

Q and A for November

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[0 : 00] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfreda, Georgia. During this time, Pastor Gardner answers various questions.

Tonight's question and answer tonight, I understand that Zach Elrod has full intentions of stumping me in front of everybody. And so that's not hard to do, to be blunt honest with you. But anyway, we'll take a few questions and see how far we get tonight before we get around to the...

Well, that was a real hard one there. Yeah, I know that story. But we'll take a few questions and if we get around to preaching this message or whatever. Would you share your testimony of salvation and God's leading into ministry?

You know, I don't know what you think. I'll tell you my story. I'll just tell it and you can take it in what you think. I grew up in a very, very country town. And so I was a member.

I wasn't a member. My parents were members of Wrigley Baptist Church. The pastor's name was Carlton Flowers. He was a Marlboro man, smoking pastor.

[1 : 10] But back then it wasn't so taboo. That was 1962. I don't remember this particular part. But my dad says that for weeks I went to him and said, do you want me to get saved?

And he said, sit down, boy. And I would go to him and I'd say, Dad, you want me to get saved? I don't remember that for anything. But on May the 6th, 1962, I went forward and told the pastor that I knew I wanted to get saved that day.

And I accepted Christ as my savior. Don't remember if they really gave me a good plan of salvation. I remember on the way out, the pastor's son asked me if I felt different. And I thought, you know, I was crying.

So that was different. But I didn't really fully understand all of that. I was seven years old. He preached on the cross, on Calvary.

It was a country church like very few you've seen unless you're pretty old or you've been to some of the really good country churches. And I remember going home and asking my parents that week if I would go to hell if I died since I hadn't been baptized yet.

[2 : 14] And they explained to me, even at the age of seven years old, it was May the 6th, 1962. I turned eight and on August the 21st. And they told me, so I was still very young.

But they told me that, no, I wouldn't. And explained it to me from the Bible. Daddy and mother explained that to me. I was baptized the next week at Mill Creek Baptist Church. Mill Creek outside of Wrigley Baptist, just down the road a little bit.

I went by there a year or two ago and actually took pictures. And it was a very nostalgic moment for me to think about the fact that the Lord saved me. Wrigley will always have a very special place in my heart.

And Brother Flowers will always have a very special place in my heart. I don't even know where he's at or what's happened to him. But the thought that God used him to let me get saved, help get the gospel to me, is a tremendous blessing.

We moved from there to another town where my dad got his GED and could get a better job.

[3 : 13] And so we moved to a place called Trace Creek Baptist Church. It was on the creek near New Johnsonville where the DuPont plant was where Daddy got a job. And while I was there, we went to Royal Ambassador Camp, RA camp, which is like Boy Scouts among the Southern Baptists.

And during the week, there was a lady there named Jean Dock. And she was an old, old, old, old, old lady. She had to be 50 or 60. But, you know, when you're like 11, you've got to remember, man, a 50-year-old woman looks like she's been dead 50 years when you're 11.

And I could just remember, I love you, baby. But, I mean, back then, I would have thought you're old. So everybody would go play. And Jean Dock gave the opportunity. She was like the resident missionary there.

And you could go sit on the porch and talk to her. And so I went up there all the time. And I'd sit on her porch. And she'd tell stories from China and all of that. And on Thursday night, they had the bonfire.

And we walked out to the fire they were carrying across. And we were singing. I decided to follow Jesus. My cousin was there. And I had a horrible case of camp stomach sickness, otherwise known as diarrhea.

[4 : 28] And so I didn't listen hardly at all. All I could think about was I wanted badly to get back to the bathroom. And when I got back to the dorm, my cousin was there, who later became a missionary.

It was in Africa and also in Mexico. And my cousin said, Austin, I was shocked that you weren't up front giving your life to be a missionary. And I said, ah, Lord didn't deal with my heart.

Well, he really didn't deal with my heart. But I could not get away from that. And so over the next few weeks, I prayed about it and prayed about it. And I knew I could never speak in front of people. I was terrified of people.

I was not exactly an exuberant, outgoing person. Still am not. And so I decided that I would go into medical missions and that I would be a medical missionary.

