

# Missions Emphasis Sunday

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Preacher: Brooks Buser

[ 0 : 00 ] There we go, friends, it's a privilege to be with you today. Very, very thankful for this church and Tyler and Charis and Dainey, the alumni that you have sent us, members of this church that have by God's grace been able to go to various countries and are seeing great progress.

We pray for them on a regular basis. I know you guys pray for them most likely more than we do, but very thankful for this body of believers. We're going to talk about that a little bit today. And the legacy that you have in this church, some that will be known on this side of heaven, but most of it will be known on the other side of heaven.

So those of you that are involved here, I pray that you can see and have those eternal eyes to see what may come someday when we reach glory and what this church is responsible for around the world.

If you have your Bibles today, turn to Romans chapter 15. I'm going to go through a particular text there that I've found helpful in articulating the main two points that I'm going to press into.

Primarily that the church is the means and the goal of the Great Commission. The local church, not the church universal, but the local church is the means and the goal of the Great Commission.

[ 1 : 15 ] And that Paul in particular had a mandate that he saw to press on where no church existed. There are different lanes in missions.

Praise God for that. That's representative out in the foyer out there. If you're looking around at the various agencies and the missionaries and the ministries, praise God for different lanes of missions. We dare not plug everybody into one lane.

That would be a dumbing down a diminishment of the Great Commission. But there are particular lanes in missions that are harder to get into and that are more difficult. And Paul articulates that to some degree in this passage in Romans chapter 15.

So I'm going to press into that before we get into that, just so you have some idea of my own background and why I'm going to be speaking in a particular way and some of the analogies I'm going to use.

I'll just give you a very brief snapshot of our time in New Guinea. So my wife and I, as the write up in the church bulletin says, I worked as a CFO for a Dutch multinational, spent a lot of time in Europe prior to going into missions.

[ 2 : 20 ] And by God's grace, through this book and through our church elders, we got a call into missions. I'm very nervous when people start talking about the missionary call.

The missionary call traditionally has not been a call that has been individualistic. It's been a call that has been coupled with the leadership of the church and it's been through scripture that people have been seen to give their lives to taking the gospel where it's never been before.

And so that happened with us. Walked away from the business world, got two years of training. I'm a big believer in training. Oh man, I wish all of you could have sat in on Kathy's presentation this morning in Sunday school.

If that little message that she gave was given to all English speaking missionaries before they went, we would have much less attrition on the field. I was very thankful to hear that this morning.

But the idea of getting trained, the military knows this. Those of you that know anything about the Navy SEALs or know anything about special forces, those who go into harder context demand greater training.

[ 3 : 20 ] The medical community knows this. We don't let anybody who's excited about human nutrition or the human body operate on people's heads or their hearts or anything like that. They require further training.

The aviation community knows this, the larger the aircraft, the more human souls are within that aircraft, the more that the pilots need to be trained. And yet this answer has lagged behind in the Christian world as far as missions goes.

Those who go to the ends of the earth, to the hardest to reach language groups of this world typically do not get sufficient training before they go.

If they do, they tend to do much, much better. I'm very thankful for the school that I represent. We have the most inauspicious table out there, but if you happen to see the pamphlets and a couple stickers on a table, that's us.

Shameful on our part, but so be it. If you want to grab the pamphlet, that's great. But we train missionaries, and we train missionaries to go to unreached language groups. We don't like the terminology of unreached people groups.

[ 4 : 15 ] That's tended to be anything and everything in the world today. Language though, looking at the Tower of Babel, looking at Pentecost, looking at Revelation 5, 9, looking at Revelation 7, 9, tends to be this marker that our God consistently uses throughout human history to differentiate the peoples.

It's not the totality of the Great Commission, but it is a primary marker. So we tend to look at what are the languages left on the face of the earth today that have no disciples, no gospel, and most importantly, no church among them.

We're going to talk about that. So my wife and I made it to the country of Papua New Guinea. We landed among a people group. It was a long process. We learned the national language of the country, Melanesian Pigeon.

And then there were seven language groups that were asking for missionaries. We know that no man seeks after God, so they weren't asking for Christ, but they were asking for the little white pills so that their babies would stop dying.

