

# Local Church and Global Mission

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 10 February 2019

Preacher: Steve Palframan

[ 0 : 0 0 ] Thank you for having me. I know not all of you have had me in your homes, but a number of you have, and we're very grateful. We've been staying with Joy and Ross last night, and so that was lovely.

I guess I wear two hats as well as being the pastor of Egberth Community Church. I'm also chair of the board of Radstock Ministries. I'm on the board with Ralph over there, who is the one who really holds it all together.

So I've been doing that for a number of years. Radstock is a network of churches of which you guys are a part, trying to help one another to be involved in church planting projects around the world.

And so it's great to be partnering with you guys in the work in Jilan in Kosovo. And I know you were a real encouragement to Naomi and Rich when they came to visit you, so thank you for that.

And thank you for having us this weekend. My plan is to be talking a little bit about local church and global mission this morning. And we're going to be darting around different parts of the Bible.

[ 1 : 0 0 ] So if you've got your Bibles on your laps, that will help you. And I'm going to pray for us as we start asking that the Lord would help us. So let me pray for us. Lord, we do thank you for our fellowship in the Lord Jesus.

And we thank you that we meet together in the Lord Jesus' name as brothers and sisters in Christ. And we come together now to open your word that we might be addressed by you together.

And so we pray that you'd give us tender hearts, eager ears to listen to what you say in your word. In Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. I wonder if you were to make a list of all the things that a local church must do, what would be on it?

What things must a local church do? Well, let me suggest a few things. A local church must meet together. The word church in your New Testament means together.

So a church must meet together. Another thing a church must do, they must pray together. A church is by definition, as we heard at the outset this morning, a company of people who depend upon the Lord for everything.

[ 2 : 1 8 ] And that must be expressed in their life together as they come and pray together. We also must open the Bible as well, mustn't we?

So we mustn't only just gather and pray. We must open the Bible because not only do we want to speak to God and express our dependence upon God, we also want God to address us and speak to us in his word.

So we must open the Bible together. We must study the Bible. We must hear the Bible preached, taught, explained. We want to see the message of the Bible acted out in the Lord's Supper and in baptism.

We want to sing the message of the Bible together in the songs that we sing. If we don't open the Bible together, all we're really doing is sharing one another's great ideas.

And as much as I love Johnny, I don't want to sit and gather around his great ideas on a Sunday morning. That's not what we're doing, is it? We want to listen to what God says. You know, also our church should love one another.

[ 3 : 19 ] The Lord Jesus says, by this will all men know that you are my disciples, if you love one another. You know, our love for one another in the life of the church is where the transforming power of the gospel becomes visible to the community around us.

As they see people who have no connection with one another, other than their mutual trust in the Lord Jesus and membership of a local church. They see people sacrificing time and money and energy for one another's goods.

So we must love one another. We must also reach out to others. Do the work of evangelism. Preach the good news of the Lord Jesus to others. Both publicly as we gather, but also in conversation in the places that the Lord scatters us to during the week.

As we reach out to neighbours, friends and colleagues. That they too might hear about the forgiveness and reconciliation that they too can have and find in the Lord Jesus.

Now that's the core of what we do. We might do it in slightly different ways. We're in different countries, in different contexts. We do it with different languages, different accents. The music that we sing might be different.

[ 4 : 29 ] The time that we meet, the venue that we meet in might be slightly different. But the truth is that local churches everywhere should do those five things, shouldn't they? They should gather. They should pray.

They should hear from God's word. They should love one another. And they should reach out with the gospel. Now let me ask you, if that's true, let me ask you this question.

This is the question I want us to deal with together this morning. It's amongst those five things. What place does global mission have? What part does an active concern for the work of Christ amongst the nations have amongst those five things that a local church like this, like our church in Egbert, should be doing?

I don't know if you've heard the story of William Carey. William Carey was a brilliant young pastor in the 18th century in Northamptonshire in the Midlands in England.

And he, by the age of 21, he had mastered Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and Italian, and presumably English as well, whilst also working as a cobbler in a local shop.