So I prepared. We got to high school. My dad went to the school system because our little town really didn't have any kind of higher education. Read and write and arithmetic was about all you got.

[5 : 30] And my dad got some other parents together. And seven of us went through high school together. They brought in college prep courses because the state of Tennessee at that time required if seven students needed a course, that it had to be provided.

And so I took trigonometry and all that stuff. Never did do any good at it. But, I mean, I took all those college-level courses. Went to college. Fully expecting to be a doctor. Was accepted in the pre-med.

And it took me about three, six, eight weeks maybe to realize I do not care for this. Every day it was some kind of science thing going on, cutting on something.

I didn't mind cutting on stuff. I'd grown up on the farm. But all the evenings there was Bible teaching. And so every afternoon I would find a place where they were teaching the Bible. And I would either teach it or be taught. And I met a friend there.

His name is Steve. And the Lord really used him to totally change my life. He was a radical. He was excited. He was on fire for God. And I decided that I would be a preacher.

[6 : 33] But I didn't know I was going to be a preacher. I just knew I was going to do some other kind of ministry. Didn't know how to be called to preach. And Betty and I got married. And I wanted to be in the ministry so bad. I would go to my pastor. And the church was no, there were no jobs available.

And especially not when you look so young. I was, when I was 18, I probably looked 14. And so when I went to the pastor and I asked him if I could have something to do, he kept putting me off.

His name was Billy Kitchens. He married us. And he kept putting me off and telling me no. That he would get back with me. That he had something for me to do. And I went week after week. And I was getting very discouraged.

And I went to him. And I said, Brother Kitchens, if you don't have something for me to do, I'm going to go somewhere. And he reached in his pocket and pulled out a business card and said, call this pastor. He wants you to be his youth pastor. And I called him.

And that's how I got in the ministry. I called the pastor up. And he said, look, I don't know nothing about youth ministries. I don't know nothing about church having a staff. I'm just a country preacher.

[7 : 31] But Billy Kitchen says you're the guy to do the job. And so I went out there. In fact, I wanted to have a retreat. And I said, I'd like to have a retreat with young people. And he looked at me and he said, we will never retreat at this church.

There will be no retreats. And I said, okay, can we have a forward? And so we had a church forward and took the young people forward. Amen. And so while I was there, I asked every preacher that came through how to know if he was called a preacher or not.

And none of them could ever answer the question. Everybody kept telling me, you'll know. And I kept waiting for lightning bolts. And I kept waiting for anvils. But all I wanted with all my heart was to preach the Bible.

The most fun I ever had was when I got to teach the Bible or disciple or do something of that nature. And so one guy, Larry Worley, was a youth director. And he told me, another youth director, a lot bigger than I had ever dreamed of being or have ever been.

And he told me, why do you think you want this so bad? And I said, I don't know. I said, but I just wish he'd call me. I said, I just wish he'd call me. I beg him to call me, but he won't call me.

[8 : 34] And, you know, I didn't know what that meant. I guess I was expecting a phone call and I wasn't getting one. And he said, well, if you've got such a heavy desire, don't you think maybe God's dealing with you? And I said, so I will take that.

And so I surrendered and told the church I would be. I was already. They were all shocked because I went forward in the church where I had a very large youth group, the largest I've ever had. I went forward and told them that God had called me to preach and they were in shock.

So that's pretty well it. And Betty and I have been married 39 years. Betty was in on all of it. When I told Betty we were going to go to the mission field, she said I had lied to her or not told her the truth.

Maybe that's how she put it. I told her we were getting married. I was going to be a missionary. And when I told Betty we were going to go to Peru, she said, you never told me this when we got married. And I said, honey, I told you it was going to be a missionary.

She said, I know, but a missionary, you know, that's something different than what you're trying to do now. And I said, oh, no, it's really not. So that's been the whole, I guess, the whole story that gets you up to date.

[9 : 33] Next question. Of the things I spend my time on, what will last and what will not? You know, I'll give you a basic Bible answer, I think, to that.

