

“In This House”
By General Pastor Peter F. Paine
Sunday, March 2nd, 2014

I am glad to be here; I hope you are, too. Greetings from Sister Debbie Paine, Sister Hazel Davis, and our church family in Norfolk, Virginia. I think you know that I’m in town because of the home-going of Christine Schultz, and I’m honored to be here this morning. A very good friend of mine is here this morning; I’d like to ask Malcolm to bring him up. I want him to say hello. One of the greatest joys of my thirty-plus years of living in Waukegan was meeting Lloyd “Preacher” Howard. He calls me Pastor, I call him Preacher. Together we’ve had a lot of fun, a lot of victories, a lot of challenges... He lost his sight, but not his ability to inspire, to speak, to lead... I was telling Becky yesterday about the time that Nelson Mandela was in Chicago, and you and I got to meet him, and I was telling Becky before we started worship today, Preacher, that you have a picture of you and Nelson Mandela, and I was about to get my picture taken, but he said you were better looking. So, anyhow, Preacher Howard’s been a friend of Pastor Davis’s, an Christian Fellowship, and certainly a personal friend of mine for many years. We’ve celebrated a lot of things, and I didn’t want to say any more before Preacher got a chance to say hello.

(Preacher Howard) Good morning, everybody. First, let me thank Malcolm Xechariah: I made contact with him recently, and we were talking, and he told me about the church service here. I told him, “Next time Pastor Paine is in town, let me know, and I will come to church. He called me this morning at eight o’clock, and I’m here. I’m very emotional because this is the first time I’ve been to church in quite some time. I lost my vision, but I didn’t lose my ability to see. I’m working, every day, to try to get scholarships for children, especially bright young men, to get into the Air Force to become pilots. I am responsible for this young man, Pastor Paine, helping him to get his pilot’s license, and we flew many hours—in fact, we circumnavigated the United States of America to raise money to open a computer learning center, here in Waukegan, and I’m proud of that. Thank you, Pastor Paine, we had many flights together.

Before you leave the microphone, Preacher, I want to ask you a question: “This is Cessna Eight Zero November, request permission to land on runway Two Three.” (Preacher Howard) “Clear to land, runway Two Three.”

If that seems silly to you, we heard that many times in his airplane, and it was sheer joy to be up there together.

Well, I heard that you had a little theme this month: The House of God. When I heard that, I thought, “Lord, would You give me something to say that would go along with the theme this month, ‘The House of God?’” I think God has done that, and I’ve got good news for you, I think that this message, if you’ll work with me, will preach in about ten minutes. I think this message will preach real fast if you’ll work with me. I don’t think it’s going to take too long for us to do it, but I would like to share some words today that I feel God laid on my heart. When I heard the theme, “The House of God,” I couldn’t help but think—and I know we could talk about Heaven, but today, I’m going to talk about Earth. Today, I’m going to talk to you about this house that God has given us right here, right now. I’m going to talk about what it’s like for us to live here, and for us to gather together as brothers and sisters—brothers of different mothers. We get to come together, we get to worship together, we get to live together... What’s it like to live, here on Earth together, this House of God; what’s it like to live here, and to share this journey of life together. Well, Debbie and I were travelling—my wife Debbie and I were travelling, not too long ago, and we saw, in a hotel gift shop, and it says this—it’s a poster-size wall hanging—and it says, “In this house...”—this is something that you would hang in your home, and the words caught me, and so, I would like to share them with you today. It’s something that, I thought, “You know, that kind of describes how I feel about our house, the house that my wife and I live in, the house that we raised our children in,” and I thought, “You know, those words kind of describe how I feel about

this house. They fir where we live and how we do life; how we do Mondays, and how we do Tuesdays, and how we do Wednesdays, and how we do Thursdays, and how we do Fridays, and you get the point. It's not just Sunday, it's every day. And it says this:



(Photo courtesy of Bob Heitzler)

