

# Ewing Blessing Service

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Date: 25 November 2012

[ 0 : 0 0 ] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfreda, Georgia. This is the next message in our series in the book of 2 Corinthians, entitled, We Faint Not.

We're going to start by having the whole family, if you can bring them up, Josh. Just bring your whole family up here right quick so everybody can just gander at y'all. And you can do all the talking.

Well, you don't have to get anybody out of the nursery, believe me. We like nurseries. Praise Jesus for nurseries. You can just mention that somebody's lost in the nursery. And this is Josh and Elizabeth, and he'll introduce the family one more time to you and give a word of testimony on their behalf.

Well, it is great to be here, always is. We love Vision, and we love each one of you and watch you represent the stories we get to hear. It's always great to, as we get to know people, one of the most wonderful things is get to hear how God's worked in your life.

And it's just different stories. We look out, we're reminded to get to hear your testimonies. And it's just great to be with people that just know Jesus and know his power. And we still get to know his power, don't we?

[ 1 : 0 1 ] And it's great to see how visitors are welcome and see new faces. And we're excited to have you all behind us. And we're really humbled that you would send us.

But we know that that's a great responsibility on your part. You don't take it lightly. And we appreciate you being behind us. But Elizabeth here, she appreciates everything as well.

Hannah and Joseph and Olivia, they love it. Even Olivia, when she comes on to the church, she gets excited. And she knows where she's at. She knows she's home. She runs around like she owns the place.

But as a family, we appreciate it. You know, each one of us have things that we love about the church and things we enjoy here. But as a family, it's great to be able to come here.

I know we're welcomed. And I know you guys love us. And you're praying for us. And it really means a lot to us. So thank you so much from the bottom of our hearts for how you've helped us. And also, as you continue to pray for us, the next few days, we leave December the 5th.

[ 2 : 0 0 ] That's a week from Wednesday. We leave at 2.40 afternoon. So we're excited and a little nervous. I usually have a tendency not to rest until I'm on the plane with a seatbelt buckled.

So until then, you know, we're running. But is it God good how he's worked in our lives? And we just praise him for what he's doing. Praise him for what he's going to do. Thank you so much.

How about a round of applause for our missionaries? And I hope you will be praying for them. It is true. You don't rest until you get on the airplane and tighten up your seatbelt.

We were riding down. We were flying to Lima one time, though. And Betty looked over at me and she said, are all the children's passports up to date? And I said, of course. That's a dumb question.

Just let me look. I got them out. And mine and Betty's, we had 10 years. Of course, kids only get five. And I looked and all four of our children's passports were out of date.

[ 2 : 59 ] So I had the most miserable flight. I kept thinking, what will they do? Will they put us back on an airplane and fly us all the way back? Will they reject us or what? And I prayed like I never prayed before.

I promise you, brother Jeff, TBN had nothing on me that night. I was naming it. I was claiming it. And every other word you come up with, I was pulling it. And when we got there, the guy took my passport, stamped it, took Betty's passport, stamped it.

And when he grabbed the kids, he laid his finger over the date every time. And we got all four of them through there. And we were at the American Embassy the next morning as soon as they opened his doors. And I don't usually relax until I am through customs anyway.

They always scare me to death. I'm afraid they're going to charge me money. And I'm a tightwad. But so anyway, you pray for them. It's a little bit more of a deal to you than you may think it is to go overseas.

The Ewings, their parents, grandparents will be living in Indonesia. All the way on the other side of the world, they'll be living in Chile. Elizabeth's family will be living in the States.

[ 4 : 00 ] Some of Josh's family lives in the States. Saying goodbye to family is a big deal. You may not know this, but Pastor Ronald Tobias, his brother, is dying right now. And he's younger than Ronald, if I remember right.

He's younger than Ronald. And Ronald can't go to Peru to be with his family. And you might say that the hardship of being a missionary would be leaving the United States.

Well, Ronald lives in the United States, but it breaks his heart. He can't be there for his family. And so the family, the cross that falls over the family is probably the toughest of all. And you pray for Ronald.

His brother's in a coma. He's lived a wicked life of sin. Two of Ronald's preacher friends, two of the guys that, of course, I know very well, went to see Ronald's brother and tried to witness to him.

And he said, I was born a Catholic. I'll die a Catholic. I do not want to hear your message. And so you pray for Ronald. Pray for Josh and Elizabeth. That's what they're stepping into. They're going back to language school, though Josh grew up and knows how to speak Indonesian very well.

[ 5 : 00 ] Elizabeth learned Indonesian. They're going to be learning Spanish. And there's a whole lot going to be going on. So I hope you will pray. Tonight's a night to bless them and to tell them that we love them and we honor them.

And let me explain to you before we go into the messages what's going on. I love things I read in the Bible. And there's no biblical precedent for what we do here at our church on this except something I like.

In the Old Testament, it was a common practice for the dad to bless his children. And a lot of times he blessed them when he was dying. He blessed them when they were leaving. And he would call his family in and lay his hands on them and pray God's blessings over them.

And it was a very special time. It was a very solemn time. When Jacob's dying, he calls all 12 sons in and basically gives a prophecy about them. So they're leaving and there's separation and there's a time of blessing them.

And as a missionary, when I was a missionary, I found out that almost every church, when you leave, you're pretty well forgotten. And nobody knows where you are. Nobody knows what you're doing. At my home church, I showed up and, I mean, I sent probably 10 letters saying I was coming.

[ 6 : 09 ] And when I showed up, they were like, oh, didn't know you were coming back. I was like, okay. And one of my best friends, a guy you know extremely well, pastored a church.

And when I called him after I got back, he said, well, when are you coming back? I said, oh, been back for a couple of months now. And, oh, I keep up with everything. It wasn't in your prayer letter. I said, oh, yeah, it was. And so it's a different thing.

And I didn't want that to ever be the story of Vision Baptist Church. We were started with world evangelism at our heart because that's the heart of Jesus. And so tonight we're going to bless them. We're going to preach to them.

We're going to pray for them. We're going to give some testimonies to them. You may not be on the list to give testimonies, but you're welcome to. We just want to thank God for giving us good families. Now, the messages will be for you too.

