

Chris Waye Send Off Service

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[0 : 0 0] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. It is our prayer that you will be blessed by the preaching of God's Word. Open your Bibles, if you would, to Ephesians chapter 6. See if we can get that up here on the board.

I want to say this real quickly to Chris tonight. Ephesians chapter 6, verse 10. The Bible says, Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. He's ending the book of Ephesians. He's telling the Christians that He wants them to be strong, but they are to be strong in the Lord.

They are to be strong in the Lord. And so that reference there, Chris, is that they are trusting Jesus. You know, when you get on the airplane next week and you start flying across the ocean, you aren't going to do anything to help that plane fly.

You can be strong in the Lord. You can be strong in the airplane. You can just trust that airplane. You can just lay the seat back. I suggest if there's any openings where you can lay down, you lay down, and you just go to sleep.

[1 : 0 9] Take you some dope or something and sleep, you know. And just trust the airplane. And just wait until it gets over there. That's what's going on here. The Bible says, My brethren, be strong in the Lord.

And we put the emphasis on, I've got to do something. What He's saying is, No, you don't have to. Just stay in love with me. Just keep trusting me. Just keep looking at me. It's in the Lord that's the strength.

You're not going to help the plane fly. If you try to flap your arms, it won't help. If you grab the seat, it won't help. If you grimace, it won't help. If you strain, it won't help. So be strong in a way means relax.

Trust God. Be strong. And in the power of His might. Look at chapter 6 and verse 11. Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

So you're going to stand. It's amazing. He's not asking you to go forward. He just wants you to stand. In verse 13, He says, Wherefore, take unto you the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

[2 : 0 9] So He wants us to stand. He wants us to just stand there. Knowing, hey, God, I'm just trusting you. Arrows are coming. Bullets are flying. I don't have to worry. I know you're going to take care of me.

I'm standing in you. You know, as you go over there, and as you face all the things, you've got to be able to see things that nobody else can see. In the Old Testament, when the prophet is there, and his servant's there with him, his servant comes running in, and he says, I am terrified the prophet's laid back, got the TV on, flipping through channels, got the fan blowing and drinking Diet Mountain Dew.

And the young man says, Hey, buddy, there's armies out here to get us. And he said, Lord, open his eyes. Let him see what's going on. And when he opened his eyes, he saw a whole big army all the way around him.

And he said, Hey, pass me a glass of lemonade. I think I'll drink with you. Because we're strong, not in our power, but we're strong in the Lord. Look at chapter 6, verse 14. Stand, therefore.

Stand, therefore, having your loins girt. Start about with truth and having the breastplate of righteousness. Know that God is going to use you. So when you step into London, and you made the comment today, you just don't know what you're going to be able to accomplish.

[3 : 18] I'll just go ahead and tell you, you're inadequate for the job. You're not able to do the job. You're not the man to do the job. You don't have the power to do the job. You can't save people. You can't get people to come to church.

You just ain't much. But that's the beauty of the story. You're strong in the Lord. And the truth is, if you try to fly from here to London next Wednesday, I think it's Wednesday when you leave, if you try to fly, you probably can't.

You're just not that strong. You don't have the ability. You're inadequate. But you can get on an airplane and pretty well lay back and trust. When I get on an airplane, I do everything I can to sleep. I do everything I can to get over.

I put on my noise-canceling headset. I lean back in a chair. I take anything I can take to go to sleep. And when I can't sleep, I just lay there glazed-eyed waiting. I don't worry.

We hit a pocket of air. I just don't get scared. I'm like, hey, I'm not worried about it. And it's exactly what's going on here. Be strong in the Lord. So when you land in England and you walk out on the street, here's what you've got to do.

[4 : 17] Say, I just trust Jesus. Shoot at me, devil. Try to bring me down, Satan. All I've got to do is stand here and say, I love Jesus. I trust Jesus. I'll be strong in Him. And God will do a work in and through you.

