

LIVING TO THE PRAISE OF HIS GLORIOUS GRACE

EPHESIANS 1:1-3

PASTOR ROB GODARD
CLOVERDALE BAPTIST CHURCH

November 25, 2007

I hope the prayer of your heart is that you would have your eyes opened more and more and that you would be able to see and then declare the richness of who God is and what He has done. It's a joy to be a part of a church that is much bigger than this one – I'm talking about the world-wide church.

Last Sunday, God's people here gave around \$3,800 – a little bit more than that - to buy Bibles for those who can't afford them in persecuted church countries. That's at \$6 a Bible. Is anybody a really good mathematician – I tried to do it really quickly in my pew and I came up with a number but it always makes me nervous when I do math. Any mathematicians out there – how many Bibles is that about? I had 650 and if you don't believe me - is that right though? I should check first. See, George, I trust you, absolutely.

650 Bibles, and the word of God, we believe very strongly when it goes out never returns void. Isn't that exciting? So because of Cloverdale Baptist Church and the ministries around that help us to do this, we had the privilege of being a part of churches – maybe all over the world – in persecuted places, where God's word now can be read and can dwell in people richly and joy can be brought about. So thank you for that – thank you for taking part in that. And it's a privilege to serve with you, not only in what God is doing at Cloverdale Baptist Church, and there are exciting things happening here, but around the world.

Jesus Loves Me:

Rwanda is one of those words that probably brings all sorts of different images to you. When the word Rwanda comes to me, it was a word I didn't know very much about until there was a civil war there which literally ripped the country apart. Tens of thousands of people were murdered. Rebels and soldiers that represented the government at that time fought and literally villages were completely wiped out.

Billy Graham's son, Franklin Graham, went to one of those villages. He was there with a medical team to minister not only to meet physical needs, but also spiritual needs of the people there. And as he was there he saw utter devastation. And one day he was kind of wandering the streets with a soldier – he had protection there, there was still chaos going on – and he noticed a little girl sitting and playing. She had very little to play with. In fact - nothing. She was kind of sitting in a rag dress. And she was singing a song. The soldier walked by but Franklin stopped and he turned and he said to the soldier: What song is she singing? Tell me the story of this girl. And the soldier again very callously said: well, she has no one – her family has all been wiped out by the war. She has nothing at all. And Franklin said: but what is she singing? He recognized the tune and he listened for a minute and then listened for a little longer. It's something about Jesus loving her.

Franklin Graham then said: is it Jesus Loves Me, this I know for the Bible tells me so? And the soldier moving on, callously said: yeah, it's something like that. Franklin reported then to those who supported him that his world has never been the same. Here is this little girl, her world absolutely torn apart, every human relationship she had gone, nothing left - except the richest treasure available. And in her terrible time, she knew Jesus loved her.

Carl Barth, one of the theologians from centuries ago, brilliant man, a little liberal for us I think, father of new orthodoxy and some other things, was once asked by a group of students – and the students expected something incredibly profound – Carl, what's the most profound thing you have ever learned - the greatest truth that your great mind has discovered about Christianity or about the Bible?

Carl Barth thought for a minute and then he said: Jesus loves me, this I know. Rich for a little girl who had lost everything. Rich for a theologian who had spent his entire life studying the treasured truths of the Bible and rich for every person here, if we will allow the experience, not just the words, but the experience, the richness of who God is and of what God has done to not only impact our minds but to impact our hearts and to change our lives. Jesus loves me! It's rich. It's true. The Bible is really a book that shouts this out in so many different ways.

The Book of Ephesians:

If you have your Bibles, open them with me to the book of Ephesians. God willing over the next year or two or three or four, we're going to study together this tremendous book. I've been researching ahead and enjoying so much the richness of what this book teaches. And I think I'm on Sermon 8 and I'm on Verse 8, or something like that. There is so much to learn. So much to experience. So much to enjoy. Because in the midst of our world, there is truly chaos going on around us. Maybe not like this precious little girl experienced. But chaos in business, chaos in family relationships, chaos in work and what is going on there, chaos in our hearts. And I'm hoping that as we study this precious book that chaos will be slowed enough that we can see the richness and the depth of the truth that Jesus loves you and me. And if we get that, we will never ever be the same.