But some of our people that God gave us as members of our church are fixing to leave and go to Chile as missionaries. Church has already given them an offering. There will be some gifts that we give them tonight. And we just want to love them.

[ 7 : 08 ] So would you love on them with us for the next few minutes? We're going to start with Brother Ronald Tobias. Brother Ronald. Brother Robert Ronald Tobias. Would you come, Brother Robert? You look like him.

And you preach the first message, please. You guys can have a seat. Right after that, Brother Trent will come. I'm just joking. Josh, I count it a great privilege to get to know you these past couple of years.

We've had a couple of conversations up there in that Spanish church. And I've got to work alongside you. I think I helped you twice, moving twice. And so I count it a real privilege to get to know you and know your heart and your servant's heart.

And I'm real excited that you get to work in Chile. It seems like a place that God is working through greatly. And I know he'll use you guys, Josh and Elizabeth. And I pray that he continues to use you down there. And I can't wait until you guys come back and give us your reports.

Because I'll be real excited to hear that. But the pastor asked me to speak on it, give you a blessing service or give you a sermon for this blessing service. And I just didn't know really what to say. So I just wanted to show you something that what God has showed me recently as we go through different things in our lives.

[ 8 : 11 ] And I hope it helps you guys out as much as it helps me. If you would take your Bibles and turn to 2 Corinthians chapter 12. And I just want to say something just to everyone because it is a thing is that we will go through troubles and trials in our lives.

Josh, this is inevitable. As long as you're alive, you're going to have problems and trials. I know this is no news to you guys right now. As you guys just packed everything you belonged in a 20-foot box and sent it away.

And you're probably looking for your mascara, your makeup or whatever. Not you, Josh. I hope not. And right now you're going through this trial or whatever with your visas.

And you probably have a whole bunch more. But I just want you to read this. We'll read these couple verses real quick. And I want you to see something what the Apostle Paul said and what he viewed problems and trials. In 2 Corinthians chapter 12 verse 7, the Bible says, And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of revelation, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, this is what God said, My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness.

[ 9 : 28 ] Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon me. The first thing I want you to see is that you're going to have problems. You're not above problems. We all aren't above problems.

We're not too big, we're not too small to have problems. Here's the Apostle Paul, an Apostle who actually spent time with Christ. He had problems. A widow woman that made coats, she had problems.

It's going to happen to all of us. And can I remind you that Paul said that he had a thorn in his flesh. It was nothing easy. But with these problems always come blame. When we have problems in our life, I don't know about you, but I always resort back to playing the blame game.

God, why did you do this? God, my car got a flat the other day. Why didn't you wait until I got to the parking lot? Or, why didn't you let those two lug nuts be the same as the other three?

Has anyone else felt that? I did that a couple weeks ago. God, why did you let me lose my keys? You knew I was going to lose my keys. Why don't you remind me to put them back in the thing? It's God's fault. Or, God, I can't learn this language.

[ 10 : 29 ] Why would you put me in this country where I can't learn this language? You see, the problem that Paul was facing here, this thorn in the flesh, was a health problem. But I want you to remind you, he doesn't charge God with his fault.

In verse 7, he says, The thorn in my flesh, and there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me. You see, Paul realized it wasn't God that gave him that problem.

Why was that? Well, maybe because Paul believed that every good gift and every perfect gift comes from the Father above. Maybe it was that Paul really believed that when he wrote it down in Romans, that he believed that God spared, he didn't spare, that God spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all.

And therefore, he'd give us all things freely. Maybe he really believed that there was a God that loved him. Josh, everyone in this church are going to face problems. So what do you do? You don't blame God.

He's good. He's good. But what does Paul do when he faces these problems? Well, verse 8 answers that. In verse 8, he says, For this thing I besought the Lord thrice.

[ 11 : 37 ] Paul begs God three times to let this thing come away from him. Josh, there are some times in your life that you're going to have to get on your knees and go to the Lord and ask him for help.

There are things that this church can't fix. There are things that this pastor can't fix. There are things that these missionaries that you're going to go to in Chile, they can't fix. There's things that even your family can't fix.

But there's one person, there's one God that loves and cares and can fix all things. And you have to go to him sometimes. But Paul just doesn't end it there.

He just doesn't end it with the begging. But notice what his response, notice God's response to him. And this is the point of it all. So, God says in verse 9, and he said unto me, my grace is sufficient for me, for thee.

There's a secret. God is enough. God is enough for every need that you have. You're going to go through trials. You're going to go through problems. You're going to go through difficulties.

[ 12 : 42 ] You're going to go through learning a different language. You're going to go through having to fight with other missionaries. You're going to have to go through, and I know that sounds bad, but we're people. We're going to go through different trials and troubles in our life, and you're just going to have to realize, and you're going to have to rest on, that God is enough.

He is sufficient. I want you guys to remember the story that Josh and Elizabeth, I don't know if you guys were here when Tyler and Gretchen were back, but I don't know if you remember when Gretchen told the story. She was asked the question, Gretchen, how did you get through it?

How did you get through it when she found out that Tyler was put in prison? And when she was asked this, all she would say was, God was real, and he gave her unspeakable peace.

In times when you feel like quitting, in times when everything's against you, and you feel like you can't breathe, and you feel like there's no reason to move on, that's when you need to go to God the most and rely on him the most.

Josh, Elizabeth, and church, if you have problems that you're facing, or when you have those problems, that's better said, when you get those problems, realize that God's grace is enough.

[ 13 : 51 ] He is enough. I know that's simple, and that sounds so simplistic, but it's just something that we forget so much, and we need to glory in the weakness, because when we are weak, he is strong, and that's where we want to be.

We want to be used, and we don't want to go through the trials, but those trials show his power and his strength, and every time we go through those trials, he gets us through them every time.

Josh, you're going to the mission field, and unlike many people think around here, maybe not around here, but some other people might think, it's no luxury.

It's no cruise. It's going to be tough. It's going to be difficult. There's going to be trials. There's going to be problems, but realize God is enough, and he is sufficient for your needs, and he'll take care of you.