They were asking if we would move in and their lifestyle would change. They saw other missionaries land among other language groups. And so we moved in among the Yembe Yembe people.

[ 5 : 22 ] We spent 13 years among them. It took us two years to learn their language, to full fluency, what we like to call it, radius, worldview fluency, to be able to handle off-the-cuff Q&A;, to be able to speak in the abstract about complex materials, to teach revelation, to teach the book of Romans.

That's a competent worldview communicator. And so to get to that point, it took us a while. They had no alphabet. They had no written language in their, or excuse me, written alphabet.

And so we had to develop an orthography for them. Then we had to teach them how to read and write in their own language. This is all pre-gospel. So that when the gospel came, it wasn't my word against their ancestors' word.

It was this book that holds judgment over all of us, those of us that speak the English language and everyone that speaks the Beesius language as well. And so finally, in January 2008, we started the teaching.

And we didn't start in Genesis, or excuse me, we didn't start in Matthew, we didn't start in Romans. We started in Genesis 1-1 to lay out the nature of this God that is so different than the gods of the Yembe-Yembe's.

[ 6 : 27 ] Faithful missionaries, before they introduce Christ, will know what those of the language group believe before they bring the answer. Proverbs speaks of this.

To speak without listening is folly and shame. To not know the culture, to not know what they believe in. So to know the Yembe's gods and to bring the God of the Bible into direct collision with their worldview.

And then they get to decide which one is true, which one is false. And that was our process for four months, teaching them through the book of Genesis, walking them through the Old Testament saints.

And the Yembe's aren't like you guys. You guys are a very normal North American audience. You know when it's appropriate to be quiet, when it's appropriate to laugh, when it's appropriate to clap, all that kind of stuff. The Yembe's had never sat in institutional learning.

So the Yembe's, we had about 1200 of them that were turning out for the teaching a day, nearly the entire village. And they sit in a circle around you. And if the Yembe's like what you're saying, when you're speaking at any time, they will yell, keep talking.

[ 7 : 26 ] This talk is good to my belly. Because the belly is the seat of their emotions. In North America, it's our heart. My heart is broken. My heart is full. That's how we communicate emotion in this language. There's the belly.

If they don't like what you're saying, they will yell at any time, shut your mouth. I'm about to throw this talk up because it's coming from their belly. So you have a very clear idea how you're doing with the audience.

It's very apparent. There is no need for sermon review. You're getting the review instantaneously. And so we would teach, and as we would teach, we would act things out because they had never heard these stories before of this God who makes things perfect the first time.

They had a high God, the sun God who made man, but the first time he made man, he made him in the form of a pig. And then he tried the second time and he got a little bit closer and he made a crocodile.

And then finally the third time, he actually gets mankind. And the God of this book says he makes everything perfect the first time. The difference. The God who makes food, who doesn't eat food.

[ 8 : 28 ] The MBS have 16 different kinds of bananas, 14 different kinds of sego. We laid out all of these foods on a canoe and then we flew in foods that they'd never seen before from Australia. Apples, oranges, pears.

By that time we had an airfield that was done, praise God, so we had a little Cessna 206 that would bring in food and to have them taste things that they'd never seen before. Does God eat food?

No. Why didn't he make such incredible variety? Because he loves you. He loves me. And the MBS started to fall in love with this God that was so different than their gods.

And finally we get to Genesis chapter 3, which I believe is the hinge of all humanity. If you don't understand Genesis chapter 3, there's no way you understand Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. You don't know what you're being saved from until you understand the source of all the pain in this world. And we started teaching on Genesis chapter 3 in the fall of mankind. And the Yembe said, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, show us, show us.

[ 9 : 23 ] And what they meant was act these things out. And so my wife and my co-worker's wife, they dressed up some of my co-worker's wife was Eve. She always played Satan for whatever reason, I had this black bed sheet.

And I'm tempting Eve, and the Yembe's can't stand it. They're getting closer and closer. They're scooching in on us. A thousand people to where we had about five feet where we could operate this skid in. And we had this tree that we had planted in the teaching house.

We don't have a church building to this day. We have a teaching house, and the church gathers in the teaching house. And we're walking around, and I'm tempting Eve, Eve, Eve, just take the fruit and your eyes will be open and you'll be just like God.

