

# Marks of a True Believer

by Phil Beach Jr.

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of the Word of God, fellowship, and humility in our lives, and how these things are essential for a genuine move of the Spirit of God among a group of people.*

**Duration:** 54:46

**Scripture:** Acts 2:41

**Topics:** "Christian Life", "True Believers", "The Importance of God's Word"

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## Description

Phil Beach Jr. emphasizes the marks of a true believer, urging the congregation to stop comparing themselves to others and instead focus on the teachings of Jesus. He highlights the dangers of comparison, selfishness, and the need for genuine fellowship and community among believers. The sermon calls for a radical embrace of God's Word, encouraging believers to live transparently and selflessly, reflecting the inward beauty that comes from a relationship with Christ. Beach challenges the audience to prioritize the Word of God in their lives and to act on its teachings, particularly in relation to generosity and community support.

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## Transcript

Before we look in Matthew, I want to look, if I could, in the book of Acts. And what a wonderful, um, the book of Acts, chapter 2. Father, we thank you so much for your Holy Spirit. We thank you, Lord.

Help us to be honest. Help us to be transparent, Lord. Help us, Lord, to acknowledge that in ourselves, Lord, we're cold-hearted, we're calloused, we're cynical, we're critical.

In ourselves, Lord, we're prone to grumbling, we're prone to complaining. In ourselves, Lord, we're prone to leaving you and wanting to have a life that is really all about us and all about our happiness. Lord, we need the Holy Spirit so powerfully in our lives.

We need to see Jesus afresh. Lord, forgive us for the foolish act of comparing ourselves with one another. Whenever we compare ourselves with one another, we're in pride because we want to find someone that, in our eyes, looks worse than us so we can look good.

What a horrible sin, Lord. And I don't know of anyone here, Lord, who's not guilty of it. Now help us, Lord, to stop comparing ourselves with others.

There's a few here. You have looked at others. You've compared yourself with others, and it has affected your life in a horrible way.

It's actually motivating you to do things, and it's the wrong motivation. Today, the Holy Spirit wants to set us free from looking at others. Women, wives, be careful about comparing yourself with other women.

Don't do it. You're going to become very dissatisfied with who you are and who God made you if your eyes get on other women. Be careful what you read.

Be careful what pictures you set before your eyes. As we know, and it's a scriptural principle, the enemy to contentment is comparison. I've ministered on this many times.

The enemy to contentment is what? Comparison. You're never satisfied with what you have if you compare what you have with what others have. And everyone here is guilty of it.

But you know what we should be doing? Stop looking at the standards that others have set. What does the Bible say? That's the standard that we need to compare our lives to. We need to compare our lives to the person and teaching of Jesus Christ.

Jesus said, sell everything you have and give it to the poor. You know what He means by that? He doesn't mean go out and sell your home and live on the street. Because the Bible says that we should provide for ourselves.

You know what He says when He says sell everything you have? This is what He means. And this is what the New Testament teaches. It means anything in excess that you have is to be given to those in need.

Can you imagine if the entire professing Christian world for 30 years would obey the words of Jesus? You know we probably would have very few needs in the world if the church would stop stuffing, hoarding, grasping, and take the words of Jesus to heart. Now I know believers who have come to me and said, you know Phil, Jesus didn't really mean what He said. I've had them come.

He didn't really mean what He said. Isn't that a cheap excuse? So see, you shouldn't compare yourself with other people and let them determine what kind of life you live. Because if you do, you're going to get yourself in trouble, brothers and sisters.

Get on your knees before God as a family. Husbands and wives, get on your knees before God. Open up the Word of God and say, Lord, help me to see what You have taught.

I don't care what my brother's doing. I don't care what my sister's doing. If you know people who are living excessive lifestyles and it doesn't bother them, you shouldn't say, well brother and sister so and so are living this way and it doesn't bother them.

You shouldn't worry about what bothers them. It probably means that their conscience is seared and that they don't have a tender heart anymore. Because the Word of God is what we need to live by, not what our brothers and sisters think about.

So see, we have to come back to Jesus. So ladies, don't compare yourself with other people. Get on your knees and say, Lord, help me to see what You see as a beautiful woman.

A gentle spirit. One who doesn't nag her husband, but one who through her lifestyle shows her husband what a servant is. One whose focus is not outward adorning, but the adorning of the heart with a meek and quiet and gentle spirit.