[ 5 : 39 ] He was a brilliant, brilliant young man. And he read, I suppose, and these were maybe the Harry Potter of his generation, he was reading the diaries of Captain James Cook, who was the adventurer traveling the world and finding new places.

If you've ever read his diaries, they are gruesome. They're basically lists of all the people who died and he threw overboard along his way around the world. Anyway, as William Carey read those diaries, he was fascinated not so much by the new places that Cook was discovering, but by the people, thinking to himself, these people need to hear about Jesus.

They're lost. And so troubled by that kind of concern for the nations, Carey turns up at his pastor's fraternal with other ministers from the rural Midlands of England.

And he says, what are we going to do? How are we going to reach the nations with the good news of the Lord Jesus? To which he was famously told, and you may have heard of this quote by a guy called Dr. Ryland, young man, sit down when God wants to save the heathen, he'll do it without your aid or mine.

Incredible thing for him to say. And hopefully you don't need me to tell you that Dr. Ryland was wrong. History tells us that, at least, doesn't it? William Carey went on to become the father of modern missions, ultimately reaching millions of people with the gospel through the extensions of his ministry in various parts of the world.

[ 7 : 07 ] But even still, I think that despite the fact that because of Carey and people like him, all of us think missions is important. Global missions must feature somewhere in the life of our church.

I don't think often we think, how does it actually relate to who we are and what we're doing as a local church? How does it relate to the five things that we know we must do?

If the elders said to you, actually, guys, we're going to stop meeting, you'd say, well, we've stopped being a local church. We're going to stop praying. Well, we're not going to be a local church anymore. How does global mission fit in to those things that we should do?

Well, to help us answer that question, I've got three points from three different passages in the Bible. So we're going to keep ourselves warm by thumbing through the scriptures. So turn with me first to the book of Romans, to Romans chapter 15, which is on page 1141, if you have a church Bible.

And the first point is this. The gospel is a message that wants to travel. Let me say that again. The gospel is a message that wants to travel. Romans chapter 15, I'm going to pick it up in verse 7 and read to you down to verse 24.

[ 8 : 21 ] Romans chapter 15, verse 7. The gospel is a message that wants to travel. Paul writes this. Accept one another then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.

For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the Jews on behalf of God's truth, so that the promises made to the patriarchs might be confirmed, and moreover, that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy.

As it is written, Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles. I will sing the praises of your name. Again it says, Rejoice, you Gentiles, with his people.

And again, Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles. Let all peoples extol him. And again, Isaiah says, The root of Jesse will spring up, one who will arise to rule over the nations.

In him the Gentiles will hope. May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

[ 9 : 24 ] I myself am convinced, my brothers and sisters, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with knowledge and competent to instruct one another. Yet I have written to you quite boldly on some points to remind you of them again, because of the grace God gave me to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles.

He gave me the priestly duty of proclaiming the gospel of God so that the Gentiles might become an offering acceptable to God, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. Therefore I glory in Christ Jesus in my service to God.

I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles to obey God by what I have said and done, by the power of signs and wonders, through the power of the Spirit of God.

So from Jerusalem all the way round to Illyricum, I have fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ. It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known, so I would not be building on someone else's foundation.

Rather, as it is written, those who are not told about him will see, and those who have not heard will understand. This is why I have often been hindered from coming to you.

[ 10 : 34 ] But now that there is no more place for me to work in these regions, and since I have been longing for many years to visit you, I plan to do so when I go to Spain. I hope to see you while passing through, that you will assist me on my journey there after I have enjoyed your company for a while.

Now often in Paul's writings, it's not really until you get to the end of them, the end of the books or the end of the letters, that you realise the purpose for which he's writing. So the book of Romans is not written, firstly at least, as a kind of thorough explanation of the gospel, but rather it's written to a local church to persuade them to be involved in Paul's project to reach Spain.

The fact is that Paul sees a direct line between his summary and explanation of the gospel in his opening chapters and the Roman church's involvement in his mission to Spain.

He sees that connection. So let's see that together. What is it that's going on in the gospel? Look at verse 7. Well, Christ is accepting people, isn't he, in the gospel? Just as Christ accepted you, they are to accept one another.

