

Commission Service

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- [0 : 00] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. It is our prayer that you will be blessed by the preaching of God's Word.
- Tonight we will commission four families. It was three on the docket, but I had forgotten that Cannon was in China, and so he doesn't get the love offering tonight, which wasn't a big one.
- God, it's only \$100. We'll get it to you later. And the arrow and the paper, but we'll get all that to him later. Let me just remind you of what we are doing. As a church, we really believe that there is a heaven and a hell.
- We really believe that people that die without Jesus spend eternity in hell. And so we want to send missionaries to carry the gospel of Jesus Christ to the world.
- And we do that because we truly, really do believe what the Bible says. Look in your Bible with me, if you would, at Acts chapter 13. If you would. If there's a church in the Bible I would like to model ourselves after in the book of Acts, it would be the church at Antioch.
- [1 : 11] By the way, we have the teenagers in here tonight. They usually are gone, and we have them in here with us tonight, as well as the Spanish church. Look at Acts chapter 13.
- Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers, as Barnabas and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene and Manan, which had been brought up with Herod the Tetrarch and Saul.
- As they ministered to the Lord, as they served the Lord, as they fasted, praying and fasted and seeking God, the Holy Ghost said, separate me, Barnabas and Saul, for the work whereunto I have called them.
- And when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed into Seleucia, and from thence they sailed to Cyprus, and it just kept on going and carrying the gospel.
- So if you're here and you're not saved, we are doing what we're doing because we really believe that people die and go to hell. And we really do believe that Jesus paid the price, and we really do believe that people can go to heaven when they die because of what Jesus did on the cross.
- [2 : 23] They can trust Christ. They can realize they've sinned against the Holy God, and they can trust the Lord Jesus Christ for their salvation. So tonight, I'm going to ask four families to come up here.
- We're going to put them on the hot seat. Some of them get to hide. We'll give that to Ty and Rebecca since they're old. Y'all can come on up. Ty and Rebecca, come on up. And Ken and I think it was James Miyashta.
- You can bring your futura, your future. And I'm missing somebody. Ben Thomas, you can bring your future too. I even put a chair here for all of them.
- And so we're going to commission them. And so I want to start out by asking them some questions.
- I'm good. I undid the sound system. Now Andrew's going to kill me. Okay. So let's read together in your Bible, if you would, in Acts chapter 14, verse 26.

[3 : 27] And I'm going to go through a series of questions with them and ask them a question. Thank you, John. Acts chapter 14, verses 26 through 28. And I'm going to ask them ten questions, or them and you.

And I want us to go through this, if we would, together as a church. The Bible said, and then sailed to Antioch from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they had fulfilled.

Look at the verse and notice what happened. It says that they sailed back to Antioch. Antioch's where they came from. Antioch was their home church. Antioch was their base church.

Antioch was their base church.

Antioch was their base church. And then go down to verse 27. By the way, if I haven't had the ADFR missionaries, if you know about a missionary that hasn't been commissioned, and they are not an old one that's already been out there a while, we want to do this.

[4 : 48] So if I forgot somebody else, I need to be warned of this. So tell me. And then it says that when they were come and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done. Underline in your Bible, they rehearsed.

They rehearsed. So tonight we're going to tell them, we want you to go to the mission field. They're going to take the next couple of three years, whatever it takes. They're going to raise their funds. They're going to go to the mission field.

But we're sitting there not expecting them to return and to tell us what God did. Look at the verse. They rehearsed all that God had done with them. They rehearsed all that God had done with them and how God, he, opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles.

How God caused others to hear the gospel and others to get saved. And then verse 28, and they abode a long time with the disciples. They abode a long time with the disciples.

They're going to come back and hang out with us some. Probably won't be a long time, but that's the whole idea. So I want to talk to them. And I want you, you'll have a sheet of paper they're given to you here in just a second.

[5 : 51] And you're going to take care of me, right? So you can go ahead and bump that. Thank you. Do you publicly recognize that all we can do is recommend you to the grace of God, to the work that he's called you to do?

So I want all you guys to say that you realize, as a church, we can't do anything but say, y'all go trust God. We can't go with you. We can't do that for you.

And if you look in verse 26, it said they had been recommended. And that's what we're doing. We're recommending you to the grace of God. That's exactly what the passage says.