And my co-worker's wife reaches out to grab the fruit, and people are jumping up and grabbing her hand and pulling her hand down. Don't do it! God has been so good to you. Look at your belly. Reigning insults down our stuff, I can't say from the pulpit. Because they don't believe in fables and fairy tales. They believe these are their ancestors, and what happens to their ancestors will trickle down to them today.

[ 10 : 27 ] They sit back down, my co-worker's wife reaches out, grabs the fruit, takes a bite, a thousand people go quiet. And we start teaching on the ramifications of sin. When we moved into Yembi Yembi, nearly 15% of the population had a mother, a sister, and aunt who had died in childbirth.

Most of them, their first children, you've got a 50-50 proposition to live through that. It's not like the U.S. There's no such thing as C-sections, epidurals. You start going through that type of pain. Genesis 3 becomes very real to you. From dust you came to dust you will return. I think that one of the follies of the American churches that we don't let our children see people being buried too often. They're dressed up, they look nice. Death is meant to look gruesome. It's unnatural. We weren't meant to live like that. We're sons and daughters of the king, and yet we bury people because of the sin of our ancestors.

And to see these things up close, the tropics will do nasty things to a human body once it's past 24 hours. And to see the ramifications of death, and yet there's a promise buried in Genesis chapter 15, 3 verse 15.

[ 11 : 34 ] If you haven't read that, the promise that there will be one coming someday, and that one is going to make right what Adam and Eve made wrong.

Someday there will be one coming. That's the promise buried in Genesis chapter 3. Someone's coming, and he's going to make all these things right again.

And three days later we started into the next major characters of the book of Genesis, and I'll never forget this. I'm teaching through Cain and Abel, these two sons of Adam and Eve.

And one of the Yembees, I said again, they're very unlike you guys. He stands up in the back and he yells from the back, stop, stop, stop, stop, stop. Stop the teaching. I said, but what is it?

He says, this one you speak of Cain, is he the one? I said, what do you mean? Is he the one who will make things right between God and man again? I said, no, he's not the one.

[ 12 : 29 ] And he sits back down and they're just reigning insults down on him. Again, the Yembees are very expressive people. Guys every Old Testament character that we introduced, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, Solomon, someone stands up and asks the question, is he the one?

Is he the one who will make things right again? This story that you're telling us, this history of this God who makes all things, who is all powerful, who demands worship, is he the one who will make us right with them again?

And if you haven't grasped this yet, saints, those of you that read your Bibles regularly, that's the primary thrust of the Old Testament. The entire Old Testament can be summarized as who is the one?

Who is the one that is coming? He's all pointing to that one. And finally we got to John the Baptist and we're into the New Testament and I'll never forget this.

We introduced the Christ not through Luke, not through Matthew, but through John. And John the Baptist sees Jesus in John chapter one and he sees Jesus walking alongside the river Jordan. He says, look, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

[ 13 : 35 ] And we had about seven Yembees stand up yelling, stop, stop, stop, stop, stop, stop, stop. Is this the one or are we waiting for another? As the privilege of my life was to say, no, he's the one.

He's the reason we left our homes. He's the reason we've learned your language. He's the reason that we're living with you. All of this talk centers around this one. And the Yembees, again, they start yelling and throwing stuff.

Stop the talk of John who dunks in water. Who cares about him? Tell us about this one. The whole thrust and we kept teaching and we kept going for another month through the life of Christ and finally culminating in the death, grilling resurrection.

And we had about 45 to 50 on that day for the first time in the history of the world that spoke the BCS language that understood who Jesus Christ was and that he was their substitute for their sins and how those 45 to 50 lived and how they died.

They attracted more and more people to the gospel and the church today is between 430 to 450 strong. It has its own elders, its own deacons and last year it sent out its own missionaries.

[ 14 : 44 ] And so friends, that's the background that we come into this passage with. So Romans 15, if you've got verse 18 queued up, that's where we're going to start and we're going to go through verse 24.

Romans 15, 18 through 24. So I'm going to read this first and then let's get into our main points this morning. This is Paul writing to the Roman church, for I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to bring the Gentiles to obedience by word and deed, by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God.