Would you open your Bible with me to Matthew 6, 33? We'll look at that. And then I want to look up above that in that same passage of Scripture. And, you know, the truth is that the truth is that the only thing that's really going to last is whatever we do for Jesus.

Let's start in 619, maybe. Let's go to 619, Micah, if you would. The Bible says, Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth where moth and rust doth corrupt, where thieves break through and steal.

But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, where thieves do not break through nor steal. For where your treasure is there, will your heart be also. He's talking about money there. But the only things that are really going to last are things that we do for the Lord Jesus.

So I would say to you that, I mean, that includes a lot of things in your life. If you're a mama and you raise your children for Jesus, you know, you are the biggest discipler in this room.

[10 : 45] You spend more time and more life on life and you train your children. If you teach them to know Jesus and you teach them about Jesus and you pray and you beg God for the day they come to know him and you raise them in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, you are doing a fantastic work that is as great or greater than any preacher.

And you ought to know that every woman is that something that will last for all eternity. Your child will die. But if your child gets saved and your child grows in the Lord and your child is used of God, that will last for all of eternity.

Your prayers are going to last for all of eternity. In fact, as I could go to Revelation and pull up a verse and show you in Revelation where he had their prayers and he saved their prayers. And he saved their tears.

And so the Lord knows it when we pray. What you give to get the gospel around the world, that's going to last forever. People you disciple, things that you do that are eternal. The truth is everything that we have that's beautiful in you will soon not be beautiful in you.

And life won't be that way. We're all getting older. And so what you do as far as carrying the gospel around the world, praying, discipling, we make money, but we don't make money for ourselves.

[11 : 58] There's nothing wrong with us enjoying money with everything. But, you know, you ought to realize everything God's put in your hand and every person in this room, you have as much an opportunity to serve God as I do.

And I may be in full-time ministry, but you go out and you see more people than I do. And if you just share the gospel when you get a chance, if you just pray for those people, if you just let them know something about the Lord Jesus, if you use your influence, you're doing something that lasts for eternity.

And it doesn't look that way to you because, you know, we're geared in America. We're geared for how much money do I have in the bank? That's how we keep score. We keep score by how much money we have or how many toys we bought.

But in Christianity, the bad thing is we don't get to keep score. Just keep sowing. So what last or what's good? Matthew 6, 33 says, but seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things will be added.

So we seek him first. We put him first. We honor him so that it makes a difference. And then I wanted to show you, where was it? Chapter 4, we went through. 2 Corinthians chapter 4.

[13 : 08] We went through this just recently. Ezekiel. For which cause we faint not. But though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporal. But the things which are not seen are eternal. and I would just remind you and challenge you that what counts what counts your body's dying your stuff's wearing out you're gonna have to keep buying new stuff but whatever you what you do for God is what counts so I challenge you to live for something that lasts if I were in Peru dealing with a young person improve one of the young men came up to me and he was talking about how you wanted to be an officer in the military and there's nothing wrong with being an officer in the military and I said well why do you want to be an officer in the military and he said well I just think you know I can have a good comfortable life I don't have to be poor anymore I don't have to live like I've had to live all my life and he said I could have a house like that and I you know and here's the whole deal we live that's our dream that's our dream I lived with an outhouse I love an indoor bathroom people ask me do you want to go back to the way it was absolutely not if I visit I want an indoor bathroom amen and when I go visit I want an indoor bathroom but but you know it's so easy to look at things and so I challenge you get out man you teach a little Sunday school class and that looks like such a nothing that looks like such a nothing and on your job resume it probably doesn't amount to anything but it does more for the cause of Christ than anything you're teaching those kids about Jesus I have never ever had a large ministry I've never been a big preacher but let me tell you something I got saved in that little country church with a bunch of bumpkins that would be embarrassed to come to church here but they taught me about Jesus they taught me about Jesus they taught me the books of the Bible they taught me the Bible verses and they showed me things about

