

Great Commission Pt. 2

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[0:00] We'll see. I don't have any candy to throw at you, but I have to say that the best part of the retreat is sitting around the table talking and sharing.

And I thank you guys because sometimes it's hard to get in groups. But I'm hoping maybe at lunch you can do the same thing because it's when we brainstorm ideas that we can just hear Christ's message as to where we should go and what we should do.

So I'm going to start up this afternoon. Why is it that I'm the last thing before you go home at night, so you're tired, and now I'm the last thing before lunch and you're tired.

But that's okay. I'm up for the task. So I'm going to repeat the prayer that we prayed last night, which I modified from Ephesians 6, 19 and 20.

So let us pray. I know you've heard it again, but sometimes we have to repeat these words so that they just get in our soul. Heavenly Father, help me speak the words that will enable me to fearlessly make known the gospel.

[1:10] I pray I may declare the gospel fearlessly as I should. Come, Holy Spirit, come. Fill us with your presence, your wisdom, your knowledge, and most especially your love.

Help us as we unpack how now shall we live living out the Great Commission. Give me your words and only your words.

It's Saturday before lunch, and yet again we are tired. Renew us. Help us to become even more rooted in Christ. And I pray all this in Jesus' most holy name.

Amen. All right, ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, men and women. You know, I know you're like, are you kidding me? We just did the Great Commission.

We're doing the Great Commission again. But, you know, that's the beauty of two people can talk on the same message and you hear different things. And I shared with you last night that I'm currently a Colson Fellows.

[2:15] And so one of the books we are reading in the Colson Fellows is How Now Shall We Live from Chuck Colson, who created the Colson Fellows. And so I just, like I said, this is titled How Now Shall We Live?

Living Out the Great Commission. But I've got to say, just being in my group and hearing five other people speak, I'm just going to have them all come up and speak instead of me because they had such better ideas.

But that's fine. Let's do this. Last Friday, after substituting, which is my current mission field, I went down the mountain to visit a friend of mine who's 97 years old.

Her name is Mrs. Mayo. Now, Mrs. Mayo is a beautiful African-American woman. She survived cancer twice. Her husband, both her sons, and all five of her siblings have been called home to heaven.

She lives alone, and at 97, she no longer drives. Thanks goodness. She spends most of her time praying, and more often than not, someone is visiting with her and sharing their woes.

[3:29] Our daughter, Katie, loves Mrs. Mayo. And because I'm an Army brat and I moved every two years, and Bill and I were stationed at Plattsburgh Air Force Base in 1982, New York has become our home, away from home, far away from all our relatives, which are scattered across the country, which is everybody's story nowadays, right?

So during the time we lived in Lake Luzerne, St. Mary's was the daily love and contact our two kiddos, Chris and Katie, were nourished by.

Katie visited Mrs. Mayo a couple weeks ago because Mrs. Mayo's second son, Mark, passed away in September. Katie lives in Fayetteville, right near you.

And she drove the three hours from Syracuse to sit in Mrs. Mayo's living room and give her the gift of presence along with her dog, Briggs, who I really love dogs.

I mean, I like dogs, and I'm looking forward to seeing tomorrow. So Katie told me Mrs. Mayo never gets to share her heart because people are always sharing theirs.

[4:43] And so when I went down the mountain last week, I sat with her in the yard. It was a beautiful day like it is today. And I made a point of not talking, which is very difficult for me, but I did the best I could to listen.

And during our hour-long conversation, Mrs. Mayo expressed to me how hard it is today. People don't communicate. A dear friend that had been there for her for over 40 years is not talking with her right now.

And it's really making her sad. Mrs. Mayo thought others, you know, she had many thoughts, but some of them were that the world is just changing and children aren't changing anymore.

Many folks are way too busy to see the beauty all around them. So many people are physically attached to their phones. She agonized over how to fix the brokenness.

And yet all during her visit, she was positive. She told me a couple of times she didn't feel old. She stated how God has richly blessed her so much.

[5:58] And as we visited, when people walked by, we had to stop talking just in case somebody said hi to her so that she was ready to answer back with kindness.

Her life is centered on looking up and looking out. Okay? She is humble, gentle, grateful.

She loves simplicity and reekness. Love reeks from her pores. And guess what? I see Jesus in her.

