

24-0505a Transcript

24-0505a - *Realizing Equipped Saints*, Scott Reynolds

Bible Readers: Kevin Woosley and Scott Reynolds

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Realizing Equipped Saints

Transcript (0:03 - 33:34)

Scripture Readings

1st Reader: Kevin Woosley

Psalm 25:4-5,

(0:03) Good morning. (0:05) First scripture reading is out of the book of Psalms, chapter 25, verses 4 and 5. (0:14) Psalm 25, verses 4 and 5.

(0:18) Show me your ways, O Lord, teach me your paths. (0:22) Lead me in your truth and teach me. (0:24) For you are the God of my salvation, on you I wait all the day. (0:29)

2nd Reader: Scott Reynolds

Isaiah 6:19-22,

(0:34) The second scripture reading is from Isaiah, chapter 6, verses 19 through 22. (0:43) Isaiah, chapter 60, verses 19 through 22.

(0:48) The sun shall no longer be your light by day, nor for brightness shall the moon give you light. (0:56) But the Lord will be to you an everlasting light, and your God your glory. (1:02) Your sun will no longer go down, nor shall your moon withdraw itself.

(1:08) For the Lord will be your everlasting light, and the days of your mourning shall be ended. (1:15) Also your people shall all be righteous, they shall inherit the land forever. (1:22) The branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified. (1:29) A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation. (1:35) I, the Lord, has hastened it in its time. (1:40)

Transcript

Preacher: Scott Reynolds

(1:45) The last time I presented the lesson, we looked at equipping the saints from Ephesians, chapter 4, verses 11 through 16.

(1:56) You might want to turn there because we're going to reference that. (2:00) Ephesians 4, 11 through 16. (2:03) I'm interested in pursuing what this equipping might look like in practice.

(2:10) The passage gives us the purpose and objective of equipping the saints. (2:14) It also tells us why we are to be equipped, and it tells us the result of implementing this equipping. (2:22) Let's refresh our memory from Ephesians 4, verses 11 through 16.

(2:31) And he himself, and that's Jesus, he himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, (2:39) and some shepherds and teachers to equip the saints for the work of service for building up the body of Christ. (2:47) So Jesus gave us leaders to equip us for what purpose? (2:54) The work of service. (2:56) We are to be providing a service.

(3:01) What service? (3:03) For building up the body of Christ. (3:06) What's the objective in verse 13? (3:09) It says, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God. (3:18) So this equipping is to continue until we all attain a unity of faith and the knowledge of the Son of God.

(3:28) And keep this point in mind because much of this first part of what we'll see this morning (3:34) squarely addresses this point in knowledge of the Son of God. (3:39) And to become mature to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. (3:45) Why are we to be equipped? (3:47) Verse 14, that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine (3:56) by the trickery of men and the cunning craftiness and deceitful schemes.

(4:06) This brings to mind Paul's warning to the Colossians in Colossians 2, verse 8. (4:14) Paul tells them, see to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit. (4:21) According to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world and not according to Christ, (4:30) are philosophies dangerous? (4:33) And human traditions, are they dangerous? (4:36) Evidently they are because philosophies can take us captive. (4:41) And they can be deceitful according to human traditions.

(4:45) And this equipping of the saints in Ephesians 4, 11 through 16 is specifically intended (4:52) to guard the saints from this very threat. (4:56) So what's the result of implementing this equipping? (5:02) Verses 15 and 16 of Ephesians 4. (5:06) But speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into Him who is the head, (5:13) into Christ, from whom the whole body joined and held together by what every joint supplies. (5:21) And when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

(5:30) So one thing we know about this equipping is that it involves speaking the truth. (5:35) But this truth is to be spoken from love. (5:39) To mature is to grow up.

(5:42) We are to grow up in every way into Him. (5:45) And we are to grow up into Christ. (5:47) We are, after all, little Christs.