Not you. You're not the answer for England. You're not even going to really be taking the message that's the answer for England. It's God who'll be doing it. So be strong in Him. Stay in love with Jesus.

Walk with Him. Father, I love you. I pray you bless this offering. I pray that your name would be honored and glorified tonight. And I pray that you would bless Chris and Sherry as they go. I pray you take care of their family.

I pray that your name would be greatly honored and glorified through their life, through their ministry, and through what you're doing in them. I give you praise for it all. In Jesus' precious name. Amen. Someone asked me tonight when they were talking to me in the back.

They said, I guess you sure are proud, aren't you? And, you know, yeah. Yeah. Sure am. I'm thankful for what God's doing at Victory. And through the ministry there from our young men.

[5 : 19] Chris is exciting. Chris will be the second man that we have sent out, that I have sent out personally under my ministry. Brother Patrick Henry is here tonight.

He'll be planning a church in Atlanta this year. And then Jason King is here tonight. He just made it public a couple weeks ago at our church that he is also going to the mission field and starting deputation this week.

And we're excited about it. We're super excited to see what God's doing. And what's exciting about it is the fact that I've seen these guys as their youth pastor.

This year I'll be celebrating my 10th year as the senior pastor at Victory Baptist Church. Prior to that, for 10 years, I was the associate pastor, youth pastor, and everything else that falls under that category.

I'll be finishing 20 years this year. And Chris and Sherry, it was exciting to see them as young people, teenagers in my youth ministry. We had one of our annual events as the War at Victory.

[6 : 17] And it's just a big teen activity. And I think that's actually, Sherry, is where you got saved at that war that evening. One evening there. And, of course, Chris was a runner on my bus route.

Well, first he was one being ran, too. We picked him up on our bus. One of the other kids in our youth ministry would run, knock on his door, chase him around his house, each window.

And finally he got up and got on the bus and came with us, he and his brother. And just so many stories we could tell you there. And then for him to become a part of the ministry, grow up through the youth ministry.

And then marry one of the young girls there through the ministry, go off to Bible college, and then come back. I'll be honest with you, I always knew Chris had some God-given abilities.

Whether or not he was chose to surrender to him was another story. Because there was a period of time in Chris' life where he was comfortable. Now, his upbringing wasn't always comfortable for him.

[7 : 18] And I'm sure many of you know his testimony there. But in his married years and later married years, Chris was able to do a very good job with his father's business.

And was able to do financially very well for himself. And that began to scare me because I felt like maybe he had gotten too far involved in what he could do materially and with finances.

And I remember vividly the night sitting there in about 1.38 there at your house. And how around the coffee table you shared with me how it's time to get serious and do something with your life.

And I remember surrendering that night. And it's been a wonderful journey. I'm proud of you guys. I sure do love you. It's an honor to be able to have you out of our ministry.

And I hear from across the country. I've heard from across the country. Literally, I've had pastors and church members email me or text me or call me. And say, hey, we just have one of your guys in our church.

[8 : 23] I want to tell you what a blessing they were. How kind they were. Whatever. And that does a pastor good when he hears that. There's a good testimony there. And so I'm proud of that. I'll say much more on Sunday at our sending service there from the church.

But I want to take a moment and just thank Brother Gardner. First of all, for your friendship. And I appreciate you spending time with me as a young man and investing your life into our ministry.

And it goes much further than just Chris and obviously with the other guys that you've been assisting and you help. And I appreciate the fact that I can have confidence and trust. I've heard over the years where you've had many of your pastor friends get upset with you because they feel like they stole your guys or stole their guys.

And I guess one might could see it that way. But about two years ago I realized there's no way I could help a young man in the mission aspect of ministry like Brother Gardner could.

And it used to bother me real bad. Patrick, you remember I had this conversation at staff meetings. And I'm like, you know, I was trying to, I was trying, I wanted to do that. But I've never been on the mission field as a missionary.

