

# Missions Conference Saturday

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[ 0 : 00 ] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. It is our prayer that you'll be blessed by the preaching of God's Word. We're going to have two people come and preach, and you guys are going to have to figure out, one of you will use a mic, you can use this mic.

So Ben Johnson is our missionary to China, and he's going to come tonight, and then right after that, Brendan Wong, a missionary to Morocco. Corinthians chapter number 4, 2 Corinthians chapter number 4.

If we look at this world and we look at everyone that lives in it, everyone in the world has hope. They have something that they believe in. They have something that, though we may use the word hope, it is more like the word wish.

Because they wish for something, you know, I hope they will get something. They say, I hope that in the afterlife I work good enough, and so I'll have a better one in the next life or in the afterlife. I hope that maybe tomorrow it will be better than it is today.

I hope that hopefully, like Chinese people, they say, they only think of today, and they think, all I have is this life, so I hope I will make more money, so I can have a good enough life now.

[ 1 : 02 ] And that's what they look at. They look at the hope, so their hope is more of a wish, and it is often misplaced. But we as Christians, of course, we know we have a much more sure hope. A hope found in Jesus Christ, a hope found in the gospel, but sometimes we forget it.

You see, we see everything that goes on in this world, and we think to ourselves, we don't remember that we have hope. And sometimes it's even like that in the ministry. As we look at missions, and as we look at everything we do here in the community, we sometimes forget that we have hope.

So tonight I want to show you from this text that we have a ministry. But this ministry has its difficulties, but we have a great and amazing hope in it. Let's look at 2 Corinthians 4, 1 through 6. 2 Corinthians 5, 1 through 6.

Commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God. This is one thing that we at Vision Baptist Church know very well in verse 1, that we have a ministry.

And that ministry is to get the gospel to the world. That's why we give so much money away. That's why we have these young guys here like we, who go out and who get trained here to go out, because we know this ministry is ours, to take the gospel to the world.

[ 2 : 39 ] There are many things we could be involved in, but the fact is we put our effort, we put our push behind world missions, because we know that is the ministry that we have been given, and it is an honor that we are able to do that.

But you see, we know also that this ministry does not come without its difficulties. Look in verse 2 and 3. It says, You see, it says this.

If you read all this, you crunch it all down, it says this. We are to plainly give the gospel. Not everyone is going to believe it. You see, we plainly give it. We don't trick people to believe in Jesus.

My wife and I walked through an area in China called Lusone. We were walking through this area, and as we're walking through it, this lady hands me a piece of paper, and it looked like a gospel track. Had a cross on it, a lot of Chinese writing.

I don't know a lot of Chinese anyway. Knew even less then, because this was 2010. I handed it to Jake Tavi. He looked at it, and he said, It says this. You want to know why Americans are so rich? It's because they're Christians.

[ 3 : 45 ] If you want to be rich, you should be a Christian too. You see, we don't trick people to believe in the gospel. We plainly tell them this. We do not water down the word of God by what it says. We plainly tell it, but they won't believe.

It's like a story of a guy we met in China named Liyue. Liyue was a guy. We met him. We invited him to church. He started coming. I had several Bible studies with him. The last time I studied the Bible with him, we were going through the gospel, and I was showing him how he knew he was a sinner, but because of his sins, something had to be done with him, and Jesus Christ came to this earth and died for his sin, and he just had to believe in it, and he looked at me as I told him this, and he said, I can't believe that.

That is too incredible. And as I tried to steer him back to the word of God, I said, Liyue, something has to be done with your sins, he kept changing the subject, kept changing the subject, until he walked out that day and did not put his faith in Christ.

And that breaks our hearts, but not everyone's going to believe. We see that in the Bible. But not only do men in their hardness of their heart hide or block out the gospel, but look in verse 4, in whom the God of this world had blinded the minds of them which believe not.

That not only men reject the gospel, but Satan himself is working to blind men's minds so that they will not believe the gospel. If many of you have been around the world and you see something that is very interesting, Satan only has so many lies.

[ 5 : 00 ] When I took my first trip to Peru, we saw there, we saw how they had to have a mass on the anniversary of those who have passed on to pay the priest to help them get their loved one out of purgatory.

They give money for their dead relatives to help them. In China, when we went last year, we were going through one night, and we were going through intersections, and noticed all these little bonfires around the intersections.

We didn't know exactly what was going on, but our Chinese friends told us this, that the Chinese, they believe the gates of hell open up, that those who have died and gone on, they come out, and you need to give them spending cash in the afterlife.

So they burned this to help the relatives in the afterlife, giving money for those who have died. The same lie on different sides, but men believe these lies. They don't want to believe the gospel, so they believe Satan's lies, because Satan doesn't want them.

So why do we do this? If this is so important, if it is so difficult that men reject the gospel, Satan is working against us. Why do we do this? Why do we give a hundred plus thousand dollars a year to missions?

[ 6 : 03 ] Why do we train men? Why do we do everything we do here in Alpharetta? Because as difficult as it may seem, we have hope. Look in verse 5, For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves, your sermons for Jesus' sake.

You see, to be hopeful, we must preach Jesus. You see, there is nothing in this world that compares to preaching Christ. We can teach a lot about a lot of things.

How to handle your finances. How to have a good marriage. How to raise a good family. But those things pale in comparison to preaching Christ and His gospel. Because only that can save a soul.

Only that can make an eternal difference. Only that gets someone, has their sins forgiven. And that is why I'm so hopeful we must preach Jesus. But not only that, we see that we can have hope because we know God can save.

Look in verse 6, For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. You see, God created everything.

[ 7 : 06 ] That is how powerful our God is. That He just said, Let there be light when there was nothing except Him. And bang, there was light everywhere. Try that when you get home. See if it works. I can almost guarantee it will not.

