

Doing the Ministry God has Given Us!

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Date: 23 September 2012

[0 : 00] 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.

All right, take your Bibles, if you would, and go with me to 2 Corinthians chapter 4. 2 Corinthians chapter 4, and I do praise God that we have salvation in Jesus' name, and we are free to proclaim that all over the world and tell people about it.

And the gospel has worked every place it's been taken, and we thank the Lord for that. 2 Corinthians chapter 4, we'll look there in just a second. I just thought since we finished our missions conference last week, you might like a slight update.

And I've not got the final figures. If you're on the email list I send out, you kept up with it, and one day it climbed like \$5,000. But right now the faith promise is over \$103,000, up \$903,000 from the promise, over \$900,000 from the promise the year before.

And God is still bringing in some faith promise. So you just pray that this year we'll do even more to get the gospel around the world. I thank you for your giving heart. I thank you for the way you love Jesus and the desire you have to get the gospel around the world.

[1 : 11] Go with me now to 2 Corinthians chapter 4. 2 Corinthians chapter 4. By the way, in the bulletin you'll see that Trent is going to keep you updated, or somebody is going to keep you updated about what's going on in the finances and the number of tracts that have been passed out.

A lot of people going out yesterday and tagging doors with a gospel invitation. So I thank you for all that you do. 2 Corinthians chapter 4, verse 1.

Therefore, seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not. Father, help us this morning to know that you have a special ministry and plan for every one of us.

Help us to take seriously that you want to use us to do a ministry, a service to you and to your people. I pray, dear God, that you give us the courage to go forward.

I pray you give us direction. I pray that every person in this room would step up to the responsibilities that you give us, the privileges and the opportunities that you place in our way.

[2 : 12] And I'll give you great praise and great honor and great glory for what you do. In Jesus' precious name, amen. 2 Corinthians chapter 4, verse 1. A verse you've been saying over and over since we started in 2 Corinthians chapter 1 and verse 1.

Therefore, seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not. God has gifted you just like the Apostle Paul. When you got saved, God put something in you.

You didn't get saved to sit, soak, and sour. You got saved to serve God. You got saved to let your life be used of God. And so the first thing I want you to look at with me is that God gave us a ministry.

Let's look at what he did with the Apostle Paul. If you have your Bible open, go to 2 Corinthians chapter 3 and verse 2. When Paul said we have this ministry, he described that ministry.

And one of the things he said about that ministry was it was a ministry that saw lives being changed, that saw God changing lives. That's the ministry we have, a ministry of sharing the truth where God comes in and God works and God moves and God changes lives.

[3 : 18] Look at verse 2, chapter 3, verse 2. Ye are our epistle written in your hearts, known and read of all men. For as much as you are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the spirit of the living God, not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart.

Apostle Paul said, you want to know what kind of ministry I had? You want proof of the ministry I had? Some people want me to bring letters down from Jerusalem to tell them about the ministry I had. I'll tell you about the ministry I had.

God changes lives and he changed your life. I don't need a letter written on a stone and I don't need a letter written with a man's hand. If you'll just look around, God's been at work.

And God allows you that privilege. You know that? You can be part of it. You can be a soul winner. You can share the gospel message. You can lead people to Christ, praying for them, inviting them, sharing the gospel.

You can be a part of foundations to get involved in discipling people. And you can watch God change people's lives right before your eyes. That's what Paul said. Paul said, hey, my ministry was a ministry that saw lives changed.

[4 : 26] Look at what he said in chapter 3, verse 5. He said, my ministry was bigger than what I could do. My ministry was bigger than what I could do. And the very first thing you could say is, if God has a plan for my life and if God does want to use me, you don't know who you're talking about.

I look at the guys you have up in front and I look at the guys that teach the classes and, boy, they're talented people and they got things on their side. But I could never be used of God. And look what Paul said in 2 Corinthians chapter 3, verse 5.

Look at it. Paul said, not that we are sufficient of ourselves. Not that I'm good enough by myself. But to think anything is of ourselves. Our sufficiency is of God.

