

The Great Commission Today

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Preacher: Rev Rory Stott

[0 : 00] It's my pleasure this morning to welcome with us Reverend Rory Stott. He's Minister in Fort Throes in the Black Isle. I myself and Rory, we began studies in the Free Church College as it was known then, which is now the Free Church Seminary, back in 2008.

And we went through college years together, so it's a privilege, a delight to welcome him to the Pope. But he's never preached here in Stornoway before, but he's got close ties with Stornoway. He actually met his wife, Kirsteen, on a trip over to Lewis, and we're delighted that Kirsteen is able to be with us today as well. So please do speak to him if you come through to the hall afterwards. Himself and Kirsteen, they'll be delighted to meet with you as well. So my pleasure to hand over to Rory now to lead us in our worship. Thank you so much. It is such a privilege to be with you today, to worship God.

Shall we just listen to the Word of God in Isaiah in chapter 40? The Lord is the everlasting God, the creator of the ends of the earth.

[1 : 14] He does not faint or grow weary. His understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might, he increases strength.

Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted. But they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings like eagles.

They shall run and not be weary. They shall walk and not faint. Let us worship God. And we're going to sing in Psalm 103.

And sing Psalm 103, verses 1 to 11. Let's sing to God's praise. Amen. Praise God, my soul, with all my heart.

Let me exalt his holy name. Forget not all his benefits.

[2 : 34] His praise, my soul, in song proclaim. The Lord forgives you all your sins.

And heals your sickness and distress. Your life he rescues from the grave.

And crowns you in his tenderness. He satisfies your deep desires.

From his unending source of good. So that, just like the eagle's strength.

Your beautiful vigor is renewed. The Lord is known for righteous acts.

[4 : 10] And justice too, down-trodden ones. To Moses he gave known his ways.

His mighty deeds to Israel's sons. The Lord is merciful and kind.

To anger slow and full of grace. He will not constantly reprove.

For in his anger hide his face.

He does not punish our misdeeds. Forgive our sins, their just reward.

[5 : 34] For the Lord. How great is love as high as heaven. To hearts of those who fear the Lord.

Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray.

Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray.

Let us pray. of our Lord Jesus Christ. You are worthy of all praise and honor and glory.

Father, we confess our sins before you this morning. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and in deed.

[6 : 40] Forgive us for all our shortcomings. We thank you that in Jesus Christ there is forgiveness and there is hope.

We do thank you and we praise you for the hope that we have in the gospel. We thank you again, dear Lord, for your creation.

We thank you for the beauty that surrounds us. And as we look out on such a glorious morning, we cannot help but worship you and praise you.

We thank you for the mountains and the seas. We thank you for the birds, the singing birds. We thank you, Lord, for all that reminds us of your goodness and your mercy and your love and your power, your creativity.

We thank you for all these things. Lord, we long to hear from you. So help us to put aside all that distracts us and to focus on you.

[7 : 50] And we pray this in Jesus' name and for his sake. Amen. Amen. Amen. Okay, boys and girls.

Now, I don't really know how many boys and girls are here. I can see as I look out, I can see a few young faces.

And I wonder, boys and girls, if I had to ask you what a missionary is, I wonder if you would know the answer. What is a missionary?

And I don't think in this church that you would shout out, would you? But if I had to ask you what a missionary is, and a short answer is that a missionary is, say, somebody who is sent out to tell people about Jesus Christ.

Now, I wonder if you enjoy Paw Patrol. Paw Patrol is a great program. And I wonder who your favorite Paw Patrol dog is.

[8 : 55] Now, I've got to confess that my favorite is Chase. And there are a couple of reasons for that. Chase is always dressed in blue. You know that. And Chase is just very cool.

He's normally wearing his police hat. And he goes out and he helps rider. Otherwise, there's Rocky or Zuma or Sky. Sky is very cool. If you like pink, then Sky is for you.

