

Sender Orientation

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- [0 : 0 0] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alpharetta, Georgia. It is our prayer that you will be blessed by the preaching of God's Word. Let's feel a turn to 3rd John if you haven't already left there. Glad the teenagers are down here.
- Ask them to come down tonight because I wasn't sure there would be anybody else to preach to. So I knew they would at least be here for us. I knew a lot of people were gone. And ask that you do pray. I'll try to get the name for you by the end of the service.
- But ask that you pray for Brother Clapp. He was at Taste of Alpharetta and he went to the Children's Hospital of Atlanta. The officer that was the first at his home when Miss Allison went to be with the Lord.
- His son has come down with a cola, I believe, virus. He's just in really bad health shape. That may not be right.
- I'm sorry if it's not. But I'll read the text. But the kid's in really bad shape and he took off to be with them. He was with me at Taste of Alpharetta. I said, I'll see you at church in a row. I said, I want you to know I won't be at church.
- [0 : 5 6] I'll be down there. And I said, I'll let the church know. But it's an officer whose son is in critical condition pretty quickly. And I told Jonathan I'm thankful that he is a first responder to a friend like that.
- That he took off to be with his friend. And he definitely has a message of hope to share with that man. So let's pray for him as he's out there doing that. And I do apologize if I don't know the name.
- I'll send it out to you after the service if I don't have it before them. So as I said, it's my heart tonight to encourage you. Maybe it will become a tradition.
- We'll know maybe after the night if it should or not about having a sender orientation. We don't really need one in the sense because that's what church is all the time. We're talking about getting the gospel to the world and our responsibility.
- And we do it three times a week. And it's really exciting that at missions orientation, pastor doesn't have to talk to people about what to do because this church shows people what to do.
- [1 : 5 0] So they're not talking so much about discipleship and the things that they see in the church. They're talking about the peculiar things, the missions, about tax things and visa work and that small percentage of things that make their work different overseas than it would be here.
- But I do think that all of us could use encouraging. And I know as I came to 3 John a couple weeks ago, it encouraged my heart, particularly as somebody has a heart for sending.
- And I know this church, and especially those of you that are here tonight, I know that you will be encouraged as you hear God speak the senders as well.
- So when I was a student in Peru, Jake Talby and I were at an antique shop, and we found some postcards from World War I. And seeing we were living off \$600 a month, we didn't buy any postcards.

But we sat there for a long time, and we read all the postcards. And it was great. It was like an inside look into somebody's life, you know, to see what was going back and forth.

[2 : 51] And that's always neat. I don't know if you ever, like, they find a note, you buy a notebook or something, and you get that extra letter in the book, and you say, I'm not supposed to read this, so it's going to be really fun. Or maybe Jonathan did that at Heather's diary growing up, or something like that.

When you're reading something, and you think, I'm overhearing something that I'm not supposed to, sometimes it makes it a little extra special. Also, so when we come to 3 John, that's what it feels like. It feels like a postcard.

It's the shortest of books here in the New Testament. It has one more verse than 2 John, but it's shorter. And how is that possible? It has less words, right.

And so because it has less words, it's shorter than 2 John. And some people even argue that it shouldn't be in the canon of Scripture. Well, time proved that it was, and we hold it here in our hand today, preserved for us.

But it's very special to me, and I think it will be to you. As we've looked at it, I've already read to you. John is the one who laid his head upon the chest of Christ, and his heart, he hurt.

[3 : 52] He would literally hear the heart of Jesus' beat, and so he was called the Beloved. That's a wonderful nickname, isn't it? To be called the Beloved by our Savior, our Christ. I mean, John, if you call me Beloved, it would be a little weird, okay?

If Brother Tony Howell calls me Beloved, it's a little less weird. For those of you that know him, he talks like that. But it would be a wonderful thing. So he ought to know what Beloved means.

So when he calls somebody Beloved, it really means something. I mean, he is laying upon somebody the nickname that Jesus gave to him, or the endearment he called him.

