



Let's Talk (Part 8) – Vivification

Trevor Joy – August 6, 2017

Hey, church. We're going to continue on in our study of Colossians 3. If you have a Bible or you want to grab one in front of you, if you want to get started turning there, that's where we're going to camp out today. If we do any other texts, I'll show them on the screen. I won't make you flip a ton this morning because I really do want us to camp out in Colossians 3 and really mine this time for all its worth.

Let me tell you a little bit how we got here, how we arrived at this particular series. We're concluding a three-week kind of smaller series on sanctification, but it's kind of a part of a larger series we've been doing in our time this summer. We recognized we had this summer space, this kind of unique time between our spring series and what we have starting next week, if you can believe it or not. Our fall series kicks off next week.

We had this unique space we really just said, "We want to hear from our covenant members. What would be helpful for you where you are in your journey? What would be helpful? What text or topics would be helpful for us as a church to dive into?" We got some great feedback from our members and several topics that just really have been helpful for us to dive in this summer. We've had sermons over topics like the Trinity and singleness, and then one of the most consistent ones that came back was around how to grow in the image of Christ and this idea of sanctification.

We decided to anchor these three weeks in Colossians 3 and really talk about this topic of sanctification. Week one, Matt covered verses 1 through 4 and then really verse 17, so kind of the bookend of our particular passage, really giving an overview of what sanctification is. Then last week we kind of stepped into, "This is the practical outworking of this." There are two passages that kind of sit juxtapositionally to one another: the one we covered last week and the one we'll cover this week.

So kind of by way of review, what we covered last week was Paul started off by saying, **"Put to death therefore what is earthly in you..."** If you remember what Matt talked about last week, that language Paul uses, "to put to death," was a really, really strong, commanding language. It wasn't kind of that subtle suggestion or kind of light... It was a strong, commanding language.

If you use the analogy of weeds, he wasn't saying, "Hey, you just really need to make sure and get all the weeds down to the ground level." He was saying, "No, you need to uproot those things. Take these off. Take them from you. These things need to have no part of you. Put these things to death. Murder these things in you."

The plea really in that text is not to play with our sin. It's to take seriously the effects of sin and to be putting those things to death. Then he goes on to list five different vices that are examples of things we as Christians need to be putting to death. John Owen, one of my favorite theologians, summarizes kind of that passage last week as we transition to this week this way. He said Christians should always be in the business of killing sin, because sin is always in the business of killing you.

That's what we talked about last week, what it means to put that sin to death. Those things in our life, those earthly affections that run contrary to the Christian life, what it means to put those things to death. This week with the same kind of oomph, the same kind of strong language, Paul is going to urge us then to put something on.

He is going to say, "If that's what it means to put these things to death, the things that run contrary to Christian life, what then should we then put on that is consistent with the Christian life?" It takes us to our passage here today. We're going to be in verses 12 through 16. Let's read those together, and then we'll start taking a deep dive into them. Starting at verse 12...

"Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God."

The distinctfulness of this passage and really this entire chapter we've been covering is these two passages are both indicative for what it means to be a Christian and instructive for how to be a Christian. A British preacher once said (in reference to this passage) a sure way to know if your bucket is full is if your feet are wet. The lens we're going to use when approaching this passage today is what overflows in our lives both in individuals and as a community reflects what we worship.

Another pastor said it this way. He said, "Those outside the church can see plainly when our lives fall short of our testimony. We cannot hope to lead people to Christ by living an example of such contradiction." These verses in Colossians 3 give us the attitudes and actions that will reflect a community of people who have been transformed by the gospel. Let me give you two kind of stories to set the table for our time here, to give us context.

My wife and I have a good friend who is a missions pastor down in Houston. He is a lot older than we are, but right when my wife and I got married, we joined him on a short-term trip he was leading down in Honduras. One of the nights there, we just got some time after everybody was kind of done with all the events of the day. We just got to sit around and talk with him, get to know him better. He just began to share his story.

