John 9:39*, Jesus said: *"For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind."* Some of the Pharisees near him heard these things, and said to him, *"Are we also blind?"* Jesus said to them, *"If you were blind, you would have no guilt; but now that you say, 'We see,' your guilt remains."*

I want to go back to Philip. Philip clearly had a vision problem but it's not the one that you might be thinking. Philip's problem

was a problem that many of us have. It's not necessarily a failure to see Jesus as Lord and Savior, after all, Philip was one of the very first disciples to recognize that Jesus was indeed the Messiah. If we go back to when Jesus is assembling the disciples, we read in *John 1:43*, it says this, it says: *The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathaneal and said to him, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."* So here we look at Philip and we understand he trusted in Jesus as the Messiah right from the beginning, but why is Jesus so upset at his response? Well, he's upset because Philip, in spite of living day in and day out with God in the flesh, seems stuck still in this spiritual infancy. He saw Jesus every single day and yet somehow he managed to miss much of who Jesus really was. But you see, Philip is not alone.

You know, I got interviewed the other day by the pastor of Centerpoint Church, Neal Wintermute. He's interviewing different pastors. He wants to get a sense of where each church is at so that their church can better pray for them and I salute him for that. But one of the questions that he asked me was, he says, what do you see your job as? I thought about it for a second. I said my -- my job primary is to help you see Jesus more clearly. That's

really my job. I said my job is to help you fall deeper and deeper in love with Jesus by opening up the scriptures to reveal him to you. Jesus once said this to his enemies who loved to quote the scriptures. He said this in *John 5:39*, he says: "*You search the scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me.*" So what I was saying to Neal is that it's my job to open up the scriptures as they bear witness about Christ. I think it was Jonathan Edwards that said that there are two different ways that you can fall in love with Jesus Christ, two different ways that people approach this. Most people first love Jesus because of what he's done for them. I mean think of it, it is Jesus who gives you eternal life. It is Jesus who died on a cross and opened up that pathway for you. It is Jesus who has gone on ahead of us to prepare for us a future. I mean I know when I was a brand new believer, I fell in love with Jesus because of all of the wonderful things that he had done for me. And so in essence we start off loving Jesus not because of who he is but because of what he's done for us. We love him because he is so useful. I mean that sounds stark and it almost sounds ugly, but it's the truth. What is genuinely astounding to me is that God is willing, he's willing to be accepted on those terms. You know, after Philip said to Jesus, "*Show us the Father,*" listen to what Jesus says in response. He says, "*Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I*

do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves."

Hear what Jesus is saying here? What he's saying to Philip, he says, if you're not going to believe me, Philip, for who I am, at least believe me for what I've done. Believe on account of the works themselves. See, this is basically where most of us start out. I mean, it may be a perfectly appropriate starting place but it is still far from the mark of what honors and glorifies Christ. I mean we fall in love with Christ at first because he's altogether useful, but we stay in love and we grow deeper in love when we learn and discover through the scriptures that Jesus is altogether lovely. It is the loveliness of Christ that is also the key for us to successfully live out the Christian life. You know, one thing about us Christians is we're always vacillating between two extremes. We have legalism on the one side that says here's the set of rules, here's the way you have to live, you got to do this, this, this, and this. If you don't do this, this, this, and this, you're not a good Christian. Or you look at the other side that says, oh, no, we're believers, we're under grace. There's no rules at all. We don't have anything that we have to worry about in that way. Well, you know, when you fall deeper and deeper in love with Christ, it's supposed to be like falling in love with your spouse. It's supposed to be the kind of love that you have that just

overwhelms and amazes you. You don't think about rule keeping at all. You think about pleasing the one whom you love so deeply. So my job is really to help you fall more deeply in love with Christ, so deeply in love with Christ that to do his will is your delight. And to do that we have to learn more and more about Christ, we have to learn how to see Christ, and that's no small task. God is very clear that if you understand this concept about falling in love with Christ and making his delight your delight, if you understand that and pursue that, your entire life will fall into place, your entire life will work. Listen to what God says in *Psalm 37*, he says: *Delight yourself in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart.* But you know, in order to do that you have to learn how delightful Jesus is. And that's precisely the challenge that Philip and most of us have. And so the question is: Do we delight in Jesus?

