

CHURCH OF THE HIGHLANDS

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# Eternity-Focused Finances

Full Transcript

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*Duration: 35:37*

## Introduction: The Seek First Series

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0:00 What a miracle we are we are part of a miracle and I just want to just immediately say hello to the true miracle the people of Church of the Highlands today want to welcome all of our locations across the state of Georgia every one of our Alabama locations and a special shout out today to the campus we have down in Troy y'all got a picture earlier today from our campus pastor y'all look at Troy Alabama right now covered in snow you can you never know what to expect in Alabama weather can I get an amen and so we say hello to Troy and of course everyone joining us online or later on demand and the minimum of the Alabama correctional facilities come on high ones let's put our hands together and welcome our entire church family oh it's an honor to be together and I

0:43 Know your campus pastor just took a moment in prayer earlier but I just want to celebrate really what God is doing in our 21 days of prayer just we are on day 15 and God's moving in a huge way I got to celebrate this yesterday actually here at Grantsville in this auditorium we had 1100 high schoolers take a day to pray and fast and to see God we had hundreds of college students over at Greystone and I just want to say right now as a part of this miracle God is moving and we give him all the glory come on Highlands can we thank God for this season and really again the miracle we're a part of and so today I'm really excited to get into the word of God I know that's why you've come to get in his presence and to get into

1:22

### Matthew 6:33

*But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.*

2:03 Actually do want us to destroy as a church family today to repeat that scripture on the count of three one two three but seek first his kingdom and his righteousness and all these things will be given you as well what an incredible verse this verse is all about the divine reordering of life God has so much for us there are so many promises in his word the abundant life of God and we've been talking about it each week it's almost like there's a doorway here in the middle of the stage and all those promises are on one side Matthew 6:33 gives us the key to get from where we are in every area of our life to where God wants us to be to experience those promises and even that that scripture you know but seek first the idea there is in the original language

## The Financial Reality and Biblical Hope

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2:47 It's you don't just seek once you continually seek God first his kingdom which means his rule his reign and his authority and his righteousness oh come on somebody the work of the Holy Spirit on the inside of us we're not where we want to be but we are not where we used to be because God is doing a good work on the inside and then ultimately it comes with that promise of all these things as well and here's how we're saying it when God is first everything else finds his proper place so last week we talked about this idea this truth in relationships today we're going to talk about money now here's what I know I know what just happened I've been around church for a long time and the moment I said money if you were

here for the first time maybe or maybe

- 3:31 You hadn't just hadn't been to highlands in a while and you're like okay great I'm back and it's the money talk or maybe you are here for the very first time ever and you're like okay I knew it this church is all about the money I know the biggest kind of heart you know population right there was like if you brought a guest today and you're like oh it's the money talk mark you better not mess this up for me mark you better be cool today you know it's like that pressure I feel that moment I felt it before myself in church and I just got to start right here no one will ever stand on this platform you have my word and ever want anything from you come on somebody we are here to glorify Jesus and we are I'm here to serve you
- 4:09 We are here to serve you to glorify Jesus and to serve you so I'm just afraid that that that stress or that anxiety would just kind of come off today and that we would all be able to receive because the truth is this is this is reality for all of us today the truth is in the area of money we need help come on somebody that's the truth and I found some stats I want to share these this is you know when you're communicating this is called building tension I really don't feel like I have to do a lot today because this topic carries its own weight but these stats were just striking for me and then really stirred my pastoral heart honestly for today 87 percent of Americans feel financial stress weekly this is a stat I found it's at 42 percent of Americans
- 4:50 Don't have at least one thousand dollars saved for emergencies and this next one honestly was just almost overwhelming for me and this is was calculated back in December of 2025 household debt in the US is now above 18.4 trillion dollars we just got to let that sink in for a moment I'm trying to get my mind around a single trillion is hard much less 18.4 trillion if every one of those trillion dollars was a dollar bill and it was stacked from right here at Grants Mill catch this highlands that stack of dollar bills would go from the earth to the moon back again back to the moon back to the earth back to the moon almost three times from the earth to the moon that is a lot of debt and 1.2 trillion dollars of that is on high interest credit cards so it is
- 5:44 No surprise that money is one of the leading causes of relational stress and one of the leading contributors to anxiety and depression that's pretty heavy but I've been saying this every week and I get I'm so happy I get to say it again today I bring good news in Jesus name the Bible has a lot to say about this area come on somebody that is good news and and the Bible has a lot to say Jesus has a lot to say and I could go on and on about this but there are over 2,000 verses in the Bible on money wealth and possessions this is amazing one-third of Jesus's parables we're actually around these areas of our possessions our money our wealth this is striking Jesus talks more about money than he did prayer so thank God we have a good God everybody that he
- 6:31 Knew this area would carry weight and our God is a good God and he brings us truth today and so I was as I was prepared for this to be honest with you I was a little insecure I've never preached on this topic to our church I've only been on the job almost a year and so this is not a topic that I personally taught on and to be very honest and transparent today I did not grow up in a house where we talked about money a lot maybe that's your story as well I just didn't now I thank God I got to see integrity lived out in this area my dad is not he's 76 years old now he's not the kind of dad that ever you know sat us down with a notebook and he was like here's your here's your five principles

