

Colossians 3:16

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[0 : 00] Different parts of Colossians 3, but verse 16 is the verse. 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.

Every year at McElwain, we choose what we call a year passage. And we'll take a section of scripture and perhaps focus on one verse inside of it as a theme for the year.

Now, that can be a challenge because sometimes it can be sort of like window dressing. It can be like decoration. We'll even put the verse up on the wall. And it's easy to say it, but to begin driving that verse as a part of a theme into the life of your church is more of a challenge.

And so we seek to do that in different ways. This year, we've done several things with regards to particularly singing as a congregation so that we might remember this verse.

But the thing that makes it most important, I think, in terms of the congregation is that the pronoun you here is plural. In America, I don't know how it is here, but one's faith is easily privatized and made solitary.

[1 : 14] And you come across all kinds of people who will say, I love Jesus, but I don't like the church. I had a conversation with someone who actually was a former elder of ours.

He had some difficulty with the church some years ago, and he and his wife left the church. I heard they popped around to other churches. It was a sad event to me, but when I saw him in a restaurant, I walked up to him and I asked him how he was doing.

And he said he was doing well. It's very kind. Until I asked him where he and his family were worshiping. And he smiled and he said, well, Rob, we are orthodox believers with unorthodox views. And I bit my tongue.

And I said, well, what do you mean? He says, we love Jesus, but we hate his people. And I expected to hear something like, wait, we just have a problem with the church.

But hate his people. And I think he was taken aback by the stunned look on my face. He had already said what he'd said, and it was hard for him to backpedal.

[2 : 17] Where do you go after that? How do you say, well, let me soften hate. And I thought, I have nothing to lose. So I said, you can't love Jesus and hate his bride. He looked at me and he said, well, have a nice day, Rob.

And Paul says here that the word of Christ is to dwell within you, within us, within us. We would say in the south of the United States, y'all.

That's you all. Let the word of Christ dwell within y'all. Or if you're really serious and want to include everybody, all y'all. Richly.

It may be very sad as I walked away. I've heard recently that he and his wife are divorced. We're in the process of it. And my heart hurt.

Jesus, of course, cannot be privatized. Though he comes to each of us individually. He comes to us as who we are, where we are. And he takes us to himself in all unique ways.

[3 : 23] Everyone who comes to know the Lord has a unique story to tell. Because God in his grace doesn't just condescend to a mass of people. He comes to us individually.

And so our stories are precious to us. But he doesn't save us for isolation. He saves us to be part of his body. And that is the promise of the covenant. He saves us so that he might fulfill his covenant promise made to Abraham.

So that all the nations of the earth would be blessed. But that he would have a single people throughout all the ages. Who will be gathered together ultimately in that great scene in Revelation. One of those saints holding the palm branches from every tribe and nation and tongue. Beholding Christ always forever. Because of the promise that God is making a people for himself.

And so we can't privatize our faith. And yet if we don't have a personal private faith of our own. One that transforms us individually. We won't be able to connect into the body for which we've been chosen to be a part of.

[4 : 27] In other words we are integral pieces. Think of the way God says what he says about spiritual gifts. In 1 Corinthians in particular. He says each of us has a gift for the common good.

My gift is not good for me. It's good for the body. But your gift is good for me. And so we have to be in this body context. Each member serving and working its part.

So that we are blessed by one another. Paul says that we might receive a mutual blessing for one another. We need each other. And our individuality has as its reference point.

Its identity. Who we are in the body of Christ. In Christ. And that's so important. In a culture that becomes more and more isolated through social media.

Isn't it ironic? When we talk about social media. And what you have is this. Last Christmas my daughter and my niece were sitting on the hearth.

[5 : 25] They see each other maybe three times a year. They're the same age. And they're the best of friends. Both of them are 21. Sitting on the hearth in front of the fireplace. Both on their phones. And I said who are you talking to?

And they said each other. I said what? Oh we're texting each other. Have you ever thought of turning to the other one and saying hi?

Social media. Technology. But even if we didn't have that. I believe that our tendency in sin would be to move away from one another anyway.

Because that's what sin does. And so when we look at verse 16 in this context. That is spoken to the church at Colossae. As Paul is giving these encouragements. And these commands.

And these things which are to be a reference point for the identity of the church. As individuals. But ultimately as this body. He says let the word of Christ dwell within you richly.

[6 : 27] Identity has been a pretty hot topic recently. I'm sure it's the case here as well. It used to be that it was understood that one's identity was rooted in things that we consider to be fairly objective.

