

## **Sermon Podcast 9-8.MP3**

**0:08**

Alright. Turn in your bibles this morning to Ephesians chapter 1. Ephesians chapter 1. In just a moment, we are gonna read verses 1 through 14. And today, we are beginning a new series that's gonna last for the next 8 weeks.

**0:22**

And what we are doing is we are gonna be taking a deep dive into Paul's letter to the church at Ephesus. And y'all part of the reason that we do that is that we believe that God has uniquely spoken through these scriptures, through the letters of Paul, through the stories of the gospel so that our lives might be transformed. So so when we read the story of God and God's people, our greatest hope is that we will have an encounter with the crucified and resurrected Jesus. And so the best thing we can do as a church is to spend time immersing ourselves in the story of God, in the stories of scripture. And so that's what we're gonna do for the next 8 weeks, and you have an opportunity over these next 8 weeks to read the book of Ephesians for yourself multiple times over.

**1:06**

What I'm going to encourage, it's only 6 chapters long, and so you can read it at a brisk clip of about 15 minutes or so, 15, 20 minutes. You can read the whole thing. And I, at least, I'm gonna do my best to try and memorize it. And I know that's probably not possible, but I think it's worth a shot, you guys. And I wanna encourage all of you to do that as well, to take seriously the call to read scripture and to learn from what Paul is saying to the church at Ephesus, but also and maybe just as importantly, what Paul is saying to the church right here in Augusta today.

**1:37**

And so we'll begin by reading Ephesians chapter 1. We'll read verses 1 through 14. This is Paul, one of the earliest followers of Jesus speaking to the church then, and as I said, the church here today. If you got your bibles, follow along. If not, the words will be on the screen as I begin.

### 1:52

From Paul, one of King Jesus' apostles through God's purpose to the holy ones in Ephesus who are also loyal believers in King Jesus, may God our father and the Lord Jesus, the king, give you grace and peace. Let us bless God, the father of our Lord Jesus, the King, for he has blessed us in the King with every spirit inspired blessing in the heavenly realm. He chose us in him before the world was made so as to be holy and irreproachable before him in love. He foreordained us for himself to be adopted as sons and daughters through Jesus the king. That's how he wanted it, and that's what gave him delight so that the glory of his grace, the grace he poured on us in his beloved one might receive its due praise.

### 2:39

In the king and through his blood, we have deliverance, that is our sins have been forgiven, through the wealth of his grace which he lavished on us. Yes. With all wisdom and insight, he has made known to us the secret of his purpose just as he wanted it to be and set it forward in him as a blueprint for when the time was right. His plan was to sum up the whole cosmos in the king. Yes.

### 3:04

Everything in heaven and on earth in him. In him, we have received the inheritance. We were foreordained to this according to the intention of the one who does all things in accordance with the council of his purpose. This was so that we, we who first hoped in the King, might live for the praise of his glory. In him, you too, who heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation and believed it, In him, you were marked out with the spirit of promise, the holy one.

### 3:37

The the spirit is the guarantee of our inheritance until the time when the people who are God's special possession are finally reclaimed and freed. This too is for the praise of his glory. Hi, Charles. So you might not know this, but I am from, I'm from Gainesville, Georgia. And so if you're here for the first time, I am, from Gainesville, which if you don't know, Gainesville is just, about an hour northeast of Atlanta.

**4:03**

And do not let this vest and these, non pleated khakis fool you. I am from the country, y'all. I'm from the country. Okay? And growing up in the country, one of the things that we used to do in Gainesville is we would go up to Lumpkin County.

**4:16**

Anybody any Lumpkin County fans in the house? Anybody? Thank you, Jeff. I knew you love Lumpkin County. One brother in the house.

**4:21**

And we would go to Lumpkin County, and what we would do and when we were in high school, me and my buddies, is we would get in West's Ford Bronco, and there would be about 14 of us in one Ford Bronco, and we would go up to this place called Blood Mountain. Now you do not ever tell me you're from the country if you don't have a place called Blood Mountain. Okay? Right? And we would go up to Blood Mountain, and Blood Mountain is actually one of the tallest peaks in the state of Georgia.

**4:46**

It's the tallest peak on the Appalachian Basin and the Appalachian Trail in the state of Georgia. And y'all, it was a rickety and rough ride when you're going up to Blood Mountain. Right? Single file. I don't know why they call it Blood Mountain.