- 7:07 For money and they all start with a pee if you grew up in a home like that praise God I didn't my dad did not tell us to pick up a notebook he told us to put on our boots and go to work come on see my girlfriend a house like that if you want to learn you better keep up because I'm going to show you some things but you want to keep up with me and my dad every day of his life as it's the heart he's the hardest worker I know he's 76 years old this past week he had rotator cuff surgery I was in the waiting room with him I was like dad how many surgeries are my siblings where they were like how many surgeries have you had he said I've had 12 orthopedic surgeries in my life and the doctor
- 7:39 He's you know 76 the doctor's like mr pattice you know are you sure you want to get this rotator cuff fixed again and this is you know a few months back and my dad looked him straight in the eye and he said yes sir I do I got wood to chop he's laughing still go he is not slowing down and so I'm so grateful for that but I didn't I saw it live but I didn't have the language for it until I came to church to the Highlands and when I was a college student I stepped into this church under pastor Chris's teaching and I learned the principles I learned how to put words and language around what I'd already seen lived out with my dad so I am here today and in no way shape or form am I claiming expert status but I
- 8:18 Got again I got good news today God is the expert I'm here today and I am confident today because I get to preach from this word today principles around the area of finances that can be life-changing and so I really just spent I mean a long time praying and here is my simple prayer for today's talk God what would you teach us like if we were sitting around as a church and you had the first 30 minutes there's a lot to teach in this area but if we were to sit down with you for that first conversation holy spirit what do you have to say and I believe with all my heart that's what God wants to communicate today and it really starts here money isn't just the financial issue it's a hard issue it's a hard issue Martin Luther said it this way he

## Personal Background and the Van Alignment Story

- 9:02 Said there are three conversions necessary I love this the conversion of the heart the conversion of the mind and come on the conversion of the purse so our heart when we meet Jesus our mind it really is daily that's that renewing of our mind that sanctification but at some point we've got to let God meet us in our heart a conversion of our hearts around this area of money and so I'm going to boldly ask for this today I'm asking across church of the highlands today anyone joining us online for open hearts and open minds today for some of you what I'm going to share like I like it was for me at 18 years old today it's going to be a revelation and then for a lot of us today it's going to be a reminder but for whatever version of that it is
- 9:44 For you can we just receive today what God wants to tell us and I know this is what I know if we'll let it in our heart today I am so confident as your pastor today if you will let his truth in your heart today with it will come hope we got a lot of work to do in this area probably most of us there'll be practical steps but I know we can leave here with a spirit of hope and hope only works when it gets there on time I got to tell you this today wherever you are financially in debt in disunity in your home right now feeling the weight of that of those stats that I read earlier it is not too late in Jesus name I said it is not too late in Jesus name God's word is right on time and