Sky goes up in the helicopter and does everything that rider asks her to do. Now, what I really love is when there's a problem and the Paw Patrol are called via their pup pads.

And their pup pads sort of make the sound and they all go together to the center. And rider says, there's a problem. We need you to help. And he's always a really, really organized rider.

And he says, you go, Zuma, you do this. And Chase, you do that. And Sky, I want you to do this. Really, really good planning and well organized. But rider sends them off with their instructions.

[10 : 00] He sends them off. And they all know exactly what they have to do. And they, oh, it's just so cool. When they go down that slide and they fall into these very smart Paw Patrol vehicles.

And they've all got their unique vehicles. And they go out and they do their thing. But they're sent out, aren't they? And the Bible tells us very, very clearly that God's people are sent out into the world to tell people about Jesus.

Now, everybody is gifted in different ways. And so they can use their gifts to help in that work. Somebody might be really good on the computer and they can help with that.

Or they might be good at speaking. Or they might be good mechanics or whatever it is. And they can serve God in that way. Paw Patrol reminds us that Jesus tells all his children to go out and tell people about him.

Boys and girls, thank you so much for listening. We're going to say the Lord's Prayer together as we pray together.

[11 : 17] Our Father, which art in heaven. Amen. Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not into temptation. But deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom. The power and the glory. Forever and ever. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. I'm going to sing again in Psalm 40.

Psalm number 40 and sing psalms on page 50 of the psalm books. Psalm 40 verses 1 to 8 on page 50.

I waited long upon the Lord. He heard my cry and turned to me. He raised me from the slimy pit. And from the mire he pulled me free.

[12 : 18] Let's sing to God's praise. I waited long upon the Lord. I waited long upon the Lord.

He heard my cry and turned to me. He raised me from the slimy pit. And from the mire he pulled me free. He raised me from the slimy pit.

And from the mire he pulled me free.

He set my feet on solid rock. A place to stand bold, firm and broad.

He put a new song in my mouth. A joyful hymn of praise to God.

[13 : 42] Many will look with godly fear. And on the Lord alone rely.

Blessed are they who trust the Lord. Who shone the proud and gods that lie.
Thou wonders you have a full heart. How many and how great they are.
You and sorrows are far beyond. Their power to number or declare.
You did not ask that cast or goats. He brought a sacrifice for sin.

[15:16] But you have opened up my ears. You did not seek burnt offering.

Please, if you are, Please, if you are, Please, if you are, Please, if you are, Please, if you are,
Please, if you are, Please, if you are, Please, if you are, Please, if you are, Pure will, my God, pure
love is in my heart and soul.

Thank you. Shall we turn in our Bibles, turn with me to Matthew's Gospel and chapter 28. Matthew's
Gospel and chapter 28, last chapter in the Gospel of Matthew.

And this is a chapter about the resurrection and the famous words of Jesus to his disciples in that
last little section of the chapter, what we call the Great Commission.

And that's what we're going to be thinking about this morning. So let me read the whole chapter,
Matthew and chapter 28. Now after the Sabbath, towards the dawn of the first day of the week,
Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb.

[17:10] And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from
heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning and his
clothing white as snow.

And for fear of him, the guards trembled and became like dead men. But the angel said to the
woman, Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus, who was crucified.

He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and
tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead.

And behold, he is going before you to Galilee. There you will see him. See, I have told you. So they
departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy and ran to tell his disciples.

And behold, Jesus met them and said greetings. And they came up and took hold of his feet and
worshipped him. Then Jesus said to them, Do not be afraid.

[18:10] Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me. While they were
going, behold, some of the guard went into the city and told the chief priests all that had taken
place.

And when they had assembled with the elders and taken counsel, they gave a sufficient sum of
money to the soldiers and said, Tell people. His disciples came by night and stole him away while
we were asleep.

And if this comes to the governor's ears, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble. So they
took the money and did as they were directed. And this story has been spread among the Jews to
this day.