We're asking God to do a work in your life. We're asking God to take care of you. And we're asking you to go fully understanding that Vision Baptist Church can do not much more than pray for you and recommend you to the grace of God.

Do you believe that God has clearly directed your path to this current ministry? Brother Ty, do you believe that? Cannon? James? Ben? Okay. So you believe that God directed you to that.

[6 : 51] Not me. Not the church. And not Jeff Bush. But God did. I want to ask you guys to come up here and take a minute. Ben? We'll start. Just go right down the line there. Well, we'll let you go last since you're so old.

You rest a little bit. Start over here. Ben? You take up to two or three minutes and tell us about how you know that God has sent you out and what you're asking the Lord for. Well, I'm excited to be able to do this.

And, oh, thank you. I guess what you guys can pray for is for the ministry we like to model is what vision does here is we go in and we'll start a church and we'll take people from that church, disciple them to lead a church and to start other churches.

Something you can pray for us about is that we find people that we're willing to learn, that are willing to do the ministry, that are willing to serve, that are willing to do things.

And you can pray for us. The country we're going to is notorious for being kind of closed, which is something that I kind of liked about it is whenever we would ask a question, me and Phillip, it wasn't ever, you can't do that here.

[8 : 00] It was, well, no one's ever done that. So something you can really pray for us is that we can find what we can and can't do and that God will give us grace there because I know I'm going to try to push too hard at times and I'm going to end up making some pretty dumb mistakes.

But just pray that we incorporate the wisdom that we've gained here and that God gives us grace for maybe the places where I will fail.

I remember my freshman year in college, God had really done a work in my life. And I remember at that point telling many of my friends there at school, I don't know how it's going to happen, but I'm going back to Japan as a missionary.

And step by step, as I yielded myself to God, he directed my paths. The Bible teaches us that he directs our paths. And, you know, moment by moment, day by day, I never knew, I never even thought I would be here, didn't even know about Vision Baptist Church until just a couple of years ago.

But as God directed my paths, I spent time with Tyler in Tunisia. I got to come here. God miraculously let me graduate from college. Just step by step by step being faithful.

[9 : 20] And God, step by step, has showed me the next place to be. And I'm so thankful that I was born and raised in a Christian home in Japan. Mostly pagan people, two major religions.

No one really believes anything. Kind of like the Southeast, you know, everybody's Christian, nobody goes to church. But God was merciful to me and our family. My grandparents weren't saved. They never trusted Christ.

My grandparents worshipped idols. But God did a work and changed the family line, changed the history of our family, and has entrusted us with the gospel.

He's brought a wonderful woman into my life. We're going to get married in just under eight weeks. And just God is doing a work. We see that we're up against a great obstacle.

The Bible says, for it's hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. But then just a few verses later, he says, with man, it is impossible. But with God, all things are possible.

[10 : 20] You know, if we can trust him to save us, then we can trust him to do all things that are possible. Thank you so much. When I was in Dalian, China, back in the year 2015, I would go on a bus route to the underground place where the underground church met, the church that Tulsans had started.

And every day as I would ride that bus, I would see a mountain off in the distance. And I would think to myself, one day when I have some free time, I ought to climb up to the top of that mountain and see what's at the top. One day I had some free time, and I found a pathway walking up to the top of the mountain.

And I got off, and I walked to the top of the mountain, and I saw a beautiful view from the top. I saw a view of the city and the oceans and the mountains, and I saw just a wonderful view. But what really struck me that day wasn't the view I saw from the top of the mountain.

It's what I saw as I was walking up the pathway to get to the top. You see, I didn't realize it at the time, but in China, especially in the big cities, they don't have any very scarcity of land. So all the graveyards are on the side of the mountain.

So as I was walking up the side of that mountain, I saw a brick pile after brick pile after brick pile. I saw these two men digging a hole in the ground, digging a grave, and I just saw hundreds, if not thousands, of different graves scattered all throughout that mountain.

[11 : 28] What I realized is that each one of those represented a soul. What I realized is that the great probability of those people that each grave represented, the great probability is they knew nothing about Jesus Christ. And today they're in hell, and they're going to suffer for all eternity.