- 10:23 So I want to pray even right now I want to pray for us then we're going to get into this into the depth of this teaching but let's just allow the Holy Spirit to me this right where we are God I thank you for your word and God we open our hearts to you today from the youngest to the oldest in every version of this situation and God we're asking you to speak to us and God I pray that that weight would be lifted and we would receive your hope today in Jesus name and everybody said amen the key for us and the key of really getting our heart right is getting our heart aligned with what God has to say to us in this area a few years back about actually about ten years ago I got the chance to travel with pastor Chris
- 11:00 To a pastor's conference I love I love pastor Chris I love traveling with him it's a great opportunity to get around him you know to get wisdom and I also just love being his armor bearer being the guy that's with him and helping him no matter what comes his way and so we're flying from Birmingham of course you got to fly to Atlanta you can't even get to heaven without going to Atlanta from Birmingham and our flag is delayed our delta flag is delayed and so we land about an hour late in North Carolina and this pastor meets us in the airport and I can tell he is super nervous to meet pastor Chris so I kind of step into that situation he's actually sweating step into that situation it's the middle of the summer we're about an hour late I guess he was stressed
- 11:34 Getting us you know to get us there on time we walk out and we get to the vehicle that he brought now number one rule of hosting I'm this is just side lesson here never host alone because because that car had been sitting out there because he was in the airport no one's in it it had been sitting out in the 100 degrees summer heat for several hours and it just so happened to be I could tell the moment I got into it it so happened to be his wife's minivan that he picked us up in y'all know what a minivan smells like that's used to being full again you can even see that he had just taken the car seats out there were crumbs everywhere and it's just that smell of like spilled a lot of things that have been spilled in that minivan
- 12:07 And so we get in there the air is not working really good we start driving with you late he's super nervous and he picks his phone up as we're driving and I can tell he doesn't know where he's going I'm like bro put your phone down and focus on the road you have the man of God in the passenger seat and Chris Hodges is not dying on my watch and so there's this tension building up and we get up to highway speed and this van starts shaking like this now pastor Chris is a man who it is hard when he when he wants to say something he is going to say it but he is so gracious I'm dying in the backseat I'm watching him almost several times lean over to tell this guy something and finally he just puts his hand on his shoulder
- 12:44 And he just taps and he goes my brother this van needs alignment he dropped us off at this deal pastor Chris preaches it's amazing to this guy's credit I don't know if we'll ever watch this we get back out a few hours later he had taken that van and gotten it aligned in Jesus name true story but he wasn't used to driving it like that we got pulled over for speeding on the way back to the airport and almost missed our flight I love that story for a lot of reasons but I love the feeling of like that shaking of reality that may be maybe what your finances feel right right now but in a moment God can bring alignment and listen when God is first in every area everything finds its proper place including money and that's what God wants to do for us

## The Parable of the Talents: God Owns, Entrusts, and Evaluates

13:25 Today here's here's where we'll kind of just begin to really dig into this the world teaches ownership that's how we get out of out of alignment my money my possessions my time but the Bible teaches stewardship and this again getting this in our hearts is our goal today in stewardship God is the owner and we are the steward and this changes everything now it's all throughout the Bible but I want to teach it from a single parable in this these first four points are really about what we believe around this area of stewardship again getting this into our hearts Jesus teaches all four of these out of one parable in Matthew 25 known as the parable of the talents and so we're just going to move through this parable today this is the first verse I want to lean into verse 14 he says again

14:08 It will be like a man going on a journey who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them so Jesus is telling a story in the story of the man later known as the master is you know he's the guy in charge and then he has these servants there's actually three of them in this serve in this story but here's the key right from the very first verse it is not the servant's wealth it is the masters right down the first principle of stewardship God owns it and stewardship requires lordship come on church to the highlands it all belongs to God and I read this scripture a couple weeks ago I want to come back to it Psalm 24 the earth is the lords and not 99.9 percent not everything except my car or my house or those golf clubs or whatever it might

14:56

### Psalm 24:1

*The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.*

15:42 The first bite of that queso on your plate and honestly at the end of the day I'm just trying to make sure it's not poisoned I'm a good dad and there have been many times my kids have been like oh dad that's mine I'm like oh really that's yours who paid for it you received it under the the lordship of a good father this is what it's if you if I if we don't like the reality where we are financially its chain starts here it all belongs to god we will not get god's vision we will not get his blessing over our finances until we settle lordship it's what Jesus says in Matthew chapter six no one can serve two masters either you will hate the one and love the other or you'll be devoted to the one that spies the other and he could