Girls, that's what makes a woman beautiful. Society tells us that beauty is something outward. It has to do with a figure.

It has to do with the kind of clothes you have. It has to do with being provocative. That's not beauty.

That's fading beauty. True beauty, according to God's definition for a woman, is a state of heart where there's a gentle, meek, sweet, serving spirit. Now, it doesn't mean that you neglect your outward care.

But what it does mean is that if that becomes your focus, you have become deceived, and you need to repent and confess it to God. Listen, brothers and sisters, every woman here, listen. If you're married to a man who loves the Lord, let me say this, and I'm speaking for all the men here, and I'm sure they would concur.

The beauty that a husband desires to see in his wife is that inward beauty of a meek, gentle, submissive, serving heart spirit. That's the beauty. And I tell these to the girls.

I tell these to my own girls, and we should tell it to all the young girls that we know. If you want to attract the right man, then make sure you wear the right kind of clothing. Now, I'm not talking about the... If you want to attract a man who essentially is looking at your body, then go for it.

Go ahead. Dress the latest style. Dress to kill if that's what you want.

But you better consider the consequences to your actions because that's all you're going to get. All you're going to get is someone who has his eyes on your outward. But if you really want to attract a man that loves Jesus Christ and that's a broken-hearted man that wants to serve God, then you pray, God, You give me the clothing of an inward heart of meekness and gentleness, a tongue that doesn't slander, a tongue that doesn't say things that hurt people, a serving heart.

And I'm telling you, when a man that loves Jesus sees that, he's going to be attracted to it. Now, I know that young people don't see this, but your outward beauty is going to fade. It's going to fade.

The only thing that's going to be left as you get older is the inward beauty because the outward beauty fades. And we could try as hard as we can to keep it going, but it fades. That's why the Word of God tells us that the emphasis of God's heart is the inward heart.

And so, this is what it is to know the Lord and serve the Lord and walk in His Word. It's all about reality. It's all about living in reality and dealing with issues according to the truth of God's Word.

It's so freeing. It's so freeing to be real and honest and true and transparent and just wanting to see Jesus in all of His perfections and then acknowledge our own imperfections. This is what it means to be a Christian.

Lord Jesus, help me and save me. I'm a needy sinner. How many here want the Lord to help you stop being fake and stop being phony? I tell you, I long to be real.

You know one of the meanings of the word truth? It's reality. It's real. That's what truth is.

Truth is real. What is actually real and not what appears to be. That's one of the deeper meanings of the word truth.

We're to walk in truth. We're to love truth. We're to display truth.

Not unreality, but the true condition of how things are. Acts 2 verses 41 through 47. Now, when I read this, I am deeply challenged.

I'm deeply convicted. Deeply convicted. Very, very, very challenged and convicted.

And I so want the Lord to help me to see the reality of these Scriptures and their significance in my own life personally and in the lives of my brothers and sisters. We're just going to make some observations from Acts 2 verses 41 through 47. And I'm praying that the Holy Spirit will help us to see.

This captures, in these verses, this captures the true evidence of a genuine move of the Spirit of God among a group of people. This captures it right here. This has got to start in the home.

And then it splashes over in the church. Because the church is nothing more than families. You destroy the church when the families are destroyed.

Now, let's just read this and then let's make some observations about this. This is so challenging to me. Verse 41, chapter 2, Acts.

Now, this follows the message that was being preached. The Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Word of God.

Now watch. Then they that gladly received the Word were baptized. And the same day there were added to them about 3,000 souls.

And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship and in breaking of bread and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul. And many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

And all that believed were together and had all things common and sold their possessions. Now, brothers and sisters, please listen carefully. This is the Word of God now.

This is the Word of God. This ought to so deeply challenge us. So deeply challenge us.

They sold their possessions and goods and parted them to all men as every man had need. Now do you know what they were doing? Now this is going to be profound. They were obeying the words of Jesus.

That's all they were doing. They were obeying Jesus. Something that all the followers of Christ are commanded to do.

See, it's so simple. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God and having favor with all people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as were being saved.

Number one, the Word of God. The early believers were people who received the Word of God gladly. They embraced the Word of God.

They placed ultimate value on the Word of God. What place does the Word of God have in our lives? What place does the Word of God have in our families and in our homes? Brothers and sisters, I can't

emphasize this enough. You are not going to be any more broken and committed to the Lord Jesus Christ than the measure to which you allow the Word of God to get into your heart and into your soul and into your life.