If you had gone to Paul and said, man, you're a great man of God and you're very talented and you're very able to accomplish things and I wish I could be like you. Paul would have looked at you and said, I'm a nothing.

I'm a nobody. It's not what I can do. My sufficiency is of the Lord. How many of you know God? Say amen. Did you know that when Paul did the ministry, Paul realized it wasn't Paul that was able to do it.

[5 : 27] Paul never looked at it and said, look at all my talents. Look at all my abilities. I'm so good looking. I have so much ability. I'm so smart. I believe I could do something for God. Paul looked at all that and said, I don't think I got too much on my side, but my sufficiency is of God.

Maybe you're not doing a ministry. Maybe you're not involved and maybe you're not really getting involved and working like you ought to. And maybe it has to do with the fact you are depending on you when you ought to know even Paul depended on God using him.

Look at the next thing he said about his ministry. Chapter 3, verse 6. We have this ministry. It was a ministry that changed lives. It was a ministry bigger than he could do. Without the grace of God. It was a ministry of grace, not law.

Look at chapter 3, verse 6. Who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament. Not of the letter of the Spirit. For the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.

A lot of times you might have issues and say, I don't know if I could be in the ministry. Because honestly, there's a whole lot of rules and there's a whole lot of stuff.

[6 : 31] There's a whole lot of this going on. And Paul said, you know what? I didn't come with an Old Testament ministry. I didn't come to talk about what everybody had to do. I came to talk to everybody what Jesus did.

I didn't come to everybody saying, if you do this, this, and this, if you get circumcised. The Judaizers were coming down. Do you remember those guys? They were from Jerusalem. And they were trying to talk people into keeping rules.

They were trying to talk people into getting circumcised. Paul said, I didn't come to tell y'all anything you could do. I didn't come to tell y'all anything you needed to do like getting circumcised. Or eating certain foods.

He said, I came to tell you about Jesus who changes lives. I'm not here to tell you about how you change your life. I'm not here to tell you about a 12-step program you do. I'm here to tell you about a one-step program that he did.

And it's all done except the grace. Except the gift. Except what God would do in your life. It was a New Testament ministry. Look at you at chapter 3, verse 14. Look at chapter 3.

[7 : 26] Paul said, we have this ministry. What ministry? It was a ministry that revealed Jesus Christ. It was a ministry that revealed Jesus Christ and his finished work. Look at chapter 3, verse 14.

Their minds were blinded. For until this day remained at the same veil, untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament. Which veil is done away in Christ. Boy, Paul was in, just like the Pharisees.

Paul was in the Old Testament. And Paul knew that Old Testament. He'd memorized it. He knew so many things about God and the Bible. He was a Pharisee of the Pharisees. He was as good a moral man that lived in his day.

And Paul said, you know, you can't see what's in the Old Testament because they won't see Jesus. And he said, but when I saw Jesus, when I saw Jesus, it changed my life.

And the apostle Paul comes down and he says, hey, we're not going to reveal Jews. We're not going to reveal Baptists. We're not going to reveal religion. We're not going to tell people about the church.

[8 : 25] We're going to tell people about Jesus. We're going to reveal to them Jesus Christ. And now all the things in the Bible will come to life because you'll know about Jesus. Paul said, I have a ministry that reveals Jesus.

Their minds were blinded, but that veil is done away. That veil is done. Your eyes can be open when you know Jesus Christ. It was a ministry that brought freedom and liberty and joy, not bondage, guilt, and competition.

Look at chapter 3, verse 17. 2 Corinthians chapter 3, verse 17. Now the Lord is that spirit. And where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

I think my son David told me. We're talking to Jeremy Hall, who's a missionary in Arequipa, Peru. And Jeremy's had a girl come to the church and was excited about everything.

And she wanted to maybe be part of the church, but she'd gotten basically thrown out of her other evangelical church. And she said, I'd like to be a part of this church. I'd like to get involved here, but there's just no way I can do everything I have to do.

[9 : 28] I can't make all the prayer meetings. At the last church, they just fussed at her because she didn't show up every morning at 5 o'clock for prayer meetings. And Jeremy said, you're going to be okay here. We don't preach those rules.