Josh, Elizabeth, I love you. I'll be praying for you daily, and I hope you guys realize that no matter what you go through, he will be right by your side. He will never let you down.

[ 14 : 48 ] He loves you more than you ever imagined, and just trust in him. Thank you. Amen.

Would you please turn to 1 John chapter number 3, and I say amen to what Brother Robert just said, and what a wonderful challenge, and I pray that you'll listen to that again as you're there in Chile, and that we know that in Chile, you'll face problems, but you'll see things that you've never seen before, but you also get to see your God, and that's what's the most wonderful things in our problems in life, is that in those, we still get to see our wonderful God, and today is a historic moment.

Some years ago, with a bunch of missionaries, we decided that we didn't want to just read history anymore, but we wanted to make history, and I never desired to be famous in this world, but I know on nights like this, that this is the part that I get to play in history, and the fact that I would make the minutes of a service like this, for a missionary family like that, is one of the greatest honors of my entire life, to be associated with people that would risk their lives for the cause of Jesus, and to give everything to them, and I counted a real honor just to be here tonight, and this warehouse had no idea what they were getting, when we moved in here, and all the things that this wall would see, and we had no idea what God would allow us to see, and I counted a real honor, it's historic tonight, I've embarrassed myself a little bit, but I'll put it in terms, and I tried to put it to my son, that his buddy Joseph, has been commissioned by our King Jesus, and he is a knight, and there's no dragons in Chile for him to go and kill, but there's a mission, and his buddy's gonna go down there and do a work, and my buddy and my friend's gonna go down there, and do a work as well, and we get to serve the King, and that's the family business that we all work in here, and can I tell you that if it wasn't, if we didn't believe this was real, that I would not psychologically put my kid in a place where his friends leave all the time, and I would not want you to go, and some of you may decide that someday that it's not worth it to have your kids around a place that their friends leave all the time, but it's well worth it, because they're little knights going out on a mission, and King Jesus sends them on journeys, and he's gonna do wonderful things,

I want to read something, I just have a few minutes, but I think it'd be well worth reading to you what was said by a man named Leonard Woods when at the Tabernacle in Salem in February 6th in 1812, five missionaries were sent out of America, and this is a historic moment, and as a church, even though we see it a lot of times, it doesn't change how amazing that it is, the Bible says in the book of Ephesians that the powers of the air learn the manifold wisdom of God by looking down on the church, the world doesn't understand why we're sending people, why would you go and do that, I think that's great, you're going to Chile, but I would never do anything like that, is the things that people say, they don't understand what you're doing, but we're not a church like that, so at the ordination of Adonair and Judson, the send-off they were having for them, that day they spoke of David Brainerd, and now at your send-off, I speak of Adonair and Judson, and I firmly believe that someday, at the send-off of another missionary, they'll speak of Josh and Elizabeth Ewing, and that God has wonderful things for you, this is what he said, I trust these feelings are yours, you have devoted your lives to the work of making known among the Gentiles unsearchable riches of Christ, we know you do not leave your native land because you have not the fairest proposition of reputation, usefulness, and comfort here, you go, we believe, because the love of God is shed abroad in your hearts by the Holy Ghost, we finally look upon you as chosen vessels unto Christ, to bear his name before the Gentiles, blessed be the Lord God of the Gentiles, that he hath put this design into your hearts, the cause in which you have enlisted is the cause of divine love, you have chosen the noblest, the most honorable work on earth, more honorable than the laurels of concours or the diadems of kings, but is also arduous and perilous, who is sufficient to do the work of an apostle to the heathen, when you have seriously contemplated the greatness of this work, you have often cried out,

Lord, if thy presence go not with us, carry us not hence, I hope you will never forget that without Christ you can do nothing, without the help of Christ you can no more, advance the kingdom among the idolaters, then you can scatter midnight darkness by a word, he that planeth is nothing and he that watereth is nothing, the increase is holy of God, without his assistance, you not only fail of success, but of fidelity and perseverance, if you should be forsaken of God, what would your conduct be, what would become of your mission, the precious name of Jesus would be blasphemed among the pagans, your light would go out in the darkness, shame and blushing would cover the faces of your patrons and friends, and their hearts would die within them, the celestial flame which has been kindled up among you, how would it be extinguished, my dear friends, I would not distress you, but you know that this would be the dreadful result of your mission, if the special help of God should not be granted you, but if you go forth in the strength of Christ, you will be burning in a shining light in the regions of darkness and death, we hope to hear good tidings of great joy from the east, your personal exhortations can indeed go but a little way, but be not discouraged on this account, think how it will be in Asia, or in your case Chile, or two hints, the kingdom of Christ, which you are sent to promote toward the rising of the sun, will be like a little leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures a meal till the whole was leavened, it will be like a grain of mustard seed, which when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth, but when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all the herbs, and sheweth forth great branches, so that the fowls of the air may lodge in the shadow of it, and some chosen regions the Lord enabled you to plant this precious seed, to see young men who have been the beloved pupils faithfully preaching Christ among the heathen shall be my joy and my crown, oh may the first fruits of your seminary and Bible college and training among the people in pagan lands be the praise of the glory of divine grace.

[ 20 : 34 ] What was said of Ed and I and Judson and the team could be said of you today, and what was said of these men as they went out and they would go out and what they would do would be very little except enabled by Christ the same the day, and the same God that allowed them to see great things is the same God that's going to work inside of your life.

Can you imagine this, Brother Josh, that the church is commissioning, is sending you out of this place, and that in times past we would never see you again. That when you get there, you wouldn't get to Skype and tell us that you made it, or Jason wouldn't send us a message and say we picked you up, but you would be sent out to never be seen again, and that if that was our decision today, that your love for Jesus would cause you to do that, but our confidence in you would allow us to send you out and preach the gospel.

That we believe as a church that your understanding of the gospel can plant a seed in a country that will grow up a great tree, and that many people will find refuge in there.

How amazing is that, church, that we believe that his understanding in the gospel, that God can work in him to such a point that if we never saw him again, that we would trust that we would continue to go to our jobs and work, we'd still continue to train up our children and talk about this famous family, but we would never see them again.

