

## “Glorifying Faith”

### Devoted to God

Romans 4:16-22

Rev. Ted Wood

June 30, 2017

**Ted:** Good morning, men.

**Men:** Good morning.

**Ted:** The Lord be with you.

**Men:** And also with you.

**Ted:** Let us pray. Lord God, in Your word You tell us that without faith it is impossible to please You. We pray that You'd give us that supernatural and gracious and grace-filled and glorifying faith that focuses on You and not on ourselves. We also pray for brother Bruce. And together we pray that in Your earthly life You laid hands on people and they were healed. We pray that in Your Spirit, with us praying and joining together, that You will supernaturally heal Him and deliver Him from this pain. Cause him to focus on You, and cause his love for You to increase. And we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

**Men:** Amen.

**Ted:** In my work I always have a period of transition. I don't mind all the people walking around me. *(Laughter)* I have a period of transition from one client to the next. My contracts are very long. I get one or two contracts at a time, and they usually last twenty to twenty-two months or longer.

So right now I'm in the middle of a transition between current clients and future clients. And it's always an unsettling time. And I've never figured out how to make it all work. It's not a pleasant time because there's a huge amount of uncertainty.

I just finished a very successful assignment with an organization with which I've been since 2014. And then I found out last week, sitting at a meeting, that the organization that I thought I would continue working with that they brought in a new director. And I sat there during the introduction of the new director and heard that director's comments. And I decided that this was not going to work, that we were not going to work well together. So that contract was canceled, and another contract was allowed to lapse.

So right now there's a huge amount of uncertainty. And that usually sends me into a lot of fretting inside. And in the back of my mind there's kind of a constant hum of uncertainty. Perhaps some of you have had it. Sometimes it comes more to the front. And this background sound of doing the transition period, this background sound will wake me up in the middle of the night.

So it wasn't too many weeks ago, about two weeks ago, that I was awakened at 2:00 in the morning. And by my bed stood an angel. No, that's not true. *(Laughter)* I just thought that would be a nice dramatic touch. *(Laughter)* Thank you for laughing.

**Participant:** You're welcome.

**Ted:** Now in the middle of the night I woke up. And of course when I wake up I'm not fretting so much as that when I wake up my mind is going 60 miles an hour. I'm starting to think. I have to write things down quickly because so much stuff is coming to me. I'm a morning person.

So often, when I'm lying there in bed and my mind is lively, it can wander in and out with things that aren't especially productive. They're not evil things; they're just not

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especially productive. So I thought that what I would do—and I wasn’t at the place I normally stay at when I’m out of town—I picked up my phone and I decided that what I was going to do was that I was going to feed my mind with some wholesome food. So I took my phone and did the search. And I know so little about this stuff that I’m going to die and know nothing about most of the things having to do with technology. But I typed in “John Piper Quotes.”

Now do you all know who John Piper is? John Piper is probably one of the greatest minds amongst the Reformed Baptists. He was previously the head pastor for many years—I think thirty-some years—of the Bethlehem Baptist Church in Minneapolis. And he is a superb thinker.

I was talking with my son the other day about John MacArthur versus John Piper. And when you compare the two, I think that they are both Reformed, and they are both kind of the independent Congregationalists. But at the same time Piper seems to have more room for the mystery and the wonder of it all. John MacArthur can get pretty dogmatic and black and white, which is fine.

But nonetheless, I pulled up a quote from John Piper. He always has something very provocative and thoughtful to say. And what I found was that I found a story that he told. And I decided to use that story--I call it a Piper parable—in my teaching today, because in that parable John Piper talks about glorifying faith. And I went back and found out that parable, that story, came out of a sermon that he preached in 1999. So I tried to pull from that sermon. So there are things from him, and there are things where the Lord has instructed me.

But nonetheless, what I want to talk to you about this morning is faith that really glorifies God, or glorifying faith. And I ask the question. How can I give God the most glory? In what way do I do that?

I think it’s important to start off by taking that word *glory* and defining it, because a lot of times it can be understood in a lot of different ways, such as “glory, hallelujah!” And people say, “That was a glorious time, a great time.”

Well *glory* really finds its root in the Hebrew word *kabod*. Of course it’s not spelled that way in Hebrew; it’s spelled from right to left. And it means abundance; honor; splendor. And it has a sense of weight.

Hebrew has root words. All words in Hebrew come out of three-letter root words. And the root word out of which *kabod* comes means something that has weight or substance to it. It’s heavy.

