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July 30, 2023

Even Angels Long to Look into These Things

1 Peter Revisited

Prayer: *Father, I thank you for your goodness, I thank you for your grace, I thank especially for the gift of your Son and the gift of your word; and Lord, this morning we're going to look in some depth just a small piece of it. And I just pray for your spirit's presence, I pray as we open up your word that you would guide us, that you would direct us, that you would bless us and that it would be of permanent value. And we pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.*

Quick question. What did you pay for your Bible? I've had quite a few bibles over the years. I remember spending probably close to \$25 for a big fat NIV study Bible many, many years ago and I remember after a number of years of use it just started falling apart. One of the lovely things that someone once did for me was they got that Bible and they had it rebound and recovered. I did a quick check on the Internet just to see what a Bible goes for these days and I found out if you have a Kindle, you know, you can order from Amazon and Amazon will sell you a bunch of different

translations on your Kindle for the price of 0.00. Literally you order it as if it's a regular Amazon order and the price comes up as 0.00.

The cheapest print version of an ESV translation that I found was you can buy one for \$2.49 but there's literally dozens, dozens of organizations that will send you one for free. I even found an organization that will send you a free study Bible and pay for the shipping as well. But it's not like most families don't have a Bible, I mean, most families have their own precious family Bible and it's precious because it probably contains lots of family information, lots of pictures. For many the family Bible's just a venerable token that they place on their shelf to be taken down only on the rarest of occasions, and I think that's because most people just don't realize how precious that Bible is.

And so this morning I'm going to look at a passage from 1 Peter that addresses the uniqueness of the Bible and some particular ways that God put it together. God is describing what some of the authors of scripture thought about what they were doing as they wrote these sacred texts in this passage this morning. It's *1 Peter 1:10-12*. It says: *Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, trying to find out the time and*

circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of the Messiah and the glories that would follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.

We're going to spend a lot of time looking at that passage. This is in Peter's letter. In his opening statement in his letter he speaks of the good news and the bad news that born again believers in Christ experience. And the good news is the treasure. He says in verse 4, he says, *an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you.* Just think about that. What God is saying is there's already an inheritance; it's reserved, it's there, it's waiting for you. The bad news if I can call it that is the trials. Verses 6 and 7 says: *In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*

So God says the thing that's most precious to him and actually

therefore to us is faith. He says trials are designed by God to refine that faith so that when that great day of salvation comes, we can bring honor and glory to Christ. And then Peter next goes on to tell us that faith itself, it has its own inherent joy. This is what he says. He says: *Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.*

You see, faith grows by realizing all the dots that had to connect for you to come to the place where you acknowledge Christ as your Savior, and it continues as you see these dots of your life repeatedly lining up to form a pattern not necessarily of worldly success but of a commitment to a trajectory that leads heavenward rather than earthward. As Michael Card says, there's a joy in the journey itself. And it's a joy that if you're not one of his you can't even begin to understand or even fathom. I mean, I saw that in India. I saw that in people who had absolutely nothing that this world has to offer. And yet like Peter says, they have the most profound sense of joy I had ever seen. These are folks who are literally watching their salvation play itself out in real time. And again Peter goes on to say: *Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you,*

searched intently and with the greatest care, trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of the Messiah and the glories that would follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.

Peter is pointing to this progressive unfolding of truth that we find in scripture. God chose to reveal the truth of the gospel over the course of thousands and thousands of years, and for much of that time the prophets who revealed it, they were completely in the dark. I mean, the prophets who revealed this truth on a piecemeal basis -- quote -- "*searched intently and with the greatest care, trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of the Messiah and the glories that would follow.*" And so they searched intently but they never got the whole picture. And again, *it was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.* So it's saying the prophets never found what they were

looking for. And instead God told them no, no, you're serving a future generation, those who would be privileged enough to hear the whole gospel poured out in realtime. And prior to that everyone dealt with a fragmented gospel that no one could fully understand.