Now, you remember a little earlier my testimony about how my conscience troubled me. Well, see, when I read the Word of God and I hear about the Word of God and the place the Word of God had in the life of the early believers, I can't help but feel troubled in my life because in my own life, apart from the Holy Spirit empowering me, the Word of God does not have that place. And see, this is the only way that we're going to be able to come into the good of this is we must be honest with ourselves and with God.

Does the Word of God have this place in your heart and in your life all the time, every day? So what do we do? So what do we do? Oh, well, shucks. Whatever. It's just the way it is.

You know what that means? Hard heart. Calloused conscience. Left our first love.

That's what it means. That's what it means. Does it trouble us? Not really.

Why? Because we're not walking close to the sinless One. You get close enough to the sinless One and you fall on your face. We'd rather listen to talk radio than Jesus.

We'd rather turn on the TV and watch foolish things than go before God in His Word. We'd rather talk to our brothers and sisters about sports, about our business, about politics, about how high taxes are, than talk about the Word of God and let it shine light into the areas of our life that need help. The Word of God does not have a place of significant importance in our lives.

That's why we are hard. That's why oftentimes the Lord has to do something very major to get our attention because we are so busy. Now let me say this, brothers and sisters, this is not a popular message as you can see.

We never have a problem with seating. This is not a popular message. It is not a popular message for people to embrace the truth that tells us that we're all wrong and only Jesus is right.

But you notice the Bible says they received the Word gladly. This is the basic trait and very first sign of a true, living relationship with Jesus Christ, whether it's individually or whether it's corporately as a body. The Word of God is given preeminence in our lives.

Not the Word of man. Not entertainment. Not our personal hobbies.

The Word of God is given preeminence in our lives. We have to come before the Lord and say, Oh Lord, forgive me. Forgive me, Lord.

Forgive me for allowing so many other things to take place as preeminence in my life. Now I'm not saying that you neglect what you have to do in relation to earning a living. But I would suspect that if everyone here was honest in the light of God, the time that we have that we would consider to be free time or spare time, oftentimes is not redeemed.

That means bought back for the Lord's interests, but it becomes something for us so we can do our own thing. The Bible says to redeem the time. Buy it back.

That is, take the time that's available to you and use it for God. They received the Word of God. They were not receiving a set of ideas.

They were not receiving man's thoughts. It wasn't a set of rules and regulations. It was the Word of God.

It wasn't human philosophy. It wasn't religion. It was the Word of God.

The very words of God. Notice that they received the Word of God. There is a difference between hearing the Word of God and receiving it.

We must pray for the grace of God to so work in our heart and lives that we don't just listen to the Word of God. We don't just come together in our Sunday gatherings or have Bible studies just to listen to the Word of God. But we embrace the Word of God to the point where we welcome it.

We believe it. We take it into our heart. We practice it.

We experience it. We hold on to it. We hunger for it.

We share it. And most importantly, we let the Word of God be what it's supposed to be. The light of God shining into our heart in order that we might see clearly the true condition about our own lives so we can come to Jesus for help.

We must embrace and hold to the Word of God. We must teach our children that the Word of God is the only thing in this world that lasts forever. The only thing.

The Word of God and loving God's Word and obeying God's Word. Everything else is a fleeting pleasure. It's here today and it's gone tomorrow.

But the Word of God endures forever. And we must do more than teach this to our kids. We must pray that God will give us the grace to live it.

Live it before our kids. And we need to teach our children how to teach them by example. Listen.

How to confess our sins. When was the last time you as a parent went to your children? Or husband, you went to your wife? Or wife, you went to your children or husband and you confessed your failure and your sin? When was the last time? Men, you want to do the most for your sons as they get older? Let them see in you the capacity to confess your sin. Son, forgive me.

Daddy has been selfish. Daddy has not taken the Word of God and made it the most important thing in his life. And I don't want you to follow that example.

Now, there's some things I do I would like for you to follow the example. But not that. Let's pray together that God will change our hearts.

Hello? That's what we need to do. Now, it's funny as a preacher. I'm just going to say this because I feel the Lord probing me too.

I don't usually like to say these things. But I know as a preacher over the years a lot of people get offended at me personally because of the Word I preach. Take it personal.