But you see, that is how powerful our God is. And the power to make light shine in nothing is the same power that He has to make the light of the gospel shine in the hearts of men.

And you see, that gives us hope because we know He can save. Why? Because He made the light of the gospel shine. Where? In our hearts. If He can save me, He can save a Chinese person.

If He can save me, He can save someone in India. If He can save me, He can save someone in Alpharetta. It doesn't matter. We're all just as lost. And we all need God to show the light of the gospel in our hearts.

To show us we are sinners and that we need a Savior. And God can save. And that gives us hope. That no matter how blind, no matter how delusional, no matter how hard-hearted someone may seem to be, God can save them.

[ 8 : 05 ] And that gives us hope. You see, that gives me hope for Leo. That though he walked out that day, God can still save him. That though he walked out that day, God can still work in his heart. And that gives us hope.

Maybe tonight, there's someone like Liyue in your life. Someone you've witnessed to. Someone you've brought to church. Maybe it's a relative. Maybe it's your own child. When they've heard the gospel, but they've rejected it.

And maybe tonight, you can start. They may be on the other side of the world like Liyue, but maybe tonight, you can start by praying for them. Because we know that God can save them. We may not know where they're at, but God can save them.

My wife didn't grow up like I did. I had both my parents go to church. My wife's mother was an alcoholic. And she was in and out of foster care until she was nine years old when her grandmother took her in.

That's why her daughter's name is Evelyn. Her grandmother was getting older in age. She couldn't get out of the house. She was a shut-in. But you know, one thing she knows she could do is that she could pray.

[ 9 : 02 ] And because of her health going down, she often did not sleep through the night. But she would get out of her bed in the wee hours of the morning, 3 a.m., 5 a.m., around the time Brother John Pearson gets up.

And she was getting out of the bed and she would go into the kitchen. And inside the kitchen, there was a drawer. And inside that drawer, there was a list. And it was just a list of names. And she'd use her walker and she'd get up right next to that counter and she'd just pray through those names.

And I have no doubt in my mind, one of the reasons I have the Wi-Fi do is because of that woman's prayers. You see, we can make a difference in this world, in this ministry, by praying for those who are lost.

And God can save them. Miss Evelyn, she passed away in 2009. She may never see, never saw on this life what her granddaughter would do, but one day she will.

And maybe that person you're thinking about, you may never see what God does with them, but one day you will. Thank you. Amen. How many of you enjoyed that? Say amen. All right. How many of you, after hearing that, just now thought to yourself, that is great, but I just don't really think God would ever use me that way.

[10:05] Say amen. Now, I'm kind of being a little jokingly, but really, I'm going to be a little honest. Sometimes when we hear something like that, and I've been where you are sitting, and I hear that, and I think to myself, can God really use me like that?

Please turn to Exodus chapter three. Exodus chapter three. Can God really use me like that? Today we're going to look at how we need to let God use us. Three ways in Exodus chapter three. We're going to see that we need to hear the cry, hear the call, and to hear the comfort that God has for people like you and me, who will sometimes doubt and wonder, can God really use me?

So read with me, if you will, in Exodus chapter three, verse nine through 12. Now, therefore, behold, oh, let me give you a little background here. Moses is 80 years old. He's out in the wilderness.

He's tending some sheep, and this burning bush is there, and God speaks out of this bush to Moses. Let's keep going. Verse nine. Now, therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel has come unto me, has come unto me, and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppressed them.

Come now, therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh that thou mayest bring forth my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt. And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?

[11:15] And he said, Certainly, I will be with thee, and this shall be a token unto thee that I have sent thee. When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain. Three ways as to how we can let God use us, I want to encourage you.

We need to hear the cry, hear the call, and hear the comfort. Here, we have Moses. He is born into slavery. It's been about 400 years of slavery. The Israelites are here. There's a new Pharaoh, and Moses kills a man, an Egyptian, he goes out into the desert, or goes out into the wilderness.

He gets married, he has a child, and he's tending these sheep, and God comes to him. And now, when you think of Moses, what do you think of? When I say Moses, what do you think of? Great leader, a great man.

Hebrews chapter 11, a man of faith, splitting the Red Sea, right? Ten commandments. We think somebody great and awesome. So, Brendan, why in the world are you talking to us about Moses? Because I am not Moses.

Well, that's a good question. Here, we're going to see that Moses is kind of like you and me. We're going to see that here, and we need to hear the cry for deliverance. Here in verse 9, God is telling him, behold, the cry of the children of Israel has come unto me.

[12:18] I've seen their oppression. If you look in verse 7, 8, and 9, God tells Moses, behold, you're out tending sheep, and I'm coming unto you, and I've heard the cry, oppression, affliction, difficulties, death, and I want to do something about it.

We need to, just like today, people are crying to be delivered from slavery, oppression, bondage, to what? To sin. But not all people are looking unto Jesus to be set free from sin and death.

So what do they turn to nowadays? What do people turn to? Do they turn to God right away? I mean, life is difficult, so I'm going to turn to God. Do they do that today? What do they turn to? Drugs, alcohol, money, relationships, they're not turning to the Lord Jesus Christ.

I'm going to share a story with you. This man is in Morocco. His name is Habib, means the beloved. Habib. And he's about 31 right now. He was looking for a solution, an escape, deliverance, out of bondage.

And he was, he was an Islam. He had the beard, he had the hat, he had the dress. I didn't wear one tonight because it's a dress. And I, frankly, I forgot. But he went on the Hajj to Mecca, on the pilgrimage.

[ 13 : 17 ] He went there, hundreds of thousands of Muslims there, and he realized something. It's a lie. Islam is a lie. And so he goes back home to Morocco and he throws it all away and he says, I'm going to be an atheist. I'm going to live my life the way I want to.