Today in China, there's a new generation of people, and that's going to be their same story. It's going to be their exact same story unless we get the good news of Jesus Christ to them. I'm so excited that God is, my wife, Nancy, and God has saved us.

He's called us. He's given us an opportunity to go to China with the good news of Jesus Christ. We're asking God to do big things. We're asking him to help us win people to Christ, help us start churches there in China and train men for the ministry.

And that God would also call forth many other laborers to take the gospel to China. So that generation of people in China today that do not know about Jesus Christ, they can hear the good news that Jesus saves.

God bless you. Well, I've been to that mountain that he's talking about, and it is truly amazing. We were able to walk up there as well. The Lord has been working in my life for many years, and I'm just so grateful how he's brought Rebecca and I to this place where we are in our life.

[12 : 32] You know, in the 40s, you may think that it's too late to go. But as I was praying back in 2014, I was asking God, I was thinking, you know, the Lord has one prayer request in Scripture. It says that you would pray to the Lord of the harvest, that he would raise up laborers, because the harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few.

And so I was thinking, I was praying for young people. I was praying one morning as I was reading my Bible, and I said, Lord, raise up more laborers. Obviously, we believe that for whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved, but they must hear that from someone, because we know that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God.

And so I was begging God for that, thinking of younger people, thinking of the people in the training center. But then the Lord very clearly spoke to me and said, will you go? And I said, I was broken because, you know, if it was just the Lord of the harvest, some Lord that I didn't know anything about, then I maybe would say no, because I'm 47 years old.

And why would I leave everything that I, all my comforts and go? But I realized this is not just the Lord of the harvest. This is my God who saved me. This is Jesus who died for me.

He's asking me, will I go? And so I said, yes, Lord, I will go. And from that time, he's been working in my life. He's been drawing us closer. Rebecca and I, as we've been growing in his grace, and we continue to work and labor around here.

[13 : 48] But I could never get that out of my heart. I knew that he wanted us to go, and I knew after we visited China that he wanted us to go to China. I knew that there was 1.3 billion souls there that as we went to the English corners, as we talked to them, they did not know the Lord.

In fact, most of them said that I learned that there was, I was told in the fifth grade that there is no God. And so I haven't thought about it since. And that broke my heart. And I want to, you know, the passage here in chapter 10 of Romans says that, that how then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?

And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And so God has asked us to go to labor and be a preacher. And the second part of that says, how shall they preach except they be sent?

And I'm so thankful for Vision Baptist Church that you are raising up people and you are sending people to the mission fields. And I thank you for all that you've done, the investment that you've made in our life. And I just ask that you pray for us as we go.

So we don't know how we're going to learn the language, but we trust that God will help us to learn the language. We don't know how we're going to start churches there, but we trust that God will help us to start churches there. And that we'll be able to train men and take them, help them to start churches over there.

[14 : 58] And that many souls will be saved. Please be praying for the 10-city initiative. I'm so excited about that. We have 10 cities. I've already mentioned it. 88 million people are represented in those 10 cities. 249 million people are represented in the surrounding areas around those cities.

So we prayed for laborers for the harvest in China. All right. Let's have a word of prayer and ask God to work in these guys' lives.

Brother Trent, why don't you come up here and you can lead us in prayer and ask God to bless these men as they go forward. Let's pray together. Heavenly Father, we come to you tonight with great joy knowing that you allow us to be involved in your ministry.

That you've given us a purpose as a church family and as individuals. And that we get to send families the night of our own company. Pray that all of us in here will be aware of the decision that you made when you decided to send them out.

You've made a decision for every one of us that we have a great responsibility to them. To hold the rope. To pray for them. To work and do whatever we can. To help them see effective ministry started there.

[16 : 02] Pray that you'll be with them, Lord, on the journey to the field. Pray for their safety. And we thank you in advance, Lord, for the churches that will partner with our church to get them to the field. We are very grateful, Lord, that there's other churches, Lord, that would help support and help us send the missionaries to the field.

In a way that would allow them to live there for a lifetime and have a ministry that would be honoring to you. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen. Well, you have the questions, I think, on a sheet of paper there with you.

And I want you to realize and I want them to realize just how important this is. And so question number four is do you promise to give yourself totally to carrying out the ministry that God has given you no matter how hard or discouraging it gets?