Jesus and and uh I mean it was not the kind of church I mean it just wouldn't have been anything that you would have imagined as being good but they taught me about Jesus that's what last man if I was you I'd find every place I could to get involved in that could I stop and say this every one of you you know uh three of our men will go to the mission field tomorrow for a short visit brother John and Chuck and uh Ben are leaving tomorrow Trent and I are leaving tomorrow you know you could get involved with a missionary uh and and uh you could go participate in that get a heart for the world that's the kind of stuff that lasts next question if I become offended to what extent is it better for me to grow in my own life and get over it instead of confronting my brother or sister in Christ well I uh I think that uh it depends on what you're talking about so let's uh Matthew 18 was written for brothers that get offended in the church in Matthew chapter 18 it says if you're if you're offended you can go to your brother and you talk to him about what's what's wrong what the fault is but let me let's back up I think whoever wrote the question you wrote the question very well let's back up just a second did you know that most of the time when I get hurt it's my pride that gets hurt and it's really not such an issue except

I'm very prideful and buddy I can let the least little things bother me and sometimes I think that the Lord allows those things to happen to goad me and to show me where I need to change and to show me where I need to mature I'll take you to Matthew 18 in just a minute but and I'll read those verses with you quickly but just just listen to this I think that the majority of the time I need to just suck it up I need to learn to forgive I need to learn to love and loving loving's tough work it's hard work uh to forgive and to love somebody when when they when they do you wrong uh but the truth is uh the truth is that uh too much confronting goes on or too much running goes on it's always one of those two uh not a lot of forgiving and loving in spite of most people will either confront or they'll run I think most people run and that's a real crime you know if if somebody hurts your feelings you say well I'm leaving this church because somebody hurt my feelings well you certainly didn't do the right thing you certainly didn't do the right thing first off no matter where you go somebody's gonna hurt your feelings I mean it's just gonna be impossible not to get your feelings hurt can you say amen right there I grew up in a home where we never lived anywhere because my parents always moved and they didn't get along with people they didn't get along with people so we'd stay here three years then we move over here three years and we'd have a set of friends here and uh my my brother has he says I have no roots you can't no matter where you go the people in the next county won't like you any better than people like you in this county so maybe you ought to grow up don't run second if you have to confront confront lovingly look at Matthew chapter 18 with me if you would Matthew 18 and uh Micah you make me speed up enough to get all these questions covered Matthew chapter 18 if you would and let's go to verse 15 verse 15 it says uh more if thy brother shall trespass against thee go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone and if he shall hear thee thou hast gained thy brother verse 16 but if he will not hear thee then take with thee one or two more that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established and if he shall neglect to hear them tell it to the church but if he neglect hear the church uh let let it be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican I want you to watch this a second you realize what's going on here it is a situation where if somebody has committed a trespass against you that another brother would recognize that he committed a trespass suppose I went over here and I said brother Morgan would you be willing to go with me uh ed ed took an ink pen off my desk without asking and I need you to go with me and help me straighten out ed on that and if Steve were to look at me and say come on man get a life is that all that happened come on tell me the story you realize that what's going on in the story is they committed a trespass against you and you went to them and sometimes the trespasses I mean just be honest they weren't really trespasses they weren't really something big enough to get in them involved about it was really something you should have just turned the other cheek with so I say Steve would you go Steve looks all this over an ink pen how much the ink pen cost it was a big I don't know what they cost nowadays it used to cost 19 cents but they probably cost what what's a big ink pen cost it don't cost much and so Steve looks and says well did you ask him for the ink pen back yeah I did he said he didn't take it so you know so I want to take a brother or two with me and they look at me and say come on Austin that's a little over the top don't you understand this trespass here's a real trespass how could you bring it in front of the church and say ed now I got everybody here witnessing you took my ink pen and it says I didn't take your ink pen and I say and I don't have any witnesses the whole church is going to end up saying Austin sit down