Do you not see what he said? He said, there's no bondage here. There's no competition here. There are no rules here. He said, where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. He said, God does the work and the emphasis on who Jesus is.

Well, you come to church sometimes and a preacher is preaching what you ought to do. And a preacher is preaching how you are messed up. And even as born again Christians, hey, that's fine to tell a lost man he's messed up because a lost man is messed up.

It's fine to tell a lost man he's going to die and go to hell because he is. It's fine to tell a lost man he needs to see the law so he can see a sinful condition. But once you're a born again Christian, you know what? When you know Jesus, there is liberty.

There is freedom. The Holy Spirit of God puts a sense of joy in our hearts, not guilt. Because we know, and Paul said, boy, I came preaching Jesus. It was a ministry that saw lives transformed by the spirit.

[10 : 28] Look at chapter 3, verse 18. But we all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord.

The Lord, watch this, watch this, this is so great. Paul said, you know what? Whereas before they were looking at the law, they kept looking at these 12, these 10 commandments on these two tablets of stone. And they focused on that and they focused on all these rules.

And that's what they were doing. And they wanted their lives to change and they couldn't get their lives to change. He said, I got a whole different message for you now. Look at Jesus. He said, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord.

You're changed in the image. You know what? You become like who you look at this morning. Don't look at you this morning. Don't look at the rules this morning. Look at Jesus. Paul said, I'm here to preach Jesus.

Put your eyes on Jesus. Looking unto Jesus, the author and the finisher of our faith. Here for the joy set before him, despising the shame, endured the cross. You see what happens? You look unto Jesus this morning.

[11 : 28] Paul said, that's the ministry I have. What's an exciting ministry? You have the privilege of sharing good news with everybody. Good news. You've got the privilege of sharing with them that though you deserve hell.

And though you have sinned against the holy God. Jesus died on the cross and Jesus paid your sin debt. You have the opportunity of sharing that great news. What kind of ministry do you have? How do you see your ministry?

Do you see it as a burden or a privilege? Did you know as a born again Christian, every one of you ought to be serving Jesus. But it ought to be like, man, I get to tell people about Jesus.

I get to share my faith. I get to pray. I get to read my Bible. I get to go to church. It ought to be, boy, God is doing a work in my life. Are you thrilled and honored that God would use you in any way at all?

Second thing I want you to look at. Go back with me to 2 Corinthians chapter 4. I want you to see the ministry. Paul said, we have received this ministry. And so I thought we ought to see that ministry. We ought to realize what an exciting service.

[12 : 30] That's what ministry means. What an exciting service. What an exciting work opportunity Paul had. He got to share Jesus with people. Jesus who frees people. But the second thing, it's in that verse, 2 Corinthians chapter 4 verse 1.

Paul was able to do the ministry because of the grace and mercy of God. Look at chapter 4 verse 1 again. Therefore, seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not.

Paul had a ministry. Paul was serving. Now, that doesn't mean he was pastoring a church and everybody was like, ah, boy, you're the big man and you're the big shot and we're here. No, he was serving.

He was traveling from place to place. He was preaching. He was teaching the Bible. He was teaching God's word. He was actually writing scripture. And Paul had every reason to be discouraged. Paul had every reason to quit.

This morning, maybe you can be a tad discouraged. Boy, do you realize what I have to put up with and all the burdens I have to bear as I serve God. And maybe that comes into your mind.

[13 : 32] Maybe you even think, hey, I mean, you don't know the life I have to live. You don't know all the problems I have issues with. But Paul said, hey, guys, I have this ministry, but I have received mercy.

So I don't faint this morning. What is what's holding you back? Is it cost too much? You don't have enough money. You don't have enough time. You're discouraged.

You're whipped, whatever. Paul had every reason to quit. First, I want you to see all of Paul's reasons. He could have quit. Look at what it says in chapter one. Second Corinthians, same book. Second Corinthians, chapter one, verse eight.

You should be getting kind of familiar with it. Look at verse eight. For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble, which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life.

We had the sentence of death in ourselves that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God, which raised the dead. Paul said, guys, I know what it's like to have problems.

