

# SERMON TRANSCRIPT

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SPEAKER

Brian Frost

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Grace Unleashed

PART

3

TITLE

We Are Forgiven

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Ephesians 1:7-10



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So good to see your face this morning. If you're a guest with us, here, welcome. We're really, really glad that you have joined us. We really do think it's an honor for you to come and to worship the Lord Jesus with us or, if you don't know him as Savior and Lord, just to come and learn more about him. We really are glad you are here. I want to ask you to look with me to the first chapter of Ephesians if you have a Bible. If you don't, there should be one in a chair near you. They're at the bottom. If you don't have one at home, we would love for you to take that home as a gift. Here at Providence, we love the Bible and it's because it's the Bible that points us to Jesus.

Jesus said in Matthew 7:24, he said, "Anyone who hears these words of mine and obeys them is like a wise man who built his house on rock." For you and for me, as we look at all the different paths in life, there's a proverb. It says there is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end, it leads to death. So many people are building their life on so many different assumptions. What the Bible says is there's only one creator of the universe and there's only one savior. This savior, this creator, he came to earth, he spoke words that were true, that were in full alignment with how he created us to live our life, to think, to be, and if we'll build our life upon what he has written in this book, it says that it's like us building our life, our house, upon the rock, sturdy foundation. As I often encourage us as a body, let's lean in. Let's lean in to everything that God has for us here in Ephesians. I want to ask you, if you would, let's bow and let's pray together.

Father in heaven, we thank you for your kindness to us. God, even as we look out into the world, we see signs that we read about in Matthew 24. God, we do not know how much time we have left here on the earth. It may be hundreds and thousands of years. It may be tomorrow. God, what we do pray is that while we're here and as the next generation is here and the next generation is here, however long there are generations here, we pray, God, that there would be a growing remnant of people on the earth that would worship you, that would exalt you, that would adore you. That's the desire of our life. We come to you. We come to your word. While we take our time here on this earth, we want to honor you with our life. We want to honor you with our dreams, our aspirations, our relationships, our responsibilities, our talents and gifts, our treasures. Everything that we have while we're here, we know that it's borrowed. You're the owner of everything. Apart from you, there is no God. You are eternal, from everlasting to everlasting.

God, we humbly take our place at your feet today, at your word, and pray that you would help us to understand it, to believe it, to apply it to our life. We do pray for the world. We pray for the world in all of its confusion, in all of its heartache and all of its brokenness. As we hear of rumors and wars, we hear of earthquakes and floods and storms and violence and the world is so desperately in need of the culmination of redemption, we look forward to it and ask that you would go before those in the world today that are deeply hurting and you would unite them to your son Jesus Christ. We pray for even our missionaries and who missionaries around the world. We pray for the speed of the gospel. Even while we are meeting here in this moment, we pray, God, for people, for church planters, for pastors, for Bible translators, all around the world, God,

that you would give them favor and that your name would go and be glorified to the ends of the earth. Would you use this moment in our lives, in this room, and in these rooms, God, to contribute to that end? God, we pray in Jesus's name, amen.

Well, in 2010, Disney gave us the movie Secretariat, which was about that legendary racehorse who, in 1973, won pretty much everything. He won the Derby. He won the Preakness. Perhaps the most significant thing that we can recall about Secretariat actually took place in the last of these three significant races in 1973, when he won by 31 lengths. There, on the back stretch, there was a man. His name was Chic Anderson, who was the announcer. As Secretariat and one other horse started out really, really fast, faster than any other horse had ever started out. In fact, throughout every quarter mile, he actually ran it faster. On the back stretch, the second place horse, who actually started in the lead, he starts falling back. Suddenly, Secretariat just starts expanding his lead and expanding his lead. Chic Anderson, he famously says at that point, "Secretariat is widening now. He's moving like a tremendous machine." In the end, he won by a record 31 lengths at the Belmont Stakes.

Why I tell you that is because that idea of he's running like a tremendous machine reminds me of Paul in Ephesians chapter one verses three through 14 where he rattles off a 202-word Greek sentence, which was how the letter, the New Testament was first written. He rattles off 202 words without pausing for a period until the end. He's so overwhelmed with the grace of God in his life. He's so overwhelmed with the grace of God, that what God has made available in every single one of our lives, that Paul literally writes about God's blessing like a tremendous machine. Like each stride of Secretariat was over 24 feet long and this is what Paul is doing. He's literally just chewing up theological ground that is so significant, election and predestination and calling and blessing and forgiveness and redemption. He literally just is chewing up enormous ideas about who God is and what God has done like a tremendous machine.