(5:51) That's what Christian means. (5:54) As Paul instructed, (5:58) Imitate me as I imitate Christ. (6:03) 1 Corinthians 11.1 (6:05) The whole body joined and held together, that's unity, (6:10) growth comes from implementing this equipping of the saints (6:13) and when each person is working properly in love.

(6:18) But what the passage doesn't tell us is what this equipping is. (6:24) What lessons are taught? (6:26) What should our leaders be teaching us? (6:28) What do we need to be learning to equip us

for the service that Jesus has for us to do? (6:35) And this is what I would like for us to begin to explore today. (6:41) So what might equipping the saints look like? (6:45) Looking at some of the apostles' teachings, (6:48) let's try to get an idea of what this might be.

(6:52) In the Scripture, there are some ideas of what I think should be included in the equipping of the saints. (6:58) It's not exhaustive and not necessarily authoritative, (7:02) but hopefully it will give us a good starting point for building a curriculum for equipping the saints. (7:10) Beginning with Paul, in the same letter, Ephesians, just two chapters before, (7:16) is mentioning the equipping of the saints.

(7:19) Paul, in telling the Jewish and Gentile believers that Gentiles too are now part of the family of God, (7:27) says in Philippians 2, verses 17-22, (7:36) Ephesians 2, 17-22, (7:39) And Jesus came and preached peace to you who were afar off, (7:44) that's the Gentiles, (7:46) and preached peace to those who were near, that's the Jews. (7:53) For through him we both have access in one spirit to the Father, (8:00) that's unity of the faith. (8:01) So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, (8:05) but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, (8:11) and that again is unity of the faith.

(8:13) And this household of God is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, (8:20) Christ himself being the cornerstone, (8:25) in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. (8:33) In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. (8:42) So looking at verse 19 and 20 of Ephesians 2, (8:47) members of the household of God built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, (8:53) Christ Jesus being the cornerstone, (8:57) and the household of God is built.

(9:01) It has a foundation. (9:04) The foundation is the apostles, prophets, and Jesus himself being the cornerstone of that foundation. (9:13) Notice in verse 21, the household of God is referenced as the whole structure.

(9:20) And see if this doesn't sound familiar, comparing Ephesians 2, 21 with Ephesians 4, 16. (9:30) In Ephesians 2, the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple. (9:37) In Ephesians 4, it says the whole body, Ephesians 2, the whole structure, (9:43) joined and held together in Ephesians 4, and Ephesians 2 being joined together, (9:49) and Ephesians 4 makes the body grow, and Ephesians 2 grows into a holy temple.

(9:59) And in Ephesians 2, 22, in him you are also built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. (10:11) So look at these terms that Paul's using. (10:14) Household of God, structure, foundation, cornerstone, built, holy temple, dwelling place.

(10:22) Paul is using building construction terms to express the growth of the church and our individual growth as well. (10:31) Through the equipping of the saints, the household of God built on the foundation. (10:38) So let's follow Paul's lead and be thinking, is this metaphor relevant to equipping the saints? (10:47) And let me suggest that the metaphor is a blueprint, a design plan, a model or template, (10:55) for building that house, Jesus' church, a plan for us to follow.

(11:01) So Paul uses the building metaphor in Ephesians 2, 19 and 20, (11:08) identifying the foundation as the apostles' prophets and Jesus as the cornerstone. (11:15) So when a construction company builds a large superstructure, like a skyscraper, (11:21) they don't just lay the foundation upon the soil, (11:26) and they don't just dig down a little bit and lay the foundation upon clay.

(11:31) They search for bedrock upon which to lay the foundation.

(11:36) They look for the rock. (11:39) Jesus asked his apostles who they thought he was, recorded in Matthew 16, verses 16-18. (11:50) Simon Peter answered, (11:51) You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.

(11:55) And Jesus replied, (11:57) Blessed are you, Simon, son of Jonah, for this... (12:02) What's this? (12:05) You are the Messiah, the Son of God. (12:08) Peter's answer. (12:09) For this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by the Father in heaven.