So when God gets the glory and when things are glorious, they have to do with things that are weighty and of great substance. That’s why, when we look at the world, we see things that are not glorious. The world is not glorious because the world is passing away. It’s lightweight. It’s ephemeral. And the things of God are always the heaviest things, the most substantial things.

And the aim of all things is to display the glory of God. And we see this in Scripture. “*The heavens declare the glory of God, and the skies above proclaim His handiwork.*” Psalm 19, verse 1. Or “*Be exalted, O God, above the heavens. Let Your glory be over all the earth.*” And that would be Psalm 57:1. Or from Romans 11: “*From Him*”—that is, from God—“*and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be glory forever and ever.*” So all the things that ever were and ever will be are infused with the glory of God. And only when that happens do we have any substance.

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God created me. Therefore He brought me into this world to display more of His glory in the universe. Following Ephesians the first chapter: *“God predestined us to be adopted as sons through Jesus Christ.”* And what was the purpose of God’s predestination in adoption of us as sons? Well, His purpose was *“to the praise and the glory of His grace”*, the great weight of His grace.

And giving God glory doesn’t mean adding something to God’s glory. It simply means showing that God is glorious. We’re calling attention to His glory and demonstrating what glory really is.

Now the best way to glorify God, that is, to show His weight and His substance, that in fact He is the most important thing, is to exercise, to demonstrate and to act in faith. And in Piper’s sermon he then draws on Romans the fourth chapter, the sixteenth verse. And I’m going to read it here. I didn’t include it in the notes. That would be Romans 4:16. And it’s talking about how Abraham trusted God, had faith in God, and God counted that faith as righteousness, versus counting the good works that Abraham had done.

And it reads this way. *“That is why it”*—that is, God’s promises to give Abraham an inheritance and the land—*“that is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring.”*

So the promises that God made to Abraham by Abraham’s faith are guaranteed to everyone who comes out of Abraham’s loins not only physically, but spiritually. Paul makes that point at the end of this section.

*“As it is written,”*—this is God speaking—*‘God has made you’*—Abraham—*“the father of many nations.”* *In the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. In hope he believed against hope*—that is, Abraham believed against hope—*“that he should become the father of many nations.”* That’s because God had promised it to him. *“As He had said,”*—been told,—*“So shall your offspring be.”*

*“He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead, since he was about one hundred years old, or when he considered the deadness of Sarah’s womb.”*

Now you remember that story. God promised Abraham offspring. Abraham was a hundred years old and Sarah was barren. There was no chance that he was going to have children.

*“No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God. But he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, fully convinced that God was able to do what He had promised.”*

*“Fully convinced that God was able to do what He promised.”* The one attribute of a regenerate heart—that means your heart that has been born again—the one attribute of a regenerate heart that gives rise to all the other graces and gifts of God, that one attribute that gives rise to every other gift that God has given you, the one gift that best gives glory to God is faith. The Scripture says in Romans 4 that *“Abraham grew strong in faith, giving glory to God.”*

The definition of that faith, or the experience of that faith,. Is a strong assurance that God’s promises are good, and that He can and will perform those promises, and the harder the promises seem in being fulfilled, the more my faith glorifies God. The harder

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those promises are able to be fulfilled, the more the faith that I place in God glorifies God.

And the Scripture says in Romans 4 that “*without becoming weak in faith Abraham contemplated his own body, now as good as dead, since he was about one hundred years old, and the barrenness of Sarah’s womb.*”

It was Abraham’s faith that glorified God, that kind of faith. Again, Romans 4:21: “*fully convinced that God was able to do what He had promised. That is why his faith was counted to him as righteousness. But the words ‘it was counted to him’ were not written for Abraham alone, but for us as well.*”

The fulfillment of the promise that Abraham would have a son seems utterly impossible. And it is, humanly speaking. So when I, like Abraham, following his example, an inheritor of that faith, having been given that faith by the indwelling Spirit, when I like Abraham trust God in a situation like that, like Abraham’s, humanly impossible, I glorify Him. I make God look strong and wise and reliable by exerting that faith—the assurance that God can and will do what humans can’t. I would call that *glorifying* or *glorious* faith.