And he's trying to find deliverance from this bondage to slavery and sin, but he hasn't found it because he hasn't found it in Jesus Christ. But now he is a believer. For six years, he's been a believer and now he's calling out and he cried.

The last time I met with him, he was crying, asking that God would bring a church there in Marrakesh, where he lives. So not all people are looking to Christ. And can you hear the cry for deliverance around us, around us, not just in Morocco, but here in Alpharetta, the people we bump into all the time.

You know, we go to Walmart, it's kind of difficult to talk to people because you have the self-checkout. But those people in there are crying out to be delivered from slavery and bondage to sin. If we want to let God use us, first of all, we need to hear the cry for deliverance and also we need to look with me at verse number two, at verse number 10.

We need to hear the call for a deliverer. Hear the cry for deliverance, hear the call for a deliverer here in verse 10. He says, Come now therefore and I will send thee unto Pharaoh that thou mayest bring forth my people, the children, out of Egypt.

[ 14 : 22 ] So because of this need, this cry for deliverance, God is going to do what? He is calling a deliverer. Now who is he calling here in verse 10? He says, Therefore, because of what I just told you, come now, I will send who?

You. So I'm going to Moses. I will send you unto Pharaoh that thou mayest bring forth my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt. And God wants to use people to carry out his mission and his work. Did God need to use Moses?

God need Moses? God didn't need Moses. But he chooses to use men, chooses to use Moses. And like a brother was just saying, he wants to use us. Christ didn't, 2 Corinthians chapter 5 verse 15, 2 Corinthians 5 verse 15, Christ didn't die for all so that they would live for themselves, but he died for all that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again.

Are you hearing the call for a deliverer? God wants to use you and God gave us a mission. God gave Moses a mission. And we need to hear the cry for deliverance and hear the call for deliverer if we want to let God use us. But thirdly, and what we're going to look at right now is we need to hear the comfort in verse 11.

We need to hear the comfort that God has for a doubter. Moses, me, maybe you. Can God use me? Yes, he can. He wants to, but let's look what Moses says here. We don't have the time to cover his two questions and his three objections.

[ 15 : 33 ] We're just going to look at the first one here in verse 11. And it says this, And Moses said unto God, Who am I that I should go unto Pharaoh and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt? Who am I?

There was Moses. He's looking at himself. He's looking at Pharaoh and he's looking at this mission, this task that he's been given. And what is he saying here? What is this question he gives? Who am I? You're like, Why me? Who am I to do this thing?

I don't know if you're here and you're wondering to yourself, man, I'd love to do that, but I just don't know if God could use me. I've been there. I do that every so often today, yesterday. I'm wondering, Can God use me?

How can he use me? And here Moses is, a man of faith, a man of all this greatness, but don't forget that before all of these great things, there's Exodus chapter 3, verse 11.

And maybe you're here today and you're wondering, How can God use me? I am a failure. I am a failure. I have failed before. Moses, did Moses fail before? Moses failed big time. Moses tried to deliver his people and they rejected him.

[ 16 : 28 ] Who are you to come over us like a king and a ruler? You killed an Egyptian. You're a murderer. He runs away in fear and flees. He failed before. But does God still want to use him? He does. And if you're here today and you're wondering, I don't know if God can use me.

I failed big time, big time. Moses failed big time and God used him to do big things for his namesake. Maybe you're here today and you're wondering, How can God use me? I'm too old. Or I'm too young.

Moses is 80 years old. His 80 might be our 40 or our whatever. But even 40, some of us in here who have maybe passed the 40 mark, Lord bless you guys, carry on, that Lord can still use you.

I know a family where the parents have said, It's too late for us. God will use our kids. That's why we started the Bible college. But can God use old people, young people? God can use all of us. If you're here today and you're wondering, Ah, I'm too young.

Are you too young? No. There's nobody too young or too old that God cannot use. Maybe you think it's impossible. I can't speak. I'm kind of jumping ahead. But in chapter 4, Moses says, What?

[ 17 : 25 ] In chapter 4, verse 10, Moses said unto the Lord, O my Lord, I am not eloquent neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant, but I am slow of speech and of a slow tongue. But God answers and tells him, Who has made man's tongue?

I will give you your words. I will teach you what you will say. And Moses, he goes back and forth asking questions, giving objections, and God keeps giving him the same answer every single time just in different ways. And what is the answer that God gives to Moses?

If you look, God's comforting response in verse 12. And he said, this is God, and he said, Certainly I will what? Certainly I will be with thee.

And this shall be a token unto thee that I have sent thee when thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt. You shall serve God upon this mountain. God gives his comforting response and it is the presence of God. The presence of God.

And if we realize what this is, if Moses got it right away, we wouldn't have to wait until chapter 4, verse 18, where he finally says, Okay, all right, I'll go. But it took him a little while. It took him all the way up to the point where he says, God, you know, send whom you will send.

[ 18 : 25 ] Basically it's translated into send somebody else, God. That's what he's saying. Send somebody else. Don't send me, send somebody else. You know, send somebody else here to go to the mission field. Send somebody else here to help in the church. Send somebody else here to go help with Mableton.

But God wants to be able to use Moses. And God can use you. He wants to use you. And I encourage you to let him use you. Hear the cry for deliverance in the people around us.

Hear the call for a deliverer. Hear, he wants to use you. And hear the comfort for a doubter. Remember all the great things that God did with Moses. Pretty great and amazing, right? We were talking about that at the beginning.

God did amazing, great things through Moses. And God can do the same thing for you. Because Moses is here and he has no idea what's in the future except to trust the Lord that he's going to be with him. But we have something Moses shares with Joshua at the end of his life when he's 120 years old.

He's sharing something with Joshua that God repeats to Joshua in Joshua chapter 1. It's the same thing that Jesus repeats to us in the Great Commission. What is sandwiched on either side of the Great Commission? He says, all power and authority is given unto me.