(12:16) And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock... (12:20) What rock? What's this? (12:23) It's the same this that it was before. (12:26) Peter's answer. (12:28) That you are the Son of God, the Messiah.

(12:32) And upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. (12:39) So Peter's confession identifies Jesus as the Messiah, the Christ, the Son of God. (12:46) And Jesus says, I will build my church on this truth.

(12:51) Paul tells us to lay hold of eternal life that we confessed in 1 Timothy. (12:57) And that even Jesus, before Pontius Pilate, made the good confession. (13:04) In 1 Timothy 6, 12, and 13, (13:08) Paul tells Timothy, fight the good fight of the faith, (13:16) that you will call on about me.

(13:21) He made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. (13:26) What confession is that? (13:28) It's the same one that Peter made. (13:29) You are the Messiah, you are the Christ, the Son of God.

(13:34) I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, (13:40) who in his testimony, before Pontius Pilate, made the good confession. (13:47) In the account of Jesus before Pontius Pilate, Jesus too makes the confession. (13:54) At the end, the Son of God.

(13:57) It's this way. (13:59) In John 18, the account is found in John 18, verses 33 through 37. (14:08) So Pilate entered his headquarters again and called Jesus and said to him, (14:14) Are you the king of the Jews? (14:16) Jesus answered, Did you say this of your own accord, or did others say it to you about me? (14:23) Jesus answered, I a Jew of your own nation, and the chief priests have delivered you over to me.

(14:30) What have you done? (14:32) Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world. (14:37) If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting that I would not be delivered over to the Jews. (14:45) But my kingdom is not from the world.

(14:48) Then Pilate said to him, So if you are a king, (14:54) Jesus answered, you say that I am a king, and for this purpose I was born, (15:02) and for this purpose I have come into the world to bear witness to the truth, (15:08) and everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice. (15:11) So Jesus says, For this purpose I was born, and for this purpose I have come into the world (15:18) to bear witness or testify to the truth. (15:21) In this context, with Pontius Pilate, Jesus came to testify then to what truth? (15:32) Pilate then asked him if he was a king.

(15:35) Jesus then made multiple references about my kingdom, (15:41) implying that he was a king, and the point is, (15:45) So you are a king. (15:48) The most important truth on which all of Christianity lies is that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, (15:59) and not Simon Barjona's name

change to being changed to Peter. (16:06) Who would make that the rock on which all of Christianity rests? (16:11) Paul will later call Jesus the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords in 1 Timothy 6.15, (16:18) as does John in Revelation 17.14. (16:22) By the way, if the rock is the truth, that Jesus is the Messiah, the Christ, the Son of God, (16:31) then that means that the rock is Jesus.

(16:35) Jesus is the rock that the foundation lies on. (16:39) However, not only is the rock on which the foundation of Christianity lies, (16:46) but he is also the next building constructed on, the chief cornerstone. (16:54) According to New Studio Architecture regarding architectural cornerstones, (17:02) In relation to architecture, a cornerstone is traditionally the first stone laid for a structure.

(17:10) With all other stones laid in reference, a cornerstone marks the geographical location (17:17) by orienting a building to a specific location. (17:24) Ephesians 2.19, Paul says, (17:26) You are members of the household of God built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, (17:37) Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone. (17:42) Jesus is the cornerstone that he lays in building his church.

(17:49) There is a familiar verse from the Psalms. (17:53) There's even a song about it. (17:54) Perhaps you've heard it.

(17:57) This is the day that the Lord has made. (18:01) Let us rejoice and be glad in it. (18:05) You've heard it.

We've sung it. (18:08) There's the context. (18:11) The Psalmist says in the 118th Psalm, verses 21 through 24, (18:18) I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation.

(18:22) The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. (18:30) This is the Lord's doing. (18:32) It is marvelous in our eyes.