We could say things like I am a white male American southerner. And I wouldn't be attacked for that or demonized for it. Because someone might immediately say well that will explain a lot of who you are and the way you act.

It isn't my final identity. But here on this earth it will explain how I think about things of great importance. Like college football. That is American college football.

And I stayed up way too late last night catching up on all the scores back home. Or the way that I think about certain foods. Or the way I think about family. And the way I think about the land.

So important to someone growing up in the south. Some of you may have recently heard about a man who by all outward appearances and by his birth records and citizenship documentation was a white American.

[7 : 34] But he claimed that he was a Filipino. Did anyone hear about that? He insisted that he was Filipino because he said he was a Filipino trapped in an American's body.

He says whenever I hear Filipino music I just my heart is knit to it. And whenever I smell Filipino food I just want to eat it. Well so do I.

But I don't think that makes me Filipino. And he said I feel just right when I'm around other Filipinos. So he was convinced that he was Filipino. That really shouldn't surprise us because of the way we have made identity such a fluid thing.

And we have bowed to this idea culturally that one can just move in and out of an identity at will. We laugh sometimes but it's a very sad thing.

And I think it's important to recognize the confusion that comes from that is exactly what our enemy wants us to have. If we are confused about who we are in things that seem to be obvious.

[8 : 33] Well I know I may look like a man. But you know if I think I might be a woman then maybe I should identify as that. And so what is obvious really isn't obvious.

And things are turned upside down. This past summer in Connecticut there was a controversy as a girls track team championship had as its two top winners. First and second two transgender girls.

Well let's say what they are. They're boys. The controversy was this. Some felt they had an unfair advantage. But the next level controversy was well how do we address that if we've already said it's okay for them to be girls competing?

How are we to address it? Do we have a right to say that? Is it fair? Should I feel the way I do? Is there such a thing as an unfair advantage? What we had is a bunch of confused puppies.

As Christians we believe that identity is objective. Excuse me. In the sense that we believe that it isn't fixed for us. We don't fix it ourselves but it is fixed for us by God.

[9 : 37] Now this passage is important when it comes to those things which humanly speaking we might say are objective. Gender, race, nationality. Paul says these are things that the gospel transcends.

He's not saying these things are not a reality. He's saying these aren't our ultimate identity. Here verse 11 there is not Greek and Jew circumcised and uncircumcised. Barbarian city and slave free. And surely there are.

There were those sitting there hearing this. Thinking well that's exactly who I am. But with it came also the kinds of things that someone might feel limits them.

And the culture would limit them. And he says but Christ is all and in all. Christ is everything. And so he says put on then this reality. Put on not that which from a natural standpoint is your identity. But that identity which God says is the reality of who you are as verse 12. His chosen ones holy and beloved. Compassion. Kindness.

[10 : 42] Humility. Meekness. Patience. Bearing with one another. And if anyone has a complaint against another. Forgiving each other. We see that one another-ness. And each other-ness. That's in the text. He's saying ultimately that the reference point for identity.

Has to be something that transcends all physical realities. And it is the promise of the gospel. That God is in the world reconciling sinners to himself.

Not counting men's sins against them. And here just because there is no Jew. Greek and Jew. Circumcised. Uncircumcised. Barbarian.

City and slave. Free. Male or female. But people in need of grace. And people who receive grace by the promise of God. Then there is a reality. And a reference point.

That all can revolve around. When we get to verse 16. When he says let the word of Christ dwell in you richly. I think he's giving a summary statement.

[11 : 42] All through this chapter he speaks things which are true. Which might be hard. Even impossible for us to believe naturally. I appreciated the sermon this morning. Without faith it's impossible.

That's a police God. It's not difficult. It's impossible. Some of us have a hard time believing. Because of the things that we identify ourselves with physically.

Perhaps the families that we've grown up in. In which we were verbally abused. Which is simply benignly neglected. Faithful parents who worked hard. But didn't show much love.

Maybe didn't communicate forgiveness. That wasn't terrible. Some coming from terrible situations. To hear things like you are chosen. Dearly beloved.

Holy. Who would dare to believe something like that? That seems impossible. And so the reference point becomes the word of Christ. That declaration of what God said is a reality.

[12 : 40] For all those who are in Christ. This phrase word of Christ. Christ only appears twice in the whole New Testament. Here in Colossians 3.16. And in Romans 10.17.