Last week, we looked at verses three through six. We want to look at verse seven through 10 today, which is really highlighting the Son's role. Then next week, we'll look at verse 11 to 14, which is really the work of the Holy Spirit in our life. Because it's one sentence in all three weeks, I want to read all of this amazing sentence. Starting in verse three, he says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love, he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace with which he has blessed us in the beloved. In him, we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us in all wisdom and insight, making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as the plan for the fullness of time to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth."

“In him, we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will so that we who are the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. In him, you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.” Then he writes a period. I just love how he can not move past without explaining and stacking expression upon expression. I think, at the end, he probably hit period and looked back and he didn’t have a computer that could go back in and so he would have to go back. If he wanted to add periods, he’d have to add capital letters and it would just mess up his whole letter. He just says, “We’re just going to go with that.”

It’s a beautiful thing but it’s even more beautiful of what he’s trying to communicate. What I want you to see in this, there’s really only two applications that the text lends itself directly to our life. As we go through, we’re looking at a few other applications, but if you just look at the words, the only thing he tells us to do is either what he’s done or what God says that he did all this so that we would do. That is worship. It’s literally to sing. He starts, he says, “Blessed be.” In other words, he’s just saying, “God, you did all of this.” On three different occasions, it actually tells us why God did this in our life. He says, “To the praise of his glory. To the praise of his glorious grace. To the praise of his glorious grace.” Three different occasions, this refrain is placed within the song. In other words, God and Paul want the result of our life, after reading and understanding what is written here, to be that we would sing, literally, that we would sing and not that we would sing songs, but literally we would sing with our life, that our very life, that our relationships, everything about us, would be the overflow of gratitude for what God has done for us.

We looked at a few things that the Father intentionally did in our life last week in verses three through six. Let’s look at what the Son does. The first is this. Christ has redeemed us by his blood. Now, you have to remember that every one of these blessings is made available only through Jesus. What I want to do here is to show you the three things that it says that Jesus said, “This is my part of the pie. This is what I’m going to provide for them.” The very first is that he has redeemed us by his blood. It says “in him.” Make sure we know who the “in him” is. If you look at the end of verse six, it says, “In the beloved.” When Jesus was on the earth, he was baptized. There was a voice from heaven that says, “This is my beloved Son.” When he’s talking here and he says “in the beloved,” who he’s talking about is in Jesus Christ. Then verse seven starts “in him.” In the beloved Son of God, we have redemption.

Now, if I were to say to you my tire is now fixed and I give you no other context, no other story, I just said, “My tire is fixed,” you would connect the dots in your own heart because the word “fixed” implies something was once wrong and now it’s no longer wrong. You would connect the dots and assume that my tire had been flat or there was something wrong with it. If I told you that I had been rescued by the fireman, you would naturally connect the dots and assume that, at some point in time, I was in peril. I was in danger. There was risk involved.

You see, Paul doesn't give us very much context when he says the words, "We have been redeemed. In Christ, we have redemption." He intends for us to fill in that gap, knowing what redemption is. You see, when he writes, "We have redemption," we're supposed to look back and think about the cage in which we were all trapped because redemption literally means to be set free because someone else paid a price of ransom in order to let us go. Paul doesn't talk a whole lot about the prison that we were in. He just affirms that we have been released but nobody is ever excited about being released unless they're aware and remembering that at one time they were in prison.

At one time, we were literally in a cage that we could not get out of. You see, the Bible says when we sinned against God, that we incurred a debt that we could not pay. There had to be a payment and it had to be a righteous payment. The problem is we had all sinned, which is why we needed a payment. Nothing that we could do, we couldn't stack up enough righteousness in our life to counteract the fact that we were no longer perfect, we were no longer perfectly righteous. We had a debt before a holy God that we could not pay. What the Bible says is, as a result of that, we became slaves, slaves to sin. What that means is that when sinned called our name, we were like a puppy dog that says, "I'm ready. Let's do this." We were slaves to death. Death calls our name and we die. There's no fighting that. We were imprisoned by death. We were imprisoned by sin. We were imprisoned in fear and shame and regret. Like birds locked in a cage, we were all trapped. Christ did what we could not do. It says that he paid our debt through his blood.

