

# SERMON TRANSCRIPT

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SPEAKER

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SERIES

Planting The Gospel

PART

5

TITLE

Share Clearly

SCRIPTURE

1 Peter 3:14-18



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Good morning, Providence. It is a joy to be with you guys this morning. What an incredible truth that we just spent three songs singing? I mean, what a privilege not only to stand together and to raise our voices, but to even know the truth that we were just given the grace to sing about, is a remarkable thing. This morning, we are in the last week of a five week series on sharing our faith and that was born out of a three year vision that we have for where we believe God is taking us over the next three years as a church and you can see that vision was laid out in May by Pastor Frost. Really there are three pieces of that vision to plant our lives in the church, to plant the gospel in the community and plant churches in the world. This five week series has been born out of that second arm of the three year vision.

To plant the gospel in our community and it's really just a way to say, we want to equip you to be able to share the hope of Jesus that has been given to us. We've looked over the last five weeks and it went, Brian has called five ingredients that are all important, but alone are not the full picture of what it's like and what on the power that we've been given to our share faith. We started with remembering clearly, just recalling of the time that you come to believe in Jesus as your Lord and savior. Then out of that in week two, we looked at it, that remembering should spur us or compel us to live authentic lives that are consistent with what Jesus has done, that we would pray faithfully. Week three, we looked at praying faithfully for the opportunity to share that truth with others and then we looked at caring personally. All these things born out of what Jesus has done, that we would care personally as a reflection of the God of all comfort and care, the one who gives the greatest care.

Then today, we're going to look at the final piece of that puzzle to share clearly. Now the truth of the matter is this, for most of us, if we've professed faith in Jesus Christ, the first four, they may be a challenge but we feel comfortable with that, right. We feel comfortable thinking about what Jesus has done for us. We may even feel comfortable living out the truths of the scripture in a way that's authentic with people around us. We'll certainly pray for other people and we'll even extend a love through care, but we often like to stop short there. Surely, someone else can do ingredient number five, share. Do I actually have to speak to anyone in order to share my faith? What we see though in the scripture is that the God expects that of us. The very last thing that Jesus said when he was with his disciples on this earth was to go and make disciples of all men and baptizing them in the name of the father, son and the holy ghost.

That by default required that the truth would be spoken and so as he commanded his disciples to go, he sent them with the message to proclaim. The reality is that we should be sharing our faith and so today, really my task is simple. If we're going to share our story, then we're going to live out authentic lives and we're going to pray and we're going to care. Then what is the essential piece of what we share? This morning, we're really going to look at that. The content of what we share and how we ought to share it and we're going to do that by looking at a passage in I Peter, Chapter 3. If you are here with us today and you're in this room and you don't have a bible, then there's one, should be one in the chair in front of you, to your right or your left and you can certainly follow along with us in that.

If you don't own a bible, then that would be our gift to you, that we'd love for you to take it and if you want, if you have that bible, you can look on Page 1,015, that's where the passage is going to be. Now what I want to do really quick before we read the passage is set up back a little bit of the background of why Peter wrote this epistle and why Peter even has the right to or I say the right to, why he addresses the things that we're going to look at this morning. If you remember anything about Peter, you remember that upon Christ's arrest and his trial, that Peter, the one who would quickly speak in every opportunity right, a man that was not short of words, suddenly grows remarkably silent in the face of persecution and out of fear. Not only does he not speak, but in the course of the evening of Christ's arrest and ultimately his crucifixion the next day, Peter denies Jesus three times. Peter in fear, shuts down and doesn't share.

God in grace restores Peter after he's resurrected, Jesus' resurrection, he comes to Peter and he restores him and then he gives him a task to feed his sheep. In other words, encourage those who will believe in me so Peter spends the rest of his earthly life doing that every thing and this letter is born out of that. The recipients of this letter were believers that because of persecution against the church, were scattered throughout the Roman empire primarily in Asia Minor. He wrote a letter that he expected to be circulated among these believers who had been taken from what they knew and they'd move into communities where there was no church, there was no gathered body of believers and he sent this letter as an encouragement to them, knowing what they faced, knowing the fears that they had and even the stress and the persecution and the suffering that maybe either behind or them or before them and he penned this letter. This is what he writes in Chapter 3 that gets to the heart of what the message is that we ought to share and how we ought to share it.

