

God's Glory in Mission

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[0:00] Ephesians chapter 1, we're going to read from verses 3 down to 14, and it's on page 1173 if you're using a red-covered Bible. Let's listen to God speak to us as we read this.

Amen.

He has freely given us in the one he loves. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he has lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding. And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times have reached their fulfillment, to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ.

In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, in order that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be for the praise of his glory. And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession, to the praise of his glory. Ken. Before Ken speaks, I'm just going to pray for him and for us. Let's pray. Our Father God, we thank you for your word. We thank you that it's in our language that we can read, but without your Holy Spirit we will not understand and it will not change us or transform us.

So we ask that by your Spirit you would speak into our lives today. We pray for Ken. We ask that you would help him to communicate effectively and clearly the truth of your word. We pray that you will bless his ministry and his work, his teaching ministry in the college. We pray for his visits to Peru, that he would be an encouragement to the church there and that you would continue to help him as he seeks to bring the gospel and encourage the church worldwide with the good news of Christ.

[3:12] Christ. We ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen. Good morning again. I want to say it's a privilege to be here and to enjoy fellowship. I was going to say the warmth of fellowship. The fellowship's good. The building's cold. I understand why you have tea and coffee. I think that's great. And I've drunk Barry's tea for the first time in my life. Some people drink nothing but, I'm told. Anyway, today I was asked a question about what I'm doing now that I'm going to retire quite soon. I'm going to tell you a secret before I begin to preach. Today is my birthday. A very kind gentleman guessed me at 51. I think that was flattery. I'm 62 today and life has gone very quickly. Life moves along very swiftly, doesn't it? And it's good to be able to live for the Lord and to know the Lord. And the theme today is mission. The whole weekend has been mission and we've been thinking about mission and hostility. But really what I want to do today is perhaps pick up the idea of mission and preach a sermon that may not be so typical. I want to reflect on why I am doing what I do at this time, but not to make it that personal, to actually look at the scriptures and to see what the scriptures say. And we've read together a lovely passage, Ephesians 1, 3 to 14, which I think is a great passage on mission, but I'm not going to expound it. But really that is the background to what we're going to do today. Before we get into the Word of God, let's pray. Father, again we pray. And once again, our God and Father, we thank you that mission is part of your sovereign activity in the realm of redemption in the world. And Father, we know that from first to last, it's your mission. It's not our mission. We're involved in mission not because of us, but because of you. And Father, we know that mission and the gospel of Jesus Christ originated in your heart. It's based on your love, determined by your will. And the mandate was enunciated in the Word of God through the will of God. And Father, we know that it is all explained. The rationale for mission is explained in the Word of God.

And the ultimate success and fulfillment depends on your power, not on us. Depends on your sovereignty and not on our human will. Help us, Father, we pray, to proclaim the gospel, knowing that people will believe because the gospel is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes in you.

We ask in Jesus' name. Amen. So, when I sit in my office in Belfast, in Moira, and think about mission, these are the thoughts that come to my mind. And I want to share them today. And the starting place for mission is not me.

It's not you. It's not us. Nor is it the lostness of the world. Nor the command to go. The mandate for mission lies within God and His desire to have a relationship with His creation.

So, this is my weak attempt to try to articulate what I believe the Bible teaches about mission. And this church, every church, the church of Jesus Christ, and it's much bigger than any little local church, exists because God is a missionary God. We can certainly say that. And God works through His Son.

[7 : 20] He works through His Spirit. And without God's work, I would have nothing to do. You would have nothing to do. The great thing about the mission of God is, and we were reading about it in Ephesians chapter 1, is that the mission of God stretches from eternity to eternity.

Long before we came here, and I have to say, long after we will be gone from here. What excites me when I look at the New Testament and the scripture about mission is, that all the verbs connected to mission and God. If we have to be convinced it's God's mission, think of the verbs, the action words. God loves. Action. God sends. Action. God chooses. Action.

