



The Church – January 29, 2020  
Led by: Autumn Hokenson

**Verses Covered This Week**

*Matthew 16:13 – 19*

*1 Corinthians 1:13 – 17*

*Colossians 1:16 – 18*

*Proverbs 11:14, 24:6*

*Zechariah 8:20 – 23*

*Matthew 18:19 – 20*

*John 15:6 – 8*

*Romans 15:5 – 7*

*Hebrews 10:24 – 25*

*Romans 12:1 – 21*

*1 Thessalonians 5:12*

*1 Peter 5:1 – 3*

*Titus 1:5 – 2:11*

Alright, good evening, ladies. I hope y'all have had a very good week. 85 weather changes between last week and this. We've had all four seasons. That's good, right. It's Texas. So I am praying in my heart as we go because if all you get from this is what I'm bringing to the table, this is a glorified waste of time. So I am praying that the Lord Himself will speak something to you from Him tonight and something out of this. So if you leave here tonight with something, that was your gift from the Lord. Because I'm nothing but a hot mess. But the Lord uses hot messes. And that's what we're talking about tonight. Because the church is the glorified, biggest hot mess of them all.

So we learned last week about spiritual gifts. And we've been stacking one thing off the other: baptism, Lord's supper, and so pulling all of that together is the church. Because predominantly our baptisms and our Lord's suppers, those are taking place inside the church. And we use our spiritual gifts inside the church. What is the church, though? If we don't know what the church is, then we might not know where we're supposed to do all these things. So there's a lot of thoughts on what is the church and who is included. So let's go straight to the word because that's where we're supposed to find all our answers, right. So we're going to start in Matthew 16 and I'm going to warn you one more thing. You will either love the Amplified Version by the end of this night or you will hate it. But I'm OK either way. But tonight in particular, I needed

all the extra words because those words spoke to me and gave me more clarity and I hope they do the same for you. And if not, just say this was a little vacation from a typical version. So when we go to verses, I will try to read it slow enough so you can somewhat follow along in your NASB. Your NIV, it's going to be a struggle. You might just listen. So we're going to start in Matthew 16:13. Again, this is a little bit that we've been covering in various ways.

<sup>13</sup>Now when Jesus went into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" <sup>14</sup>And they answered, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." <sup>15</sup>He said to them, "But who do you [yourselves] say that I am?" <sup>16</sup>Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." <sup>17</sup>Then Jesus answered him, "Blessed (happy, fortunate, and to be envied) are you, Simon Bar-Jonah. For flesh and blood [men] have not revealed this to you, but My Father Who is in heaven. <sup>18</sup>And I tell you, you are Peter [Greek, *Petros* – a large piece of rock], and on this rock [Greek, *petra* a huge rock like Gibraltar] I will build My church, and the gates of Hades (the powers of the infernal region) shall not overpower it [or be strong to its detriment or hold out against it]. <sup>19</sup>I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind (declare to be improper and unlawful) on earth must be what is already bound in heaven; and whatever you loose (declare lawful) on earth must be what is already loosed in heaven.

So that is a little bit of a tongue tie there. We're going to go through a couple of things first. You will hear the idea that because of this statement, first of all, it was the Holy Spirit that revealed this to Peter and He is very clear about that. He did not get that from men. So we can say for certain that what we're building here on the church, what is the church, those people have their revelation revealed by the Holy Spirit. And what I mean by revealed, I mean who the Son of God is. Who Christ the Messiah is. And who that is, is revealed by the Spirit thus forming the church. But I'm going to say more about that. So we have *Petros* which is what He calls Peter here. And that is little rock. OK. It's a little part. A little piece. But on this rock, that's the Gibraltar. Do you think He's referring to Peter when He's talking about the Gibraltar? No. So when we hear the idea that the church is founded on Peter, or Peter holds the keys and all of this kind of stuff, it does come from these passages. But it comes from a misunderstanding of what the church is actually built on. It's not built on Peter, the *Petros*; it's built on the *Petra* which is Christ the Son of God, the Messiah. And so if the church is built on Him and who He is, to be a part of the church you must have a Holy Spirit understanding of who He is and that's the Son of God.

But the end part of that verse, what are we? So we are the church standing on this authority. Because we're going to talk about our authority here. So in verse 19, I'm going to jump over here for just a second. Less wordy in NASB.

<sup>19</sup>I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth must be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth must be loosed in heaven.