16:28

### Matthew 6:24

*No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.*

17:25 Live under his authority it's going to period change starts there here's verse 15 again back to the parable hit to one he gave five bags of gold to another he gave two bags to another one bag each according to his own ability we're actually don't focus on the amount right now we'll come back to that and this is then he went on his journey write it down number two principle is god and trust what we have has been entrusted to us by god stewardship requires responsibility this was a this was a life-changing revelation for jill and i is that everything that i have been entrusted with everything god has given me he's given me own purpose with a purpose i'm going into it one more time nothing you have or that i have is an accident nothing we

have or even anything we don't have

- 18:11 Is an accident he has a purpose for all and our responsibility this is a life-changing revelation is to use it as he intended and this is what the bible says in first peter and this is applied directly to spiritual gifts but it you'll see at the end it applies to every gift in our life each of you you should use whatever gift or carriage you've received to serve others as faithful stewards of god's grace in its various forms and here it is so that in what all things god may be praised through jesus christ our purpose the purpose of what we've been given is always first and foremost to glorify god this one we showed the video and the value today specifically as a church myself our entire team our trustees every single penny is a gift to be in it's been entrusted to us church to glorify
- 19:05 God with it all now i'll give you a sneak peek to the end of the parable when we live this way come on somebody there is always more that's why the original mount that we received doesn't even really matter but if we don't live this way even what we have and this is in the parable as well we will lose if not in the reality of it 100 percent the blessing will come off of it and all of us have seen this in our life somebody who has very very few earthly possessions but they are they live it they live with the responsibility to glorify god with it and you can be in in that environment or maybe that home and then there is just a blessing it's come on an atmosphere a spirit on it and we've been all around that other that other
- 19:47 Reality maybe somebody's incredibly blessed but there is just no blessing on it i'm telling you i choose this way every single time what i have comes with the responsibility come on highlands and i will glorify god with it can i get an amen today back to the parable verse 19 the master goes away the stewards each they're in their own way begin to invest and to use that that that that bag of talents they received and says after a long time the master of those servants returned and settled the accounts with them and in the original language the word settled means an evaluation and i want to lean in here it's important for us to recognize there is a test attached there is an exam attached to what we have been given that god actually does evaluate it therefore stewardship requires faithfulness now many of
- 20:36 Us and again i feel this today in such a massive way have been attacked in this area of finances and and we we've made mistakes we've all made mistakes maybe you come in today and that that way to that debt you're feeling all that in this moment maybe for you right now it's you were successful before you had wisdom and there's so many different versions but if we come in today without heaviness that pressure that's on us it comes with a spirit of fear and here's what the enemy wants to do the enemy wants to keep us paralyzed in the area of finances with a spirit of fear and this may be you if when i read earlier you know there's going to be a test if immediately you felt condemnation that's just a good indicator that there's a spirit of fear attached to this
- 21:16 Area right now in your life because jesus does not teach on money to condemn but you call us from that fear to faithfulness and in fact in the parable you can go read it jesus confronts the servant who ended up not investing but burying his talent but he's doing that not not really to confront the person but to confront the spirit of fear that was on it because if there's a spirit of fear we will try to hide this area of our life from the word of god we'll try to hide it and it'll keep us paralyzed and go all the way back to the garden whenever there is fear it hide we hide from god and if we hide from god there is no hope so receive grace today i just receive grace today i don't i don't know who i'm talking to receive

21:56 The grace of god this parable of the talent it's a gift to us there is an exam coming but the gift of this parable is it's not the final exam this is just a quiz to let us know where we are so later on in Jesus name i'm going to break off fear come on somebody condemnation in this area defeat in this area and it is so deep in my heart to even break off suicidal ideation that has come from that condemnation in Jesus name come on got the grace of yeah receive the grace of god today is available what i have requires faithfulness and here's that here's the opportunity today from this point forward i will do this God's way and listen at the end of the day highlands this is all God needs you don't look at me yes there's work to do