[9 : 39] I've never gone through deputation. Those were things that I had no experience in. And I couldn't help Chris when I owed him that aspect of it. And it used to bother me and I struggled with that. And I finally realized, you know what, if anybody could do that, Brother Austin Gardner could do that.

And he's going to do that. And it was that day I remember, preacher, when it kind of hit me, I said, you know what, I'll never be able to have the influence mission-wise.

But I can teach them how to pastor. And I can teach them how to love people. And I can teach them how to do the work of the ministry within the church. And it was that day, about two years ago, that I embraced that and began to develop that heart and my mindset.

And I decided then I don't need to be Austin Gardner. Now, do I want to do some of the things he does? Absolutely. And he'll surpass far more than any of us in here along those lines.

But I'm thankful for the impact of this ministry, the influence that you've had. Thank you for your willingness and all of the guys. It was weird tonight not seeing Mark Hoffey up here. You know, I'm all, hey, preacher.

[10 : 47] And, you know, it's just, but it's exciting to see new faces in here. I told Miss Betty, man, it's neat to see some new kids up here, new faces up here, going through the same thing.

Training, serving, or being, doing, serving, and training. And I'm thankful that you have allowed some of our guys to be a part of the ministry in this aspect. And we sure are grateful for you. Vision Baptist, never grow weary of the impact and the influence that your pastor has.

And I'm very appreciative, very thankful for it. And I want you to pray for him. I want you to lift him up. I want you to support him. And I want you to try to endeavor to reach this globe with the gospel. Amen. I sure do love you.

Chris, come on and preach, bud. Let me pray for you, all right? Yes, sir. I love you. I appreciate you. Father, I ask if you would please just bless Chris tonight. I pray, God, you'd use him, God, to bring to us the word that you'd have us here tonight.

I thank you, Father, for the fact that you saved him and called him. Thank you, God, for his submission to you, his yielding us to you. Thank you for that of his wife as well. God, an exciting time.

[11 : 51] I ask now that you would help him as he charges his vision one final time for a while. I pray, God, tonight hearts will be open, ears will be attentive. And there may be another young man or another young woman here tonight, Father, who needs exactly what it is that you would have come through his lips.

I pray, God, you speak to my heart as I as well. Again, superintend this service. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen. Thank you so much, Pastor. Well, if you would, tonight open your Bibles to the book of 2 Corinthians, chapter number 4.

2 Corinthians, chapter number 4. And I appreciate very much the high honor to preach here in this pulpit. Thank you, Brother Gardner, for allowing me this time. We'll be in 2 Corinthians, chapter number 4.

We'll begin in verse number 8. The Bible says this, We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed. We are perplexed, but not in despair. Persecuted, but not forsaken.

Cast down, but not destroyed. And as I began thinking about this night and been looking forward to this day where deputation would be over, I couldn't help but to laugh and to think about an email that I had sent three years ago.

[13 : 07] I'd sent an email to the team of missionaries on my very first day of deputation three years ago and was all excited. I couldn't sleep that night, couldn't sleep the night before because I knew what the next day was going to hold.

And I couldn't sleep that night after finishing up. And I wrote an email and was telling the guys, you know, what the church did for us and how I got to preach and all these things.

And then they paid me. So they gave me a love offering. I couldn't believe it. And I remember writing and saying, I can't believe I'm getting paid to do this. And, of course, Aaron Bayshore, in typical Bayshore fashion, was kind enough to write back, you're not getting paid to do that.

You're getting paid to finish deputation and to go and to do the real work. And real encouraging, you know. And Aaron, if you're listening tonight, now I'm getting paid to do the real work.

And so, but I do appreciate and I appreciate the truth in that statement. And as I begin thinking about the end of one ministry and now the beginning of another, I'm realizing that these last three years, as though they have been a ministry and God has allowed us to do some things and He's taught us and trained us and brought us along, we understand that the real work of the ministry is ahead of us, not behind us.

[14 : 30] And as I begin looking through the scriptures and looking specifically here tonight, the life of the Apostle Paul, we realize that ministry is not always easy. The Christian life is not always easy.