He is welcoming people. In the gospel, sinful, fallen people are welcomed and accepted by a God of righteousness and holiness and perfection.

[ 11 : 51 ] He, in the gospel, brings them into his family, into his people, through Christ's death on the cross. And all of that, verse 7, is to bring praise to God. It's for his glory.

Now, we mustn't miss this. This is subtle, but it's meant there as a surprise, I think. It's supposed to be a surprise to us that God in Christ is welcoming Roman people into his family.

He is accepting uncircumcised outsiders like the Romans into his people. Christ was, after all, a Jewish Messiah. He is the promised Old Testament saviour, the rescuer of God's people, Israel.

But now, says Paul, God, through Christ, is welcoming people in Rome, Roman Christians. How so? Well, verse 8, For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the Jews on behalf of God's truth, so that the promises made to the patriarchs may be confirmed.

Christ came as a servant to the Jews, the circumcised, in order to fulfil promises made to the patriarchs, the Old Testament heroes. But, and there's the mind-blowing truth, the earth-shaking point, so that, what, verse 9, that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy.

[ 13 : 13 ] In other words, the very promises of the Old Testament, the servanthood of Christ for the sake of his people, the Jews, was for the very purpose of reaching the Gentiles, the nations.

Now, Paul won't leave it there. Instead, he proves the point with a string of Old Testament quotes, linking God's promises to Old Testament patriarchs with this project of reaching the Gentiles, who are ethne, the nations.

And here's the thing, God's promises, promises fulfilled in Christ's work on the cross, have within themselves this driving concern to get out to the nations, to go beyond, to reach out.

With this goal of welcoming and accepting people in Rome, people in Carigalline, people in Liverpool, into God's family, to the praise and glory of his name.

Imagine it like this for a moment. Imagine you've got a young border collie dog, a young sheepdog, and you're taking her out for a walk on the hill. And she's young, so you've got her on a lead.

[ 14 : 25 ] If anyone's had a puppy, you know that's really important, isn't it? You've got to keep them on a lead because you have no idea what they're going to do if you let go of that lead. But as you walk up the hill, you decide at a particular moment in time, right, okay, now I'm going to do it.

I'm going to go for it. I am going to release the lead and see what happens. And so you let go of her lead and you unclip her. What does she do? Well, she runs. She runs to go find sheep or anything as near to sheep as she can find and bring them back to you, whether or not that's what you hoped she would do or whether or not it's what you had in mind.

I've got a Labrador and the first time I let her off the lead, she ran and ate someone's picnic. That's because that's what Labradors do instead of border collies. But so it is with the Gospel promises, okay?

In the Old Testament, in a sense, the Gospel promises are kept on the lead for the Jewish nation. But in the work of Christ, the lead is released and boom, it goes to the nations because that was always in it.

That was always the purpose. Unleashed, the Gospel gathers people from the nations. It's on the loose. It's on the run. It's reaching out to the world.

[ 15 : 39 ] Now that very fact gets worked out in two ways in the life of the Roman church. In verse 7, it means something very profound for how they meet together. It says, verse 7, that they should accept one another.

It means, doesn't it, that their local church should accept one another in the same manner in which Christ is accepting them. So that our churches should be welcoming and friendly to people regardless of their nationality or race.

Disregarding cultural differences or differences in background or class, our churches should be places where people are welcomed on the basis of Christ's welcome of them. So we must do that.

But more than just that, look at how it works out in Paul's life. Jump towards the end of the section that we read in verses 19 and 20. Look at what Paul says. Here Paul says that he's finished the work in Jerusalem and all the way around to Illyricum, modern day Albania.

He's fully proclaimed Christ in all those places, he says. Which is an astounding thing for him to say. This is one man saying all the way from Jerusalem all the way around to modern day Albania. I've preached the gospel and proclaimed Christ fully in all those places.

[ 16 : 51 ] Now I don't think he means that everybody in those regions have become Christians. Nor does he mean, I don't think, that there's no more fruitful work even that he could do in those places.