**4:56**

Maybe because a lot of people, like, shed blood as they're trying to get up. I don't know. But, y'all, what would happen is that when you got to the top and you're worried, like, how are we gonna get here? Are we ever gonna arrive? But when you got there, you would get out of your car and we'd set up our tents, and then we would go overlook at this peak of Blood Mountain, this incredible view.

**5:17**

And from the top of Blood Mountain, you could see down into Cleveland, and you could see all of the towns that are all around you, and you could see for miles on in, and you could see the entire vista of God's good creation. And I want you to hold that

image in your mind because I think that as we dive into the book of Ephesians, that's the sort of thing that Paul is doing. Right? Let me explain what I mean because so many of Paul's letters, right, when you read, when you read Paul's letter to the church at Philippi, if you read Paul's letter to the church at Galatia, they're laser focused on particular topics. They're they're laser focused on individual issues that are happening in unique churches.

#### **6:01**

But this letter to the church at Ephesus, it's a broader letter, and it isn't focused just on one thing, but this letter is focused on a variety of things. And so standing at the top of this mountain known as the book of Ephesians, we get to see so much more about the whole of the Christian gospel. And so over the course of the next 8 weeks, y'all, here's some of the things that we're gonna be talking about. We're gonna talk about God. We're gonna talk about the world.

#### **6:27**

We're gonna talk about the church and who we are called to be as the people of God. We're gonna talk about salvation and this idea that we are saved not just to go to heaven one day when we die, but we are saved to become a certain sort of person and people right here and right now. We're gonna talk about Christian behavior. That's right. As followers of Jesus, we are called to behave and to live certain ways in the world, and we're gonna spend time talking about that.

#### **6:53**

We're gonna talk about marriage. We're gonna talk about marriage because there's that passage in Ephesians chapter 5 that everybody's afraid of where it says, wives, submit to your husbands. Right? I love selling telling that one at weddings. Isn't that great?

#### **7:04**

People love to hear that. And husbands, be willing to die for your wives as Christ died for the church. We're gonna talk about family and how do we organize a family unit in a world where the family has been turned absolutely upside down. And then we're gonna talk about spiritual warfare. This idea that we are engaged in a

battle not with other human beings, but with the powers and the principalities.

### 7:29

And so you can see that this book isn't just focused on one thing in particular, but it is focused on the widest variety of issues and thoughts for how we can be the people that God intends for us to be uniquely situated to follow Jesus in the world. And so that's what we are going to do over the course of the next 8 weeks. And and what I want to do this morning is I want to do something really kind of simple. I just want to lay out the broad themes by looking at these first 14 verses. But before we get to those first 14 verses, I wanna just kinda let you know what's happening in this letter.

### 8:05

Because it is Paul's letter to the church at Ephesus, or so we read. But y'all, this is absolutely fascinating, because when we get to the earliest copies, right, the earliest copies of this, manuscript to the letter to the church at Ephesus, what we find, y'all, this is absolutely fascinating, is that none of the earliest copies actually have from Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus, to the church at Ephesus. It says, from Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, of King Jesus, according to God's purpose, and then it is just to the church. And so while we have it as a letter to the church at Ephesus, what most scholars believe and is generally, accepted whether it is progressive, evangelical, theology across the board, biblical studies across the board, that this letter in particular, it's a circular letter. It isn't intended to be just for 1 church, but it's intended to all of the churches that at the time period was known as the region of Asia.

### 9:05

And so Paul is writing this letter as a broad reminder of all of those Christian themes that we just talked about a few seconds ago. And the most interesting part of this letter to me is that he's sending a circular letter. It's to a bunch of different churches, but where he is writing it from, you guys, he is writing it from a prison cell in the city of Ephesus. He had been ministering and and doing the work of Jesus in Ephesus for almost 2 years long period of time and he gets thrown in prison. And it is from that

situation in a Roman prison cell that Paul writes this incredible letter that is filled with soaring rhetoric and beauty and thanksgiving and generosity.

**9:51**

And we need to think about this for just a few moments you guys. Because Paul writing from prison and Roman prison is not like prison in America in the 21st century. Right? In some levels, there's more freedom. But in the most pressing levels, and if you're a prisoner in a Roman prison system, you understand that at any given moment, a Roman guard can show up, can say that he is tired of dealing with you, and with no repercussions, he can end your life.

**10:21**

And so Paul is living under this constant stress. Paul is living under this constant state of unknown. And yet, he sends this letter to churches around the region of Asia. And what do we find? But a letter that over and over and over again is filled with goodness.