Families do what they do in their house. You know, families have different ways of saying, “I love you.” Families have different ways of saying, “I’m sorry.” Families have different ways of encouraging each other. Families have different ways of going the extra mile for each other, and this is the family that God gave me. Christian Fellowship is the family that God gave me. In 1973, when I gave my heart and life to Jesus Christ, this is the family that God gave me here on Earth. I know there’s a bigger family that I’m going to get to meet in Heaven—the Body of Christ is larger—but, right here, right now, you’re my sisters and you’re my brothers. I thank you for sharing this journey with me. I thank you for praying for me when I slipped and I fell. I thank you for lifting me up when I needed someone to carry me. I thank you for loving me when I felt a little lonely, and, yes, leaders can feel lonely. I thank you for feeding me when I was hungry. I thank you for bearing with me when maybe I didn’t get it right the first time. I also want to thank you for your love every day of the journey, and I want to talk to you a little bit about his house, the house of God. I thin the Scripture talks to us about how we do what we do. I spent some time thinking on this idea of the House of God, and in the House of God, we do love, and sometimes we do it better than others, but we do love in the House of God—could the church say amen? Love goes the extra mile, and love bears a brother’s burdens and love—anybody need a little love? If we can’t get it here... If we can’t get it here, we might just make the mistake of looking for it in the world.

We don't want the world's love. The scripture tells us that our ways are not God's ways, and God's ways are not our ways, so we need to be continually looking to God and saying, "What's Your way?" The Scriptures tell us that God is love. You know, Satan offers a good counterfeit of love. Somebody say amen. I've often said for teaching purposes that if someone were making counterfeit bills, what would they want them to look like? real dollar bills. See, Satan has a counterfeit love, and it looks like the real thing, and, for a short period of time, it might even feel like the real thing. Is it okay to preach today? Is it okay to preach? You see, we do love in this house. The Bible said to weep with those that weep, in Romans 12:15, and rejoice with those that rejoice. When we weep with those that weep, and we rejoice with those that rejoice, you see we go through the journey of life together.

We talk about our sister Christine today; it's altogether fitting and proper that we do so, because Christine went home to be with the Lord a week ago today, and her home-going service was yesterday. Christine is a very special part of this family. Did I say, "was?" I meant "is." I didn't say was, because I didn't mean was; I said is, because I meant is. Christine *is* a very important part of this family. Let the church say amen. I heard person after person, yesterday, at the funeral service for Christine Joyce Schultz, say, "She was like a mother to me." You see, in this house, we need some motherly love. Some of you know a little but about my story; I lost my mother when I was young—she didn't die when I was young, but she went to a nursing home when I was ten years old and so I didn't have her influence in the home, and there were some other people who helped. That's what we do in this family, isn't it? We help each other, we fill in the gaps, don't we? We help each other. Maybe you're a big brother for someone who needs a big brother. Maybe you're a big sister for someone who need a big sister. Maybe you're a mother for someone who—come on. Maybe you're a father for someone who needs a father figure. You might not be able to be their natural father here on the earth, but you can be a father figure, amen? We can do love in this house. I'm going to say it plain as I know how to say it today, we can do love better in this house. I'm asking every one of us to ask, "How can I do love better, God? How can I go the extra mile? How can I be a better example? How can I lift my brother or my sister up in prayer? How can I forgive better when they slip and fall?" We do love in our house, and you know what else we do in the House of God? we go the extra mile. Sometimes it's not fair, it's just the way it is. Sometimes it's not fair, it's just the way it is. You know, when I was a young boy, sometimes I would say to my dad, "It's not fair." And he said, "It's not always going to be fair, Peter. Get used to not fair." My dad would say to me, "Peter get used to not fair, because not fair's a good thing to get used to because it's not always going to be fair." He said, "Let me tell you something, son..." and my dad said it to me in the most loving way possible, so when I say it to you, "Let me tell you something, son..." it wasn't mean, it wasn't condescending, it was like, "I want you to get this, because you need to get this." He said, "...but sometimes your life is better than fair." You know what? In the House of God, sometimes is all the time, because you know what we got here is better than fair. You can't buy this with money. Somebody say amen. What we've got in the House of God is a gift, and it's more precious than silver or gold. It's more precious than silver or gold. You can't buy it with money, but you can give it away. You know what's the nice thing about how we do love in the House of God? the more you give, the more you get. The more you give, the more you've got. You know what? we've been loved into this family. We've been loved into this family. I've been hugged by mothers in this church when I needed a motherly hug. I've been hugged by brothers in this church when I needed a brotherly hug. I've been corrected by elders in this church when I needed a correction. That's what we do here, we do love.