Now, as you have learned from last night, I'm a pretty militant person. I break things down. I spell them out. When I go to church on Sunday and the sermon starts, I'm the one that takes out the sheet of paper and starts writing down the notes from the sermon.

Right? Because I want to break everything into bullets so that I can press on and do my job. I'm focused. I'm a military pilot. I always seek to understand the air operations plan.

[7:05] Right? So that I know what's going on. As a math teacher, I love formulas and I solve problems. And as a Christian, when you ask me how now I should live and live out the Great Commission, you have my attention.

I love the fact that Bill was asking us questions and he gave us questions so that we can think, respond, and react. Right? But we have to do so so it's not complicated.

That it's not full of fluff and stuff or busyness and it's not focused on self. So we need to live out that Great Commission, the rest of our story, without fluff, stuff, busyness, or focus on inside.

And instead, we're looking up and we're looking out. Like Elijah's, God's direction and purpose and marching orders were not found in the wind. They weren't found in the earthquake.

They weren't found in the fire. They were found in God's small voice. It comes from the Bible. It comes from the Word of God. And I love the fact that we have to just clothe the shelves in Scripture.

[8:20] We have to write it in our hearts. Write it in our minds. Like Deuteronomy 11, 18, 20 says, Fix these words in your heart and minds.

Tie them as symbols on your hand and bind them on your forehead. With the Holy Scripture part of our DNA, we can face the challenges of today's culture, recognizing, like what Mrs. Mayo said, the world has changed.

An American worldview inventory done in 2021 by George Barna, the Cultural Research Center, revealed that just 6% of all U.S. adults have a biblical worldview.

A new piece of groundbreaking research by the Culture Research Center answers the question raised by the initial study.

If American adults do not have a biblical worldview, what is the dominant worldview among the 94% others?

[9:26] The simple and surprising answer is, drumroll, there isn't one, all right? There isn't one.

Based on a half-hour-long personal interview, national representatives sampled 2,000 adults. The CRC study found that the most common worldwide view might best be described as syncretism. That is the summary name for a contrasting and irreconcilable collection of beliefs and behaviors that define people's lives.

It is a cut-and-paste approach to make sense of and respond to life. Rather than developing an internally consistent and philosophical, coherent perspective on life, Americans embrace points of view or action that feel comfortable and seem most convenient.

These beliefs and behaviors are inconsistent and even contradictory, but few Americans are troubled by those failings. Now, I'm really proud of my group because in my group, we kind of talked about that.

[10:42] We had one that shared that her brother Cherry picks this and Cherry picks that, and that's how we feel in our me-myself culture. Okay? So, let's agree.

We live in a strange new world. So, when we contemplate how now to live, we have to identify and understand something right here, right now, that we have been placed in such a time like this to live out the great commandment and the great commission.

We have to understand that the battle and the tools that we have so we can put on the armor of God and fight the fight with the sword of the Spirit for this time.

Today, right now, this is our Esther moment. We were born to be here, right? Esther 4.14 tells us, For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place. Relief and deliverance from this world is going to come from another place. But you, ladies and gentlemen, have been called to live in, you've been called to this royal priesthood for such a time as now.

[12:14] So, in the next few minutes, I'm going to arm you with four Mrs. Mayo-isms on how now to live. And I pray that the Holy Spirit plants and waters the seeds so that they will take root in whatever resonates in your Kintsugi heart.

Now, remember, I can't pronounce that word. But our heart is filled with Jesus. He fills our broken pieces like we talked about last night so we can fight the good fight.

And I'm hoping that the questions you took from earlier and the questions that you're asking yourself now as to how you should live, how your church family you should live, how your neighborhood you should live, is going to arm you to fight the fight.

I want to warn you in advance, you're going to have rough days. You're going to stumble. You're going to fall while you do your mission. Your journey is going to be messy.

We talked about so that, you know, you see Jesus' message through your mess. And it's certainly not going to be linear. It's going to require constant prayer, a continual relationship with God, one another, and daily repentance that we talked about last night.

[13:36] Remember, everybody, your identity is through and with and in Jesus Christ. I'm going to warn you before I go over these four rules.

You're going to need to take time to rest, to be renewed by the Father's gentle whispering in Bible study. You're going to have to trust the Holy Spirit's going to provide you hope, wisdom, and discernment as you live out the Great Commission.

So here it goes. Here are four Mrs. Mayo-isms to help you live on your Esther road. Number one, I want you to eat healthy, to feast on the Holy Bible.