His story is unique in that he came to faith a lot later in life. He had a really successful career as a corporate executive and lived a life that was very, very far from Christ. His conversion was really, really radical. It happened in his early forties. Really as soon as he came to faith, he just became drawn to the mission field. He started going to a lot of short-term trips with his church down to Southern Mexico in the Chiapas Mountains to evangelize the Mayan Indian villages that were down there.

There's one particular village that just continued to captivate his attention and his affections. As he described this village, the reason why is this village was just largely untouched by the effects of modernization. They were a peaceful place, a sweet people, really receptive to the gospel. His heart began to grow in conviction because these people were so sweet, so receptive to the gospel. It seemed kind of like this little, mini utopian village.

He said though they were such a peaceful and sweet people, their eternities were set for hell. Conviction rose in his heart that he said, "These short-term trips aren't enough. I need to go and be

a constant gospel presence in this village." He sold all he had, moved down there, and moved into this village to live amongst these people to preach the gospel. His time there was for 10 years. As he was reflecting on his time there, he said something happened his second year in that fundamentally changed the rest of his time there.

As I kind of mentioned before, one of his original attractions to this village is they were just largely unaffected by modernization at that point. Two years in, the village was introduced to the television. He said what began to happen there was the trajectory of the village began to dramatically change.

In that next eight years that would follow that, they experienced their first inner-village murder. Crime began to grow. People began to dress differently, talk differently, act differently, value different things. It began less and less to be receptive to the gospel. It's interesting. With the introduction of the television (this is not to villainize TV, but maybe it is), what was once a peaceful village began to erode overnight.

I want to contrast that with a different story. In 1955, five American missionaries led by a guy named Jim Elliot moved down to the jungles of Ecuador to evangelize this tribe of Indians called the Auca Indians. There were two primary things that drove these missionaries to this tribe. The first was this particular tribe had a strong reputation for a culture of violence. They were a murderous tribe. They would really wage war on surrounding tribes, but also internally.

These men felt a sense of urgency because this tribe was literally on the verge of going extinct from killing one another. Every generation just began to propagate this culture of violence as it grew and grew and grew. They had a sense of urgency to reach this tribe because they were on the verge of going extinct.

The second reason was they just really believed the only cure for this culture of violence was the gospel of Jesus Christ. These five men with their wives and families in tow moved down to Ecuador and began making preparations to reach this tribe. As they kind of learned the area, learned the language, culturally became aware of kind of what was going on, talked to the neighboring tribes, etcetera, it kind of came to the point where, okay, they need to step out and make contact with this tribe.

These five men loaded in a plane with some gifts and other things, left their wives and families, and flew to land on a beach kind of in a remote jungle area. They landed on a beach of a river so they could start to make their way inland to make contact with this tribe. These wives say goodbye to their husbands. They loaded up with the plane, and they were going to come back in a few days.

After days and days and days when their husbands didn't return, the next report their wives got was the reason their husbands didn't return was because upon not so long after landing on that beach, they were speared. They were murdered there by that tribe of Indians. That story quickly spread like brushfire across the world. *TIME* magazine picked it up because it was this crazy story of this savage tribe of Indians who killed these American missionaries.

What's interesting is, if we go back to the second chapter of that story, these wives who had just lost their husbands, have their kids living in the jungles of Ecuador, their response to their husbands being murdered wasn't to run. It wasn't to call the National Guard and go in guns ablazing with vengeance. It was to move with compassion.

They went back in to that village to carry on the work of bringing the gospel message to this tribe. What would happen from there is that tribe became receptive to the gospel, came to faith. The whole tribe was saved! What's left today is a gospel presence. The trajectory of that tribe was going extinct, and today they live as a Christian community.

What sets these two different examples apart from one another? Rather, what is common about them? An author, Greg Beale, says it this way. He says, "We become what we worship. What people revere, they resemble, either for ruin or restoration." These two stories provide a backdrop for us to understand the importance of the text we're diving into. The entire book of Colossians is really driven by, preoccupied with, this response to a false teaching.

