

# Drawing Near-3rd Session

by Gisela Yohannan

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*We must use God's methods to motivate others to love and good deeds, as worldly methods represent God poorly and cannot achieve eternal results.*

**Duration:** 1:11:28

**Scripture:** Isaiah 50:4-5, Matthew 6:33, 1 Thessalonians 5:11, Hebrews 3:13, Hebrews 10:24-25

**Topics:** "Experiencing God"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of being an example to others, especially in the context of ministry among the unreached in Asia. He highlights that new believers often learn how to behave as Christians by observing their pastors and their families. The speaker then focuses on Hebrews 10:24, which encourages believers to stimulate and motivate one another to love and good deeds. He emphasizes the need to use God's methods and cling to His promises when facing problems, as others will be watching and finding strength in our example. The sermon concludes with a reminder that Jesus is coming soon, urging believers to continue encouraging one another as the day draws near.

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## Transcript

Now we come to the last part of our scripture. We started out in, let us draw near, and then we started, let us hold fast. And now we want to look at verse 24, and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more, as you see the day drawing near.

The writer of Hebrews here is saying, now after you have learned how to draw near to the Lord, and after you have learned how to hold fast to his promises, notice there is just one more thing. Now God wants you to motivate others in the body of Christ. So what are we supposed to motivate or stimulate them to do? Well, it says here, to love.

That means to love God, to love one another, as ladies, to love our husband, our children, to love our neighbors, to love the lost world. And what else should we stimulate others to good deeds? Walking by faith is a good deed. Obedience to God's word.

Serving the Lord, serving others. Charity, ministry, all these are good deeds. It's a whole lot of things we're supposed to motivate each other.

And then he says, he points out something specifically, in not to forsake our own assembling together, as is the habit of some. Now, I don't think there is any of you because you came here, but maybe there are some people in your fellowships that need to be motivated on that part. You know, nowadays you can sit at home and you can get your church either on TV or streaming.

A lot of churches do streaming, which is wonderful for those that are sick. But some people get kind of the thought, it's easier to stay home. I don't have to dress up.

I don't have to drive. And I don't have to put up with these saints at church that are sometimes so unsanely. So the writer of Hebrews want us to motivate others not to forsake to come to church because it's really important.

You know, sometimes we think, I don't contribute much to the church, but according to the New Testament, everyone has gifts of service. God has given to each of his children gifts of ministry. The body supposed to get supply from what God has given to you and you supposed to receive from others.

Now, if you are missing or if someone is missing, that means the church is robbed from not receiving that gift that God deposited in that person. Think about it. It's like we are one body.

That's what God's word says. Now, if the arm is missing or the leg is missing, staying at home and the rest of the body is going somewhere, that body is limping. You know, sometimes we think we are so insignificant or others are so insignificant in the body of Christ, but that's not true.

Each one, God has given gifts of service and something that we supposed to fulfill. And if we are not there, the church does not receive it. Neither do you receive the ministry of others.

You know, there is this scripture in Deuteronomy 32 verse 30. It talks about these Israelites, you know, talking about how God is wisdom. And it says, one is chasing a thousand.

But two are chasing 10,000. Shouldn't two chase 2,000? It says no, 10,000. That means when we are together, what God wants to do through us multiplies.

It multiplies greatly so we cannot miss anyone. So that's why one of the things we need to stimulate each other is come to church. Get into the body of Christ.

Do what you're supposed to do. Give what you're supposed to give. Serve with what God has given you.

Now, we will look at, let us consider how to stimulate one another. When it says here, let us, that includes all the believers in the church. You know, as believers, we're supposed not to sit back and leave it up to the pastor or the pastor's wife or the song leader, the worship leader to motivate the church.

Did you know that you're supposed to motivate the church? Everybody's supposed to motivate the church. You know, sometimes the pastor is all alone trying to get the saints out of the pew. And sometimes it's almost painful to listen to some of the saints.

Some pastors have to ask and to plead to get just some normal ministry going in the church. You know, sometimes one of the areas that is often lacking a lot of volunteers is the nursery, you know. And the pastor is saying, we got 40 babies in the nursery and only one person to change the diapers.

And that lady is almost losing her mind, you know. Three services she has to be all by herself. And he begs, is there not anyone that want to serve the Lord by changing the diapers of these little babies? Or in some of the churches, you know, the pastor will say, you know, we are three months behind with our electricity payment for the church building.