I want to quote a Puritan here in memory of Bruce. Bruce is always quoting Puritan pastors. Three hundred and fifty years ago Thomas Watson, a Puritan pastor, asked this question. “*Why should faith justify more than any other gift that God gives?*” Why should faith, the gift of faith, justify more than any other gift that God gives? “*Because faith is a gift or a grace that takes a man off himself and gives all the honor to Christ and free grace.*”

Faith takes a man off himself. The British have an unusual way of saying a lot of things. But I love that expression. It takes a man off himself. You’re focused on yourself. Glorifying faith takes you off yourself. “*Abraham was strong in faith, giving glory to God.*”

Now glorious faith has three dimensions—past, present and future. Of course, faith is a trust in a Person. You can say, “I have faith in God.” Certainly that is the case. But it is also trusting God to be and to do what He has promised to do and will do, trusting God to act as He said He would act.

The death and resurrection of Christ is faith for the past and the future. Now listen to what Romans 5:9 says. “*Having been justified by His blood,*”—that was in the past. I have faith in the sacrifice of Christ on the cross for my sins. Having been justified by His blood—that’s a past event; I believe that; I’m putting my faith in that—“*we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him.*”

That’s future. I not only believe that Christ saved me now, but He is also going to do something in the future with me.

It says this in another way in Romans the eighth chapter. “*He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all.*” That’s in the past. That’s a fact in the past that we put our faith in. “*How will He also not with Him freely give us all things?*” Will He not give us all things? That’s a future event. I have another faith that’s a future faith.

Faith looks back and stands on the shed blood of Christ, it’s justifying effect. So my faith looks back and stands on what Jesus did on the cross. Then my faith looks forward and believes that this past work guarantees my salvation from the wrath to come, and every blessing in the heavenlies.

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So I have, in a sense, two kinds of faith. I can trust Christ and His saving work on the cross and His resurrection. That justifies me. But there’s another faith that looks forward to what Christ is going to do with me in the future. In fact, future faith is a more glorifying faith than past-looking faith. Believing that God has done things in the past glorifies God to a certain extent. But believing that God will do what He has promised before you see what He does, before you see it, that glorifies God even more. It honors His present and future trustworthiness.

Do you understand what I’m saying? It’s one thing to look back and see what God has done. I put my trust in that. But it’s an even more glorious thing, it’s a heavier and weightier thing, to look into the future and see what God has promised and believe that He will fulfill that, because you don’t see what He has done. You see the cross. You only have a promise of what is to come. *“Blessed are those who have not seen, but believe.”*

You know, in my business, which is fundraising, I will sometimes quote to my secular clients who are mostly secular; there may be believers amongst them—I said, “Remember. Somebody famous once said that *‘It’s more blessed to give than to receive.’*” (Laughter)

But listen to this. It *is* more blessed to give than to receive. Why is it more blessed to give than to receive? Because when I receive, I can see it. I’ve got it. Bill gives me some money. I have his money. I can see that. Isn’t that great? Thank you, Bill for having given that to me in the past.

But it is more blessed to give, because when I give to Bill, I no longer have that security. It’s gone.

Now don’t you find that kind of counter-intuitive to the way that people naturally think? I’m secure; I’m blessed. I’m happy, I’m built up when I have stuff, when I’m secure in what I have. But when I give it away, you would say, “You’re crazy! You’re not more blessed. You’re blessed when Bill gives it to you, versus you giving it away.”

So the whole Christian faith is wrapped up in this great incongruity with the world. And this is the hardest thing for most of us to get used to. We keep thinking like the world does. And indeed we do believe in our heart of hearts that it is more blessed to receive than to give.

Now at this point—Yes?

**Participant:** Was that correct when you said that, because you kind of did a flip on that.

**Ted:** I was being kind of subtle. You see, I did flip them intentionally. I said that, in fact, most of us—and I, Ted Wood—do act as if it is more blessed to receive than to give. And Jesus says no. *“It is more blessed to give than to receive.”*

And we say, “Jesus, You have to be crazy! I mean this is not blessed at all!” When I’ve got Bill’s stuff, when I’ve received that, I mean I’ve got some security there. I’ve got some stuff. But when I give my stuff away to Bill, there it goes. I mean, what am I left with?

**Participant:** Right.

**Ted:** I’m left with—

**Participant:** God.

**Ted:** God.

**Second Participant:** Amen!

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**Ted:** You know, when all else fails. When preparing this talk today, this is a hard thing to do, because I’m agitated on many levels. But I went through and worked so hard on this talk, in researching it and kind of fitting it in late hours. And then I said to myself as I finally finished it up yesterday evening, “Well God, let’s see what You can do.”