So, Brother Ty, did I get an answer? I did. Cannon. James. Ben. So, you know, learning a language is hard. It's tiring. People don't accept you.

Your wife misses home. But you're making a commitment in front of all of us that you will continue to carry out that ministry. All right. Next question, Brother. We'll start on your side.

[17 : 06] Ben, will you come back and tell us, Vision, how God has worked in your ministry to his honor and glory? Yeah. What about you, James?

What about you there, Cannon? And Brother Ty? Brother Ty, will you promise to call or write us when you get discouraged? Excuse me. Now, skip number six.

Number six, Brother Ty. Do you believe that Vision Baptist Church is a church worthy of reproduction wherever God sends you? Yeah.

I like your answers, Ben. Yeah. Yeah. Cool, baby. Yeah. So, the importance is that you realize, I hope you would take and realize that your church is trying to do some things.

We hope you would help your church that you're going to start, learn how to do. And so, next question. Start with you, Ben. Will you promise to call or write us when you get discouraged instead of allowing Satan to win the victory in your life?

[18 : 08] You know, I ask you, at that point, they need yoke fellows. They need people in our church that they can call.

They need somebody in our church who would say, I'll be here for you. I'll be contacting you and I'll be staying in touch with you. They're on deputation. And you can get to know them well enough to ask them and get to know them enough that you can say, I can talk to you and we can have a real friendship.

I hope you'll do that. Ty, will you acknowledge that you believe that you're being sent out a vision to accomplish the purpose God has called our church to do as you go in our place? Okay.

And then, number nine, Vision Baptist Church. And I really want you to answer the question. Will you commit to love, support, and pray for these families? You do realize.

Maybe you don't realize it with the young people, but maybe you look at Ty and Rebecca and you do realize it. They're giving up a very lucrative job. All the comforts.

[19 : 10] They're giving up everything that Americans dream about to go to the mission field. And they're going to go to a place where it's hard because it's not home, because they speak a different language, because they eat funny food, and because everything's different.

I mean, it just really is. And I happen to know that. And so they need us. They need us. Most missionaries go to the field, and out of sight, out of mind, you'll forget them.

I'm asking you to commit to that. And Vision, well, you recognize that this missionary is your representative, carrying out what God wants us to do as a church. I'm supposed to go into all the world.

Not all of us can go into all the world, but God gives us somebody to go in our place. And that's why we support them, pray for them, and send them out. If you believe that as a church, would you say amen? They're carrying out the responsibility that we have.

I'd like to ask Trent and the deacons, if you would, to quickly come up here. We're going to give you these guys, everybody but Cannon. He doesn't get one. It's my fault.

[20 : 15] This says, commission certificate. Having surrendered to the Lord as missionaries and strongly believing that the local church is the institution that God has ordained to execute the Great Commission, Benjamin Daniel Thomas have been commissioned by Vision Baptist Church in Alpharetta, Georgia, to direct its ministry in church planning and the training of leaders in propagating the gospel around the world.

On the 16th day of February in the year of our Lord, 2017, signed by the pastoral staff here at the church. And you can give them those checks too. There's three checks there. And you just looked along in Glee Cannon because you're not getting anything.

Y'all can fake it and give him one of them and pretend it's his, but it won't be. And then I am going to ask, could I get Jeff, where'd that microphone go, Trent?

Could I get Jeff Mize to lead us in prayer for these guys real quick before he leaves? And so, there you go. Jeff, you got that mic right there? Lead us in prayer for these guys, if you would.

Heavenly Father, Lord, we just thank you for each of these men, each of their wives and future wives and their families, God, how they're committed to you. Lord, we're just so blessed by them and so thankful for them that they're willing.

[21 : 36] And as my brother Ty said, you're the God. You're the creator. You're the savior. You're worth it. God, we believe that each of these young families, they're worth it, God.

They're worth their support. They're worth their prayers. They're worth their commitment. And, Lord, help us to be faithful in praying for them and supporting them and loving them. And, Lord, we know you're going to do great things.

Lord, we know that your name is going to be high and lifted up. We know that these men aren't going out for their own glory or their own praise, but they're going to be praising you and lifting you up.

Lord, the people all over this earth and our place. And we just thank you for them. God, give them protection. Bring them your provision. And, Lord, put them on the way quickly.