But if you look at the tenses of those verbs, which is what the amplified gives you, is must be what is already bound in heaven. So if we want to bind something on earth, are we binding something new on earth? No. We are in agreement with the Holy Spirit on what has already been bound and what has already been loosed. So the victory and the power and the authority

has already been won and already attained. We are just in through the church into that authority. And to agree with those things and to agree with those things that are loosed. OK. So that is the power of the church and how we are working as a church. If we do not use the authority that we have given, we are beginning to lose our purpose as a church. So let's step back just a minute and we will come back and visit that again. But let's back back down into some more details. Another thing that gets said about the church is, do you have to be baptized to be part of the church. No. Even though we talked about all of the importance of baptism, because, I'm going to reread the verse that we read last week, 1 Corinthians 1:13-17. It will be very familiar.

<sup>13</sup>Is Christ (the Messiah) divided into parts? Was Paul crucified on behalf of you? Or were you baptized into the name of Paul? <sup>14</sup>I thank God that I did not baptize any of you except Crispus and Gaius, <sup>15</sup>lest anyone should say that I baptized in my own name. <sup>16</sup>[Yes] I did baptize the household of Stephanas also. More than these, I do not remember that I baptized anyone. <sup>17</sup>For Christ (the Messiah) sent me out not to baptize but [to evangelize by] preaching the glad tidings (the Gospel), and that not with verbal eloquence, lest the cross of Christ should be deprived of force and emptied of its power and rendered vain (fruitless, void of value, and of no effect).

That's what I mean. You're going to love it or you're going to hate it. So if Paul was not called to baptize and he was called to the church, then it's not a requirement but obviously we want to encourage that and we want to be part of that. The way baptisms were carried out, that sign of being baptized it was out in the public where everyone was seeing. In that culture and at that time, if you were stepping out to be baptized, you had renounced everything around you. You were lining up to be part of the persecuted at that time. So our baptisms today are not even as representative of that outward statement of what we're doing because we do them in nice, safe, like-minded places where we're all together. I'm not saying that's bad. I'm just saying when you're looking at what they're talking about when they're being baptized, they are stepping out and away from and making it known in a public way. So they are announcing that they are publicly announcing that Christ is their Savior. That that was revealed by the Holy Spirit.

So the next thing we need to know then if we have the church and who's in the church? Who's the head of the church? And this may be simple and easy but let's go there anyway. Colossians 1:16 – 18.

<sup>16</sup>For it was in Him that all things were created, in heaven and on earth, things seen and things unseen, whether thrones, dominions, rulers, or authorities; all things were created and exist through Him and in and for Him. <sup>17</sup>And He Himself existed before all things, and in Him all things consist. <sup>18</sup>He also is the head of [His] body, the church; seeing He is the Beginning, the Firstborn from among the dead, so that He alone in everything and in every respect might occupy the chief place [stand first and be preeminent].

So it's declaring, first of all, that He was here before creation. If He was here before creation, He is God. That's makes Him the Creator. The Creator is God. So it very plainly says He's the head of His body, or the church. So we can check that box that we know who the head of the church is. Not that you didn't already. So some may say, "OK, will if He's the head of the church, why don't we all just come together like this, all level, and just all sit in a circle and go from there. Why do we have anybody, but listening to Christ? Well, we can imagine how that

might go. But there's a reason. First of all, we have several references to how they set up the church in the New Testament to give us examples. But we should all be on the same page if we're all directed by the Holy Spirit, right. If we're all in the same place, doing the same thing, all directed by the Holy Spirit, that should go perfectly, right. So let's look over at, these are short verses if you don't want to go there. But I will let you write them down. It's Proverbs 11:14.

<sup>14</sup>Where no wise guidance is, the people fall, but in the multitude of counselors there is safety.

And then it says pretty much the same thing again if you go over to Proverbs 24:6.

<sup>6</sup>For by wise counsel you can wage your war, and in an abundance of counselors there is victory and safety.

And so we often joke around here or in places like here that, you know, if you get seven Baptists in a room, you're going to have eight opinions. That kind of thing. But we're not talking about opinions. We're walking about confirmations of the Holy Spirit. When you're being a counselor, you're being directed by the Holy Spirit. And so when you're sitting there in a room and like-minded and you've all come to that Holy Spirit direction of what's happening, then that like-mind comes together to be the Holy Spirit direction through that. So various churches have various ways to set that up. Here we do it, they believe that the elders that are talked about in here are generally the staff. And there's multiple ways to view that. I don't think Chris took any strong position on way or the other. You can do it several different ways as long as they're filling out those things which we'll talk about in a minute. And then your deacons are generally more of a sounding board and really related to service. And we see lots of examples of that.