As the elders come forward to distribute the bread, I would also give us this warning that God gives about communion itself. This is in *1 Corinthians 11:28*. It says: *But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. But when we are*

judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world. This is a warning I repeat each month at communion time and I say basically that communion is very serious business, and to enter into it in an unworthy manner as to literally court disaster. And what I say is this: if you are not absolutely confident that you are a child of the King or if you first need to be reconciled to your brother or sister before you bring your sacrifice to the altar, just pass the elements on when they come to you. I say no one's going to think you strange, they may indeed think you wise because you took this so seriously. But on the other hand, you can also make the mistake of thinking that unless you are living a spotlessly perfect life you are unworthy to receive communion and that, too, is a mistake the enemy would love to catch you with. See, being a child of the King doesn't mean that you don't sin and it doesn't mean that you never fall. It means that we recognize that the salvation that we have is a gift that God has given to us that no one is ever capable of earning. And as Dane Ortlund puts it: "In the kingdom of God, the one thing that qualifies you is knowing that you don't qualify, and the one thing that disqualifies you is thinking that you do." And again, it also means that when we fail, we are aware that we have sinned and we're aware of that because we have God's Spirit living within us and so we grieve as children who know that we have a Father who longs to forgive and cleanse us who says in *1 John 1:9*: *If we*

confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. So being a child of the King doesn't mean we're without sin. It means that when we sin, we understand we have an advocate with the Father, we have someone speaking on our behalf. 1 John 2:1 says: My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin, but if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father -- Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. And so because we have Jesus's own righteousness and not our own, we are then therefore free to eat at his table. And so if you love your Lord, don't deny yourself the privilege that Jesus purchased for you at the cost of his blood. I mean, he lived the life we were supposed to live and then he died the death we all deserved to die in our place so that we could be made worthy of heaven. So having understood that, having understood that it is Christ's righteousness that makes us worthy, take some time just right now for a moment and ask yourself how well do I see Jesus?

1 Corinthians, the 11th chapter, 23rd verse says: For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." So take, and eat.

We're talking about sight, and there's three different types of "sight" in the Greek language that are all translated by different words in the Greek that translate in the English with a simple verb "to see." And James Montgomery Boice pointed out in the Easter Story three different Greek words that are all translated in English by the past of the verb "to see," it's "saw." It gives us an indication of how different the two different languages are and that's important when we're trying to see who Jesus is.

Let me give you a little Greek lesson based on the story of what happened on resurrection Sunday. The story starts out with Peter and John and they're racing to the tomb of Jesus and John out distances Peter, he gets to the tomb first. Let me just pick up on it on *John 20*, it says this: *So Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going toward the tomb. Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. And stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there, and the face cloth, which had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed. Those are three different words, "saw," "saw," and "saw," three different Greek words. Now John*

reaches the tomb first, he stoops in and he sees the linen clothes that are lying there. That's the first sighting. That's the first use of the Greek word and it's the word "bleppo." It means to see on the most basic level of seeing, something, I mean, you open your eyes, there it is. That's what John saw. He saw those linen cloths with his own two eyes. Simple enough. The next sighting, the next "saw" is the Greek word "theoreo." Peter sees those linen cloths but it's a very different kind of seeing. He's looking at them and he sees that they're neatly piled up in exactly the place where they would have been had they covered the Lord Jesus's dead body. And so he's looking at the cloths and he's realizing that if this was simply a matter of somebody coming and snatching a body, they would not have neatly stacked the cloths where they have, and so their appearance would have been extremely different than what he sees, and he's looking right at that. And the Greek verb describes how Peter saw it. It means much more than simply seeing it, it means to scrutinize something, to look at something deducing something else from what you see. So Peter looks at the linen clothing and comes to a conclusion that something extraordinary has happened in the tomb. Now how Peter -- now we understand that Peter saw the very same cloths that John saw but this time he's not seeing with his eyes, this time he's seeing with his mind. Well, now by this time, John steps back into the tomb and he gives us the third sighting, the third "saw," and this term the text uses the