Please put something in the offering plate, just two dollars more a piece, and we will be able to make it to the next month. Or, you know, the pastor will plead and say, you know, we have one worship leader. He's all by himself on the stage.

He's a one man band, you know. He sings, he plays the piano, he strums the guitar. He plays the violin and he beats the drum all by himself.

And if he has to go on like that, he will die of a heart attack. And the pastor is trying to motivate the church. You know, it's not biblical that the pastor is the only one to motivate the church or the pastor's wife.

It's up to every believer. We're supposed to motivate each other. Then the pastor don't need to plead and beg if everyone is motivating one another.

Now, it says here, let us consider how. So each of us supposed to think very deeply how we can motivate our fellow Christians. We supposed to deliberately plan to influence each other's lives.

You supposed to deliberately plan to influence other's lives. So what are we using? What kind of methods do we use to stimulate one another? You know, now we know we supposed to do it. Can we use any means and methods that we can get from the internet or by looking around what the world is doing, the successful companies? You know, there is psychology that says, you study what makes another person tick and then give him what he wants to get them on your side or there is manipulation.

You go around and fake interest in that other person, make him feel good, make him feel obligated, make him feel important so he will sign up for what you want him to do or, you know, there is this expression, I want something out of that person so I go and butter him up. You know, I tell him how great he is or she is, how amazing and wonderful his talents are so he will do where I try to push him. Or intimidation, can we use that? You know, we could say, you know, if you don't do this service for the Lord, you are not a committed Christian.

It may be true but can we use that to push someone into taking up a job in the body of Christ? Or we could inflate the truth a little bit, you know. We can say, you know, our regular attendance in Our Lady's Bible Study is 400 and you think, well, that was one time when we had a very special occasion but I won't tell them, you know. I will use this nice number and usually we have only 25 people.

So can we use that we proclaim an emergency if there is no emergency? Because we want to raise money for a worthy cause or we push other people's compassion button, you know. The children are starving to death in Africa, which is true. But our motivation is kind of, we say it because we want to manipulate that person into doing something or giving something or make people feel guilty.

You know, you throw so much food away, you could feed 10 people in a third world country, which is also true. Can we use these things to try to make something happen? Is that the methods that God wants us to stimulate one another to love and to good deeds? You know, often, you know, we hear the sentence, doesn't the end justify the means? That means the end result. Doesn't it justify everything we do to get there? You know, actually, that's what Hitler believed.

The end justifies the means when he set out to kill six million Jews and start World War II. He believed the end justifies the means. He has something in mind he wants to accomplish, so whatever way I can get it done.

King Saul in the Bible saw the same thing. The end justifies the means. You know, God anointed him or got him anointed as king and he's supposed to do God's work and fight the enemies.

And we read the story in 1 Samuel 13, verse eight through 14. The Philistines were assembling together to go against Israel for war. And Saul was given the instruction that he need to wait for the prophet Samuel to come to offer the sacrifice and ask God's favor for the war campaign.

And then he should go to war. So Saul was waiting and Samuel didn't show up. You know, Samuel was late for some reason.

And the people began to scatter. They were walking away and Saul was looking and thinking the Philistines are about to come against us and my army is scattering. They are walking off.

I need to do something. You know, I need to unify, get them back. So Saul went ahead and offered the sacrifice himself.

He wanted to help God out. His intention was to save the situation, you know. What was the result? Samuel came and he looked and he said, why did you do it? And he said, well, you didn't show up and I went ahead because the people were scattering.

I tried to save the thing. And God told him through Samuel, God took the kingdom away from you. Why? Why did he do that? You know, when we read the Bible, we find that God's word teaches we must use God's methods when we build God's kingdom.

We cannot just use whatever methods we can find on the internet or what we can see. David made a similar mistake out of ignorance maybe. You know, he meant really well and he was a man according to God's own heart, you know.

He wanted to bring the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem. It had been stolen by the Philistines, taken away for years and now it was back. And so David said, we need to bring that Ark to Jerusalem.

And so he went with 300,000 chosen men to get the Ark and they loaded it on a cart, on a new cart. They made a brand new cart and two ox or so were pulling this cart and all of Israel celebrated until the oxen somehow they upset the Ark and Uzziah who was nearby, he tried to steady the Ark and to keep it from falling off the cart. And when he touched it, he died.