**10:43**

It's filled with joy. It's filled with grace and with generosity. Y'all, if you only hear me say one thing this morning, here's what I want you to understand that if Paul can write that letter from a prison in Ephesus where his life is consistency consistently on the line and he does not know what is gonna happen next, if he can write with joy in those circumstances, then I want you to know this, that the letter to the church at Ephesus shows us that joy and gratitude, y'all, it is not dependent on your external circumstances. It is not dependent on your external circumstances. When we find ourselves deeply rooted in the faith of Jesus Christ, we can be walking through the valley of the shadow of death and yet still find joy and still find space for gratitude and generosity.

**11:37**

And some of us y'all, some of us are in that exact space right here today in this room. And we cut on our news, and we see another school shooting happens in Barrow County. And we cut on our news and we see another tragedy happening across the

country. And it is so easy to be deflated and to give up, But if Paul, writing from prison, can be filled with grace and with hope and with joy, y'all, what I want us to understand is that every single one of us can live in that sort of way no matter the circumstances that we find ourselves in. And so Paul says, hey, Paul.

### 12:20

I I'm a follower, an apostle of King Jesus according to God's purpose. He he says, to the holy ones in Ephesus. Right? To the faithful, to the loyal I love the translation I use. To the loyal believers, followers in King Jesus, the Lord, grace and peace to you.

### 12:41

Y'all, Paul writing to churches and to people that he's never met before, what does he begin with? But grace and with peace. What god wants for us is to be filled with a generosity of spirit, to be filled with shalom, God's intent and God's purpose for the world. And he says, you faithful followers in Jesus Let me just pause on this for just a minute. That loyal believers, that word in the Greek, it it Some of your translations it says followers, but it actually the Greek is better translated loyal believers.

### 13:19

To be a follower of Jesus Christ, you guys, isn't just to give mental ascent to something. But to be a follower of Jesus Christ is to be a loyal follower, not just with your mind, but with the whole of your life. Now what I wanna focus on for the next few minutes is what Paul does in in chapter 1 verses 3 through 14. Because if we can wrap our minds around that, what I think is we will be in a position to live and to live better right here and right now. Because Paul says, I'm writing to the church, and here's what I want us to do.

### 13:53

Right? I want us to bless God. To bless God, the father of our Lord Jesus, the king. Verses 3 through 14, you guys, it is one long prayer. All it is is one unique long prayer that is laid out for us, and it begins with Paul saying, let us bless god, the father of our lord Jesus, who is the king over all of creation.

**14:22**

Let's be really, really clear as we begin our journey through the letter to the church in Ephesians. That when Paul talks about God, when Paul talks about what God has done, he is always and consistently going to give us a reference point back to Jesus who is the king. Let us bless God, the father of our Lord king Jesus. Everything that God has done from the creation of the world to the culmination point in the book of Revelation, he has done it in and through Jesus. Now that is really, really important for us to wrap our heads around this morning, and here's why.

**15:07**

Because if you want to have an accurate picture of God, if you wanna have an accurate picture of God, then it is absolutely essential and necessary that you begin with Jesus. If you wanna know who God is, quite simply look at Jesus. Yo, some of us need to hear that today. Some of us need to hear that today because we grew up in backgrounds and traditions where we view God like this angry ogre, where we see God primarily through the lens of Old Testament, which by the way is distorted because the trinity is present in the Old Testament and the New as well. But when we think about God, we think about somebody who is angry.

**15:52**

We've been taught to think about God who is consistently waiting to judge you for your sins and your faults. And y'all, what I want you to understand this morning, if that is what you were raised with, if that is what you were taught about the nature of God, you need to think again. Because what Paul says over and over again is that we bless God who is the father of our Lord Jesus who is the king. And if you wanna have an accurate view of God, you always start with Jesus. And if you can do that, listen, if you can do that, it will revolutionize your life.

**16:34**

Because you will see that according to Jesus, God is filled with compassion. God is filled with grace. God is the one who is waiting to welcome the sinner back home again with open arms. And if we think that's how God views us, that is how we will view



other people. And so he sets out the beginning of this book.

### **16:56**

Let us bless God the father of our Lord Jesus the king. If you wanna know who God is, if you're here today and you don't know Jesus, look at his life. Look at his teachings. Look at the way that he died on the cross and was resurrected on the 3rd day. And in Jesus Christ, we find who God truly is.

### **17:18**

And that will be the consistent rhythm and pattern of what we do as we go throughout this letter to the church at Ephesus. And and so Paul says, let us bless God, the father of our lord, king Jesus, who is the king. And then he goes on over these next 11 verses. Right? Verses 3 through 14.