I'm going to ask a question, and this is really just a question to see if you're paying attention, how many here have ever slipped and fallen and needed someone to help you get up? I'm raising both my hands and both my feet. That's what love's about in the House of God. Amen? Anybody here perfect? Come on up; help me preach. Anybody here perfect? Of course we're not perfect; we're people. Amen? We're people. In the House of God, we need each other, because sometimes I'll be strong when you're weak. Sometimes you'll be strong when I'm weak. If we'll stay together—Hello?—we'll stay strong. We need each other. So, in the House of God, we do love, but, you know, that's not all. In the House of God, we do correction. Yeah, we do correction. You know what? love corrects. Loves Corrects. Amen? Amen? Preacher Howard, you can't fly from point A to pint B without constant corrections. You can't

live a life from point A to point B without constant corrections. Apostle Paul was writing to the church in Galatia, and he said, in Galatians chapter 6, verse 1:

Galatians 6:1 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual...

...kick them while they're down, because that's when it's easy to get them! No, he didn't, he said:

Galatians 6:1 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of...

Say it with me: Meekness. And then he goes on to say:

Galatians 6:1 ... considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

Let's take that verse from the back to the front for a minute. Maybe I was wrong; maybe this won't be preached in ten minutes. It might take twelve. Here we go, from the back to the front: Consider yourself, because you could be tempted the same way. When you see your brother overtaken in a fault, consider yourself, because you could be there, too. Be careful how you judge. Be careful—somebody once said to me, Matthew 7:1 says, "Judge not..." but it goes on to say, "For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged..." (Matthew 7:2) That's what this verse is saying. Consider yourself. You ever need forgiveness? You ever need someone's confidence? You ever need someone's help without judgment? You ever need someone to help you? Good God Almighty, I've been a Christian for a long time; you think I haven't needed a lot of help? "You're the General Pastor! You never made a mistake!" You haven't been around me much. I've only been up about four hours, today; I've made several already. You want to know what they are? (The congregation called out, "No.") Good.

We do love in this house, and we do correction. Let's say it again. Help me start the verse. "Brethren..." I'll turn to it. "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness..." How you doing on that? How you doing on that? Especially—watch this: I'm one of six children. I would like to tell you that every day of my childhood, from the time I was born until I went into the military at age eighteen, that I liked my brothers and my sister, but any of you who have siblings know that's not true. There's moments you don't like your siblings. So, can I talk a little plain here, to the family? Sometimes you're not going to like your sister or your brother, because we're family, and that's what happens. I said to my twin brother one time, we were eight or nine, something like that, and we were just having a kind of a brotherly squabble, I said, "I hate you, Paul," and he said, "Good, because I hate you." I said, "I hate you more," and he said, "You can't because I hate you the most." We had that kind of a thing going on. The other day I texted Paul, and I said, "I love you, Paul," and he texted back, "I love you, too, Pete." By the way, next month, I'll be sixty years old; we're twin brothers. He's eight minutes younger than I am. He's already told me, "You know, for eight minutes, I'll be in my fifties, and you'll be in your sixties." He said, "I'm going to text you every minute of those eight minutes, and tell you how good it is to be young." I texted him back, and said, "I love you, Paul." You see, we need to do correction, but we need to do in the spirit of what? Meekness. Why? considering thyself also, lest thou also be tempted. You see, that's what we do in the House of God. And the better we get at it, the better we get at God using us, amen?