*(Laughter)*

See, I’ve been gathering all the goodness of my work and trusting in that. It might have been a good thing for me to start off by saying, “God, let’s see what You’re going to do,” rather than “Ted, let’s see what you’re going to do.”

**Participant:** Right.

**Ted:** But you know what? If I leave it up to God, I might not have anything. I might be empty-handed. Don, I’m going to get Sig first. Go ahead, Sig.

**Sig:** You know, I think about that often too, especially with money.

**Ted:** Yes.

**Sig:** And I fret over if I’ll have enough. Will I outlive what little I have?

**Ted:** Yes.

**Sig:** Anyway, my point in all this is that it really shows my lack of faith because I live in this creation, where I can see outside these windows these trees with healthy, green leaves.

**Ted:** Right.

**Sig:** And we can hear the birds and we can see the sun coming up. And it really says to me, “Oh, this creation outside doesn’t remind me of God. He didn’t make this. It’s just happenstance, right?” God tells us in the Bible that He knows when the sparrow falls, right? So I guess I hear what you’re saying, and I think of the creation that’s right in front of my eyes every day.

**Ted:** Right.

**Sig:** It really says, “You don’t believe that this creation was made by God.”

**Ted:** And it also says that you’re trusting in the promise that you can see rather than in the promise that you cannot see, because what you’re saying is, “God, I’m thankful for this. This is great. But what I think I need I don’t see it yet.

**Sig:** You’re talking about cash?

**Ted:** Cash, or whatever we need. Relationships, you name it—health, relationships, money, security, whatever. Don?

**Don:** Yes. I think it’s also kind of like our initial reaction to the Beatitudes. Jesus, are You crazy?

**Ted:** Yeah.

**Don:** It’s the rich who are blessed. We want to be happy, not mournful. We don’t want to suffer persecution.

**Ted:** I don’t want to be poor in spirit.

**Don:** Right.

**Participant:** It’s no different with the Israelites when Jesus came. They thought He was going to destroy the Romans.

**Ted:** Yes.

**Participant:** Christianity is just totally contrary to the—

**Ted:** It is. It’s so contrary that unless there’s supernatural intervention, you are lost. Do I see another hand? I want to keep moving here. Go ahead, please.

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**Participant:** What you’re saying is that we need once again not to trust what we see, but to trust God.

**Ted:** What God has promised.

**Participant:** How do we guard ourselves from the trap of seeing many people where they are presumptuous with regard to what God has said?

**Ted:** Presumptive, right.

**Participant:** So going back to your profession, I’ve often seen people fundraising in church settings. They take on large obligations—

**Ted:** Yes.

**Participant:** Constantly thinking that they’re having faith in God’s provision,—

**Ted:** Right.

**Participant:** When in reality it’s them fulfilling or justifying what they want by imputing it onto God.

**Ted:** Absolutely. Well I think that’s why it really helps to be reformed, because you just know that you are profoundly screwed up. *(Laughter)* There’s just no doubt about that. And therefore every assumption we make—God told me this or that—we are reluctant to proclaim that because that is full of presumption. Yes, I think we need to presume on God’s promises. But when we start getting specific, we start telling God how He’s going to work it out. God, I know You’re going to provide, but this is how You’re going to do it. I know that’s not getting right at your point; I understand that. But if you would just let me, I’d like to continue because the red meat is yet to come. Is that okay, folks?

I want to look at this parable. This is the parable that got me at 2:00 in the morning, and I have it as item #4. Do you have it as item #4? Let me just read it to you.

John Piper tells this story to illustrate. He says, *“Your daddy is standing in a swimming pool, a little bit from the edge. You are three years old and standing on the edge of the pool. Daddy holds out his arms to you and says, ‘Jump! I’ll catch you, I promise.’*

*“Now how do you make your daddy look good at that moment? You trust him and jump. Have faith in him and jump. That makes him look strong and wise and loving.*

*“But if you won’t jump, if you shake your head and run away from the edge, you make your daddy look bad. It looks like you are saying, ‘He can’t catch me,’ or ‘he won’t catch me,’ or ‘it’s not a good idea to do what he tells me to do.’ And all three of these make your dad look bad.”*

It’s an interesting way to consider disobedience to God. It makes your Dad look bad.