And we just thank you for all you've done, all you're going to do. And we thank you for the souls we're going to see in heaven. It's a great harvest one day you bring home to heaven with you. In Christ's name. Amen. Amen. Don't leave, gentlemen.

[22 : 34] Jimmy, you didn't come up here. And, Jeff, you could come real quickly. And we're going to give them an arrow now and let these other two guys help you. And, Chuck, you can be ready to pray. We're going to give them an arrow. And I'll explain that significance to you in just a moment.

But this arrow is from a passage of Scripture that we'll be going over. And it's a symbol of them being dedicated and excited. Would you give the three guys?

You can just look longingly, Cannon. They're not getting us Christmas and you don't get a gift. No gift, no presents. Because you've got a bad daddy, a pastor, too. All right.

So, Chuck, would you lead us in prayer for them? Thank you. Lord, I thank you for these families that are here. Lord, I thank you for Ty and Rebecca. I thank you for Cannon and Nancy, James and Rosie.

And I thank you for Ben and Caroline. I ask you to continue to have your hand on them. We're excited to see how you're going to use them to take the gospel of our Savior into these countries. Strengthen them.

[23 : 32] Encourage them tonight. Help them to know that vision is with them and that we love them. And just thinking about the souls that will be saved and the people that will hear the gospel for the first time. And I will give you praise and thanks for it all in Christ's name.

Amen. Amen. Y'all can sit there, Dad. If you want to stay here and I'm going to preach to you. Okay, you guys can have a seat if you would. You, would you take your Bible and open it to 2 Kings chapter 13 starting in verse 14.

So we're giving an arrow away. And this arrow is just a symbol that comes out of this story right here. We've gone over it in a few minutes. I'm going to ask them some questions. But let me read it with you and kind of walk you through the passage of Scripture.

Elisha was falling asleep of his sickness where he died. So he got sick and he's going to die. That's typically what's going to end up happening with most of us. We get sick and we die. So he says, Elisha's on his dying bed.

And Joash, the king of Israel, came down unto him and wept over his face and said, Oh, my father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the horseman thereof. So he comes down to show great respect to Elisha.

[24 : 35] He's the man of God. And he comes down and he wants to make it real clear. Hey, I know you're the man of God. I'm sorry you're going to die and everything else. And God, in verse 15, gives Elisha a message.

Look at the verse 15. And Elisha said to him, Take bow and arrows. And he took unto him bow and arrows. So he said to the king, Pick up a bow and an arrow, some arrows.

Pick up a bow and some arrows. And he said in verse 16, He said to the king of Israel, Put thine hand upon the bow. And he's put his hand on it. And Elisha put his hands upon the king's hands.

That's kind of a weird situation. First off, the man of God's old and dying. And the second off, the king is probably still strong enough to really do some battle. And the king puts his arms around him just like, you know, the guy who wants to teach his girlfriend how to swing a golf club or whatever.

And he's holding on there to help him. And he's going to talk to him. And he's got his hands on his hands. That's what it says there. In verse 17, it says, And he said, Open the window eastward.

[25 : 37] And he opened it. And then said, Elisha, Shoot. And he shot. And he said, The arrow of the Lord's deliverance. The arrow of deliverance from Syria.

For thou shalt smite the Syrians in Aphek till thou have consumed them. So here's the story. He says to him, Shoot this arrow out the window.

So the man of God's got his hands on him. And the king shoots the arrow. The arrow goes flying out. And then the man of God says, That's a symbol, buddy. That arrow represents your victory over Syria.

You are going to destroy them. You are going to win. That is the arrow of the Lord's deliverance. The arrow of deliverance from Syria.

So you should have no doubt right now that when this arrow I'm talking about is something really special. I told you to pick up a bow. I told you to pick up arrows. I told you to shoot. I told you what the bow was.

[26 : 33] I told you what was happening here. I told you what the arrow was. It is the deliverance there. Verse 18. And he said, Take the arrows. And he took them and he said unto the king of Israel, Smite upon the ground.

Hit the ground with these arrows. And he smote thrice and stayed. So he hit the ground three times and stopped. So he's been given an arrow.

And this is the prophet. So this is a man of God. He's telling him something very special. And if you, if anything, if you've read the Old Testament, you know you need to listen to this guy. He said, This arrow, these arrows represent God delivering you.