### **17:37**

And what he does, y'all, this is so important to understand, is that he goes through a litany of what God has done, of what God is doing, and then what God will do in the future. What God has done in the past, what God is doing in the present, and what God will do in the future. Y'all some of you are here and you think that God stopped acting in the world when Jesus ascended to the father. You think that the Bible was finished and completed and God stopped doing things in the world. But what we need to understand is that according to Paul, God has done incredible things in the past.

### **18:16**

God is consistently, even still today, doing remarkable things in the world. And at the end of it all, God is going to bring culmination and fulfillment to the creation that he said was not only good, but is very good. So what God has done, what God is doing, and then what God will do in the future. Now what I wanna do for just a few minutes can y'all listen. We're gonna nerd out on Bible.

### **18:45**

Okay? Can you nerd out with me on Bible for just a few minutes? Because when I read chapter 1 verses 1 through 14, if you were paying attention, you would have noticed that I accentuated a

couple of keywords. Because according to Paul, what God has done, is doing, and will do in the future is rooted in 1 person and one person in particular. So let's begin.

**19:08**

I'm gonna go back, and I wanna read to you. Okay? In verse 3, God has blessed us in the king with every spirit inspired blessing in the heavenly realm. Verse 4, God chose us in him, in Jesus, before the world was made so as to be holy and irreproachable before him in love. Verse 5, he foreordained us for himself to be adopted as sons and daughters in Jesus the King.

**19:40**

Verse 6, he poured his grace out on us in Jesus the king. Verse 7, in the king and through his blood, we have received the deliverance that is the forgiveness of our sins. Verse 9, he has made known to us the secret of his purpose just as he wanted it and set it forward. Are you ready? You can probably repeat it with me now.

**20:05**

In him. Verse 10, his plan was to sum up the whole cosmos. In him. Yes. Everything in heaven and on earth in him.

**20:21**

Verse 11. In him, we have received our inheritance, and we were foreordained to this. Verse 13. In him, you too have heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and you have believed. Verse 13 again.

**20:35**

In him, you were marked out with a promise, the holy spirit. Do you hear what Paul is doing again and again and again? He uses this phrase in him to describe what God has done. In Jesus. Now y'all listen.

**20:53**

If you are not a bible nerd, it is easy to walk past this and not think about it, but if we can wrap our minds properly around what Paul is doing here, let me tell you something. It can absolutely revolutionize your life. Because Paul consistently uses this phrase in Christo in the Greek to describe one thing and one thing alone,

that we are in Christ. Now what does that mean? Let's focus on it for just a few minutes.

**21:24**

What does it mean to be in Christ? And if we take Paul seriously and if we root what Paul is saying in 1st century culture, in the world that Paul would have grown up and that Jesus would have grown in, here's what it means to be in the Messiah, to be in the king, to be in Christ. Here's what it is. To be in Christ means that what is true of Jesus is true of us. In ancient culture, it was not abnormal.

**21:55**

It was not outside of the norm. For the king, the one person to represent the entirety of his people on the national stage. It was not uncommon for the king to represent everyone else. And what was true of him, what happened to him would be what happens to everyone else. If you grew up reading bible stories, you're gonna know what I'm talking about through David and Goliath.

**22:20**

Who read David and Goliath as a kid? Anybody? You guys know it? Good. Good.

**22:23**

Good. Good. Okay. If you didn't, let me basically tell you the story. David, who was one of the greatest kings of Israel, he goes to battle, and he had already been ordained as king by, by Samuel.

**22:34**

And he goes to battle against this guy named Goliath, who Goliath is a 9 foot tall giant. And Goliath represents the Philistines, and David represents Israel. And the deal was made, which was common in ancient culture. If David kills Goliath, then the Philistines will flee, and they will be defeated. But if Goliath kills David, then the Israelites will be slaves of the Philistines.

**23:05**

And what is true of each of these men is true of everyone else. Does that make sense? And in the story, David kills Goliath and the Philistines are vanquished. And what is true of David

victorious is true of everyone else. And if that is what it means to be in Christ, that what is true of Jesus is true of us, then what we can understand is that Jesus has defeated not just Goliath, but Jesus is the one who has defeated the ultimate enemy.

### **23:40**

He's defeated sin and he's defeated death. And when he walked out of the tomb on Easter Sunday morning, the world and you are fundamentally different. Because what is true of Jesus is ultimately true of you. What is true of Jesus is ultimately true of us. And as we go throughout this book, we're gonna read some incredible claims.