So that from Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum, I have fulfilled the ministry of the gospel of Christ. And thus I make it my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has been named, lest I build on someone else's foundation.

But as it is written, those who have never been told of him will see and those who have never heard will understand. This is the reason why it's so often been hindered from coming to you.

But now since I no longer have room for work in these regions and since I've longed for many years to come to you, I hope to see you in passing as I go to Spain and to be helped on my journey there by you once I've enjoyed your company for a while.

[ 16 : 01 ] This is God's word. And so we look at this passage and I'm not going to go through this. This is not going to be an expositional sermon. I prefer those, but for our purposes today we're

pressing into certain aspects, particularly missions.

So I'm going to key off of a few things, but it's good for us to look at this passage and to just mention very briefly when we're looking at verses 18 and 19, power of signs and wonders, miracles that God allowed.

Everyone that is saved by God's grace is a miracle of salvation. What we see happening around the world in various areas where we see churches, I appreciate my brother Paul Washer.

Every church that is planted is a miracle. A single church is a miracle of God. But we have to be careful if we look at the book of Acts and we hear these things spoken, that we don't take what is prescriptive or what is descriptive and make it prescriptive.

We don't take some of the one offs. We look at the epistles for the regular, the ordinary means of grace as to how we do evangelism and how we do missions. And so those seat belts, if you will, help us stay focused on what is primary.

[17:10] And so for this passage, those of you that know your Bible know that this was a letter that Paul sent to the book of Roman, or to the church at Rome. He hadn't been there yet, but he's laying out his doctrine, what he believes.

Here's what I believe. Here's what I see in Scripture. Here's what the prophets have taught us. And then he presses into what he is going to do in the future tense. He's getting into where he sees the gospel going.

But in verse 15, or excuse me, chapter 15, we get to see his heart. Paul wants to go to Spain. And Paul wants the Roman church to support him on his mission or on his journey there.

Romans is a doctrinally tight missionary support letter. If you ever get a missionary support letter like this, support that person. Bring them on. This is one of the great ones. Probably there will be others like it.

They will not be inspired, but this is one of the good ones. And so Paul is giving his understanding of this. And he makes this remarkable statement. He says this at the end, or excuse me, in verse 20, from Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum, I have fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ.

[18:16] This is a startling, shocking statement that doesn't get enough press in the American church today. Paul is saying the equivalent of from San Diego, California to Orlando, Florida, I have fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ.

There's no more work to do here. That's a reached area. Somebody stands up and says that we most likely are going to cut them from the missionary squad, not bring them on.

But Paul has the audacity to say that. And here's the thing. He doesn't just stop there. He doubles down. He presses even further. But to understand this, you have to understand how the New Testament, and particularly how Greek grammar works.

So I had the privilege of translating the entire New Testament, except for the book of Mark, Acts, and Revelation, and the Pentateuch. That was my job on the translation team. I was the primary teacher, but then I was the main translator for the New Testament.

So I got the privilege of translating the book of Romans into the BCS language. Many people don't understand this is a chiasatic pattern. Some people will say it's a chiasatic pattern. That's the wrong way to say it.

[19:21] It's the chiasatic pattern. The chiasatic pattern means that the main point comes in the middle. How our ears, typically how we make an argument today in English is the main point coming at the end.

And that's why you don't eat McDonald's before you run a marathon, or something like that. Like, it's the punch comes at the end. And he never talked to her about her diet again. That's like, it's everything is back loaded, so you get the punch line at the end.

In this type of an argument, the main point comes in the middle. So for our ears today, we're going to pull this out and move it to the end. And we're going to jump over to his supporting statement, which begins in verse 23.

Now, remember what he said from Jerusalem to Eureka, no more work to do. But now, since I no longer have any room for work in these regions, and since I've longed for many years to come to you, I hope to see you in passing as I go to Spain and to be helped on my journey there by you once I've enjoyed your company for a while.

Paul doubles down again, there's nothing left to do. Paul, how can you say that? Most church historians that will say from Jerusalem all the way around to Eureka, less than 3% of the population

had even been exposed to the gospel.

[ 20 : 34 ] And Paul says, nothing left to do. How can he say such things? Friends, here's how he can say them. Paul saw the fulfillment of the Great Commission in terms of the church.