The very first expression of this gospel, this gospel that defied understanding, that came at the very beginning right there in the garden of Eden directly after the fall of Adam and Eve. We often talk about the rebellion of Adam and Eve but we need to go even further back to see that there was yet another rebellion; there was two.

Very first one took place between Lucifer and God himself. And lucifer was the creation of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the self-originating and self-sustaining Creator gave life and existence to a creature who by all accounts was the highest created being ever. It's this Lucifer who first rebelled against God. And the account of that rebellion and its effects is found in *Revelation 12*. It says: *Then war broke out in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with*

him.

So you see, unless you understand the effects of this first rebellion then nothing's going to really make sense. You have to understand this earth is fallen, it's cursed to decay because the premiere angel Lucifer fought and lost a war in heaven, was cast out of heaven and landed enraged here on earth. And it was this creature who successfully tempted Adam and Eve to give up their perfection and so curse themselves and the earth that was given to them freely as a gift.

And ever since his arrival on earth this fallen angel has sought to make war against human beings. *Revelation 12* says: *For the accuser of our brothers and sisters, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down.* So there he was right at the dawn of creation when Adam and Eve are walking in the garden, taking the form of a serpent and from the start he began accusing God of trying to steal from Adam and Eve something that he said they were entitled to.

You know, most of you are familiar with Bill Maher. Bill Maher likes to point out the absurdity of Christianity by saying this is a religion that believes in talking snakes. Now Mr. Maher, he's an atheist who believes that we arrived here from nothing, created by

no one, that simply by time and chance, presto change-o! Here we are. He's a big proponent of the big bang. But I've never heard him give any explanation of where the components of the big bang ever came from. You see, that's Mr. Maher's absurd little secret. We've got talking snakes; he's got the material that comprises the entire universe coming from nowhere, produced by nothing. I always tell folks, you know, both sides of this argument can be reduced to examples of silliness because in the end even atheism comes down to a matter of faith. I mean, I choose to put my faith in a talking snake crushed by God rather than nothing creating a protein soup that magically turns into human beings. And the point is never let the other side try to shame you into thinking that you think something silly when they believe something even sillier.

Anyway, back to this angel Lucifer. He's thrown out of heaven, he's landing enraged on earth and he discovers a perfect Adam and Eve walking in the garden. And so this devil takes the form of a serpent and he tells Adam and Eve that God's withholding from them the ability to be just like God. He tells them they need to rebel, they need to disobey, they need to eat the forbidden fruit and so become gods as well. Well, as soon as they eat that fruit they realized that they've been had, that when they disobeyed they had committed treason against their Creator, that they were no longer perfect like their Creator, that they were now fallen and sinful

like the serpent, like the devil himself. *Genesis 3* says: *So the LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, "Cursed are you above all livestock and all wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."*

Now I think we've all heard this before, it's an astounding statement that God made knowing that it would take thousands of years of people searching intently before it even remotely began to make sense. I mean, there's no chance whatsoever that Adam and Eve or Cain and Abel or Abraham or Isaac or Jacob or any of the other prophets would understand at all what God was clearly stating here. We can understand it perfectly because we're the ones who've been given the full revelation of God in a book we call the Bible, a book you can get for free on Kindle.

I mean God in that statement to the serpent was actually making a declaration of war between Lucifer, otherwise known as Satan or the devil, and the crown of creation human beings that are created in God's own image. And we have the benefit of the whole gospel that's been revealed over thousands of years and we understand what God is saying in that passage. What he's saying is that Eve is

going to be singled out as the particular enemy of the serpent because the Messiah Jesus Christ is actually going to become one of these same creatures that Lucifer so hated. He's going to become a human being, he's going to be called Jesus of Nazareth. And that enmity between Satan and human beings would be focused primarily on women and not men because God in the flesh would come to the earth through the agency of women. It's astounding that God in his wisdom gave the ultimate role that a human being would ever have in salvation not to a man but to a woman. Jesus' humanity would come through a female named Mary. His divinity would come not through a human male but through God's Holy Spirit. God said in *Matthew 1:18*: *This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit.*