And so there's a guy named Gaius that is called the Beloved, the Well Beloved. And those that were at the funeral for Miss Allison, you know there were some things that I brought out because she was beloved, and she had many of the traits of this person here as well.

So first of all, the thing I would like for you to see in this kind of postcard is that we're looking at the first century church, and that helps us. If you read missions history, you like to read, I like to read about the student volunteer movement, because there's things that happen, and I say, I wish that would happen today.

[4 : 57] You read about the Moravians, and you say, man, I wish we lived in that type of community. And you look for examples, you read in the book of Acts, and you say, that's how we ought to live together. And missions does that for us.

As a sender, your relationship isn't connected to the goer. You're a sender because of your relationship with the mission of God. We're not all just in response to missionaries. It's not that we're all byproducts of missionaries, that we all are connected to this mission of God.

And it does some wonderful things. It brings a beautiful community inside of our church. First of all, it's a given to us. It's a commission of God, so we've got to be obedient. But it also helps us make sure that we're preaching the gospel clearly at home.

If you find a group of people in history that stop sending the message out, you're going to find that it becomes an apostate gospel, a non-gospel that they're preaching. In northern India, there's an area called Nogaland and Manipur, and a missionary from Scotland brought them the gospel.

And a lot of that area is very Protestant, and there's a lot of churches. But the gospel never left that place. And so if you went to those churches today, and you were going to decide what to preach, you would decide to preach the gospel.

[6 : 06] Because people that have the gospel and don't share it have to change it. Because the gospel goes places. If it's a gospel that's bound, then it's a false gospel. And so first of all, it's called the Beloved.

And what is it called the Beloved in? It's whom I love in the truth. And all of us in here, we have a special relationship one to another because of the truth. So as we look at Gaius, you're going to see the profile of a sender.

And I hope you're encouraged because you say, a lot of that looks like my life. And you're going to know how you fit into the church in the first century. You're also going to know how God feels about what you're doing.

And it's a good thing. But also, some of you may be challenged to say, you know, I don't really fit that so well. But I want to. So it says that He is the Beloved. Beloved in the truth.

And that's what we share in. It's His name that we just sung about. In verse number 2, it says, Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thou so prosperous.

[7 : 06] It's a pretty good compliment, don't you think? To say that I wish you were as physically able as you are spiritually. I know there's times in my life that I would not want my physical body to be like my spiritual life.

But John knew that about him. And I want to remind you all in here that missions work and the work inside of the church is not a progressive thing. We do not have to be not as spiritually healthy as the people we send out.

Because that's a progression that we're not getting to. That every one of us in here should be people of this book. It should be spiritually healthy. People that love His Word. And this is an incredible compliment.

It might have been health issues. Maybe Gaius wasn't in good health. And maybe that's why John was able to say that. He was able to say, I wish you were physically strong.

And maybe that's what kept them back. Or it might have been many other reasons. But look at verse number 4. It says, I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth. And that's a verse that you have heard probably many times.

[8 : 05] But you know in the context here, it is saying that I enjoy. John has a guy named Gaius that was involved in his ministry at some point that he feels a love for. That they had a fellowship in the gospel before.

And there's also this group of people called brothers and strangers going out. And he says, when I see you and them walking together, it brings me great joy. And Brother Ty, when we make a great deal about missions, oftentimes we hear something not being said.

And it says that our lives are not great as well. And so when I come to a verse and I know that the God of heaven has great joy in the life I live, it does a lot for me.

It does a great deal of work inside of my heart to know that he looks upon you today. And he says, the way that you walk and the way that you serve brings me great joy. That John would say that about your life.

And that ought to be a motivating factor for you in here. And so there was a joy brought to them from the goer and from the senders. That they both have the same love and commitment, yet they had different roles to have.

[9 : 09] They had the same place in their heart. But John had a place in his heart for believers that were walking in truth. And there's a place of joy there. And that's true for all of us in here.