Let's dig deeper in the purpose of the church and what we're doing there now that we know who we are and why we have some of the positions that we do so that we can have some counseling and some direction. Because, goodness knows, I have an opinion about things, but it's not necessarily Spirit led. The church advocates for or supports our relationship vertically with the Lord, right. You've felt that presence when you come together with other believers in various situations, not just in this building, that you feel like your walk is strengthened. So let's back that up and let's just not base things on feelings. In Zechariah 8 we're going to talk about the vertical relationship of the church and how it keeps us up and down. We will also talk about the horizontal with the body of believers. So Zechariah chapter 8:20

<sup>20</sup>Thus says the Lord of hosts: It shall yet come to pass that there shall come [to Jerusalem] peoples and the inhabitants of many and great cities, <sup>21</sup>And the inhabitants of one city shall go to them of another, saying, "Let us go speedily to pray and entreat the favor of the Lord and to seek, inquire of, and require [to meet our own most essential need] the Lord of hosts. I will go also. <sup>22</sup>Yes, many people and strong nations shall come to Jerusalem to seek, inquire of, and require [to fill their own urgent need] the Lord of hosts and to pray to the Lord for His favor. <sup>23</sup>Thus says the Lord of hosts: In those days ten men out of all languages of the nations shall take hold of robe of him who is a Jew, saying, "Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you."

So yes, God is everywhere. But clearly we're seeing that there is a draw to the city of Jerusalem because it's where the presence of the Lord is being felt and known by His people. So coming together brings that about. Now we're going to jump over to Matthew 18:19.

<sup>19</sup>And I tell you, if two of you on earth agree about whatever [anything and everything] they may ask, it will come to pass and be done for them by My Father in heaven. <sup>20</sup>For wherever two or three are gathered in My name, there I AM in the midst of them.

So we're promised that. So if we come together with two or more and the church is the church body and then we have the local church, right. So when the local church comes together, there's usually more than two. So we can know for certain that He's there and in the midst of them. We're going to keep going to John 15:6-8

<sup>6</sup>If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch, and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned. <sup>7</sup>If you abide in My, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. <sup>8</sup>By this is My Father glorified, that when you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples.

So we are abiding in constant drawing of the Holy Spirit throughout our lives and through what we're doing. I'm going to read it over here too. I'm just going to read it again.

<sup>6</sup>If a person does not dwell in Me, he is thrown out like a [broken off] branch, and withers; such branches are gathered up and thrown into the fire, and they are burned. <sup>7</sup>If you live in Me [abide vitally united to Me] and My word remain in you and continue to live in your hearts, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you. <sup>8</sup>When you bear (produce) much fruit, My Father is honored and glorified, and you show and prove yourselves to be true followers of Mine.

So that fruit production is seen as we come together. You may have fruit producing all in yourself, all alone by yourself. But it is very difficult to abide in Christ alone. So not only that, we're told repeatedly that we are to come to church together. So maybe you want to say, "OK, vertical church means I'm a part of the church and I'm a part of the body, but I can be a single member of the body by myself and that is my church at my house by myself. And I can still have a vertical relationship with God. Yes, but you are missing the horizontal aspect of what God's calling us to. So we're going to flip a lot tonight. Go to Romans 15:5 – 7.

<sup>5</sup>Now may the God Who gives the power of patient endurance (steadfastness) and Who supplies encouragement, grant you to live in such mutual harmony and such full sympathy with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus. <sup>6</sup>That together you may [unanimously] with united hearts and one voice, praise and glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (the Messiah). <sup>7</sup>Welcome and receive [to your hearts] one another, then, even as Christ has welcomed and received you, for the glory of God.

It's very difficult to do that by yourself. It's very difficult to be united in hearts with one voice and praise and glorify God the Father if you are by yourself. I'm not saying you can't praise the Lord; you just cannot be very well united. In John 17, when Jesus is in the garden, one of the main things He prays for is our unity. It's very difficult to be unified if you're standing by

yourself. I don't know, maybe it's easier, but it's not real unity. And so we've got to come to a place to come together and we have to come together in a way that what we're doing produces fruit and unity and love and what we're sharing outside and that is why the church is under such great attack internally. Why we have conflict and issues and why patience is hard to come by. Because that is where, when we're not unified, that's when we're not producing that outward look of what is the worldly draw to us and to Christ. Our unity is based on our love for Christ, not on our love for our brother. So when we are looking at this; the power of patient endurance who supplies encouragement, that's who God is doing in us as we are unified with each other. The unity is based on what His word says about us and to us and not how we feel and not our strong opinions, that's for me. You can take that if you need it. But that part is for me. But if we find difficulty coming together in a unified manner, then we are having difficulty making an impact in the area where we are.