So all the celebration was over and they left the Ark in someone's house and David said, I can't bring it like this. Now we read sometime later, David said, we need to try it again. To get the Ark, but this time we will follow God's specific instruction, how the Ark should be transported.

And we read, David said, no one is to carry the Ark of God but the Levites, for the Lord chose them to carry the Ark of God and to minister to him forever. That's in First Chronicle 15 too. And then he assembled the Levites and he asked them to consecrate themselves.

That means they had to be purified so they will be not unworthy to transport this Ark. And then David talked to them and he said to them, because you did not carry it at the first, the Ark, the Lord our God

made an outburst on us for we did not seek him according to the ordinance. First Chronicles 15, 13.

So David recognized he can't use just any kind of methods to do God's work. It need to go according to what God put in his word. And so this time they did it like Moses had described it.

They had to carry the Ark on their shoulders and they brought it to Jerusalem and nothing happened. No one died because they used God's method to build God's kingdom. Now, I think that day David learned the most important lesson for any kind of ministry.

And the lesson is the end must be spiritual and the way to get there must be spiritual as well. The end result must be according to God's word and God's method and the way to get to that end result must be according to God's method. Now, this is true for the Old Testament and the New Testament.

And this is also true for motivating others. You know, we're supposed to stimulate one another to love and to good works. We need to use God's methods.

So why is God so concerned about the methods we use? Why is he so concerned? Shouldn't he be happy for the results? The reason is he's so concerned because the methods of the world don't represent him. You know, we are ambassadors for Christ. That means we are standing in the place of the Lord Jesus.

2 Corinthians 5.20, we're supposed to represent God himself. We're supposed to represent his love, his truth, his holiness. If we use the wrong methods, worldly methods, the world will get a wrong picture of our God.

They will think God is fake love, untruthfulness, manipulation, God is using people. Also, God is so concerned about the methods we use because the methods of this world cannot achieve anything that has eternal results. It's only temporary results.

It won't last for eternity because flesh can only produce flesh regardless of how good and successful it looks in our eyes. You know, people accomplish so many things, but if it's done with fleshly methods, it is flesh, God says, it's not spirit, it cannot last. Flesh is incapable to produce anything that lasts beyond death.

John 3.6, Jesus is saying, that which is born of the flesh is flesh. Flesh doesn't turn into spirit. You understand that? Whatever we accomplish in the flesh doesn't suddenly turn into something spiritual God can accept.

1 Corinthians 15.50, flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. So we still talk about how to motivate, stimulate each other, and we said we can't use boldly methods because it doesn't represent God, and flesh can only produce flesh. And Abraham had to learn that lesson, you know, when he got Ishmael.

He was saying to God, can you bless Ishmael? And God told him, I cannot accept the product of the flesh. You know, it says in Romans 9.7-8, but through Isaac your descendants will be named. That is, it is not the children of the flesh who are children of God, but the children of the promise are regarded as descendants.

God could not accept Ishmael and fulfill everything he wanted to do because it was a product of the flesh. It was not the son of the promise, according to the spirit. Only what is from the spirit will last for eternity.

Please remember that. Whatever you do for the Lord, only what is from the spirit will last for eternity. You know, we look at the largeness and the beauty of success and fruit, but God always looks for the source.

What produced it? What produced this big result? Only the spirit can produce life in us as well as in others. It need to last for eternity. Romans 8.6 says, for the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.

So we can conclude that using the methods of the world to stimulate each other won't work. We may have some result, we may have even big result, but it will be temporal. God cannot accept it.

It will not last for eternity. So the methods we need to use for any kind of ministry and for motivating each other need to be God's methods. So what do we need to do to find God's methods? We need to look in God's word.

What does it say? How to stimulate one another? And then we need to look at the Lord Jesus. What kind of methods did Jesus use? What kind of methods did the apostles use? We can learn from them. Well, the first method to how to stimulate others is be an example to the believers.

Timothy was a young Christian. Paul was writing to him. Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith, and purity.

Show yourself an example to the believers. To those who believe. First Timothy 4, 12.

That's not just for young Christians. He wrote in Titus 2, 2 and 3 for older Christians. Older men are to be tempered, dignified, sensible, sound in faith, in love, in perseverance.

Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips, nor enslave too much wine or anything else either. So likewise means whatever God says about the older men is likewise for the older ladies. So we got young people and older people.

They supposed to be an example. Motivate others for your example. And your example must be in your speech, the way you conduct yourself, the way you love, your faith, your purity, your perseverance, all these things that are listed.