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. And
when they saw him, they worshipped him. But some doubted.

And Jesus came and said to them, All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go,
therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the
Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.

[19:19] And behold, I am with you always to the end of the age. Amen. This is God's inerrant
word. And we pray his blessing on that reading.

Friends, shall we again just bow our heads and pray? Let's pray. Father, we do thank you for that
great commission to go out and make disciples of all nations.

We bless you, Lord God, that your desire is that all would be saved. And we thank you that you use
the ordinary to bring about transformation and change in people's lives.

Father, this morning we are conscious of those who are saddened, of those who are grieving. And
we do pray that you would be with those who are mourning the loss of loved ones.

We reflect on the tragedy that took place on Friday evening and a family that is heartbroken.

[20:36] We pray for that family. We pray, Heavenly Father, that you would be very close to them
at this time. We thank you, Lord, for the promises of your word that tell us that you are close to the
brokenhearted.

But, Lord, not only those who are grieving, but there will be some who have received difficult news
this last week. We live in a broken, fallen world.

And life is full of uncertainty and pain and suffering. And so we pray, Lord, for those who are suffering this morning.

We thank you for the fact that your church is a spiritual hospital. We come here not because we have everything together and our lives are all rosy.

We come here because we are broken and those who are needy. We thank you, dear Father, for your grace. We thank you for your mercy.

[21 : 42] And we thank you that you are the great comforter. So be very near to those who are in particular need of you this morning. And we pray for your people.

We pray, Lord, that you would give to your people the joy of the Lord, whatever their circumstances. That they would have that deep assurance of faith.

That they would have that peace which surpasses all understanding. We do pray for the communion services coming up this week.

We pray for those who will be leading the services and involved in the services. We pray that your blessing would be on them. We pray that you would give to your people an expectation that they would hear from you and not the wisdom of man.

And so work by your Holy Spirit amongst your people this week. We pray, Heavenly Father. We pray for those who do not know you. We pray, Lord God, that you would open eyes.

[22 : 46] We pray that you would bring people to the end of themselves. That they would turn to you and repent of their sins. We ask these things in Jesus' name and for his sake.

Amen. Amen. Okay. Let's sing again in Psalm 130 on page 421.

Psalm 130 on page 421. Lord, from the depths to thee I cried. My voice, Lord, do thou hear.

Unto my supplication's voice give an attentive ear. Let's stand to sing to God's praise. Amen. Lord, from the depths to thee I cried.

My voice, Lord, do thou hear. Come to my supplication's voice give an attentive ear.

[24 : 11] Lord, who shall stand if thou, O Lord, should smile in me with thee.

But yet with thee forgiveness is that fear thou mayest be.

I wait for God. My soul doth wait.

My hope is in his word. More than may that for morning watch.

My soul, which part the Lord. I say more than may that to watch.

[25 : 32] The morning light to see. Let Israel open the Lord.

Lord, for with him mercy is dear. And plenty as redemption is ever found with him.

And from all his iniquities Israel shall redeem.

Amen. Well, shall we turn back to the passage that I read earlier, Matthew's Gospel in chapter 28.

And Matthew 28 and verse 18, we read, And Jesus came and said to them, All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

[27 : 05] Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.

And behold, I am with you always to the end of the age. Well, Billy Graham, the famous evangelist, whatever our thoughts about him, he had great influence on many, many people.

And at one of his meetings in 1954 at London's Haringey Arena, someone asked him just before he was going to go out and preach, somebody asked him, What would you like to come out of this?

Well, said Billy gravely, among other things, at least a thousand missionaries. A thousand missionaries. And eventually, as we know, the influence that he was to have on so many people, he was to realize that and so much more.

The Great Commission. This is maybe the main passage in the whole Bible, but it's not the only passage in the Bible that tells us to go out and tell people about Jesus.

[28 : 33] It tells us about mission. Now, remember the context here is that the resurrected Jesus is speaking to his disciples.