You know, in your heart as a believer, there's a special place in there for the joy that is felt when you see somebody else walk in the truth that you've invested in. And it would be a shame if you live your Christian life without ever exploring how wonderful that is.

And John is just talking about how great it is. He's just bragging on some people out of his ministry. He's saying, guys, I want to encourage you. I'm writing you a postcard. I want you to know you're doing a good job.

And I appreciate what you're doing. Walking in truth. He's a genuine believer. John chapter number 2. You know what that's about? John number 2 says, Chris, that if somebody, Luke 8, John 2 tells us in the church, that if somebody comes and preaches a false gospel, they preach not about Jesus, that you can get to heaven some other way than by Jesus, that it's the responsibility of this church to send them out, to say, get out of here, that we're not going to let it happen, even if it requires physical force.

I would wonder which one of these men might pick me up and carry me out if I was to try it or not. I'm not going to. But we are supposed to help them on their journey and say, you cannot preach that here.

[10 : 29] There's a difference between a person that teaches a false gospel and a person that believes a false gospel. They don't believe the gospel. We bring them in. We love them. We share the gospel. But if they come in and they have influence in the church and they're trying to teach young people or old people a false gospel, we get together and we even say, you're not part of this church.

We turn you over to Satan for destruction. And we let everybody know that Vision Baptist Church does not believe that this man or woman understands the gospel. And we send them on their way.

We move them along. Third John says that if a person comes up and they can preach the gospel and they love the gospel, then we have a responsibility to help them on their way, to be a fellow helper of the truth.

Which means one way that if a person grows up in our church, any of these young people, where they come through here and they share the gospel and it's in their heart to go to a faraway land to the uttermost, we have a mandate to help them get there.

Help them be trained. Help them get prepared emotionally, spiritually, in every way possible to help them there. It also means, Lupe, if you're in a Sunday school class and somebody shares a prayer request about how they're trying to take the truth from the circle that you're sitting in to some other place, you have a responsibility to help them on their journey, to be a fellow helper of the truth.

[11 : 47] Because that's what we're exporting around the world. We don't just love the baggage, the luggage that it's sent in. We love what's getting sent. And as we love the gospel, we're going to love those that take it everywhere they go.

And we have to take ownership of this responsibility. I've told this before, but it was my first mission trip that a dentist in the church paid for me to go on. When I was standing in a situation where I had a Bible that a man wanted and the bus I was in was moving away, I asked myself, am I responsible for people I don't know?

The first time I really thought about that. Am I responsible to get the truth to people that don't know? And the way that I'm able to do that is everybody that I come in contact with that is trying to get the gospel message somewhere, I get involved in their life.

And I send them. And so we're living a life that's spinning all the time. So that if you get near me and you're trying to go somewhere with the gospel, I'm going to accelerate you on your journey.

Kind of like you go to a batting cage and you drop a ball in it and that thing's spinning and it comes out at you. Sometimes where it should, sometimes at your head, depending if you went to a nice one or not. You know, it could have spinning and spinning.

[12 : 58] And in the Bible, there was families that were just spinning and spinning and spinning. And when somebody would come near them, they would hit that home and they would just get sped out of there. Acts chapter 19, Paul's teaching the school of Tyrannus.

And in two years, all of Asia Minor there hears the gospel. And how is it happening? It's because where people believe the gospel, they were saying, I'm going to take you from here to there. And they were moving them along the way.

And it's great to live in a, to have a group of friends or believers that feel that way about what we're doing. So if you find anybody going down the road and they're carrying luggage and it says truth on it, you stop and say, what is it I can do to help you get down the road?

You know, if they're hitchhiking. So if they got their thumb out and they're trying to get to Japan, help them. If they're trying to get the gospel at FCA like Zach's trying to do, help them. If they're praying for their cousin and it's Thanksgiving time, you call them the morning of Thanksgiving.

And you say, can I pray with you this day? Because we are fellow helpers of the truth. And it creates a special relationship. The new birth. We're all born again. You know, I was born in Kentucky, which makes me different than just about everybody.