But it's finished because of Paul's ambition, verse 20, to keep pressing on with the gospel to tell it to people who've never heard. A project where ultimately he wants the church to help him in.

See, this is the second implication, isn't it, for the church. Not only are they to be accepting of people irrespective of where they're from, the second implication is that they should be involved with Paul in the project of taking the gospel to other people regardless of where they are.

Deliberately going beyond the boundaries of their own church for no other reason other than the fact that they believe the gospel. They believe the gospel which is like this border collie who's on the loose running free and rounding up people from the nations, bringing them into God's global family.

Bringing glory to God. And this is interesting, isn't it? Bringing glory to God, says Paul, not simply by the sheer number of people who are saved, but by the spread around the world of those who are saved.

[ 18 : 02 ] So Paul leaves behind fruitful ministry where more people would become Christians and will become Christians as the church reached them, but Paul leaves that ministry because he's concerned about God's glory and the spread to every corner of the globe.

You see, here's the thing for us as a church family. If you will preach the gospel, believe the gospel, gather around the gospel as a church, it will do this work amongst us because the gospel has this power within it.

It will send us out to the nations. It will give us in itself an otherwise inexplicable concern for people who are unlike us in places that we have never been.

Not because we're adventurous types, but because the message of the gospel which has welcomed us into God's family gives us in itself this concern to reach the nations with the good news of the Lord Jesus.

So that's the first point. The gospel has that spreading power within it. Second point and second passage, the local church is a mission agency for the world. The good thing with this passage is you only have to turn one page in your Bible to find it.

[ 19 : 12 ] It's 1 Corinthians, which is, if you've closed your Bible, page 1144. The local church is a mission agency for the world. Now, as we come to 1 Corinthians, it's going to help us just to know a little bit of background.

the church in Corinth was a mess. I think that's the most simple summary. It was a mess. You're told in the book of Acts that Paul planted the church, but it seems to have quickly run into difficulties.

And the letter of 1 Corinthians is written to the Corinthian church on the back of two things. One is a report from Chloe's people or Chloe's household, as it gets called in chapter 1, who have sent back news to Paul of what's really going on in Corinth.

The second thing that seems to have happened is that a letter has been written by the Corinthian church to Paul, and Paul is answering some of the things that come out in that letter. Now, as you read through 1 Corinthians, you're obviously only getting one half of that conversation, aren't you?

It's like listening to someone, you're not supposed to do this, listening to someone's telephone call, but if you listen to someone's telephone call on the train, you're only hearing their half and you're piecing together. But as you read 1 Corinthians, you can piece together what seems to be happening in Corinth from Paul's responses to them.

[ 20 : 29 ] So they are split along the lines of personality. Some people are following Paul, others are Polis, others Cephas, you know, he's my hero. Added to that, they're boasting about sexual immorality.

It seems that a man is sleeping with his step-mom, and though the world around them is ashamed of that, the Christian church seems to think this is a great example of Christian freedom. And Paul is outraged.

In another section, church members are taking one another to court in legal battles, not because they've done great offences against one another, these are small matters that they should be able to resolve in the local church, but instead they're taking them to court.

And if all of that wasn't enough, they're also getting drunk as they share the Lord's Supper. I think this is probably the highlight or the low light, the low light of 1 Corinthians, as Paul says, do you know what, when you guys share the Lord's Supper, it would be better if you didn't bother.

Better if you didn't bother. So bad are your meetings together. Now into all of that mess comes the letter of 1 Corinthians and Paul says some really surprising things.

[ 21 : 33 ] So let me just read the first three verses. We're only going to look at the first three verses. 1 Corinthians chapter 1. Paul called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God and our brother Sosthenes.

To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be his holy people, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours.

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ. Now I think the first surprise there is that Paul thinks that this church is sanctified, made holy.

In other words, and it gets expanded in these opening verses of Thanksgiving from verses 4 to 9, Paul looks on at the chaos of the Corinthian church, all those things going on, and he sees them as holy people, saints, he says.

That's brilliant, isn't it? Paul there is showing his confidence in the gospel to take sinful, broken, fallen people and wash them clean of their sin, that they might stand before God as absolutely sanctified, holy.