God predestines. Some people will have a ball game just because I mentioned that word. God does that. Action. God speaks. God creates. God plans. He sends. He moves by His Spirit.

And I have two big brush strokes this morning. And when I think about these two things, my heart, I think, is kept right in regard to mission. I don't get the thing out of sync.

I don't lose too much sleep. And I follow the Lord more easily. The first thing I want to say this morning, very simply, is this. The primary motivation for mission, for you, for me, for everyone in the whole world, is for the glory of God. That is the primary goal and the motivation of mission.

[8 : 52] It's all about God. Let me clarify. Mission is not to do, has not to do, in the first place, with the welfare and glory of the human race.

It's not about the growth and expansion of the church. When we think that's what it's all about, we lose our vision and our focus. It's about the glory of God. And that forms the highest goal of mission. And the ultimate goal is that God will be glorified as His people, that's us, tell other people about His greatness, and as people who are at enmity with God, come to faith in Jesus Christ. That's about as simply as I can put it.

Mission is church-centered. That's why we're talking about mission today. That's why there's a mission weekend. And the church, us, we are the means of mission, and we are the goal of mission.

Does that make sense? We're how it's done. And it's all done so that people will be added to the church of Jesus Christ. And again, the church is much bigger than anything that many of us might think about.

That's the goal and the aim. And the goal is to gather people into the community of local churches in the world. And what do we do here? We've been doing it today.

[10 : 16] Where we worship God. We've been doing that. Where we equip people to grow in a relationship with God. And that's why we're here today.

And where we share God, where we share Jesus Christ and the gospel with other people. And that's not necessarily done within four walls. The church of Jesus Christ has legs.

And we walk. And we leave the building. I come from the north. I say that. I've lived in the north since 1991. If I was preaching today in the north, you know this.

I would have a suit on. I would have a tie on. Yes, I would. Just so that I wouldn't offend certain people. That's what I would do. And we would probably be seated in some of the most lovely buildings in the world.

And my wife would be throwing off her cabigans because it would be far too warm. That's just how it is. And sometimes, perhaps, we can get connected to the building.

[11 : 15] So let's disconnect from the building. We know that. We are the church. And we are the goal. People like you and me. And so what I want to do today, and I'm picking this up from Johnny.

He was saying something like this. And this is my paraphrase. I simply want to challenge you and me, and I need to be challenged all the time, to think about mission, about the practice of mission, and perhaps to process all the stuff we've got into our heads and hearts over the weekend.

Yesterday we were blitzed, weren't we? And sometimes when we're blitzed by it, statistics, how many Christians, where the church has been persecuted, where things are not like that, and so forth, we don't know what to do with all that stuff.

So we think. But I also want us to feel. And I want us to feel the motivation for mission. And then I want us to take the responsibility.

Now, we can't be responsible for all of mission. And if I had my way, I would have all of you today picking up the four little boxes that remain and saying, I want to support Baptist missions.

[12:23] By the way, take them. Because I'm going up in public transport today, and I'd rather not have all the stuff to carry along with me. So take them and support Baptist missions.

And especially the radio in Peru. Isn't that right, Tom? There we go. But I want us to think about responsibility about mission. Now, we can't do everything. All the Lord will ask you to do and me to do is something.

Something. Maybe more than we've done up until this time. So let's go back. First big brush stroke. And I don't want to lose this from my thinking, your thinking. Because it's really what the Bible teaches.

The primary motivation is the glory of God. And when you think about that, that keeps our hearts right. Doesn't it? And we can share in that because you and I, and we've read about it, are co-heirs with Christ.

And the scripture goes on to say, if we share in his sufferings. And I don't think there is any Christianity without suffering.

[13:35] I had a little quote I was going to throw in yesterday, but I couldn't do it. I didn't have time. Archbishop Festo Kivingeri from the Anglican Church in Africa, speaking at the anniversary of the martyrdom of a Ugandan archbishop, said this, said this, Without bleeding, the church fails to bless.

Now that sounds very tough, doesn't it? Without bleeding, the church fails to bless. And sometimes we want very comfortable lives.