The best way to feed your heart, mind, and soul is with the Word of God. All the answers we need for life are found in the Holy Book.

2 Timothy 3, 16-17. And I love how so many Bible scriptures are 3-16. Right? You need to go through that Bible and look at all the 3-16s.

[14:40] But in this one, it says, All scripture is God-breathed and useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

We're supposed to work. Our actions, our thoughts, our words need to reflect God's Word, especially because Bible illiteracy is rampant.

And we live in the greatest unchurched region in the country, the Northeast. We have to know the Word of God. We not only have to be, well, we not only have to know it, we have to be lifelong learners.

El-cubed, right? Not only do we have to know it, we have to live it so people see Jesus in us. Holy Scripture cannot be an a la carte menu.

We can't cherry pick it. We can't choose what we're going to follow based on how we feel. We have to study it, know it, do it, live it.

[15:53] And like those Hebrew warnings I talked about last night, we've got to make sure we don't fall away. Hebrews 5.14 says, We have much to say about this, but it is hard to make it clear to you because you no longer try to understand.

In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone else to teach you the elementary truths of God's Word over and over again.

You need milk, not solid food. Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness.

But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish between good and evil. Now, I am sharing this, ladies and gentlemen, because we've got to know the Word, we've got to live the Word, and we've got to teach the Word.

And I say that because, you know what, I'm a little uncomfortable. Okay? I told Bill, I feel naked when I'm talking to you guys because I didn't go to seminary.

[17:10] You know what? I teach math, but you know what? I'm stretching myself by standing into you in my humility, in my craziness, because, yes, there's a little craziness.

Because, you know what? If I can get up here and teach, you need to get up and teach. And I do not mean teach like we're doing formally now.

The best way to live out the Great Commission is by conversation with people. And not just conversation.

I mean, don't just talk to the person like, let me play, let me play. The best way is to form friendships, have relationships, and share Jesus through gentle conversations.

Right? So, even though, like, I'm a little nervous, because I know that I am, like, scary, and I am probably scaring you, but in my scariness, I want you to, I want to model the behavior.

[18:11] Right? I want to model the behavior that we all have to do to share the Word of God and know the Word of God so we know what is good and we know what is bad.

Okay? In today's world, guys, when you go out there, you find so many worldviews. You find secularism, postmodernism, Eastern mysticism, Marxism, Marxism, the list goes on and on and on and on and on.

We have to be so careful not to insidiously be swept away with progressive Christianity or any other gospel that speaks, that doesn't speak the truth with a capital T.

We've got to know, we've got to be red flagged when someone talks to us and you're like, where does that say that in the Bible? Or, you know, that type thing. So I use this resource from Kevin Bywater.

He's from Summit Ministries. He created, are you ready, an accurate test to see when things don't match with God's Word. Now, I love this test because it takes the four basic operations of math, which, you know, I can do math.

[19:22] So what are the basic four operations of math? Now, here's your chance to go from B plus to A minus. Help me here. The four basic operations of math.

You got this. Oh, you say, oh, yeah, go ahead. Addition subtraction, multiplication, and division. Okay, for that, you will read on the division.

I'm going to give you an A minus, but here goes. This is how we're going to tell if things are true or not. One, does the message add to the Scripture? Two, does the message subtract from the deity of Christ?

Three, does the message multiply the requirements of salvation? Four, does the message divide the body of Christ?

So, guys, I've just given you a little mathematics to help you. This formula is a great tool for you as you stand firm on the Word of God and live out the Great Commission.

[20:26] We've got to know the Word each and every day. We've got to do our homework, just like you should do your math homework. You should do your Bible homework.

And you need to eat solid, healthy food to help you. And our source, our strength, our knowledge, our health.

Yes? You can use those words. Absolutely. I love that you're learning the math. This is so good.

Okay, so the four basic operations in mathematics for us to discern if we're falling into progressive Christianity, Mormonism, Jehovah's Witnesses, you name it, to test whether or not something is true or not.

Add, subtract, multiply, and divide. One, does the message add to Scripture? Two, I'm on a time schedule.

One, does the message add to Scripture? Two, does the message subtract the deity of Christ?

Three, does the message multiply the requirements of salvation?

[21:44] Four, does the message divide the body of Christ? This is, you know, this is flying talk, formation talk.