What a wonderful confidence we have placed in your family, and you should be encouraged by that, that this church would entrust you to be our representatives, to be deputized, and be sent out, to such an incredible place.

[ 22 : 02 ] 1 John verses 3, 1 and 2, let's read this as the children of God, I read to you and Miss Elizabeth here. Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.

Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that we shall appear when we shall be like him.

Two things were said there, very clearly. One, we do not yet know what we will appear to be. Speaking of his second coming, that when we see him, we can't even fathom what we will become when we become like the image of Jesus.

And we wait for that day, and I will stand there with you, with Chilean men, and brothers and sisters, that you have led to the Lord. And we can't even imagine what heaven will be like when we see him. We can't even fathom that.

But also what we see here is that as we look into the face of Jesus, it changes us. And we know that that has started in your life from the point of salvation, that as you look at him and you learn him from his word, and then as you're out there discipling people and you learn more about God, you are predestined and he is changing you into his image.

[ 23 : 12 ] So I can't even imagine what it's going to be like in heaven. But can I tell you, I can't even imagine what the Ewing family is going to look like in 20 years after staring at the face of Jesus through ministry and his word.

So we have examples before us and our pastor, Adoniram Judson, people in the Bible, but can I tell you because God lives inside of you in the work of the Holy Spirit that we can't even fathom what he wants to do in your life.

And we just thank him that we get to be involved in this. But we can't even begin to guess what he will do as you keep your eyes focused on him and he will change you into his image and then one day that dream will be realized when we will be once again together and we will see him face to face.

I speak on behalf of the church and say that we believe in you to the point that we believe that you could represent us there and if we never saw you again we believe that you understand the gospel and you and your family can teach it to other people.

But we believe that as you look into the face of Jesus he will change you and that change will make a difference in a country. Heavenly Father, I thank you so much for an opportunity to be here tonight, Lord, to even be in the room with these chosen servants.

[ 24 : 16 ] We thank you for their life and their testimony and the cause that they're involved in and I pray that you'll help them see as they are the children of God and as they're beloved by the Father and we don't even know, Lord, what's going to happen in the next 20 or 30 years in their life, Lord, as they continue to look at you through your word knowing that one day we will get to see you face to face as we are shoulder to shoulder with brothers and sisters from every nation and every tribe in this world.

Lord, I thank you as being part of this church that we get to send out such wonderful families empowered by the Holy Spirit to do this work. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen. Thank you. We're going to ask the folks that are going to be giving a word of testimony and if you have not been, you're not already said you wanted to but you'd like to give it, ladies and gentlemen, if you would, come on up and be ready.

Just go ahead and take a seat here and you can give a word of testimony. This is part of the blessing just to tell them that we love them. One of the things I saw happen in Prue that really blessed me was though they had nothing at that time.

They were making about \$25 a month. You go to a birthday and they wouldn't have gifts to give the family but the family would, a person would sit there and hear for probably an hour he would hear one after another say how much they loved him and so it's just a sweet time.

And I want to say this to the church and I say this to Josh. C.T. Studd made this quote, if Jesus Christ be God and died for me then no sacrifice can be too great for me to make for him.



[ 25 : 42 ] And it is a sacrifice for you as a church and I think about that as you have small children to sacrifice for my wife and I to have our children out and going and in the ministry and I just want you to know I think what the young men what our pastors have preached has been fantastic.

I know that our God is good and able and his grace is strong and he will take care of Josh and Elizabeth he'll also take care of you and I also know I also know that it is a it is a tough thing to go to the mission field it's a tough thing for your kids to lose their friends but what a privilege we serve Jesus and it will be worth it it is worth it it's a fantastic thing that God allows you to do now y'all can have a seat I mean but anyway you do it any way you want y'all stand I don't ever tell women what to do I've been married 39 years you do anything you want to do but one of you ladies start us up there go every other one if you don't well don't go every other one there's only three of them I was going through some boxes yesterday down in my basement and I found a box of old prayer cards and I found one with a picture of Josh and his brother and his sister and mom and dad so we've known y'all for a good while I thought I should have brought it tonight let some of y'all see that but Josh and Elizabeth we're so excited for you guys and we just want you to know that we are going to be praying for you and we love you guys

I just want to say I love y'all I love your family I know that there are going to be some tough times coming up because there's going to be a language you've got to learn but guess what we can talk when you get back and people might not understand I don't know a lot of people that speak Spanish but there are going to be some tough days but you know what God is good and everything that happens in your lives is molding you and making you into what God wants you to be and Hannah and Joseph you know what Brother Austin said you know it's going to be sad because you're going to be losing some of your friends going away from them and all of that and we know because our kids were your size when we went to the mission field but you know what our kids were the best part of our ministry they helped and they brought people into church that we never could have gotten into church so Joseph and Hannah you know what

God's got a big job for y'all too and I know y'all are going to do a great job and you're going to come back and you're going to miss your friends in Chile then and it's going to you're just God is just so good and he's going to give you friends here and friends there and Josh take care of that precious family we love them and we trust your leadership your guidance because we know that the Lord's leading you and my favorite verse is 1 Samuel 12 24 says only fear the Lord and serve him in truth with all your heart and I can't see because I don't have my glasses and I'm crying for consider how great things he hath done for you God's been so good to us and I just pray that we're going to hear just wonderful wonderful things about how the Lord is using you there I think it's kind of a theme we have going today but we're so proud of you guys and we're excited as senders to send you guys as representatives to Chile from us but we are

I think we're all a little tired of goodbyes but we know it's worth it and we're going to miss you guys something I thought about all day when I was thinking about you Elizabeth was just how the things you've gone through the last couple months and how we've prayed for you through those things and your whole family I just feel like the Lord showed you that he lifted you up through those times and he's going to take care of you through all of this and I think we all know that as humans you guys couldn't have gotten through that and I think that I'll continue to show you how he's going to be there for you and in your own power you couldn't have done any of that but I saw day by day as I saw the testimony you were to all of us how the Lord really strengthened you and it really encourages me for you guys and encourages me for all the other missionaries going out that the Lord does miraculous things and helps you guys and I'm praying for your whole family I know I know firsthand how hard it's going to be to see you know your siblings get on a plane and your daughter and it's it's a hard time and and we'll be an extra pair for you guys during that time