You supposed to become an example to the believers. So we learn from this. We motivate others by living and practicing what we wish them to become.

You motivate others by living and practicing what you wish them to become. In our ministry, we work among the unreached in Asia, in quite a number of Asian nations. Now, the people we have in our churches are mostly first generation Christians.

Now, how do they learn how to behave as Christians? They copy and they observe whatever they see in their pastor and in the pastor's family. You know, in many areas, the only Christian is the pastor and his family. So whenever someone gets saved, they will watch them.

What do they do? How do they behave? How do they speak? The ladies will watch the pastor's wife. How is she talking to her husband? How is she behaving in the church? How is she raising her children? And then they will copy whatever they see. This is really something very serious because these believers have nothing else to compare with.

They don't come from a Christian background. They don't know the Bible at all. The only example they have is what the pastor and his family is portraying, good or bad.

That will become the foundation of the church. It is very, very serious. We motivate others by living and practicing what we wish them to become.

And after we do that, the second thing how to motivate others is after we lift that, we teach them. First you lift and then you teach. You know, Jesus first lived and then he taught for 30 years.

He was obedient to the Father. And then he was teaching obedience. We read in Acts 1.1, Luke is writing, you know, about his, about his account, about the life of Jesus and the church.

And he says, the first account I composed to you feelers about all that Jesus began to do and teach. First Jesus did, first he lived, and then he taught what he lived. The apostles also first lived and then they were teaching.

You know, when you read these letters from these apostles, you many times come across the word bondservant. That means they were living as bondservants, free will servants to the Lord. They were totally given to Jesus till death.

And then they taught. And we read, you know, they were teaching, instructing, correcting, leading, exalting, reminding and motivating people. But they first lived it and then they taught.

And I'm sure you know the scripture in Titus 2, 3 and 5 about women, you know, Paul instructed the older women to teach the younger women. But before he says that, he talks about the older women need to be reverent in their behavior, not gossips, and enslaved to anything addictive. And then he says, teaching the younger women.

First they need to live, and then they supposed to teach what they live, you know. And they supposed to encourage the younger women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be sensible, to be pure workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands. That means the older ladies in the church supposed to motivate the younger ladies with the things they lived, not just with the things they speak.

And you can only speak and motivate others if you can back up with your life. You know, you cannot teach or motivate what you don't live yourself. It just don't work.

You know, if you want, you need to succeed first in your own life before you can teach others. You know, I cannot teach you how to bake this wonderful fluffy cake that rises that high when you put it in the oven. If when I make my cake, it almost comes out like a tortilla.

You won't believe me. You know, I can't teach you because I haven't succeeded in baking such a nice cake. So dear sisters, if you want to teach others, you first have to live it.

You first have to succeed. People need to have a reason why they should listen to you. So we motivate others by teaching them with words what we have been living all along.

You know, sometimes, you know, others will try to motivate you to pray, but they don't have a prayer life themselves. Will you accept it then? I'm sure it won't. Your motivation will not work because they don't see you doing it.

Or they will advise you, you know, motivate you to obey your husband. But when you look at their life, you see they don't obey their husband. So will the motivation work? It won't work.

So dear sisters, we motivate others by teaching them with the words what we have been living all along. How do we motivate others? Only what is life in me can produce life in others. You know, teaching spiritual things is different from a classroom lecture.

In a classroom, the teacher is passing on information. He will say the earth is round and two and two is four, and the cat says meow. He passing on information.

But when you teach spiritual things, you pass on, you transfer life. This is so important. You transfer life.

How does that happen? The Lord shows us that ministry, and part of ministry is motivation. Ministry is the outflow of our inner life. It's not doing 10 things, you know, in the church.

Ministry is outflow of our inner life. John 7, 38, 39, Jesus was saying, he who believes in me, as the scripture said, from his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water, but this he spoke of the spirit whom those who believed in him were to receive. Something's supposed to flow out of my inner life.

That is ministry that will motivate others. Only the life in me that is from God, not from the flesh, can give life to others. The source is the Holy Spirit of that inner life.

The Holy Spirit transfers life to the spirit of another being. He uses our spirit like a vehicle to take it to that other person, that life to that other person. See, from us flows rivers of living water to others, so all our other life or methods will only have temporal result, if any result at all, because the source is the flesh and our best efforts of teaching and motivating cannot produce life in other people.