The disciples and many people have witnessed the power of God. They have been witnesses to the extraordinary power of God at work.

As Jesus stands there after having died for three days and risen after three days, he stands there and says to his disciples, I want you to go out.

I want you to make my name known. I want you to make disciples of all nations. And what we might say the greatest movement in human history, not might, this is the greatest movement in human history.

And that movement continues to this day. As people share about Jesus Christ in all nations, throughout the whole world, and as their lives are transformed.

[29 : 47] And so we know in the book of Acts, this ripple effect that goes out into all the world. As people go out and tell people about Jesus. And what we need to remind ourselves this morning is that mission is part of the church's DNA.

Whether we're the free church or whatever church we are, that mission is part of the DNA. It is part of who we are, that this ripple effect goes outside of us.

I want to notice two things, and maybe a half point after that. But two main things this morning. The first one, as we think about mission, is the authority of mission.

Very, very simple. But we're taking from the passage here. What is the authority? Who is the authority of mission? The authority of mission is Jesus Christ. And he uses that word authority. All authority has been given to me. So I want to jump very quickly, just for us to get this idea of the authority of Jesus.

[30 : 53] And if you know your Bibles, you will know John 17, is that high priestly prayer of Jesus as he prays to his father. And he says, he lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, Father, the hour has come.

Glorify your son, that the son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all flesh. There's the hymn, the words of the hymn, Rock of Ages, cleft for me. There is that solid foundation of Jesus Christ.

Notice a couple of things. The unmistakable authority of Jesus Christ. And we turn to that, if you know your Bibles, Daniel 7 is a key chapter in the Old Testament.

And we have the prophecy of the Messiah who will come into the world. And we read in Daniel 7 and verse 13, I saw in the night visions and behold, with the clouds of heaven, there came one like a son of man and he came to the ancient of days and was presented before him.

[32 : 15] And to him was given dominion, authority, and glory, and a kingdom that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him.

His dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away and his kingdom, one that shall not be destroyed. And so, the unmistakable authority of Jesus.

Notice there, in Matthew and in Daniel, we see that he was given this authority. That doesn't mean that he didn't have authority before in the Trinity, in the Godhead.

But what it does mean is that in his role as mediator, he has given this authority over all people. And so, it's an unmistakable authority, but it is also an unending authority.

We've already seen that in that passage in Daniel. It is an everlasting authority as we think about the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Jesus, which is everlasting.

[33 : 24] It is eternal. Thinking here about authority, about the power that Jesus has. Think for a moment about the power that there is in the world.

Chairman Mao Zedong, the famous dictator, communist dictator, he famously said, power grows out of the barrel of a gun.

And Alfred Nobel of Sweden, he introduced dynamite to the world in 1866. And he called it, ironically, he called it security powder.

Isn't that ironic? And the idea behind it was to promote peace and stability across the world. And so, there are two versions here of the power that is found in the world.

And somebody said this, from the Babylonian, Greek, and Roman empires through to present tyrannies, we have come to recognize that every apparatus of state dedicated to keeping a people docile and obedient to a doctrinaire system has a limited lifespan.

[34 : 36] And all I'm doing here right now is I'm comparing power of the world to the power of Jesus. A contrast between these two things.

And because Christ is behind mission, it is a powerful force. It is the most powerful force in the history of mankind.

Because he has authority and because he has power, it is a powerful force. Powerful things happen. Powerful things happen to people.

Lives are transformed because of the authority of Jesus. Think of Central Asia without naming any countries. But there are things happening there that the people, that the leaders in those countries don't want people to hear about.

But the gospel is at work and lives are really transforming because of who Jesus is. The gospel is flourishing. Lives have been transformed.

[35 : 42] Many of you know what I'm talking about here because your lives have been transformed. And so the authority of mission, we think of the power of Jesus.

