

Paul's Ministry Plan

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[0 : 00] Colossians chapter 1. This is the end of Colossians chapter 1. We're going to go to Colossians 2 next time. Finally get out of the first chapter. Sounds good, yeah? All right.

Colossians chapter 1, verse 28 and 29 this morning. And just as a way of reminder, you've got to remember Paul's never met this church. He doesn't know the people personally, but he wants to, last week, help them know how much he has given and suffered for their sake.

He's sharing with them the truth. Their pastor has come to him for a couple of questions. He's come to him for help. And so this letter he's writing back to them so that they will know how to deal with the false doctrine that's being taught to them, how to deal with the false theology, as well as just how to live in this world.

And as he does so, part of what he's doing is he has talked last week about his apostleship, kind of proving and defending why they should listen to him.

And then today he's going to tell us a little bit about how ministry is supposed to take place. So, with that said, verse 28 and 29, we proclaim him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ.

[1 : 29] For this purpose also I labor, striving according to his power, which mightily works within me. Father, thank you for your word.

And I pray, Father, that you would use it in our lives today. We need the truths that are here. And, Father, we need to be shaped and molded by your word.

So we pray that your Holy Spirit would do that even now. And we pray it in Christ's name. Amen.

Amen. So Paul is going to lay out for us sort of his plan of ministry, how he does ministry, and particularly how he's doing ministry within the churches, and then what he's sort of expecting of the Colossians.

And it's important for us to see this because this is sort of like, this is like the most foundational thing we could talk about as a church to understand how we ought to function as a church.

A lot of people have a lot of ideas about what the church is. There's a lot of different illustrations that people have used. But if you want to get right down to it, the church is a group of people who are becoming more delighted in Christ and who are helping other people become more delighted in Christ.

[2 : 55] That's what a church is. And so this is sort of a plan that helps us understand how to do that. As a matter of fact, you could say it this way. That if you listen carefully to what we're saying here, and we take these principles and we apply them, and you say to yourself, well, where are we going as a church?

Where's First Baptist going to be in five years? My prayer would be that this is exactly where we should be and where we're headed. This is who we ought to be.

I believe this is what every church ought to be. I believe every church has the same exact mission from God. And it is simply just to make disciples.

But let's look at it from Paul's perspective, see what words he puts to this to help us maybe flesh it out some and give some sort of shape to it. And I'm going to do this in three points, the goal of ministry, the energy of ministry, and the tasks of ministry.

Let's then talk about the goal of ministry. The goal of ministry, Paul tells us in verse 29, he says, for this purpose I labor, which means that verse 28 tells us the reason he's doing all of this struggle.

[4 : 06] And it is, verse 28, so that we may present every man complete in Christ. That's the goal. Present every man complete in Christ.

And what this goal shows us is that Paul's aim is on every single member of the body of Christ. The word there for man is the large term that you could say like mankind or humanity.

That's the word that's there. And he's saying that every single member of the local body of Christ, in every local body of Christ, ought to be presented complete.

Paul's working for the maturity of every single person. There is no room, there is no room for a member of a local church to not grow in maturity.

There's no room for a member of a church to be immature and stay there. You can start immature, we all do, but you've got to be making progress.

[5 : 12] And it's not about perfection, but it's about direction. Right? It's, is my life headed that way? Paul is saying, every member, every man.

This goal also has to do with the idea of presenting these members. He says, we present every man complete in Christ.

Now, I think Paul is talking about that he's presenting them back to God. He's giving them back to God. It's a little bit like if you take your kids to, you know, be tutored on a school subject or tutored in music or tutored in some sort of athletics.

You've given your child over to that tutor, that instructor, that coach. And when they give your child back to you, your child has now made progress and they're giving back to you a little bit more complete, a little bit more mature than they were, a little more understanding.

Does that make sense? That's what Paul is doing. Paul is someone who he's saying that I'm taking every man, making them mature in Christ so I can present them back to God. Because every member of a local church is on loan to the leaders of the church and it is our responsibility to present you back to God.