Where we hear the phrase. So faith comes from hearing. Hearing through the word of Christ. I think it's this latter passage. The immediate context makes it clear. That the word of Christ is the message of the gospel.

Here's what Paul says there. How then will they call on him whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?

And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it was written. How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news. But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says. Lord who has believed what he has heard from us.

So. Faith comes from hearing. Hearing through the word of Christ. To me it makes good sense for Paul to be referring to the gospel. As that which is to dwell richly in believers.

[13 : 39] Especially in the context. As we've said of Colossians 3. And all the things that it says about us. That we would not know unless we were told. Unless God revealed it. We would not know automatically. Or we wouldn't know by general revelation.

Looking at the world. But we have to be. It has to be revealed to us. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts. To which indeed you are called in one body. The gospel which reconciles us to God. But also reconciles us to one another. And so the gospel becomes the ground of the peace. To which we are to get a call. And all these other things. That make us who we are as the bride of Christ.

Some scholars suggest that the word of Christ should be broadened. To simply mean the account about Christ. And that would be just the gospel story. But I think that limits it. It's more than just the story of Jesus.

It's the story of what Jesus has done. And the truth of what Jesus has done. And the word of Christ is that declaration of the gospel. And its power in taking us.

[14 : 39] And making us new creations. People who are able not only to believe that they may approach God. Without fear. But begin to live together.

Without fear. Relationships are sticky things. And we carry with all of our old relationships. And current relationships.

It's baggage that informs the way we talk to people. The gospel gives us permission to begin to. As Paul says in 1 Corinthians 13. To believe the best. To think differently.

To assume not the worst but the best. And to put ourselves forward in a position of risk.

Relationships are just plain risky.

You say something and people might not understand it. Even in the context that you're familiar with. Much less a context of someone like me coming into somewhere new. I've had so much encouragement to not say this.

[15 : 36] Not do this. This is typically British. This is not typically British. And you know. I love what Paul said to me. Be yourself. Here I am. Warts and all.

And you know. He giveth more grace. But. The most important thing for us to remember about the word of Christ.

Is its power within us. To do what God has said it will do. Which. Self-help can't do. Which psychology can't do.

Psychiatry can't do. And I'm not denigrating those things. In terms of what medical advances are valuable within that. But to truly change the soul. So that someone is able to begin trusting.

When they've had a life of not being able to trust. Is because the word of God dwells within them. And begins to do something. That they haven't even set out to do.

[16 : 36] It's because God has gotten to work within them. And begun to make something happen to them. Now I think the passage that makes me think about. How the word of Christ is to be taken here.

Is actually not a passage that mentions the word of Christ. But it is. If in fact. The gospel. Of Christ. And all that it pertains. In terms of the authority of God.

I think of the great commission. All authority in heaven on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations. Baptizing them in the name of the Father. And of the Son. And of the Holy Spirit.

Teaching them to observe. All that I have commanded you. So does that mean that we're supposed to memorize the Bible. And understand all of its teaching. Teach everyone. Every last thing.

The fear of teaching people to obey. Of course. Is that some people might think. That that obedience. Is the grounds of their salvation. We spoke of that in Sunday school this morning. I've had people say to me.

[17 : 32] That you shouldn't teach people to obey the Bible. For fear. That they will think that that's their salvation. I think God's more powerful than that. I think he knows.

That he. The work he begins in us. That he will finish. And that. We're freed by the promise. Of the gospel. The imperative of this passage.

Is make disciples. And Jesus charges us. In making these disciples. To teach them to observe. All that I have commanded you. And all that he's commanded. Is the whole of the scripture. Is the story of redemption. The promise of God.

In making a people for himself. Out of a fallen world. It isn't the collection of rules. They're there. It isn't the collection of laws. It isn't the commands.

To do this. Or to not do that. But it is. How we are to live. As God's people. Who have been made so. By the richly indwelling word of God. The upshot of all this.

[18:28] Is that it's more reasonable. To conclude. Not only in Paul's mind here. But in the understanding. Of the college students. I think. That the word of Christ. To dwell richly in them. Is not merely the gospel story. But the entire word of God.

Understood as that. Which has the power. To transform us. And to give us a reference point. For life. That is not available. Anywhere else.

I think. I'm probably. As we say. Preaching to the choir. When I say this. This is all stuff. That we've all heard before. We know this. We know. We're supposed to understand. That the word of God. Is where we get our information.