Ephesians, one of the best loved books in the Bible – in fact probably if you were to ask and go throughout history and ask, you would find 2 books would float to the top. Can anyone tell me what the other book would be? ... The book of Romans and the book of Ephesians.

Personally, this is a book that has changed my life as I understood the greatness of who God is and that has kind of trickled into my mind and into my heart and then been a blessing to so many that have struggled with: where is God in the midst of chaos?

Throughout history, this book has been called the crown, the climax, of Pauline theology. The greatest communication ever made to man, the true theology of Paul, the consummate and most comprehensive statement which the New Testament contains of the meaning of the Christian religion. It is certainly the final statement of what Paul believes about God.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge called it the divinest composition of man. Past President of Princeton Theological Seminary, John McKay, said: Never was the reality of revelation more obvious and the reflective powers of the apostle's mind more transfigured than in the great book which is known by the title: The Epistle to the Ephesians. It tells us of Christ and the church. It tells us of what it means to have a personal relationship with God and how that relationship can take place. It tells us that God is sovereign over all of history including what is happening in Canada and our world right now. It's a profound book, it's a simple book, it's a book that we can plumb for years and years and never get all of the riches that are found there.

I really believe that if you think through and pray through and interact with God through the study of this book, your life will never be the same. It's not so much a matter of going through this wonderful book, as we carefully and reverently and prayerfully consider this book, it's not so much what we will do with the book of Ephesians - but more what it will do with us.

God, the Holy Spirit, would you open our eyes so that we can see the richness of who God is and what God has done and then what God has called us to.

Read Ephesians Every Week:

I make two challenges as we start this study, and we are going to take gentle breaks for Christmas – 3 or 4 Sundays – and then another gentle break for Easter, and then I'm not even sure what we are going to do for the summer. I don't know that far ahead where God will lead us. But I would encourage you while we are studying the book of Ephesians to make 2 commitments. The first is: every week read the book. It's only six chapters. Takes you about 10 minutes to read from the first chapter to the sixth chapter and when you read it, keep on reading – don't stop and think – keep on reading. You make notations - carry a pen with you if you want. Just get the richness of the entire book. If you read it every day until you are done this series, you will know it very well. And then you can start to plumb.

Memorize Ephesians Chapter 1:

Secondly, I'd like us together to memorize Ephesians Chapter 1. Now I will say that the staff has a head start. And if you're not a very good memorizer, you've got about 2 years to do it. But I'd love for us to memorize the book of Ephesians together. If you are willing to take part in that with us, there will be a prize. Now I will say this up front. The real prize will be that you get to know God better. Because he says: I have hidden (this is God inspired) – I have hidden your word in my heart so that I might not ... You see, the better you know the word of God, the better equipped you are to fight the battles He has called us to fight.

We've lost that passion for memorization. I know Cloverdale hasn't but I would encourage you to memorize the entire book. Do it with your families so that as an entire church, we could know this book. And we can call it to memory when we are feeling discouraged or when we're feeling a need for passion, purpose, or the pursuit of God that He so longs for us to have.

So those 2 challenges just up front. I will remind you of them. As we work through this book. The other gift will be a mug – I'm kind of a mug guy - so that every time you drink from that mug you will remember Ephesians 1 and the richness that it teaches and beyond.

It's really my belief that if we as a church make it our goal to be saturated with this book over the next year, we'll never be the same. We will know God better, be changed by His grace, and we'll enjoy serving him with delight.

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God,
To God's holy people in Ephesus, ^[a] the faithful in Christ Jesus:

We see in here an introduction to who wrote the book, although we believe very strongly that the Holy Spirit inspires the book. In other words, God is giving this to us. Paul, an apostle – we think this book was written in 60 to 62 AD - Paul was in prison. He was writing from prison, kind of concerned about a church that he had planted. The book of Acts tells us a little about Ephesus. In fact, Acts Chapter 20, which is one of the richest places to go about the role of an elder in a church, in Acts 20, he looks back and says: this is my experience with you and as I move on, I love you and I want you to be very very careful. I want you to read that in Acts Chapter 20 Verses 17-38.