and shut up so you know really this is supposed to be a pretty strong thing so unless it's strong enough to get to this I'd forgive it and you're gonna get your feelings hurt you're gonna get your feelings hurt I was in Peru and I would you know I mean I loved Peru and I love preaching there and I love doing all the ministry there and and when you speak another language you may speak it well enough for people to understand you but you probably have an accent and you've seen that with everybody you know that speaks another language unless they were kids when they learned it and I remember walking out of Hunter Church one night and I got out to my car by this time now you got to understand that my ministry was pretty large I had all kinds of churches everywhere and the Hunter Church was a large church we had a Christian school we had a Bible college we had a whole lot of stuff going on and I got out to my car and these eight or nine year old kids were standing there talking and they were going they were mocking me they were mocking the way I talk and so when I got out there to them they looked at me and they said why not stay ask me yeah my and man I mean it just flew all over me and I said look you little punk in Spanish I said look you little punk can you talk English and they said no sir I said well shut up you see honestly can you imagine me going in and asking the brothers of the church to help me correct those kids that's a foolish thing it was my pride that got hit hard turn the other cheek grow up a little bit next question sir why can't divorced men become deacons man they're gonna get rougher and rougher by the night we better hurry on go with me to first Timothy chapter three and I'll show you why uh that I don't believe they could have the office of a deacon first of all let me say this they can be a deacon without the title the the word deacon is all it means is servant and um there are a whole lot of qualifications there in the list and uh I think that I think it's the same thing with pastors and so just look at it with me if you would in first Timothy chapter three verse two we're talking about the bishop or the pastor or the elder of the church it says he must be blameless the husband of one wife now skip down to verse um eight likewise must the deacons be grave not double tongue not given much wine not greedy of filthy lucre um even so must their wives be grave and verse 12 they're husbands of one wife two things I'd say to you about deacons first off any real deacon wouldn't want to be fighting about anything a real deacon's a servant and his attitude wouldn't be uh bless god I don't like the way you're mistreating me it would be I'm a servant and servants are meant to be mistreated so he would just accept them he would just accept it and we're all supposed to be like that but there are two things that that that are very strong I think in the bible here first Timothy three and in Titus chapter one about the pastor and the deacon and and there are a whole lot of qualifications and one of them is that he has his home under control that he has his home so it wouldn't be just not be divorced it would be that he has his wife and children loving Jesus if I can't as a pastor I would never sit in a church under a pastor who couldn't get his wife to come to church because if anybody knows if I'm real it's Betty and if Betty doesn't believe I'm real enough to believe what I preach and teach if my children won't listen to it and follow it when they're when they're living in my home then I think it disqualifies me so it really comes down to this that you're setting up some people in the church with offices that become models model offices and so that's the main reason I didn't make that I didn't write that he did some of you might say well it just means not living with more than one woman and I think that's a possibility you could easily come up to me and say well it just means that he can't have multiple wives uh uh but I really you know I think it really means basically a one