### **24:08**

Things like the same power of God that raised Jesus from the dead is actively the power that is at work inside of us. That we, right now, in this moment have been seated with Christ in the heavenly realms. What is true of Jesus is true of us because we are in Christ. And listen to me, you guys, that forms our identity. That makes us who we are.

### **24:40**

And that is so important to understand in the world that we are currently living in. Because there are so many other things that are vying to define you, that are actively trying to tell you who you are. And when Brett and Hank and Will were up here singing earlier, one of the things we said is we won't bow down to idols. Because make no mistake about it, there are idols everywhere that are trying to tell you who you are. And if you forget that you are in Christ, then you open yourself up to a world of disappointment and of hurt.

### **25:16**

|| I don't know if you all know this, but college football kicked off a couple weekends ago. You know that. Right? And then today is actually well, it's Thursday, but today is the real big kickoff for other football, which is what? The NFL.

### **25:31**

Now the NFL has gay gathered a brand new fan base recently. Do you know who they are? Swifties. And on Thursday of this past

week, the Kansas City Chiefs played the Baltimore Ravens. And the Kansas City Chiefs have one player in particular who is of great interest to the Swifties, and it's not Patrick Mahomes who is the quarterback.

**25:52**

Do you know who it is? Travis Kelce. Yes, Kelce. Thank you. I bet you knew that, didn't you?

**25:57**

It's Travis Kelsey because Travis Kelsey is the boyfriend of Taylor Swift. And so, y'all, I am watching the game on Thursday night, and they are it's a great game. It comes down to the last second. Final touchdown waved off at the last second, and the Kansas City Chiefs wins. And there's one moment in this intense game when the most intense thing happens of the entire night.

**26:19**

Taylor Swift showed up. Y'all was incredible. And you would have thought that Jesus had ascended had descended from heaven, y'all, because the cameras cut to Taylor Swift, and they go, Taylor's here. Taylor's here. And the sideline reporter, I swear, this is so insane.

**26:35**

But the sideline reporter, you guys, Taylor walking in to go see Travis play some football. And the sideline reporter goes, do you see her outfit? Do do you see her out y'all, she is wearing a Versace crop top and Ferragamo knee high boots. I don't know who either of those people are. What I can tell you is I thought her outfit was pretty ugly, but I'm a 41 year old man.

**26:59**

So what do I who cares what I think? The most famous person arguably in the world, defined by her Versace crop top and her Ferragamo boots. Every single one of us is at risk for having our identity formed and shaped by things outside of what we hope for. And we need to be painfully aware. Y'all some of us are here, and we've allowed our identity not to be defined by the things that we wear or by the successes that we have had, but maybe some of us are here today, and we've allowed our identities to be

defined by the failures that we've encountered.

**27:45**

And what I want us to understand today is that in a culture that is filled with idols and with false promises, that we have the opportunity if we heard what Paul said to find and root our identity in one thing and in one thing alone. Here's what I want you to understand, that when you become a follower of Jesus, nothing defines you except the crucified and resurrected Christ. Nothing defines you because you are in Christ. And what is true of Jesus ultimately, friends, it is true of you. And most of us need to hear that.

**28:30**

Actually, let me reframe that. All of us need to hear that who are here in this space today. You are in Christ. What is true of him is true of you. And y'all, that is absolutely great news for us as individuals, but but, actually, I don't just wanna stop there.

**28:47**

I gotta move pretty quickly over this next section. But these first 14 verses, they are so filled with life and with goodness because Paul is addressing individuals, but make no mistake about it, what Paul is ultimately doing is he is addressing the church, the collected community of people who are following Jesus in the world. And he says that we have been foreordained. Right? Don't get caught up on that language about predestination.

**29:17**

Foreordained, chosen before the creation of the world, all of that. Right? Y'all, when I was being interviewed to be the senior pastor of our church, someone asked me, they said, Will, what do you think about Calvinism? What do you think about predestination? And I said, well, I don't.

**29:30**

And if that's what you're looking for, y'all, there are bigger fish to fry in this world. Don't don't get caught up on that stuff. Okay? Because Paul says we have been foreordained, and this is the part I want you to focus on. Right?

**29:41**

You've been foreordained to be adopted as sons and daughters so that God might receive the praise of his glory from us. Collectively as a church, not just as individuals, but collectively, our purpose is to reflect the goodness of God out into the world and then reflect the praises of creation back up towards God. That we are called to be transformed as a community so that the world might see what it looks like when God is active in a group of people. Yo. In a world of polarization and division, the church has an opportunity to model a better way forward.