Ephesus was a city of roughly a quarter million people. It was the leading city of the most prosperous region of the Roman empire. It had great roads throughout. It was kind of the

touchstone for many places. It was a thriving metropolis. They report that there were probably over 50 gods and goddesses that they worshiped, with one that kind of rose to the top. If you read the book of Acts, you will see who that goddess was, and we will talk about her as we go on. But Paul's interaction and then spiritual battle with that world brought about his having to leave. He was chased out of town by the merchants who were losing money because people were coming to Christ, then throwing out their needs.

Diana, there's a little hint if you want to do further study, although we will talk about her. It was one of the seven ancient wonders of the world – the temple to her.

Ephesus was a pagan city – a city that hated Christians – a place where authentically following God with purpose and with passion and with all of your might was very difficult to do. And so Paul turns around and he writes this book and he says: I want you to understand how to live for Jesus.

How to Live for Jesus:

I don't know if you've ever had that question in your mind. I certainly have and continue to. How do I live in such a way that my relationship with Jesus actually is authentic, actually changes who I am, actually defines what I do. I don't want religion – I want passion, I want relationship with almighty God through Jesus Christ. And sometimes my world threatens to choke that out. These people understood this. The book of Ephesians will help us understand how to respond.

Oh there were differences – they were under tremendous persecution. Nero was in power. And if you've heard of Nero, you know the atrocities he put Christians through. He would light them on fire, he would put them into bloody clothes and then feed them to wild dogs or wild animals. He was atrocious to Christians.

I want you to understand that this book is not written in a theologian's headquarters who doesn't understand life to people who were separate from real life. I want you to understand that the richness of this book changed these people. They desperately needed it, they longed for it, so that they could live for the glory of God in the midst of life that threatened to steal their joy.

I understand that, I need it. I don't understand the depth of the persecution but I understand what it's like to sometimes look at my life and see that God has kind of been sidelined. I don't mean that I long for that but sometimes I get mixed up in other things, other passions, other important things – family and work and ... you can fill in your own blanks.

Purpose:

This book calls us back to what really really matters. This morning, I want to see the big picture – 3 words – big picture that will change our lives. The first word that this book really helps us with is: PURPOSE.

If you read chapter 1 you will find this phrase repeated. As a church we will repeat it as we study the book - to the praise of His glory, or for the praise of His glory. In other words, in the midst of anything that life brings - for these people in Ephesus or the churches it was written to - tremendous pain. But in the midst of anything that life brings – good or bad – you exist for one purpose overriding every other purpose.

By the way, I believe that not only bad things, like persecution can crowd this out, but good things. Good things like loving your wife, or loving your husband, or raising your children can

crowd out this one overriding passion. We exist – the book of Ephesians will tell us over and over again – for the praise of His glory.

It's an amazing thing. It will change everything else in how you live. You exist not to be comfortable, not to have a great family, not to have a great job and make lots of money. You exist for the praise of the glory of God!

I think John the Baptist of all the people in the Bible modeled this the best. I think his one great line was this. Turn to John Chapter 3 Verse 30:

He must become greater; I must become ... What? less."

You see how important this is for us because again to some degree we have been trained – God exists for me. And so it governs our prayers – God please do this and this and this and this for me because I need help, because I don't feel well, or this... you fill in the blank. Now what God wants us to be passionately pursuing is His glory. I must become less. He must become more!

Jesus said of John the Baptist: he is the greatest man born among women to this point. What made John the Baptist great was not that he did miracles – in fact, we don't know if he did any. We don't think that he did. It was not that he had a long life – his life was cut very short in a vile interaction with King Herod. Did he accomplish much in his life? The answer is no. In fact, he died almost forgotten in a prison. Did he have tons of wealth? The answer is no. What did he do that made him great? He used his entire life to point to Jesus. He lived for the praise of His glory. That was his driving purpose.

You know we live in a purposeless nation. Oh we will talk about purposes, but there is a hunger underneath for something more. And so that is why if you title your book with the word "purpose" in it, it will become a number 1 bestseller. In fact, I have been told that the number 2 bestseller, outside of the Bible, in all of the world, is "The Purpose Driven Life".