Don't, don't, don't, don't pay attention to this. So our health, our strength, our knowledge, it comes from the Bible and the Bible alone. Hebrews 4, 12 reminds us, for the word of God is alive and active, sharper than any double-edged sword.

It penetrates, even dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow. It judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

Going right back to the heart from last night's message. Now, when I read this talk to Bill last Sunday, he said, you know, when you do number one, number one, eat healthy, feast on the Holy Bible.

He added, asked me to add this footnote. So here's the footnote for number one. He commented that I needed to let, remind you all that when you're reading the Bible, you invite the Holy Spirit in to guide you.

[22:54] In John 14, 5 to 17, Jesus tells us, if you love me, keep my command. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever.

The Spirit of truth, the world cannot accept him, but neither sees him nor knows him, but you know him, for he lives in you and will be in you.

In verse 26, Jesus says further, but the advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

So guys, as we study, know, teach, share the Bible. Remember, don't add, subtract, multiply, or divide it, but also, invite the Holy Spirit in to open your heart, mind, and soul into living it out.

So number one, eat healthy, feast on the Holy Bible, and seek the Holy Spirit's wisdom. Number two, communicate, resolve conflict.

[24:11] Mrs. Nail says that folks don't really talk anymore. We're on our phones, we're rushing here and there, we're getting our list done, we're binging on Netflix, we go on and on and on like the Energizer Bunny.

Now believe me when I say this, I am preaching to myself here, okay? I'm ready to watch the next episode of Manifest on Netflix, okay? I'm going to tell you, that's what I'm doing when I go home, okay?

But, we have to, I want to share with you or model with you how this relates as far as communicating and resolving conflict.

Bill and I have invited two different people to our house for Thanksgiving this year and we're hoping neither one of them comes. It's not because we don't like them or love them because we do, but it's rather because both groups, both people are estranged from their loved ones.

Now, I am praying that they can resolve this conflict. I am praying that they get a better offer because they are reunited with their loved ones and therefore they will not grace our table.

[25:25] Estrangement and isolation are super common these days. I had to watch a TED Talk as part of the Colson Fellows and it was all about how phones were supposed to help us be better and now phones have caused us to be so isolated and believe you me when I said if I asked a student to put a phone down you would think they're suffering from withdrawal right?

Right? But we live in this fake world with our fake friends and this fake life right? And so we are estranged we don't talk to people that don't think like us and we are isolated and I hope somebody asked me later did those people come to you for Thanksgiving and I hope I can tell you neither one came because they reconciled.

We had a friend a couple years ago who did not see his daughter and his grandchildren for a couple of years because he voted for Trump. I am telling you regardless of the blame, the hurt our politics our pride we have to communicate.

We are commanded to love one another I know that was last night but we are commanded even if we disagree and that means ladies and gentlemen each one of you have to be initiators.

If there is conflict right now in your life if you are estranged from somebody you have to reconcile you have to take the first step and you have to say I'm sorry that's what I'm telling my sister tell her you're sorry even if you didn't do it.

[27:05] We have to be uncomfortable we have to go where others don't. You know last Friday I subbed for a teacher and she had a sign on the front of her podium and it said live as though this were the last day of the marking period.

So I want to ask you are you living like today is your last day? Is there someone that you need to go home to tonight after our retreat at three and you have to be the one to initiate?

You have to be the one to show love joy peace patience kindness goodness faithfulness gentleness and self-control by turning the other cheek even if you don't want to what conflict can you and I right now try to resolve because we are image bearers.

Now Mrs. Mayo said we don't talk Mrs. Mayo also said we don't listen when people come and visit they love to share their woes with her and they leave without hearing hers they leave her with sadness and her heart is heavy and although she doesn't say it it's a one sided relationship you know I cut to the chase and all she can do is pray so I have to ask you how's your prayer life how's your relationship with the Lord are you coming to him and you're giving him this litany of bliss are you stopping and listening to hear his voice back at you do you see his handiwork throughout your day you know I love doing meditations first thing in the morning because then I see it throughout my day do you see others do you see others and see