[14 : 05] All right? But it makes me different than some of you. And so we're different in here in many ways. If you have a chance after this service to get down to Alpharetta, taste of Alpharetta, you should. You probably ought to just leave your car here and start walking because you're not going to find a parking spot down there.

But you will see diversity. It's just unbelievable. It's just a wonderful thing, the diversity there that we have in this area. But in here, we were all born again here.

We weren't born in Kentucky or down in Atlanta. We're not a Grady baby. We're all Bible babies, okay? We were all born of this book. And it gives a special relationship. It's in the truth that we have.

And it makes us so close. And I believe I can say with all sincerity that your identity in Christ is at the heart of being a sender. Because the contrast that was given here is Diotrephes.

When he's comparing. Diotrephes is only mentioned here as a contrast, the Gaius. And it says that he loves the preeminence. What stops the gospel? It's preeminence.

[15 : 05] What stops the advancement of people talking about Jesus? It's people talking about themselves. What keeps you from talking about Jesus wherever you go? It's a conversation about you or that other person. You know?

And so, the desire for preeminence stops the gospel. And so, when missionaries go out and they go to churches, they are supported. The people support our sons and daughters of this church.

And they go to church. And they're complete strangers. We have strangers into our church during our missions conference. And we love those people. And we partner with those people.

And why do we do that? It doesn't make sense. But we love the same thing they love, which is the gospel. But Diotrephes wasn't like that. And you have a choice in here between being a sender, which is a guy like Gaius.

Or you're just simply a stayer. There's a difference there. Those that send and those that stay. And the majority of people, they stay. And when I travel away from this church, the thing that I try to encourage churches to know, that is one of the greatest need in modern missions, I believe, is for pioneer senders.

[16 : 13] It's for people to say that, I am going to sweat and I am going to bleed on every play of the game, just like a missionary does. So, trying to find your identity in anything but the cross will cause you to have no concern about helping your brother down the road.

That is only concerned about the message of the cross. Because they have nothing to offer us. If I'm only concerned about myself, when John asks for prayer requests about his co-workers at Cracker Barrel, or, hey, do you want to get together and meet some of my friends, I'm not going to be interested.

If John wants to take that message to another part of the world, I'm not going to be interested because it's not enough about Trent. It's not Trent-ish enough. You know? And that's the problem most people have about the Great Commission, is it's not enough about them for them to be very much interested.

If you want to get somebody's attention, you say their name. If you don't think somebody's listening to you, you say their name because everybody likes to hear about themselves. And so, in your heart, you must make Christ's priority or you can't be involved.

So, not only was Gaius loved by John, was he spiritually prosperous, he was living genuinely rather than hypocritically, but he was bringing joy to John by his life, but also he faithfully served his brother and stranger.

[17 : 27] And this is the testimony that was heard. It says that his charity was heard among the churches there of what he was doing. How you treat those that further the missions indicates how you feel about the mission.

How you treat people involved in missions lets you know how you feel about the mission that God has given. It says they heard testimony of their charity.

Our missionaries go out and they talk about you guys. Not Vision Baptist Church, but you people by name. And that is a wonderful thing that we get to be involved in and provoking them.

And if you're in here and you're a yoke fellow or you're not, see I get to be personal here. It's orientation. That's what I was meaning here. If you're a yoke fellow or not, you ought to get involved with it.

One, because it's a way for you to be involved. And two, is because we're encouraging other churches in the way that they treat the people sent out of our church and the people inside other churches that are carrying the gospel.

[18 : 26] It says that they gave the Gentiles here, the Gentiles, they took no support of them. When Jacob Talby was in China and when he was questioned about where his money came from and they said, we want to see your church money, are you taking it?

They wanted to know, are you getting rich off of China? He was able to say, no, I did not take money of the Gentiles, of the unbelievers here. I'm supported by people that love Jesus back home that sacrificially give.