But I'll tell you this, following Jesus Christ, sooner or later, will cost us some kind of suffering. I don't mean physical, necessarily. It will cost us perhaps somebody laughing.

It will cost us something along the way, where people make it a little bit difficult for us to follow Jesus, and to believe the simple faith that we have in him. And it's still true, co-heirs with Christ, if we share in his sufferings.

Being willing to lay down our lives for Jesus. It's never all blessings at no cost. And that's true for the church here. It's true for every church, everywhere.

[14:53] We won't see the full blessing of God, unless somewhere along the line, there's a tough element to following the Lord Jesus Christ. Now that leads me to my second motivation for mission.

And if you have your Bibles, please, I want to pick it up now in 2 Corinthians chapter 5, please. In verse 18. And Paul is talking about you and me, and about what you and I are called to be in Christ. 2 Corinthians chapter 5 and verse 18. I'm just going to pick out a few verses, because for me, this is what you and I do. And are.

And all of this is a gift from God, who brought us back to himself through Christ. And God has given us this task of reconciling people to him.

For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation.

[16:00] And I love this verse. This is what you and I do. So, you and I are Christ's ambassadors. God is making his appeal through us.

We speak for Christ when we plead, come back to God. The secondary motivation for mission, and these are the only two main points I have this morning, is the ministry of reconciliation.

I can think of nothing more exciting than that. The ultimate goal? God's glory. And that includes the reconciliation of this world to God.

Now, Jesus is here today by the Holy Spirit. And Jesus empowers you and me by his Spirit. And you and I are involved as members of a church, as part of the body of Jesus Christ, on Christ's behalf.

And we ask people, we implore people, to be reconciled to God. And Paul goes on to say, it is just as if we do so on Christ's behalf.

[17 : 13] Now, when I used to tell my school friends, into my teen years, when I went through grammar school, that I wanted to be a missionary, actually, I believed then, and I still believe, that perhaps the Lord had given me the privilege, of being called to do one of the most wonderful things in the world.

But every Christian is called to do exactly the same. And that is to call people to come back to God. And we believe that. And we certainly believe, in 1 Corinthians 15, verse 3, that Jesus Christ died, he was buried, and that he rose again.

And if a person does not believe that, Paul goes on to say, in 1 Corinthians 15, if a person does not believe that Jesus died, was buried, and rose again for their sins, that person is not a Christian.

And a lot of people say they're Christians because they do good works. And I think it's excellent that people do good things. And none of us can ever criticize that. And we certainly know that there's a general goodness of God in the world.

But we believe that the resurrected Christ appears to people, and changes their lives. Now that's a simple, powerful message. Paul.

[18 : 31] What a wonderful testimony. Against the church. Against Christians. Locking them in prison. And totally opposed to the ideology.

And then God showed the resurrected Christ to Paul on the Damascus road. And he was absolutely changed. James, the half-brother of Jesus, mentioned in 1 Corinthians 15.

The half-brother of Jesus, who when Jesus was alive, said about Jesus, he's beside himself.

Actually, he was saying that Jesus was a little bit out of his mind at that point.

Didn't believe in Jesus. You know, I find that a tremendous comfort. Sometimes people say to me, I try to live for Jesus in my family, and people don't want to hear.

Can you imagine that Jesus, the very Son of God, walking on the earth, and his own half-brother had no faith. And then he came to faith and changed.

[19 : 30] Other people were changed. And I love the story of Peter, mentioned in 1 Corinthians 15. The failure. The man who wanted to follow Jesus and didn't manage to do so.

And the resurrected Christ appeared to him. Do you not think that sometimes we give Peter bad press? We think that Peter's the headstrong man.

We think that Peter's the one who, you know, says, I'm going to follow Jesus and he gets it all wrong. But the thing that changed me and my view on Peter is I've read one Peter, I've read two Peter.

And when we read that, we have another kind of Peter, a mature man going on. Changed. So exciting. That's the message that you and I have.