Christ like we talked about last night do you take the time to forge relationships with people and not talk but simply listen you know Americans we just want to keep talking and we don't even give people time to talk back alright do you have friendships with people that don't think look or feel the same way you do our son Chris studies philosophy in order to teach at his alma mater at the Air Force Academy my alma mater he went to Hamilton College but he studies philosophy so that he can teach at the Air Force Academy he's currently a major he wrote his master's thesis on civility about six years ago talk about timely civility today he's on his third year and his final year at Baylor for his PhD he's writing his doctorate dissertation on exploring tolerance through the lens of good will the world needs civility tolerance and good will it begins with me just like revival begins with me that's the circle

[30:20] I gotta step out of this circle and it begins with you right civility tolerance and good will now I'm going to give you an example of maybe a seed planting I just learned that Father Efe does something at the community college and this is an interesting fact and we're trying to figure out how now shall we live individually what we can do to live out the great commission and as a group or with the church a new study from crime prevention research center identified 135 attacks on pro-life institutions and people since the leak of the US Supreme Court decision to overturn Roe versus Wade by contrast six pro-abortion people were attacked during the same time period pro-life people and organizations have been shot fireburned vandalized stolen from and threatened this past Saturday after church in Queensberry we go to an

Anglican church on Saturday nights Father Dave told us about a new pregnancy center that was going to open up in Glens Falls Father Dave stated that they had an announcement last Saturday they announced the director's name first name only they announced the board members names first name only of this new pregnancy center the center cannot be located in a church because they're fearful of attack and in fact they don't know yet where that location is going to be of course this is for the concern of health and safety of the people going to the pregnancy center if this is not an example for you of the lack of stability tolerance and good will then I don't know what is and it's occurring in our own backyard but let me caution you you know it would be really easy for you to just go like the movie on the river quai do you remember what the line was at the end of the movie on the river quai when you were you setting down with anybody no madness madness madness madness and it would be really easy for you guys right here and right now to say the world's gone mad this is madness when you talk about this pregnancy center in glens falls but I'm going to tell you there's always madness this guy has always been falling it's always been awful and the only way that we can resolve this is love you know when I think of last week's epistle it was from 1st corinthians 16:13 to 4 there were some marching orders

I love those air operation orders those battlefield orders how shall I live well like I said all I want to do is take my own bible and put it in my brain and fill it in my heart and share it and the words were corinthians 6:13 to 4 watch stand fast in faith be brave be strong let all that you do be done with love okay so if there's madness guess what I'm going to be part of that pregnancy center in glens falls I'm going to support it and guess what my name is Karen love and I'm going to let people know that I support and believe in that that's one way that we can be that Joshua will one be strong and courageous model that behavior you know it's timely that this retreat is right before the election I can't help but asking if you're reflecting

Christ in all you say think and do as well as email tweet and post now I know I said that last night but you know students need repetition so I'm repeating it to you the world is polarized and it is canceled but we as image bearers of God are not polarized we are not canceled no matter where you stand on an issue or agenda we are to share Jesus in through all that we do Luke 6 27 31 tells us how to communicate but to you who are listening I say love your enemies do good to those who hate you bless those who curse you pray for those who mistreat you if someone slaps you on the cheek turn to the other also if someone takes your coat do not withhold your shirt from them give to everyone who asks you and if anyone takes what belongs to you do not demand it back do to others what you would have them do to you so under step two communicate resolve conflict be civil and kind and talk to one another even if you don't like them number three give thanks in everything G.K. Chesterton said gratitude is the mother of all virtues 1st Thessalonians 5 18 commands us to give thanks in all circumstances for it is God's will for you in Christ Jesus this male is 97 years old she gets up every day and thanks God for the gift of being alive she told me that every day is another blessing from God the beauty our blessings our life we need to adopt an attitude of gratitude in this book how now shall we live Chuck Colson remarked that we should live in a state of continuous gratitude for God he goes on gratitude in every breath we breathe every moment we have to enjoy the wonders of his creation and all that is our family our work our recreation gratitude that the son of God took away our sins and paid our debt on the cross compelled by this gratitude we desire to love him and live out his command unfortunately appears today that the [36:41] American dream is becoming a life of comfort the American dream is now becoming a life with no worries no work and no suffering frankly you know I'm alarmed when I hear stories about Canada's euthanasia laws Canada stands poised to legalize new standards for euthanasia in March 2023 the new law extends to medical assistance and dying laws to those with mental illnesses after a temporary exclusion expires euthanasia is about to become a lot more common in Canada as a way to cut down health care costs by March the new law in Canada is expected to allow children to be killed by state doctors without the approval of their parents now why am I sharing this to you so that you can pray how now shall we live one step at a time one prayer at a time by action somehow the biblical message like the need for all of us to repent and the fact that we are going to suffer is being eliminated from life's equation today we want to decide our beginning and our end in essence we're trying to not only silence