Another thing that we do in the House of God is we bear one another's burdens. Now it's verse two of Galatians. Apostle Paul said,

Galatians 6:2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

In the House of God, sometimes we've got to bear one another's burdens. You see, you didn't get the burden, you didn't create the burden, it wasn't delivered to you, it didn't he your address on it, but somehow, someway it came to your sister or your brother, and yet, come on, in the House of God, we bear one another's burdens. We bear one another's burdens. If you're not willing to do that, you're in the wrong house. Did I say get out? No, I said, get in. I'm not saying get out, I'm saying get in, but get in with the right spirit that that's just the way it's going to be. If you need a quid pro quo (or however you say that—I'm not an attorney), then you need to know this: Sometimes you need your burdens beared. I know that's not good English, but it's a great message. Sometimes you need your burdens beared. Sometimes you need a brother or sister to come up and say, "Let me help you carry that. Let me help you carry that." It's all right, somebody say amen. "Let me help you carry that, sister. Let me help you carry that, brother." Come on. That's what we do in the House of God, we bear one another's burdens.

Now, if you're thinking that just leads to a sloppy house, did you not just hear me say that we do correction in the House of God? It's not sloppy to bear one another's burdens. It's spiritual to bear one another's burdens.

Something else we do in the House of God, we do humility. We do humility in the House of God. Before I read Galatians 6:3, I want to give you an example of humility. How many of you know that brother Kirk Orelup was out of the country recently? What most of you probably don't know is that he represented me, as the general pastor, and our whole ministry in the island nation of Haiti. He was there as the single ambassador of leadership for our ministry with Pastor Ulysse when he went to say goodbye to his mother, but he didn't come back and toot his horn. Give the Lord a praise. He didn't come back and say, "I need a homecoming like a king," but he went there as a regent. Do you know what a regent is? When a king sends a message to another country and it was really the king's job to go, but he couldn't go, he sent a regent. It's more than an ambassador, in the moment of his presence, they were the king. That's a regent. That's what Kirk did in Haiti. He came back, and he sings on that last mike, and he plays that little hand percussion instrument—I don't know the name of it—the shaker. Yeah. I play that, too, but I do it just when I stand up. We do humility in the House of God. We do humility in the House of God. Don't think more highly of yourself than you ought to. Amen? Don't think more highly of yourself than you ought to. If you really knew me, then you'd know that I don't really like all the accolades, but the position deserves respect, so I accept them. Do humility in the House of God. Don't always look for your reward on this side of Heaven. Amen. Sometimes you need to learn to serve from the back row. Sometimes you just need to learn to ask God, "Where would You be in this picture?" It's not all about you, and it's not all about me. I remember when I got out of the United States Navy and our pastor, Pastor Davis, said to me, "Son, I want you to be full time in the ministry, but I need you to take a job, just for a little bit." I thought a little bit was three months, six months, maybe nine months... So, ten years later, when he said, "I think it's time you quit your job and go full-time," I was thinking, "I thought you forgot." There were some times during those ten years when I almost forgot about my humility and said, "Hey, what about me?" I didn't say that for any other reason than to help somebody who feels that they're being more patient than the situation deserves. Sometimes it's what's called for. Sometimes it's what's called for.

Let me tell you something else we do in the House of God: We do responsibility. I didn't read Galatians 6:3, but you can read it. Now we're going to go to responsibility. In Galatians chapter 6, the fourth and fifth verse, we read these words:

Galatians 6:4-5 *But let every man prove his own work...*

You see, you've got a work to do, and you've got to prove it. The word prove isn't used very often in the Bible. It's used in Malachi 3:10. There's a chance we get to prove God. Here's a chance, in Galatians 6:4, where we get to prove our own works, where we get a chance to day, "God, I'm going to live up to Your expectation of me. God, I'm going to do what You'd..." Remember the parable of the talents in Matthew 25? Here's a chance for you to prove what God has entrusted to you was entrusted properly. You get a chance to prove that.