Jesus died, was buried and rose again for our sins. And when we believe that, things change. In Peru, I'll give you a statistic.

[20 : 26] Incidentally, please take these things. They're heavy. I don't want to carry them on the bus, really. And you read about Peru, you read about Spain, France, different places, Baptist missions works. When I went to Peru in 1973, before many of you were born, 1 to 1.5% of the Peruvian population professed evangelical faith.

Let's put it that way. According to government figures in Peru now, 12.5% God has done wonderful things. Peru's very different. I get in a taxi in Belfast and we talk about everything.

I get in a taxi in Peru and the guy says to me, you're not from here. No. What brings you here? And I say, well, I'm a missionary. I'm a Christian.

And we have a conversation. And within minutes we can be talking about spiritual things. People are so religious in Peru and so open in a way that perhaps they aren't here. So I've been spoiled working in that.

Now, let's bring it back here. This ministry of reconciliation. And you're probably saying, do I have to go to Peru? Does everybody have to go somewhere else? Not necessarily.

[21 : 41] I think wherever God has placed you, whatever job you have, that's where the Lord is leading you. Somebody has put it this way and I love this. If we want to follow Jesus, we have to follow Him to the ends of the earth.

For that is where He is going. Now for me, that was Peru. For some of you, that's here. Some have come from other places to here. It might seem like the end of the earth to you folks who have come

from other places.

But this is the end of the earth for you because this is where Jesus has brought you. And where the Lord took me was to another country. And it doesn't matter whether you're here, Belfast, Orkney, or the United States, or Africa, any place in the world.

That's where the Lord is leading you and me. And I thank God for how He's led me in my life and for what I've been able to do. You know, things have changed in the world. You've probably noticed this.

In the past, most missionaries were from the West. True? Yesterday, I noticed that the country that sends out most missionaries today, did anybody notice?

[22 : 53] Huh? Was it China? China's sending out a lot. You're almost right. It surprised me. Yeah. Say that. I think it was Mongolia or Moldova.

It was one of those weird countries. Brazil sends out a lot. China sends out a lot. China wants to send out 100,000 missionaries. Do you know what's happening?

We naughty Westerners, I'm talking about we Brits, and I'm talking about we Americans, we're at war in certain countries. They don't like us over there for some reason. Don't quite understand that. I'm being facetious. But you know what the Lord's doing? Chinese people, I mean real Christians, are going from China and they want to send 100,000 missionaries from China.

The persecuted church that has grown when missionaries were thrown out of China back in 1951, I think it was, one million Christians. Do you know now how many Christians there are in China?

[23 : 54] Some reckon there might be 130 million. That's one in ten Chinese. Check it out. Most of the things we wear are made in China. One in ten, probably a Christian making your shirts and your trousers and everything else.

But those guys are going to other countries and they're not going as missionaries, they're going as Christians. Because at the end of the day, to call yourself a missionary is not very popular in certain parts of the world.

And they're going. This is going too. But they're going. They're going to work in these places. And they're in Afghanistan. They're in Iraq.

They're in Iran. And they're talking about the Lord Jesus Christ. Isn't the Lord so wise in what He does? See, call them what you like. Maybe they work in laboratories.

Who knows? But they're working for the Lord. And in the past, most missionaries were from the West. Not now. Not now. More people are coming from the other countries and we, we will have to receive people and willingly and lovingly receive people and say, you guys perhaps have so much to teach us from other countries here in the West.

[25 : 05] We won't go down that route at the moment. But there are now more Christians in the Southern Hemisphere and in what used to be called the Third World than in the West.

I think that's great. I think that's great. I could go down the line on that. But in this task of reconciliation, I've learned this.

And this might seem a very, very simple lesson to learn. And it's this. There is no room for first fiddles, number ones.

There's only room in the Lord's work for number twos. And I've called us second fiddles. I love to go to the orchestra. We went at Christmas, Jeannie and I.