(18:35) This is the day that the Lord has made. (18:39) Let us rejoice and be glad in it. (18:43) Did you know that that verse points to Jesus building his church? (18:49) When Jesus became the cornerstone that the Jews rejected.

(18:55) There are other scriptures that identify Jesus as the cornerstone. (19:00) Luke chapter 20, in the parable of the wicked tenants, beginning of verse 9, (19:05) Jesus tells the Jews this parable. (19:09) An owner of a vineyard let his vineyard out to tenants.

(19:16) Then he goes away for a long while. (19:19) When the time came, he sent a servant to the tenants (19:22) so that they would give them some of the fruit of the vineyard. (19:25) But the tenants beat the servant and sent him away empty-handed.

(19:30) And this happens sometimes. (19:33) And then in Luke chapter 20, verses 13 through 18, Jesus continues. (19:39) Then the owner of the vineyard said, (19:42) What shall I do? (19:45) Well, send him away.

(19:47) I don't respect him. (19:51) They said to him, (19:55) Let's kill him so that the inheritance may be ours. (20:00) And they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.

(20:04) And then, what will the owner of the vineyard do to them? (20:10) Jesus asked. (20:11) He will come and destroy those tenants and give the vineyard to others. (20:18) And when the Jews heard this, they said, Surely not.

(20:23) But he looked directly at them and said, (20:26) What then is this that is written that the vineyard shall become the cornerstone? (20:41) And when it falls on anyone, it will crush them. (20:45) Another reference is found in Acts 4, where Peter has been arrested in Jerusalem. (20:52) And the chief priest and his family come and have Peter to be interrogated.

(21:00) And during that, Peter preaches to the high priest and his family. (21:06) And while doing that, he says in Acts 4, 11-12, (21:12) Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone. (21:21) And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.

(21:31) Did you know that's the context of that verse? (21:35) Peter reveals the consequences of Jesus being the cornerstone. (21:42) If he's the cornerstone of the church, then no other name is given by which men must be saved, that we must be saved. (21:51) So years later, Peter will reference Jesus once again as the stone.

(21:57) But this time as the living stone. (22:00) And he references Christians and the likeness of living stones being built, (22:05) using the building metaphor for maturing Christians. (22:09) In 1 Peter 2, verses 4-10, Peter says, (22:15) As you come to him, the living stone, rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him, (22:24) you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, (22:34) offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

(22:39) For in the Scripture it says, (22:42) See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone, (22:49) and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame. (22:53) Now to you who believe, this stone is precious, but to those who do not believe, (22:58) the stone the builders reject will become the cornerstone, (23:04) and a stone that causes them to fall. (23:11) They stumble because they disobey the message, which is also what they were destined for, Peter says.

(23:19) But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, (23:25) God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of Paul to you out of birth into his wonderful light. (23:36) Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God. (23:41) Once you have not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

(23:47) These first two steps in the building construction metaphor are all about Jesus. (23:54) This metaphor is directly related to the equipping of the saints. (23:59) Jesus built his church on the rock, and that's the truth, (24:04) that he is the Messiah of the Old Testament and the Christ of the New Testament.

(24:12) And Jesus is the cornerstone, the stone laid on that rock, (24:18) that orients and gives direction to the foundation laid down by the apostles and prophets. (24:26) So the leaders that Jesus gave the church, Ephesians 4, 12, and 13 will tell us, (24:33) are to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, (24:39) until we all attain to the unity of faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, (24:47) to become mature to the measure and the stature of the fullness of Christ. (24:54) Perhaps Peter helps us understand what our service might be.

(25:00) You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood (25:08) offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ, 1 Peter 2, 5. (25:17) That's our lesson for this morning. (25:19) In part two, we will continue examining the building metaphor

(25:27) by looking at some of the foundation laid down by the apostles and prophets. (25:32) We will also discover, I believe, that to build on top of that foundation, what are we to build? (25:41) Whatever we build, Paul cautions us to take heed how we build.

(25:50) The imitation is being extended to anyone who needs it, while we stand and sing. (25:59)