But do you know that I can't even remember the last time that someone came to me and said, Phil, I want you to forgive me because I got angry at you because of the Word that you were preaching. And I realize it's not about you, it's the Word. I know.

I know that preachers, my God, they become the topic of Sunday afternoon, Sunday evening, and all next week. Yet very rarely are people honest enough with their own conscience to feel troubled about having had the preacher for lunch when in fact it wasn't about the preacher. They had a problem with God's Word.

But yet they don't come to the preacher and say, I'm sorry. I can't remember the last time. And yet I know it happens.

I know it happens. And so what it tells me is the state of the hearts oftentimes are so hard and we're so unwilling to be real and honest with one another that we don't confess, we don't humble ourselves before our brother and before our sister. We don't humble ourselves.

And you know what? That's spiritual loss many times. So they received the Word. They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine.

Listen carefully. The apostles' doctrine was simply the teachings and words of Jesus Christ. The teachings and words of Jesus Christ.

The early church really believed what Jesus said. That's why the early church lost their lives. They really believed what Jesus said.

The teaching included what Christ taught, the fact about His death, resurrection, and ascension, as well as the teaching from the Old Testament as it was all fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Next, they continued in fellowship. What begins to happen in our lives, brothers and sisters, when Jesus really gets ahold of our heart and the Word of God gets deep inside of us is we realize that Christianity is about a fellowship.

It's a fellowship with the Lord. It's communion with the Lord. It's intimate communion with the Lord.

But it's also about a fellowship with one another. It's first an individual matter, but then it becomes a corporate matter. The Christian is attached to Christ personally, but the Christian is also attached to other believers.

And therefore, there is a fellowship, a koinonia. The word fellowship, listen, the word fellowship means a sharing of what one has and what one is with one another. That's what the word fellowship means.

It's a sharing of our hearts. A sharing of our lives. A sharing of what we have.

A sharing of our struggles. A sharing of what the Lord has given us. It's a community of believers walking in the light, living in the light, and sharing with one another.

And when the early church was filled with the Spirit of God and they were filled with Jesus Christ, they prioritized their fellowship with the Lord and their fellowship one with another. Acts 2.42 And they continued steadfastly in doctrine and fellowship. 1 Corinthians 10.17 For we being many are one bread and one body.

For we all partakers of the one bread. Many, many Scriptures. There's Ephesians 4.13 Malachi 3.16 that teaches these important things.

And so, they continued in fellowship and in breaking of bread and in prayers. Do you see what's happening, brothers and sisters, as we look at the Word here? What were the things that these early believers were doing? What was the priority of their life? Fellowship. Prayer.

Breaking of bread. Sharing their lives together. That is in direct opposition to both the tendency of our own sinful nature and the spirit of the society which tells us what? It's all about Me and it's all about now.

It's all about Me and it's all about now. If we do not come before the Lord and let the Holy Spirit break us, we will look at these things and we will say it's impossible. Our lives will be governed by the spirit of this age.

Verse 44. Who would like to read verse 44 and 45? 44 and 45. Please.

Now, as Michael's finding it, remember what we're doing here. We're looking at the evidence. Does anyone's conscience trouble them? That's a good thing, not a bad thing.

I can't read this without struggling to want to just drop down on my knees and say, Lord, have mercy. Help me, Lord. This is not what I'm about.

If I am governed by my own instincts, by my own desire... Listen, if the government of my life is based on me and my wisdom and what I think is right and what I think is good and what I think is profitable, I probably won't end up with any of these on the list. That's what self-government does. Self-government misses what is important and it ends up prioritizing everything but what is important.

Okay, Michael, go ahead. Listen to these verses very carefully. Yes, they do.

Now listen, brothers and sisters. Let's just come to the Lord and say, now, Lord, what is Your Word saying? What is Your Word saying? Remember, this is His Word. Okay, this is His Word.

It is critical for us as believers to pay close attention to what is being said right here. It's critical for us to pay close attention. First of all, this speaks of believers who were true believers.

That is, they truly embraced Christ as Savior. That means it affected their actions. True believers are those who desire to do what Jesus said.

True believers. True believers might from time to time get sidetracked and they might think more about what others think, but ultimately they'll come back to where they say, it's got to be what the Lord Jesus wants me to do, not what others are doing. Verses 44-45.

The verses that Mike read is about this. First of all, they were together. That doesn't mean that they were in the same place, although they did meet in the same place.