Revelation chapter one verse five says, "Jesus loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood." The word "blood" expresses the price that Jesus paid so briefly and succinctly that it's easy to pass over the anguish and the shame and the separation and the isolation and the guilt and the struggle and the tears and the injustice that Jesus endured in order to free us from that cage. That is exactly what he did and, amazingly, the Bible says that when we trust Jesus Christ, in his righteousness, he takes our sin, he credits his righteousness to our account, and then he, just like this picture, he opens up the cage to set us free. The door has been opened. When Paul says, you look at this picture, and we were once in there, that's our feather in there. When he says, "We have been redeemed," what he says is we were, at one time, in a cage awaiting death and eternal wrath. Yet, Jesus, because his love for us, he came and rescued us by paying our ransom in order to open up the door.

What do we do because this is true? The first application is for those in the room who have never trusted Christ. That is I would exhort you to look to Jesus and trust in him. We, as a body, invite you to do what many of us have done long time ago. That is to stop trusting in your righteousness, stop assuming that you're going to be able to counteract your imperfection by a few good works before a holy God. Instead of banking on your accomplishments and your goodness, which the Bible says are nil, to trust in his provision of his Son. Literally, ABC. A, admit that you're a sinner. B is believe. Believe in Jesus Christ, his righteousness, his death, his resurrection for you. Third, to confess him as Lord, to acknowledge his place in your life as Lord, as Master.

The Bible says that if we confess with our mouth that Jesus is Lord and you believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, it says we'll be saved. As a body, we encourage you today to be redeemed, to trust in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins.

The second application for this point is for those of us who already have trusted Christ. That is let's look to redemption and praise him. Let's look back regularly to this act of redemption, this blood payment, and praise him for it. You see, at the Frost family, we have a dog. His name Champ. Champ sleeps in a crate at night. The door gets shut every night. He doesn't moan and groan because we let him and bury in and he just lays down and he falls asleep. Normally, there's just a few minutes, he starts hearing the house stir in the morning. It's interesting. As every single morning, as the door opens, he is reminded of his liberty. He darts out of that door and his tail is wagging and his tongue's hanging out. He's so excited. He just wants to be petted. He loves water. He's just enjoying life at that moment. He's so grateful the door has been opened.

You see, God doesn't put us back in the cage every night and let us out in the morning. You and I have the possibility that, because we've been freed forever, that we're not going to have that regular reminder of being liberated and set free and our hearts can forget the thrill. Amnesia, spiritually, can muzzle our praise. If we're going to be a people who respond rightly to what we have received in redemption through Jesus, we're going to have to regularly do specific things not only for ourselves, but for each other. We're going to need to read the gospel and be reminded of redemption regularly. We're going to need to sing about redemption regularly. We're going to need to rehearse the gospel to ourself regularly, but not only to ourself, we're going to need to do this with our kids. We're going to need to sit them down and talk about Jesus dying and rising from the dead again. When they say, "Dad, I already know this," you say, "I know you already know this, but I do not want you to lose the thrill."

This is why we have life groups. There's a lot of things that we say, that when we get in these smaller groups and we pray for one another and we encourage one another and we love one another and we help one another physically when people have need, but if there is one thing that life groups are supposed to do, it is to help each other be amazed again at what Jesus has done for us, to not lose heart as we're going through a broken world because we look back and we remember afresh that we have been liberated. You see, why we sing every single week is because we walk in these doors and many of us, on any given Sunday, are not ready to sing. We're not thrilled sometimes at 8:55 at what took place 2,000 years ago. We sing these songs and we think these and we read this and we talk about this. Some of us, you're thinking, "Man, David used to do this all the time and now Brian's doing the same thing. They're never going to get over this gospel thing. They just keep bringing it up." That's right. Until I'm dead or you fire me, this is what we're going to do. We're going to talk about what Jesus has done for us so that we can be amazed. Christ has redeemed us by his blood.

The second thing we see is Christ has forgiven us by his grace. Now, if you even look at the wording, he says, "In him, we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses." One happens with the other and so it's so closely tied to redemption that forgiveness may not be a separate thing. It's just something that's so amazing we want to talk about it. We've been forgiven of our trespasses. Now, what is a trespass? It means to cross the line. In other words, God looks around at all the sin in the world and he wants us to make sure what's sin and what's righteousness. He puts a sign over it and he says, "Hey, this is wet paint. Don't touch." Every single person in the world, you look at our hands, every one of us, you look at our conscience, you look at our heart, you look at our mind, you look at our lives, and we all have paint on our hands as proof that we did not believe God's good intentions and we all touched the wall. We trespassed. We crossed the line. This is what it means he forgave our trespasses.