Other reasons that we need to come together is Hebrews 10:24 – 25.

<sup>24</sup>And let us consider and give attentive, continuous care to watching over one another, studying how we may stir up (stimulate and incite) to love and helpful deeds and noble activities, <sup>25</sup>not forsaking or neglecting to assemble together [as believers], as is the habit of some people, but admonishing (warning, urging, and encouraging) one another, and all the more faithfully as you see the day approaching.

I feel like, at least a lot of us in here would say, you feel like we see the day approaching. Maybe they did too. But it feels like we see the day approaching. And so that encouraging and admonishing each other doesn't mean all our words are sweet. But it means that our words are encouraging to each other and admonishing. You know the difference. When someone's brought you an encouraging word that urges you to change and when someone has brought you a critical word. But we are not to just, we are to actively seek ways to stir each other up. It's like fanning the flame. The flame of Christ within us so that when we are burning brighter as a church together in unity, all of these things stack on top of each other. And so if we're not assembling together, it's pretty hard to encourage and fan the flame with each other because we don't know each other well enough.

OK. I'm going to Romans 12 and we're going to hear a whole big talk. Paul's going to set us straight. He is going to tell us how we shall now live.

<sup>1</sup>I appeal to you therefore, brethren, and beg of you in view of the mercies of God, to make a decisive dedication of your bodies [presenting all your members and faculties] as a living sacrifice, holy (devoted, consecrated) and well pleasing to God, which is your reasonable (rational, intelligent) service and spiritual worship. <sup>2</sup>Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed (changed) by the [entire] renewal of your mind [by its new ideals and its new attitude], so that you may prove [for yourselves] what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God, even the thing which is good and acceptable and perfect [in His sight for you]. <sup>3</sup>For by the grace given to me I warn everyone among you not to estimate and think of himself more highly than he ought [not to have an exaggerated opinion of his own importance], but to rate his ability with sober judgment, each according to the degree of faith apportioned by God to him. <sup>4</sup>For as in one physical body we have many parts (organs, members) and all of these parts do not have the same

function or use, <sup>5</sup>so we, numerous as we are, are one body in Christ (the Messiah) and individually we are parts of one another [mutually dependent on one another]. <sup>6</sup>Having gifts (faculties, talents, qualities) that differ according to the grace given us, let us use them: [He whose gift is] prophecy, [let him prophesy] according to the proportion of his faith; <sup>7</sup>[He whose gift is] practical service, let him give himself to serving; he who teaches, to his teaching; <sup>8</sup>He who exhorts (encourages), to his exhortation; he who contributes, let him do it in simplicity *and* liberality; he who gives aid *and* superintends, with zeal *and* singleness of mind; he who does acts of mercy, with genuine cheerfulness *and* joyful eagerness. <sup>9</sup>[Let your] love be sincere (a real thing); hate what is evil [loathe all ungodliness, turn in horror from wickedness], but hold fast to that which is good. <sup>10</sup>Love one another with brotherly affection [as members of one family], giving precedence *and* showing honor to one another. <sup>11</sup>Never lag in zeal *and* in earnest endeavor; be aglow *and* burning with the Spirit, serving the Lord. <sup>12</sup>Rejoice *and* exult in hope; be steadfast and patient in suffering *and* tribulation; be constant in prayer. <sup>13</sup>Contribute to the needs of God's people; pursue the practice of hospitality. <sup>14</sup>Bless those who persecute you [who are cruel in their attitude toward you]; bless and do not curse them. <sup>15</sup>Rejoice with those who rejoice [sharing others' joy], and weep with those who weep [sharing others' grief]. <sup>16</sup>Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty (snobbish, high-minded, exclusive), but readily adjust yourself to [people, things] *and* give yourselves to humble tasks. Never overestimate yourself *or* be wise in your own conceits. <sup>17</sup>Repay no one evil for evil, but take thought for what is honest *and* proper *and* noble in the sight of everyone. <sup>18</sup>If possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. <sup>19</sup>Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave the way open for [God's] wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, says the Lord. <sup>20</sup>But if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head. <sup>21</sup>Do not let yourself be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