When he sees a church in a city, Paul presses on to where there is no church. He pressed on to those regions. Spain, some church historians will say he made it as far as Britain, to those places, those peoples, those languages that do not have a church among them.

Paul saw the church as the primary metric of the Great Commission. There's no other way to read this particular interpretation of how he says, nothing left to do unless you see it as the church.

Because Paul saw Jerusalem. Praise God there's a church there. Corinth. Praise God there's a church there. Genesis, Galatia, Antioch, churches in these cities represented to Paul the pioneer missionary I press on where Christ has not been named, where no foundation has been laid.

John Piper, if you guys haven't read *Let the Nations Be Glad*, that's probably the best primer for the theology of missions and particularly the theology of pressing on to where the gospel has not been before.

[ 22 : 02 ] The best chapter in that book, if you're looking at it and you're going, I don't have time to read the entire book, but maybe a chapter, chapter five. Chapter five is going to elucidate some of these arguments that I don't have the time to get into fully.

But Piper will say this, Paul's conception of the missionary task is not merely winning more and more people to Christ, which he could have done much more efficiently in those regions that he was familiar with, but rather the reaching of more and more peoples or nations.

The grouping of peoples. We don't just talk about, well, there's billions of people unsaved. It's the groups of people. And how do we mark a particular group? Go back to Matthew 28, 18 through 20, that we will go to all nations.

What's the Greek word there? The *Pontita ethne*, the *ethne* of the world. It's the word that we get ethnicities from. And what's the primary marker of an ethnic group today?

And throughout history? Language. Language. We're looking at the groupings of people. Praise God, the English speaking world has the gospel inherent among it.

[ 23 : 09 ] At one time in history, we did not. We were those nations that were far off, that still did not understand the grace of God in the person of Jesus Christ. But today, we have that light amongst us.

It's available on the radio. It's available in print. It's available on televisions, available on podcasts. There are still roughly 3,100 or so languages left on the face of the earth today that have none of those things, that have no understanding of the gospel, that have no missionaries among them, that have no translations of Scripture, and most importantly, no church among them.

We don't call where I'm from, San Diego, California, an unreached area. You know why? Because Claremont Emmanuel Baptist Church, the Rock Church, Shadow Mountain Community Church, the Hill Church all reside, and there's about 40 others that preach the gospel faithfully.

And they have hundreds, thousands of missionaries. We don't call them missionaries. You know what we call them? Faithful church members. Faithful church members. That's what we are called to do.

I used to be a missionary up till 2016, and then my wife and I finished that work. We handed off the Scriptures to the elders of the church. They're faithfully teaching. I had the privilege of going back there every year to check on that church.

[ 24 : 31 ] We see that as a pattern, that Paul goes back and visits the churches that he planted. He doesn't just leave them behind. He goes and checks on them, and he continues to do that, and so will we until the Lord doesn't give us breath or the ability to get on an airplane anymore.

But now in 2016, we transitioned to being senders in our church, the goers and the senders, the two-part equation that's so clearly articulated in Romans 10, 13 through 15.

This two part to where everyone's involved in the Great Commission, either as a goer or a sender. Today, I have Denny and Jeffy Harper, who live on the other side of Lodi Street.

I have Dan and Eileen Penya, who live just to the left of me. I have Tom and Becky, who live kitty corner from us. Those are the people in my life that I am pressing to come to my church, that I'm pressing with the gospel, that I'm developing relationships with, that I go to water polo games with, that I try and figure out what's going on with Los Angeles Lakers because Denny's really into the Lakers, so that I can build that relationship with them.

Friends, there are people in your life today that are divine appointments. You have not been put in your neighborhood randomly. You're not in your class.

[ 25 : 43 ] You're not in your job. You haven't been put in that particular family randomly. If you're a Christian, we don't believe in karma or chance. We believe that everything is a divine appointment and that you, hopefully the faithful church member at Fourth Memorial, are making the most of those divine appointments that God has brought into your world.

But for Paul, the pioneer missionary, I go where no church exists. He presses onto those areas. He saw the church as the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

Let me look at a few verses with you. You don't have to turn to these. I'm going to go rapid fire through these to support this presupposition that the church is the goal of the Great Commission. The fastest and easiest way to understand this is to look at those original disciples, the apostles, who got the Great Commission from Jesus' lips.