Also notice the word "forgive." Sometimes we use the word "forgive," we don't really know what it means. We assume it means we make things right. I forgave them. I let go of it. We don't really know. The word "forgive" literally means send away. Sometimes a picture really helps to anchor this idea in our heart. God gave us an entire picture book called the Old Testament that was pointing to spiritual realities that would come. One of the most holy days, in fact, it was the most holy day, was the day of atonement. It happened one day a year for the whole nation of Israel. They would all gather and they came specifically to deal with a sin problem every year, the sin problem of their lives. They would come and a high priest, there would be two goats unblemished, wasn't the worst goat they could find, say, "No one wants this goat. Let's go ahead and give this one." No, it was the best. It was an unblemished lamb, a picture of the kind of person that would be required, unblemished spiritually, morally to save us from our sin.

The first goat would be killed, scarified in order to make a payment for sin, a substitutionary payment. It was an atonement. It was a covering. The high priest would literally cut the throat, sprinkle blood on the altar. The animal would be placed and be burned to forgive sin. Then there was another goat. The second goat wasn't killed. Instead, the second goat, the scape goat, what would take place is the high priest would come and he would put his hands on the goat's head symbolically to confess and to appropriate all the sins of the nation upon this goat. Then what they would do is they would take this goat and they would take it away, out into the wilderness, so far away it would be impossible for that goat to find its way back to the people. It was symbolic. If God was not only atoning and sacrificing for sin, but he was taking sin as far away as possible.

You see, these animals, they served the people much like a life raft serves a ocean cruiser. If an ocean cruise line is going to sink and they know it's going to sink, there's a bunch of life rafts. What happens is they lower the people in the life raft and then they're there. Now, life rafts are not meant to live in. They're not meant even to travel in. You don't set up residency and governments inside life rafts. You wait until another ocean liner, a rescue ship with an engine, can come and rescue you. This is the portrait. This is everything about the Old Testament. It was the life raft waiting for the better ship, the rescue ship that was Jesus Christ.

When Jesus came, his act in life was to do two things. It was to do just what those two goats symbolically were pointing that he would do. He would give his life as a sacrifice for sin, but he would also take our sins so far away from us that it could never revisit us, that that guilt, that that shame, he would take it as far away as possible. In fact, Psalm 103 verse 12 says, "As far as the East is from the West, so far does he remove our transgressions from us." Paul says here is that Jesus did all this according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us. You see, God does not give us subsistence forgiveness that will barely cover our sins if we're careful not to overdo. Romans 5:20 says, "Where sin increased, grace abounded all the more." What this means is you and I can not sin beyond God's grace. It's an amazing thing, that you can't sin for the 41st time and he goes, "You know, I told you only 40." His grace always keeps pushing. It's because he lavishes it and he's because he's rich in grace. The rich people that we know of on the earth, they're all paupers in compared to the richness of God when it comes to everything he has, including grace. It can never be exhausted.

What do we do with this, this idea? If it's true that Christ has forgiven us by his grace, then what's our response to that? As I was praying, I actually had a hard time. What's the best way for us to apply? As I think about our body, as I think about the people in our body that, your pastors that we meet with and talk with, and there's a problem there's a problem in our hearts, in many of our hearts at Providence, that I want to address right now in this application. This is the application. Let's accept ourselves as forgiven in Christ. I want you to think about what it says there. Accept ourselves as forgiven in Christ. Many of us see the promises of God and yet do not look into the mirror and allow ourself to live as though we are forgiven. You see, if you've trusted Jesus Christ and confessed your sin to him, then you are forgiven. God says it this way, 1 John 1:9, he says, "If you confess your sin, he is faithful and just and forgive you of your sin." He will forgive you of your sin. He'll take away all your transgressions, cleanse you from all unrighteousness.