Peter says, sorry, in Verse 14, "But even if you should suffer for righteousness sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them or be troubled, but in your hearts regard Christ the Lord as holy. Always be prepared to make a defense to anyone who ask you for a reason for the hope that is in you, yet do it with gentleness and respect. Having a good conscious, so that when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame, for its better to suffer for doing good if that should be God's will than for doing evil. For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous that he might bring us to God. Being put to death in the flesh, but being made alive in the spirit." Now I believe that this passage in the scripture as a whole really have, there's four points that I think God intends for us to understand about the message that we're to share and how we ought to share it. Before we do that, let's pray and we'll hop right in.

Father, thank you today for the grace that you've poured out on us. If we sit in this room or we're here through media, then the reality is that your message of hope is reaching our ears. That is grace. It's grace. You would grant us the privilege of hearing the truth that you would change us through it so I pray this morning that we might have ears to hear what you would have us to learn. That we might put it into practice and we might with joy share what you've done in our hearts. We pray these things in Christ's name. Amen.

From the beginning, God has spoken, right. In Genesis, the very first voice that is heard is not man's voice. It's God's. He speaks creation into existence and then he creates man and man actually hears the words of God first. I mean imagine that. Man's voice was not the first voice to shatter the silence of created order. It was God's and he made himself known and that's the truth of the scripture. All throughout the scripture, what we see is we see a God who makes himself known. He speaks to us and even the writer of Hebrews says this clearly, he says in Hebrews 1, "Long ago and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets." There was a time in Israel's life when God spoke to men who took his word and then spoke it to other men, but the writer goes on to say, "But in these last days, he spoke unto us through his son." God came to earth in the form of Jesus Christ. He sent his son and his son then spoke to us.

He goes on to say about his son, "Who he appointed him in heir of all things, through whom he also created the world." In other words, Jesus, the one who came and spoke God's word in the flesh was the same one who at creation, spoke us into existence. Our life is ours because Jesus has breathed it into us and so we got a God who wants us to know him. He wants to know him, but he also wants us to know his gospel. He wants us to know the truth of our need for him and the salvation that he offers and so we have to ask ourselves then, if God wants us to know the gospel and we're believers and we confess faith and believe in Jesus Christ and the gospel, then we got to ask ourselves the question, "What is the gospel?"

We use that term all the time and there are times of things that are said about it, but if we're going to share it, we ought to know what it is and really at its core, the gospel is this and what the scriptures teach us is God's story of his pursuit of sinners, God's story of his pursuit of sinners. It's a glorious story. It's a story of love. It's a story of betrayal. It's a story of unimaginable sacrifice and unmerited reconciliation and it's a story that has an ending that's better than any fairy tale that's been told. That's the story and from that since, the whole of the scripture is telling the gospel, the big picture of what God is doing. There's even a tool that's out there that we've made available to you guys to help tell that big story of what God is that we're doing, it's called the three circles and I just want to take a second to walk through even this so you can see it in action. We can look at what God would have for us to know.

Now the reality is for most of us, as we come into sharing our faith, there's always this tension of how do I even get started in a conversation, right? I mean that's the hard part. Do I just go up and say, "Hey, I want to tell you about Jesus.," and that had, certainly people do that and it works, but for most of us, we got to ease into that all right. There's a reason why and we're going to look at it in a minute, but the reality is that there's not a person who has lived much time on this earth who will not agree with you that this place is broken. I mean, we have anger and frustration and contention. We don't have to look very far to see that things don't work the way that they ought to. For many of us, that's a starting point for conversation with others. Whether we meet people in their brokenness or we just, are witnessing brokenness around us and it gives us an entry point to talk about what God is that we're doing because the world wasn't always broken.

In fact, God designed the world perfectly and we can see details of God's order and even now in the things that were created, but early on as he created a perfect world and he made man, he actually made man. You guys know what you were made for? You were made to enjoy God's presence, to be recipient of his love, to share in a relationship with him and know his power, his presence and everything about him unhindered, but for most of us, we have to admit even if we're believers, we certainly can recall a time when we were very far away from God and even if we are believers, there's probably a time in our lives now where we feel like we're separated from God, we feel the weight of the brokenness. It's there, so what happened? Well, the scriptures tell us that it was sin. That God made us to enjoy him and his love and his presence, and in a sense to worship him, to follow him, to listen to him and obey him, and out of rebellion, we stopped doing that. We wanted to be in control and that was sin.