[ 19 : 23 ] Go ye therefore. And at the end of it he says what? I will be with you. I'm going to tell you a story of success here really quick. His name is Moctar. He's illiterate. He's a man in Morocco. He's in his 40.

He is illiterate. He cannot read. He's not been to school. He doesn't have any, barely any teeth, okay? But God has used him to reach out to his brother-in-law and his friends. And two of them have trusted Christ as their Lord and Savior and their believers today because God chose to use an illiterate man who only knew the gospel to share it with his family and his friends.

I want to encourage you to let God use you. Remember in Exodus chapter 3, verse 12, certainly I will be with you. And now we're going to have Brother Philip Trask and he is with Sand Mountain Bible Camp, a good friend.

And then after him, Pastor Miguel Murillo will come with a future Pastor Miguel Sanabria to translate for him. Thank you, Brother Gardner. I sure do appreciate the opportunity to be at the mission conference.

I have thoroughly enjoyed it. We'll be leaving right after the service tonight. We'll be preaching at our own church tomorrow. But I have enjoyed the mission conference here, enjoyed the fellowship with the missionaries.

[ 20 : 27 ] I have enjoyed the good food. We've had some great food. And if you couldn't find something you like tonight, you're in big trouble. You're probably anorexia anyway. But anyway, there was some great food tonight and I enjoyed it.

I had a little bit of everything, I think. All kinds of different countries, but I appreciate it. Hey, the highlight of my meal tonight was sitting at the table and one of the young ladies across from us told us that she was saved at Sand Mountain Bible Camp when she went there as a teenager.

Bless my heart because many people have made decisions at Sand Mountain Bible Camp. I was 10 years of age when I was saved and it was a family camp meeting at Sand Mountain Bible Camp. We usually didn't stay for the Friday night service.

Dad would drive back to Illinois but decided to stay that night and somewhere around 11 o'clock an old Indian preacher, Ed Ballou, I don't know if you ever heard of him, he'd preach and sing and preach and then sing and holler and run around a bit.

But when he was finished preaching, the Lord had spoke to my heart and I knew that I was a sinner and I went forward and accepted the Lord Jesus as my personal Savior. Right after that tornado went through, I went up to the slab there of that tabernacle and went approximately where the place where the Lord saved me and I just thanked the Lord for what he had done in my life.

[ 21 : 43 ] And I purposed at that time that the camp wasn't going to end because there was more people that needed to know the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. I'm going to cut out that spot, make a memorial somewhere around the camp with that spot.

Not that that's a hollow spot or a special spot but it is to me because that's where the Lord saved me. Look if you would at Psalms 37. Psalms 37, I want to look at one verse of Scripture for sake of time tonight and once again let me say thank you Brother Gardner for the opportunity and for the friendship and Brother Bush for the friendship.

He was able to speak at our teen camp this past year and did a wonderful job, many decisions made for the Lord and I believe even two young men went with you to Argentina from that week and so that was a great blessing.

Psalms 37, look if you would at verse number 23. The Bible says, the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord and he delighteth in his way though he fall he shall not be utterly cast down for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand.

I have been young and now am old yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging bread. I want us to look at just the first 11 words there of verse number 23 and just focus on those for just a moment.

[ 22 : 58 ] I pray that it might be an encouragement to you. I'm not used to preaching 10 minutes and I was 2 minutes short last time so I guess I actually get 12 now but I want you to notice it I'll just take 11 since there's 11 words no, 10 minutes.

The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord. Look first of all at the word the steps. The steps. Now that's not talking about the way that you walk. I played volleyball with some of the guys today so my step is a little bit different.

When I came up here a little sore there in the knees today I know some of the guys play football. Their step is quite different. It reminds me of a little boy that went out west to visit his aunt and she took him to town and these two cowboys were walking down the boardwalk and he said holy cow auntie look at them bow legged cowboys and she says son you don't talk that way so she carried him home said I'm going to make you read Shakespeare.

He read Shakespeare for three weeks in the morning and the afternoon and evening nothing but Shakespeare went back to town after that three week period those same two cowboys walked down the boardwalk and the little boy goes hark what men or men's are these whose legs are in parentheses when it speaks about steps here it's not speaking about the way that we walk bow legged or pigeon toed or something it's speaking about the ways of our life the ways of our life in fact the Bible says there is a way that seemeth right unto a man but the end thereof are the ways of death it's speaking about our ways it also speaks about the path that we are on Proverbs says trust in the Lord with all of thine heart and lean not to thine own understanding in all thy ways acknowledge him and he shall direct thy paths the paths the steps of a good man in fact Paul says in 2nd Timothy chapter 4 verse 7 I have fought a good fight I have finished my course I have kept the faith he says I have finished my course all of these words are speaking about the steps that we take the paths the ways the course of a good man are ordered by the Lord not only do we notice the words step but notice the words a good man a good man now the truth is that none of us here are good the Bible is very clear in Psalms 14 verse number 3 they are all gone aside they are all together become filthy there is none that doeth good no not one

Psalms 53 verse 3 every one of them has gone back they are all together become filthy there is none that doeth good no not one then in Romans chapter 3 verse 12 they are all gone out of the way they are all gone together become unprofitable there is none that doeth good no not one there is not one of us that is a good man so who is he referring to the course the path the way of who is ordered by the Lord the good man is speaking of a Christian a Christian I'm glad that when I received the Lord Jesus Christ as my personal Savior that God no longer sees me but he sees his son I love the Christmas song that says Adam's likeness now in face stamp thine image in its place I'm glad that the image of the Lord Jesus Christ is stamped in my place that I am not a good man but I stand in the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Paul said in Philippians 3 verse 9 and being found in him not having my own righteousness which is of the law but that which is through the faith in Christ the righteousness which is of God by faith