[24 : 40] woman man a one woman man so if he had a porn problem I still don't think he could be a deacon if he had a lust problem or a fornicating problem or an adultery problem or a divorce problem or another wife problem he still wouldn't be in a position to be a deacon and I would base it all on first Timothy 3 and Titus chapter 1 and there those aren't the only qualifications there's a whole lot more there that make it uh pretty rough and the big thing would be this just let me say that if I that that uh good people have been divorced good people have been divorced and I love you and you are not out and God loves you and he doesn't hold that against you uh uh uh there's only two things I know of that uh that that he's put any limitation on and that'd be pastoring a deacon and there's tons of other things you can be involved in and uh being a uh just those two things that Bible is pretty specific about that's why I wouldn't have a deacon that would be divorced and remarried could you explain more about Christmas on the north side what is its purpose um well I'm gonna be very brief aren't there like nine questions didn't somebody tell me 10 questions so here's the main thing we need an excuse to invite people to church to get the gospel to them and so what happens is you know you could invite them every Sunday you could say man I want you to come this Sunday but when you have something special people will be like oh so you're doing something really special yeah we're going to do something really special and so it gives you an excuse to invite people to come to here to come to the church and get to know the church two or three things number one if they're if they're lost if they're lost they might not want to come to church so that gets them in here for for another reason maybe they are maybe they're a little put off by being a warehouse but if you get them in here and they see what it's like and they meet you they'll come back so it's really an evangelistic purpose get them here to hear the gospel and so it's something that's pretty easy to put together that might draw some people to come to church okay the bible says when christ comes back to earth he will be riding a white horse and followed by armies riding white horses since animals don't have souls and go to heaven or hell are these horses literal if so where do they come from is that zach elrod's question all right uh let me tell you something there will be horses in heaven and they will be white and uh we will ride them and where do they come from i don't know but a guy who can make a world in six days can do anything he wants to do uh i doubt it's your horse resurrected uh i doubt it's your horse resurrected uh that they don't have souls and they don't go to heaven or hell but they'll be there whenever he needs them to be there and so that's the next question we're gonna sing a song and take a break what is the appropriate what is the appropriate biblical response to a situation which a person you have been sharing Jesus with for a long time simply rejects the gift of salvation and the message of Jesus Christ uh i would say to you that if you've been sharing the gospel with somebody in this and they continually reject Jesus you should love them and be kind to them and on occasion bring it up but don't be obnoxious and just back off pray watch this there's only one way people really get saved it's not how you're holding your mouth and it's not the way you've been talking it is the work of the Holy Spirit so beg God pray to God to work in their life share the gospel the best way you can and wait on God to work it's uh that's really hard because a lot of us come out of independent baddest backgrounds where you're supposed to be able to lead somebody to Christ in 20 minutes or less and everybody's supposed to pray the prayer and everybody's supposed to get saved but that's just simply not true the reason you're saved and the reason you're here like you are tonight is the God of heaven did a work in your life and he convicted you and he showed you your sin and he brought you to a place that you recognized that you needed to be saved and so if you're sharing the gospel and they're continually rejecting i'd still be their friend i'd still love them and i'd bring it up whenever i got the chance but to be blunt honest i'm moving on

i'm moving on i'm moving on about missionaries i'm moving on in every part of my life i'm going to find people that are ready to hear and responsive watch this paul walked through entire cities and it evidently didn't say a word there jesus walked through tight places and didn't even speak it's not like everybody everywhere they went and so you can move on to the next person and continue loving that person but witness to somebody else i always look for who's responsive everybody i meet i'm going to ask questions and i'm going to say things and i'm going to invite them and i'm going to invite them to church or i'm going to do stuff like that but when they if they're not interested that's fine it is funny one story about that there's a guy named julio marquina that our church supports as a missionary and julio had been witness to and julio had been dealt with about the gospel and julio had had many opportunities to hear about jesus and he was a very hard case and in peru you always have the door wide open and you would we never had a building anywhere near this big and so uh the the there was a major avenue outside of our church door probably 15 feet from the door of the church you have to leave the doors open because if the door is not open it means you don't want people to come in so the door is standing wide open and julio made this thing uh this uh it was it's like uh it's like the kind of thing that mechanics roll up under cars to work on the the uh under a car so they would make those out of ball bearings and then they they made all kind of ungodly noise on the road and so he would go outside our church and he would wait till church started and get his friends and ride them up and down outside the church making all the noise he could throw rocks at the windows make any kind of noise he could to disturb us people tried to talk to him he wouldn't listen uh he was hard-headed and then one day he got saved and he's a mystery in venezuela today somewhere in there god stepped in and did a work it's god always give god the glory for it one more question we're going to sing a song with ed what are good parenting books besides the bible i quit doing that a long time ago um trip a guy named trip uh is it paul trip somebody help me uh shepherding a child's heart i i think that's a good book um get with uh get with uh trent and get with mark coffee uh uh robert i don't know if he's been dealing with any of those books get with some of those guys uh i don't really teach those courses and i i don't really read books about parenting much anymore we got one more question that's it well glory to god i'll still preach them uh i thought robert was gonna get my outline and everything uh uh uh i think that paul uh i think paul trip's book's probably one of the best let me just say this till you um be careful with every book and just know it's a book um dr spock came out when i was a kid told everybody to quit spanking their children and that's become the norm today you all follow that to the t just about it's like you're not supposed to discipline your child uh uh so there i mean the pendulum swings from one side to the other side and uh i would just say to you that uh i don't know what good books to suggest to you but i would be very careful to stick more mostly in the bible and read the bible and here's the thing love love love love love love love love your children and keep the doors and the lines of communication open with your kids as best you possibly can and uh be very careful don't try to raise them the same way don't try to raise them the same way they're not the same uh you got four kids i had four kids betty and i had four kids they're not the same they all have different personalities uh you've got uh obstinate stephanie who wouldn't