Paul is urging the Christian community to reflect both individually and corporately the Christ they worship. What's interesting about the passage we're going to dive into is it kind of feels like three different sermons, but they really do begin to flow into one another. It's three different sections in this passage we will work through together.

The first one is Paul is going to list these five virtues or attitudes that, as those who are in Christ, we put these things on. These are contrasted to the five vices he lists in the previous passage we are to take off or put to death. Following the attitudes, we as a community are called to put these virtues

on display or in action, as it changes the way we interact with one another and the world. Then lastly, Paul exhorts us as a body of Christ to live for new things in a new way. So you have attitudes, actions, and exhortations. Let's get started. Let's jump in.

Verse 12. Before Paul lists the attitudes we are to have in reflecting Christ, he starts by saying this in verse 12. He says, **"Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved..."** What is this "put on"? As I mentioned earlier, this is the same kind of strong language he used at the beginning of the other passage when he says, "Put these things to death." This isn't kind of that suggestive, "Hey, this would be a good idea."

The best way I can explain this is the difference is, when your child comes down the stairs wearing something you don't want them to wear, this isn't that, "Hey, it would be a good idea if maybe next time you thought about putting on something different." It's, "No. Get back upstairs. Change your clothes. It's unacceptable."

That's the kind of strong language he is saying. "This is what you are to wear," because the clothing reference here is an appeal to a more drastic change. He is not saying these things, putting on these things, doing these things is going to make you a Christian any more than parking a horse in a garage is going to make it a car. What he is saying then is putting these things on rightly reflect on the outside what's happened inside.

What's happened inside? Galatians 2:20 says it this way. It says, **"I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me."** When Christ lives in us, we put on these things. But before he gets to that, what does he say? Who does he call us? Who is he addressing? **"Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved..."** We have to get this (this chosen, holy, and beloved) before we can understand or walk out anything that comes next. In Ephesians 1, verses 3 through 7, Paul says...

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved."

What does Ephesians 1 tell us? That the God of the universe before anything else was created set his sights on saving you. Your redemption was gloriously particular. God's grace toward you was absolutely intentional. We have a hard time with this in the Reformed community because we really like to focus on the verses that come next, especially in Ephesians 2 where it talks about who we are apart from Christ. Right? We're wretched. We're dead. We're far off.

What does Ephesians 1 say? God knew that. He knew that before anything else in the world was created. Christ wasn't plan B. He was the plan from the beginning of time. He would send his Son to rescue, redeem you. It's this grace that empowers our obedience. We'll look at these following things, these following commands, much differently when we see them through the lens of what Christ has done for us.

Our feet will get wet with these attitudes, these virtues, when our buckets are full with this identity that we are holy, chosen, and beloved. As those who are holy, chosen, and beloved, we clothe ourselves with these attitudes. He lists five of them. He says compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. I hope it helps you. It helped me when I was working through it to see these virtues, these attitudes, as having a cascading effect, beginning with compassion.

The order here matters, compassion being kind of the umbrella virtue that begins to kind of cascade, roll into the others, or produce the others, affect the others. Second Corinthians 1:3 says it this way in helping us understand what he means by compassion and/or mercy. It says, "**Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies...**" Romans 12:1 says, "**I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice...**"

Compassion here is the exhortation. As you put on Christ, start with the eyes. See how God sees with compassion and mercy. My wife has corrective lenses. When she gets up in the morning, the first thing she does is... She doesn't do her makeup before she puts her contacts in. I think that's kind of self-explanatory how that would probably go. Right? We have to see correctly before we can begin to do everything correctly. If we don't see right, then everything else will just begin to get out of place or off.

How differently would we approach ourselves, one another, and even the world as we know it if we strived to see how God sees? We could start here, Christian, with seeing yourself how God sees you:

holy, chosen, beloved. Overflowing from this compassion, this mercy we view from, we have kindness and humility.