And I'm dreaming of Jeannie today. And incidentally, Jeannie with the light grey hair, if you know her. That's a good Scottish song. And we go. And I'm always enthralled because in the orchestra, Handel's Messiah, you name it, first fiddle.

[26 : 08] The conductor, he stands up and he bows forever and a day at the end and he gets the applause. And first fiddle. Have you noticed that? And he often goes over and shakes the hand of the first fiddle.

That's probably not the best way to say it. But the second fiddler is also playing. Imagine first fiddle without second fiddle and third fiddle and fourth fiddle. Where would the orchestra be?

And in the Lord's work, now you're beginning to think, Ken's beginning to be non-biblical. Well, let me give you my scripture. Where about John the Baptist? That's where I start.

The greatest of all the prophets, Jesus said. But what did John say? Jesus said, John is the greatest of all the prophets. Let Jesus say stuff, not us.

But John said, Jesus must increase. I must decrease. So when I think about the practice of mission, yes, the ultimate goal of missions is the glory of God through the redemption of people, redemption

of people for God through Jesus Christ.

[27 : 16] The radio in Peru. I'm going to show you something from Baptist missions. I only have two of these and I'm going to give them to you. I don't know if you have a notice board. But I went to a church in the north.

This is everybody in Baptist missions. There aren't many of these around anymore. Some of you may have them, right? Well, I went to a church recently and they had it up. There I am, right in the center.

I went to a church and I said, huh. But it was up on the wall. No, not really. That came out wrong. But it was up on the wall and we were there, all the western missionaries. And I said to them, have you got another copy?

They said, no. I said, what a pity. Because if you were to pin the other side up, this is Peru. There are, look at the Peru bit, this little corner, three couples. Three couples.

And I love these guys, but they're not doing all that much because there's only three of them. Three couples. But look at the front. Fifteen different units, all on Baptist, with Baptist missions, being paid a pittance, perhaps.

[28 : 19] But they're doing far more work than the missionaries in Peru. I think that's exciting. And even in Peru, the radio, and it's my baby. When you do give money, give it to the radio.

There you go. Specify the radio. The Lord bless you. But there they are, great team. They're Peruvians. You see, all I could do, and I'm being quite honest, all I could do was set up the radio. And my ministry is very simple. Your ministry may be very simple, may be better than mine. I'm an implementer. And you know, when people said to me, you're setting up a radio.

What do you know about a radio? Nothing. But all my life, I've done stuff. I've started stuff. It's just one of the things I like to do. It's one of the things that excites me.

It's why I get bored and move on to something else. People are different. I'm an implementer. It's somewhere in the Bible. I just haven't found it yet. It's a gift. Implementation.

[29 : 20] But other people come behind. So in this task of reconciliation, I'm learning and I've learned over many years that I need to be number two. Second fiddle.

Do you believe me? So how does this apply to me? How does this apply to you? Obviously, everything primarily, and this is why it's so important, is for the glory of God.

But even in the ministry, often, there's no room for number one. It's only for number twos. Let me give you another scripture.

Paul is writing. 1 Corinthians 15, 9. Now, let me say something just before that. Somebody told me the other day, and I love this. I don't know where he got it from.

Somebody said from Charles Hatton Spurgeon. It takes more grace than tongue can tell to play the second fiddle well.

[30 : 18] I'll repeat that. It's not a text, but I think it's biblical. It takes more grace than tongue can tell to play the second fiddle well. 1 Corinthians 15, 9.

Paul is writing. What does he write? This is Paul, the Apostle Paul. I am the least of the Apostles. I am the least of the Apostles who am not worthy to be called an Apostle because I persecuted the Church of God.

What did he say? I am number two? No. Not even number two. I am the least. He met the risen Christ. And when Paul met the risen Christ, he had two questions.

Check it out. In the Acts of the Apostles, he met the risen Christ and he said this, Who are you, Lord? And isn't that the greatest question we can ever ask?

Lord, who are you? I want to know you better. And the other question is, what do you want me to do? I don't think you and I can ask two greater questions than these two.