And what God wants you to do is shoot that arrow out the window. Now he wants you to hit the ground with it. And I can see the king. He's kind of losing his dignity. He's kind of feeling like this is such a dumb thing to ask me to do.

This foolish old man is holding hands with me, telling me to shoot an arrow out the window at nothing. And then he's telling me to strike the ground with the arrows. Okay, here you go.

[27 : 36] Bam, bam, bam. I did what you wanted. Can we move on? Can we move on and get out of this? And he smote the ground and he stopped. Verse 19. And the man of God was angry, wroth.

And he said, You should have struck the ground five or six times. You should have struck the ground five or six times. And then you would have smitten Syria until you had consumed it.

Whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but three times. He said, You know what? That was a symbol. And you were showing whether or not you were excited about what I'm doing. You're excited about what I'm showing you.

And you've shown an apathetic attitude. You're not that excited about doing my work my way. And so now you will not win. You'll get three victories. And then after that, you're going to get in trouble.

And so when I preach this message, I call it the king of apathy. Because this king was apathetic. This king was, I don't care.

[28 : 34] This king was, I'm not going to take the step. Can I just tell you church stuff feels real foolish? Honestly, church stuff feels real foolish. I mean, getting on our knees and praying, writing a check, asking God by faith, standing up and preaching a message.

And sometimes I wish I had a job like you do where I did something where everybody respected it and thought it was a really good job. A smart guy did that instead of being the preacher and so on.

And that's basically where we are here. He's like, I don't think what I'm doing is important. So he struck the ground apathetically. He wasn't excited about what God had promised.

And so Elisha's going to die. The king has been foolish in the way he treated it and foolish in the way he acted. And he hasn't been excited about it. And so they're going to lose.

Let me just tell you this. For the missionaries in a second, I'm going to talk to them about deputation and learning a language and developing or adapting to a culture. But I'll tell you this for all of us.

[29 : 37] Most of us are fairly apathetic. What's the big deal about reading your Bible every day? It's not that big a deal. Boom, boom, boom. I just did what I was supposed to. Going to church, not that big a deal.

Boom, boom, boom. Learning how to pray. Boom, boom, boom. Telling somebody about Jesus. Giving out a gospel track. All right, blah, blah, blah. Just doing what I'm supposed to because I'm supposed to do it, but I ain't that excited about it.

That's the story here. And God said, okay, because you don't believe me and you won't do what I say, I'm not going to bless you. By the way, you know it's called the foolishness of preaching?

Right. You know why? That's not a nice thing to say. The foolishness of preaching is simply saying this. You look really ridiculous trying to tell people that a guy who died can save them.

You look really ridiculous that that's your job. You mean you spend all your life just telling people that there's a heaven and a hell and people can go to heaven? It's kind of foolish.

[30 : 37] Won't you get a real job? Most parents feel like that. When their kids might go into the ministry, they'd be like, man, an engineer would be the way to go. Hey, chemist would be the way to go. Doctor, lawyer, whatever would be the way to go.

Don't do nothing foolish like preach. That's the story right here. As a church, I challenge you, if God's going to let our church go forward, you've got to really take it seriously that we read our Bibles.

You've got to really take it seriously that you disciple people. You probably even think discipleship's kind of foolish. You're like, I don't want to just meet with a guy and go over some Bible lessons. Good night. He can pick that up on his own.

Nobody taught me. Bless God. I can do just fine by myself. You know how? That's how we act. Come on. Be honest. You feel really foolish about it. That'll kill our work. We've got to really be passionate about trying to get something done for the Lord Jesus.

I'd like to ask you guys some questions if I can. God is giving you a great opportunity to do a ministry as a missionary. You're given a great opportunity.

[31 : 41] We're commanded to go into all the world with great promises. So you need to know that no matter how foolish it feels and no matter how dumb it might feel to have the man of God's hands on your hands and shoot an arrow out the window or to strike the ground with an arrow, we got great promises.

He had great promises. The arrow of deliverance. But he didn't take it seriously. He took it kind of lightheartedly, flippantly. He didn't think it was genuine. You've been given promises.