They were together in that they shared by the power of the Holy Spirit a mutual, single desire to place Christ as the preeminent One in their life and to do whatever He said in order to bring glory to His name. They were together on this. They shared the same heart, passion.

Next, they were together and they sold their possessions in good and used the money to minister to the poor and needy. Now the question is asked, why did they go through such extreme measures? Why did they do that? The simple reason why is simple and critical and obvious. Christ commanded it.

Matthew 19, 16-22. Matthew 19, 23-26. 27-30.

Oftentimes, and again, I have had believers recently, recently come to me and say it doesn't mean what it says. It doesn't mean what it says. Actually telling me it doesn't mean what it says.

Brothers and sisters, it's very, very dangerous to come to where we no longer really believe what God's Word says. It doesn't really mean that. When the Holy Spirit moves in revival and you and I come to where we acknowledge our condition as sinners and we embrace Christ, the Lord deals with every single form of selfishness and greed and requires, not gives an option, requires that it be dealt with in our life.

Every form of selfishness and greed. The fact that they sold what they had does not mean, as I said before, that they sold their homes and lived in the streets. What it meant was they gathered together everything that was in excess, just like Jesus said, and they offered it to the Lord and they offered it to those who were in genuine need.

They practiced selflessness and sharing. Who are rich and who are poor? A rich person is anyone who has more than what others have. That's what a rich person is.

More than the vast majority of the world. A rich person is anyone who has anything to put back beyond meeting the true needs of his own family. This is exactly what the Bible teaches over and over and over and over again.

I have been privileged to be in third world nations, as many of you know. I've been in the Philippines. I've been in India.

I've been in Romania. Let me tell you, every person here is rich. Everyone.

If you compare yourself with them, we're a wealthy people. When I was in the Philippines and we were fellowshiping with the Filipinos, they couldn't believe what we had. They couldn't believe it.

It was another world to them. God gives wealth. Not that we would hoard, but that we could give an opportunity to demonstrate the benevolent heart of God in sharing.

In summary, a rich person, you say, well, who is it that sold their possessions? Who is it who sold what they had? Only the rich people did it. Well, who is rich in our midst? Everyone's rich. We've all got more than we need.

Most everyone here does. A rich person is anyone who has anything beyond what he needs. What Christ demands is that we give all that we are and have to meet the needs of those in such desperate need all around us.

We are to hold back nothing. This is often the great complaint against Christians that we just do not believe. The evidence of our unbelief is seen in the insistence of Christ.

The demand that we give all that we have to feed the starving and meet the desperate needs of the poor and lost of the world. But we don't. Here's a quote from Gandhi.

The great leader in India. He said he never embraced Christianity for this reason. Christians talked about the teachings of Jesus, but rarely practiced them.

And he questioned the authenticity. That's what Gandhi said and therefore, that's why he never became a Christian. How many others reject Christ because of our hypocrisy? Our unwillingness to let the Word of the Cross go deeply into our lives and into our hearts.

This is so contrary to the American ideas. America, it's all about us. It's all about me.

It's all about now. It's all about what I can get. And Christianity has become nothing more than a Christian version of that heart.

It's all about me. It's all about now. Now, I want to ask everyone this question.

Where is this coming from this morning? The Bible. What am I preaching right now? This is what it is to be a preacher of the Word. I'm not giving you my opinions.

I'm not giving you my ideas. I'm explaining the meaning of the Word of God, comparing Scripture with Scripture. And believe me, I say, Lord, this is so contrary to what I am as a man.

I need Your help. I need Your help. Christ demands that we give all that we have.

When we deny self by giving all that we have, 1 John 4, 20, then and only then do we receive heaven and treasure of heaven. To deny self is a hard saying, but Christ demands it. It is love of the world that makes us unwilling to give up the possessions we have.

By refusing to take and give what we have, we make the fatal mistake of showing to one another that we love the things of the world more than we love people. That we prefer hoarding and extravagance, living sumptuously and comfortably, than to helping those who are needful, so desperately needful. That we love the world more than we love the hope of eternal life.

That we love the position, the recognition, the esteem, the power of the world's possessions more than we love Christ and the desire to keep His commandments. That's what it means when we hoard. That's what it means.

The early church let go of holding to earthly things for two reasons. They realized that possessions create the big I. The man who has possessions is usually looked up to, esteemed, honored, and envied. Possessions bring position, power, and recognition.