It is the reference point. For how we are to live. Well I think. When we look at what Paul says here. About the idea. Of dwelling within us. And what it means. To have it richly dwell within us.

It gives us. Just a. A little bit more insight. Into how we are to. Stop striving. So hardly. To have. So hard. To have the word of Christ. Dwell within us.

[19:26] And here's what I mean by that. The word translated dwell. Is a. Straightforward verb. That means to dwell. Or live in. But it has the additional sense. Of being at home. And being at rest.

And being in comfortable surroundings. So when Paul says. Let the word of Christ. Be at home. Within you. He's saying. Stop striving against.

What the word says. It's at home. In you. And that's y'all. It is at home. In you. The most natural place. For the word of God.

To dwell. To rest. To be at home. Is among God's people. So that it may shape them. And inform them. It's that which is your life. You think about when.

Someone comes to visit you. What we say to our visitors. Is make yourself at home. You either mean that. Or you don't. Make yourself at home. What does that mean? Does that person.

[20:28] Then walk around your house. In your underwear. In their underwear. I mean. Is that what you do. When you're in your house. When we lived in Tuscaloosa. In Alabama. I came home one day. It was hot.

And Alabama. It can be just as hot as Florida. And I came home. Excuse me. Immediately began. To change my clothes. And I couldn't find my sweatpants.

And so. I was going to walk to the laundry room. And I just thought. Well. I'll do a few things along the way. That's the way my mind works. I'll stop and do things. And I forgot. That I was walking around.

In my boxer shorts. At home. It's just Lisa. It's just. My kids at the time. All of them under three. And so I came walking into the. Living room. And there stood the neighbor.

With Lisa. I have made myself quite at home. Would I say that to my guests? Come on in. Take your pants off.

[21:22] But we extend this idea. That the place. Where we live. Is where people should be. At comfort. And rest. The word of God. Should be so.

At home. Among us. That when it speaks to us. That which makes us. Uncomfortable. Because. We believe. And we trust those.

Who are speaking it to us. Because it says. We are to speak to one another. So we don't resent what it says. We realize that it has its rightful place. To lodge in our hearts.

And even. Serve as almost like a burr in our saddle. To say. You need to hear this. Don't kill the messenger. The word belongs here.

Particularly when it addresses us. In those areas. In our life. With sanctification. That need to be addressed. We shouldn't resent the word of God. It should be at home among us.

[22:19] Not just from the pulpit. But in our lives. And of course. That means that we should be. Using it. At home. What's interesting is. He says. Let it dwell richly. And that. That word there.

Is a word that is often associated. With wealth. But what it means. Is the full depth. The depth. The riches. That come with things. That have many facets.

You think about holding a jewel up. And turning it. And as you look at it. There are different qualities. That you see. And it's amazing to see it. It has a richness to it. You think of.

Of treasures. That have different levels. Of richness to it. That's the idea. To say that the word of Christ. Is to dwell within us. Richly means. That it is to be.

To be turned over. And. Thought upon. In the old Hebrew sense. Of meditation. Meditation. Is mind filling. Not mind emptying.

[23 : 15] In the Hebrew mind. In the Hebrew mind. Meditation. Is to take the word. And to spin it around. Toss it around. Turn it over. Think on it. Look at it. I think of a rotisserie. Rotisserie chicken. Is something. That we love to get. In our home. And I like to watch. Those. Those chickens. On that. That spit. Just turning. They always look. Better then. Than they actually do. When you get them. Into a little container. You know. They've sat there. And all that. Heat has risen in there. And the condensation. Then drips back down. And the skin. Shrinks down on it. You open it up. And it's not this. Beautiful thing.

Spinning on the rotisserie. It's this. Shriveled up. Bird. It does taste good. But. I've watched those things spinning. And I realize.

And those juices are coming. That's. Rather what I think. This idea of. Richly. Letting the word of Christ. Dwell within us. Meditating. Turning it around. And all the different things.

[24 : 08] About it. It's juices. As it were. Dripping down. Into our hearts. And minds. As we think about the implications. Of scripture. How often. Has it been. For those of you.

Who have walked with the Lord. For years. That you've read a passage. Of scripture. That you've known. And suddenly you've seen. An angle in it. It's not new truth. It's the truth.

That has always been there. But where you are. In your life. By God's providence. Or perhaps. What's going on. In your life. In terms of your own. Struggle with sin. Or even with the joys. Of grace. That you're experiencing.

That suddenly. Something new. Comes out of it. The same scripture. But a new application. That's one of the reasons. Why we ought to meditate. More on the word. Let the word be at home.