If we follow that, church should go beautifully, right. Yes. And church doesn't always go beautifully. And my role in church not going beautifully has everything to do with every single one of the pieces of these verses. Whether I am thinking my gifts are better than they are or worse than they are. It doesn't matter which way. If you're a knee and you're not doing your knee thing, then these verses can't be played out. There are parts of the body that may have more requirements, more often used; that doesn't make them more important. Kidneys are important. They get a different level of use than your gall bladder. Ask people who don't have their gall bladder; if they'd like it back. It's still part of what God's doing. It's still whatever your role is. It doesn't mean they have to be equal levels of minutes served. But whatever those gifts are, whatever the thing is that the Lord has placed in you, if we do not come together and use them as part of the body, then the body is less. The body is not functioning. We can't be unified. We can't do all of these things that we're called to. And the reason we're called to them is to encourage and fan the flame with each other and to be a light to the world that's out there. I'm going to skip that one. If you'd like you can go look at Ephesians 4 later if you want to go see some of the other gifts that are listed into those church leadership roles. But the point is, that whatever God has planted in you with His Holy Spirit is a gift. You are part of an actual body and without you, it does not function as well.

1 Thessalonians 5:12. We're going to jump a little bit.

<sup>12</sup>Now also we beseech you, brethren, get to know those who labor among you [recognize them for what they are, acknowledge and appreciate and respect them all] – your leaders who are over you in the Lord and those who warn and kindly reprove and exhort you.

So we did get to do some of that this weekend, right. We got to appreciate and if you've been here any amount of time, Chris has exhorted you from the pulpit somewhere along the way. So we did get to acknowledge and do that. But understand one of the reasons we're called to do this is because the attack on our leaders is greater than the attack of the members. It just is. Ask Michelle what our weeks are like before we teach. I don't know. Every week, every time. I'm like, "What's going on here. Oh, yeah, it's my week to teach. Of course." So imagine that on a much more significant role. And so we do need to be in prayer for them. We need to use some of the patience and other things that come up as they are under more attack. That's the only word I know. Let's go to 1 Peter 5:1 – 3 because this is what they're held to.

<sup>1</sup>I warn and counsel the elders among you (the pastors and spiritual guides of the church) as a fellow elder and as an eye witness [called to testify] of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a sharer in the glory (the honor and splendor) that is to be revealed (disclosed, unfolded): <sup>2</sup>tend the flock of God that is [your responsibility], not by coercion or constraint, but willingly; not dishonorably motivated by the advantages and profits [belonging to the office], but eagerly and cheerfully; <sup>3</sup>not domineering [as arrogant, dictatorial, and overbearing persons] over those in your charge, but being examples (patterns and models of Christian living) to the flock (the congregation).

So they are held to quite the standard of how they are to live out their calling in front of us. So never take that lightly as you watch from those other levels as to, there are various spots, I don't just mean the pastoral role. There are lots of items mentioned there of various seasons of counselors or leadership or full time staff or deacon assignments. It's all of those things that carry that weight. One of the books that lays out all the nitty gritty details of all of the church and how we should live and how we interact is Titus. And it's pretty straight forward. So I'm going to, there's a couple of long reads tonight just because the Scripture's just clear. There's nothing better than what it already says. So if you'll turn to Titus we will wrap up with this. We're going to start in 1:5. So here we have Paul writing to Titus and if you look, we wouldn't have a New Testament if it wasn't for messed up churches. So all this stuff is as old as the church. Same things we deal with today are the same things that are here, but we're given all of the exhortation and encouragement in how to walk that out with as we go back to baptism and the Lord's Supper discussion as the Holy Spirit lives and works inside of us all wrapped together in one big bow.

<sup>5</sup>For this reason I left you in Crete, that you might set right what was defective *and* finish what was left undone, and that you might appoint elders *and* set them over the churches in every city as I directed you. <sup>6</sup>[These elders should be] men who are of unquestionable integrity *and* are irreproachable, the husband of one wife, whose children are [well trained and are] believers, not open to the accusation of being loose in morals *and* conduct or unruly *and* disorderly. <sup>7</sup>For the bishop (an overseer) as God's steward must be blameless, not self-willed *or* arrogant *or* presumptuous; he must not be quick-tempered or given to drink *or* pugnacious (brawling, violent); he must not be grasping