Greek word "orao" which means "to see with understanding." So John has stepped back into the tomb and now he's seeing what Peter has seen. He understands something extraordinary has taken place, the tomb is empty, Christ is no longer there, he is risen. So the Greek in this one passage captures three different types of seeing. There's bleppo, to see with your eyes; there's theoreo, to see with your mind; and there's orao, to see with your understanding. Now which one do you think Jesus used when he spoke to Philip in verse 7 when he said this: *"If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him."* Well, it's the third kind of seeing. It's the "to see with understanding" type of seeing. That's what Jesus desperately wanted from Philip. And it's Philip's answer: *"Show us the Father and that will be enough,"* that proves to Jesus that Philip, he's not even close. Philip is you and me. I mean how many times have you thought to yourself or maybe wished for someone else the same answer that Philip gave? Lord, if you give me something physical, something visible, something tangible, something I can get my hands on, it would make all the difference in the world. Well, Jesus is basically saying to Philip, no, no, Philip, it would not. And he knows what he's talking about.

I want you to think back for a minute, just think about your own personal lives, something that you've participated in. Have you

ever been in some type of extraordinary experience? For some it may have been an automobile accident, for some -- maybe some of you witnessed a crime, maybe something just extraordinary that took place in your life. I mentioned this once before, one of my own extraordinary experiences was Janice and I were walking up the street and we saw about a hundred yards ahead of us garbage cans with garbage strewn all over the place, and as we're walking up the street, we're going on our walk, I like to lecture and so I'm lecturing to her about bears and what bears do and that kind of stuff and in the midst of my lecturing she says, "Well, all I know is that he's right there." So I looked, I mean literally 15 feet away from us is a very large black bear sitting on the side of the road. So I mean he literally could have reached out and snatched us. And so I said to Jan, I said, "Just keep walking, just keep walking, pretend he's not there." So we got about a hundred yards away and we both did what everybody does when they're in those kind of situations, we looked at each other, and I said, "Did you see what I just saw?" She said, "Did you see what I just saw?" We basically needed each other to confirm what it was we saw, and if I didn't have Janice to confirm what it is I saw, I guarantee you within five minutes after that took place, I would have said, "Did I really see that?" I mean, "Did that really happen?" Well, you know, that's not a very firm foundation to base your faith on. I mean, I know I've been in a number of those types of circumstances

and I distinctly remember thinking literally within minutes wondering did I really see that? Did I really hear that? And you know, I think we think if we had this kind of eye witness encounter with Jesus, it would be lasting and it would be significant, but in my own experience I realize I almost instantaneously started to doubt what it was I heard or saw. And, you know, Philip is proof of this. I mean Philip was looking for just such an experience even though we know that Philip had lots and lots of those experiences because he lived with Jesus for years. He had already witnessed dozens and dozens of them. So Jesus implores Philip not to see him just with his eyes or his mind but also with his understanding, and for good reason. You see, experience is not how you see Jesus. Scripture is.

Let me give you another example. If you remember, there's this conversation that takes place, this awful conversation between a rich man who is down in hell and he's speaking to father Abraham and they're talking about Lazarus, and this is a case in point of how seeing with the eyes or even the mind alone is going to ultimately fail us. Jesus is telling a story, and he's telling the story of this rich man and Lazarus who was extraordinarily poor, so poor that he has to survive by eating the crumbs that fall from the rich man's table, and so both Lazarus and the rich man die and Lazarus is transported by angels to Abraham's bosom while the rich

man goes straight down to hell where he is in torment. So we pick up the story at Luke 16:24. It says this: "And he called out -- this is the rich man -- "He called out 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the end of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in anguish in this flame.' But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner bad things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish. And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, in order that those who would pass from here to you may not be able, and none may cross from there to us.' And he said, 'Then I beg you, father, to send them to my father's house -- for I have five brothers -- so that he may warn them, lest they also come into this place of torment.' But Abraham said, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.' And he said, 'No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.' He said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.'"