[ 22 : 55 ] You know, this morning, if you're struggling as a Christian, if you're losing in your fight with sin, if you feel this morning like a hopeless failure, or maybe this morning you're not a Christian and you think, I could never be good enough to be a Christian.

Well, then you must hear this from 1 Corinthians chapter 1. Paul believes that the power of the gospel takes sinful, fallen, broken people like you and me and makes us stand before God as sanctified people, holy people, who in Christ have everything that we need.

It's astounding, absolutely stunning. Christ so comprehensively deals with sin, even the sin that we still struggle with, that we can be called saints.

But the second surprise really is there in the word together in verse 2. Look at what's happening here. The Corinthian church in all their mess are sanctified, they're called saints, but they are together.

together. You notice that they are, his holy people faint together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Let me try and explain the shock of that.

[ 24 : 09 ] This doesn't happen so often in our house anymore because our children have grown up to the stage where they now wash their hands. But when they were little, we have four daughters and when they were really little, it would not be uncommon for one of them to have a vomiting bug.

And what you know if you've got a number of small children in your house is that once one of them starts vomiting, it's not going to be very long before another one starts vomiting. And when another one starts, it's not going to be long before.

And anyway, it's terrible, isn't it? It's the worst thing ever. Passing children between my wife and I to hold them over the toilet because we wanted also to throw up. It's like the worst week of our lives.

So we instituted this rule in our house which is if you have a vomiting bug, you are limited to your room or the toilet. Nowhere else.

If you're going to be sick, run to the toilet but you're otherwise confined to your bedroom and no one else in the family is going to have anything to do with you until you're better. That's the compassion of our family for you.

[ 25 : 13 ] And we do that because we want to stop the spread, don't we? We want to stop this getting through everybody because it would be terrible. Now I think that if I've been in the Apostle Paul's shoes, the first thing that I wanted to say to the Corinthian church is just don't have anything to do with anybody else please.

This stuff that you're doing, please don't have anything to do with anybody else. You've got the church equivalent of a vomiting bug. Get yourself sorted, limit yourselves to your own room and when you're sorted then by all means engage with what's going on in the rest of the world.

But he doesn't say that at all does he? He says rather right at the beginning that they are together with saints, with other holy people around the nations. They trust in the same gospel, they hope in the same saviour.

Now those are not empty words for Paul. He's not kind of trying to inspire them to say something that's not quite true of them, to make them feel better. Instead as you read through the letter it has a real practical outworking in the life of the Corinthian church.

As you go through the letter you realise that not only is Paul responding to Chloe's report, not only is he responding to this letter that he's received, also those might be the occasion of his letter but the purpose of his letter is to inspire the Corinthian church to give money to the Jerusalem church, to host Timothy as he comes to visit them, to send people along with Paul to take money and greetings to the church in Jerusalem, providing people to travel.

[ 26 : 46 ] people. Now I turned you to 1 Corinthians because I think that's the most surprising example of this, but actually as you work through the New Testament you see this is time and again the New Testament's assumption about the work of the local church in global missions.

It is the responsibility of local church, even really messy local church like Corinthian church, it's their responsibility to do mission, global mission.

The local church is God's mission agency to take the gospel to the nations. Ordinary local churches pay for missions, host and receive missionaries, send missionaries, take collective responsibility for the work of the gospel, not only in their own place but beyond them in the nations.

Now there isn't a separate agency set up in the New Testament to do this job, instead it belongs to ordinary local churches. We turn to William Carey in the 18th century for a moment.

It's interesting isn't it that Carey set up the Baptist Missionary Society because of the failure of the local church. He went to that minister's fraternal to inspire local churches to engage in global mission.

[ 27 : 53 ] He came away and set up the Baptist Missionary Association because none of them could be persuaded to be involved. Now arguably the fruit of 200 years of mission agencies has been accidentally I think that local churches can feel like that responsibility has somehow been lifted from their shoulders.

So we wouldn't say with Dr. Ryland, you know, young man sit down when God so pleases to save the heathen he'll do it without your help or mine. What we tend to say is local churches you sit down because the mission agencies are going to do it for you.