[ 30 : 36 ] Elizabeth I just want you to know how much I love you how grateful I am to be your friend how we're for you here at the church for your whole family thinking along the same lines as what Steph said just seeing what the Lord has done in your life these last months you've been a great example to me of how how a godly woman would deal with a difficult circumstance in her life and I know that that is putting it so so mildly and I don't mean to make light of that situation of what the Lord did with with your with your dad you've been a wonderful example to me and I know that through all of that that the Lord has grown you and your family and I'm so excited to see what the Lord is going to be doing with you in Chile how he's already grown you so much not just through that but just through the whole time that we've had here with you I'm so grateful that I get to know you as a friend and in those difficult times that are going to come we're only just any of us we're just a phone call an email

Skype away just please reach out to us we will love to keep in contact with you we love you so much thank you Elizabeth I just wanted to say I think there's a lot of ties that bonded us together a lot of things that we both went through and I just want to get up here and try not to cry but the way that I've prayed for you over the last few months I know that I'll be praying for you there as well and that I love you and I'm looking forward to Skyping it has to help Elizabeth I just wanted to say thank you for letting me be part of your life and to get to know you and your kids and I don't like saying goodbye and it's sometimes hard to get to know people when you know you're going to say goodbye but I know that you have conned past that and let each one of those people in this room be a part and to take a little piece of us with you and we thank you for that you know it's you get to know people by reputation when you work with a group as close as this church but during the time you guys have been here we've been able to move past just reputation and really get to know you personally and we want to thank you for letting us be a part of your lives and becoming friends it's very difficult sometimes to get to know a lot of missionaries when you're not at the church all the time because their time is monopolized by the work they're doing and things of that nature which is perfectly fine but we do appreciate you guys opening up and letting us be a part of your lives and being friends and thanks for letting the kids come over we know we're going to miss them and the dogs are going to miss them too so but thank you all so much you guys have a wonderful trip

Josh Elizabeth Alicia and I thank you for your friendship and it's kind of funny we were laughing about it previous to this with a you know Josh is one of those guys that he's going to be your friend and not let you choose to be his friend he's just going to be there every time you turn around like bubble gum even if you want wanted to scrape him off it's really going to be difficult and eventually you'll give up but it was every time like from the first day we came in here until now he's just you turn around he's there and it's a good thing now we've since decided to be your friend so but but even with you know that 100% into being your friend was made it easy for us to not be not be strangers among strangers to be honest and even something like foundations we had no idea what foundations was but it was hey you want to do foundations okay what is that and so we you know between dragging your three kids down to

Panera somewhere between here and Buckhead and taking time out of your schedule we thank you for it and be praying for you I was trying to decide or figure out or remember if I had any kind of funny or embarrassing thing that I know about Josh but I don't I just don't have anything I've got to know Josh's mom and dad for a long time and been able to enjoy being a part of the support of their ministry at the church we used to be at and it's really neat to see a second generation who's not going to the mission field for the first time but has been there and going to a new country and how exciting that is and this is really my favorite kind of service we have here at vision this is this is what the vision for vision really was was this right here that we're doing and so I have a favorite set of verses that I like to use for a night like this which is really a double benefit for me brother because I get to say something that doesn't involve an offering which is really a bonus second

Thessalonians chapter one the Bible says in verses 10 through 12 when he shall come to be glorified in his saints and to be admired in all them that believe and that's what this is about creating more admirers of Jesus creating larger admiration for Jesus and so anything that falls under the category of creating admiration for Jesus is part of the job description you know the stuff that's difficult the stuff that's easy the stuff that's a lot of fun like preaching to a great big crowd and then the stuff that's not so fun like dealing with problems it all goes in the job description because it creates admiration for Jesus and that's what this is really all about because our testimony among you was believed in that day wherefore also we pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of this calling and fulfill all the good pleasure of his goodness and the work of faith with power what a great promise he's not only going to fulfill the work of his good pleasure but he's going to add faith and power to the ministry and that's his promise verse 12 that the name of our

[ 37 : 03 ] Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you and ye in him according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ what a great assignment to go glorify God in Chile to create admirers of him so that in that day the testimony that we use in this day which was believed will create admiration for our God and glorify him what a great assignment God bless you real good we love you guys we'll be praying for you in Chile there was a lady a lady they asked in the Mexican revolution they asked this lady who had lost like eight sons it could have been six could have been eight I don't remember exactly sure she lost six or eight sons and they said to her all of her sons were killed in the Mexican revolution when they fought to get their freedom from Spain and they said do you have any regrets and she said I only have one regret I didn't have more sons to give and you and I as a church are serving the Lord Jesus and we're taking the gospel of

Jesus Christ we're lifting his name and today Jason Holt with his family I'm not sure his family went with him but Jason and some of the young men drove an hour and a half away and they started a new church they named Vision Baptist Church and we have the privilege of being part of that I'd like to talk to you as blood bought saints I'd like to remind you who you are you belong to Jesus we were saved how many of you are saved say amen your life is not your own and I'm going to talk to Josh and Elizabeth tonight but I want to talk to you and I just want you to know Vision is a very different church there's no doubt about it it's very different the very idea that so many people would leave they'd come and be a part of us I was sitting watching Ed sing and being blessed by Ed I love Ed I'm proud of Ed and I'm excited about what God's doing in his life but we're on our third song leader and we're only six years old six and a half years old and we'll soon get another one and maybe he'll be better looking say amen but I thank God for all these guys that God gives us and all the work