Most of the missions happen by the sacrificial gift of people that cannot afford to give it. All of it. People are giving what they can't. And Jake was able to say that. And what a wonderful testimony of it.

And that's what he was being complimented in, is that there's people around the world that are able to say that. It's a shame if a missionary wonders about how the project will be funded, because there ought to be plenty of people spending like senders.

He's always looking for opportunity there. And it's said that it was done inside of the church. So Gaius is a church man. His work he's doing is inside of the church.

[19 : 31] He's meeting the brothers. He's meeting the strangers in there. And we find that hospitality is essential to discipleship. It's vital to what we do in getting the gospel out.

A wartime lifestyle presents itself not as a legalistic burden, but as a joyful acknowledgement that our resources aren't entrusted to us for our own private pleasure, but for the greater pleasure of stewarding them for the advancement of the kingdom of God.

So the opportunity that we have when people pass through here, which they're called brothers and strangers in this story. Brothers are those that were of their own congregation, and strangers are those that came from another church.

And when they come by, we have an opportunity here to be good stewards and to help them along their way. Do you know how messy it must have got at Pentecost when the church, 120 or so, and then 3,000 people get saved and they're from far off lands?

And they have to show hospitality to them? I mean, we're not talking about a nice lunch together. We're saying the people in that church, they had to put up in every spot in their home probably, they were sleeping.

[20 : 39] They were running around. Basically, 120 people are caring for 3,000 new converts, and it had to be messy and entangled and crazy at times.

But that's what the church looked like. That's what they were really involved in each other's life. You know, we saw that last week, and I hate to use it just as an illustration, but when Miss Allison passed away, there was people in Brother Clap's home in a way that normally wouldn't happen, because that's not normally how we treat one another.

We normally stay to ourselves. And I was so honored to get to serve with this church. There was people in their home immediately. You know, there was no professionals. There was no, as they would say, I put that in quotations.

There was no pastors around. The people swarmed to that home, and they cared for them, and they were involved in each other's life. And that's what we would see from a guy named Gaius, that he would be involved. He would be shown hospitality.

He would be getting involved. He would make problems that weren't his problems, his problems. And people went for his namesake. So I shared 3 John with our missionaries at the other orientation going on, the one you have to travel farther to.

[21 : 46] And I reminded them that they are supported by people giving sacrificially, and that they are supported because they go for the sake of his name, that we really don't like them that much. No, we like them, but we don't like them enough to do what we do for them.

But we love the gospel they carry. And so they may go around, and they may raise their support and be liked by people, but it's not their personality, and it's not the way that they've been able to put their prayer card together.

It's that God has changed some lives, and so people love the truth. And because you have promised to take the truth where we can't go, we want to get behind you. And that's the mandate upon them is to go for the sake of the name.

But when we find that people are going for the sake of his name, we ought to do radical things to get behind them because it ain't about them. It's about getting the gospel in places that it's not at.

All right, Ben, Luke, and Titus, if you guys would come here. I don't see justice here, but if you three guys would come up here. As we think about this opportunity, this is what I told our missionaries to do, and I want you to think about it.

[22 : 45] So which one of you would be a quarterback if we were going to have a football team? All right, all right, Tigger. Let's see, he already has a quarterback nickname, okay? Well, you're a running back now, okay? So Tigger's a running back, and he's running.

And as he's running, if you see, sometimes a running back will point at somebody that needs to be blocked, right? You know what I'm talking about. Okay, come here, John, since you know what I'm talking about. Or you just might have been trying to stay awake, and so you're moving your head.

All right, so here you go. You've got Tigger, and he's a running back, and he's got the ball. And he sees somebody that needs to get blocked. And so here comes Ben over here. And Ben places a block.

People, it's Thursday. Everybody's tired. A little entertainment would be fine. Hit John, all right? We really need to see this. No, don't hit John. All right, so he knocks him out, and the Tigger keeps going.

And then here comes somebody else. Here comes Ben Mize to set a tackle on Tigger. But then Luke takes care of this guy. Come on, take care of this guy. All right? And then that was all right.

