A PLACE OF CHANGE MINISTRY DR. ERIC THOMAS

REAL ONES: YOUR FEED CAN'T COVER YOU

DR. ERIC THOMAS

November 14, 2026

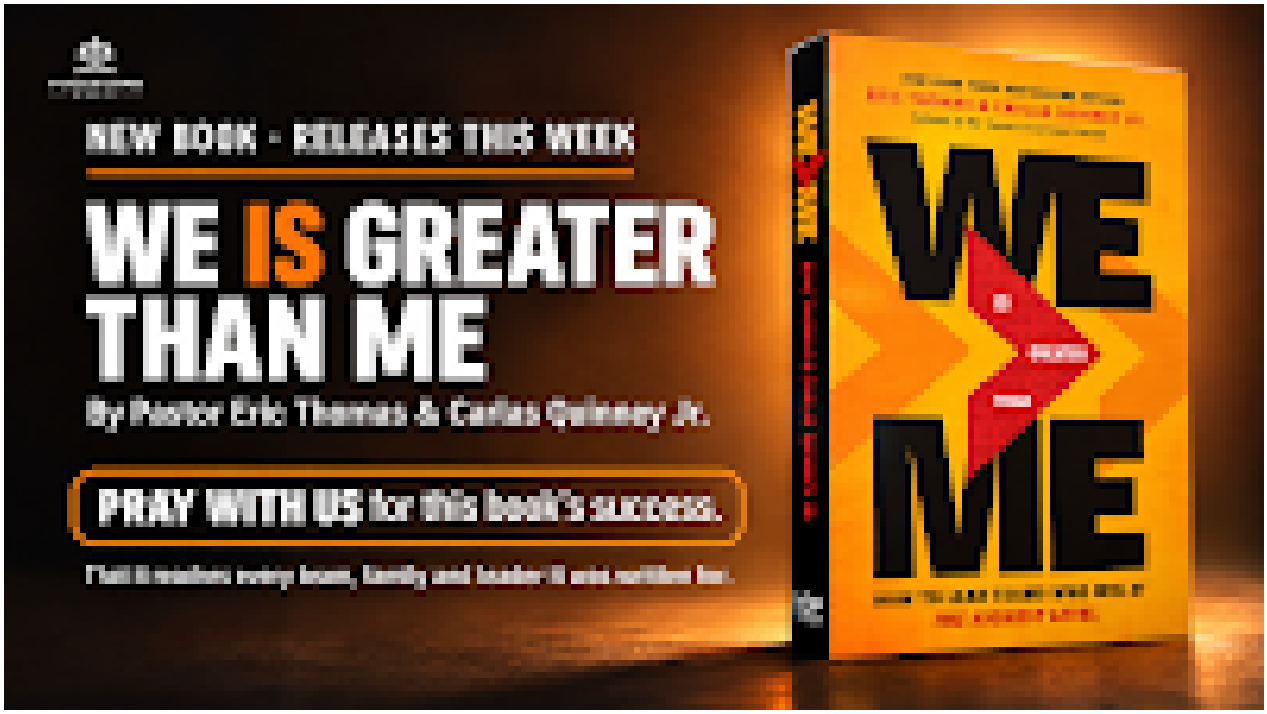
> Real ones show up when it costs them, cover you when you fall, and love you enough to tell you the truth - a feed, no matter how closely it's watching, was never built to do any of that.

THE ONE THING

YOU WILL NEVER RISE ABOVE THE COMPANY YOU KEEP - REAL ONES ARE THE PEOPLE WHO SHOW UP WHEN IT COSTS THEM, COVER YOU WHEN YOU FALL, AND STILL LOVE YOU ENOUGH TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH. BUILD THAT COMMUNITY ON PURPOSE, BECAUSE THE FEED IN YOUR HAND CAN WATCH YOU EVERY SECOND OF THE DAY, BUT IT WAS NEVER BUILT TO COVER YOU.

REAL ONES

You will never rise above the company you keep. Real ones are the people who show up when it costs them, cover you when you fall, and still love you enough to tell you the truth - and the feed in your hand, however closely it's watching, was never built to do any of that.



From the deck - APOC REAL ONES Dr. Eric Thomas Saturday, November 14, 2026

THE COMPANY YOU KEEP DECIDES HOW HIGH YOU GO

People will tell you success comes down to education, degrees, income, talent, discipline, or connections. ET's own answer is different: "the real advantage is the community." When he prayed and asked God to change his life, "the very first thing he did was change my environment so I could change my community." Leaving Detroit for Oakwood University put him, for the first time, around people from all over the world who already had goals and were moving toward them - and he says plainly that he didn't blow up because of a degree or a gift. "I blew up because I surrounded myself with the real ones."

> He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.
>
> PROVERBS 13:20

SOME PEOPLE WHO LOVE YOU CAN'T TAKE YOU WHERE YOU'RE GOING

This isn't about writing off where you come from. "It don't mean that you don't love your people, but your people alone can't take you to where - why? Cuz they're not there." Some of the people who got you here were chosen for you; the next community is the first one you actually get to choose - and what you choose will either raise your ceiling or keep you exactly where you are.