See, men had actually nothing to do with the Messiah coming to earth. There was no seed of man fertilizing Mary's egg in the normal fashion. Instead God said through an angel to Mary: *"The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God."*

So it's no wonder why the serpent would be at enmity with the

woman. I mean, she represented the greatest existential human threat that there ever was to the devil. It was Mary who would give birth to God in the flesh who would come to earth specifically to do battle with the prince of the earth, with the devil. That's why *1 John* says: *The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.*

Now I mentioned there were two great rebellions, one that took place among the angels and another that took place among human beings. The human rebellion, we know all about that, it started with Adam and Eve and it's still being played out to this very moment. It's the life that you and I live out today as Christians. But that angelic rebellion, that rebellion that took place in heaven that caused Lucifer to be cast out and sent to earth, that is had a very different result. God extended astounding and amazing grace to human beings when they fell. He apparently extended no such grace to the angels who rebelled with Lucifer, sending the worst of them directly to hell.

2 Peter says: *For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them in chains of darkness to be held for judgment. Jude 1:6* says: *And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their proper dwelling—these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting*

chains for judgment on the great Day.

So you look at it, the angels received judgment; we, we received grace. God says Jesus Christ became one of us, he lived a perfect life, then he offered that life up on a cross so that we could obtain by faith in his sacrifice salvation, something that was apparently denied to the angels. And that grace is specifically what Peter is talking about. Again, he says: *Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of the Messiah and the glories that would follow.*

So these prophets, they searched intently but they couldn't find. And for all of their insight and privileged ability to bring truth to light, none of them even came remotely close to the privileges that every one of us sitting here today have. I mean, they all got glimpses of glory but none of them got the full picture. None of them ever held in their hands the full and complete revelation of the grace of God revealed through the word of God. None of them have what we can get for free from dozens of sources, and that's a Bible.

And you look at all of the prophets in the Old Testament, you look at Daniel, Daniel was one of those prophets who searched intently. In Daniel 9 he has a vision of the anointed one Jesus coming into Jerusalem thousands of years before it happened. I mean, he longed for the full picture but he never got it. We have Zechariah in Zechariah 9, he actually sees King Jesus riding into Jerusalem on the foal of a donkey. He sees flashes of the coming King but he never saw the full plan of God. Isaiah in Isaiah 53 saw the same King Jesus. He saw him stricken, smitten by God on our behalf but what he didn't see was the full picture; he didn't see Jesus' full triumph over death. And perhaps the best known of all is David in Psalm 22. This is David having a vision of Christ crucified that reads like an eye witness account even though the events in David's life took place a thousand years before the Lord Jesus was born and were written hundreds of years before crucifixion was even known as a form of execution.

And starting at verse 6 of *Psalm 22* David says: *But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by everyone, despised by the people. All who see me mock me; they hurl insults, shaking their heads. "He trusts in the LORD," they say, "let the LORD rescue him. Let him deliver him, since he delights in him."* And then down in verse 11, it says: *Do not be far from me, for trouble is near and there is no one to help. Many bulls surround me; strong bulls of Bashan*

encircle me. Roaring lions that tear their prey open their mouths wide against me. I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint. My heart has turned to wax; it has melted within me. My mouth is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth; you lay me in the dust of death. Dogs surround me, a pack of villains encircles me; they pierce my hands and my feet. All my bones are on display; people stare and gloat over me. They divide my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment.

David is describing Christ's crucifixion and he's describing it to a T, but he didn't know it. He didn't know it because actually wasn't going to happen for a thousand more years. The very words that David quotes -- quote -- "*He trusts in the LORD,*" they say, "*let the LORD rescue him. Let him deliver him, since he delights in him,*" those are the same words the mockers used to shame him a thousand years later as he's hanging crucified. I mean *Matthew 27* gives us the same account in realtime. It says: *In the same way the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders mocked him. "He saved others," they said, "but he can't save himself! He's the king of Israel! Let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God. Let God rescue him now if he wants him, for he said, 'I am the Son of God.'*" In the same way the rebels who were crucified with him also heaped insults on him.