[6 : 30] You don't belong to me. And everybody said, Amen. You belong to the Lord. And I have a stewardship for you, but you belong to the Lord.

You are the Lord's. You are His. And all I am is just the tutor that comes in to try to help encourage, equip, and strengthen, and mature like Paul in order to present you to God perfect and mature in Him.

That's the goal. And so what does it mean to be complete in Christ? Some translations use the word perfect and some translations use the word mature.

So what are we talking about here? Well, this is the way I would say it. This is the way I would summarize it. Your life, your words, your attitudes, your actions should all begin to look more and more like Jesus Christ every day.

So how would Jesus handle being cut off in traffic? That's how you should start looking more and more.

[7 : 34] How would Jesus handle it when your kids won't listen to your instructions? That should be you more and more like Jesus. How would Jesus handle a co-worker taking credit for your labors?

That should be you more and more and more. How would Jesus handle caring for His elderly parents? How would Jesus pray for someone who is sick just focusing on the physical or would He be more concerned about the spiritual?

How would Jesus treat His wife if He had a wife? Would He speak with impatience? With unkindness? How would Jesus want you to treat your husband? Would He want you to down your husband in front of others?

How would Jesus vote in the presidential race? How often would Jesus pray? How would Jesus read His Bible? How would Jesus share the gospel? In all of these ways maturing in Christ is growing to becoming more and more and more like Jesus every single day.

It's direction not perfection. That's the second time I've said that. Let me tell you what I'm saying by this. I had a friend of mine who was at our last church and he was one of our leaders and he always had this illustration that he gave.

[8 : 43] He had a boat and he had it right there at the marina there in the port there at Port Lavaca and he talked about you could get in this boat and I can head out to the Gulf of Mexico and to get out there I have to go around this island or that island and I've got to get there.

He says, but the thing is is that as we live the Christian life we need to be headed that direction. He says, I can't turn around and go up north. I have to go south.

I have to be going the right direction. Christian maturity Christian maturity means that you're headed in the right direction. You may never arrive and as a matter of fact the day you do arrive is the day that you go on to be with the Lord and we're all ready to graduate for that but the thing is is that until then you've got to keep going in the right direction.

The goal is for you and I to become complete and mature in Christ and that goal then means that Christ is Lord of our physical, emotional, spiritual, social, financial, political life.

God is not interested in saving you just so He can be your sugar daddy in heaven so you can get there one day and then you can live all the rest of your life how you want to.

[10:13] No, He wants every single bit of your life and He expects there to be maturity and growth being like Him in every area of life.

So our goal, our aim, our purpose for First Baptist ought to be that every member of this body of believers can be presented back to God mature and complete in Christ.

Which means you should want to become more mature. That should be a desire of yours. You should desire to want tomorrow for you to look more like Jesus than yesterday.

And it is a slog. It's not an easy road. It doesn't happen overnight. There's no microwave spiritual maturity.

It's going to take time. But it ought to be your drive. It ought to be your aim. It ought to be your the air you breathe. And if it's not, if you think to yourself, no, I'm satisfied with the maturity I have.

[11:31] I don't really want to grow anymore. anymore, then I just have to tell you, you really need to look at yourself and ask yourself, is it right for a 30-year-old man to want to go back into diapers and stay at his parents' house?

Then why would a Christian want to stay as a baby who's been a Christian for 30 years? You need to want to grow. And if you say to yourself, I don't really want to grow, then you need to pray and ask the Lord to give you the desire to grow, or maybe you need to pray and ask the Lord to save you.

And if you do want to grow and be more mature, then the great news is that that's what we're after.

That's why we preach through Colossians. Colossians is all about growing the body of Christ.

But the second thing is that that means that everything that we do as a church body, what we put our monies to, what we put our energies to, ought to be for the maturing of every person in Christ.

You have to think of it like a pathway. You have to think of it like a pathway.