So the rich man says if my brothers had this extraordinary experience, if they saw Lazarus literally rise from the dead to warn them about their brother's fate, then surely they would respond because they would be able to see with their own eyes and see with their own minds and then get this truth once and for all

and not wind up coming to this dreadful place where I find myself in. Well, Abraham's answer is unequivocal. He says they have Moses and the Prophets. He says they have the scripture, they have the Bible, the revealed word of God. He says if that's not enough to convince them that someone -- then someone literally rising from the dead is going to be just as unsuccessful. And what Abraham is saying here is that there are different ways to truly see something. You see, you can see with your eyes, you can see with your mind, and you can see with your understanding. And the ability to successfully see lies not in the contents of what is being seen itself but in the one who is doing the seeing in the first place.

Let me give you one more example. This is from *Luke 7:36*, it says: *One of the Pharisees asked him -- that is Jesus -- to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table. And behold, a woman of the city, who was a sinner, when she learned that he was reclining at table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of ointment, and standing behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head and kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment. Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him,*

for she is a sinner." And Jesus answering said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." And he answered, "Say it, Teacher." "A certain moneylender had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. When they could not pay, he canceled the debt of both. Now which of them will love him more?" Simon answered, "The one, I suppose, for whom he canceled the larger debt." And he said to him, "You have judged rightly." Then turning toward the woman he said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not ceased to kiss my feet. You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven -- for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little." And he said to her, "Your sins are forgiven."

Now Simon the Pharisee, this fellow, this Simon, is everything we think Pharisees are. He is cold, he is calculating, he's absolutely convinced of his own spiritual superiority, and as a result, he's absolutely blind. I mean he reluctantly agrees with Jesus that seeing the extent of God's forgiveness is the key to loving him, but, but he has no love for Jesus. And he has no love for Jesus because he can't see him. You know, the sinful woman, on

the other hand, she's somebody who sees Jesus perfectly. She's overwhelmed with love for him because she sees him. Jesus immediately contrasts the incredible depth of vision that the woman has versus the absolute blindness of Simon. And so we have this woman deeply captured by sin, clearly of no social standing whatsoever, but she sees Jesus the way we could only hope to see him. So Jesus calls Simon out with one simple question about seeing. In verse 44, he says: *Then turning toward the woman he said to Simon, "Do you see this woman?"* Well, Jesus did. I mean, he looked at her and he saw her guilt, her fears, her repentance, her forgiveness, her joy, and above all, her love. She looked at Jesus and what did she see? She saw compassion, she saw forgiveness, she saw salvation. Simon looked at her and he saw nothing. The Greek word that Jesus used to ask Simon if he even saw the woman was "bleppo," that's the most basic form of seeing there was. And even at that level, he couldn't see a thing. She didn't exist. In fact Simon can't see anyone except his own kind. And he and the woman he scorned illustrate perfectly the exact premise I'm trying to speak of this morning. You see, you don't see Jesus with your eyes, you don't see Jesus with your mind, you see Jesus with your understanding and your understanding is shaped by what you believe. I mean Simon couldn't see the woman and he certainly couldn't see Jesus. Jesus because he's Jesus saw the woman perfectly. But she saw Jesus as well, and because she saw

him with her eyes, her mind and her understanding and her heart, she was overwhelmed with love for him.

As the elders distribute the cup, I'd like to us to ask ourselves the question: How do we see Jesus? See, our problem with seeing Jesus is the same problem that Philip had. Basically I think we have everything backwards. What we do is we say to God, God, do this, do that, the other thing, let me see this, that, and, the other thing and then I'll believe. Well Jesus, we may find, does not respond. Here's why. I mean we have a cliché that says it all, we say, "Seeing is believing." Well God takes that exact thought and he reverses it. He says no, you got it all wrong. It's not seeing is believing, it's believing is seeing. When you believe, you begin to see. And what so frustrated Jesus about Philip was his refusal to believe what Jesus had been demonstrating for years. And so what he tells him, he says, if you're not going to believe in me and my word, at least believe in the miracles that I've done. Again he says: *"Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me or else believe on account of the works themselves."* What matters, Philip, says Jesus, is that you believe. That's where we start, but that's not where we stay. See, much of our ability to see Jesus as he would have us see him lies in us and our ability to believe. I don't know how many times you've asked Jesus to simply show himself to you, and to your