I want you to know it's for a great cause it's because our Jesus is worthy of anything and everything we could ever do take your Bible if you would and go to 2 Corinthians chapter 11 and verse 23 it's always convenient that God's word is right there where we are and what we're needing to do as I was preparing what I'd speak tonight to say to Josh and Elizabeth I thought what better place than 2 Corinthians chapter 11 and verse 23 I'd like to read the rest of the chapter but we really don't have time so let's look with me if you would at verse 23 2 Corinthians chapter 11 and verse 23 and the apostle Paul says are they ministers of Christ well I speak as a fool I am more and labors more abundant and stripes above measure and prisons more frequent and deaths off and he continues to give a long list of the things that he did as he served the Lord Jesus and I'd just like to remind all of you everything I'm going to say to Josh ought to apply to you it does apply to you and it is your life and it is the truth that ought to be there but Josh you really need to hear this tonight and I'll be blunt honest

I prepared the message I do not pick out people to preach to but if it's your blessing service I do and so I did and this might not be in all honest truth you might walk out here and say my goodness man he burnt me in front of everybody but I'm going to tell you things you already know yourself and the first thing is that we are called to live a life of sacrifice we are called to live a life of sacrifice and Paul wanted to brag about being in the ministry he didn't say look how many churches I started he didn't say you know I'm an apostle he didn't say hey by the way guys I'm like the greatest preacher alive I've written a third of the new testament myself he didn't say that he said they think they're servants well let me just go ahead and tell you I am more now let me list to you all my qualifications I've been beat I've been hungry I've had everything in the world go wrong my life has been my life has been in peril in peril in peril in fact is if you read verse 26 it sounds like there's a whole lot of pearls in there he said in peril of this and in peril of that perils that's a Tennessee hillbilly joke y'all didn't get come on Joe

Gibby you got it didn't you you hick all right say amen with me brother all right and so it was all about their suffering it's suffering it should never be a matter to you it shouldn't important be important to you if you're well cared for in Philippians chapter 4 verse 10 Paul said I rejoice in the Lord greatly that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again wherein you were also careful but you lacked opportunity not that I speak in respect of want for I have learned I have learned I had to work at it I had to learn it but I've learned no matter how it's going for me in whatsoever state I am therewith I will be content I know how to be a base I know how to live when I ain't got any money and I know how to live when I do have money everywhere and in all things I'm instructed to be full and I'm instructed to be hungry how to abound and how to suffer need I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me it should not be about your getting but your giving I want to remind you of that it shouldn't be about your getting but your giving false teachers were the big money people false teachers were the ones that looked for all the blessings

[ 42 : 26 ] Paul was hungry and hurting but the ministry was worth it that's what he said in 2 Corinthians chapter 11 you are not seeking comfort convenience or even compassion but a cross that's the first thing you were called to sacrifice can I remind all of you were called to sacrifice every one of you when you came to follow Jesus he said this hey if you want to follow me pick up your cross let's go die together he said to every one of us if you don't hate your mother hate your mother and your brother and your everybody else in the whole world and just love me you're not worthy of me that's what he said we are called to a life of sacrifice missionaries weren't called to it all of us were the second thing in verse 30 your glory is in the Lord and the price you pay to serve him in 2 Corinthians chapter 11 in verse 30 it says if I must need glory if I have to say something and brag a little bit let me brag on the things which concern mine infirmities let me brag about all the sufferings I've done and that's what he does whenever Paul gets a chance to brag he brags about how much he's suffered would you look just a second that is so opposite of prosperity gospel that is so opposite of what you do you know when we brag here's our bragging we like to brag boy God's been good to me answered my prayer got me that new car

God's been good to me he's taking care of me met my needs God's been good to me man he healed me and I didn't die God's been good to me took care of my babies God's good to me well Paul said hey I'll tell you something God's good to me I've been I've had the devil beat out of me I've been hungry I've been stoned I've been hungry I've been fasting I've been out in the middle of the ocean for 36 hours night and a day I'll just be honest with you God's been good to me I call on you to remember you're not going to Chile as a profession it's not your means of taking care of your family it's not your way of making money it's you taking up your cross you dying to yourself you giving up your life you serving Jesus you the glory in Jesus because he alone is worthy of your thoughts you're not even worthy of your own thoughts wasn't that a wild thought you're not worthy of your own thoughts he's worthy you're not worthy I'm not worthy it's Jesus your comfort your own in your new house down there and there's

Spanish being spoken everywhere and it's either hot or it's cold or the wind blowing or maybe there's a little earthquake Chile has earthquakes and maybe something that's going on you're going to be thinking what in the world am I doing here well see you're not you're supposed to be thinking about what he's doing and you're allowed to be a part of that he is worthy if you complain you'll be doing the opposite of glorifying Jesus you'll be complaining against him and when you complain against him you actually praise the devil the devil will come in right there as soon as you start complaining the devil will come in sit right beside you and say man I agree with you God is not that good a guy he mistreats people yeah come on say it again he is not good and Jesus ain't good and the work ain't good you come up with and the devil is right there saying man you and me on the same team come on let's get in the complaining crowd the praising crowd is Jesus crowd say man the praising crowd is Jesus crowd the whining and complaining crowd that's the devil's crowd do not even use your for me you hear and you know what

Paul says hey man praise Jesus if I got a glory I think I glory in my weaknesses in my infirmities number three there has to be something major that'll make you suffer like Paul for people that did not even love him Paul suffered these people didn't love him his church didn't love him he spent and was spent for them and the more abundantly he loved them they didn't love him back so I ask you three or four questions do you know the reality of eternity is heaven real to you do you do you as a church really believe there's a heaven or do you honestly think when you got to Alpharetta you made it is hell real to you some of you got things going wrong in your life and you can for eternity in 2nd Corinthians chapter 4 verse 15 he said for all things are for your sakes Paul said I've suffered all this for you guys that

I'm preaching to that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God for which cause we faint not though our outward man perish yet the inward man is renewed day by day for our light affliction which is but for a moment work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory go prepared to pay the price go prepared to think in terms of eternity now go prepared to glorify God will you allow yourself to be embarrassed or ashamed by the gospel and its power do you believe that God can work and this question you need to answer for yourself all of us need answered I'm believe that God can work do you believe that God can work through you do you believe that God can work through you right now in Chile right where you'll be do you believe God do you understand God's mercy do you love him enough to suffer for him and his cause do you believe that he wants to seek and save