And God wants us to have a purpose driven life. And that purpose driven life is this - I exist for the praise of your glory. Please hear this as clearly as I can say it. We can go to the text – it is all over the place – Verse 3:

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. ⁴ For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love ⁵ he ^[b] predestined us for adoption to sonship ^[c] through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will— ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. ⁷

Verse 11:

In him we were also chosen, ^[e] having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, ¹² in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory.

Chapter 2, Verse 7 – I love this, this in the context of grace and we will talk about this in just a minute...

⁷ in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

Do you see what the driving purpose that the Bible calls us to live for is? To the praise of His glory. It's a reminder that life is all about God. Life is all about God.

And so in the midst of your turmoil, in the midst of your business, in the midst of doing whatever it is that you are doing in your life as you experience pain, some will be your own fault – it will. Some will be a consequence of your own sin. Some will be a consequence of the fall, a consequence that there is sin and death and sickness around us. Some will be a consequence of the stupidity of others.

And God is saying to us in the book of Ephesians, and I am saying to you as your shepherd this morning, when those things happen, and they will, your response must be something that says: life is about God - to the praise of His glory, and I will live for him. Do you see how radical this is? My purpose is to live to the praise of His glory - as is yours, if you are following Jesus.

Position:

Number 2. The book of Ephesians teaches us about position. Not only do we hear that life is to be lived exclusively and passionately to the praise of God's glory and that life is about him, but it tells us who we are in Christ. One of Paul's favourite phrases in the book of Ephesians is this little phrase: In Christ. In other words, it is telling us the richness of what it means to live for His glory. Where we're at with him is so incredible.

Again, we can read this in some many places, but 13 and 14 of Chapter 1:

¹³ And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.

In other words, you are in Christ! You are secure, you are rich, you are powerful. Be very careful how we use that. We are seeing that theme over and over again in the book of Ephesians. You can find victory in Christ! You can find absolute and total security in Christ! Christianity is a victorious life - relationship with Jesus. That we are in Christ is so rich. We discover it and live and enjoy it and rest in it!

This story is told in the '30's. This precious dear elderly lady – she went to her banker. The '30's were very terrible and in fact if you lived through them – and I didn't – you will remember them very well. But really as a nation we have forgotten them, but for some people, it was hard to even feed their families. Terrible times. This lady was having trouble feeding herself so she went to her banker and she brought in her insurance policy and she laid it on the table and she said: I just can't keep paying this – I apologize – I just want to turn it in. The banker turned to her and said: Ma'am, this is worth a lot of money. He was a person who had integrity. He said: Ma'am, I think you need to keep paying on this, I really do. He noticed as he said this that it

was actually her husband's policy and she was a beneficiary. He said to her: Have you talked this over with your husband? And she said: I can't, my husband's been dead for over 3 years.

The banker checked out if this was true, he did some research, and found that it was. She not only received 3 years of payments that she had been making on the policy but she received the benefit of the life insurance. And she lived in riches for the rest of her life.

The greatest life insurance policy of all time became due when Jesus Christ died on the cross and rose again. Thousands and thousands of people and some of us are included continue to try to make payments on our own salvation when all we need to do is accept the immeasurable gift that is ours through the death and resurrection of Jesus. Our purpose is to live for His praise and glory. But there is this incredible reality that He has paid it all! It is finished! And it is guaranteed to all who believe this incredible promise – the Holy Spirit guaranteeing – or He who began a good work in us (Philippians 1:6) will carry it through until when? All the way! This is profound. It is profound because we struggle sometimes with security. And the Bible says: in Christ we are absolutely secure. It is finished. The price is paid.

Purpose: to the praise of His glory. Position: in Christ.

Process, Passion:

The third P is process, or passion. A life lived with all of your might for God. That process in this book starts in Chapter 4. If you ever read this book which I hope you will do on a weekly basis, you will discover that at the end of Chapter 3 there is this amazing prayer. In fact, I believe the book of Ephesians, if we just pray the prayers that are there – the prayer in Chapter 1 that kind of starts in 14, 15, and then goes on. Or the prayer in Chapter 3 that starts in 14 – will radically change how we pray. But in Chapter 4 Verse 1, we see this transition. It talks about who you are in Christ, it talks about what Christ has done for you. And then in 4 Verse 1, he says: As a prisoner for the Lord, then... Based on all that I have told you, based on where I am – I urge to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.

What?