Galatians 6:4-5 *But let every man prove...*

And there's no gender there on that one, ladies.

Galatians 6:4-5 *But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another...*

It's not enough just to be part of a good family, you need to make the family that you're a part of good. I'll say that again: It's not enough just to be part of a good family, you need to make the family that you're a part of good. Amen? Are you making this family the family that God wants it to be, or are you coming every day with your hand out? I'm not putting you down; I'm not criticizing, I'm just asking us all to just ask the question, "How can I do better, lord?" Amen? Amen? We do responsibility in this house.

Look at Matthew 5:16 where Jesus said, "(verse 14) **Ye are the light of the world ...** (verse 16) **Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.**" In this house, we do light. It's part of our responsibility. You ever wake up in a dark room and you weren't familiar with it? Maybe you'd been travelling, maybe you were... You ever wake up in a dark room and you weren't sure where something was at? You know, we're the light of the world; we show people where things are at. What we're showing them is where the answer is. Where's Jesus in this picture? Where's Jesus in this picture? Hello? When you're the light of the world, you get to be an example, but they're not looking at you. You see, when you're on a ship at sea, and you're looking for safe harbor, you're looking for a lighthouse. When you get there, you don't tie your ship to the lighthouse, because what you were looking for was safe harbor, because that's what that lighthouse represents. We're not the light of the world so that people can come to us; we're the light of the world so that people can come to Jesus. Amen? Amen? So, we do responsibility in the House of God

Let me tell you something else we do in the House of God: We do forgiveness. Matthew chapter 6, verse 14 and 15. Now, the Lord just got done teaching the Lord's Prayer, didn't He? The first thing that he thinks it's important to highlight, right after He teaches us to pray—and I would like to suggest to you, that when I read the Lord's Prayer, I think of it more as a how-to-live than how-to-pray. I'll say that again: When I read what we call the Lord's Prayer in

Matthew, I think of it more as a way to live than how to pray. It is a way to pray, but I think, even more so, it's a way to live. So let's look at what he says:

Matthew 6:14-15 *For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses...*

You say, "Pastor, you preached on that before. In fact, I think you preach on that too much." No, I think I don't preach on it quite enough, and I'll tell you why: Because it's an everyday challenge for us to do it, and it's the devil's playground if we don't get it right. The devil can beat us with that stick until we're beyond repair if we don't get it right. If we get to the place where we don't forgive, we put ourself in a prison that has no key. I'm telling you that the hardest things that I've had to forgive in my life, when I finally got around to doing it right, set me free more than it did anyone else. You say, "Well, that's a selfish way to look at it." Maybe. I would prefer to think of it as the survival way to look at it, or even the correct way to look at it. Jesus said it like this—don't listen to how I'm saying it, listen to how Christ said it:

Matthew 6:14-15 *For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: (verse 15) But if ye forgive not men their trespasses...*

Good God Almighty. How about we all get pen and just scratch verse 15 out, and we'll just go fourteen to sixteen. What do you think? It won't matter come judgment, because the lord will say, "I didn't scratch it out. You did." Let's read verse 15:

Matthew 6: 15*But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.*

Good God Almighty. Whoa! See, somebody came to church today, and maybe you've got just one more thing to forgive, but you're thinking, "They just don't deserve it." That's okay. That's okay. It's not about whether they deserve it, it's about whether you want to be in this house. When we talk about the House of God, I'm not talking about the walls of this building, I'm talking about this family on earth that's going to be the family in Heaven. Hello? There's probably not a person in this room—there's probably not a person in this room; I know there's some young people here, so—there's probably not an adult in this room that doesn't have something big that was hard for you to forgive. Maybe there's an adult in this room that you haven't come over that hurdle yet. Come over it today; get it behind you. Quit holding a grudge that doesn't matter. Quit holding a grudge that doesn't matter. Hello? Hello? Some of you're holding a grudge because you think you're going to hurt the person that you're holding the grudge against, and all you're really doing is hurting yourself for holding on to it. I've drank that poison in my life—I've spent a few days and weeks and months and even years saying, "really? Do I have to forgive this? Do I have to let this go?" You say, "(gasp!) You? Why would I listen to you?" Because I'm here, and you're here, and this is the Word of God, it's not the Word of Pete. If you're here today, and you've got to lay it down, you've got to let that grudge go, let it go. let it go; that's what we do in the House of God. Finally say, "God, You know what? this is Yours, not mine." Some of you have got some great big hurts, and you might think when I'm saying that, that I don't know how big the hurts are. That's true, I don't, but God does. Hello? "You don't know how wrong she did me." "You don't know how wrong he did me." "You

don't know how wrong they did me." I may never know. I may never know your pain. I may never be able to sit with you in a way that I will understand your pain, but guess who does? God Almighty. And, by the way, any story you've got to tell—did you ever hear somebody that always wants to tell a bigger story than the one you just told?—any story you've got to tell about how hard it is for you to do what you got to do in forgiveness, listen to Jesus' story. Hello? Hello? Listen to the story of Jesus Christ, and then tell Him that you've got something to talk about; then tell Him that you've got something to complain about; then tell Him that somebody did you wrong. Huh? He was beaten, He willingly shed His blood for your sins; He was falsely accused—He was the spotless lamb that was led to slaughter, *willingly*, for your sins, for my sins. Yeah, in the House of God, we do forgiveness.

You know what we don't do in the House of God? we don't do excuses. We don't do excuses in the House of God.

1 Corinthians 10:13 *There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.*

Yep, in the House of God, we don't do excuses. We take accountability, responsibility, and we understand that God is with us every step of the way unless we ask Him to turn His back while we walk away. I heard someone say once that Jesus is a gentleman, He won't come where He's not invited. When you have a temptation in your life, that's the time to invite Jesus in. That's the time to invite Jesus in. When you have a temptation in your life, that's the time to invite Jesus in. I'm going to share that verse again:

1 Corinthians 10:13 *There hath no temptation taken...*

It didn't talk about someone else. "There has no temptation taken *you*. Put your name there.

1 Corinthians 10:13 *There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man...*

You're not the only person who ever suffered that temptation. "But you don't understand!" I'm not making fun when I say that. I'm trying to help you understand that Jesus understands. He does understand. That verse tells us He's faithful, and He'll provide a way to escape. So, in the House of God, we don't do excuses.

I'm going to close with this: In the House of God, we do invitations. There's people out there that don't know the Lord and Savior. Stop thinking that the work is done because you've accepted Him. Stop thinking that the work is done because your name's written in the Lamb's Book of Life. There's people around us that are going to Hell, saints. There's people that you know, there's people in your family, there's people in my family, there's coworkers you have, there's neighbors you have, that will go straight to Hell if they don't get this invitation and accept it. You say, "Well, I told them I was a Christian." I had a lot of people tell me they were Christians before I accepted Christ, but, one day someone sat down with me and said, "Can I show you what the Bible says? It says that Jesus Christ is the Lord and Savior, that it's his name—Acts 4:12 says there is none other name given under Heaven whereby we must be saved." Then I heard this simple invitation in John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that he

gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” Have you believed in Jesus Christ? “I believe that there’s a God.” Do you have a relationship with Jesus Christ? How do you take on the name of Jesus Christ? If my memory serves me right, last time I was here, Justin did it. It’s in Romans chapter 6: Buried with Him in baptism, raised to walk in newness of life (Romans 6:4). Amen? “Oh, pastor, don’t tell me about baptism again; you make too big of a deal about it.” Blame Jesus. Blame Jesus for that, because He’s the One Who said, “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” That’s what He said, and when Peter, and those that were with him, in the second chapter of the Book of Acts, they did exactly that. Someone told me just the other day—I had a long discussion with an individual, this last Thursday, and he said, “In Acts 2:38, ‘name’ means authority, it doesn’t mean name. I said, “Let’s see if that’s true.” We went to the concordance, and the concordance tells us that the root word for name in Acts 2:38 is ‘onoma’ and onoma is a proper noun; it means, name. I told him, I didn’t search the word name in every place in all of Scripture; there may be a place where it means authority. I’m going to go do that this week; I’m going to take some time and I’m going to take the concordance, and somebody might even help me do that, but I’m going to look, and maybe there’s a place where name means authority, because that makes sense. He said, “It’s like, ‘Stop, in the name of the law!’ Law isn’t a name, it’s the authority of the law.” I said, “That’s a great, and interesting, analogy, except for name means name.” You know, when I check into a hotel, and they ask me, “What’s your name?” and I say, “Well, I’m a father!” They say, “Okay, but what’s your name?” and I say, “I’m a son!” They say, “Okay, but what’s your name?” and I say, “I have spirit!” They say, “Okay, but we want to see if we have a room for you, can you tell me your name?” I can say, “I’m here in the authority of...” and they say, “What’s your name?” Name means name, and, by the way, water means water. It’s worthy of doing some study.

So I’ll close with this: The House of God isn’t just for those of us who are here; it’s for whosoever will. So, if we’re really going to be the House of God here on Earth. You remember the Lord’s Prayer, He said, “Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done...” Where? “...in earth, as it is in heaven...” You see, if we’re going to be the House of God on Earth as it is in heaven, we’re going to have to do some things right. No, I’m not talking about works; I know we’re not saved by works. I’m not preaching the law; I’m preaching love. If we’re going to be the House of God, we’re going to love people into it. So let’s get better at that. And, yes, I’m pointing at me when I share that. I didn’t come here to do anything other than to say to you that I’m going to try to do my best to better every day, to do better at that. I got a very encouraging text message today; it’s from my brother Gary, who’s a year older than Paul and I. I had the privilege to share the Gospel with Gary in 1978, and I had the privilege to baptize him in the precious name of Jesus Christ. He texted me this morning, and he said, “Pete, I woke up this morning, and I’m praying today, and I just want to say, thank you. Because of you, I know the Lord Jesus Christ.” Do you know how good that made me feel? That’s not about me, because I’m just one link in a very long chain. I’m one person in the House of God. If someone hadn’t showed me, I couldn’t have showed him. Amen? And he’s showed others since then. That’s what we do in the House of God. That’s what we do in the House of God. That’s what we do in the House of God. That’s what we do in the House of God. Let’s better at it. Let’s do better at honoring our Father.

I'm going to tell a story; I just feel it laid on my heart to do it. I went in the Navy in 1972, and a few weeks after I went to basic training, my father said to me in a letter, he said, "Peter, it's interesting..."—I grew up in a small neighborhood in a rural area not too far from Pittsburgh, and in the neighborhood I grew up in, in fact, there wasn't a key for our front door. The doorknob on our front door didn't have a key, it was just the kind of knob that you would have on the inside of your house. We didn't have a key on the front door of our house. So, we just never locked the house. We couldn't lock the house. I suppose we could have afforded a doorknob that had a key, it just never seemed to be purpose for it. My dad wrote me a letter, and he said, "I came home the other day, and four of your friends were on the couch, and they were watching the game on the TV in the family room. I came in, and I said, 'Hey, guys, you know Pete's gone; he's in the Navy, right?' and they said, 'Yeah, Mr. Paine, we know that, but this always felt like our house.'" Does this feel like your house? Is it the kind of house you want others to come to, not just to see you, but because they know that it's their house to?

God bless you.