Our disobedience to God and the way that he made us was sin and sin led to brokenness and it did, the big thing that sin broke if you look in Genesis, the sin broke our relationship with God. Adam and Eve suddenly realize that they could not come into God's presence. In fact, they hid from God and the biggest problem that we have is the brokenness that exist between us and the God who made us, but that's not the only brokenness that exist. That actually affected everything else and so we have tension in this world between one another because of sin, because of our broken fellowship with God, we fight and we err and we don't have to look very far, in social media or on the news to see the effects of this. We don't have to look outside of the context of our own families. If you have children, you've seen this at work, in your own children and in your own heart toward your children. Brokenness affected man's relationship with man, but it also affected man's relationship with the created word, suddenly life got very hard.

What we've done since the garden is we've attempted to fix our brokenness with every imaginable thing possible. We've attempted to fix brokenness with medicine, with technology, with stuff, but every attempt that we have at fixing brokenness, ultimately just leads to more brokenness. If the story ended here, it'd be really bad news but it doesn't because God, the one who made us, who made us for perfect relationship with him, he also pursues us to restore that relationship and that's where the gospel comes in. When we say the gospel in this context, we're talking about something specific and that is this, that God, out of the love for us, pursued us by sending his own son to this world, the broken world that sin now has affected. He stepped into our brokenness. He lived perfectly, the way that we could not and we can't. He went to the cross because of our brokenness and for our brokenness. He gave his life so that we might be restored to him and all that the scriptures tell us that we have to do in order to receive what Jesus is offering, is to repent of our brokenness.

To admit to God, I cannot do this alone and to believe that Jesus did the unthinkable, that he paid the debt that I owed to a holy God and he in turn restored my relationship with him and out of that then, if we simply confess that. We repent and believe that God in that moment, restores our relationship with him, not because we deserve it, because frankly, we don't. To a person in this room, there is no one sitting here who deserves to be restored to God, but God and his love and his grace pursued us and he does it through Jesus.

When he does that, that he restores us to be able to live out that design and that's the message. That's the message of the gospel, but it's only good news if we get to Jesus, right and so we might say, "Well, what's essential? Do I have to share all of that when I share my faith?" Well, in some manner, you may but the scripture tells us that there's really one key essential part to sharing the gospel that we have to get to, and Peter gets to it here in this passage in Verse 18 when he says, "For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, be put to death in the flesh and made alive again in the spirit."

Now you may say, "Well, is that really the full context of the gospel?" Well, you have to remember this is well into a letter Peter wrote so if we look at the very beginning of I Peter, what we see Peter say to them is, "Blessed be the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ. According to his great mercy, he calls us to what? Be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable and undefiled and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power be guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

Peter's already told them the gospel, the good news of what Jesus has done and the birth that he brings us, so when he gets to Chapter 3, he's skipping a rock back across to remind them of the reason why they can have hope, where that hope comes from and why that hope gives us the ability to share. Paul says it this way. In fact, I've heard this passage in I Corinthians called the gospel in a nutshell, if you want to know what you ought to get to when you share your faith with other people, then there's really three components and they all revolve around Jesus and who he was and this is how Paul says it, "I want to remind you, brothers of the gospel that I preached to you." He goes on to say, "the gospel that you received and in which you stand and by which you're being saved, if you hold fast to the word that I've preached to you unless you believed in vain."

Then he says what that gospel was, "For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures." In other words, that God already told us this would happen, right. It wasn't a surprise and it wasn't plan B that this was God's plan all along. According to the scriptures, "That he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures and then that he appeared." What are the key ingredients that we have to share? If we're going to get to the good news, then we need to share that God sent Jesus to save us and that Jesus came and he lived a perfect life and he died our death and it was all in accord with what God had already said would happen so that we might be restored to him and not only that, when God was, when Jesus was resurrected, that he actually appeared to people.