David also, he prophetically writes: *My mouth is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth; you lay me in the dust of death.* Well, a thousand years later at the crucifixion, Jesus himself said: *"I am thirsty."* A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus' lips. When he had received the drink, Jesus said, *"It is finished."* With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

David also prophetically writes: *They divide my clothes among them, and cast lots for my garment.* Again a thousand years later we have this event recorded in realtime, which says: *When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes, dividing them into four shares, one for each of them, with the undergarment remaining. This garment was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom. "Let's not tear it," they said to one another. "Let's decide by lot who will get it." This happened that the scripture might be fulfilled that said, "They divided my clothes among them and cast lots for my garment." So this is what the soldiers did.*

Now all of this in this exquisite detail, it begs the question, the question is: How did David know about this crucifixion? The answer is simple: He didn't. He never got the whole picture, I mean, that was a privilege reserved for us. It really wasn't David

who was writing Psalm 22 some thousand years before it happened. It was the Spirit of Christ who became Jesus of Nazareth who wrote that Psalm through David.

And again, we go back to what Peter is saying. Listen to what he says: *Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of the Messiah and the glories that would follow.*

You see, it was the -- it was the Spirit of Christ within Daniel and Zechariah and Isaiah and David as well as all the other Old Testament prophets who pointed to the suffering of Christ and the glories that would follow. I mean the prophets searched intently with the greatest of care but they came up empty. The amazing thing is that what they searched for God has placed at our feet. And what we have here is this unspeakable privilege of a full revelation of God. Did I mention you can get a full translation for \$2.49 from Amazon?

See, what we often don't have is the good sense to realize the gift that we have been presented with. Folks for centuries, they've longed to see what we've been given to see. And that applies to a

host of New Testament mysteries as well. When Jesus revealed to his disciples the meaning of the parable of the sower and the seeds, he revealed that seeing and understanding scripture is a blessing that only God can bestow, and it's a right that no man can claim. Again Jesus made that clear in *Matthew 13*. Jesus had just preached to a crowd that was so large he had to speak from a boat. And I've mentioned this many, many times before, he spoke a parable that nobody understood what he was saying. And once again, we see a truth revealed in a way that no matter how intently you searched or inquired, you would not discover it.

I mean Jesus talked about a farmer sowing seed on four different types of soil. There was rocky soil, there was thorny soil, there was barren pathway soil and good soil; but all Jesus does as he's teaching from this boat, he describes what happens to each seed as it lands on that particular type of soil and then with no teaching, no explanation, no description, no illustration, he just leaves, and he leaves with this admonition, he says: "*Whoever has ears, let them hear.*" And we know for a fact the disciples were appalled. I mean, all of these people, they're gathered to hear the master speak, it's so big a crowd he's got to speak from a boat, and he's speaking in ways that nobody understands. *Matthew 13*, it says: *The disciples came to him and asked, "Why do you speak to the people in parables?"* You know, my guess is the

disciples' question was half question and half rebuke. It was like, why are you doing this? Nobody understands you. Why are you speaking in a way that nobody gets? This is the key. It says: He -- that's Jesus -- replied, *"Because the knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them."*

Jesus goes on to tell them that Isaiah had prophesied of these people's blindness and deafness and just before he gives them a full explanation of what the parable means, he says in verse 16: *"But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear. For truly I tell you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it."*

If those words sound familiar, just consider our scripture this morning. Those prophets searched intently with the greatest of care. They longed to see what we see but they did not see it. And you know why they didn't see it? Well, again, I go back to the same verse because Peter tells us why. He says: *It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.*

What Peter is telling him, he says the whole of redemptive history through the Garden of Eden through the prophets through the cross itself and the resurrection, it's all been revealed in bits and pieces throughout the entire word of God. And Peter's drawing the biggest of big pictures here. He's telling us that the prophets of old prophesied in part because they only knew in little bitty pieces, but that we who have the untold privilege of having the whole gospel now know what the prophets could only dream of knowing, and that's Jesus Christ and him crucified and resurrected, something you can find out for only \$2.49 at Amazon, or free if you've got a Kindle.