### **30:33**

I've often heard people talk about the church, right, in this sort of language. That the church is a hospital for sinners and not a vacation for saints. And I get that, and it's true, right, at some level. But please make no mistake about it. Yes.

### **30:47**

We are a hospital for people who have fallen short of the glory of God. But if we take seriously the reality that we are in Christ, then what we will know is that we are seated at the right hand of God the father right now, that the same power of God that is at work in the resurrection of Jesus is at work in us, and we are called to be a transformational community that brings goodness and grace and hope. This summer, I actually spent a week out in, Houston, Texas. Spent a week in Houston, Texas, studying just this, just the book of Ephesians with one scholar in particular, a guy named NT Wright, that I deeply admire and respect. And, this is the language that he used, going going all throughout the week as a reminder to us as a church, who are we called to be?

### **31:37**

And in his beautiful British accent, he says that we are called to be small working models of new creation. Isn't that good? I should preach all in British, shouldn't I? Yeah. Maybe.

### **31:49**

We are small working models of new creation. Paul says that we have been given the spirit, The holy spirit of God as a the technical language, a down payment. The promise of what we will receive in full later, we have a glimpse of it right now. And the spirit of God is at work collectively in us as a community, and we

are called to be small working models of what God will ultimately do in the fullness of time. Isn't that a beautiful challenge for us?

### **32:29**

And we can do it because we are in Christ. And what is true of him is true of us. And if I stop right there, it is good enough news for me to walk out the door and just keep on doing this Jesus thing. But we actually have to go one step further. Because the gospel for so many of us has been primarily about you.

### **32:50**

Right? We've reduced the gospel. The the the gospel that there's a crucified and resurrected king over all of creation and his name is Jesus. What we have done in the church in the 21st century is we've reduced it down to this individualistic thing that says you say a prayer and you go to heaven when you die, and it is all about you. And while I'm not denying that you do get to enjoy eternity with God through your faith in Christ Jesus, what I want us to hear Paul saying in this book is that the goodness of the gospel is so much bigger than just me and just you.

### **33:27**

That the goodness of the gospel is about the restoration of all things. Listen. There will come a day when God will renew and restore and redeem and recreate everything. And that process has begun in and through Jesus. The gospel, y'all, is so much bigger than just me and just you.

### **33:52**

Don't forget what Paul says. Right? Ephesians chapter 1 verse 10, that God's plan was to sum up the whole cosmos, not you, the whole of creation y'all, in King Jesus. Yes. Everything in heaven and on earth in him.

### **34:16**

In Christo. God is actively reshaping and reforming all things. And there will come a day when all of the brokenness of the world will be made right, and thanks be to God Jesus. Come, Lord, quickly. It will all be summed up in the king, things in heaven and on earth.

### **34:40**



And the most beautiful part of what Paul is saying is that we, me and you, get to be an advanced sign of what God will one day do for the whole of creation. And so ultimately, you guys, I've stood up here and I've talked for 32, 33 minutes. And I don't want you to walk out here filled with a bunch of academic head knowledge because that doesn't transform your heart. What I want you to do is I want you to walk out asking yourself a fundamental question. Has your life been transformed?

### **35:13**

Are you a better human being actively in the present moment because you are in Christ? The only thing I want you to walk out of this room asking is the question right here. Can you say that you are Encristo? Can you say that your life is being transformed? Can you say that what is true of him is true of you?

### **35:39**

And the good news of the gospel is that today if you can't, you can. Because we are in Christ. And what is true of Jesus, the beloved son of God is ultimately true of you. And for that y'all, we give thanks to God. Can you say that you are in Christ?

### **36:03**

I want you to ask that question and join me now as we pray together. Lord, what a morning. What a morning where we've gotten to celebrate you and your goodness, God, where we've gotten to reflect on who you are and who you call us to be. And God, right now, my prayer for my friends who are here in this room, my prayer for my friends who are watching online, it is really simple, lord. Help us to know that we are in Christ.

### **36:31**

Help us to know that Paul says what is true of Jesus is true of us, that we have been called, that we have been set apart, god, that we have been transformed because of Jesus. Lord, for some of my friends who are here today who maybe have not trusted in you, give them the grace to do that today. Help them to know that their identity can be found in its fullness, not through the things of the world, but God through the faithfulness of Jesus. So may we trust in you this morning. God, we are grateful.

**37:07**

Be with us as we continue to worship. This is our prayer, and we ask it in the name of Jesus Christ, the King who is our Lord.

Amen.