22:37 For all of us and even on a very practical level today you don't have to leave this service without receiving prayer our prayer teams are ready to pray for anyone in any financial situation we have pastoral care teams at every location reach out to us or even link up through this prayer moment today and we will sit down with you and begin financial really counseling in your life and get you connected to small groups starting a couple weeks we have from financial peace other versions of small group there are plenty of tools around here but it all starts with a decision in our hearts i'm going to do this God's way back to the parable verse 21 his master replied well done now the part that we didn't see here is you know all the investing happens and now they're coming back and that that

## Practical Principles: Order, Calling, Contentment, and Generosity

23:17 Settling is happening and they're presenting for the one that had five the one that had two that brought back a return and the one that had one that had buried it but to the five and the two Jesus teaches well done good and faithful servants you have been given you've been faithful with a few things i will put you in charge of many things again there's that promise of more but i want to link into this next verse i think this is even the greater promise come and share your master's happiness here's the greatest promise of a life of stewardship is that God redeems it and stewardship produces eternal rewards come share in your master's happiness you know last week we talked about the golden rule i want to go back to the sermon on the mount today the greatest financial principle ever taught this changes the game this is the divine reordering of God

24:06

### Matthew 6:19-21

*Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

24:52 Is to glorify God and populate heaven stewardship impacts eternity this is what we believe this is what has to be in our hearts now i got seven minutes and forty five seconds and i got four more points i told you but i want to help make this practical again we got prayer pastoral counseling small groups but even here today principles that i've learned even from pastor Chris and even this language from him today i want to make sure we walk out of here with some equipping of how how's this gonna what's the outworking of this word in our life here's number one write it down this is a huge principle order over amount can i get

an amen now trust is proven by order and god clearly asked in the bible

25:36

**Proverbs 3:9-10**

*Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine.*

26:20 Had been at times generous sporadically generous but i received a revelation that changed my life i want to share it with you today our mindset before that had been give god out of whatever was left it's like if there was going to be ten we waited till there was ten to decide and this principle of tithe changed everything i give the first before i even know the rest of the nine are coming i trust come on somebody i trust god with the first when we do that there is always a blessing is that blessing the name and claim it screws mcduck money vault no although jill and i have always been blessed here is the blessing when we trust god with the first peace come on somebody joy alignment knowing that

27:02 He's in control here's number two and this one's huge calling over compensation money will not buy happiness the american dream is not a bad thing but it is a terrible ultimate thing happiness comes with a life of purpose can i get an amen and then this has to be preached acts twenty twenty four this is the apostle paul however i consider my life worth nothing to me if i may only finish the race and complete the task the lord jesus has given me god has given each of us he's given you a task and the greatest goal of our life should not be the compensation but should be the calling i'm going to finish the call of god on my life when i graduated college um all of

27:48 My friends were getting ready to step into a business situation or you know a career that was attached to you know it's and sometimes pretty large compensation i felt the call of god to ministry and the first opportunity your boy had to say yes to that was as the janitor at a small Baptist church in oak grove, Alabama that was my first ministry job and i was in this reality of like knowing i'm called not knowing that god had a plan not knowing where that plan would go but saying yes like i heard god say yes to that first opportunity and i always remind you in our house i'm the only person that's ever been paid to clean i'm a professional in our house there were so many times i was god where are you is this it what are you this is what you

28:31 Called me to and there were so many times i was tempted by looking at everybody else to say you know what not whatever i missed it i'm going that way and the holy spirit was faithful to remind me mark if you bail now will you be happy at 70 and no the answer was no i got to do what i'm called to do i listen compensation matters it is good to make a lot of money if that's what you're called to do make a lot of money and fund highlands college scholarships okay but never before calling i want to lean in here this is somebody's in the valley decision right now this is confirmation for super purpose in jesus name here's number three contentment over consumerism that 18.4 trillion dollars of debt is really just driven by discontent let's be honest today because enough is

29:13 Never enough i've already quoted the notorious b i g here's jim carrey this is what he says i think everybody should get rich and famous and do everything they dreamed of so they can see that it is not the answer the good news is the bible teaches a better way flippian chapter four says i know what it is to be a need and i know what it is to have plenty i have learned the secret of being content and what is

contentment look at me church it's just recognizing how blessed we already are we could pass the mic for honestly maybe even valid reasons we could all have a pity party today about what we don't yet have or what we don't have but man we could spend a week maybe the rest of the