[12:44] That's a little too big to sit there. See the cross? Okay. Hold that as the middle. And right here, if I go too far this way, I'm off camera.

So, there we go. over here is lostness.

Over here, anybody over here, not you people sitting here, but where I'm standing, if you die over here, you go to hell.

This is a person who's not a Christian. This is a person who's not following after God. Some of these people, you know them. Maybe they're a neighbor.

Maybe they're a relative. Some of these people, a lot of these people, you don't know. Some of them live in Medina. Some of them live in Curville. Some of them live in Bandera.

[13:45] Some of them live in Pakistan. Some of them live in Zimbabwe and Sydney, Australia. They live all over the world. They don't know Christ. When you come to here, this is a person who's become a Christian.

They've left there. They've come here. They've trusted Christ. They're now a Christian. I'm assuming that for the vast majority of you, this is where you are.

Maybe you're not. Maybe you're over there. I don't know. I can't read your heart. But you need to know where you are. You need to know where you are because this is important for knowing how to grow in Christ.

And the question is is that from here we need to go that way. We don't need to go that way but we need to go that way. And the reason we need to go that way is because that's the end.

I look at that window and I think to myself there's a river over there and we need to cross that river because on the other side of that river is heaven. That's crossed in the River Jordan. That's not Medina River. That's the River Jordan. Okay?

[14:46] You with me here? You cross the River Jordan to get to the promised land. That's dying and going to heaven. One day we're going that way. We're getting closer and closer to Christ and once you become a Christian you should be going this direction.

You should be taking little step by little step as you grow in your faith as you mature in your faith that every day you should be making one little step closer and closer to Christ.

This is what maturity is. Coming from this place over here where you knew nothing coming to the cross being saved and now walking this pathway. That is what we're after.

That's the goal of ministry is for you to not stand here or if you're here for you to go this way to get here like if you're over here and you know you're over here what I want to say to you is I beg you come to Christ be saved and go past here.

Now I hope you understand I'm using all of this just as illustration you don't you don't actually come up here to the pulpit to get saved right? Okay you just go to Jesus to get saved just making sure you're with me here okay?

[16:00] Now the goal then of ministry is to walk that path. Let's talk then secondly about the energy of ministry.

In the energy of ministry I see this in verse 29 where Paul talks about his labor. basically he says I labor striving which means he spares no expense.

Okay he is engaged in a struggle he's engaged in a fight as a matter of fact the same word striving there is the word that he says to Timothy at the end of his life when he says I have fought the good fight I have striven with this I have worked hard with this and then he shows a bit of the foundation of this power he says in verse 29 according to his power which mightily works within me his power which mightily works within me it is God's power it is God's energy that is working within Paul in order to do the things that he is trying to do this word can be translated as working exertion power activity influence it is God's power God's work and this power mightily works within

Paul now what exactly is this power well it's the same power that he talks about in Ephesians chapter 1 19 and 20 and he says you need to know what is the surpassing greatness of this power toward us who believe and these are in accordance with the working of the strength of his might which he brought about in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at the right hand of the heavenly places you understand what he's saying there he's saying that there was a power that raised Christ from the dead and seated Christ next to the father that power was the power of the father the power of the Holy Spirit Paul is saying that the power of the Holy Spirit the resurrection power that raised him from the dead is the same power that works within him for him to be able to do the ministry that he's trying to do he wants to present everyone complete in Christ how does he do that he needs the power of the Holy Spirit working within him in order to accomplish this there's an old fable about this mouse that's with this elephant mouse is on the head of the elephant and they're walking through the forest walking through the jungle and the mouse looks back where they've been and he sees this huge wide path with trees knocked down and things all torn up and he says look what we did you'll get it in a second that's the way it is in ministry in ministry it's not by might it's for you because of the word of

God it's because of the power of the Holy Spirit not because of me and so Christians we have to have the power of the Holy Spirit in us if we're going to do this ministry we need to grow in Christ we need to become mature and the only way that happens is by the power of the Holy!