Then the scriptures have eye witness accounts of the resurrection of Jesus Christ to confirm for us now, even today as we read the truthfulness of what God is that we're doing. That's at the core of the gospel. What is common is Jesus. It's not good news if we don't get to the savior, but that's the joy of what we get to share. Jesus makes the good news good. God wants us to know him and he wants us to know his gospel and the simply reality is this, the good news of Jesus is only good if we get to it. Here's the remarkable thing about Jesus, Jesus doesn't just make our lives better, Jesus gives us life. If we're sharing with other people, Jesus is not a way to have a better life. Jesus is a way to have life.

Guys, we're dead in our trespasses without Jesus so the message that we get to share, our story has to be his story that God would pursue us in our brokenness and that he would rescue us through Jesus. Then he would restore our relationship with him.

God doesn't just want us to know the gospel, but God wants us to share the gospel. Good news was meant to be shared. In the old testament, there is passage of scripture in II Kings, that what we find is we find the Syrian armies come against the nation of Israel. That the kingdom is split, you've got the northern kingdom and the southern kingdom. The nation of Israel under siege by the Syrian army and here's the remarkable thing, they're starving out the capital city and the people are perishing and outside the walls of the city, sat four lepers, men who could not come into the city because they had a disease, it made them unclean and they're talking amongst themselves and they say to one another, "You know what, if we stay here, we're going to die, so we ought to just go to the Syrian army because if we go in the city, there's no food. We're going to die anyway so let's go to the Syrian army and they'll either kill us and we'll die or they'll show favor to us and we might get something to eat."

They muster up enough strength to go to the Syrian army, but they walk into the camp and the camp is deserted. What we later found out is that God actually caused them to hear a report that was not true about them being, their homeland being attacked and so they withdraw from the city and they go in such haste that they leave the entire camp. Everything in it, food, supplies, money bags. They just get up and leave and these four lepers, men that were despised by the community because of their sickness, they walk into this camp and they plunder it. They take food and they eat and then they gather up gold and some stuff, and they go and they hide it. Then the scriptures tell us this in II Kings, they come to a place after they've done this and they say to one another, "We're not doing right. This day is a day of good news. If we're silent and we wait until morning, punishment will overtake us. Now therefore, let's come and go and tell the king's household."

Guys, good news of salvation is meant to be shared and even in the pages of the Old Testament, long before Jesus steps on this earth, God is showing us a picture of what is to come for us, salvation through the hand of God, is not meant to be kept quiet. The message that we get to share is good news that people need to hear and not only does God expect us to share it, but he expects us to have opportunities to share it. That ought to encourage us, that God would expect us to share his story and he would expect us to have opportunities to share his story. Peter says in Chapter 3, Verse 15, "To always be prepared to make a defense to anyone who ask for a reason for what, the hope that is in you." Now hope is a funny thing, in that when we talk about it in terms of desire, we are in, the world's perspective, hope is a desire for something good that's in the future, right? We might use it like this.

I hope, this would be a hope of my children, “I hope it doesn’t rain today so that we might go to the pool after lunch.”, right? That’s a hope, or you might say, “I hope State can put together a winning season this year in football.”, right? I’m hoping for something in the future or maybe this one. This has never happened to me, “I hope, when my plane is over an hour late departing and my only hope of making my next connecting flight is if that connecting flight is also delayed.”, right? That’s never happened to me traveling, but it’s always based on something preferred out in front of us, something good that we want that is in the future, but here’s the funny thing about hope in the world’s context, it’s based on uncertainty. Have you ever thought about that? We hope on things that are uncertain, but when the bible talks about hope and when Peter says, “Be prepared to give an account or defense for the hope that you have.” It is not talked about in that context.

When the bible talks about hope, it is certainly talking about the desire for something good that’s coming in the future, but it is out of a complete confidence that it will come about. Why? Because hope is always wedded to faith in the scriptures. You hardly ever find hope mentioned that faith is not there. Now why is that important for us? Because faith isn’t our faith. Faith in the scriptures is not based on our hope of God. Faith is based on God’s proven faithfulness so hope suddenly is not on things that are uncertain, but hope in the biblical context is based on promises that God has made that we can be sure will come true. That’s why Peter says you ought to be able to live in a way that you are demonstrating for people around you that you have a hope that is certain and then they’ll ask you about it. God expects us to share the gospel and he gives us opportunities to do so.