I have kind of a working definition for these two that I've been using: *kindness* is a Christlike attitude toward others and *humility* is a Christlike attitude toward oneself. What do I mean by a Christlike attitude? I mean that Philippians 2 ethic where it says Jesus surrendered his rights. He laid down his rights. He emptied himself. He became nothing. He laid himself down that he might lift us up.

This is that Christlike attitude. Kindness is that Christlike orientation toward others, and humility is that Christlike orientation toward ourselves. Kindness, compassion, cascades to kindness and humility, which cascades to gentleness and patience. The definition I have for *gentleness* here is kindness and humility together in our approach toward others, and *patience* is kindness and humility in our response to others.

Let me give an example of how this works itself out in Christian communities, of how kindness and humility overflow to gentleness and patience. Sometime last spring I was preaching a message here. I was using a sermon illustration about Abraham Lincoln where he was passing by a slave auction, and he saw this woman on the slave block being bid for. He was moved with compassion for her. He bid for her and won her so he might set her free.

The illustration I was using was to demonstrate her response to Abraham Lincoln in that moment was to trust him. The illustration was our heart's response to realizing God's saving grace of us, that he has set us free, is to trust and follow him. A dear African-American sister in our church texted me that next week and said, "Hey, can I get some time with you? I just want to walk through one of the sermon illustrations, this particular one you used in your sermon, and just how that was difficult for me and could potentially be difficult for others." I said, "Great."

She and another great sister came over to the house, sat in the living room with Rachel and me. I'll be honest. We started this conversation really, really far apart from one another. We both had different presuppositions. Honestly, when you step into this kind of topic, as you can imagine, it's really, really complex and really, really sensitive.

As we approached this conversation together, what made this conversation go so dramatically different than others that could potentially go bad was this. The kindness demonstrated by these

sisters toward me, their approach to me, the humility they walked in, and their orientation toward themselves produced a gentle approach with me as a brother who honestly didn't understand in the beginning. Then they had patience with me as they walked with me, explained it, and helped me to see.

Honestly, at the beginning of the conversation, we started at very, very different ends of the spectrum. But by the end, we were heard, understood, unified. We were able to pray together and worship together. It was beautiful. It was beautiful! It all started with two sisters who approached a really tough situation not with arrogance but with compassion, and overflowing from compassion with kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. The product of that was unity and worship.

These are the kinds of interactions that are to mark the people of God. This is how we image Christ individually and corporately. We clothe ourselves in these attitudes. In verse 13, we see these five virtues or attitudes put into action. Paul says, "**...bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.**"

We see *bearing* and *forgiving* are the two actions that mark the Christian community. What does it mean to bear with one another? This phrase "to bear up" means literally to hold up, to support, to buttress, to have something lean against you or even to restrain. The context here is not short-term, like to catch something. It's more long-term. To lift up. To support. What does it mean for us as a Christian community to bear with one another like this? This isn't to react. This is to support.

I'd like to talk through this in two different categories. First is internal and then external. If you're going to walk with me, you're going to get two different types of baggage, right? You're going to get the stuff that's inside of me, all that dirty stuff. My personality, my wounds and weaknesses, all the things that happen that go on inside of me in my heart.

You're also going to get the stuff that goes on outside of me, the external. You're going to get suffering. You're going to get celebration. You're going to get sickness. You're going to get tragedy. Bearing with one another means we're in for the long haul. We support one another in suffering, and we seek to restrain one another in struggle.

The Christian community has a regular diet of suffering and celebration, and we pull up the table to both. Why? Because the ethic of the kingdom is grace, not reciprocity. It's not about what I can *get*; it's about what I can *give*. That's what it means to bear with one another.

Then he says forgiving one another, because the primary currency of the Christian community is grace. Christ not only establishes the pattern of forgiveness but also the possibility of forgiveness. Why? Because we who have been forgiven much are to forgive much.