Do you understand? It is very, very important that you understand only what is life in you can give life to others, and that life, the source, need to be the Holy Spirit. Then it will, when it flows out of you, it will transfer life to other people. That is how you motivate others.

So we motivate others by the border of life that flows from us to them. You meet people, and what flows out to them encourages you, it helps you, it exhorts you, it gives you courage. They may not say even anything, but something is flowing out of them and that helps you, that lifts you up.

This is how you motivate that other person. And then, how do we else motivate others? We need to have a testimony that qualifies us to say to them, follow me. You know, Jesus was walking along the shore, and there were these fishermen and some others, and he tells them, follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men, Mark 117.

And we read, and they immediately left their nets and followed him. Now, it didn't mean just follow me. Jesus didn't just mean, you know, you walk behind me.

You know, I'm walking ahead like mother goose, and you all the little geese behind me. He meant, follow me, look what I'm doing, do the same thing, learn from me. And Paul, he also was saying the same thing.

He was saying to the believers, be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ. 1 Corinthians 11.1, follow me. Would it be a scary thing if you say to someone, follow me? Or would that person be safe to follow you and imitate whatever you do? You can only say this, follow me, if your testimony is the same in private as in public.

You know, Paul was saying in 2 Corinthians 1.12, for our proud confidence is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in holiness and godly sincerity, not in fleshly wisdom, but in the grace of God, we have conducted ourselves in the world and especially toward you. What he means with this, he's saying, we have the testimony of our conscience. That means, whether you see me or not, I live by what I teach.

There is no difference in my life, no difference in my love, no difference in my prayer. You know, so many times when we are surrounded by people that pray, we are all of a sudden this spiritual warrior praying. And then others do, you know, do some, but usually we are not that person.

But Paul is saying, I am the same. I have the testimony of my conscience. You know, we have the testimony often of other people that watch us, but often our conscience is saying, when you are alone at home, you are different than what you show in the church, what people know about you.

You know, so many times we try to teach our children manners. You know, we say, never lick the knife. You know, you may cut your tongue and it's dangerous.

Don't lick the knife. And when you take milk out of the refrigerator, don't drink out of the bottle and put it back. But lo and behold, we are hungry in the middle of the knife.

We get up and we go to the fridge and we take the knife and cut a piece of cake and we lick the knife. No one is seeing it. And we may even drink out of the bottle of milk.

We laugh about these things. We try to teach our children, but when no one is around, we may not live what we teach. In spiritual things, we often do the same thing.

Our faithfulness, holiness, submission, our obedience need to be the same. We need to have the testimony of other people and also the testimony of our conscience that we live what we say. Then we can motivate others by saying to them, follow me as I follow Christ.

Now there is another method we can motivate other people. We can make them thirsty to long for what we have. When they watch our life, that they really get thirsty and say, I want to be like that person.

You know, the disciples, they were around Jesus all the time and they watched him, what he was doing and how he was doing his ministry. And these disciples were watching how Jesus was praying to his father. You know, and they discovered Jesus has, whenever he prayed, he got God to answer him each time.

His prayer never failed. You know, when he prayed for the five loaves and two fishes, they multiplied. When he prayed for the lame man, he walked.

When he prayed for the blind, they saw. When he prayed for Lazarus to come out of the tomb, he came up. So it caused the disciples to desire to learn to pray like Jesus.

Jesus didn't have to round them up and say, it's Wednesday night and it's prayer evening. Now you all kneel down and you repeat after me. He didn't have to do that.

You know, it says in the scripture in Luke 11, one, after Jesus prayed, the disciples came to him and said, Lord, teach us to pray. We want to learn to pray like you pray. See, they got thirsty for what they saw in the Lord Jesus.

What about us? We motivate others by the relationship we have with God. I remember when I was a Christian, maybe just a few hours old, I saw this believer and his face, it was an older person. His face was so shining and there was such love coming out of this person.

And I was thinking, I want to become like that. I really wish to become like that. I could see such a difference between that person and what I had seen in the world.

You know, let other people, by watching us, our relationship to the Lord, they should become thirsty and hungry and they should come knocking at our door and say, I want to become like you. I want what you have. And then another method to motivate others, we can show them how God wants to use and to bless them as a result of their participation in doing God's work.

There is a story in the New Testament. Actually, it's Paul that is writing about the Christians in Macedonia. You know, Paul had heard, came to know that the Christians in Jerusalem, they were suffering greatly.