Working a job is not always easy. Providing for your family and many of you coming straight from work tonight, it's not always easy. And as we see here in 2 Corinthians 4 and verse 8 and 9, we see a man who is troubled.

We see a man who is perplexed and persecuted and cast down. But we notice the contrast of what he's not. We see that he's troubled, but we see that he's not distressed.

We see that he's perplexed, but he's not in despair. We see that he's persecuted, but not forsaken. He's cast down, but not destroyed. I have to look at my own life, and I wonder what in the world will five years from now look like.

We'll be, Lord willing, I've been in London for five years, five years from now, and I pray that the Lord will have allowed us to plant a church or two and to train some men for the ministry.

[15 : 35] But I know that troubles are going to come their way. And I've seen just in my short time of ministry many great men of God who I thought would just last in the ministry forever, who would never fall, who would never fail, do just that, who go through temptation, who go through trials and things that knock them out of the ministry and knock them out of their marriages and knock them out of whatever it is that they're doing.

And I have to understand and look at the Word of God and see how is it that a man can go through all that he went through, and stay on the course. And as I think about my life and I think about your life tonight, we all go through those things.

We all go through times in our life. We all go through troubles. But how is it that Paul could go through these things and come to the end of his life and say that he had finished his course, he had run, and he had fought a good fight of faith?

I believe we find the answer not in the Apostle Paul, but notice what is said in verse number 16. It says, For which cause we faint not, but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.

And as the charge that the gardener gave to me just a few moments ago, I have to remind myself of daily that the strength does not lie within myself, and it does not lie within you and your ministry and your day-to-day, what you do at work or at school or just throughout your community.

[17 : 02] Our strength in our ministry doesn't lie within ourselves. The strength in our marriages does not necessarily lie within ourselves. It's not an outward thing that we do.

As we see, as has been ingrained here in the ministry here, Be, do, serve, train it. It starts with the be. It starts with the inward man of who we really are.

And so tonight, just for the next ten or so minutes, I want to look at how did Paul renew the inward man day by day. It's very easy to look and say, well, the inward man needs to be renewed.

It's easy for me to remind myself it's always got to be about the inward. It's not about the outward. And I am quick to admit that I want to show results, whether it was on deputation, whether it was in my job, whether it was in now entering in this new stage of ministry.

We're a very results-driven people. That's our human nature. We're proud, at least I am, and I'm sure many of you are. We want the pat on the back.

[18 : 03] We want the results. We want the affirmation that we're doing a good job. The trouble with that is, as long as we're getting that, we'll press on. But when we begin to not see the results, what will happen?

And so I hope for just the next few moments, we can look at some things that Paul did in his own life that made him the man who he was. I want you to notice in verse number one of chapter number five, the Bible says this, For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God and house, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house, which is from heaven. If so, be that being clothed, we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened not for that, we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.

Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord.

For we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. First of all tonight, I want you to notice that Paul's confidence was not in himself.

[19 : 29] It was not here on this earth. His confidence was in heaven. His motivation in life was, it didn't matter what happened to him on this earth. You know, as Paul would go into battle, spiritually speaking, he would go into a place where literally his life was on the line.

He wasn't just going to be made fun of. He wasn't just going to have to write a prayer letter that wasn't as glorious as his colleagues. It wasn't a pride issue. Literally, his life was on the line.

But when Paul would go into these battles, when Paul would walk into a city and preach the Word of God and spell out the Gospel message of Christ, he knew that the very worst thing they could do was the very best thing that they could do.

And to kill him meant that he was going to be in heaven with his Lord and Savior. Now I would have to ask you tonight, how much of our life is spent on temporal things on this earth versus eternal things in heaven.

You know, I know much of my life was all about making money. It was all about what I could do. It was all about my wealth and my happiness and all these things.