[14 : 33] Anybody in this room serving God, you've already faced problems or dealing with problems. It could be family problems. It could be money problems. It could be, it could be emotional issues. It could be any number of things.

You're dealing with problems. And Paul looks at you and he said, we got a ministry from God. We got a ministry from God and we got mercy from God. And we faint not.

Watch the few of the things that Paul lets it be clear in the, in the, in the Bible. You know what he said? He said, Hey, I love people and they don't love me back. That's a good reason to quit. Maybe you ever, you ever been doing service.

You're right here in the church. I mean, you're trying to help somebody and you give and you give and you give. And it seems like they never give back. Well, that's what Paul felt like. Look at second Corinthians chapter 12, verse 15. The Bible says that I will very gladly spend and be spent for you though.

The more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved. Paul said, I spend and I get spent. I spend everything I got and I spend all my life. And the more I love you people, the less you love me.

[15 : 32] Sometimes some of you, you quit serving God. Didn't you? Because it seemed to always be a give, give, give. And you thought it ought to be at least a give, take, give, take. You thought it ought to be at least be a give and receive.

And Paul said, he said, let me tell you, I spend and I'm spent. I burn my life and I burn my money and I love. And they don't even love me back. Like in first Corinthians chapter nine, in first Corinthians chapter nine, verse three, Paul, Paul wouldn't get paid a salary and the churches wouldn't take care of him financially.

And he writes, he writes in there and he says, my answer to them that examined me, you guys are trying to check me out. He said, have we not power? Don't we have the authority to eat and drink? Don't we have the power authority to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles?

Or Barnabas and I are the only guys that have to have a full-time job. Paul said, you know what? I love and nobody loves me back. I give and nobody gives back. And they don't even want to take care of my finances.

And your church is full of problems. But dealing with you Corinthians, and I'm telling you, your church is full of problems. And they were even judging Paul. The church where Paul was trying to work, the people he was trying to serve, the people he was trying to, you know, you would think that if he's trying to help them and be a blessing, they'd be good to him.

[16 : 48] But look what they said in 2 Corinthians chapter 10 and verse 10 about him. They said, for his letters say they are weighty and powerful, but his bodily presence is weak and his speech contemptible.

Paul, you might can write a good letter, but buddy, you ain't much to look at. You ain't much to look at, and you aren't a very good speaker either. Paul says, you know what?

I got this ministry. I got this ministry. But we don't quit. We don't faint. We don't give up. We don't turn. And we don't run like a coward.

If you serve God, boy, when you first get a ministry, when you first start discipling somebody, or when you first start leading people to Christ, or when you first start teaching a Sunday school class, it's exciting.

Boy, what a blessing you get to do that. But I mean, after week and week and month and month, there comes a time when you're like, I don't know if it's worth it. I don't know if it's worth it. Nobody seems to love me.

[17 : 46] Nobody seems to care what I do. Nobody seems to be concerned about me. In fact, is they even talk bad about me? And Paul said, I know all those feelings.

We have received a ministry, but we're not going to faint because we have mercy. We have found mercy. Because of God's mercy, Paul was able to not quit.

Faint in that verse means to give in to fear, to lose courage, to behave like a coward. Paul knew he had received mercy. Before he had been the chiefest of sinners, he had persecuted the church, and now he was being allowed to serve God.

Sometimes we get an overinflated opinion of ourselves. We forget that we were big sinners. And we're dealing with sinners. We're like, when's that guy going to quit sinning? And we forget that we were just like them.

Can you say amen right there? Well, we can get a critical and a haughty spirit. And Paul said, well, we got a ministry. Can you believe I got a ministry? I can't believe I got a ministry. I'm the chief of sinners. I persecute the church.

[18 : 49] I have verses. I can show you where he said that. Well, so I just can't believe I got a ministry. God trusted me. Put me in a ministry. Sometimes you can get an attitude of, man, I don't know if it's worth it.

I don't know if it's worth it. But Paul knows God and he knows his mercy. He knows that God's working in and through him. Paul was able, verse 2, look at 2 Corinthians 4, 2.