That's not what the New Testament says. The New Testament tells us that local churches like your church here, like our church in Egbert, should not assume that anyone else is doing this job for them.

but rather it belongs to us. It's our responsibility to build relationships, to engage, to receive, to learn, to send, to go. Which means, doesn't it, that our local church gatherings have this really odd dynamic to them.

Not only are we really concerned to gather together because that's what it means to be church and we want to gather together, but actually also there's this strange dynamic of also wanting to push some people out.

[ 29 : 04 ] Not because we don't like them, not because they don't fit in, rather because before God we've come to the conclusion that these individuals might be better serving somewhere else for the sake of the gospel.

There is a grindy shaped hole in our church in Egbert. And yet we are persuaded as a local church that they are better serving the gospel over in Kosovay.

Better for them, it's better for our local church and it's better for the church there in Kosovay. And that's our calling, isn't it? God doesn't simply call individuals into mission, he calls local churches to be responsible for missions so that together they feel this burden.

We have a responsibility beyond our own borders to take the gospel into places where it's not yet been heard, to preach Christ. And maybe you should go. That's the second thing.



Okay? Local churches are global mission agencies. Third thing, mission mindedness is for every church member. Mission mindedness is for every church member.

[ 30 : 16 ] And for that we're going to turn to the book of Philippians. So turn forward a few pages. I'm going to get you a page number in a second. These pages in your church Bibles really stick together.

Maybe you don't use them very much, Johnny. Is that right? Okay, Philippians we were looking at, which is page 1178. 1178. Now Paul's letter to the Philippians.

We're having an overview of Romans, Corinthians and Philippians this morning. Paul's letter to the church in Philippi is centred around this word mind.

Okay? Not so much just your brain, but minds as in attitudes, your heart, the controlling idea about what your life is for.

That's what Philippians is all about. So that's why you get the verses like, for me to live is Christ, to die is gain. This is what is the controlling centre of your life? What is your life all about?

[ 31 : 21 ] And he uses a special word for it, which does come at other times in the New Testament, but it's here no less than ten times. The word phronim is this word for mind or attitude.

And it comes scattered through the letter, but it's clustered three times in chapter two. So let me read a bit of chapter two to you. Let me start at verse one. Look at what he says.

Therefore, if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being, here's the word, like minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one, here's the word again, mind.

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but rather in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests, but each of you to the interests of the others.

In your relationships with one another, have the same, here's the word, mindset as Christ Jesus, who being in very nature God did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage.

[ 32 : 30 ] Rather, he made himself nothing. By taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness and being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross.

Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

Now that word appears, doesn't it, like I mentioned, twice in verse two and then again in verse five. But it's all the same thing, isn't it? Paul's point is that the driving passion and purpose, the mindedness that we have towards our lives as Christians should be what?

Should be the same as the Lord Jesus is. And how do we know what the Lord Jesus' mindset was towards his life? What was Christ's controlling thought about his life?

Well it's seen, isn't it, there in verses six to eleven. His mind and his attitude is the attitude which took him to the cross, which emptied himself.

[ 33 : 44 ] He did not consider equality with God something to use to his own advantage, but rather he made himself nothing. In other words, the controlling attitude of Christ's mind is this.

It's one of self-sacrifice for the purpose of the eternal salvation of others. Do you see that? I am going to sacrifice myself, says the Lord Jesus, so that others might be saved eternally.

And that attitude, verse nine, means that when God sees Christ, he says, this is the one. This is the one whose name is above every name. Bow to this name because in seeing this self-sacrifice for the eternal well-being of others, you see God in the flesh.

Now the point of the letter of the Philippians is that that is supposed to be the heart attitude of the church. That is our mindedness towards one another.

So the word mind is there in chapter four, verse 10, where it's translated, I think, concern, probably. Chapter four and verse 10. I rejoice greatly in the Lord that at last you will need your concern, your mindedness towards me of self-sacrifice.