And if you are a disciple of Jesus this morning, if you are a follower of Jesus Christ, the reason you are able to take those moments, although we always struggle, don't we, but take those moments and boldly share about Jesus and perhaps take the opportunity and tell somebody about Jesus, the reason why you're able to do that is because of this power that Jesus has.

We have the Holy Spirit inside of us. And so there is the authority of mission, but then we notice secondly the mandate for mission. So what are we to do? What is the church to do?

The mandate is that you are to go out and make disciples of all nations. It's very simple, isn't it? You are to go out and make disciples of all nations.

Let's notice a couple of things again about this mandate. First of all, the scope of the mandate, you are to go to all nations. I love it. You are to go to all people groups and tell people about Jesus.

[37 : 03] And we have here the inclusivity of the gospel. That simply means that the gospel message is for every human being in the whole world. The inclusivity of the gospel.

Isaiah 42, 6 says, I, the Lord, have called you in righteousness. I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles.

Another word for nations is that word Gentiles. It was, I believe, the understanding of David Livingstone when he went out into Africa.

It was the understanding of Eric Little after his exploits, after winning gold. And he had a call from the Lord to go to China and tell people about Jesus Christ.

It was the understanding of William Carey to go into India and tell people about Jesus, to go out into all parts of the world.

[38 : 10] And so they had this understanding of the message that the gospel message is for all people because he says, go to all nations and tell people of the gospel.

We are in the Black Isle and we are in Highland Council. Now, the Highland Council, the administrative area of the Highland Council is very limited.

It's a big area, but it's very limited. The administration takes place within a certain geographical area. They don't do anything outside of that area.

It is only in the Highland Council, in those villages and cities within the Highland Council that that administration takes place. The gospel is different.

Mission is different. We told you that the mandate is to go to all nations. We see it in the Bible. The psalmist in Psalm 117, O praise ye the Lord, O all you nations.

[39 : 17] The Bible tells us that God would have it, that all would be saved, but not all will be saved, but that all hear the good news of Jesus Christ.

And there is the scope. The scope is to go to all nations and then we have the nature. What is it that the church is to do? What is Stornoway Free Church to do?

Well, we are to make disciples. The original language there used basically translates to teach all nations, to teach all nations.

Now, there are two things that are involved here. First of all, to preach the gospel. And we know that because Mark tells us at the end of his gospel that that is the way that we make disciples is that the gospel is proclaimed.

That that is a call to people to repent of their sins and to turn away from self and turn to Christ. And by the way, there will be some people who have never, ever bowed the knee to Jesus Christ this morning.

[40 : 28] And you need to know this morning that you are separated from God. And the only thing that is going to bring you into relationship to God is to repent of your sins and to turn away from yourself and to turn to Jesus Christ.

That is the gospel message. You are in danger. You will be judged for eternity if you do not turn to Jesus. But the good news is that through Jesus Christ, you can have a relationship with the creator of the whole universe and receive all the blessings that comes with having that relationship with Jesus Christ.

And so that is a challenge for you if you do not know Jesus this morning. But that's the first thing, to preach the gospel. And the second thing is to baptize. Baptize.

To go out, make disciples, and to baptize. Now, what is the prerequisite for baptism? It is faith, isn't it?

It is faith in Jesus Christ. And now we as a denomination, this church, believes in infant baptism. But there are some perhaps who don't, who believe in adult baptism.

[41 : 45] That's absolutely fine. There may be people here who believe in adult baptism. But what is important is that you are a follower of Jesus Christ, that you are baptized, whether as a child or as an adult, that you are baptized.

And that is one of the two sacraments that we celebrate. The Lord's Supper, which you're going to be celebrating next weekend, and baptism. And so baptism, go and make disciples and baptize in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

The Belgic confession about baptism says, in this way, he signifies to us that just as water washes away the dirt of the body when it is poured on us and also is seen on the body of the baptized when it is sprinkled on him, so too the blood of Christ does the same thing internally in the soul by the Holy Spirit.