Within us. So that we are able. To see it. Dripping down. Into our lives. Into the nooks. And crannies. And places. Where it needs to go. Where we might. Resist.

[25 : 02] It's going. Because of what we're afraid. It will expose. The word of God. Is living. And active. Sharper than any. Two-edged sword. Piercing. To the division. Of soul. And the spirit. Of joints.

And of marrow. And discerning. The thoughts. And intentions. Of the heart. Hebrews 4. 12. We shouldn't be afraid. Of that. It should be something. That we embrace.

Asking God. As David often prays. Show me. What I need. To see. Show me. My heart. But we need. To be prepared.

For what wretched sight. We might behold. God does not. Reveal our sin. So that we might. There. Have to grovel. Before him. But so that we might know. That where sin abounds.

Grace. Super abounds. He is making us. And remaking us. Into these people. Who will be able. With others. To speak.

[25 : 56] The word of God. To one another. It's interesting. He says. Teaching. Admonishing. Verse 16. Singing psalms. And hymns. And spiritual songs. With thankfulness. In your hearts. To God. Three times here.

In a short order. Of two verses. He mentions. Thankfulness. Or thanksgiving. Giving thanks. And to know. That the. Word of God. Exposes us. And sometimes. In the community.

Where we might be. Embarrassed. By that exposure. In terms of our sin. And to know. That community. Will not abandon us. But will embrace us. Because of the promise. Of grace. To know that we are exposed.

As those in need. And that God supplies. Every need. In Christ. Is something. To be thankful for. That we might become. As C.S. Lewis says. Not. Less of who we are.

But more of who we are. As we grow. In grace. And become the people. Who God. Has made us to be. In community. The reference point. The identity.

[26 : 51] That we have. Is from the word of God. Dwelling within us. Richly. Practical application. Read scripture. Yes. Memorize. Scripture.

But I think. One of the most important. Things that I would say. Is that we need to. Believe. The scripture. We have to. Believe that. What it's saying. Is not just true.

For other people. But it really is true. For us. And you look. As Paul begins. Chapter three. If then you have been. Raised with Christ. Seek the things. That are above. Where Christ is. And of course. This is speaking.

Of the positional reality. That if we have been. United with Christ. In his death. And resurrection.

Then as he has been raised. And is seated. At the right hand of God. God sees us. There with him. We are united.

With Christ. And this is a reality. He is not going to. Kick us off. The throne. With Christ. He would have to. Deny himself. Set your minds.

[27 : 43] Then are. On things that are above. Not on things that are on the earth. I think this has been. Roundly misunderstood. As don't ever think about anything. On the earth. What it means. I think is. Have as your reference point.

Set your mind. On those realities. That say that you are indeed. United with Christ. Raised with him. So that we might know. How then. To live. On this earth. To interact.

With it. To be faithful. On this earth. And to realize. As verse 12 says. That we are God's chosen ones. Holy. And beloved. And to put on compassion. And kindness.

Humility. Meekness. And all those other fruits. That are the reality. Of the fact that we have been united with Christ. That our identity. Is something that has been given to us. Not something we have chosen.

To believe that God can actually make us. To be a people. Who find joy. In this transformation. And to find peace. And subtleness. In the fact that we. Are not finished yet.

[28 : 40] In being who we are going to be. That's something that I find hard. To believe myself. Because I. I would like the journey to be over. I'd like to be at this point. Where I can say.

I know. I understand. And I have wisdom. I have. Two adult children now. I need to let them be adults.

I still want to treat them. As my children. They have to make decisions. On their own. And I think. I should have wisdom. To know how to do that. But I'm still daddy. I don't want to let go. I can't make decisions.

For them. I'm still learning. C.S. Lewis. Is a wonderful illustration. Imagine yourself. As a living house. God comes in. To rebuild that house. At first.

Perhaps. You can understand. What he is doing. He is getting the drains right. And stopping the leaks. In the roof. And so on. You knew that those jobs. Needed doing. And so you're not surprised. But presently. He starts knocking the house.

[29 : 37] About in a way. That hurts. Abominably. And does not seem to make any sense. What on earth is he up to? The explanation is that he is building. Quite a different house. From the one you thought of. Throwing out a new wing here.

Putting on an extra floor there. Running up towers. Making courtyards. You thought you were being made. Into a decent little cottage. But he is building a palace. He intends to come in. And live in it. Himself. Painful. Yes. Surprising. It shouldn't be. Because God is intending. To make us for himself. To join us together.