This is what *Hebrews 1* says. It says: *In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son.* So what he's saying is that language that God is speaking to us today is not French or German or any other language, it's Jesus; that's the language. And what he's saying is he's the one who alone makes all of this start to make sense.

So Peter says of the prophets: *They were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven.* What he means is that Daniel, Isaiah, Zechariah,

David and all the others, they each spoke in fragmented ways of things that has now been told to us completely by those who preach the gospel by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. So at last we have the big picture. All of redemptive history is now being told not in part to the prophets but in the whole now by you and me who preach the gospel to you, by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven.

Just what is that picture and what does it mean today? Well again, I pointed out the beginning of this message, there's two different rebellions that we talk about, and there's two different types of creatures with two radically different outcomes. One group was the angels, the other group is us. The angels received instant judgment; we received grace. But that grace unfolds piece by piece, bit by bit, from the sentence that God imposed on the serpent right at the beginning, telling him that he'd be at enmity with a woman through all of the prophets each being given piecemeal a further, further revelation of the truth, that God would raise up a man named Abraham who would become a nation that would produce a God-man and that through that woman, Mary, by the Holy Spirit, that God-man would take on Satan himself by being the debt-payor for all of his sheep.

You have to understand, this is the story that captivates the entire universe. Peter himself says, *angels long to look into*

these things. And I've said before, the English translation hardly does that sentence justice. The Greek word for "long" here is "epithumeo," it's easily translated as lust. It's not longing, it's extreme longing. What God says, the angels in heaven, they're transfixed by their obsessed with this gospel. It's a story so fantastic as to enthrall the entire universe with one notable exception: That's us. We are at the center of the story and yet because of the curse of Adam, we are blind, bored and kind of indifferent to the story. And if you doubt that, just strike up a conversation with someone about the gospel of Jesus Christ. We all know you can talk about a thousand different things, from sports to the weather to politics, you can even get into some spiritual stuff but say those words, "Lord Jesus Christ," and whether suddenly or not so suddenly you're going to be told this is not something I want to hear unless God intervenes. And there's a reason for that. God made that reason clear in *1 Corinthians 1:18*. He says: *For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.*

You see, that gospel is soundly rejected as nonsense by people who are under a curse. The angel who fell to earth and cursed it and us still curses every single individual who is outside of God's grace. And again God makes that clear in *2 Corinthians 4*. He says: *The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so*

that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. Well, God answered that curse through the prophets who told us to look forward to the coming of the Messiah. We are told they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven.

So we now, we now have the whole picture. Now it is we who tell angels as well as powers and principalities just how wise and loving and kind and powerful the Messiah is; and we do that by demonstrating the outworking of his work in our lives by showing what his redemption has done to our ordinary lives. You see, God has chosen angels to reveal his justice to; he's chosen human beings to reveal his mercy to.

And here's where this message becomes very practical. You see, angels, angels, I've said angels are obsessed with this gospel, hence they are also obsessed with us as we live out that gospel. And that gospel is what should occupy every single aspect of how we live out our lives.

You know, for most people your life is the very first Bible they're ever going to see. It's the very first Bible they're ever going to

read as they read you. Let me explain how this works itself out by telling you a story that happened years and years ago. I was on a field trip with one of my kids. We went to Bear Mountain State Park which to no one's surprised has a bear paddock. It's a big open space, it's a space where you can watch the bears do their thing in some measure of safety. The way the paddock is constructed, there's this large concrete lip that goes out over the whole thing so the bears can't get out. This particular morning that we went, bears were all tucked away under that lip so nobody could really see them. So I watched this, of which I was part of, this large, large crowd of people, everybody's standing on tiptoe staring into the paddock, peering intently into it to get a glimpse of those creatures. And I thought in a sense we're just like those bears at Bear Mountain State Park. There are all kinds of creatures that we have never met, human and non human, who are right now standing on tiptoe to view our lives as expressions of the greatest story this universe has ever known. Remember, even angels long to look into these things.