Paul was able to renounce, to turn his back on the hidden things in the crafty ministry. Paul learned to be honest and transparent.

Look, if you would, at verse 2. The Bible says, but have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, not handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

Paul said, man, I got a ministry. And I would faint, but I got mercy. But I have, you know what? I'm not going back. I've turned my back on the old life. I've turned my back on the old way of doing things.

[19 : 50] And I'm going to serve Jesus. Just write these verses down. You can look them up later if you can't keep up with me. But you know what? Paul gave up his old life. Paul gave up his old life.

You should give up your old life. In Ephesians chapter 5 and verse 10. Boy, listen to this. The Bible says in Ephesians 5, 10, proving what's acceptable unto the Lord. We're going to see more about that later in other services.

But Paul was like, man, I just want to know what pleases God. I just want to know what makes God happy. He said, he said, now, he said, it's not about pleasing Paul. It's not about doing what I want to do.

It's about doing what God wants. Verse 11. Paul said, Ephesians 5, 11. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

Paul said, I'm not going to do what I used to do. I'm not going to hang with who I used to hang. I'm going to stand against what I used to do. Verse 12. It's a shame even to speak of those things, which are done of them in secret.

[20 : 46] But all things are made manifest in the light. Now, Paul's hungry to do what's pleasing and acceptable to God. And in this room, there ought to be a room full of people that are like, man, I love Jesus.

I love Jesus. And I want to please him. And I want to do what pleases him. I want my life to reflect how much I love him. I want my life to reflect how good he's been to me. Paul is hungry to please God.

He doesn't even want to hang around with people doing shameful things. Paul wants to walk in the light. It's the false preacher. It's the legalist that has something to hide.

In Matthew 23, verse 27. Those Pharisees, that they were legalists if there ever were. But if they had more rules, they had rules about their rules. And here's what Jesus said about them. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees and hypocrites.

For ye are like unto whited sepulchres. You're like a graveyard. You've got beautiful crosses and beautiful manicured lawns and beautiful grass. But inside, it's nothing more than dead men's bones and all uncleanness.

[21 : 48] Paul said, I'm not trying to hide anything. You see, those other guys, they came down from Jerusalem. But they were not using the Bible and Jesus and Christianity to bless. They were using it to get. They were using it to get offerings out of people.

Boy, television evangelists have become pros at it. They build mega mansions and have mega money because of it. And they use Christianity. And God's not against you having money.

But God is against you falsely using this. And having a hidden agenda. And making up stuff so you can get something out of it. Paul said, I'm not doing it. I'm not trying to hide the truth.

I have no tricks up my sleeve. I simply preach Jesus. That's all I preach. In 1 Corinthians 2, verses 1 and 2, Paul said, And I, brethren, when I came unto you, came not with excellency of speech or wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.

For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified. Paul said, you know, I did actually go to one of the most prestigious schools among the Jewish nation. And I have read a lot of books.

[22 : 51] And even, let's that be, slip out in some of his other writings. I read a lot of books. And I'm up to date on current affairs. I've read the latest blog. And I'm up to date on the latest Twitter feed. I really know what's going on.

But I didn't come to you with all the cute things everybody said. I decided when I got to talk to you, I'd tell you one thing. Jesus Christ. And him crucified. Nothing cute.

Not tricking anybody. Not playing any games. Read the latest book on church growth. But I think I'll just preach. Jesus. And him crucified. Paul was clear, plain, and bold.

If the gospel offended, it just had to offend. Paul wasn't looking to draw a crowd. He wasn't looking to sell the gospel. He just wanted to preach it, plain and simple. Paul refused to twist the Bible to get followers.

The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 4, verse 2, We have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty. There's no trickery, no deceit, no hidden things going on here in the ministry.

[23 : 50] We're not walking in any craftiness, deceivableness. We're not trying to trick you or deceive you. We're not handling the word of God deceitfully. We're just preaching it just like it is. You know, one of the great things about preaching through the Bible is every week you read it.

And every week you're like, man, he didn't say much. It's just exactly what the Bible said. He ain't all that smart. All he does is read what it says and yell it at us. Well, that's what Paul said. He said, I'm just telling it like it is.