It washes and cleanses from its sins and transforms us from being the children of wrath into the children of God.

Now, we need to be clear when we talk about baptism that not all are called to preach the word, not all are called to administer sacraments, but what is really, really important is that we are all called to be missionaries.

[43 : 15] I love, actually, there's a church in Lewis with a sign above the door as you go out of the church, above the door is the sign you are about to enter a mission field.

You are about to enter a mission field. I love that. I love that because it takes away this fallacy, this idea that mission takes place only in places like India.

and actually what we are reminded this morning is that mission takes place on your doorstep. What are some of the things that we can do?

We can pray for mission. I'm pretty sure that you do that in this church. In fact, I know you do. you pray for souls to be converted.

You pray for missionaries on the mission field. So you can pray. You can get involved with mission. You can support mission financially.

[44 : 28] And maybe God is placing on your heart this morning a call to go and tell people about Jesus Christ. Maybe this is just one of the various ways he is knocking at your door on your heart for you to do something about the mandate that has been given to his children to tell people about Jesus Christ.

Now, we need to be very aware that not all of us are called to go to India or to China or to Africa or to the mainland and actually verbally tell people about Jesus although we are all to always be ready to give a reason for the hope that is inside of us.

Hopefully, there's something that is bubbling out of us because of what Christ has done for us on the cross. But there are various ways in which we can get involved.

I love the missionary organization MAF, Mission Aviation Fellowship. And what comes from the work of MAF is that mission is not necessarily speaking on the street corner or on a church and actually verbally telling people about Jesus.

You can go if you're a pilot or a mechanic or if you have administrative skills or you are good with technology. We have a family in our church in Fort Rose who were in Papua New Guinea and he was a specialist in IT and he was supporting the work of Wycliffe with his skills in technology.

[46 : 16] And I think when we think about mission I think it's good for us to dream to dream a dream of what the Lord can do through a bunch of ordinary people like you and I.

And so let's dream for a moment. Imagine the highlands and islands and that's the Lord's people evangelicals brought into the priority of mission.

The priority of telling people about Jesus Christ and increasingly became burdened to either pray or give financially or be involved in some way even coming to the elders and say you know I was really challenged by what was said there about mission.

Is there some way that I can serve the church in this field? Are there missionaries that you as a church support? You know I'd actually like to be involved with that because I see that it is biblical.

I see that the Lord Jesus Christ has given us the mandate to do that we became burdened to equip people for mission. In Fort Rose we're getting really excited about the first holiday club that we're

having in a long time there on that section of the Black Isle and we're having a holiday club in early August.

[47 : 37] I wonder if you can pray for that. And what I'm saying to our people is just imagine for a moment 30 young primary school kids who have never darkened the door of a church who will hear about Jesus Christ for the first times in their lives.

I wonder if you can pray for that with us and pray for the organization and pray for that holiday club. You're a big congregation and there are all sorts of things going on in this congregation. Wonderful. Wonderful. Because we're doing what we're called to do. Now there is a lot more to this passage which I'll say in just a moment.

Go and make disciples of all nations. Baptize them. But also to teach them what I have taught you. So discipleship comes into it as well.

And so we've seen the authority of mission. We've seen the mandate of mission. But we need to see as well the extension of mission if you like. I'm just using that as a way to describe discipleship.

[48 : 46] We become disciples of Jesus Christ when we are new creations. When we are being transformed by God the Holy Spirit.

We then become disciples and we need to be discipling each other and growing in our faith.

And so we can't talk about the great commission without mentioning the importance of discipleship. Verse 20 tells us what it is. Teach them to observe all that I have commanded you and behold I am with you always to the end of the age.

The authority of mission, the mandate for mission, and the extension of mission. Again, let's dream just for a moment.

A dream that ETS, the college in Edinburgh, continues to equip people to minister in Scotland and all over the world.