So what do you suppose we saw when we stood on tiptoe to look at those bears? News flash, we saw bears. We saw them eating, sleeping, playing, doing what bears are supposed to do. So what do you think angels see when they look into our lives? Well, let me explain to you from scripture what they're supposed to see. This

is *Ephesians 3:10*. This is the Holy Spirit speaking through Paul and he's speaking about the very same grace that Peter is speaking about. He's talking about mysteries unfolding. This is what he says. He says: *This grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the boundless riches of Christ, and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things.*

So here's Paul telling us guess what, I get to tell you the whole story now, I get to make it plain what was kept hidden by God for ages. And here's why. He says: *His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to his eternal purpose that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

You see God's intent here? God's intent is to display his manifold wisdom and that means wisdom displayed in thousands of different ways, and it's displayed to whom? Well, he says to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms. Well, that certainly means angels, it means a lot of other creatures that we've never met. But where is this wisdom put on display? Through the church. *His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms.* That's wisdom's displayed not by presidents and potentates

and the powerful, not by priests, popes or pastors. The church. It's you guys; it's all of us. That's us living out our standard everyday lives.

And what I'd love you to see is that we are living in a human paddock right here on planet earth. We've got creatures both human and non human that are standing on tippy toe looking intently at everything that we do. And what do the angels see when they look into our lives? I mean, do they see ordinary people carrying on the flow of redemptive history by living out their ordinary lives for the glory of God? That's what they should see. The amazing thing is that it's not the extraordinary but ordinary things in our lives, those are the things that really matter.

I was standing on tippy toe at the bear paddock because I wanted to see bears do what bears do. I wanted to see them just being bears. I have no desire whatsoever to go to those bizarre circuses that have bears dressed up in tutus carrying parasols riding on bicycles and jumping through hoops. I mean that may be amusing to some people but it's not real at all because that's not how real bears live their real lives. The same is true for us. What it's saying is that God's angels are fixed on us bringing glory to God through our ordinary lives. Paul says: *So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.* So we

ask, can anything be more ordinary than eating and drinking?

You know, sometimes we I set our sights on living like Christian circus performers rather than ordinary redeemed believers. We convince ourselves that if God's going to ask us to go out and slay dragons for Christ we'll go out happily but that's not likely to ever happen. Most of us have little dragons that are very, very ordinary right here at home, dragons that challenge our notions of what it means to live life to the glory of God.

I mean, we need to understand that while we are living out our ordinary lives, extraordinary things are happening all around us. Angels are watching us and we're as oblivious as those bears were. And we're oblivious when we refuse to live our life like the world wants us to live, when we take the risk of simply telling others that Christ is the reason that we do live and when we gather for a simple meal and take the time to offer up thanks and praise to God for it, then we're demonstrating the glory of God in the way we live out our ordinary lives.

I opened this message speaking about a different type of seeing. In reality it's not about seeing at all, it's about being seen. We talk about living your life coram Deo, that's simply a Latin phrase that means under the gaze of God. See, everything we do in this

life, it's a reflection of the grace and the transforming power of the Spirit of Christ in us, or not.

Peter tells us that the prophets for centuries desperately searched the scriptures trying to find out what the big picture was. Again, *they were not serving themselves but you, when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven.* And so we've got our bibles. Many believers died so we have the privilege of actually owning a Bible which did I mention you can get for nothing? We get to see the big picture. We get to realize that now we are part of the big picture. And when we reflect that grace by preaching and living the gospel with our mouths and with our lives, we can be assured even angels long to look into that. Let's pray.

Father, I just thank you for the role that you've given us. Whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all for the glory of God. I pray that we would begin to realize that our life here on earth is not that different from the life of those bears in that paddock and that creatures throughout the universe are watching intently. And what they're looking for is the glory of God and what they're trying to see is how our lives reflect that redemptive power of Christ. I pray that as we live our ordinary lives each

and every day, we would reflect on the fact that we are being observed, that we are under the gaze of God, under the gaze of angels who long to see that redemptive plan played out. And I pray you would give us the grace, the strength, the ability, the wisdom to do just that. And I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.