[19:32] Spirit I mean right now I am preaching you need the power of the Holy Spirit right now in order to take what I'm preaching and use it for the good of your soul to make you more mature it's not just a cognitive function where you go like I hear the words I process the words I memorize the words no it's the power of the Holy!

Spirit in you to take that and to use it for the good of your soul I need the Holy Spirit and his power as I preach in order to keep my mind clear in order to keep me from saying wrong things in order to keep the passage clear in the explanation because that's the most important thing the passage being clear because those are the words of the Holy Spirit and he's going to use his words to change you need to be a praying person if we're going to grow in Christ and you should be praying all week you should be praying all week for me as I study and I know several of you do you've told me you do and I appreciate that I need that greatly I need you to be praying for me as I study so that I understand the passage so that when I bring it here you benefit you say well but that doesn't sound right for me to pray for you to do good just so that

I benefit oh please take advantage of me I really want that more than anything I want you to grow in Christ because he's worked in me but you also need to be praying for yourself as you come to this moment of this preaching you need to pray that God would work in you but you also need to be praying for each other you know you're you're not an island here and there are things that are going on in the lives here that if some of you knew what was going on you would be like well I cannot believe that I would have been praying for you and I'm saying to you you don't have to know the stories pray for one another anyway pray that one another would hear what God is saying through his word and grow in that but it also means this like if we we're going to get this energy for ministry

it's going to be by the power of the Holy Spirit it means not only do we pray but it also means we have to be patient we have to be patient

God works in his time in his way just because you don't see immediate growth does not mean that growth is not happening how many of you have ever taken a seed and you planted it in a cup or you planted it in the ground and in 20 seconds when there was nothing growing you dug it up and threw it away no because you know that a seed has got to stay there for a few days and eventually it will grow preaching!

growth in Christ all of these things takes time even when you can't see anything happening God is at work and I'm saying this because of two reasons number one you and I we struggle spiritually with all kinds of things that come our way things that maybe we don't know how to handle maybe I'm acting the fool and I don't like it maybe I'm susceptible to the temptation to this particular sin and it seems like I keep falling to it again and again and I want to say to myself well God if you really love me why aren't you keeping me from doing this and I'm saying to you you need to be patient with the Lord and his work he works in his timing but the second reason I'm saying this is because many of you know your children your grandchildren a sister a brother a mom a co-worker a friend who's not anywhere near the

[24 : 08] Lord and you want so desperately for them to turn back and come to him and I'm just saying to you pray and patiently wait upon the Lord the Lord has greater desire for their salvation greater desire for their growth in Christ than you do trust him wait patiently don't begin to think that it all depends upon you being able to convince them don't begin to think that it depends all upon you to be able to say the right words don't begin to think that it all depends upon you to be some sort of witty apologist that has all the right answers at the snap of a finger it doesn't depend upon you and so pray to him and patiently wait upon him and he will renew your strength so we know the goal of ministry we know the energy needed for ministry let's talk about then the tasks!

ministry I find verse 28 really fascinating how many of you remember from last week you don't have to show your hand I just want you to remember one of the things I said about reading the Bible is we have to be careful not to put ourselves in the shoes of the of the apostles not to put ourselves in the shoes of like David we have to be careful because those places usually are not for us and I love verse 28 because Paul goes from talking about himself in verses 24 through 27 to verse 28 where he says we now all of a sudden Paul's inviting us to join him he's all of a sudden inviting us to join him in thinking about this he says we proclaim him we proclaim him now Paul uses three words that I want us to look at he uses the word proclaim and then he uses two words that sort of describe proclaim using admonishing and teaching and so