mind's eyes he has refused. I don't know how many times you felt like your prayers to Jesus just went off into the sky and floated out into nowhere. I don't know how many times you fought with doubt that he even exists and you might want to say, like Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and it is enough for us." And yet Jesus' response to us is the same as his response to Philip: Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long and you still do not know me, Philip?" See, Jesus isn't speaking just to Philip. He's speaking to Mary and Steve and Bill and Bob and Barbara and Jim and everybody else. "How can you say, 'Show us the Father?' Believe me that I'm in the Father and the Father is in me or else believe on account of the works themselves," and we say what works? Well, what works are you talking about? I'm struggling here. What have you done for me? How do I know you're real? Well, I can tell you right now if you love Jesus, it's because God's already done four separate works in your life. And he's given you a future promise of a fifth work. Let me just show that to you. This is *Romans 8:29*. He says: *For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.* So if you are his, God the Father says you've been foreknown, you've been predestined, you've been called, you've been justified, and he goes on to say you also

have a promise that you will be glorified. That's not a theoretical pie in the sky. You see, if you know Jesus, that is, if you know God the Son, these are facts. It's a fait accompli. The question is do you believe it? You see, the woman who Simon scorned knew only a fraction of the works that we already know God has done in our lives, but it was enough to bring her to tears of worship, and so we ask ourselves the question this morning: What has she been given that we haven't been given? I mean, what have we missed that she didn't? Well, the answer is belief. *"Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves."*

As you approach the cup, consider another skeptical believer. This is someone whose son was demon-possessed. This is *Mark 9:21*. It says: *And Jesus asked his father, "How long has this been happening to him?" And he said, "From childhood. And it has often cast him into fire and into water, to destroy him. But if you can do anything, have compassion on us and help us." And Jesus said to him, "'If you can!' 'If you can!' All things are possible for one who believes."* Immediately the father of the child cried out and said, *"I believe; help me unbelief!"* That father is us. The father says if you can do something, and Jesus says "If?" "'If you can!' All things are possible for one who believes," including falling deeper and deeper in love with Jesus. If you want to fall

deeper in love with Jesus, ask for the ability to believe.

As you take up the cup, I'd like us all to repeat that Father's prayer. It's the one that enables us to truly see Jesus. Before we take the cup, just repeat after me, I believe, Lord; help thou my unbelief! Can you say that? I believe, Lord; help thou my unbelief! *1 Corinthians 11:25* says: *In the same manner he also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."* So take, and drink.

This is the part where we call this head, heart and feet, this the part where we try to give a practical application to what it means to remember Jesus. And one of the things that we want to talk about now is probably one of the most practical applications we've seen since this church has been around, and that's the handicapped access project that we are undertaking, and this is what I want to speak to you a little bit about this morning.

As you well know, we've been wrestling with this for a number of months now, and ever since -- if you don't know, we had a young man who fell and was paralyzed, severed his spinal cord, he's in a wheelchair now and this church is not only not handicapped access-able, it's hostile, I would say, to those who are

handicapped, and so God has been speaking to us for years about how we are to go about doing this and he's spoken very, very loudly and clearly through Aedan's situation. So what we've been doing is we've been taking the time to -- 'cause this is a considerable amount of money to spend, we've been taking the time to kind of work through each different approach to how we're going to make this building accessible. And we started out with a ramp that would go up along the side here and some of the down side of that was that that would mean that Aedan would get in right at the very front of the building in the back and that's not someplace that he wants to have to enter in and we are going to make that bathroom the sound room that Luke is standing in right now, that's going to become an ADA compliant bathroom. That was the idea. But as we thought it through, this still gives Aedan only access to this floor and the youth group does a lot downstairs. And so we had some other options. One other option would be to have a lift that would go in the front of the building and Aedan could come out and come up on the lift and get right to the front there, have access into here, have access to an ADA compliant bathroom but it still didn't give him access to downstairs. And so we've kind of argued through the first one which was the ramp, the second one, which was a lift over here, and we've arrived at the third one which is going to be an elevator of sorts, it's a lift that will go to two floors. Where that window is right there is going to become a door, right