[31 : 23] Who are you? And we want to know him better. And you know, he spent the rest of his life, I believe, answering these two questions. And if you have questions in life, I think these are the best questions we can ever ask and we can ever answer.

Lord, who are you? Let me know you better today. And I meant what I said earlier and I hadn't pre-planned it when he said to me, When did you come to Jesus Christ? I gave all that I knew about me to God then.

And I know a lot more about me now because the Lord reveals a whole lot more to me about me. And I can give a whole lot more of me to the Lord now than I used to. And I knew Jesus was glorious and I knew that he changed my life then.

But I know that he changes my life more now because he's more glorious than I realized he was when I was 10. 52 years later, that's how it is. Later in life, what did Paul write? He's growing. And I'll tell you how I know this. Ephesians 3, 8. It was written after 1 Corinthians 15. Later in life, Paul grows and he says this. He writes this.

[32 : 27] To me, who am less than the least of all the saints. Imagine that. What do we think of ourselves in the church of Jesus Christ?

Do we think we're the most important kingpin? We can be tempted to think that. But he goes on to say, this grace was given that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.

What did Paul say? Great sainthood? Great sainthood is to see yourself like Paul, the least of all. That's a paradox, isn't it?

Almost a contradiction. He saw great grace, he saw the greatness of the gospel and he saw that it was all about Christ, not about him. Later in life, and we know this because 1 Timothy 1.15 was written after Ephesians and after 1 Corinthians.

Just before his death, following Jesus, he was growing. This is growth. 1 Timothy 1.15. There are several faithful sayings quoted in the pastoral epistles and this is one of them.

[33 : 37] This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief.

Now doesn't that seem the opposite of spirituality? That's descending growth. What happens in spirituality as we come to know the Lord Jesus is the exact opposite of what happens in the world. Apostle, the least. Saint, less than the least of all the saints. Was Paul lying? I don't think so. I think Paul saw himself in relation to other Christians as not that important. Maybe you don't think you're that important. Good in that sense. Maybe the Lord can use you even more in that way. And sinners, the worst. Did Paul mean that? Absolutely. And isn't that growth? You know, when I was younger I used to think that the older I would get, as Johnny says, near retirement age, that I would feel holier.

[34 : 53] Ah, I don't feel holier today. I don't stand here thinking I'm a missionary. I'm holier than other people. I'm absolutely amazed that the Lord can use me and He's still calling me to follow Him.

And the older I get, the more I have to confess my sins than ever before. And into that mix, imagine this, Paul presented the unsearchable riches of Jesus.

That's growth. Descending growth. The opposite of what it is in this world. How about me? How about you? In me, in you, in us, there's no room for self-importance in one sense.

I go into bookshops when I travel and if I see another self-help book I think I'll blow up the bookshop. Everything is self-help, self-esteem and all that stuff.

The irony is we only are esteemed finally in Jesus Christ and the weaker we are, the stronger we are. Isn't that strange?

[35 : 59] Paul says, did Paul mean this? He says, I have even despaired of life itself. That's rock bottom. And yet, he says, when I am weak, I'm strong.

And there's no room for self-righteousness. I've been a Christian for 52 years. No room. No room. Life is just a vapor.

Let me tell you, it's just gone. And on the line, my mother passed away. She was 90. And I was talking to somebody the other day. I said, I don't particularly like to live to be 90. I said, but the alternative, I'm not too attracted to that either.

You know, life is just flying. And that's good. We'll be in heaven soon. But meanwhile, I don't know about you. In my life, and I mean this, I do a lot of repentance now.

If I say something I shouldn't say, I think, that's not nice. If the Lord speaks to my heart, I just know that I have to be right with God. And it's a daily thing, isn't it?

[37 : 03] And I notice that people who are like myself at this age are nodding their heads. You know what I mean? It's what happens when we grow and go on. A lot of repentance. But, the other side to that is, the beautiful paradox is, we see more of the unsearchable riches of Christ than we've ever seen before.