To live otherwise, listen to this, is not humility. It's the deepest form of arrogance, actually placing ourself as the supreme authority over Jesus's authority. It's to say Jesus is the judge who says you are now forgiven, you're innocent, but there's another judge with my last name that disagrees. I'm going to listen to that judge. That is belittling to the blood of Jesus Christ, assuming that we would need to help him out by further punishing ourself, by contributing some good works to his works in order to be forgiven of our sin. You see, this is shaming to our Savior, to say, "I understand that you say that I am forgiven, but I'm going to live as though you're wrong. I'm going to keep beating myself up. I'm going to keep shaming myself. I'm going to keep assuming that the call to go or the call to serve can't be for me because of my past." Often times, it turns the page from punishing ourself to it's so much grace, it's just too much for me to absorb, so I just need to repay it somehow. I need to contribute somehow.



Just to put it really simple, I would say this. Believe in Jesus and then believe Jesus. Believe in him as the Savior who redeems us and forgives us of our sin, and then believe him when he says, "You are forgiven." You see, I would encourage you to receive the free gift of God's grace and then respond out of that fullness. Do you remember the woman in Luke chapter seven who poured that jar of ointment over Jesus? The Pharisees, who never looked to Jesus for forgiveness, they grumbled because of the waste of that sacrifice. Jesus begins to speak and he interprets her sacrifice as an overflow of realizing that she had been forgiven. You see, she did not sacrifice to be accepted. She sacrificed because she was accepted.

Providence, if we don't get this order right, we're going to sink as a people. We're going to sink into shame. We're going to sink into moralism. We're going to sink into being so introspective about our guilt that we don't want to tell anyone about the grace. We don't labor to be forgiven. We labor because we are forgiven. We worship and pray and give and serve and share with others, not to make him smile with us, but because he already is smiling upon us. Everything he's told us to do is done out of overflow instead of trying to fill the cup up. His grace is for you. He has redeemed us. He has forgiven us. One last one, Christ has united us in himself. He has united us in himself.

Notice what it says in verse nine and 10, he says, let me find it, "Making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ is a plan for the fullness of time to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth." You and I, we're forced process all the information that we see and feel and hear in the world through a lens of brokenness. Sometimes we wonder what God is doing. We know that he's active. We read that he's active. We see good things that are happening and we attribute it to God. All of a sudden, the very next day, there's an earthquake that kills hundreds of people in Mexico. We think, "God, what's happening in the world? What's happening in our life? What's happening in our kids' lives? What are you doing in the world?"

Sometimes what we're given is the lens where we know that he's doing amazing things, but we get to see under the loom and not over the loom. We get to see behind the cross stitch, but we don't get to see the front side. The front side, there's a pattern, there's beauty, there's intentionality, the back side, there's also a pattern, there's beauty. Well, no, there's not. There's great intentionality, but there's not as much beauty. It's hard to see what that's supposed to look like on the other side. If you were to lay down under a loom and look up, you would see all kinds of knots and frays. There would be somebody, a designer up top, who's looking and who's organizing everything so that it's beautiful. But the Bible says that we all are laying on the ground and we're looking up at God, what he's doing in the world and all we can see, we see some beauty, we see some intentionality, we see some order. We're supposed to trust that there is all these things, but sometimes all we can look at is the frays and the knots and the strings that are just kind of hanging around.

What Paul does for us here in this text, in these two little verses, is he says, “Let me give you a sneak preview of when God is going to turn the loom and you get to see what he’s been up to all this time.” He says he’s making known to us the mystery. We look at it. Mystery in the Bible does not mean spooky. It means un-inventable. You would never, in your wildest imaginations, be able to tell someone accurately what’s on the top of that loom, how beautiful it is, how intentional, how amazing it is, what God is doing. What he’s saying here is this, “Let me give you a sneak preview to really, the core of what he’s doing. It’s this.” He stacks up all of these phrases. He says he’s making known to us the mystery of his will. That will is according to his purpose. He has a predetermined purpose that he’s working this will out, which he set forth in Christ, meaning Christ is the answer to how it’s going to be pulled off as a plan for the fullness of time. There is a time when it will be done. There is a moment literally where God says, “It is now time to see what I’m doing, what I’ve been doing forever, since creation. You now get to see it.” Then he tells us what it is. He goes, “It’s to unite all things in him.”

The word “unite,” if you remember the word “redemption” or my tire is fixed or I was rescued, it implies something, doesn’t it? The fact that he’s going to unite means that we are now divided. Unite means we were lots of different places and we all come to the same place. This is his plan. We were created for Jesus. We sinned against Jesus so Jesus came in order to bring us back to himself. Providence, if we have been united to Jesus and if we are participating in uniting others to Jesus, then we are living for the point of life. You are birdying the hole of life if you are connected to Jesus. It is the point, it is the goal, it is what he’s doing. It’s to bring people back into a right relationship with him.