God but we're trying to replace him with ourselves citing Chuck Coulson's book again he states one of the great paradoxical truths of the Christian life is that the greatest adversary adversity I'm sorry the greatest adversity often produces the greatest blessing James 1 2 reminds us of this truth consider it pure joy my brothers whenever you face trials of many kinds Jesus himself stated in John 16 3 I have told you all these things so that in me you may have peace and in this world you will have trouble but take heart I have overcome the world so the bottom line is whatever we face wherever we go be grateful rejoice in the Lord always again I say rejoice!

Philippians 4 4 give thanks in everything in every blessing and every suffering last one is number four are you guys with me are we still with me okay okay I'm trying I'm looking at the clock I'm trying I'm trying number four think young get out there and work this is Mayo's 94 97 I have number dyslexia with 4 and 7 and that's pretty hard as a math teacher thank you this is Mayo's 97 she shared with me that she thinks she's young I told her that's great because I'm 64 but in my mind I'm 16 which was a little embarrassing last week when I wiped out on the paddleboard court at our retreat you know I believe you're only as young as you think and I flew with this guy Blair Biddle on his spinny flight on a KC-135 and he and I worked together for two years in taper scheduling and every day he told me he was an old man he was in his late 40s and Blair always used to say I'm an old man and today 35 years later Blair's still an old man and I'm not okay what does it mean to be old well for many old equals retirement equals doing nothing again no worries no suffering no pain my mom is 87 she's moved three times in four years she moved from a 55 or older gated duplex in Nashville to a 55 or older apartment with transition into assistant living in Nashville to another 55 or older apartment with transition to assisted living in Fredericksburg to a final 55 or older apartment complex that makes the love boat look like a dump okay now this scares me more and more folks are seeking the new American dream of luxury these delight our eyes and they make us look in instead of up and out whatever happened to the notion of growing and living and serving

Christ and here until you hear those amazing words in Matthew 25 23 well done good and faithful servant I am ordering all of you people today to think young you need to get out there and go to work right here and right now Jesus tells us in Matthew 9 37 the harvest is plentiful but the workers are few get your shoes on and get in the mission field ASAP are you reaching out to others actively living out your mission field you know all of us are called to go out and spread the gospel I don't care what our culture says or how we're going to be mocked so how and what are you doing to serve and to ultimately glorify God now

[42 : 28] I brought my first card in the deck of West Westminster cards because these are like math flash cards I have these in my home and they just helped me learn get this into my my noggin so this is the Westminster short catechism card I got them a couple years ago and I'm going to ask you question number one and I'm going to see who gets the answer right so here's the question what is the chief end of man absolutely correct the chief aim of man is to glorify God and enjoy him forever and the way that we do this is by doing good works not that our works count in our salvation good job you get a dessert today at lunch okay we glorify

God by following the great commandment there's two of them and by living out the great commission so I'm going to share with you what my current mission field is because it is not just going to Ethiopia it is right here in the streets of Syracuse I live in Chestertown okay I see this role of the next chapter of my life as being an encourager okay I am so grateful to be here today and encourage you I am so grateful to God that Bishop Bill and I are able to visit Anglican churches and missions and love and support them along their journey you know there's six new Anglican missions that have been formed in New York since we left the Episcopal church and when we're not working for Bishop Julian maybe one or two times a month visiting parishes we attend two services a month and we just encourage people in their walk with Jesus now that's role one

I am an encourager that's my mission field when I am not traveling with Bill I have a secular mission field it's called substitute teaching now believe me when I say this subbing is a war zone right now I subbed back from 1992 to 94 when we came back to New York and when I subbed it was worse than when I went to Jeddah Saudi Arabia for Desert Shield it was terrible but then I went back on active duty and when I went back into teaching I was able to have my own classroom and it was a well oiled machine and it was good all right but then when Bill joined ADLW I decided okay I'm going to retire and I'm only going to sub when I'm home so I went back into darkness because subbing is not fun the kids know they have a sub and they think that they can just have so much fun with her right and so