[ 26 : 21 ] I'm not a good man but through the Lord Jesus Christ I am in a right standing I am a righteous man because of the Lord Jesus Christ so I'm thankful that this verse is speaking about me if you know the Lord Jesus Christ you are now a good man you are now a good woman because of the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ stamped upon your life it says the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord I want us to focus next of all on the word order the word order what's neat is in the Hebrew there are several different words that have been translated from this Hebrew word and order is one of them but there are some other words that have been translated that help us understand this word just a little bit we can read it this way the steps of a good man are fashioned the word fashioned is used in the Old Testament the word fashioned means to be made by hand like the potter takes the clay and fashions the clay the steps the ways the course of a good man of a Christian are fashioned are molded are made by the Lord

I'll tell you that is a tremendous blessing to know that God has already prepared our way that the way of your life the troubles you may face the difficulties you may face the mountaintops that you might experience all of them have been ordered by the Lord and have been fashioned by the Lord our little boy is 21 months old the Bible says that the psalmist says for thou hast possessed my reins thou hast covered me in my mother's womb I will praise thee for I am fearfully and wonderfully made we have that verse of scripture up over his bed I am fearfully and wonderfully made for this reason because when the Lord was forming little Ryan way before he was ever conceived when God knew his parts before he was ever born and began to put him together the Lord decided that he would put a little extra cute chromosome there that little extra sweet chromosome and Ryan was born with Down Syndrome and we at first we were heartbroken not knowing how to handle it but yet we realized as being students of

God's word that every one of us are fearfully and wonderfully made God knew exactly what he was doing when he put Ryan together and he added that little extra chromosome we call it the cute chromosome the loved one the one that makes him smile the one that makes him happy and Ryan is exactly who the Lord wants him to be we've accepted that fact in fact we have embraced that and he's a wonderful child and we love him to death but the fact is is that no matter what difficulty you may have in your life or what shortcoming you may think that you have physically or mentally or in any area of your life I want you to know that you are fearfully and wonderfully made that God has fashioned you that God has made you not only is the word fashioned used but there's another word and I like this it's furnished furnished the steps of a good man are furnished by the Lord the word furnished means to provide or to equip this is great for missionary preaching isn't it that the steps of a good man the steps of a missionary have already been furnished by the

Lord the Lord already knows where you're going to be tomorrow he already knows the needs that you're going to have next month he knows the needs that you're going to have the first week the first month on the field and guess what he is already preparing you for that he is furnishing the way for you he is equipping you so that you will already be ready he equips us with wisdom James 1 and verse 5 if any of you lack wisdom let him ask of God he equips us with strength Isaiah 41 fear not for I am with thee and be not dismayed for I am thy God I will strengthen thee he provides that grace that we need and he said unto me my grace is sufficient for thee for my strength is made perfect in weakness not only that he provides those resources that we need Philippians 4 verse 19 but my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory the path the course the direction of your life has been fashioned by God but it's also been furnished by God he prepares exactly what you need oh and I like this here's the last thought that

I want to give you is that it is finished the steps of a good man the course of a good man the way of a good man is finished by the Lord he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Christ you know often times we may go astray often times we may get off the path that maybe the Lord has intended for us but I'm glad that the Lord is not finished with us I'm glad the Lord is able to correct us and bring us back to the place where we need to be we were talking brother O'Malley when he left the motel he went to the right his GPS sent him to the right my GPS sent me to the left and you know GPS they send you in different directions they send you in different courses in different places but you know something a GPS always knows where you are doesn't it unless you live on Sam Mountain where we live and it says it can't find you but usually a need to be no matter where you are you know there's some

[ 31 : 47 ] Christians that get out of the way they get off the path they get off the course but I'm glad that God is greater than any GPS that we are familiar with he knows exactly where you are he knows exactly where you need to be and the best way to get you there and his way for your life has already been fashioned it's already furnished and he will finish it I love that verse in amazing grace his grace that brought me safe thus far and grace will lead me home one day we're going to be like the apostle Paul we'll be standing there in heaven and we'll look back and say it's his grace that brought us he led us through this path he led us to the place where we are hey I hope these eleven words have been encouragement to you thank you so much good evening all of you it's a pleasure for me to be again here within the church if you could all go to your bibles Matthew chapter 6 what is the most valued thing to you what is the most important thing for you those things that are important and of value to us are those that we dedicate time to and money you can say that God is important for you but if you don't have time and space in your calendar or budget for God it's only words that you're saying many people say that God is important to them many people mention God like the one that's first in their life but their acts show the opposite that he is not in the first place they say they say to love

God but they don't seek him to know more they think that only knowing of his existence is enough about God God is a person that requires time from our part to get to know God all that we think about God should come from the word of God and everything that we believe about him and think about him should come from his revelation and the more we know we know that he is worthy for us to get to know him in our lives in Matthew 6 Jesus teaches his disciples how to preach and pray sorry and with the pen in your hand please read verses 9 and 10 verse number 9 says after this manner therefore pray ye our father which are in heaven hallow be thy name thy kingdom come thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven puedes ver en la última parte del versículo 9 santificado sea tu nombre you can see in the last part of verse number 9 where it says hallow be thy name subraya allí tu nombre underlined there where it says thy name en el versículo 10 dice tu reino in verse number 10 it says thy kingdom y en versículo 10 la segunda parte dice tu voluntad fíjate que dice tu nombre tu reino tu voluntad notice there that it says thy name thy kingdom and thy will entonces si Dios es importante para ti su nombre su reino y su voluntad son importantes para ti his name his kingdom and his will are important cuando hablamos de su nombre estamos hablando de su persona cuando hablamos de su nombre estamos hablando de lo que el es acércate el micro acércate el micro por favor oh perdón entonces cuando hablamos de su persona estamos hablando de lo que el dice que es no lo que pensamos que el es has visto personas que dicen yo creo en Dios dicen y que creen acerca de Dios tu les preguntas y que crees acerca de Dios bueno que el es bueno que el me da de comer me da familia me da un trabajo y todos vamos a ir al cielo a fin de cuentas no conocen a la persona de Dios la persona de Dios es tan grande que nunca nos cansaremos de aprender de él pero la información que tenemos acerca de Dios debe provenir de la palabra de Dios su nombre su persona y para conocer una persona tienes que pasar tiempo con esa persona tú no amas a quien no conoces tú no respetas a quien tú no conoces tú no disfrutas a quien tú no conoces si Dios es importante para ti estás diciendo que su persona es importante para ti y por lo tanto pasarás tiempo en conocer a su persona y así al abrir nuestras Biblias o al estudiar los domingos en la iglesia queremos saber sobre su nombre