And so he was taking up a collection to help these poor saints in Jerusalem. And so he was telling the churches, please collect some offerings and let us bless these poor believers in Jerusalem. They need our help this time.

But he didn't ask the Macedonians because they were so utterly poor. He couldn't bring himself to tell them, you participate too, you need to give as well. But you know what happened? They were begging Paul.

It says in 2 Corinthians 8, 4, they were begging us with much entreaty for the favor of participation in the support of the saints. They were begging, we want to participate. Paul didn't really want to accept it, he felt bad.

But then he saw how joyful they were and how eager they were. And he's writing about the collection they took up. He's saying, in a great deal of affliction, their abundance of joy and their deep poverty overflowed in the wealth of their liberality.

For I testify that according to their ability and beyond their ability, they gave of their own accord. 2 Corinthians 8, 2. What he was saying here is they had such joy to give. It was overflowing.

It was, their joy was greater than their poverty to give. And they were giving so liberally from their heart. So now we can ask ourselves, why did these Macedonian Christians didn't want to miss out giving to that cause of helping the Christians in Jerusalem? They could have celebrated and say, well, Paul exempt us, we are tax exempt, we are exempt from having to do a collection.

But no, they didn't want to miss out. Why did they not want to miss out? Because they knew through their giving, they get to have a part in doing something for Jesus himself. Matthew 25, 40, it says, and the king will answer and say to them, truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of mine, even the least of them, you did it to me.

These Macedonians, they realized, if we take part in this special offering, we do this to Jesus himself. We get to do this. We get to do something for the Lord Jesus.

And then they also realized through their giving, they can love one another, just like Jesus commanded us. John 13, 34, a new commandment I give to you, that you love one another even as I have loved you, that

you love one another as I have loved you. And then they also realized that through giving, they can go into all the world and preach the gospel and build God's kingdom on earth.

You know, Romans 10, 14, 15 says, and how shall they believe in him whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? So they became senders, actually. You know, the church in Jerusalem, they were the first Christians that sent out people to different parts of Judea, Samaria, and to the end of the world. Apostle Peter, these Macedonians, through their offering, they were sending Apostle Peter to Israel.

They were sending Paul to Europe. They were sending Apostle Thomas to India. He came to India, actually, and planted five churches.

One of these churches is in my husband's village. So through giving, they also realized they get to have a part in all what God is doing as a result. You know, the salvations of thousands of people, they never met on this earth.

And through giving, they realized they will receive a reward in heaven. You know, the souls, they hope then for Christ, they will meet in heaven. They are the treasures they collected on earth for eternity.

So these Macedonians, that's the reason they didn't want to miss out. There were so many blessings if they participate. So we motivate others by giving them an eternal perspective.

The ministry you do will result in many souls. The prayer you pray will help others to come to know Jesus. We motivate others by helping them to see beyond their little world, to see what this thing will do in eternity.

In our ministry, we have thousands of churches all over Asia. And every church has also a women's fellowship, we call it. It's the women of the church, they come together and they study the Bible together.

And they learn together and we teach them a lot of things. We teach them literacy. About 54% of all our believers are illiterate and most of them are women.

And we also teach these ladies the joy of giving like the Macedonians. Many of them are very, very poor, from very poor areas. They don't have nothing.

But they may have a chicken at home that lays some egg. And our women in the churches, we have about 9,000 women groups. They raise funds to participate in missions like the Macedonians.

We show them the joy of what it means to participate in God's work and to give to missions. So our sisters have become very, very inventive of being able to participate in sending missionaries, in supporting Bible school students, in buying gospel tracts, and in doing outreach ministry. So some of these groups of women, some of the things they do is they raise chickens.

And then no one gets to eat the eggs. They are sold in the market and they buy gospel tracts with them. Or they make handicrafts, baskets in some areas.

They weave wonderful shawls and things. They sell these things, what they make. And the money is given to missions.

Or they plant vegetable gardens, a little plot of land. And these vegetables, no one gets to eat the tomatoes or beans, they take them to the market and sell them. And then they use the money to support missions.

Some of our sisters live in jungle areas. They go in the forest and collect sticks and make brooms and go and sell them. And the money they give for missions.

They have learned that through that, they can participate in saving souls and get, and they are so excited to do something for God's kingdom. You know, some of these, our women groups are so poor, they really have nothing at all. And one of our leaders was visiting one of these very, very remote places.