I want to give you a couple of thoughts before I define these three words one is proclaim is like the umbrella and admonishing and teaching are like two variations okay second thing is admonishing and teaching are two sides of the same coin admonishing is a negative side to some degree and teaching is the more positive side I think you'll see that as we go so let's think about these three words the word proclaim this is the idea of making something publicly known it's the idea of giving something wide distribution the best way to think of this is maybe like a newspaper printing the headline right it gets wide distribution now it's something that's not this word is not focused upon the form of the proclamation as much as it is focused upon the fact of the proclamation that it needs to be proclaimed it needs to be declared it needs to be heralded it needs to be shed abroad it needs to be spread out right and for us as we think about this word that could be preaching a sermon like I'm proclaiming Christ now I'm doing that very thing that Paul says we preach him we proclaim him I'm spreading out Christ and all that he has said here in this passage I'm doing that but it can be done in a Sunday school it can be done in a small group it can be done with you and another person reading the Bible together it can be done with you texting a verse to somebody there's all kinds of ways for us to proclaim him for us to spread abroad admonishing is the idea of helping someone to avoid or to stop a course of action that's wrong dangerous or sinful it's got a corrective aspect to it and maybe they just need to be admonished and warned not to go to a certain place or maybe they need to be told you need to stop doing that it could be in the area of doctrine hey listen don't believe this false doctrine over it could be stop believing that false doctrine it could be about your family and about what's going on in marriage or parenting or with elderly parents or with retirement or there's all kinds of things right it could be in your personal life it could be sinful thoughts that run through your mind or it could be sinful habits that you have all of those things are things that can be admonished and it can be done in a sermon it can be done in a letter but in the

new testament by and large it's done one-on-one one-on-one then there's the word teaching this idea of teaching is the idea of giving instruction showing the right way to think or act that's why it's two sides of the same coin right because it's it's not enough to just say hey avoid this you got to say avoid this but go here stop believing this false doctrine but believe this truth stop doing this sinful thing but start doing this good thing instead teaching is what jesus did when he preached the sermon on the mount scriptures say that he taught that because in teaching we are imparting knowledge you're to impart something that they did not know before something that they did not understand fully and it can be done in a large group it can be done in a small group it can be done one-on-one and so here's what paul's doing wherever the colossian christians are he's proclaiming with both warning and teaching so that they might grow in christ so that he can give them back to god mature and complete in christ and he does this by patiently waiting upon the lord as he depends entirely upon the power of god to work in them and then he turns around and tells them to do the same thing look at colossians 3 16 let the word of christ richly dwell within you with all teaching and admonishing same exact words teaching and admonishing one another now the context here psalms hymns and spiritual songs but that's okay the point is is that every member has a responsibility to teach and admonish one another he is counteracting the false teaching that they're receiving by challenging the body to be teaching and admonishing one another every single christian has a responsibility

prayerfully to depend upon the holy spirit to proclaim the word both admonishing and teaching and patiently wait for god to work so let's say that again i have a slide um that says uh what are we doing it's got several slides in this here's what i want you to see this i want to try to tie this all together for first baptist okay kind of take what we've just talked about put it together here for first baptist and what are we saying here first of all what's our mission our mission is that we want to build lives that treasure christ we want to build lives that treasure christ it's the ultimate aim it's the ultimate goal maturity in christ is to treasure christ someone who doesn't treasure christ is not maturing in christ the ultimate mark of spiritual maturity is a life that treasures christ above all things that's what we want to do the reason i'm preaching to you is to try to build your life so it treasures christ the reason that we do sunday school or midweek bible study is to build your life so you treasure christ and i'm saying the ministry we do from here forward ought to be to build our lives to treasure christ as a matter of fact if you think about it a person who's here who's lost and you you've been saved and you're here it ought to be your aim and your goal to look around you and go i need to build their lives so that they treasure christ i see someone back there i know them and i love them and i want them to treasure christ and i want to do everything i can to build their life so that they treasure christ oh here's somebody here they're building my life because they're further down the road than i am they're building my life that's great i love it when somebody's building my life and helping me to treasure christ that's do you understand what i'm saying wherever you are look around you look to the left look to the right look to the left treasure help someone build someone's life to treasure christ that's the mission okay now let's talk for just a moment about what did i say what's the next one oh yeah who pulpit and the pew pulpit and the pew here's what i'm gonna tell you the world the world out there is going to try to tell you that the preaching of a sermon cannot disciple god's people the world is going to tell you that the preaching of a sermon because it's a person lecturing and it doesn't match some sort of idea of different learning styles and it's just somebody talking talking talking is never going to accomplish building a life that treasures christ but that is false that is false if it doesn't why are we doing it why would we gather every week to do this let me tell you one of the reasons why we do this we the reason that i think god put this here and and in scripture i can show you where he says we ought to be preaching like this is because for just a moment we need to shut up and listen so often my life is full of my thoughts my life is full of what i think my life is full of me wanting to