[23 : 43] And then now here's Tigger in the end zone. No dancing. It's still Baptist Church, all right? So here's Tigger. You guys get down there. So here's Tigger in the end zone. Does he turn around and look at these guys and say, What are you doing?

You guys stayed, and I went. What is your problem? Does he do that? No, he goes back, and a good running back finds the guys that made the block for him.

And he runs back, and he celebrates like this. Oh, wait. Okay, he really did. Great. I appreciate it. But they celebrate. So come back here, Tigger. They celebrate together because at the end of the play, the running back may be in the end zone, but there could be all kinds of people.

My favorite thing in football is where the guy that kicks the ball ends up making the tackle, right? He's not supposed to. He punts the ball off, and he usually walks off because he's usually like 4'8 and 108 pounds, you know?

He should be a jockey, but he's on a football field on a scholarship, and somehow the play's going on. He just gives it his all, and he is so proud. At the end of the play, everybody's tired, and a good running back goes back.

[24 : 50] And I tell that to our missionaries, that good running backs honor those and send a postcard to somebody and say, thank you for getting me here. But what does it look like? Is that Tigger wants to take the gospel to South Sudan, and so growing up, he needs somebody to teach Sunday school, so Ben takes care of that problem.

He needs somebody to take him through foundations, so Luke takes care of that problem. He needs somebody to show him how to love his wife and to model that in his home and to care for him, and somebody else takes care of that problem.

And when he gets to that end zone, and he crosses it, and he's loving Jesus on the mission field, he's serving God in this community and sharing the faith everywhere he goes, he looks back, and there's a whole lot of people that made that happen, and we all celebrate together.

So you can be involved in every play when it comes to missions. We get to celebrate with every touchdown these people make. It ought to rejoice your heart. You guys can be sitting down. You are the greatest people I've ever had do a football illustration on a Thursday night in the month of May.

All right? So thank you guys for that. So they brought him forward on their journey. They were solving problems and to make it happen. And that's what Gaius was. He was a fellow helper of the truth.

[26 : 03] He was a blocker for the greatest football game in the world. And when John watched him live out that life, he said, Beloved, I have no greater joy to see you walk in truth.

When I watch you walking the way you do, my heart wants to leap out of my chest for what you're doing. I find myself guilty of sometimes thinking that if there's television in heaven, that the God of heaven only wants to watch Jacob, Talby, and Aaron Bashore, and that he only flips to me when there's a commercial on the other channel.

I mean, these guys tell stories. I mean, Kevin Hall can cluck like a chicken. You know? That Koza is crazy. And he started in these churches. And I'm happy if my socks match when I come to church on Sunday.

All right? I am not those guys. But I am thankful that that is not how it is, that I am not secondary, that I am not that, that I am not third-string football player, that I get to play in the game.

And I go to bed at night knowing that I have sweated and I have bled for a good cause. And I want to encourage you guys in doing it, but to do it even more, to just be very intentional about it.

[27 : 14] Because most people accidentally produce, when they produce a strong man or strong woman, they do it accidentally. And they say things like, I never imagined he would be a missionary. I'm like, don't say that, you know?

Or say, I would have never known he would have grown up and ran this company and had devotions with it. He's like, never would have saw that coming. Well, young people, we see it coming. You know? That's what we're expecting.

We expect that you will love God. And that when problems come up, these people are going to set a block. They're going to give their all. Be intentional about it. Let's not be surprised when that happens.

So, fellow helpers of the truth. It says they ought to receive such. So, based upon the relationship we have with them in the truth. And that's my reminder to you guys right now about your relationship with the missionaries.

Not just because that's the thing we do at Vision. Not because it's kind of our novelty. Not because they're really nice people. Not because it's interesting.

[28 : 12] But because they are carrying a truth that we love. And so we have a relationship based with them in truth. And so you ought to talk to them about it. And you ought to remind yourselves about it.