You see he has just said: Your goal is to live to the praise of the glories of His grace, to live with passion, to point to Jesus. And then he said: that in Christ he has paid the price. Absolutely – Jesus Christ while you were still a sinner died in your place and now he says: live worthy of that calling. Please do not minimize this. He said: this is who God is. He is in control of every detail of all of life, all of history is His story. And He loves you!

Now the call – live worthy of that calling. Please understand. This is not just something simple that we can glibly coast over in the book of Ephesians. It's a battle. Ephesians Chapter 6 – a war is going on. Not only externally for the souls of those who don't know Jesus, but internally for purity and holiness and passion and joy for Jesus. But there's this process that we need to fight on with all of our might - that we need to pursue. We must seek to walk worthy of who God has called us to be and of what God has done. Now please hear me clearly, because most churches like ours, when we hear this kind of call – Ephesians 4, Verse 1 – we get this sense of overwhelming guilt and shame or overwhelming apathy.

Because we hear this – Pastor we hear this in the Bible – we are to pursue it with all of our might, with passion, we are to live for the glory of God, with every breath I take I want to please him, I want to walk worthy of the calling. Then I am going to commit again today – and I hope

you do – to live this kind of life. Then you take a step and you realize you have taken one step forward and how many steps back when you evaluate your life? And you go: Man, I am tired of trying! And you try again. And you fail. Your thoughts are bad, or your words are harsh or gossipy or slanderous. And you take one step forward – I don't want to do that again. And you're in a cycle of passionate pursuit and passionate failure and it leads to apathy or leads to legalism or leads to faking it or....

What we want to understand from the book of Ephesians is: not only does God call you to live this way, but if you are in Christ, empowered by His Holy Spirit, it is possible to be in a process that leads you from glory to glory, growing. You cannot do it alone. In fact, if you try to please Jesus on your own, you'll find that the Christian life is impossible. But if you understand that life is about Him, and not about you, and if you understand that you're in Christ, absolutely secure because Jesus has paid it all. When you're passionately pursuing this walk worthy of the calling you've received, you're not doing it to earn salvation. You're doing it because you are saved. And then there's this overflow of joy. And you say: Yes, Lord, I will follow you with all of my heart. You have everything, You deserve everything. I will live. Yes, I will fail because you are calling me to be perfect, but I will serve You with passion. I will make it the driving goal of my life to say: to live is Christ, to die is gain.

You see the book of Ephesians is going to show us how to do that. It's going to show us how to do that in every day life. It's going to show us how to do that when we are at work. It talks about slaves and masters. It's going to show us how to do that as children with our parents. It's going to show us how to do that in families in Chapter 5, where it talks about wives and husbands and their interaction and children. In Chapter 6, it's going to show us how to fight the war that's going on around us. It's not with humans but with powers and principalities. It's going to teach us how to live this kind of life that is rich in purpose, that is joyful in position in Christ, and that is passionate in the process of pursuing Jesus with all of our might.

I love Ephesians 2: 8-10 - maybe the richest description of the Gospel.

⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰ For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Isn't that exciting? There it is! It's His grace! It's to the glory of His grace. It's exciting because we are saved by grace – we can't earn it. If we had to earn it, we would fail all the time. And He's already got things for us to do that if I point my nose towards with all of my might, I will accomplish His will for His glory in His strength and the world will never be the same. This is exciting stuff.

Pastor, why didn't we study the book of Ephesians 2 years ago? Because I believe right now is the time - in God's sovereign love. He has planned for us to enjoy the richness of this book.

You know, you will be asking, well what now? You've given us an overview of the book, and we want to be able to apply God's word to our lives. And I believe that with all my might. I don't just want you to be excited about the study of the book of Ephesians, although I do want that.

How Do We Apply This:
The Will:

How do we apply this? So let's talk about this. I have 4 applications. The first is: an application of the will.

I would like you to make a commitment right now. We've talked about it a little bit, but I would like you to make a commitment right now that you will read this book every week until we are done the series. I would recommend that you do it on the first day of the week, either Sunday or Monday, but that you do it. And then you do it again and again. What I would even strongly recommend – that you pick the Chapter that we're in and you just read that one every day and then you kind of finish up when you have time. Do your normal devotions. I don't want to talk this away from the rest of the Bible. But take 10 minutes and let this book become a close friend. Enjoy it, know it, live it, rejoice in it. Are you willing to make that commitment this morning? When I say "make it" – tell someone else – this is something I am going to do. Please hold me accountable. I'm going to live with this book.