*“Now you don’t want to make God look bad, so you trust Him. Then you make Him look good, which He really is. And that is what we mean when we say that faith glorifies God, or that faith gives God glory. It makes Him look as good as He really is. So trusting God is really important. And the harder it seems for Him to fulfill His promise, the better He looks when you trust Him.*

*“Suppose that you were at the deep end of the pool by the diving board. You are four years old and you can’t swim, and your daddy is at the other end of the pool. Suddenly a big mean dog crawls under the fence and shows his teeth and growls at you and starts coming towards you to bite you. You crawl out on the diving board or walk toward the end to get away from him.*

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*“The dog puts his front paws up on the diving board. Just then your daddy sees what’s happening and calls out, ‘Johnny, jump out into the water. I’ll get you.’*

*“Now you have never jumped one meter high and you can’t swim, and your daddy is not underneath you, and this water is way over your head.”* I’ve been in that situation, as here and also as an adult in life.

*“How do you make your daddy look good at that moment? You jump. And almost as soon as you hit the water, you feel his hand under your arms. And he treads water, holding you safely while someone chases the dog away. And then he takes you to the side of the pool.”*

I don’t know if that parable grabs you, but it grabbed me, because it’s one thing to jump in when He’s right underneath you, and it’s another thing when He appears to be at the other end of the pool.

In the parable the boy trusts God because he fears the water or the dog, or he runs out of options. This involves saving his own skin. This kind of faith involves saving his own skin. And the glory remains with the boy because he trusts God in order to serve himself.

I trust God to get me out of a bind or bless me, make me weightier, more significant, make me more glorious in a way of speaking. This faith is earth-bound faith. And it is too often my kind of faith.

As I shared with you, I had this very experience in preparing this lesson, or thinking about my clients, or thinking about my wife who just went in for surgery, or the other things—thinking about my church, thinking about my children, the ones who don’t believe. I’m thinking about God blessing me, about God glorifying me for my sake.

Because I have this attitude, this earth-bound attitude about faith, it’s really about me. Therefore God must grow me up to exercise glorifying faith in Him. God has to do that.

At first I exercise faith for my glory, for my weight, for my substance, for my honor, for my looking good. I’m not primarily concerned about God looking good. When I believe in faith, too often I am primarily concerned about me and not about God.

But because of what He did for me and what He’s doing to me and doing through me, because I’m a new creation in Christ, because I’m in union with Him, because I’m filled with His Spirit, because He lives in me and I in Him, God begins to make me dissatisfied with earth-bound faith that has its end in my needs and fulfilling what I want. And in time I actually become sickened with earth-bound faith. I need a glorious faith.

And I begin to say, “How can I please God, cause Him to rejoice, make Him look good no matter how I look, no matter how I’m blessed by the whole process?”

I gradually—or for some of us rapidly—start to grow up in Him, as I move from earth-bound faith to glorifying faith. I start to exercise future glorifying faith in my heavenly Father because I find that I love Him. I want to do for Him, I want to please Him. I want to be like Him. I want to make Him look good and I want to glorify Him, no matter what happens to me.

Piper writes, *“I have faith in Him and jump. That makes God look strong and wise and loving. The harder it seems for Him to fulfill His promise, the better He looks when I trust Him.”* I’ve got a page-and-a-half more out of twenty pages. *(Laughter)* I’m just joking.

This faith glorifies God. Now let’s talk about the application. This glorifying faith, how does it get applied?



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When I trust God to fulfill His promises in me, to work everything together for my good as it says in Romans 8:28,--

**Transcriber’s Note:** Romans 8:28, NKJV. *“And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.”*

**Ted:** To be with me to the end of the age (Matthew 28:20),

**Transcriber’s Note:** Matthew 28:20. *“And behold, I am with you always, even till the end of the age.”*

**Ted:** To help me and strengthen me and uphold me (Isaiah 41:10),

**Transcriber’s Note:** Isaiah 41:10. Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.

**Ted:** To meet all my needs (Philippians 4:19),

**Transcriber’s Note:** Philippians 4:19. *“And my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”*

**Ted:** To bring me safely to heaven (Philippians 1:6),

**Transcriber’s Note:** Philippians 1:6. *“Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.”*

**Ted:** *“When I trust God to fulfill His promises in me, when I begin to grow up in this glorifying faith, it will profoundly affect the kinds of sacrifices I make for Him and for the gospel. The shackles of security and comforts and treasures will be loosened and sometimes completely freed, and I will seek first His kingdom and take risks. And that will make the glory of God shine all the more brightly before men, that they may see your good works and glorify Your father in heaven.”*

Let me wrap it up by talking about Genesis 13, the story of Abraham and his nephew Lot. Do you remember that story? They came to the land, and Abraham and Lot looked over the land and they were going to settle in the land. But there were too many sheep and their herds were too many. So they decided to divide up the land.