I want to go back to that story I told earlier about Jim Elliot and the team of missionaries who moved down to the jungles of Ecuador to evangelize the Auca Indians. As I shared with you, these men were speared, leaving their wives and children there in the jungles of Ecuador. These women, whose response was not vengeance but compassion, went back into this tribe to evangelize, to take the hope of the gospel to the Aucas there.

I want to just kind of take us for a moment, if you can, and I want you just to imagine, put yourself as best you can, into the shoes of one of these wives and mothers who receives that news, who is far from home, who is in the jungles of Ecuador in a foreign place, who receives the news that her husband has just been murdered. They're looking at their children and are considering life raising these kids without Dad.

What does it take for their response not to be fear or vengeance but compassion? It's compassion that would move them to say, "We're not going to run. We're not going to retaliate. We're going to go in, and we're going to continue the work of sharing the gospel because they need it." What does it take for that to be the heart response of these women?

There are a lot of really awesome chapters that follow this story, but in the biography of one of them, she remarks particularly on a different scene where several years later... As I remarked, they go in, share the gospel. This tribe all comes to faith. One of these men who is the leader of this tribe became the tribal pastor. She remarks on this scene where she is watching this tribal pastor baptize her children.

I want you again, just the best you can, to put yourself in this woman's shoes. What does it take for someone to be okay with the scene of the man who killed her husband baptizing her children? What does it take for her to look at that with adoration, with worship, and to see that as beautiful? Man!

What does that take? It takes forgiveness. True forgiveness. That's what sets us apart. The world looks on that with awe.

I'm going to let Elisabeth Elliot, one of these women, teach us about forgiveness this morning as she gives her definition of it. I'll put it up on the screen for you. She says, "To forgive is to die. It is to give up one's right to self, which is precisely what Jesus requires of anyone who wants to be his disciple. 'If anyone wants to follow in my footsteps, he must give up all right to himself, take up his cross and follow me. For the man who wants to save his life will lose it; but the man who loses his life for my sake will find it.'

Following Christ means walking the road he walked, and in order to forgive us he had to die. His follower may not refuse to relinquish his or her own right, territory, comfort or anything that the follower regards as his or hers. Forgiveness is relinquishment. It is a laying down.

No one can take it from us, any more than anyone could take the life of Jesus if he had not laid it down of his own will. But we can do as he did. We can offer it up, writing off whatever loss it may entail, in the sure knowledge that the man who loses his life or his reputation or his face or anything else for the sake of Christ will save it."

This is what it means to forgive, to lay it down. Then Paul ties up this section with this statement. He says, "**And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.**" If all of these virtues make up the garment of Christ we're to put on, love acts as the belt that holds all of these virtues together.

What do we know about love? In Galatians 5, love is the active expression of a justifying faith. It's the primary fruit of the Spirit. First Corinthians 13. Love is the supreme Christian grace. All of the commandments are summed up in love. Romans 13. These virtues attain their full power only when they are united and empowered by love. We have attitudes, actions.

Lastly, in verses 15 to 16, Paul exhorts the Christian community. He says, "**And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.**" We have these exhortations, kind of the bookends of them being *peace* and *word*.

"...let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts... Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly..."

Then we have this bridge in the middle. I want to start first with *peace*. The peace Paul mentioned here is one he consistently highlights as one of the key blessings of the Christian experience. It's what's mentioned earlier in chapter 1 of Colossians, verse 20, that peace, that shalom. It's that eschatological state of cosmic redemption that the Old Testament prophets were anticipating. It's that 2 Corinthians 5 that we have been reconciled to God.

We talked about Ephesians 1 earlier. Well, he goes on in Ephesians 2 to describe those of us, what our state was before Christ. We were far from God. We were at enmity with God. We were strangers and aliens. We were dead in our sins and trespasses with no hope in the world. In Christ, God brings those who are far off. He brings them near. Those who are strangers and aliens he makes sons and daughters in the household of God.