*and* greedy for filthy lucre (financial gain); <sup>8</sup>But he must be hospitable (loving and a friend to believers, especially to strangers and foreigners); [he must be] a lover of goodness [of good people and good things], sober-minded (sensible, discreet), upright *and* fair-minded, a devout man *and* religiously correct, temperate *and* keeping himself in hand. <sup>9</sup>He must hold fast to the sure *and* trustworthy Word of God as he was taught it, so that he may be able both to give stimulating instruction *and* encouragement in sound (wholesome) doctrine and to refute *and* convict those who contradict *and* oppose it. <sup>10</sup>For there are many disorderly *and* unruly men who are idle (vain, empty) *and* misleading talkers and self-deceivers *and* deceivers of others. Especially of those of the circumcision party. <sup>11</sup>Their mouths must be stopped, for they are mentally distressing *and* subverting whole families by teaching what they ought not to teach, for the purpose of getting base advantage *and* disreputable gain. <sup>12</sup>One of their number, a prophet of their own, said, Cretans are always liars, hurtful beasts, idle *and* lazy gluttons. <sup>13</sup>And this account of them is [really] true. Because it is [true], rebuke them sharply [deal sternly, even severely with them], so that they may be sound in the faith *and* free from error, <sup>14</sup>ceasing to give attention to Jewish myths *and* fables or to rules by [mere] men who reject *and* turn their backs on the Truth. <sup>15</sup>To the pure [in heart and conscience] all things are pure, but to the defiled *and* corrupt and unbelieving nothing is pure; their very minds and consciences are defiled *and* polluted. <sup>16</sup>They profess to know God, but deny *and* disown *and* renounce Him by what they do; they are detestable *and* loathsome, unbelieving *and* disobedient *and* disloyal *and* rebellious, and [they are] unfit *and* worthless for good work of any kind.

<sup>1</sup>But [as for] you, teach what is fitting *and* becoming to sound doctrine [the character and right living that identify true Christians]. <sup>2</sup>Urge the older men to be temperate, venerable (serious), sensible, self-controlled, and sound in the faith, in the love, and in the steadfastness *and* patience [of Christ]. <sup>3</sup>Bid the older women similarly to be reverent *and* devout in their deportment as becomes those engaged in sacred service, not slanderers or slaves to drink. They are to give good counsel *and* be teachers of what is right *and* noble, <sup>4</sup>so that they will wisely train the young women to be sane and sober of mind (temperate, disciplined) and to love their husbands and their children, <sup>5</sup>To be self-controlled, chaste, homemakers, good-natured (kindhearted), adapting *and* subordinating themselves to their husbands, that the word of God may not be exposed to reproach. <sup>6</sup>In a similar way, urge the younger men to be self-restrained *and* to behave prudently [taking life seriously]. <sup>7</sup>And show your own self in all respects to be a pattern *and* a model of good deeds *and* works, teaching what is unadulterated, showing gravity, with dignity *and* seriousness. <sup>8</sup>And let your instruction be sound *and* fit *and* wise *and* wholesome, vigorous *and* irrefutable *and* above censure, so that the opponent may be put to shame, finding nothing discrediting *or* evil to say about us. <sup>9</sup>bid servants to be submissive to their masters, to be pleasing *and* give satisfaction in every way. <sup>10</sup>Nor to steal by taking things of small value, but to prove themselves truly loyal *and* entirely reliable *and* faithful throughout, so that in everything they may be an ornament *and* do credit to the teaching from *and* about God our Savior. <sup>11</sup>For the grace of God has come forward for the deliverance from sin *and* the eternal salvation for all mankind.

So he goes on a little bit more talking about who we are in there, but it's more of the same that we've been talking about tonight. If we live out and walk out the things that we're called to do,

then as we come together in the body of Christ using our gifts that we have brought out, then that unified body is a strong light fire that is drawing the men to Him, not to us, to Him. And so the question is, what is your role in the body? What's keeping you from your role in the body? What is that thing that may be being whispered in your ear, "I couldn't do that. That's not really for me. Someone's already doing that. I don't really fit here. I don't really know anybody. No one's asked me to do that." Or, "I feel nothing." OK. If that might be it, ask the Holy Spirit. He's put that in you. He has a place and a role and part of the body and come together and use that to be unified. Are there things keeping you from unity? Are there things that need to be worked out in your own heart or worked out further than that? We talked about the authority that we are loosed. We have the Holy Spirit living in us. We have all authority to act out everything that God did on this earth; we have all of that same authority. Are we living that out? So our question is, "What will you do to be a part of that body and a part of that unity in your step forward." And it does, it takes all of us doing all of these things, but in the Holy Spirit's strength because that list is scary and is not well lived out by me. So it was a good reminder for me.