listen to anybody stubborn stephanie who wouldn't listen to anybody you have uh joy who caused us all all kinds of heartache and problems but is now doing doing wonderful you have david who is was a clown the day he was born and is still a clown till today and you have chris who was so tender-hearted uh but extremely uh extremely diligent and hard-working is that they're just all different and i don't think you can uh i don't think that uh it's very unfair for you to compare your kids to each other and i think parents do that a lot i know my parents hurt my brother because i since i was called to preach as a young kid my entire life i was like the angel never never did do any i never got in trouble never never was with a girl never got drunk uh none of that stuff and uh my brother rebelled very much because he was constantly told why don't you be like your brother and uh so for a long time i think he about hated me just plum wrong to do that so i don't have a good book for you to read but i'd be careful with that one next question last one is regeneration and the new and the and the new birth uh only a new testament teaching by the way i need to remember one thing y'all had to ask me about uh you know that's a hard way a hard thing to answer uh yes but it's foreshadowed in the old testament my devotions this morning if you're on my email list from austengardner.net tomorrow you'll find out jesus said uh if you believed moises you'd believe me because moises spoke of me so did you know that when moises was writing genesis exodus leviticus numbers and deuteronomy he's talking about jesus that is a wild thought moises spoke about me and so when you're reading about the creation jesus is in there and when you're reading about abraham and isaac and jacob and when you're reading about egypt and when you're reading about all the sacrifices moises was talking about jesus in all kinds of ways that we we i'm sure we get to heaven he's going to show us how jesus is just everywhere all over the bible and we're going to find him all over the bible so uh i'm going to tell you that yes in the old testament we kind of see it foreshadowed but the new birth and being born again and all that is really found in the new testament not in the old testament okay is that it micah okay one question nobody asked and uh maybe you've got discouraged about asking is about what's going to happen with the church plant so let me give you an update on that and we will sing well this is an awkward time a message i need to have about 30 minutes for and it's 15 till uh well i may drag this one out on the new church uh not really i won't do that to you uh i really need you to be praying over the next week or so the pastor of the church that some of you would know about but we're on the internet i won't speak we'll be talking to his men lord willing and asking them if vision can send a team to take leadership inside of 285 there's a building it's on an acre and a half it has an auditorium it'll seat uh um 250 250 so it's only an acre and a half i thought it was three acres it's grandfathered in uh there it's going to be an very good shape financially and he should be talking to them and by the time i get back from chile i should be able to sit down with him and so lord willing uh january the first his plan is that we will be uh taking over leadership of that church and so instead of starting a church with no building being in the same situation we are here this is a church that's very greatly struggling uh um has very few people that would be attending faithfully they're they got a pretty good spanish crowd that attends but they have very few uh anglos uh white folks gringos uh and uh it's right in the heart of everything you can imagine on one side of the road it's just full of uh it's full of uh latin americans that need the gospel and on the other side of the road there's a yuppies and on the other side of the road there's african americans and on the other side of the road there's koreans