What did they do? When they heard the Great Commission, what did they do with their life? Let's go rapid fire through the New Testament, primarily through the book of Acts. Acts chapter two, Pentecost, results in the church at Jerusalem.

[ 26 : 56 ] Not a bunch of random believers. Praise God, we've spread the gospel, we disciple them, but if you don't gather those disciples into a healthy, strong, mature New Testament church, it rises and falls in one generation.

The hope is the Yen B'Yen B'Church, Fourth Memorial, Claremont Emanuel Baptist Church will still be going if the King tarries and every one of us is dead.

We put our hope in the church. We don't put it in individuals. We put our hope, this is the lampstand, this is the light, this is the embassy, the outpost of the kingdom.

I was in a closed access country a few weeks back and it was a shocker to me, but we got off the plane and our contact picked us up. There was me and two other guys and we were all American citizens and the first thing he did was he drove us by the U.S. Embassy and he said, friends, if they start coming looking for us in the hotel, if they catch you guys in this particular region where we're going, you need to make it back here.

If you make it back here, you'll make it home. And this embassy took on this new meaning to me. This is our home. And we gather as saints, I'm not talking about unbelievers, I'm talking about those who understand the grace of God and the person of Jesus Christ, those who are in Christ.

[ 28 : 19 ] When we gather on a Sunday, this isn't some ritual that we do because it's been handed down and we just do the things that we've been taught to do. This is the embassy. This is the outpost of light.

What happens here as we recognize the Lord, remember we have a celebration on a regular basis when someone joins the family. What do we call that?

Baptism. We have a regular family meal where we get together and we celebrate the most important thing about us, what we hold to be true. What do we call that?

Communion. And once a week, we have a family gathering where we get together and we hear the word preached to us clearly from this pulpit. That's called Sunday. That's the gathering of the saints. We're a family in these things. This outpost of Christianity. Acts 2, Pentecost results in Jerusalem. Acts 11, 19 through 30, the establishment of the church in Antioch.

[ 29 : 17 ] Acts 14, 23, elders are attached to churches. Acts 14, 27, the church is the basic Christian community that is gathered for any significant events.

Acts 15, 41, Paul and Syria and Celicia strengthening the churches. Acts 16, 5, the result of the Jerusalem Council, churches are strengthened and grow in numbers.

Acts 26, 18, Paul recounts his own call by Christ and was commissioned to the church to plant churches among the Gentiles. First Corinthians 11, 18, the assumption is that Christians are coming together regularly and in person.

Second Corinthians 11, 28, Paul's concern for all of the churches is paramount in his thinking listed right alongside the same concern for whippings, stonings and shipwrecks.

You want to know what the Great Commission is? It's the planting of churches. That's how the apostles understood it. All of these other things. And I was a Bible translator. Praise God for the pilots that flew us around, men walking around there.

[ 30 : 21 ] I had some tears in my eyes, seen some of these pictures. Praise God for the support structures for all of the things coming. But the primary, the pinnacle, what we are shooting for as the

members of Christ's family is to see these outposts of light planted around the world and the strengthening of the weaker ones.

We press on where no church exists. But we have to have these lanes in our mind. And I'm just going to articulate these really quickly. You have to have two different lanes when it comes to the general world of missions.

There's Pauline missions, which we're talking about now, the emphasis to go where nothing has been planted, and there's Timothy missions. Again, I'm borrowing this from John Piper, so if you're not happy with this, go talk to John Piper.

Piper will elucidate if you remember in 2 Timothy chapter 4, Piper's talking about Titus. Go to Crete. Go name elders there. Timothy, you go back to Ephesus and straighten out what apparently had already gone wrong in their theology.

There's Timothy impulse to strengthen what is weak. Not every missionary is an ends of the earth missionary. Praise God for that. We need stronger churches in some of these areas, in the Mandarin speaking world, in the Arabic speaking world, in the Bahasa speaking world.

[ 31 : 41 ] We need stronger churches, but we don't call them unreached language groups. You know what we call them? Poorly reached language groups. You have to have categories for this so we don't just lump everything into missions.