Even this morning, the neat thing about the scriptures, most of you, if I were to poll you, are probably sitting here and you would say, “I profess belief in Jesus Christ is my Lord and savior.”, and so I’m telling you things that you already know. Paul, when he wrote the book of Romans, he wrote a letter to a church that he’d never visited. He didn’t start the church in Rome, but he knew of them and he wrote a letter, telling them he was planning to come and visit them as he passed on the way to Spain and in the very first chapter of Romans, he says this to them in Verse 15, “I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.” Now think about this for a minute. Paul is not writing to unbelievers. Paul is writing to believers and he says, “I long to come to you.”, and do what? To preach the gospel, the good news.

Now why would Paul want to preach the gospel to people who already knew it? Because it is our hope and there’s nothing that we hear that ought to stir in us more joy and affection than to be retold the story of what Jesus has done, and so if you sit in this room and you’ve heard the gospel a thousand times, it ought to be as joyful to you today as it was the very first day that it fell on your ears because our hope rest in the promises that Jesus made through what he did in the gospel and what did is proven to be true by God’s faithfulness over and over again. Our hope is in the gospel, but the reality is God expects us both to know his gospel and to share it, but he also knows our hearts. You remember, we come to sharing our faith with a little bit of trepidation, with fear, almost every time we see it in the scriptures, testimony about God’s salvation is attached to really usually to a spoken word of don’t be afraid.

Why does God do that? Because he knows our fears and he wants us not to fear. God graciously addresses our fears and he does it even here in this passage with I Peter, Peter simply says, "Have no fear of them." Those who may oppose your message or may ridicule you for it or look at you and wonder how absurd are they following this, he says, "Have no fear of them or be troubled, but in your hearts, regard Christ the Lord as holy." Now the word regard there or honor, on your scriptures may say honor, Christ the Lord is holy, it's actually the same word for fear. Here's what Peter is saying, don't fear man and his response to you and all the things that maybe attached to that, but fear God. Now you may say, "Well, that's great. You're telling me to replace one fear for the other.", right? Now fear's an interesting thing. See if this will help you guys think about it. I'm going to put a couple pictures up rapidly probably, sorry. The first one, there are lots of things that man fears, right.

We may fear clowns, right. I mean legitimately, there are people, my daughter said in the service earlier and they said, "I'm really angry at you for putting that picture up.", right, because there are certain things that evoke fear in us. Some people maybe afraid of snakes. Now I don't have a picture of snakes because my wife told me if I put a picture of snakes on the board, that she would not come to worship this morning, but some of us have real fear of snakes. Some people are afraid of heights, right? This is a picture of the ledge in Chicago where you could stand on a glass floor, hundreds of stories above the city and look through it, right. All of these things are ways that fear manifests itself in us. I want to tell you a little story. There's another picture here, a story of a black, here's a black bear. Now I'm not afraid of bears, all right, but I'm going to tell you a story to see if this will help you guys to realize this.

It's several years ago, I was in Idaho and I was on a horse, riding up a trail along a river and I rode up on a sow and a cub, black bear and they didn't hear me coming because we were on a trail. It was wet along this river and the river was loud and we were down wind and so the bear had no clue we were there until we ride up on them. We didn't know the bear was there because we rode around the corner and they were there, so the cub goes up a tree, all right. The bear runs across the trail in front of me and up the hill about 20 yards and stops. Now here I am on a horse, in between a cub and a tree and the sow on a hill about 25 yards away and if you know anything about bear, well, if you don't know anything about bears, that's not good. The sow turns and she squares off and she barks and she runs about five steps toward me. Now you guys have to understand, I'm not afraid of bears.

Now that was tense, but my horse is very afraid of bears. Now this wasn't my horse. It was a horse I was riding and the horse's name was Red, and Red had obviously been around bears before and didn't like bears because the soon as the bear jetted across, his ears went up. When the bear turned and barked at us and lunged at the horse he does a 180 and goes on a full run the opposite direction of the trail, almost knocks the guy behind me off his horse and it's take me about 200 yards to get the horse to stop. Now what does that have to do with us and fear? Fear in the world's perspective, always calls us to run away from what we're afraid of, just like the horse. If we're afraid of something, we generally want to get very far from it.

When Peter says “Don’t fear man, but fear God.”, he’s teaching us something different. When the scriptures use fear of the Lord, it’s not that way.