[ 48 : 01 ] Chileans do you acknowledge that the focus or focal point is number four the real battle is a mental spiritual heart battle wish everybody listened to this this is where everybody in this room is fighting is where we all live it's your attitude would you look at Philippians chapter 4 and verse 4 with me Philippians chapter 4 and verse 4 rejoice in the Lord always and again I say rejoice I want to stop and just ask you just for a second fire me but here it comes are you ready you know who you're to rejoice in Jesus you're not to rejoice in your house you're not to rejoice in your health you're not to rejoice in your spouse you're not to rejoice in getting your prayers answered you're to rejoice in the

Lord always and again I say rejoice then look at verse 5 Josh let by the way Josh when you get to Chile rejoice in the Lord don't rejoice I made it we got our support boy God came through big time we showed him with prayer warriors I put this out on Twitter the other day I really think you ought to consider this just one of my dumb thoughts it's amazing we go to God and ask him for something in prayer and when God answers a prayer we all think that guy is a real big prayer warrior we never think God is a big God who answered a prayer but we got it backwards hadn't we rejoice in the Lord look what he says let your moderation be known unto all men let your self control let your ability to trust let your moderation you need to slide through it you need to say hey man things are going bad things are going good I ain't really sad and I ain't really happy I'm just trusting Jesus and going forward let your moderation be known let your self control be known let your ability to deal with junk be known because you're a man of

God verse six don't you worry about anything be careful for nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be made known to God and then the peace of God which passes all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus well there's no need to have a peace that passes understanding when everything is going right today today I heard about a lady one of the waitresses at Cracker Bell won \$50,000 in the lottery she is probably experiencing a lot of peace and that doesn't surprise me nor pass all understanding if you had to be \$50,000 right now I would be very peaceful and happy amen but you know what when you got cancer and you have peace that's different when you got muscular dystrophy and you can have peace that's different and that'll be because God came through and God did something in your life God came through and then he said and then he says finally brethren whatsoever things are true boy

Elizabeth I wish you listened to this put on a truth filter put on a thinking filter so many people got stinking thinking stinking attitudes I happen to know you so I'm just being honest with you watch finally brethren whatsoever things are true that means Bible true whatsoever things are honest that means Bible honest whatsoever things are just pure lovely good report virtue if there be any praise that's what I want you to think about you know you're not supposed to think about I'm missing my mama you say well that's true I am missing her yeah but it ain't lovely it ain't true or Bible true you're supposed to you're supposed to already hated your mama whoa whoa you're supposed to hate your mama you're supposed to take up your cross you're supposed to say I love outwardly focused and upward focused are you thinking of you and your family outward focused upward focused or inward focused me and my family it's a spiritual battle it's the attitude

Josh that you will teach your family there were many days in a country where where basically a civil war was going on where gunfire was heard in the streets and bombs went off blew the windows out of my house I'm not making this up people with machine guns everywhere you looked I'm telling you it was a wild time and I was scared to death I was terrified I'm just being honest with you there wasn't a spiritual bone in my body I went in my bathroom and I said God in heaven I am scared to death you have got to do something and I would walk out and say honey it's really getting scary are you scared I said no I'm not scared God's good and he's going to take care of us he'd say really I'd say yeah excuse me lord I'll be right back in to tell you I'm sorry I lied but you know it's the attitude you portray it's the attitude you get across to your family I remember a night at 10 o'clock at night the phone rang and a missionary his wife called me and she said my husband's having a heart attack

[ 53 : 21 ] I was wondering if you could come get us to take us to the airport and I thought I don't go out at night I am scared they're police with guns they're terrorists with guns and I don't go out after about 8 o'clock at night I just make it I can't go down there but I just didn't tell Betty that I didn't tell her that I just said God I mean you going to fake this buddy I believe you I sure hope you get me home tonight I was cursing every other missionary in town for not answering their phone too I was teasing on the cursing part are you leading your home spiritually Josh are you making the big decisions living out what you decided kindly but firmly controlling the thoughts and attitudes of your family when a missionary kid has a bad attitude he got it from his daddy when kids when preachers kids don't want to serve

God they heard that at home too many daddies are whiners they're complainers too many Christians are whiners and complainers no wonder our kids don't want to serve God they listen to us if I listened to you I would jump off a bridge kill myself living living living living living out what you decided Josh here some direct things to you I know that's pretty direct wasn't it love your wife and your family stand up and be a spiritual leader control yourself and your walk with God so that you can be respected and followed I'm going to tell Elizabeth to follow you in a minute but there's no real she shouldn't follow you unless you be a man of God so stand up put on your big boy britches be a man be firm enough to lead and gentle enough to make her want to follow do the ministry that God has given you Elizabeth love and respect your husband much of what he will be and can do will depend on your believing in the man of

God and the man God gave you I know that I have not much and I haven't done much but I have been able to be in ministry this long and much of it was because I have a wife that believed in me I had a wife that always told me she thought I was going to do something I was going to be somebody we're still waiting on it to happen but she's always told me that I can remember preaching in my first empty on the back side it was just paneling made into a box we didn't have any money I had no mentor I had nobody to help me I had no church that was really helping me I came out of a church but the pastor didn't give a rip about me nobody else did and I would stand behind that pulpit and preach to three and four people besides Betty more than one time I preached just to Betty and one man many times I preached to Betty and one man and

Betty told me one night she said I know the days coming you'll preach behind big pulpits in fancy churches and hundreds will hear you I never forgot that and I can remember when God opened some doors and I was in Iquitos preaching about three or four thousand out on a little stand I thought Betty thought this had happened I can remember preaching at a church in Ohio man the pulpit just fantastic they got air conditioners that blow straight on the preacher it's the only place I've ever preached and I was cold I mean I'm standing there thinking Lord help me they need to turn the AC down there was one vent pointing straight at me and I kept my hands know that follow your husband remember that you were made to be his help meat and help him accomplish the work God gave him you were made to be his help me ladies that'd be a new concept wouldn't it you're not the head of the home that'd be another message for another day