[20 : 38] And you know, we love to sing the songs about a mansion in heaven. We love to sing the songs about getting there to old glory land. And you know, those are great songs and that's wonderful to think about.

But you know, oftentimes our life doesn't reflect that. We look and we look at our lives and much of what we do here on this earth is so self-centered.

We do so much for ourselves without ever giving much thought to eternal things. So when Paul is going through his life and when he's troubled, when he's perplexed, when he's persecuted and cast down, I have to think and hope that Paul wasn't thinking about his own wealth, his own prosperity, his own life.

He was thinking about what he could do for the cause of Christ because he knew that as verse number 8 says, willing rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.

Philippians chapter 1 and verse 21 says this, for me to live is Christ and to die is gain. For me, just think about that. For me to live is Christ and to die is gain.

[21 : 48] I don't think if you were to walk into the Northside Hospital and go through the hospital ward there and through the cancer ward and go through the trauma center, the emergency room and begin to say these things, hey, to die is to gain.

I don't think you'd make very many friends there tonight. But you know, for the believer, to die is to gain. And we have to understand that with our lives that we have a very short amount of time here on this earth.

And I would hate to go tonight without asking you, have you ever put your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ? Do you personally know where you will go when you leave this earth?

You know, we have a reward that's in heaven. My reward is not here on this earth. You understand that? Your reward, you might get a paycheck tomorrow, but you know that's not the best reward you'll ever get as a believer.

Your reward lies in heaven. There's a story of two men that were put in a room and they were to work there for one 24-hour period.

[22 : 54] And these two men were put at these tables and they were just doing a very grueling and boring task. And boy, one of the men, he was just complaining all day long.

He didn't want to be there. You could tell he was just annoyed by the whole situation. The other man in the other table, he was just whistling along. He was singing. He was happy. He was just glad to be there.

The difference in those two men was the foreman, the boss, he whispered into the ear of the one man, he said, when you go home today, I'm going to give you \$20. You know, the task that he was doing, it wasn't, you know, it was worth well more than \$20.

And the foreman whispered into the ear of the other man, he says, when you leave today, when you finish your work, I'm going to give you \$1 billion. Now you can see why one man would be happier than the other man.

But can I tell you tonight that through God's word, he has whispered into your ear, he's going to give you well more than \$1 billion. He's giving you something of much more eternal value.

[23 : 56] And so Paul's confidence was in heaven. His inward man could be renewed day by day as he thought about his home in heaven. Secondly, tonight, I want you to notice verse number 9.

We see, wherefore we labor, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him, for we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

Paul says that whether present or absent, dead or alive, I want to be accepted of him. Now, as a believer tonight, we are accepted in the beloved. We are accepted by God.

There is nothing that you could do or say that would cause Christ to love you less or to cause Him to love you more. If you're a believer, you have a home in heaven and there's nothing you can do about it tonight.

But you know, just as my son, he could never lose his sonship. He is my son. There's nothing he can do about it. He was born of my seed. He is mine. Do you know, he does things oftentimes that don't please me.

[25 : 06] He does things that I don't necessarily approve of. Not that I'm not pleased with him, but his actions I'm not pleased with. With the things in his life I'm not pleased with.

Paul's concern in his life was not about pleasing men. It wasn't about pleasing others. It was about pleasing the holy God in heaven with his life.

Galatians 1 and verse 10 says, For do I now persuade men or God? For do I seek to please men? For if I yet please the men, I should not be the servant of Christ.

You know, if my life was all about pleasing Christ, I'd have no business being on the mission field. If your life is all about pleasing you, I'd ask you to consider your life and what is it really all about.

Oftentimes our lives can be even a facade. We say we want to please God with our lives, but really in essence we're just pleasing ourselves. We give so that God might give back to us.

[26 : 08] We do a good deed so that someone else may do a good deed unto us. When really we're just trying to please our own selves. I'll challenge you tonight to live a life that is pleasing unto Christ.

That you would give your life, you would give everything about you over to God and allow Him to use you as He sees fit. Thirdly tonight, and this is really what I want you to see tonight, is in verse number 14.