I met a pastor a couple weekends ago. And I feel so close to him. I didn't learn hardly anything about his family in there. But every moment I was with him, he wanted to talk about how much Jesus had changed his life.

And every time he talked about Jesus, I thought, man, I know this guy. Because he is talking for my heart right now. And you build a strong friendship in that. And so they might be in here for a couple years.

They might be in here from the time they're little. Whatever it is. If you're not having conversations around the truth, you're never going to have your hearts knit together. Based upon the work they're doing. Based upon the sharing and the reward.

Matthew 10 tells us that we will share in the reward with them. That when they have a touchdown, it's six points for our team too. You know, we go by the same score clock that they're going by.

[29 : 09] And after a godly sort. So how should we do it? We do it the way God would do it. And he does it generously. And he would give and he would give resources to help provide for them to carry out their task.

To sin in a godly sort is to recognize the supreme importance of proclaiming the name of God in word and deed among the nations. That we will do whatever we can to support those who go out for the sake of the name.

Spiritually, practically, emotionally, and financially. We decided as a church that we aren't just sending dead presidents, which are needed. But we're sending living people around the world.

And you need to get involved in their life in every way possible. And supporting them emotionally and spiritually and helping them along the way.

So that when they're in the end zone, you say, I was part of that, of seeing them in the end zone. And one of the best things you could do as a member of Vision Baptist Church that would help is that you become a fan of the youth of our church.

[30 : 11] That you just decide that whatever they do, you like it. You treat them like your own kids. My kid does something and it's awesome. Your kid does something and it's goofy, right?

Is that how we feel about it? Like, oh, look, Thatcher drew a mural on the wall for our church. If he does it, I want to frame it and say, hey, look, somebody else does it. How about you decide that every kid in this church is your family.

And you become a fan of them. And you get to know them. And you help their parents mold them. And when their parents don't attend this church, you get involved in it. Because there's no greater way in the local church to be involved in the Great Commission than to become a fan and a partner with parents in the raising of those kids.

Because they're going to do something with their life. But are they going to carry the truth with them when they go? They're going to take a briefcase to work, but they may not have a Bible in it. They may move overseas, but they may not do it for the sake of the gospel.

They're going to do something, but the question is, are they going to do it for the name of Jesus? So they brought forward on their journey. So brothers and sisters, as we close here, I want to encourage you to continue to cultivate an environment where people will love the world and they will dream of doing great things for God.

[31 : 26] And I hope there's a recommitment to truth. In 1 Chronicles 12.8, some of you are new in the church and may not know this, two years before the church started, I came back from Peru and I knew that my friends back here were going to the mission field and I told pastor, I said, I am going to go around looking for men of war fit for battle.

That I'm going to go to church after church and I'm going to say, like Alexander Duff who said, will anybody show that Scotland loves India? Will they send somebody to show that we care about India?

I said, I'm going to go church after church and I'm going to say, do you have any men of war fit for battle? And I'm going to find my buddy Jake some workers. I'm going to find Aaron some workers. And not only that, I'm going to find people not only that would go, but I'm going to find people that are serving in their local church that would just get behind Mark Tolson as Brother Ty and others have in here.

I said, I'm going to find those people that get behind it. I got an email today from a guy named Dr. Bruce Martin. And he said, I had a conversation with a missionary in Egypt. And I just thought you'd want to know.

And my heart was blessed by it. And those were the kind of people I wanted to meet. And I have met some people like that. But when he said, why don't we go, and when he said, I'm going to start a church in Alpharetta Roswell, where not just the missionaries are involved in missions, but the entire church takes the entire obligation of the gospel seriously, I said, I want that with all of my heart to be involved in that.

[32 : 56] And on days like this, I'm as happy as a pig in the sun. In the words of Brother. I'm not sure if that's a good thing. I think it is. The way Brother Jim Roberts said it, it was. But I am.

And I know when you come close to, here's the trick. When you're preaching, you get close to the invitation, you're not supposed to tell people they're doing a good job. But I'm going to tell you, you're doing a great job. I saw it in Trenton.