Abraham is a great illustration of what glorifying faith does. He said to Lot, *“Take whatever part of the land you want, and I will take the rest.”* That’s what Abraham says. He said to Lot, *“You take whatever you want, and I will take the rest, whatever is left.”*

Abraham trusted God with his future and did the unnatural thing. In his exchanged with Lot he did not cover his bets or carve out a blessing. *“Lot, you can have most of that good land. But let’s just agree that I’ll give you  $\frac{3}{4}$ . Let me keep a quarter.”* Abraham left nothing for himself, except the leftovers from Lot.

Lot took the well-watered Jordan Valley, along with Sodom and Gomorrah. Abraham took the less fertile and rocky ground of the heights. Lot paid dearly for his choice.

But immediately after Abraham made this decision and the land was divided—*“Lot, you take your part; I’ll take the rest, what’s left”*—but immediately, after this act of glorifying future-directed faith, God came to Abraham and said, *Lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are—northward and southward and eastward and westward. For all the land which you see I will give to you and to your descendants forever.”*

**Participant:** Amen.

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**Ted:** Now Abraham could not see that. He could see the land, but it wasn't in his possession. But you know, it was in God's possession. And it was the promise of God that Abraham possessed.

Abraham trusted God for the future and gave it away. Abraham trusted God for the future with glorifying faith in the future promises of God, and gave it away. And God said, “You'll get it all back.”

Jesus promises the same thing. *“Truly, I say to you that no one who has left houses or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or farms for My sake and for the gospel's sake, but that he will not receive a hundred times as much, now in the present age—houses and brothers and sisters and mothers, and children and farms—along with persecutions. And in the age to come, you will receive”*,--and Jesus says, “I am promising you this”,--*“eternal life.”*

So this is the challenge to us. Take your stand on Christ crucified and risen for your justification in the past. Take your stand on trusting in God's promises for the future. And do what He is calling you to do now. *Sola Deo Gloria!* To God alone be the glory.

**Participant:** Amen.

**Ted:** Amen. Now questions.

**Participant:** Actually I have a couple, but I'll keep it short.

**Ted:** Choose your best one. Make it future oriented. *(Laughter)*

**Participant:** You have that future faith in God's promises for the present.

**Ted:** Yes.

**Participant:** I think of that Philippians verse, *“Be anxious for nothing.”* You know, whatever it is that's causing us to be anxious, God's explicit will is don't be anxious.

**Ted:** Right.

**Participant:** I'm not sure that I understand the earth-bound faith. Exactly what do you mean by earth-bound faith?

**Ted:** Okay.

**Participant:** You know, I'm faced with circumstances like you expressed at the beginning.

**Ted:** Right.

**Participant:** And I have to exercise faith and say, look. First of all, God says, “Don't be anxious but pray, and request.” And then He promises to meet them. But you have to trust Him in those circumstances. I've had to trust Him in those circumstances. And I've seen Him working through those things, instead of being anxious.

**Ted:** Right. Well, I mean that when I'm sitting there at the meeting with the board, and they say, “We're not going to renew your contract”, or you're sitting in the office and you hear that there are notices going around for layoffs, or whatever it is, or you're sitting there in the doctor's office and he says, “It doesn't look good.” I mean every one of us has been in that situation. The natural response is to go,--

**Transcriber's Note:** Ted gasps.

**Ted:** I mean, inside I'm sitting with a client at the board meeting and they're saying, “We're not going to renew your contract.” And I'm sitting there like this. And inside I'm going, “Oh no! Ho no! What's going to happen now?” There goes the thing I can see. I throw my hand up. There goes that nice three- or four-page contract that's going out of my hands! And then I begin to do what worldly people do. They start figuring out how to make it work. That's earthbound faith. And that's the faith that says, “Oh God, please get

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me out of this situation! Protect me! Give me the contract! Give me the work!” That’s earth-bound faith.

And we’re so used to that. We even think about that. We preach about it. We preach that people should have faith in God for their perceived needs, rather than for what God promises, for what He says is in the future.