I don't have anything tricky. I'm not jumping from here to there. And I'm not trying to find some hidden clue. I'm just telling you what it says. There's no code in this thing. I'm just telling you what the Bible said. Paul said, I'm not handling the word of God deceitfully.

I don't twist the scriptures like the Judaizers. The Bible doesn't need defending. One preacher said, the Bible needs defending like a lion needs defending.

If you let the lion go, he'll take care of the people that want to hurt him. Paul said, I don't twist the scripture. I don't handle it like that. You do not need to try and make it palatable or feel good for the world.

[24 : 52] The Bible is powerful in its own right. It will accomplish God's purposes for it. Paul was not trying to make money with the Bible. 2 Timothy chapter 4 and verse 3.

In the day you live in, this kind of preaching may not be the most popular kind of preaching. Preaching the Bible may not be the most popular kind. And Paul told Timothy that was going to happen. In 2 Timothy chapter 4 verse 3, he said, For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine.

But after their own lusts, after their own desires, what they want. They want what they got. What they want. They will heap to themselves teachers having itching ears. They'll say, this is what we want to hear.

Tell us what we want to hear. Tell us how to be successful. Tell us how to be happy. Tell us how to prosper. Tell us how God will do. They'll make teachers up to do that. And they will turn, verse 4, their ears away from the truth.

And they'll turn to fables, fairy tales, stories that are made up. Paul said the hindrance of the gospel would be, wouldn't be that Paul wouldn't serve God with everything he had.

[25 : 56] And everything at his disposal. Now check this out. Who hinders the work of God? 2 Corinthians chapter 4 verse 3. It was Satan. But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost.

Paul said, boy, I'm telling you, we're in a spiritual battle.

And they don't want to hear the gospel out there. And they don't want to know Jesus. Because the devil literally blinds them. They can't see it. They can look right at it. And they don't see it. The Jews couldn't see the truth because they rejected Jesus as the Christ.

The Gentiles, the lost world outside of Judaism, couldn't see the gospel because Satan blighted their minds. They don't want. They don't see it. And they don't want to see the truth. The Holy Spirit must convict them and convince them of their need.

We must pray that God would work. Look at verse 5. Paul said, and I'm not preaching about me. I'm preaching about Jesus. I'm not pushing a Jewish thing.

[26 : 59] I'm not pushing a Jerusalem thing. I'm preaching about Jesus. I want you to go now to verse 6. Last thing. Paul's ministry was to give them the light of knowing Jesus.

Paul's ministry was to give them the light of knowing Jesus. For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness has shined in our hearts. To give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Just like creation. Do you see what he said right here? God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness. The God who in the very beginning in Genesis chapter 1 commanded the light to shine out of darkness. That same God is at work in your life.

And he has shined in our hearts that same God. Just as miraculous as when he called the light to shine out of the darkness. Just as miraculous as what he did in my heart. On May the 6th, 1962 when he convicted me of my sin and showed me my need of the Savior.

And he made me a new creature. 2 Corinthians 5, 17. God did a work in you. Please listen to this. Please listen to this. And I'm through. Listen to this. You didn't save you.

[28 : 02] You didn't turn over a new leaf. You didn't take a new step. You didn't get baptized and God change you. You didn't do anything to get you where you are. It was God who was at work in your life.

It was God who came down and showed you you were a sinner through his commandments and his laws. And he said, you've sinned and you're sick and you deserve to go to hell. And you saw that and you cried out for mercy.

And the Holy Spirit showed you Jesus. And Jesus dying on the cross. And Jesus paying your sin debt. And just as powerful and fantastic and miraculous as it was when God in the beginning commanded light to shine out of darkness.

God shined in your heart. That's how you know your salvation is a salvation that you won't have to worry about losing. Hey, you didn't do it. God commanded. How many of you have been born again?

Say amen. It's not what the badness did for you. It's not what the church did for you. It's not what water in some pool did for you. It's what the God of glory did for you.

[29 : 00] He came down and he did a work in you. He commanded the light to shine out of darkness and he commanded the light to shine in your hearts. And he made you a new creature. Paul preached the word of God to expose the world to the truth of Jesus Christ.