Otherwise, everyone turns into a missionary and every place is a mission field, and then we lose all strategic impetus that is out there to make sure you've got the right categories. What are the four primary categories that we look at if we use the church and language as our guardrails?

Well, there's four lanes. If you want to get into this deeper, go to 9marks.org and there's an article on there that's called a Better Way to Look at Missions, but the real quick and dirty of this is there's four lanes of missions today.

Some of these didn't exist 40, 50 years ago or 100 years ago, but the four lanes of missions.

Number one is the training of national pastors to see these national pastors, particularly in the global south.

The terminology of the global south is all over there, but it makes me nervous. A lot of the global south is riddled with prosperity, gospel, and weak theology. So how do you strengthen these pastors in the global south?

[ 32 : 48 ] Well it's the training of these pastors into better orthodox theology that we have been privileged to have so much of in our language. The training of national pastors, a lane in missions.

Number two is English speaking churches. I was in India three weeks ago for the All India Pastors Conference. We see radius India starting. It just started three weeks ago as well.

In all states, all provinces of India were represented for the All India Pastors Conference. Everybody coming from a different language. What was the language that we used?

English. How in the world a bunch of Indian pastors coming together and using English? English is the dominant language of the world. And so for our time to see strategic churches planted in Cairo, in Jakarta, in Dubai, in Doha, these airline pilots, these migrant workers, these expat teachers to see these outposts of light, these embassies of the kingdom, there is a lane for this that is legitimate and helpful in our world today.

And then the third lane of missions, this national language churches. In Papua New Guinea where I was from, that's Melanesian Pigeon. In Indonesia that's Bahasa.

[ 34 : 07 ] In China that's in Mandarin. Then we don't call them unreached language groups. We call them poorly reached language groups. But this is a legitimate, I want to see more churches in China.

I am begging to see more churches in Hindi in the Indian context. More churches in Urdu, in Pashtu. All of these different languages, these national languages.

But then there's this fourth lane of missions, this Pauline lane. Primary languages left today. They're not majority languages.

You have to learn two languages if you're going to get to these places. You have to learn the language of the country. And then you have to learn the language of the small minority group in that country that still has no gospel and no church among it.

Friends, these are our primary lanes of missions today. Where we as the church, we press out. And where fourth memorial is going, where some of your sons and daughters, some spiritual sense have gone out is to go to those places where no church exists.

[ 35 : 14 ] To learn those languages. To become competent in those cultures. To a worldview level. For the sake of presenting the gospel. For the sake of discipling them.

For the sake of gathering them into churches that by God's grace will outlive every one of us in this room. That's the hope we have.

That's where we put our energies. We see these churches planted that will still be going. Still be preaching the gospel faithfully. Still be opening this every Sunday and teaching what it clearly means until Christ returns.

That's the hope of the Great Commission. That's the impetus of the Great Commission. That is the force of the Great Commission to go where those places are unknown to us presently.

And so we get to the final point. We come back to this chiasmatic pattern to the middle where Paul makes his main point in verse 20. And thus I make it my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named, lest I build on someone else's foundation.

[ 36 : 19 ] But as it is written, those who have never been told of him will see. And those who have never heard will understand. Praise God for Timothy and missions. Praise God for other lanes of missions.

Praise God for the support structures, for the pilots that flew us in and out, for the translation consultants that made it possible, for the literacy consultants that taught us how to teach the Yembe-Yembe's how to read and write for the first time in their history.

Praise God for all of these things. But we continue to push towards the church. We continue to push towards that thing that Christ has chosen to use, the bride that he will return for.

He's not returning for individual believers. He's returning for the bride. He's returning for the church. That's what we press into. That's where we use our energies to see his name advanced in all the earth.

I'm going to close with this story and we'll be done. When we had presented the gospel to the Yembe's about two weeks after we had presented the gospel, the Yembe's came up and saw me late at night.

[ 37 : 22 ] The Yembe's are night owls. They stay up to about two, three o'clock in the morning almost every day. They helped us build our house. Our house was up on eight foot high poles that were just like their houses because there's a lot of critters that you don't want getting into your house.

The Yembe's knew because they'd helped me build my house where I slept at night and they had a long pole. When they needed to get me, they would come under the house and they knew about where my head was and they would hit the bottom of the floor and your head would bounce up off the floor.