it is a completely international community and so by god's grace if that happens that's where we'll be starting uh to work and it will put me and the staff under a pretty big strain so we'll be asking you to help step it up until god gives us somebody it has always been my practice never to start any work until i have a man but every time uh every time we've thought of somebody that might work here in america and help us start churches here in america they always end up going uh they always end up going to the mission field uh just recently you didn't know it but we had we had a family here just a few weeks ago and they came to meet with me and talk with me about becoming the pastor of the new church we'd start and so we were sitting and we spent hours together and uh talking and i told him he'd have to stay at the church here for a couple of years and really be a have the heart of vision and understand who we are and what we're doing and so he looked at me and he said well if you were my age what would you do i said i'd go to the mission field that's what i'd do and he said uh really and i said yeah and he said i've not thought of that i said well you all think about it but hey i'd love to have you come help me start that church but uh he said uh okay so the other day he wrote me a letter and says uh looks like we're going to go to argentina so i lost that guy to argentina uh so but if i were his age i would head back to the mission field so you pray that god would work out things so that we could get a church going in uh uh inside of atlanta uh and uh reach out to some people it would be a fantastic privilege let's sing one song and i'm gonna read a verse and say a few things that will be dismissed all right stand with you we're gonna sing together amazing grace how sweet the sound amazing grace how sweet the sound of the rain the king the song of the rain the king the song of the rain the king of the rain the king

Praise the top of all Jesus, the grace of His name.

[39 : 23] The precious name of Jesus, the light of His name.

All right. Let me just share a couple things with you. We'll be through before 7 o'clock. I would like to beg you to pray. I really believe God wants us to start lots of churches and lots of places and to see lots of people influenced for the gospel.

And that means we need to raise up people here in our church. And so Christmas on the north side, for example, serves a big purpose. And you're going out and getting somebody new and getting them saved. And then let's bring them up and shepherding them and teaching them and discipling them and running them through foundations so that they can become spiritual leaders and so that they can go start churches.

I believe that though Vision's not a big church, Vision doesn't have great numbers. We don't have 300. We don't have a beautiful building. I believe our church is unique.

And if you go here, you probably assume or believe some of that yourself. There are now 18 missionaries out of the church that we give an unreal amount of money.

[40 : 42] This morning, by the way, you gave \$444.40 in the offering, which blew my mind. And I told him, I said, you can come, but if you get \$50 in the offering, I will be shocked.

And so they came. I told him that I didn't think so. And David Judd, who has visited our church several times, he said, well, it was real convenient that the message was on giving right before.

And I said, well, you know that it wasn't convenient. He said, oh, I know. He said, but it sure was not. I said, well, if you'd come next week, I'd have been on 2 Corinthians chapter 10 and it wouldn't have helped you a bit. And so I thank you for being a giving church.

I thank you for helping with the missionaries and being kind to the missionaries and doing the ministries here. We need more churches that have this heart that are just Bible preaching churches that just go from verse to verse.

I'm an independent Baptist, but I'm often bothered by some of the ways that we have done things in the past. And so I hope you'll really pray about that and that you'll really get a heart for it. I'm going to not preach the message.

[41 : 41] I am going to read you some of the stuff here that I want to read you some little sayings I got ready for the service. And then you'll get the rest of 2 Corinthians. Let me give you one. Here's Francis Bacon saying about money.

Money is like manure. You like the way that started? A very little use unless it is spread. Money is like manure.

A very little use unless it is spread. And so, you know, one of God's purposes for your money is that it be spread around and not hoarded. That's not him. That's me. I would say to you, I was just reading this week when I had the scan.

They wouldn't let me read. So I had to listen. They said I could listen to something. I had to sit still for an hour to this medicine to get all through my body. And I had to listen. So I was listening once again to Charles Spurgeon's life story.

And Charles Spurgeon earned a salary of 20,000 pounds, between 20,000 pounds and 30,000 pounds. So that you know what that means. That was enough. 30,000 pounds is what it cost to build the tabernacle that seated like 4,000 people.

[42 : 46] And downstairs it had Sunday school rooms of 900, capacity of 900, and then other rooms. It was only a \$30,000 building. And his income was between \$20,000 and \$30,000 for years that he made that income.

And when he died, he had very little money left. He didn't keep any of it. In fact, as many of the missionaries that you have read about in books, like Hudson Taylor, those guys, they knew in George Mueller's children's home, it was Spurgeon personally preaching around and getting all the money and then sending large amounts of money to them.

So I hope that you have learned something about giving and you realize that's the important thing about what you do with money. You have been listening to Austin Gardner, pastor of Vision Baptist Church.

For contact information, location, service times, or more audio and video recordings, log on to www.visionbaptist.com.