You can do that. Do you not realize that the same God that saved you by miracle, by great awesome power, he saves other people. Share Jesus.

God worked in Paul's life so that he would give the light. Salvation is not what I do, but what he did. Salvation is knowing God through Jesus. Knowing God through Jesus.

Make much of Jesus. Let's preach Jesus. Even though Satan does all he can to block the light of the gospel, God commands it to shine.

I'll never understand. I don't know exactly all that happened. I was raised in a godly home. I was raised in a Christian home. I went to church all the time. And back then in those days, you know, they used to have these protracted meetings where you go to revival meetings.

[30 : 00] And two and three weeks in a row every night. I was raised in church. And I heard the gospel all of my life. And as an almost eight-year-old boy, I was sitting in church.

And I'd heard the gospel week after week. And my daddy said, I kept coming to him and saying, hey, do you want me to get saved? And my daddy said, no, just sit down and be quiet. And then one Sunday morning, just out of nowhere, I just decided. I don't even remember that part of it.

But I do know that one morning. Something readily happened in my heart. And I knew I was a sinner. And I knew Jesus died on the cross. And I knew Jesus died for me. And I accepted Jesus Christ. I received him.

I believed on him. I trusted him. And what he did on the cross of Calvary. And he saved me. He saved me. That pastor didn't save me. My parents didn't save me. The church didn't save me.

I got baptized a week later. I didn't do anything. You get baptized and all you'll be is a wet sinner. You won't be saved. It's Jesus who saves. Do you know that he has saved you?

[30 : 56] Do you know that you're born again? Do you know that you put your faith and trust in him and received what he did on the cross? You believed in him. You just trusted him. The Bible says the wages of sin is death. But the gift of God is eternal life.

See, he gives you a gift. It's all paid for. Salvation is all bought and paid for. It's all been taken care of by Christ on the cross. It's all paid for. All you do is receive it. All you do is trust him. All you do is believe him.

Say, I believe. That's all you're doing is I'll take it. I know there's nothing for you to do but receive what God did on the cross. And you won't do that until you say, man, I'm a sinner. I realize I've done wrong.

I realize I failed a holy God. I realize I can't save myself and I need God. If you're not saved this morning, you ought to get saved. This morning, you ought to say, I trust Jesus. And then if you are saved, you ought to back up a little bit and you ought to say, you know what?

Look, I'm a born-again Christian, but I haven't taken my ministry seriously. We have this ministry. We have this ministry. We don't deserve a ministry. You don't deserve to be saved.

[31 : 52] You don't deserve to have the privilege of sharing Jesus. You don't deserve the privilege of being able to disciple people. You don't deserve the privilege of managing money God puts in your hand. You don't deserve any of it. But God gave it to you.

You want to be able to say like Paul, we faint not. What's your job? Man, share Jesus. Share Jesus. Who's on your prayer list right now? Who are you praying for that Jesus would save?

Who are you inviting to church? Who are you having over to your home and sharing the gospel with? Who are you telling, I want you to know about Jesus? You don't have to be convincing them, tricking them, deceiving them, working craftily.

Just be open and be who you are. Renounce the hidden things. Just say, man, I love Jesus. That's as simple as it can get. I love Jesus and I love what he did on the cross. And tell them about Jesus. So if you're lost today, if you're not saved, you don't know you go to heaven.

If you're not a follower of Jesus Christ today, you ought to say, I want to trust Jesus. And if you are a Christian, you ought to say, man, God has given me a ministry. And I don't want to faint. I don't want to back up.

[32 : 49] I don't want to quit. I want to go forward and carry the gospel message of Jesus Christ. Father in heaven, I love you. And I thank you for the privilege of sharing your word today. And I pray that your name would be magnified and glorified.

And I pray, God, that you'd speak. God, save anybody that's here that's not saved. And God, anybody that's a Christian here this morning that might be fainting, I pray you'd wake them up and help them not to faint, but to trust you. And I'll give you the praise and the power and the glory and the honor for all that you've done.

We love you.