su persona oramos en su nombre todo lo hacemos en su nombre su nombre su persona y es lo más importante para nosotros lo es para ti lo conoces sabes hoy más acerca de Dios que ayer tiembles ante su presencia lo cual habla de un amor reverencial mira el versículo 10 tu reino si Dios es importante para ti su reino es importante para ti tu propagas su reino tu extiendes su reino tu hablas a otros acerca de su reino venga a tu reino es futuro habla de su retorno habla de su retorno es futuro pero también es presente no has leído en Colosenses donde dice que los que han puesto su fe en Cristo han sido trasladados de las tinieblas al reino de su amado Hijo han sido trasladados de las tinieblas al reino de su amado Hijo si Dios es importante su reino es importante si Dios es importante su reino es importante no solamente vives bajo el dominio de su reino sino que extiendes su reino propagas su reino por eso testificas por eso das a misiones porque Dios es importante y si Él es importante su reino es importante y deseas que más personas vengan al reino de su amado Hijo y debes decidir que más personas vengan al reino de su reino el libro de Hechos termina diciendo que Pablo predicaba el reino de Dios y por eso

Dios es importante conocemos su persona y propagamos su reino pero luego dice tu voluntad fíjate si Dios es importante su voluntad es importante no puedes decir que Dios te importa cuando su voluntad no te importa no puedes decir que Dios te importa cuando su palabra no te importa no puedes decir Dios me importa pero tú vives como tú quieres es como decir que amas a tu esposa y a tus hijos pero no provees para ellos no eres ejemplo para ellos y tú dices me importa mi familia no, no te importa tu familia si no provees y no les das tiempo no importan Dios es lo más importante para ti ¿cuánto peso tiene la voluntad de Dios en tu vida?

¿cuánto peso tiene la voluntad de Dios en tu vida? por eso están saliendo misioneros su voluntad importa por eso los que nos quedamos oramos y damos a misiones su voluntad importa su reino su nombre importa su nombre importa que es lo más valioso para ti paint here tonight and to preach your word. Thank you for these who've come out. Thank you for the wonderful time that we had today at the picnic and the other services that have been held in the times of just good fellowship. Thank you for this church. Thank you for her advancing her commitment to taking on another missionary even tonight, dear Father. I pray now that you'll fill me with your spirit. For this I pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Acts chapter 11 is the introduction of what we call the promised offering. Last night I covered with you there are three basic type of offerings we have in our church. One is the prescribed offering. This is the tithe.

[ 43 : 03 ] God sets the amount. It's an income based offering. There's a second kind of offering that we have. That offering is the preferred offering. This is a compassion based offering as opposed to the other being an income based offering. Meaning that if I made \$500 I give God 50. That's simple basic math from the word of God. Preferred offering. I sit there and I listen and I hear a need and I say you know I want to participate in this offering. I'll give to that. That's the preferred offering. The third offering is the promised offering. This offering came as a model because the church at Antioch wanted to help believers who were going to go through like a famine.

wherever he is. Yeah. They're going to go through a dearth which we learned last night was like a famine.

And so what they did was they said let's respond. They responded with what now we call the promised offering. This is an offering given by faith. So the believers hear about this need. This famine that's going to take place. And so they listened and they began to respond. Each of them. Notice the verse how it starts out. Then the disciples. We learned last night that's the classification of people who were involved in the promised offering. Believers give. There's no other way around it. If you're a believer and you're not giving it's disobedience. I mean the scripture is replete with places where it talks about we're to give. And in the promised offering this is one way like I talked about last night. I tried to close out with this thought that they use the pattern for a famine. We are using the pattern for world evangelization.

So when the church says we're going to support a missionary what are we doing? We're saying we're going to increase our faith to be able to take on more missionaries. And so what they did was they were at this place and in fact if you kind of compare scripture with scripture you'll see that they had about a year's time from when they made the promise to when they started to collect this offering.

Paul even says that one of the churches the churches of Achaia had had their offering ready for a year. So kind of like a timeline gives us an idea. So now these believers in Antioch they're there in the service and they said wow if that famine's going to take place I want to do something about it. We talked about the Pepperdine's house.

[ 45 : 36 ] Did it burn? No thankfully. Good. Were you a little nervous? Okay. Unconfessed sin or just general nervousness? Okay. And get the stones ready. I said what if, right?

So the idea is this, is that they heard this need. They had family that was back at this church of Jerusalem. So because they were believers they responded.

The second thing I see in this verse, then the disciples, every man. Here's the second thing I want you to see about the promise offering. I want you to see the cooperation involved. Everybody gave.

Everybody was involved. What was precious in just a few moments ago when one of the little fellas up here raised his hand and said I want to have a card. And the pastor said make sure he gets a card.

This is the one offering that is not affected by income. It is not affected by anything but faith. And if we are going to teach the next generation to give then we better teach them in the faith offering.