Those who are dead, he breathes life into us. When we are united with Christ, the Bible says the dividing wall of hostility comes down. In the cross, he kills the hostility. Paul is saying here let the peace of God rule your hearts. Let the peace of God, that we have been reconciled to God, that we are no longer strangers... We're adopted sons and daughters. We're coheirs. That is our reality now. We are no longer those who are far off. We are near. We're no longer those who are dead. We are alive. We who have been reconciled to God have peace.

Paul is speaking here of how this peace needs to be applied to our lives, saying it needs to rule in your life. It needs to be the primary arbiter in your life, the primary decision factor in your life. Why? Because the reality that we have been reconciled to God should fundamentally change everything about your life.

Why is that? Because the reality that we've been reconciled to God fundamentally changes everything about who you are. This peace that we are sons and daughters, that we have been reconciled to God, should change everything. Let this peace rule and reign in your heart.

Then, secondly, he gets to this sentence, this three-word sentence right here. He says, "**And be thankful.**" At first glance, it feels like this sentence is kind of out of place. If you're a parent, you might pick up on what Paul is doing here. Why? Because one of the primary things we're trying to instill in our kids consistently is gratitude. Gratitude!

Why? Because they just don't know in their little minds how good the gifts in life they have are. They just come to expect it. This gets challenged with our kids every time we have a birthday. We'll go to one of their grandparents' house. I won't say which one.

We'll show up, and we're already trying to really come around our kids and help them understand, "Hey, this is a blessing. These are gifts. You didn't earn these. You don't deserve these. This is a gift. We want to receive gifts as gifts with glad and thankful hearts. Why? Because you didn't earn it. You didn't deserve it. Gratitude is our response to a gift."

What makes that challenging is every time, the grandparents get really, really compassionate toward the other kids who don't get to open gifts when one kid has a birthday. So they started this really, really bad habit of they get one gift for all the other kids. I have four kids. They get one gift for all the other kids to open up on *this* kid's birthday.

Now every time there's a birthday party, all my kids get excited because they know, "Oh, I'm going to go to Grandma and Grandpa's house, and I'm going to get a present too even though it's *this* kid's birthday." It really, really kind of destroys and presses against this idea of gratitude we're trying to instill in our kids.

But if you watch here, why does Paul say this? He says it because he is trying to parent us. He is trying to say we just talked about the peace of God, that we have been reconciled to God. That fundamentally changes everything about who you are and your world. What does he say next? He says, "**And be thankful.**" Be grateful!

You have the supreme gift. Don't move past this. You didn't do anything to earn this or deserve this. It is a gift from God. You have been reconciled to God. You have peace. Be thankful. Be grateful. Why? Because gratitude is the primary indicator of peace. If you know what God has done, you are grateful.

What he is saying next is he doesn't say the Word of *God*. He says, "**...the word of Christ dwell in you richly...**" The Word of God is really common in the New Testament, but the word of *Christ* as seen here only occurs in Hebrews 6. Paul is not referring here to the word of message that Christ proclaims but rather the message that proclaims Christ, or the word of the gospel.

What he is saying is the message of the gospel needs to be central to the Christian community. **"...dwell in you richly..."** It needs to be central to our activities, our worship, as we teach, admonishing one another. Why? Because as we've talked about already in 2 Corinthians 5, we are reconciled to God. We have been made messengers of reconciliation. The hope of Christ now lives in us. We have peace through God through Christ.

Now we have the word of the gospel, the message of hope, the word of Christ. **"...dwell in you richly..."** In our activities. In our worship. It should be fundamental in the Christian community. We see these ideas of *peace* and *word* as he exhorts the Christian community. The *peace* and *word* needs to be peace and gospel. It's intentional.