[ 34 : 57 ] Indeed, you were concerned but had no opportunity to show it. Now they've given him a gift. So Paul writes to the Philippian church to say, thank you for being so minded towards me that you are sacrificing of yourself for the eternal well-being, not simply of me and my perseverance, but of that of others as I tell them the gospel.

So he writes to say thank you. He says in chapter one, verse seven, I think where it's translated feel, he says it's right for me to feel this way about you. I am minded like this towards you, the Philippian church, that I am going to sacrifice of myself for your eternal well-being.

So here it is. We see it supremely in Christ and his work on the cross. You see it in the Philippians' love for Paul. You see it in Paul's love for the Philippians. Self-sacrificial service for the eternal well-being of others.

A willingness to give that others might hear and know Christ. But the question for us this morning is who is meant to have that mind? Does that mind belong just to the really keen Christians in church?

Well no. Chapter two, as we read together, it comes from being united with Christ. It comes from our fellowship with the Spirit. It comes from our inclusion in the Lord Jesus Christ.

[ 36 : 16 ] And in chapter three, verse 15, it's there's such a view of things, which is the same word, that every mature Christian should take. In other words, this is the DNA of every Christian.

When Johnny was over in October, I think it was, or November, preaching in Liverpool, he had the privilege of meeting my dad. My dad doesn't live in Liverpool, but he was around helping me fit a new shower.

And despite our best intentions, we intended to finish before Johnny arrived. But we hadn't. So Johnny got the privilege of seeing my dad and I messing around in DIY.

But one of the things that Palfremen really love is practical stuff. So we love doing jobs together, and we love practical presence for one another.

Now my dad never phones me up and says, how are you doing? Phones me up and says, what are you doing? Is there a job that we can do together? This year for Christmas, my dad's dad bought me a wax oil spray gun so I can spray rust proofing on my car.

[ 37 : 22 ] Brilliant. It's the way we're made. Palfremen think practical is best. That's just our family likeness, right? So if you meet any of us, that's what we're like.

Now in a sense, that's what Paul is saying about the Christian in Philippi. It's not practical wax oiling. It's self-sacrificial service for the eternal well-being of others.

That's the DNA of Christ, and it's the DNA of every single Christian in church. That is to be our mind. A mind which lies behind every pure missionary endeavor.

The mind in every individual Christian is to be in me. It's to be in you. It's to be in every single person who trusts in Christ, which looks at the eternal well-being of others, even outside their own church, and says, that eternal well-being is worth my personal sacrifice.

Which means, doesn't it, that the part of discipleship for every Christian is seeing that they have a responsibility for the gospel beyond themselves. At the cost of their own comfort.

[ 38 : 30 ] That normal Christian living, normal Christian discipleship, is not simply that the extreme Christians go, in a sense, but the ordinary Christian discipleship is that we're all involved in that process.

You know, you might not leave Caroline, but still your self-sacrificial love for others that they might hear about Jesus will work its way out in practical ways in your life. As you give.

As you pray. As you share news and information. So let's just wrap this up and end where we started before the rain gets so heavy you can't hear me.

As a local church, we are gathering, we're praying, we're listening to God's word, we're loving and we're reaching out. What place does global mission have in those five things? Well, actually, it invades every single one of them, does it not?

You know, as we gather, we gather with a view to scattering ourselves broader than just our own nation. That more people would hear the gospel. As we pray, we pray not simply just for ourselves and our own needs.

[ 39 : 36 ] Of course we pray for those. But we realise we have a responsibility for the needs beyond our own church, for others' needs. So we pray for them too. As we listen to God's word, we listen to the message of the gospel, which is not just about a small saviour for my own personal salvation.

It's about a global saviour who's reaching out to the nations, a message which has within itself this expulsive power to get to the very corners of the world. As we love, we love not just one another in this room, but we love others that they too might hear the gospel.

And as we reach out, certainly we reach out in the streets around us, but also we realise that we have a responsibility to reach the nations beyond us as well.

Let me pray as we close. Heavenly Father, we thank you so much that in the Lord Jesus we see this message which belongs not simply to us, but it belongs to the nations, that they might hear of the welcome that they can receive in the Lord Jesus Christ.