Decision:

Secondly, again, this is mine – so the first one was will. I want you to make a decision – a decision to live in this book. Secondly, remember why you exist and seek to have your relationship with Jesus impact all that you are and all that you do. Understand, I'm still talking in the mind here, because this is such a big picture thing. But if you remember the preciousness of that little girl and the brilliance of that theologian – really the most profound thing that you know and that I know, is that Jesus loves me. That's what the Bible says and I can live in light of that. And so I want us to spend time thinking our purpose, thinking through why we exist. We don't exist for our own comfort. In fact, the Bible tells us that anyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. And I believe that will intensify. I don't know that for sure – but it's what I believe. The closer we get to Jesus, the more trouble we'll have, and the more grace will overwhelm us, and the more passion we'll have. What I'm saying is: let's take time to re-evaluate our lives and to say: I want to live for the praise of Your glory – whatever that means in my life, with my family, with my parents, with my job, with my school mates, whatever it is – to the praise of Your glory – no matter what the cost.

For the Ephesians, it might have meant going to the Coliseum, being dressed in bloody animal clothes and dying. I don't know what it means for you. But I know you will never be alone in your passionate pursuit. You'll be in Christ.

Rest in God:

Thirdly, as you pursue God with all of your heart – again this is a matter of the will – but I am looking for an emotional response here – rest in the assurance of God's sovereignty and His personal care for you as His child. I know that when you are going hard after a Holy God – which is what we long for as a church – not just playing church – but passionate pursuit – when you're doing this, life gets tough. I know that from experience, I know that from you who have told me about your own lives as you give everything to Him. And then as things threaten you and crowd it out, and it's a battle, and it's a war - Ephesians understands that. In this rest, in the peace and assurance of God's sovereignty and His personal love for you as His child, please listen. And again, I'm looking for an emotional response, because you probably know this – you have an un-loseable relationship that makes you absolutely secure no matter what is happening around you in life. And when you truly believe that – Philippians 4:4-6 there's a peace that transcends all understanding which will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. And after that emotional peace.

Fight for Holiness in All of Life:

Fourthly: again big picture and we will review these things all the time. Fight for holiness in all of life. Don't be satisfied with an external holiness. Fight to take captive every thought you have. The Bible tells us that no one keeps perfect rein on his tongue. James Chapter 1 and then again in James and many other places - fight so that every word that comes out of your mouth is to the praise of His glory or to build others up. Fight so that every action you do is looking for the good of others and the praise of His glory. Fight to be selfless. Fight to be God centered. Fight to be holy. Pursue holiness with passion. Do not be satisfied with failure. Oh, you'll live in failure. You will never arrive until you die. But say: to live is Christ. I will pursue this with all of my might. I'll change my life around this so that to die is gain! Again, I know this is big picture, I understand this. We'll get specific when we get specific with the book. What I'm looking for is the stirring of your hearts to say I know there is more. I know I can be holier. I know I can pursue righteousness from the inside out with more passion in Christ, with all of my might, for His glory.

I think this book will call us to do that and I think the Holy Spirit is calling us to do that. And so on behalf of God, make every effort to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.

I think those four are good enough for implications this morning if we put them in practice. This book, this God given book, is about purpose, is about position, and is about process or passion. Let's pray.

Father, it's our longing to bring honour to Your name, it's our longing to know You more. We need the eyes of our hearts opened. We need Your word to be more than just words. So we ask in Your power and in your strength that You would open the eyes of our hearts. We ask that we would be able to see wonderful things from Your word. Father, I thank You for Cloverdale Baptist Church, I thank You for the love that is here for others, I thank You for the faith that You have given. And I ask God that You would please give us the spirit of wisdom and revelation so that we might know You better. Would You please allow the eyes of our hearts to be enlightened so that we can know the hope to which You have called us and the richness of the glorious inheritance for everyone that knows You. We want to know You more. So that in joy, our lives will never be the same, from glory to glory. Thank you, Jesus. Amen.