Now the faith that God wants to grow us up into is that I want to get to the place where the client says, “Well, we’re not going to renew your contract.” And I want to sit there and say, “Well, I wonder what God has in store for me for the future.” I mean, it’s going to be exciting, isn’t it? There goes that contract. Well, that’s fine. They were trouble anyway. *(Laughter)* I know that God has got a more exciting thing coming down the road.

Do you see what I’m saying? That glorifies God because it says, “God, You made promises. I cannot see the fulfillment of them. But I believe that You will do them.” When I do that, the Father says, “Jump into the water. I’ll catch you.” And we do it; we jump. Yes?

**Participant:** It’s really easy to say, “Walk by faith, not by sight.”

**Ted:** Yes.

**Participant:** Yet in thousands of churches, Christian radio programs, Christian TV programs, if you analyze it, it’s all about me and what I need to do. And I think that people are hard-wired to want to hear that.

**Ted:** Yes, we are. Forget Christians. The natural man wants to hear that.

**Participant:** Yes. It’s all about me.

**Ted:** When my wife was going in for surgery, I was concerned. I mean, I love her. When she was in the operating room longer than the doctors said, I was anxious. But God wants me to get beyond that. He wants to grow me up out of that. That’s what I’m suggesting.

**Participant:** Doesn’t God use those things?

**Ted:** Absolutely. He uses those things because He uses them to deplete our energies. If we keep being anxious and consumed, with me not getting sleep at night because I’m consumed with all of these things, pretty soon I say, “Oh my gosh! This is the last thing I want! Anything is better than this!” Maybe I ought to trust God for the future. What a novel thought! We get drained. God puts us through the wringer of our own anxieties to wring out any options that we have within ourselves, because all the figuring out and sorting out and praying and scheming and all those things, they don’t produce results. And when they do work out, they usually turn around and bite us in the back side.

When I say, “This is helpful; I’ve got this thing sorted out. I’m going to do this, this and this, and I’ll be safe.” Well, I do this, this and this and before you know it, it’s a worse mess than it was before! I mean, we’ve all had that experience. Go ahead.

**Participant:** I think that we’ve got to realize that we have to walk closer to Jesus every day. And He makes changes in our lives.

**Ted:** Yes.

**Participant:** And change always involves people. And maybe He’ll take you into private arenas that you’ve never had before.

**Ted:** Right.

**Participant:** So we should be excited whenever we’re in pain. You know it’s hard sometimes, of course, because it always involves new people. You’re going to feel that,

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you know. There are so many new people I’ve dealt with here, being part of this group, you know?

**Ted:** Yes.

**Participant:** You don’t know where He’s going to take you. You start out with simple faith. But it always involves people. Or maybe there’s somebody very important who you’re going to walk into or may change your life, like Billy Graham. You don’t know.

**Ted:** Right. Or the Archbishop of Canterbury. *(Laughter)* I’m sorry, guys. I didn’t mean to offend you. *(Laughter)*

**Participant:** What does it mean to go from glory to glory?

**Ted:** What verse is that?

**Participant:** 2 Corinthians 3:18.

**Ted:** Yes.

**Participant:** “*But we also, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.*”

**Ted:** I love that verse. That’s a real promise from God. Remember, the root word, that three-letter Hebrew root word for *glory* is *kabod*, which has the sense of *weight*. I’ve got to believe that if you’re going to understand glory, you’ve got to understand it in the sense that without glory we are vacuous and empty. We’re like wind. You know, it’s like that great line from Isaiah 40. “*All of the nations are as dust in the scales to Me.*” They are like a drop in the bucket. I mean all of the great and heavy things we think are important, like the nations of the world, as we listen to the news and get consumed with the news and the politics and everything. But do you know what God says about all of that? Republicans and Democrats, Hilary Clinton and Donald Trump. He says that they are all as dust on the scales.

Now if we’re going to weigh something, is there any dust to bite? *(Laughter)* We are like a drop in the bucket. So I start off like that. I am as dust on the scales, as nothing. And I am lightweight.

I think I’m big and glorious. But in fact I am as nothing! I’m like a worm! But what God does is that He takes me from one heaviness to another, till I’m as heavy and weighty and substantial as He is.

That is the course. That’s a promise. I’m trusting in that because I can’t do it with all my fretting and worrying at 2:00 in the morning, or with me trying to get the client to do something he doesn’t want to do. I can’t do that. I have to trust God to get me from glory to glory to glory—heavier, heavier, heavier, more important, more substantial.