I want you to see the constraint of love was never failing. First of all, Paul's confidence was in heaven. His concern was to please Christ. In verse number 14, we read one of my favorite verses in all the Bible.

It says this, For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge that if one died for all, then we're all dead. And that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them and rose again.

Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh, yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more. Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.

[27 : 17] All things are passed away. Behold, all things are become new. I hope you caught that in verse number 14. The Bible says, For the love of Christ constraineth us.

You think about the Apostle Paul, and you think about, I mean, place yourself in his shoes, and his sandals as he's walking down these dirty, dusty roads after being kicked out of nearly every city he went into.

How did he continue on? How did he press on? You know, I used to look at this verse and think the love of Christ. You know, my love for Christ.

If I can just love Christ enough, then I want to serve Him. But you know, it just never happened. It never happened for me. And I would try to love Christ, and I would do all I could, and I would be on a spiritual high, but then not very long after, I would be back down in the valley.

Then one day I realized that it's not my love for Christ that constrains us. It's Christ's love for us. You see, my love for Christ might go up and down depending on how I feel that day, and if I'm in the mood to love Him or not.

[28 : 27] Do you know the love of Christ for you and for me? It never fails. It never changes. It never changes. He died for us because He loved you. While we were yet sinners, He died for us.

And I hope you can understand that as we go to the mission field, as every missionary that's represented on this wall, sure they go for the lost souls, and sure they go to plant churches, and sure they go for all these reasons, but may I tell you, it's none of those reasons that will keep a missionary on the field.

It's the love of Christ that constrains us. It's the love of Christ that will cause us to go into a lost and dying world and tell them of the Lord and Savior.

Hope you'll get that in your life. Hope you'll allow the love of Christ to constrain you, to force you, to make you. Not that we're bound by guilt. Not that we're bound by any of these things at all, but where we take off the chains of bondage, of sin, we're now slaves to Christ.

And it's the love of Christ that binds us. It's not chain. It's not a big ball. It's the love of Christ that ought to constrain us. And lastly tonight, we notice the commission of God was given.

[29 : 42] In verse number 18, the Bible says, And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation, to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ. As though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. And I don't think I need to spend a lot of time on this.

You hear world evangelism preached at this pulpit. I mean, out of every verse of the Bible. And what a wonderful thing that is. But you know, God, in His mercy, in His grace, allows us to serve Him.

We are ambassadors. I'm reading a lot on the United Kingdom of how the visa laws work, and taxes work, and this word ambassador comes up a lot in my reading.

You know, that means so much. But more than being an ambassador of the United States of America, we are ambassadors for the King of kings and for the Lord of lords.

[30 : 56] And I hope you understand what that means, that we have the opportunity. It's not a burden. It's not something that we have to do. It's something that we get to do. It's a privilege that we get to live our lives this way.

And so we see the Apostle Paul. We see how he's troubled and all these things, but how he manages to go on. And you might think, well, that Apostle Paul sure is something great.

That Apostle Paul, boy, what a hero. What a great man of God. May I tell you that Paul is not the hero of this story? Paul is never the hero of the story. Joseph is never the hero of the story.

Moses is never the hero of the story. You are never the hero. I am never the hero of the story. God is the hero of this story and every story.

And we just get the privilege of telling that story to as many around this world as we can. It was God that put him in heaven, that gave him a place in heaven.

[31 : 55] It's the Lord that allows him, even the ability or the want to, to please him. Certainly it's the love of Christ that constrains him. And it's Christ that we represent as ambassadors.

He does the work. He allows it. He makes it all possible. And he is the hero tonight. And so I hope in your life that you will make him the hero of your life, just as Paul did in his.

Father, we love you. We thank you so much for your word. We thank you for this time tonight in your word. And we pray that it would be blessed, that you would be honored and glorified through it all. Which in Christ's name we do pray.

Amen. This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfredo, 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.