[35 : 46] talk and for just a moment so long as i'm interpreting god's word correctly it means i got to be quiet and i got to listen and so the pulpit is necessary to build a life that treasures christ but the pulpit and the preaching is not sufficient it's not sufficient it's not enough there needs to be the ministry of the pew and that's where you come in yes the preaching is good and the preaching needs to be there and the preaching is necessary and you could be right here and you could look at your friend and you could say i want them to come i want them to hear the preaching of the word because i want their their life to be built to treasure christ i want them to be saved but sometimes that sermon by itself is not enough sometimes you've got to say something sometimes you've got to open up god's word with them and you've got to share with them because even though the

preaching is necessary it's not sufficient so you have a ministry to do well what is what is that ministry how do we do this three things they should look familiar i've been saying them matter of fact i preached a sermon i think maybe a little less than a year ago with these same points some of you are going like you did yeah i did i did you're supposed to forget them by the way you know that right because the point is the conviction that the holy spirit brings on you right here right now to make you change and and have a change of mind the way this is done prayerful dependence upon the holy spirit patiently waiting and proclaim the word no one is discipled in any other way nobody's life is built in any other way this is the only way it's done you will not build somebody's life to treasure christ by giving food or by giving clothes you will get a chance to speak into somebody's life by giving food and giving clothes you will show the love of christ by giving food and by giving clothes but someone just getting food and clothes will not disciple them so that they treasure christ there must be prayerful dependence upon the holy spirit patiently waiting upon the lord and the proclaiming of the word of god that that proclaiming of the word that's the scary part for most people because you know how many of us think to ourselves well before i can proclaim don't i have to have a seminary degree no you know how you can proclaim the word with somebody you open up your bible and say let's let's read through the gospel of john together and you sit down and you read chapter one verses one through eighteen you both look at each other and you go like you know i thought i might know what that says but i don't really understand that i'm going to go read something somewhere and let's get together again next week and do it again and you've now read a few commentaries you got got a handle on maybe what it's saying you come back together you read the first 18 verses and you can speak a little more intelligently about it that's it it is not rocket science it's the word of god and you can take and you can do that but you say to yourself you know that just sounds so so difficult well let me tell you let me tell you a little baby step you can take bring them with you bring them with you okay like here's here's the truth the truth of the matter is is that when we have a tendency to want to invite people to come i sometimes wonder if we're really excited about it or not if we're really interested in them coming or not because i know that like i'm trying to remember what that was it was a restaurant we went to one time in in like victoria or some other place and i'm telling you what oh it was the sky that's what it was there's a restaurant in victoria called the