I deal with people all the time who have lots and lots and lots of money, I mean tens of millions of dollars, hundreds of millions of dollars. And yet so much of their lives, many of them—as are very poor people; we’re no different; we’re all sinners—but they are of little substance. They sit there and tell me stories about all they have and all they’ve done, and all the people they’ve spent time with. And yet they are as nothing. They are like dust on the scales.

So I pray. When we get that perception, when God lets us see our true condition, then we begin to understand what glory means, and we become more and more glorious as God instructs us and leads us by the power of the Spirit.

**Participant:** Thank you, brother.

**Ted:** Sorry. I didn’t mean to be—

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**Participant:** I think that’s well stated. The question I have is like that. It’s my anxiety that tends to be lessened when I think of eternity, and not today and not tomorrow. My wife does not like that perspective because she worries about details, paying bills and meeting obligations.

**Ted:** Yes.

**Participant:** And I worry about them, too. But okay, let’s take care of it. But my point here, my question I should say, is that this is the point of sharing our faith with somebody else, even a Christian, to talk about eternity. It’s like talking about social justice without talking about the gospel, without Christ. And yet we want justice. God wants justice. But this emphasis on social justice in our culture and our nation tends to outweigh the justice that God wants, in the sense of people being brought into His kingdom and healed, or brought into His arms and healed. So we tend to overlook this. And I guess my question in all this is this. Is it inappropriate to talk about eternity? With God in the end, everything will work out.

**Ted:** It is critical to talk about eternity because eternity has the greatest weight. It’s the most glorious. It has the greatest glory. That always has to be done.

I always ask people, “Well, do you believe this works? So what? Where is it all going to end? Where are you going to be? You mean that you don’t believe there’s any accountability? You know, if you go and walk off a cliff, the accountability there and the consequences are that you’re going to fall. Do you believe that there is no accountability and that there are no consequences in eternity?”

I asked my son-in-law that question. Do you believe there are no consequences in eternity? I’m just asking the question. Yes, Frank?

**Frank:** The promise to Abraham was that he would be the father of many nations. But he took that upon himself because Sarah couldn’t conceive. He chose Hagar.

**Ted:** Yes. Good example.

**Participants:** And we have the Muslims.

**Ted:** Well that’s right. *(Laughter)* I think Abraham was actually looking for an excuse. *(Laughter)*

**Participant:** He chose Hagar because he did not trust the Lord. That’s what it is.

**Ted:** It’s because he was trying to solve the problem, as we all do. At the valley of decision with Lot and Abraham, he went about trying to solve the problem.

**Participant:** Right.

**Ted:** He said, “God has a solution. And the best way to do this is to get me out of the equation. Lot, what would you like? I’m going to step out of this solution. Lot, what would you like?”

“I’m going to pick that really nice ground. Look at that, cultivated and everything!”

Okay. *(Unclear)* He got what he wanted, and everything else came with it, Sodom and Gomorrah.

**Participant:** Did Lot know what was going on in Sodom and Gomorrah when he picked that land?

**Ted:** He may or may not have, but he didn’t care.

**Participant:** Okay.

**Ted:** Like many Christians. *(Laughter)* Praise the Lord! I’ve got a blessing down there; I can see it!

“Well, Lot, there’s Sodom and Gomorrah.”

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“Oh I know. But we can get along. We can work it out. You know, the Lord will bless us and bring some of them to Christ. It will all work out.” *(Laughter)*

**Dale Thurston:** One last thing.

“Said the sparrow to the robin,  
‘I’d really like to know  
What makes those human beings  
Rush about, and worry so?’  
“Said the robin to the sparrow,  
‘Oh I think that it must be  
They have no heavenly Father  
Such as cares for you and me.’”

**Ted:** That’s good. Bill has given me this from 2 Timothy the second chapter, the eleventh verse.

*“If we have died with Him, we will also live with Him.*

*If we endure, we will also reign with Him.*

*But if we deny Him, He will also deny us.*

*If we are faithless, He remains faithful,*

*For He cannot deny Himself.”*

Let us pray. Lord God, we thank You that by grace You have given us a glorifying faith. We know that faith is out there for us to experience and to grasp. We pray that You’d give us the desire and the ability to do that, and that by doing that and exercising faith that is glorifying, we make You look good to the world. And we pray this in Your name. Amen.

**Participant:** Amen. *(Applause)*