REAL ONES SHOW UP WHEN IT COSTS THEM

ET's own definition, stated directly: "The real ones. The people who show up win it cost them. Cover you when you fall. And love you enough to tell you the truth." That last part is the hard one - a real one isn't a yes-man who tells you smoking, skipping school, or staying with the wrong people is fine. "Real ones hold you up and hold you accountable."

> Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.
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> PROVERBS 27:6

THE 600, THE 400, AND THE 200

In 1 Samuel 30, David took 600 men to go recover everything the enemy had taken. Only 400 actually crossed the brook and fought - 200 stayed behind, "so faint that they could not go over the brook Besor." Not lazy. Worn out. ET's point lands on everybody in the room: you only get twenty-four hours and so much energy in a day, and most people spend theirs on the wrong things - weeping, blaming, complaining - instead of saving it for the fight that's actually in front of them.

> So David went, he and the six hundred men that were with him, and came to the brook Besor, where those that were left behind stayed. But David pursued, he and four hundred men: for two hundred abode behind, which were so faint that they could not go over the brook Besor.
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> 1 SAMUEL 30:9-10

THEY DON'T GET NOTHING - THE WRONG KIND OF COMMUNITY

When the 400 came back with everything recovered, some of them wanted to shut the 200 out completely: "we will not give them ought of the spoil that we have recovered." That's what the wrong community does with people who fall short - it keeps the ledger and cuts them out.

> Then answered all the wicked men and men of Belial, of those that went with David, and said, Because they went not with us, we will not give them ought of the spoil that we have recovered, save to every man his wife and his children, that they may lead them away, and depart.
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> 1 SAMUEL 30:22

DAVID'S RULING: EVERYBODY EATS

David overruled his own men: "Ye shall not do so, my brethren, with that which the LORD hath given us" - and ordered that the spoil be shared alike between the ones who fought and the ones who couldn't. Then he made it permanent: "he made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel unto this day." A real community doesn't win by itself, and it doesn't let the ones who couldn't finish walk away with nothing.

> Then said David, Ye shall not do so, my brethren, with that which the LORD hath given us, who hath preserved us, and delivered the company that came against us into our hand. For who will hearken unto you in this matter? but as his part is that goeth down to the battle, so shall his part be that tarrieth by the stuff: they shall part alike. And it was so from that day forward, that he made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel unto this day.
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> 1 SAMUEL 30:23-25

COVER, DON'T CONDEMN - BUT COVERED ISN'T THE SAME AS EXCUSED

"Love will cover a multitude of sins" - but covering someone isn't the same as pretending nothing happened. ET's own words: "Covered isn't the same as excuse. Bear one another's burdens." Some weeks you're the 400; some weeks you're the 200. The real community doesn't change its answer either way.

> And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.
>
> 1 PETER 4:8

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

THE FEED CAN WATCH YOU. IT CAN'T COVER YOU.

The turn in the message: platforms that study your every scroll aren't neutral - ET points to real courtroom findings this year of platforms held negligent and ordered to pay out billions of dollars over how they're designed to hook kids. Whatever the feed knows about you, it was never built to show up for you the way a real, present person can. "That thing in your hand, every time you touch it, it's measuring who you are and what you do, and it's making sure it sucks you into its world. It can't cover y'all."

THIS WEEK'S CHALLENGE

Find one person who's "at the brook" this week - worn out, behind, discouraged - and be a real one to them before next Saturday.

FIVE-DAY ASSIGNMENT

Monday - Check Your Numbers. Open your phone's screen-time settings today and write down your real daily average. No guessing, no judging

yourself - just look at it honestly.

Tuesday - Audit Your Circle. Write down the names of the people you spend the most time with. Be honest: are they taking you where you want to go, or keeping you where you already are?

Wednesday - Take Back an Hour. Trade one hour you'd normally spend scrolling for something that builds the gift God gave you - reading, practicing, praying, building. Put it on your calendar so it actually happens.

Thursday - Find Your 200. Think of one person in your life who's weary right now. Reach out directly today - a call, a visit, a real conversation. Not a like.

Friday - Be the Real One. Do one thing today that costs you something for somebody else - your time, your comfort, your reputation - the way a real one would.

DO NOT JUST READ IT

THIS WEEK'S ASSIGNMENT

MONDAY

Check Your Numbers

Open your phone's screen-time settings today and write down your real daily average. No guessing, no judging yourself - just look at it honestly.

TUESDAY

Audit Your Circle

Write down the names of the people you spend the most time with. Be honest: are they taking you where you want to go, or keeping you where you already are?

WEDNESDAY

Take Back an Hour

Trade one hour you'd normally spend scrolling for something that builds the gift God gave you - reading, practicing, praying, building. Put it on your calendar so it actually happens.

THURSDAY

Find Your 200

Think of one person in your life who's weary right now. Reach out directly today - a call, a visit, a real conversation. Not a like.

FRIDAY

Be the Real One

Do one thing today that costs you something for somebody else - your time, your comfort, your reputation - the way a real one would.

A PLACE OF CHANGE MINISTRY

KEEP BUILDING.

Saturdays at 11:00am.

Notes, slides and the full transcript every week at apoc.kapturedpixel.com/message