You would think that Christ was returning. It was upon us. You just snapped awake like that. Two weeks after we presented the gospel, what, what? Bottom of the floor, heads bouncing up, go to the window, ask, who is it?

It's a typical Yembe response. It's me, it's me. I know it's you. Who are you? He said, it's me, your tribal father.

In Yembe, Yembe, we had been adopted into clans. They have four clans and I was adopted into one. My tribal father is the chief of the village and at that point, we were pretty sure that he understood the gospel.

[ 38 : 28 ] I was like, oh man, this is important. Grab a flashlight, go outside and there's seven guys who are standing there. In Yembe, Yembe, it's really rude to shine your flashlight on people's faces. That ruins their night vision.

So you shine it on their feet and they can recognize all 1200 of each other by their feet. That's why they can track people through the jungle so easily. I can't recognize anybody. Of course, they can recognize my feet, but I'm looking at their feet and I'm trying to figure out who was there.

So I'm inching my way up the feet to the kneecaps, to the shorts and okay, recognize those shorts, recognize that belly button. And you got about seven guys that we figured at that point understood the gospel.

This is two weeks after we had gotten through Matthew 28. And so I asked them, did somebody get bit by a snake? Did somebody have a bad case of malaria? Because they would come get me at night if there were medical emergencies.

They said, no, no, no, it's nothing like that. We want to know when we're going. And I said, what do you mean? And they said, well, if what the book says is true, our sister village across the mountain, the men and women of Changri Man, they're going to the place of fire, right?

[ 39 : 37 ] Yeah, that's true. So when are we going? Will it be tomorrow or will it be the next day? When are we going to take them this talk? Two weeks old in the faith.

When are we going? Friends, when I came back to the United States in 2016, I had a church and a wealthy businessman offer to fly the Yembi Yembi elders from Papua New Guinea all the way back to the United States for their missions conference.

And I wouldn't do it for two reasons. Reason number one is it would blow their worldview apart, like just to ride on an airliner, let alone land at LAX, cost go, forget about it. Like it would just, it would be too much.

But the second reason, and I was able to be more pointed with the businessman, I said, brother, you think this would be a good thing, but I don't think you would like the outcome of this. Because remember, if the Yembi's like what you're saying, even to this day when we have an elder in training and he gets up and he speaks and he's doing something that is not in the text or that the church in general feels like he's starting to drift, the women in the church will yell, the canoe's turning, the canoe's turning.

And this poor guy's just dying up front. The Yembi's would probably get up at a gathering kind of like this, where we're celebrating the gospel to the ends of the earth and they would say some version of how long have you had this talk?

[ 40 : 57 ] How long has this been in your language? When are you going? And friends, there's some of you in here that are young enough, that are able to learn languages, that are able to contemplate taking the gospel where it has never been before.

And there's an army of you in here that can send these ones well. You have a distinguished heritage from what I understand of being goers and senders in this church, do not rest on your laurels.

Be the church that continues to see past Spokane, sees past Washington state. Do the things locally, be involved in the international ministry, be involved in the thing.

You're a Christian. You should be involved in those things, but always with an eye towards where is the gospel yet to go? Where does the church not exist to this day?

Pauline and Timothy and missions coming together, goers and senders coming together to see the great commission accomplished until our Father calls us home.

[ 42 : 04 ] Let's pray. Father, thank you for your grace to us in the person of Jesus Christ. Thank you that we have so clearly in our language this message of hope that saves the world, it gives us new highs, new joy, new habits in life that transforms dead men into living tools fit for the King to use.

Father, I pray for this church, fourth memorial. I pray that you would light a fire in this church that would not be extinguished until you return. We pray for the ones in here.

We pray for those faithful ambassadors representative of the tables out there in the foyer. We pray for their continued longevity. We pray for their perseverance. We pray that they would continue to walk in a manner uprightly watching their life and doctrine.

And we pray for the senders in this room. May you make them faithful. May they have scars, not the physical scars, but the scars of living a life where their eyes were on the ends of the earth.

We pray for this because we pray that we would be faithful to the final command that you have given to us as your followers. And we'll give you all the glory for these things. In Jesus' name, amen.