[ 46 : 40 ] They're not going to, I mean face it, our kids are gainfully unemployed. Right? You don't work and you're still being taken care of. That's gainfully unemployed. But when they get out of the home they should have already learned how to give.

And the promised offering is a wonderful way to say little Timmy, do we have a Timmy? Good. Little Timmy, here's how you're going to give. And here, little Sarah, this is how you're going to give.

We're going to trust God for this amount. You say, well, will this work? Oh, this works because this is the faith-based offering. And when I talk about cooperation, everybody ought to be involved.

Everybody should be involved. Why? Because look, we worship together. We pray together. We work together. We evangelize together.

And our giving ought to be together. You ought not to be the kind of church member that takes the offering and say, well, I'm going to send my tithe to somewhere else.

[ 47 : 40 ] And I'm going to send this and I'm going to do it my way. And I'm going to come to church, use all the services and facilities of the church, but I'm not going to give at the church. If we work together and worship together and pray together, by all means, let's give together.

Because collectively, we will give far more. And they learned that. They knew that. They simply said, every man. You know, that beats a numeric goal, doesn't it?

To be able to say, well, we're going to raise \$5 bazillion this year for our promised offering. Wouldn't it be far better to say, we had 100% participation from our congregation?

That'd be biblical. So we look at the model of the promised offering. We have their classification. They were disciples. We have their cooperation. The Bible says, every man. Then notice this next phrase.

Every man, what? According to his ability. Everybody has an ability. It's the way it works. Each of you have a job.

[ 48 : 39 ] There is something you are doing for employment. And because of your job, you're making money. What do you do for a living? I work at a grocery store. You have an ability.

Sir, what do you do here for a living behind Brother Shreve? You're a missionary. Give me, what do you do for a living? AT&T.; How do you spell that? Just kidding. So he works for AT&T.;

What do you do for a living, sir? I'm a teacher. All right. So I've got what grocery store? Aldi. Aldi. The only saving grace about Aldi is that's the parent company for Trader Joe's.

That's the only saving grace. Otherwise, it'd be Publix for me. So I've got... We're good? Okay. I've got a guy who has an ability based on his income. So we say, well, hey, sure.

You know, I can do some. I can trust God. I have this ability. And we look back at AT&T.;, boy, and we say, whoa, we know where the money is. I mean, good night. All of us have been paying for the iPhone for forever.

[ 49 : 37 ] And this guy's got to be rolling in the dough. And we look at the teacher. We say, we know there's no money in that. So we say, okay, fine. So we look to him and say, well, he, if I had his money, I could...

No. Our offering is based on our own ability, not someone else's. So in the promised offering, I don't pine for someone else's ability to give.

I look at the capacity God has given me. And because it's a faith-based offering and not an income-based offering, I could sit down and look at that card and say, I have faith that...

I'll give you your card. I realized I went home last night and I took the card from you. They'll make more. It's like Lay's potato chips, I know. And so we take this card and we look at it and we say, okay, I can believe God for this amount to give.

That's faith-based. They didn't know what was going to happen between when Agabus stands and gives them the prophecy and when it was actually time for it to come due.

[ 50 : 41 ] They didn't know what was going to happen. They didn't know what the price of milk, no, gas, no, hay for the camels or whatever they eat. They didn't know what stuff was going to cost.

All they knew was God touched my heart to trust Him. If I look at my capacity of money, it's not much. But if I look at my ability to trust God, I can believe God to give.

This is why when some will say the promised offering is giving to others what God may not ordinarily give for you to keep, but He actually gives for you to give to others.

This is the capacity of faith where we say, dear God, if you will give to me, I will give to the cause of world evangelization. That's the promised offering.

Classification, disciples, cooperation, every man, comprehension, according to His ability. A teacher can't give what the affluent at AT&T; give.

[ 51 : 45 ] And the guy at Aldi's, God knows they charge you for the grocery cart there, right? Isn't that right? Beats all I've ever seen. Did you know that, preacher? They charge for the grocery cart.

It's embarrassing. Publix doesn't do that. That's all I'm saying. And Trader Joe's doesn't either. But so we look at it and we say, okay, I know I have a capacity to give.

Long before my wife worked outside of the home for money, she worked inside the home for no money. And she had a faith promise commitment. We raised our son to do the same thing. You say, well, that's a lot harder, but all of us have a capacity of faith to trust God.

So I see every man according to his ability. Notice this next thing. The Bible says they determined. That is the decision aspect, or shall we call it, the commitment.

So we see in the promised offering, the classification, the cooperation, the comprehension, and now we see the commitment. They had a moment where they said, I'll do this. Because some people get really spooked at this point.

[ 52 : 49 ] And that's okay. The pastor said there are no rules. But the one thing this card does, by you putting it on there, it enables the man of God to be able to say, we can at least look like we can count on this much coming in.

Because a budget of faith is built on the cards that are turned in. And so if you turn in a card, you say, well, I'm just, I'm not, I'm not signing anything for the church.

Well, there's no place to sign. Oh, there is. Sorry, on the back. I just looked down, it says sign. We're not going to ask them to sign it, are we? No. So skip that part.

Who got these cards? You? We're not going to use those sorts again, right? But Worldwide has cards and ours don't have a place to sign. Now, maybe, maybe, maybe Brother Smithy was right.

Maybe he is not going to be nice. I look at this and I realize all we want you to do is mark on here an amount. That's it. Nothing more.

[ 53 : 55 ] Because if you want, you can make the commitment and not keep it. But I'll remind you, this is God's house. And we're going to need to know, I mean, there have been some good missionaries this week.

And it would be wonderful if we could take them on. But you have to come to the place of commitment to say, oh, they'll figure it out. Please, we're not all that bright. Help us.

Yes. This is the part where we say, you could help us to figure it out how much we could do. Because then we could sit down and say, you know, the cards tallied up to \$120,000. And if we divide that up, we might be able to take on a few more missionaries.