You know there are five times that the Great Commission is mentioned in the New Testament and every time it's a promise. His presence, his power, his protection. All of the things that God protects or promises us.

And the door is wide open all over the world. No matter where you land in the world, you'll be able to get out of the airplane, walk down the way, learn a little bit of language, and you will be able to see lives change.

It's amazing. Brendan Wong has gone to Morocco. That's like one of the hardest places you could possibly think about going. It's a place where the Muslims are everywhere.

[32 : 42] It's an Arabic country, and you would think no one would be saved, but every time he talks to people about Jesus, they're interested. He talked to one guy about Jesus today, and the guy said, I'd like to come Sunday.

Can I bring friends? And he's like, well, yeah, sure you can bring some friends. Sure you can bring some friends. So I want you to know that this is a great work.

God stands ready to work a work that you will not believe. God stands ready to work a work that you will not believe. I want to ask you, do you really believe God's going to use you?

Are you willing to take something? You're going to feel super foolish learning another language. James doesn't have to. The rest of you do. James is going to have to learn how to write and read better. It's a hard thing.

You're going to feel very foolish. I can remember standing in Querétaro, Mexico. And when they said stand up in Spanish, I had no idea. They said stand up.

[33 : 39] And the Spanish pastor just liked picking on me and playing with me. He was a good friend, and he liked picking on me. So he'd stand up, and he'd write on a board. There was a board behind him. He'd write stand up.

And when he'd say stand up, he'd look at me, and he'd point. And he'd point at the board and say, he wrote stand up in English so I'd know to stand up. But I'd been a pastor for 13 years before I got there. I kind of knew what you're supposed to do at church.

But they didn't do it the way I was used to, and they certainly didn't sound like that. There will be problems that you face that require discipline, decision, and dedication.

But if you will do all and just stand, you'll see God work. I want you to hear this, and as serious as I can be, you're going to get discouraged. You're going to get discouraged about deputation.

Because you're going to call and call and call, and you're going to call all day long, and you're not going to get a meeting. You're going to go preach in a church. But you know God's so good? Last night, Eric Elrod and his wife and John DeLuce, I believe, were together.

[34 : 41] Right, John? That's who you were with, right? And they'd drive all the way to a church. And the pastor said, give us a call when you're about 30 minutes out so we can tell you how to get there. Because there was no way to this church. Like GPS can't find it.

It was on an Indian reservation, correct? On an Indian reservation, you had to go down to the corner, turn at the tree, you know, that kind of deal. And so the pastor was going to tell him. So Eric called him about 30 minutes out, and the pastor didn't answer.

The pastor's wife answered. The pastor's wife said that he was at a sit-up, right? Called a sit-up. Because they were sitting up all night long with this Indian man who died. They were going to sit with the body, and there wasn't going to be church.

And they'd driven three hours to get there. And just outside of the church, the pastor said, sorry, we're not going to have church. You drove up here for nothing. That's kind of frustrating.

So they quickly made a couple of phone calls, found a church, and dropped in a church. And the pastor had been praying all day, saying, I don't have a message from the Lord. I don't know what I'm going to preach.

[35 : 38] God's going to give me a message. And about that time, Eric walked in. And the pastor said, hey, y'all can preach. So he let John preach. He let Eric preach. He even gave John a love offering.

John wants to go with all the mysteries now. John wants to go with all. But there's times when you're just going to have to make your mind up. You're going to have to make your mind up. I'm going to stick in here, and I'm going to do what I'm supposed to do.

Every opportunity requires obedience, even in small things. I think a funny thing in the story is everything that the man of God asked the king to do was nothing.

I mean, really, who can't shoot an arrow out a window? Honestly, that's not that big a deal. And who can't take some arrows and beat the ground with them real quick? Not that big a deal.

But the king didn't want to obey in the little things. Sometimes I think you're like that as a church, and I'm like that. Because I look at it, and I think, reading my Bible every day, praying, being faithful to church, giving my money, disciplining other people, all the little things we do, leaving prayer at home with my children as we go to eat a meal.

[36 : 43] And I think about all that. It's none of it's a big deal. But it was a big deal to God that day. It was a big deal to God that day. And you may not think it's that big a deal that you're faithful to church, but your kids are watching you.