As that place. Where he dwells. Even now by his spirit. But forever. So why should we be afraid. Of coming to the end. Of our earthly perceptions.

And growing more and more. Of that. On our understanding. Of what we are becoming. The mutuality. Of. Speaking into one another.

[30 : 33] Lives. These truths. Is so important. Because we need that. Mutual encouragement. Let the word of Christ. Dwell within you. Richly. Let what the word says.

About who we are. Who God is making us to be. And what he's called us to be. In this world. Not just to slog it through. Until Jesus comes. But to walk.

In a world. In which the grace of God. Is communicated. Just by who we are. In our relationships with people.

People who have dignity around us. Because they're made in the image of God. Even though they are not believers. People who deserve. To receive kindness from us.

Consideration. They may very well be the elect. Or will we speak to them. As those who may be. In fact. With us forever.

[31 : 29] You know. Sometimes those who are. Reformed Christians. Still struggle with that idea. And they'll think. Well. God is sovereign. He'll save those who he saves. And my not speaking to someone.

Is not going to make or break. Their heavenly destiny. I think that's true. But God has called me. To live in this world. Authentically. As someone who has been. Transformed by grace.

And when I stand before him. In heaven. I'm not going to school him. On theology. And say. Well you see Lord. There's this thing called. The doctrine of predestination. There's this thing called. The doctrine of election. And there was nothing I could do.

That could change any of that. What he would say. Perhaps. Is yes. But I called you. To bear my name. How do you know. I wasn't going to use.
That bearing. In the life of others. As you lived. And showed. The reality. Of the compassion. Of the gospel. Poured out on you. As you spoke.
[32 : 24] As you learned. To speak into people's lives. And give hope. The hope of the gospel. To learn that people. Are hurting around you. How do you know. I wasn't going to use you.
For that. And more than that. Why would we want to miss. The joy of being able. To watch God. At work. As we let the word. Of Christ dwell.
Richly within us. And we see it. Expanding around us. Even as it does. God has called us. To speak.
To one another. To let the word. Of Christ dwell. Within us richly. And our lives. Teach. Even if we might not. See ourselves. As teachers. Our lives. Admonish. Even though we might not.
See that. In terms of authority. We look at people. And we think. I want to be more like. That person. I see the ease. With which they seem. To wear their faith. I want to be like that.
[33 : 20] Tell the Lord that. And then open your heart. And say. Change me. And don't be afraid. God will use that.
He will bless that. And then we sing. I love this. In here. Singing psalms. And hymns. And spiritual songs. With thankfulness. In your hearts. To God. Most natural response.
Of a heart. That is having the gospel. Dwelling richly within it. And of a community. That has the gospel. Dwelling richly within it. Is singing. Last week. In Nashville. Tennessee.
I went to a conference. It was the. Same national conference. That Keith and Kristen Getty. And their friends. Had. There were 8,000 people there. And to listen to 8,000 people.
Singing hymns. Is amazing. I stopped. And looked around. And several here. Were there. I think. I can't remember. Who was.
[34 : 14] Been on so many trips. Yes. Florence was there with me. I looked around. At one point. We were sitting. Acapella. And I looked at people's faces. And I can't see into people's hearts.
But it recurred to me. That what was coming out. Onto their faces. Out of the heart. The mouth speaks. Jesus says. And the praise. Of grace.
Of God's. Saving power. Was so evident. And it shamed me. Into thinking. How often. I will sing. As a matter of course. As a part of. The agenda.
We should never look at worship. As the agenda. The which we walk through. It's the opportunity. To express. What's in our hearts. That the word. Of Christ.
Is dwelling. Within us. Richly. And to break. It's called forth. It's singing. Do you know. The command in scripture. That is most given.
[35 : 09] Is not fear not. And you hear people say. The command is given. Most often is fear not. It's not. It's singing. Sing. Sing. Singing is how we encourage.
One another with the truth. On all the truths. Of Colossians 3. That our identity. Is not found here. On this earth. that is found in Christ.
And that all the fruit that comes from that reality is borne out in our lives, not because of who we are out of Him, but in Him. And the singing that comes out of our hearts is an expression of the Spirit's joy within us, I believe.
And that teaches and admonishes us and encourages us and makes our hearts thankful. Why? Because God has called us to sing for eternity.
We will be singing forever. I think we should make a good run at it right now. Let's pray.