[49 : 51] And that ripple effect of the great commission as we see in Acts continues to go out. And we in a very small way are involved with that. Pray for ETS and the work of ETS as men are being equipped to lead the church and to go.

Men and women are being equipped to go and tell people about Jesus Christ in Scotland and to the ends of the world. Dream just for a moment that this congregation becomes increasingly burdened to obey the great commission and tell people about Jesus Christ.

Dream just for a moment that in ten years time people would look at this congregation and see that the Lord has blessed this congregation and they have grabbed that burden to go out into the world with the good news and that you would continue to do that and as God's word is preached here that as you are equipped to be disciples you are also equipped to tell people about Jesus the great ripple effect of the gospel.

Let me finish going back to Billy Graham and there is an organization called African Enterprise and African Enterprise engages in evangelism and relief work in the great cities of Africa.

Now African Enterprise is truly African in being led and African inspired but African Enterprise began in Madison Square Gardens with a young white South African by the name of Michael Cassidy.

[51 : 46] Michael Cassidy was under the preaching of the gospel and he was fired up and he sensed a call by the Lord to go into Africa and evangelize the cities of Africa.

And there are a couple of lessons in that for us this morning as we finish off. The first lesson is this, that the preaching of the gospel touches lives and goes throughout the world.

It is the greatest human movement in human history and the most powerful human movement in human history. And so that's what happens when people tell people about Jesus, when people gossip the gospel to their neighbors and when the gospel is preached in a church like this.

And so there is that ripple effect. But another lesson is this, that there is a whole army, more than an army, of people who are not recognized like Billy Graham or Michael Cassidy or Callum Motto Smith or James McKeever who are God's soldiers who are transforming lives.

Again, you don't need to be a preacher. We are all the soldiers of God who have been given a mandate. Whether we can give ten pounds a month to mission or whether we can help in administration or whether we can serve in a church like this whose mandate, part of their mandate because this is a biblical church to go out into all the world and support missionaries and do something on the mission field.

[53 : 26] However small it is, however big it is, perhaps you won't be recognized for what you do, but the Lord recognizes you and the Lord knows what you are doing and he is pleased.

If we are involved with mission and you will arrive hopefully and the Lord will say, well done good and faithful servant.

You know, the rest of the people, many people didn't know what you were doing but I see what you're doing. Well done good and faithful servant.

Let's pray. Father, we thank you for the authority of mission. We thank you for Jesus. we thank you for the mandate for mission and we thank you for the event which allows us to tell people about Jesus.

We thank you for his death and resurrection on the cross and we thank you for your amazing grace that you poured out on your people by sending him to die for our sakes.

[54 : 40] Father, help us to die every day to ourselves and to live to Christ and bless your people. Send them out to serve you in whatever small ways that may be, whether it's prayer, whether it's financially, or whether it's actually going.

Lord, equip them and send them out, we pray. We ask it in Jesus. Amen. Amen. Shall we conclude our service by singing in Psalm 126?

Psalm 126 and verses 126. Psalm 126 on page 171, when Zion's fortunes God restored, it was a dream come true.

Our mouths were then with laughter filled, our tongues with songs and news. Psalm 126 on page 171, the man who bearing seed to sow goes out with tears of grief will come again with songs of joy bearing his harvest sheaf.

Let's stand to sing to God's praise. song 126 when Zion's fortunes got restored, it was a dream come true.

[56 : 06] Our lives were then with laughter filled, our tongues with songs anew.

The nations said the Lord has done great things for Israel.

The Lord did mighty things for us and joy our hearts knew well.

restore our fortunes gracious Lord like streams in desert soil.

A joyful harvest will reward the weeping sowers tall.

[57 : 12] The man who bearing seed to sow goes out with tears of grief will come again with songs of joy bearing his harvest sheep.

now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy to the only God our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord be glory majesty dominion and authority before all time and now forever Amen just up there voy voy! voy! voy! voy! Thank you.