I saw it in Alpharetta. I see it as you look at you, and I look in your life. But can I remind you that God has great joy in this. Keep being intentional about it. Let's ask God for more and more.

Let's not despise the goers, because it isn't a competition. It isn't about them. It's not about us. When we talk about them, we're not even talking about them. We're really talking about the truth that they're carrying out there.

And we've got to make much about them. We've got to put them up here, because you've got to know them, because your time is limited with them. And we've got to remind you all the time, but it's not about them and their legacy in life.

[33 : 52] It's about us getting the truth to some people that don't have it, unless this church in Alpharetta will do something about it. And I hope you're committed. So whatever position you're playing on this football field, every play, give it your very all.

It makes me laugh to think about some of y'all playing football. All right, but when you go out there, you give it your all. For these people over here, on that row right there, and then back there, I hope you will say that whatever is needed in their life to get them from where they're at right now, the faithfully serving Jesus in the future, as a church, we will decide that we want to give it all.

Y'all fighting over here? We have a football game on the third row back here. Some people's kids, you know, you never know what you're going to do. So I'm going to pray for you right now. And I'll pray for Lupe.

I always do. Can you imagine her playing football? Not with a broken arm, that's for sure. But I want to, Brother Jeff, I could say all your names, but I'm not going to. But I want to say thank you.

Everyone over here. Sherry P., I know you love that your puppy's over in North Africa. But I know why you really love Tyler and Gretchen. And you may try to fool us, but we know you love Jesus, all right? And we know that's why you love those people over there.

[35 : 02] And Brother Tony and Andrew back there, I'm glad you were here tonight. Because I know you've had a lot of your friends come and go. And sometimes we feel like we're just the byproduct of a great plan of missions. But we are part of the process.

And I hope you're encouraged in it. Because you're going to hear about it. I even think, don't talk about missions because they hear about it all the time. Let's get to Exodus. But it's a wonderful thing to be involved in.

And I just want to say thank you. That you walk in a way that brings joy to the God of heaven. And we get to be involved in a great work. Somebody asked me at Orientations.

They said, is this what you thought would happen? I said, I had no idea how much fun it would be to work with people in the church whose heart beat with me for the things of the Lord.

It's a wonderful thing. And 150 years from now, if the Lord's not back, and if this church is still preaching Jesus Christ, it's going to be a church that is still preaching Jesus Christ here and around the world.

[36 : 01] Because that's the only way the gospel can be enjoyed, is if it's shared with other people. So I'm going to pray and thank God for you. Make a couple announcements, and we'll get out of here.

Heavenly Father, thank you so much for those that were here tonight. Lord, I wish I was always more for these people. I wish I could always express things in a better way. Because you have given such a wonderful thing in the people that you have brought to this church.

I pray that right now in Alpharetta, down there at Taste of Alpharetta, there may be some conversations that will lead to some people becoming, first of all, saved, and then serving with this group of people.

I thank you for their sacrifice. I thank you that they're willing to not have the preeminence. That they're willing to come to a church that isn't about being a consumer, that doesn't cater to them, that doesn't make much of them, but makes much about the truth, that talks about the truth, that tries to get it out.

And so I thank you for these friends. I thank you that my son and daughter are raised among people like this, that love you, and want you to have the preeminence. Thank you that we are a group of senders, and that we work hard on every play, and we get to celebrate with the things that you're doing here, and around the world.

[37 : 17] And with all my heart, I thank you for keeping this writing, and inspiring, and preserving it, so that I can read it today in 3 John, and I can know how you feel about people like me, and people in this room, that are just simply fellow helpers to the truth.

In Jesus' name I pray. Amen. This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. For more information, log on to www.visionbaptist.com, where you can find our service times, location, contact information, and more audio and video recordings.

See you next time. Byenell. Bye. Bye. Bye. Bye. Bye. Bye. Bye. Bye. Bye.