in the corner there. So Aedan will be able to get out of the car, come right over here, get in, push -- be pushed into the elevator on a wheelchair, there will be somebody behind him, he can press a button and go downstairs and have access to all of downstairs, upstairs have access to here and access to an ADA compliant bathroom right there. The sound room's going to be in front. It took a while for us to get to this position because this obviously involves a lot of money. Your money. And it's the Lord's money. And we basically want to spend it in the best possible way, and so we approached this the way we approach everything, said, Lord, we are -- we are not brilliant, we are not insightful, we are just men, sinful men, trying to figure out the best way to do this. We come before you with our ignorance and we ask for your wisdom. It's a great plan. It works all the time. All you have to do is humble yourself and say, I don't got it, Lord. And God says, I got you. And so this is the way we're going forward with this idea, and this is where we're at right now. Obviously we are -- this is going to cost a lot of money. We have a lot of other ideas as to what we want to do because it's going to cost us a classroom downstairs, we are very, very tight for classroom space, there's been a number of different ideas and a number of different suggestions as to what to do, not the least of which, one of the ones that I found fascinating is to bring the upper part forward and create a mezzanine where you could have some more classroom

space. So there's a lot of ideas that are still percolating that we're praying through and praying about and arguing about. But we are going this week, we have hired a friend of ours, mutual friend of ours, who does this type of thing, Mike Desocio, he's going to be meeting with the building inspector and we're going to throw as much as we can to him about permissions, to get this, that, and the other thing. It doesn't mean we're going to necessarily do it but we're just going to see what they'll let us do.

And so what I really want to ask for us today is a number of things. I want us to be aware that we're going to start a fundraising thing, we're going to have one of those little thermometers with the -- so you can chart your progress, because this is -- as I said, this is going to be a pretty steep financial burden. So we're going to be approaching it that way but we're going to be sinking our teeth into this, but what I really would ask for us today is prayer this week because this is where we're going to be meeting with the civil authorities, if you will, and part of -- a lot of what we had to deal with is we've got neighbors on both sides that are -- one particular neighbor is not exactly thrilled with us and our singing and that kind of stuff, and so we know that we have the potential of stepping on toes and we know that neighbors could create a real problem. So we need to bathe what we're doing now in prayer. And so I'm asking you all this

week to be praying specifically for the meetings that are going to be taking place with the civil authorities and then once we get permission, which we should not have a problem with because we've already met with the building inspector, he's already indicated, you know, some flexibility there, and what we're doing shouldn't require anything extraordinary, so we're just praying that that goes forward and once we get that permission, then we're just going to start moving forward. So that having been said, let me just lead us all in prayer.

Father, we just, again, I thank you for Aedan, I thank you for the example that he has been to us of what Romans 8:28 is all about. God says all things work together for good to those who love God, who are called according to his purpose, and this was a terrible, tragic thing that happened to him and to his family and to Sonya and to Cindy and to Aivee and to Don and to all of the Roach family, Lord, we just know that this was an incredibly difficult thing to handle and yet by your grace they have been walking through this aware that you are lifting them up. And Aedan is home now, and so there's still part of the adjustment that he has to go through, he's been weeks, months, in rehab but now the reality of his new life is upon him and there's been a great deal of work that's been done at the house, there's been a great cooperation by this church in meals and volunteering and helping in whichever way

that we can and so we want to pray especially for Aedan and his family that this adjustment would be bathed in your grace. And there's going to be a big adjustment to this church, to this building, it's just a building but what matters here is the people inside and so we pray as we go forward with this that we would have your grace, your power, your wisdom, your energy, your blessing. And we also pray, Lord, that you would just guide us each and every step of the way. And we pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.