And you may not feel that it's a big deal, but your kids are watching how faithful you are to your spouse. And you may not think it's a big deal, but it's all being watched. It's all being watched. And honestly, pastors are going to treat you.

Ty, I feel more for you than I do for the rest of them. Because you're older, you're dignified. I mean, I used to have to stand in the back of the church. The pastor said, y'all just stuff his pockets with money.

So I'm standing back there, and 100 people walk out, and everybody's sticking their hands in my pockets. Now, I like getting the money, but I did not like having grown men and women stick their hands in my pockets. I just felt weird about that.

Another thing that used to make me do, they'd say, you hold the offering basket while they pass. So you're standing there. How are you? God bless you. That's okay. You don't have to give. Really, really kind of foolish feeling.

[37 : 51] But you've got to obey. God is able to do great things. He can help you raise your sport in two years. He can help you learn a language. He can help you start churches.

He can help you train leaders. You've got to believe him. You've got to step out. The king could have won. Joash could have had victory. But Joash wasn't excited enough about what God would do.

You will feel foolish as you do the things that are asked of you. You'll feel foolish. You don't tell how many times you're going to get embarrassed on the mission field. Because in America, you kind of know what you're supposed to do and when you're supposed to do it.

But there, you have no idea. You don't know. Don't sit there. Do sit there. Stand here. I mean, I can remember going to the funeral home and I'm on the way to the funeral home and I said to the guy, what do I say when I get there?

Because I didn't know what you're supposed to say. And they got a routine. They got what you're supposed to say. Say it this way. This is what you say when you get there. I got in there. I mean, I didn't have it written down. About halfway through, I'm like, I forgot what I was supposed to say.

[38 : 51] I'm supposed to be telling everybody how bad I feel about this. Foolish feeling. Foolish feeling. The biggest obstacle to your ministry will be you being apathetic and lazy.

Hang on. I'll tell you this. When you don't raise your support, it's not the church's fault. It's not vision's fault. It's not vision mission's fault. And it's not the church's that you're going to's fault.

It's your lazy. Strike the ground. That's what the air is supposed to remind you of. Put it somewhere where you can remember. Hit the ground and hit it a bunch and keep hitting the ground while you're doing it.

Don't lack enthusiasm. Don't be laid back. Don't act like you don't care. Be excited about doing God's ministry. You cannot accept what others say can be done, but step out by faith, believe in God.

Don't believe anything they say. When they tell you nobody here has ever built a church like that, when they tell you no one can learn a language that quickly, when they tell you you can't raise support, you're going to say, hey, I'm here to follow God.

[39 : 58] You know, be nice about it. You can't be cocky about it, but you're going to tell them, I am going to do what God wants me to do. You must be willing to pay the price. Nothing that's of any value is easy.

And nothing that's of any value is cheap. In Peru, there was a saying, something like this translated, it's worth what you paid for it.

You give it to them free, that means it's not worth much. Don't pitifully whine. Instead, get up and go do your job. Don't whine about the churches.

Don't whine about the support. Don't whine about how people treat you. If you want to compare us to the Old Testament preachers, we got it pretty easy. God will get the job done with or without you.

So why don't you step up and see God do some great things. You know, God's a great God and God will win. I'd just like to be the one he does it with. I'd like to be the one God uses and shows his power with.

[41 : 02] I want God to use me and I hope you do. In church, I'd just like to say to you, this is not a game. This is not a game. Because we are, there are really souls hanging in the balance.

People are going to die and go to hell. So when there's a little Russian Bible study that takes place on a Monday night or a Tuesday night of the week, and you might not see that as a big thing, in somebody's lost world, that's the greatest thing that ever happened.

Because somebody's sharing the gospel. And when some of these guys go out on Saturday and they tag doors and they invite people, it may seem like something that's not important. But last night in a Bible study, somewhere a lady got saved.

Going to go to heaven when she dies. And that Bible study and that Sunday school class and all the things you're doing, they are of real value. Grab the arrows yourself.

Strike the ground. Act like it's important. Don't get laid back. Don't get lazy. Don't be apathetic. Let's believe that God will do great things with us. This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia.

[42 : 12] For more information, log on to www.visionbaptist.com where you can find our service times, location, contact information, and more audio and video recordings.

Thanks. Thank you. Thanks. Thanks. Thanks.