So this is not guilt or pressure. This is just logic. It helps us to be able to put this thing together. So we ask you to make the commitment. Kim and I have been married for 27 years.

We have a son. He's 24. And we got married just across the state line in Alabama. And can you imagine what it had been like at the house if I had said to Kim, you know, after we're, let's say we got married and we get in the car and we're headed on our honeymoon and we came to Atlanta for our honeymoon.

[ 54 : 59 ] It's here for the home team. And let's say I said, hey, hon, look, here's how it's going to work. I'm going to come home only on Friday nights.

Please wash all of my clothes, have my favorite meal for me, and I'll leave the next day. And don't you ever ask me any questions where I've been, where I'm going to go, and I'm just going to give you the money.

How well do you think that would work at your house? I'll assure you this little five-foot-one bundle of joy and love here would not have tolerated that. And she would have brought this six-foot-six-and-300-none-of-your-business-pound man down to size and say, listen, Jack, that's not going to work.

Why? Because that's not what commitment's about. Commitment is better, worse, thicker or thinner, rich or poorer, all of these things.

That's what the commitment is about. And so at God's house, we ought to do the same thing. If you wouldn't tolerate inconsistent commitments at your house, why should we do that at God's house?

[ 56 : 01 ] So I look at their commitment. They determine. Then it looks like, notice the rest of the verse. They determine to send relief unto the brethren. There I want you to see the compassion that is involved in this offering.

The idea is that they genuinely saw that when they gave to the famine offering, offering by faith, they were sending relief to the brethren. And it is no different.

Any missionary here? Brother Patrick Henry, how long have you been on deputation? Please don't make me do math. That's seven months? Seven, eight months? Okay.

Mrs. Patrick Henry. What is it like when Mr. Patrick Henry comes home and says, Honey, a church just took us on for support. How does that make Mrs. Henry feel?

Happy. Why? We have money. And you need money if you're going to Aldi. You need money to get the work done for the cause of Christ.

[ 56 : 58 ] And you're that much closer when it comes. It's a demonstration of love of a church to take on a missionary. And it says, You know what? My husband wasn't an idiot. He got God's call right.

They are taking us on for support. He could be. I don't know. We're just going to go with the assumption that he's not. So we see the compassion involved in the promised offering. Number six. I want you to see this in the following verse.

The Bible says, Which also they did. This is again referring to the promised offering. I want you to see the character that is involved in this offering. They made a promise.

Watch now. They kept the promise. What a novel concept. God's people saying, We're going to do this. God's people following through and say, We did do this.

Hey, you know what? If you miss a week or two or three, pick up, start again. No, we're not sending the Baptist bouncers by to say, Hey, you turned in a card and we know.

[ 57 : 55 ] You use a purple pen and you make your check marks this way. We don't hire handwriting analysts, do we, Brother Jeff? Apparently you need to check this out.

I'm just going with the card. I have the wrong card. Is that what you're going to say? Amen. So when I look at this, we say, You know what? I made my promise and I kept my promise.

Boy, there's nothing better than that, is there? To say, I made a promise and I fulfilled it. And the fulfillment of the promise isn't for the self-glory and the pat on the back. Because we sow in dollars and we reap in souls.

That's the name of the game. So look at the last part of verse 30. Which also they did. And sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul. So now I look at this and I see the completion of this offering.

They said, We made a promise. We're going to commit to this promise. We kept the promise. And how they did it was, They sent it to the travelers who would come by. And there would be a delegate from each church that would go with Paul and Barnabas.

[ 58 : 59 ] And they would travel back to deliver that offering. All sorts of financial accountability. They're great principles to teach here. But all I'm showing you is, it was the full circuit. So when I look at Acts chapter 11, It is the Reader's Digest version of the promised offering.

It kind of shows you the whole thing. They made the promise. They kept the promise. They made the promise because there was a famine. You and I are in the same boat tonight. Tonight we're going to go home. And we're going to look at our cars.

We're going to say, God, what do you want on there? And you're going to seek God's face. And tomorrow you're going to come back. And you'll mark on that. And you'll turn in this portion. And you'll get that card turned in. And we'll be able to take a tabulation of how much has come in.

And begin to make a budget of faith. But it all starts with a conversation with God. What do you want on here? A young Marine was in eastern North Carolina. And he came to hear me preach one night.

And he came to me after it. And he had never heard of this promised offering before. He said, Brother O'Malley, you've got to give me one of those cars. That's the greatest thing ever. It wasn't one of these cars. We had our own at that point.

[ 60 : 04 ] And it didn't have a place for a name. And so the Marine said, give me one of those cars. And I did. He said, now, sir, you have to help me and tell me what to put on that card.

I said, young Marine, listen. I can't tell you what to put on that card. That's between you and God. He said, no, sir, you don't understand. Well, I pulled back a little bit and said, tell me what I don't understand.

I figured maybe I misunderstood something. He said, sir, I take orders for a living. And I'm asking you to give me the orders of what to put on my card. I thought for a second.

And I said, it's going to be cheaper for you if you do it than if I do it. I don't want to fill out your card for you. I want you to start a conversation with God tonight.

There in your seat, here at the altar. And say, God, lay the amount of faith that you want me to have this year to give for the cause of world evangelism. I'm comforted by the fact that when I want to know about the promised offering, it's not something that preacher and I sat back in the back there and said, let's scheme up a way to get more money from these folks.



[ 61 : 08 ] No, we just go to the word of God. Here's our motto. There was a need. They made a promise. They had a period of time. They fulfilled the promise. They did it for a famine.

We're doing it for a spiritual famine, the cause of world evangelism. Would you stand with me? This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. For more information, log on to [www.visionbaptist.com](http://www.visionbaptist.com), where you can find our service times, location, contact information, and more audio and video recordings.