One time (we've talked about it here before) in John 20 (you don't have to go there; I'll read it to you), Jesus is appearing to his disciples. After the crucifixion when he resurrects and appears to his disciples for the first time, they're locked away in that room, scared. The last time they saw Jesus was on the cross. They're in the room scared together, wondering what's going to happen next. Jesus appears to them, and this is what he says to them.

Jesus stands in front of them in his resurrected form and says, **"Peace be with you.' When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side."** Why did he do that? We have a different context for the word *peace* now, don't we? We know what he is saying. **"Peace be with you."** Then what does he do? He shows them his hands and his side. What is he trying to demonstrate there? "It's true! What I said I was going to do I did."

Why does he stand there in resurrected form and say, "Peace"? Why? Because the gospel that brings peace hinges on the resurrection. What Jesus did in rising from the grave was defeating sin and death. What he did standing before them was saying, "I'm bringing you peace because it's all true. I did what I said I was going to do. It's true. You now have peace to the Father through me." He mediated that peace on the cross.

Then what does he say? He says it to them again. I always loved this statement. It says, **"When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord."** That's the most understated verse ever. If you're just imagining them seeing Jesus, it may have just been the shock, but they were glad. I feel like that word *glad* is just pregnant with a whole lot. They were *really* glad. They were *really* excited. I'm just going to speak for them. They were *really* excited about this!

You can just imagine. They may have just been freaked out, but Jesus says to them again, "**Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.**" Why? Because who we are both individually and corporately is a saved and sent people. This idea of peace, word, saved, and sent is an exhortation for what it fundamentally means to be the people of God.

I've said this to you before, and I'll say it every time I get a chance in front of you, church. Missing this right here is why I believe so many Christians are tired, bored, frustrated, and complacent, because they have such a small view of what the Christian life really is, of what we have been saved into and sent for. David Platt has a great quote in reflecting on this reality to challenge us this morning. He says...

"The price is certainly high for people who don't know Christ and who live in a world where Christians shrink back from self-denying faith and settle into a self-indulging faith. While Christians choose to spend their lives fulfilling the American dream instead of giving their lives to proclaiming the kingdom of God, literally billions in need of the gospel remain in the dark. [...]

I could not help but think that somewhere along the way we had missed what is radical about our faith and replaced it with what is comfortable. [...] But then I realize there is never going to come a day when I stand before God and he looks at me and says, 'I wish you would have kept more for yourself.'" Church, those who have the peace of Christ or those who proclaim Christ... Our feet get wet with proclamation when our buckets are filled with peace.

I want to close here how Paul chooses to close our time. He says, "**Let the word of Christ [this gospel] dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.**"

We sang a song right before I came out called "King of My Heart." In the second verse of this song, this is how it goes. I want us to just think and consider on this as we step in and are about to sing it again together. It says...

Let the King of my heart be
The wind inside my sails,
The anchor in the waves.
Oh, he is my song.

Let the King of my heart be
The fire inside my veins
And the echo of my days.
Oh, he is my song.

How do we worship differently singing songs, hymns, and spiritual songs with thankfulness in our hearts to God when it comes from a reality and a recognition that we now have peace in God, peace with God through Christ? We now have the word of the gospel and have been sent on mission. Let's stand together and sing, church, as those who have embraced this reality and walked in this reality.

I just want to say if you're sitting out there this morning and you're just going, "Man, this is kind of far for me..." Maybe when I say *chosen, holy, and beloved*, you cringe because you just don't feel chosen, holy, and beloved. You feel wretched. You feel sinful. You feel dirty. You feel far from God. You feel ashamed.

Let me just encourage you that the God of the universe before anything else was made set his sights on you. His arms are not too short to reach you. You are never too far from him to bring you near. Maybe your response this morning isn't thankfulness for peace. Maybe your response this morning is to cry out for peace to a God who hears and is waiting to respond with life.

Wherever you are this morning, those who are far from God or those who are in Christ, let our response be this: thankfulness in our hearts to God that we have been reconciled to him and that we now have this word of Christ, this gospel, to carry out.