Isn't that true? Back to Baptist missions for a moment. Three couples in Peru. I think that's great. 13, 15 Peruvian units on the Peru.

I think that's wonderful. And to serve the Lord on the foreign mission field doesn't mean you're a number one kingpin. How people can put you up on a pedestal it's not like that. They're just so important. These guys working away in Peru. Peruvians that I love. I'm going back in June and July and I'm looking forward to that. And when Peru gets into your blood it's in there. You're going back on your honeymoon, are you? Tom? Oops. There we go. We're all number twos, aren't we? Partners. ordinary people.

[38 : 09] And God calls us to be second fiddles. I think that balances out beautifully every church. Don't you? And the glory is His.

You see, we're on a faith adventure. The other night Elizabeth Almanza, you know her Tom, phoned. It was so encouraging. She, if you know the Bible college in the north, we have Valerie who works in the, she keeps us six lecturers straight in Peru.

It's Elizabeth Almanza. And she said, Ken, it's great. We're meeting for prayer every morning and we're praying. The pastor's wives are meeting for prayer. We're having an evangelistic campaign. And she told me all kinds of things and I thought, wow.

I didn't know all these things were going on. And there are the guys working in the mission, the Peruvians. I was so excited. I want to encourage you today. I don't want to send you on a guilt trip. I really don't. I want you to think about the weekend. Fine. I want you to process it. I don't want you to try and do everything for every mission and every field in the world.

[39 : 11] You can't. But I want you to think it through. But be encouraged. The primary motivation for what you do and for your life and my life is the glory of God. And He has a whole lot more glory in your life and my life than you might even think.

I believe that. So don't give up. Don't give up. This is for the glory of God. Secondly, the secondary motivation, the ministry of reconciliation. It's a process.

That's the challenge. Think about it. Think about the practice. Feel it in your heart. Be motivated and take that responsibility to heart. Recession in the South.

I wasn't going to say this but I came across this little quote the other day. Some folk are looking for jobs. You think you don't have money. But you know, I found this and I've worked with poor people in the world and they're some of the best people I've ever met in my life.

I'm not against wealth. I've met wealthy people and some of them are the best people in the world. But giving is not giving of any kind until it interrupts our lifestyle.

[40 : 19] People talk about a tenth. The Bible in the New Testament doesn't mention the tenth. Have you ever wondered about that? It talks about generous giving. I'm just leaving you with that one. Maybe that's where you have to plug in.

I can't afford to. Hey, giving is not giving until it interrupts our lifestyles. Without bleeding the church fails to bless.

Let's pray. Father, we thank you our God and Father that you are a missionary God. Thank you that the Bible is a missionary book.

Father, we thank you that the gospel is a missionary message. It's to be shared. It's good news.

And Father, we thank you that your church is a missionary institution.

Here in Carragalline, this church, us, these people are missionary people. Help us, Father, always to be missionary minded so that we do not deny the faith entrusted to us nor betray your trust in not passing it on.

[41 : 30] We know you. We love you. And we know it's wonderful to know you. Father, we go through many struggles and we know that. Sometimes we even doubt and you take us through.

And Father, we thank you today that the ultimate goal of preaching the gospel, of sharing you, is your glory. And Father, we worship you that you have given us this wonderful ministry of reconciling this world to yourself.

And Father, we bless you that we enter into mission because Jesus Christ is present in the form of the Holy Spirit here among us. And he gives us power.

Power to go, but power to be. And that we're involved as members of the church. The body of Christ. And Father, we thank you for that wonderful text that when we implore people, we do so on Christ's behalf to come back to God, to be reconciled to God.

It's just as though you make your appeal through us. And Father, we thank you that you've called us to do that simply, daily, when you give us the opportunities, not artificially.

[42 : 43] artificially. And thank you, Father, for we know that in this lies the only possibility of forgiveness and of a new relationship with God for many people and for all who will come to you to worship you in spirit and in truth, loving you with all our hearts and with all their hearts, souls, minds, and strength.

And Father, in this we rejoice in Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen. Blessings on you.