29:57 Day on that pity party we could spend a week passing the mic and throwing a praise party oh come on highlands with how blessed we already are the secret is contentment i mean i believe it or not i'm driving to church today watching the sunrise weeping in my truck worshiping god think i do not deserve the blessings in my life come on highlands let's never forget we are so the air in our lungs we're part of an amazing church for us bermingham out whatever it is we are so blessed it's contentment here's number four we'll finish here this one's powerful it really all builds to this generosity over scarcity there's no time today to teach on the spirit of man and that's the part i had to leave off to go deeper in that but there is truly a spirit behind the idolatry we have

30:45 Towards possessions and that spirit wants to bring to us not only a spirit of fear but ultimately a scarcity mindset it's this inner anxiety of enough you know never it's never going to be enough i got to protect what i have at all costs you know if i'm generous i may lose it all church this will destroy us what a scarcity mindset does to us is it makes us live small human lives and god wants to set us free from that to live the god-sized life that he has for us and god's tool for freedom from a scarcity mindset oh come on church it's a spirit of generosity we don't give to get we give to stay free acts 20 35 this is why it is more blessed to give and receive it keeps us free it all belongs to god

31:33

**Acts 20:35**

*It is more blessed to give than to receive.*

32:15 He had the margin in that moment to be generous that he was able to say yes to a \$25 opportunity and you would think the story ends there and sometimes honestly it's even been preached this way and i'm grateful that we're preaching this full truth here today because it's important for us to recognize it's never the moment of being generous if we are not careful that'll become about us that's not the prize that's an amazing opportunity that the reality was on the other side of that gift was a 10-minute conversation with a man where there was an open heaven and Harrison was able to bring hope and help and step into that come on church the person was surprised

32:49 The gift just created the opportunity what we have was never meant for us it's meant to go through us to eternity and this is what we're calling today eternity focused finance it's kind of pray for us today bow your heads and close your eyes all across church let's let the holy spirit move right now and i say this every week the message is over but the moment isn't let's just lean into what the holy spirit is speaking to us and again i'm going to pray for a spirit of hope but really i believe that the key and just really the whole series is this way the key to unlocking that hope is in lordship first of just giving god control of this area of our life we've controlled it for too long today that changes before i even pray over these areas of possessions and

## Closing Prayer: Lordship and Surrender

- 33:30 Money i want to pray for the lordship of your life and maybe you're here today if you know it i'm bold today i know you know it i'm not going to belabor this moment if you walked in today and you don't have a personal relationship with Jesus if he's not the lord of your life this is your moment and you already know it at every location i want to stay together today i'm not going to of course embarrass you or call you to the front but if that's you today before we pray over these other areas it's got to start with the lordship of our life and getting saved is allowing him to forgive us of our sins and become the lord of our life if that's you just pray this prayer with me in your heart say Jesus today i give you my life
- 34:02 Forgive me of my sins and mistakes i turn away from all of that and i run to you you are my savior and today i declare you're my lord you gotta fill me with your holy spirit so i can walk out these doors and live for you god thank you for those who just prayed that prayer the old is gone the new has come they belong to you now to this area of lordship and in our possessions and finances and honestly even our time and talent every area of stewardship this is probably all of us but if you would just be willing right now to spirits moving in your heart just open your hands right there in your lap is just an act of surrender god we're coming to you today and we do repent we turn away from our own ways in this area and we declare you are the lord over all of it god you own
- 34:54 It all god we're going to need your help so fill us with your holy spirit to begin to live this message out but right now in Jesus name i just come alongside your prayer and in the name of Jesus break off all shame all condemnation all fear that scarcity mindset god i'm praying for the man or the woman right now who's even in their minds thinking they have messed it up so much they should just end it all that suicidal thought is broken in the name of Jesus i speak hope and i speak future and i speak life no matter where we are we believe right now you can take us from where you are to the abundant life you have for us so god we're asking you for your help and we're giving it all to you in Jesus name everybody said amen we
- 35:33 Put our hands together and thank god for his word today