They boost ego and make a person self-sufficient and independent. As a result, there's a tendency for the rich person to feel independent and self-sufficient. Number two, possessions tend to make one hoard.

Matthew 19:21 The early church recognized the inherent danger that was present in prosperity. They did not despise prosperity, but they recognized the danger in prosperity. And because of that, they immediately embraced the teachings of Jesus.

When I got more than I need, I give it to the Lord, lest I lay hold of it and start fulfilling my own desires, using it for my own interests, and horribly neglect what the Lord's thought would be for prosperity. Riches tend to make men selfish for some unexplainable reason. The more we get, the more we want.

When we taste the things of this world and become comfortable, we tend to fear losing our possessions. We struggle to keep what we have and to get more. Some are willing to make contributions, but only a certain amount.

An amount that will not affect their overall security and standing. There are few people who will obey the words of Christ and give all to Him. Christ said it's difficult for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

He said it's difficult because riches tend to make our heart trust in another god. Next, possessions attach a person to the world. Possessions enable a person to buy things that make them comfortable, please their tastes, stir and appease their ego, stretch their self-importance, stimulate their flesh, challenge and fulfill their wildest dreams.

Possessions and money tend to empower a person. Luke 12.33, sell that you have. Give alms.

Provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that fail not. Where no thief approaches, neither moth corrupts. Acts 20.35, Paul speaking.

I have shown you all things, how that so working, that is, if you're a working man and you're making more than you need, you ought to support the weak and remember the words of our Lord Jesus. It is more blessed to give than to receive. Romans 12.13, distributing to the necessity of the saints.

Galatians 6.10, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to them who are of the household of faith. 1 Timothy 6.18, a command to the rich, that is to those who have more than they need. Now please, do not misconstrue what the Word of God is saying.

Be very careful how you listen and how you hear. God is not condemning wealth, nor is He condemning those who are rich. He's condemning the unlawful use of wealth and riches.

That's what He's condemning. That they do good, the rich people, do good, the word do good there has to do directly with thinking of others. If you have more than you need and you are under the power of the Holy Spirit, you will think of others.

If you have more than you need and you are under the power of your own heart, you will say, hmm, bigger barns, more for me, soul, eat, drink, be merry. Beware, brothers and sisters. I know this is not a popular message, especially in this country that we live.

But if I fail to preach this, God will chasten me sorely beyond what I even want to say. So I cannot neglect what the Lord has said in His Word. Do good, be full of works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate all that you have.

Just imagine the radical, transformed behavior of those who embrace the teachings of Jesus. The proclamation of the pure, unadulterated Word of Christ. Just imagine what would happen if through the power of the Holy Spirit we can begin to embrace the truth of God's Word.

Just imagine how God would be glorified. Overwhelming, isn't it? Like a different world, isn't it? I don't hear this anywhere else. I don't hear this on the radio.

I'm not getting this message in most of the books I read that claim to be Christian either. You know why? Because you know where you get this message? In the Word on your knees. That's why we must be lovers of the Word.

Okay, brothers and sisters, let's just spend a few moments in the presence of the Lord. They received the Word. They embraced it.

They fellowshiped in the light of Jesus. They believed the teachings of Jesus. And because they were full of the Holy Ghost, they obeyed the teachings of Jesus.

And because of that, they became wealthy. Wealth in the heavens that never wore out. Let's bow our hearts.

Father, we all stand in Your presence and acknowledge that You, Lord Jesus, are the only one that ever lived a life perfectly selfless, demonstrating the unselfishness of God. We pray, Lord, that You would take Your Word and that by the power of the Holy Spirit, You would help us to do what the early believers did, receive it, embrace it, and let it change us. Give us the grace, Lord, to admit our sin, admit our tendency towards selfishness, toward the love of the things of this world, toward extravagance and excess, toward using what we have that's extra for our own selves.

Forgive us, Lord. Help us to be honest enough to admit that we need a radical encounter with Jesus Christ. Please, Lord, make these things true in our lives.

God's Word just exposed this morning the greatest idol that lurks in our lives. And many will not hear and will be offended. Many.

We must pray that we will not be offended by God's Word, but gladly receive it. May God help us today to see Him. Just wait on the Lord here for a few moments.

We have just a minute or two or three. And let's let the Holy Spirit confirm His Word and give us the joy that comes when we can give all to Jesus and follow Him. Amen.

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