sky it's at the airport now you have to understand that in port lavaca and victoria there's not a single restaurant that's of any value whatsoever the food is no good and the service is terrible except for the sky and we we were taken there one time and it was so good that for like a couple of months i kept going up to people say hey what are y'all doing this weekend like nothing you gotta go with us man we're gonna go to the sky and they're like okay no the restaurant at the airport there's a restaurant at the airport yeah it is great it is awesome okay we're gonna pick up at six and we're gonna go okay y'all ready and they say okay we'll go and you know what they went with us but had i walked up to them and said yeah man i i have this great new restaurant that i love it's good that great great food yeah you ought to go sometime i think sometimes we invite people to church like that like here go ahead you know where we are come on no no no no no you take them by the hand and you say no come on let's go because why because we're preaching here now listen i'll and i'll tell you this and i i don't have no i'm not trying to be ugly or anything i just want to see i want to see this church grow and i want to see god glorified if you all think to yourself yeah but we gotta have somebody that preaches better if i'm gonna bring somebody hey listen all seriousness aside i will go in a new york minute and have somebody else do it because i don't i don't care if it's me i i don't care if anybody hears me i want them to hear somebody so they can hear the truth so that you can grow in your faith so that you can bring people to jesus so he gets all the glory you understand what i'm saying and so here's where this lands this is this is the end of the sermon here this is what i'm going to challenge you to do today okay so i'm gonna challenge you to do today you need to make a decision you need to make a decision about this is this the right path is it true that there are all these people and we want to see lives built that treasure christ and make progress that direction is it true that the preaching of the sermon is necessary but not sufficient therefore the ministry of the pew has to come in and we've got to also pray and patiently wait and proclaim god's word to other people and it is if it is true then the decision is am i willing to see my life built and to try to help somebody else's life be built too am i willing for that am i willing to get involved and do because you're like i know a lot of people want to say hey man anything you need in ministry here's what i need in ministry i need you to prayerfully depend upon the holy spirit patiently wait and proclaim his

word that's what i need you to do that's the ministry i need you to do and let me just tell you how important this decision is okay it's one of those moments where i don't want you to stand up today and give me some sort of lie yeah i want you to take a couple weeks to think and pray about it michelle and i our first date was halloween we had left and we had gone for thanksgiving break and her folks lived near where my folks lived and so she came over to our house i went and picked her up and did thanksgiving with our family and i was driving her back to her family and was going to drop her off so she could finish doing thanksgiving there and we'd spend a lot of time talking together i mean a lot when i say a lot i mean a lot it was so much that like i was i was past curfew getting in my dorm every single day her dorm closed at midnight so we got her in and i was always about 12 15 and then we would pick up the phone and we would call each other because we had a 30 foot coiled cord and i'd lay in bed and we would talk all night long and the next morning i'd wake up and i would say hey wake up we got to go to class and so that night that we were driving from my parents house to her parents house we were asked i was asking her all kinds of really serious questions about life it was totally unplanned because that's the way i am and as we got into these conversations and all this was coming out between us about all the the dreams and hopes and thoughts of who we were and where we wanted to head i put on the brakes drove over into the shoulder came to a complete stop looked her dead in the eyes and said then will you spend the rest of your life with me now that demanded an answer and in that moment had she said well give me a couple weeks i'd have been devastated i'd have been just like that's it oh the only right answer was yes what i'm saying to you though is what i'm preaching to you this morning is of that importance you need to make a decision because i'm not not because i'm going to go anywhere but because this is what i'm going to do and i'm going to work to build your life so that it treasures christ and i pray to god that you want that for yourself because it's going to mean lots of changes in your life you're going to be impacted and there are things that are going to happen that are going to be difficult and you're going to at one point you're going to want to give up and you're going to say no i don't want this anymore this is too hard and i'm just here to tell you if we make a decision to go then we go and we depend entirely upon the power of the holy spirit to accomplish it all and even if you have moments where you say this is just too much for me i can't i can't share god's word with somebody and you even begin to think to yourself you know i i'm just not the kind of christian that everybody else is then i just want you to hear one thing that's so true it's for people like you that jesus died you think to yourself but i'm not that brave of a christian i'm not that that knowledgeable of the scriptures and i'm so afraid to try to share the gospel or even a verse of scripture with somebody and you feel like you failed i just want you to understand jesus died for that and it's covered in the blood so there's no more excuses because christ has covered it all and it's okay to be scared and it's okay for it to feel weird but this is what he's called us to do and it's messy but we will just lean upon him and depend upon him let's pray and let's pray