Now it’s certainly, we should have a healthy respect for God’s holiness and his grace, but when God speaks of fearing him in the scriptures, it speaks in remarkable terms. Proverbs 9:10 says this about the fear of the Lord, “That it’s the beginning of wisdom and knowledge of the holy one is insight.” Like it’s good for us or maybe this one, this was a great one. Psalm 25:14, listen to what the word says, “The friendship of the Lord is for those who fear him.” The friendship of the Lord is for those who fear him and he makes known to them his covenant. I mean there are dozens of other passages where we can look, when God talk abouts fearing him, it’s always for our good and here’s the thing about healthy fear of God. Replacing a fear of man and all the things that might stop us from wanting to speak of what God has done, for a healthy fear of God, fear of the Lord causes us to run to him, not from him because when we fear him, we know his holiness, but we also know his grace.

We know the story of the gospel. We know the punishment we should receive and we know the grace that he pours out on us because of what Jesus has done. God addresses our fears by saying, “Don’t fear man. Fear me.” Then he’d leads us to this place. All of these things wrap up in this idea, the message that we share is the good news of a God who could destroy us because of our sin, but instead rescues us through the shed blood of Jesus and he gives us that story to share to other people and he tells us, “I’m with you and I’m alongside you. The hope that you have in me is a hope that is guaranteed.” Don’t be afraid of what can happen to you because you’re hidden in my arms and the message that we share, he then compels us to share with humility. “Do it with gentleness and respect.”, is what Peter says, now why? A lot of times, the greatest offense to people when we share our faith is the pride in which we share it.

Guys, if we understand the depths of the gospel, there’s nothing proud about it for us. We were dead in our trespasses and need, needed a savior. The hero of our story is not ourselves. The hero of our story is a loving and gracious God. No matter what we’ve done, where we’ve been, no matter how far away from him we’ve run or we find ourselves, God’s grace and his love are deeper than our sin and the amazing story of the gospel is a story of restoration that is granted not because we merit it, because God is loving and gracious and because his justice is upheld, right. The weight of the gospel rest on the fact that God doesn’t overlook our sin, but he punished it in Jesus. Let that sink in. If you want to have something compel, you do affection for God. As your sinfulness is elevated in your eyes and you realize the depth of your sin, at the same time, remarkably the love of Jesus is elevated because it’s greater than your sinfulness and he went to the cross on your behalf because of all these things that are terrible and deserve death, Jesus took them. God didn’t overlook them. He poured it out on his son.

We didn't even deserve it. We weren't pursuing God. We weren't loving Jesus first. He loved us when we were unlovable, and that ought to produce in us a deep sense of humility, not of God. God is remarkable but humility of our own story and our need for him and a recognition that others need to hear it, and so as we share, let's share with humility as Peter calls us to. We have good news, so I want to leave you with three application points that flow out of the story that he's granted us to share and how we ought to share it and it's this. As we remember, right, as we remember the story of God's grace and his salvation in our own lives to what Jesus has done, let's cherish Jesus and his gospel. If we don't love Jesus, we're not going to share, so let's cherish Jesus and his gospel and let's recall the story of our salvation often because it will spur in us affection for him and a recognition that it's a story that the world needs to know, and then lastly, let's share that gospel, the gospel of Jesus Christ at every opportunity that the Lord gives us.

Guys, we have good news, and the good news that we have is meant to be shared and God's promise is that he will give us the opportunity to share it because others need to hear it, so let's pray. Father, would you even today give us the grace to remember our story clearly? Lord, if there are some here who don't have a story of salvation because they've never trusted in you, then even today Lord, would you cause the gospel to fall on them and to consume them and their hearts might be drawn to you and they might confess and believe. God, even now as we stand before you and we lift our voices and we give our tithes and our offerings, would you take the gifts that we bring that are really just gifts that you've stored it to us and will you multiply them in a way that even in the context of this body, that they might be used for the proclaiming of your gospel to those who need to hear it?

Lord, as we leave this place, would you cause our hearts to be stirred with the longing to see the good news of Jesus proclaim to everyone that they might have the chance to be restored to you and be a part of the family of faith? Lord, thank you for Jesus. Thank you for the salvation that you offer through him. It's in his powerful and strong name that we pray these things. Amen.



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