As we close, let me give you an application here for our life. It’s this. Let us orient our lives around the supremacy of Christ. Christ is the point. Do you know why you have the gifts that you have? It’s because of Jesus. If your gifts are not aligned to glorifying Jesus, they’re pointed in the wrong direction. Do you know why you have time on the earth? It’s to glorify Jesus. If your time is not united, if your calendar, Jesus is over here and your calendar is here and your calendar is constantly pulling you away from Jesus, your time is mis-directed on the earth. God gave us resources. Every one of those resources is tied directly to glorifying Jesus. He is the point. If those resources are drawing us away from Jesus, they are pointed in the wrong direction. The relationships in your life, your friendships, all of those relationships are intended to point to Jesus. He’s the point of that relationship. If that relationship is void of Jesus, then that relationship is void of the purpose of life. Jesus is the glue to everything. He’s the point to everything. How do we orient our life? We get so distracted. We start going on all these paths. We’re like, “Wait a minute. This has nothing to do with Jesus.”

If it’s not your pattern, the first thing I would encourage is that you would devote to God the first few moments of every day as an expression that you want to know God and you want to know God’s will. Matthew 6:33, Jesus says, “Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.” What does it look like to devote the first few moments of your day to Jesus? Well, I want to tell you what I do. Let me just tell you this. This is not the way. It’s a way. I don’t have the right way. It’s just a way.

However you choose to do it, I would encourage that it needs to include praying and it needs to include the Bible, but to come to him. It's interesting that when I wake up every morning, my mind is racing. I don't know why, it just is. I wake up and I stand up and all of a sudden, it just races. It just goes all over the places. Sometimes I'm like, "Just stop. Just stop thinking for a second."

The first thing I have to do every day is I have to affirm his excellency and I have to submit to his reign. I say, "God, all the directions of my heart wants to pull me right now and I just say no. I desire, I just affirm verbally to you that I gladly submit to you as my Lord. How do you want me to spend this day?" It's interesting that next thing that happens is I begin to read his word and I begin to pray over what I read. I begin to pray for other people. I pray for you. Let me just tell you this. What you're going to find when you open up the Bible and start studying and reading it for yourself, you're going to find a God that is so passionate about the worship of his Son that he calls people to be on mission with him. See, the reason that we care about missions is we care about worship. If people in Africa were worshiping Jesus, we wouldn't go tell them about Jesus. The problem is they don't know about Jesus. They don't know about his redemption. They don't know about his forgiveness. They don't know that he's the point of life. He tells us to go and tell him.

When you open up the Bible, you find a God who tells us that he's given all of our talents and all of our treasures and all of our time in order to glorify Jesus. You find a risen Christ who is so supreme that will change the question at the end of your day from, "Did I get it all done?" To, "Did I honor Jesus with what I did?" You find in Jesus the point of life. You find that he is the point of life. You start orienting your life, you start changing the degrees of your business, of your marriage, of your friendships, of how you spend your time. Suddenly, Jesus becomes more a part of your life. Let me just encourage you, as a people, Jesus wants you to be near him.

There's a million things tomorrow morning that will pull you away from him. If you separate from Jesus, it's amazing what happens. You feel like you need to start running in life instead of walking in life. We always accelerate when we get lost. What you'll find is you're going to spend weeks, months, and maybe even years traveling really fast down the wrong road. Save yourself the hassle. Wake up the morning and say, "God, my life is yours. I want to know you. I want to know your will. I want every part of my day today to ultimately be to glorify you." Providence, if we do that, if you do that, one day, you will stand before him. You will see that he is the point of life. You'll hear from him, "Well done, good and faithful servant." Good words for a faithful people. We're going to sing here in a minute, but before we do, let me pray.

Father in heaven, we thank you so much for your grace. We thank you that these kinds of truths, they stir us to want to sing. They stir us to want to go tell other people what you've made available. I pray, God, that you would use these moments as we prepare, God, to walk back out these doors to help us to respond in faith to what you've made available. Would you help us to respond with joy in our singing now? As we give to you, we pray that what is given, that it would be leveraged and mobilized for the glory of Jesus Christ to the ends of the earth. We pray this in Jesus's name, amen.



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