I am thinking about going to Genesis next so you will hear it let her say be careful to keep your heart and mind clear do not allow bitterness to reside in you keep your heart and mind clear keep your thoughts under control and your attitude full of faith and looking up think of others not yourself so you can do the ministry you're called to do with your husband you know it's it is honestly the fact that God would allow me to stand in this pulpit and preach is something I far do not deserve everything I've ever had happen to me in every ministry opportunity has been something God has allowed because God is gracious and God is good you need to remember that you need to help your husband with that you need to believe in him you need to get your mind out of yourself it's so easy to think well they didn't do this for me and you to think like that so wrong keep it out just a reminder for both of you

[ 58 : 42 ] I want you to know I love you both and I believe in you I am praying that God will greatly use you vision loves you and wants to be behind you and I think they showed you that tonight bring glory to God as you go to the field remember this it's not about bringing glory to vision we stink it's all Jesus it's not about bringing glory to your mission agency it stinks everything stinks only one person smells good and his name is God amen the rest of us are way down here in nothing but man you're going in the name of Jesus you're going to hold the blood stained banner of Jesus Christ bring glory to God that's who you're going to serve be givers and not takers be servants and not the served give your life to do as God called you to do I challenge you you're stepping out and second Corinthians 11 such a beautiful passage think about this when

Paul had an opportunity to say hey guys check me out I am the man his bragging rights were these his bragging rights were these I have loved Jesus enough to pay the price and by the way his face would have had a smile on it he would have had a spring in his step he would have had joy he would have said count it all joy he would have been a happy guy he's not your whiny pouty preacher he's excited about serving Jesus it wasn't about boy look what I've done I've hurt when he stands up and says I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus and if you said something to me what's that scar he said that's when I was preaching in Thessalonica what about that that's when I was over in Damascus and what about that man

I was preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ he was excited he wore them like badges of honor what he suffered for Christ don't leave here whining tonight you're not doing anything but being blessed by the great God of heaven what a privilege that he would let you go what a privilege he'd let you preach what a privilege he'd let you see people saved I guess the last thing I know I've gone way over time church going to kill me but let me just say this you're going to meet some guys in Chile you're going to meet a guy named Nicolás you've already met him probably Nicolás was a liquor salesman his wife his marriage was falling apart he was nothing nobody straight headed straight to hell and you're going to find he's a big old jovial guy loves to laugh and loves to cut up and is the sweetest guy you've ever met and all that made the difference was this Jason Holt told him about Jesus he used to drive a liquor truck he used to be a drunkard and he used to have a marriage falling apart now he's got a little church and his mother-in-law love him and respect him they hated him before the whole family goes to church and he's their pastor who in the world gets a privilege like that just a servant of the great

God of heaven you're going to get to know Christian Alarcon I don't know a sweeter man in the world than Christian Alarcon Christian didn't know Jesus until somebody took the gospel to him you get to have a part of that please thank God for the privilege you have some of these people in this room are probably thinking I'm glad you're going I'm thinking I wish I was me and you could stay I pray that tonight your name would be glorified I pray you bless Josh and Elizabeth and the kids I pray that you show your great power and I pray you just do a work tonight that glorifies you I love you and I thank you for all you have done and all you are doing in your precious name amen well thank y'all very much what we're going to do is I need a chair over here if I can get one of you guys to get me a chair over here and a chair over here and Josh we'll let you come over here on the man's side since it's further to walk let the ladies stay over there you guys get another chair and

Elizabeth if like to pray over Elizabeth if you come and we're going to pray over Elizabeth and we're going to bless them as they prepare to leave and it is the prayers of God's people that God looks for us to pray God wants us to magnify him he wants us to know tonight that we're offering up a sacrifice at the same time it's a wonderful privilege that we get to do that and so we're going to have a word of prayer and Sam Paxson you can lead in prayer over here I don't think I've ever asked you to do that we were doing this but you lead in prayer over on this side if you would and all right

[ 64 : 02 ] Hannah you can lead in prayer on this side don't be a missionary's wife might as well man up amen all right so you can warm it up though you don't have to man up be all right so we'll start with Hannah if you'll lead in prayer first and then Sam if you'll pray and then I'll close us in thank you for the opportunity that we've gotten to know them more their sweet family their sweet smiles they're just such a loving family and we love them and we surely are going to miss them please just help us not to forget them as they do go over help us to be an encouragement to them I'm sure there's going to be days that are going to be hard on them and we're going to need strengthen them as they're getting ready to leave



I know they're waiting on visas I just ask that you would bring those in and help those to come in on time so that they can leave with their tickets and everything that they need we just love you and praise you and thank you for the opportunity to get to know them as they go dear father in heaven thank you for all that you do lord thank you for josh and elizabeth we love them very much we also know that you love them lord they're embarking on this journey to chile uprooting their families going across the waters and it's just a big change in their lives and we know that you have a plan for them they don't really know what that plan is right now but we know you have big things in store for them they're a sweet couple lord bless them their children keep them safe just to dwell the spirit in them and through them so they can glorify your name when they get over there and let them do the work that you have to do lord lord we know that they love you we know that josh is a man of god and lord on behalf of all of us here we just wanted you to know that all that we do we do in your glory and i know that josh is going to go and do things in your glory and your honor and your credit and we give you all glory for in your wonderful name amen father in heaven we love you we recognize that you and you alone are worthy worthy and you and you alone are worth anything i fully realize god that our church and their mission agency we're not the one that ought to get glory but you are i just pray god that you would use josh and elizabeth and the children to bring glory to your name god i ask you for those first ones that will be saved god i pray god you let josh find a man and lead him to christ as soon as he can talk god i pray you to help josh to be discipling people i pray you to help elizabeth to be able to be an influence over ladies for yonder glory god i pray lord i don't want to see them hurt so holy spirit i ask you to bless them tonight give them some strength help them to understand help them to look to you help them to magnify you help them to glorify you help them that your name would be magnified in their lives too thank you for vision thank you for a wonderful sending church thank you for a group of senders thank you for people that love you thank you for people that give thank you for people that will love our missionaries god i pray your name will be glorified here as we stay and with them as they go and i'll give you all the glory for all you do in

Jesus precious name amen to vision baptist dot com