I am in a mission field right now okay subbing is even worse than it was back in 1994 honestly it's like a box of chocolate you never know what you're going to get in the classroom you attend what movie did that come for thank you okay it's a box of chocolate but my mission field is the New York State Public Junior Senior High School and I am a witness for Christ ladies and gentlemen we're called to go into dark places and share Jesus sometimes all I can do is pray I had one student she is now a he she changed her name to Lucifer so I can't call her he I can't call her she and I can't call her by name I had her last year she came up to me this year I looked at her when you do attendance my name is Ace now okay

I can call that person Ace I'm not calling you Lucifer but where I go it's hard but I pray for kids okay and I tell you that because I want you to know you need to be somewhere that makes you uncomfortable people Matthew 5 13 to 16 says Jesus tells us you are the salt of the earth but if the salt loses its saltiness how can it be made salty again it is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot you are the light of the world a town built on a hill cannot be hidden neither do people put a light in a lamp and put it under a bowl instead they put it on a stand it gives light to everyone in the house in the same way let your light shine before others that they may see your good deeds and glorify your father in heaven so when people say why are you substituting it's crazy that's why right so don't give up

[47 : 49] Ephesians 2 10 says for we are God's handiwork created in Christ Jesus to do good works which God prepared in advance for us what good works has God created for you like his small voice our works do not have to be ginormous or popular or bold we have the best role model in town Jesus Christ the son of God who lived a life of humility obedience surrender and love and yet his life of suffering death resurrection and ascension he overcame death and the sin and the forces of evil Jesus is the way the truth and the life no one comes to the father except through him John 14 6 and you and I are commanded to tell his story to the ends of the earth the great

commission so as you live out your great commission your mission field can be small didn't say Teresa say do small things with great love for Christ you can be a missionary by nurturing and caring for little ones as a mom or a granddaughter your field can be at work or by volunteering at the YWCA where my daughter works in Syracuse or by serving your church whatever wherever however whenever your goal is quite simple remember last night love is knowing Jesus love is sharing Jesus we love by knowing and sharing Jesus and all that we think say and do in small things in relationship with others we plant seeds that ultimately the Holy Spirit blesses so number four think young get out there and do good works that God has prepared for you today I have shared four

Mayoisms now in the military we tell you what you're going to tell you we tell you and then we tell you what you told to them so again I have talked to you about how you should live through Mrs. Mayo her four step process one eat healthy feast on the word of God and let the Holy Spirit guide you number two communicate resolve conflict you be civil and kind and talk to one another even when folks won't talk to you number three give thanks for every blessing and every suffering and number four think young get out there and do good deeds that God has prepared you to now I'm going to close by reading from another book from the Colton Fellows I'm going to cheat and read from the end but you really should read this book to encourage you I would like to share a couple of parting thoughts from this book Strange New World by Carl Truman it says the church needs to respond to this present age by avoiding the temptation of despair and optimism to fall to the former despair would be to fail to take seriously the promise that the church will win in the end because the gates of hell shall not prevail against her to engage in the latter optimism is simply to prepare the stage for deeper despair later there is an alternative

Rod Dreher who talked to us at our last convention he is an orthodox Christian and journalist he wrote live not by lies and he put it this way I am neither pessimistic nor optimist but I am hopeful he goes on to say be grateful for the good things that we do have here and now I thank God that I still live in a country with greater freedoms than say China I thank God I live in a time and place where I have access to good health care and that I have a job I enjoy and that I have a loving family but I'm also aware!

[52:20] that the world God promised me a life of ease and comfort that I currently have and that my calling as that of all Christians is to live faithfully in the time and place I have been set I must not despair I must work to the best of my ability to right such wrongs I must remember that the real meaning of my life and that of others is not found in the here and now but it is found in the here after suffering here and now may at times be terrible even unbearable but is never meaningless no it finds meaning in the life death resurrection ascension and return of our Lord Christ now listen I don't know but what I just read from here was all four of the Mrs.

Mayo is those that's how the Holy Spirit weaves things in all that we see and do so dear ones let me close by simply saying to you Hebrews 12:1 to 3 therefore since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin which so easily entangles and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us fixing our eyes on Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of faith for the joy set before him he endured the cross scorning its shame and sat down on the right hand of the throne of God consider him who endured such opposition from sinners so that you will not grow weary and lose heart and I say all this in Jesus name Amen