And she was challenging the sisters, think of something you can do to participate in spreading God's kingdom. And they were saying, sister, we don't have anything. We have no money, we have really nothing.

So the next time our leader was visiting them, they were saying, auntie, we found a way how we can participate in spreading the gospel, in doing missions. And she was curious to learn what they found out. And they were saying, you know, when the animals go out to pasture, we go and we collect the cow dung.

And we make cow patties and we try them. And then we sell it for firewood. And that is how we can support missions.

And they were overjoyed. We get to participate in giving to the Lord. We have other sisters.

I remember they were saying, we have one iron, you know, one iron to iron clothes. No one else has an iron. They have one iron.

And so they opened an ironing service. So the sisters from the fellowship, each one takes turn to iron. And so they raise money for missions so they can participate, just like the Macedonians.

Imagine what God will do when these ladies give him their little things. Who knows how many churches are planted because of them? Then another method is encourage one another. First Thessalonians 5, 11 says, encourage one another and build upon another.

Hebrews 3, 13, but encourage one another day after day. So what is encouraging? Giving courage, giving hope, giving confidence to others. You know, we have a lot of downtrodden people, often in the church as well.

How do you encourage some people? How do you do it? You encourage them with words. You know, the Lord has given me the tongue of disciples that I may know how to sustain the weary ones with a word. Isaiah 50 verse 59.

You know, you say things to them, God is with you. He's faithful, he will enable you. You can count on him, he will bring you through.

He never fails. Nothing is impossible with God. Look how far he brought you.

I can see God's hand on your life. Draw near to him and he will draw near to you. You can speak courage into their life.

Not getting together and speak discouragement, but speak courage. Go out, motivate others through encouragement. And then we can encourage others by watching us how we face struggles, what we do.

Paul, he was suffering. He was sitting in prison. He had a death sentence on his life.

But while he was there, he was caring, he was praying, he was writing letters, he was discipling people. He was faithful and he was fearless and he was bold and he didn't have self-pity. Do you know what the result was? We read that in Philippians 1, 13 through 14.

And that most of the brethren trusting in the Lord because of my imprisonment have far more courage to speak the word of God without fear. So we motivate others by the words we speak to them, the words of encouragement and by what they can observe when we go through struggles and through problems. The baby we have, the baby overcome.

One of our missionaries, he was sentenced to prison for 10 years. He had done nothing wrong, but he was falsely accused and put in prison. He had a wife and two little kids and he was separated from them for 10 years.

I think his wife was 21. Then he was put in prison. When you visit him in prison, yes, he missed his family terribly.

He had planted a church, he was missing the church, but he will say to you, God has a purpose for me to be here. You know, in that prison, he became like Joseph. They put him in charge of the prisoners because he was so different.

And he led 35 people to the Lord right there in prison and he had weekly Bible study with them. And actually, even before he was released, some of these prisoners got out and some went straight to Bible school to become missionaries because of him. When we think about, you know, we motivate others by what they can observe in us when we go through problems.

Please remember that when you have problems, when you have struggles, others will watch you. Let them find strength. Let them see how you go through and how you cling to the Lord, how you hold fast to his promises and it will give them courage.

So we come almost to the end. Why are we to stimulate and encourage one another? The writer of Hebrews says, because Jesus is coming very soon. Hebrews 10.25, all the more as you see the day drawing near.

We already said about this this morning, you know, Jesus is far closer than when this letter to the Hebrews was written. And Israel is on a countdown. It's our clock to the coming of Christ.

So now what should you do with all this? The writer of Hebrews says, let us consider how to stimulate one another. Dear sisters, now you need to consider when you go back to your church. We listed a whole lot of things.

I hope you wrote them down, how we can motivate others. Now you need to consider which one you are going to do. I hope you do all of them.

What did God show you what you can do to motivate others? You know, your churches here need to grow. There are lots and lots of unsafe people in this Michigan state. Dear sisters, God called you and you're

supposed to stimulate one another.

What you can do to build God's kingdom maybe there are some things you need to change in your life so you can qualify to motivate one another. I don't know. I don't know your life at all.

But I know that God has a purpose for you. And you have a purpose in his church in building his kingdom. And please, dear sisters, let us get busy, stimulating, motivating each other.

So our pastors and pastors' wives and leaders are not alone. It is our job. God want us to take up our responsibility and motivate each other so his work, his kingdom can grow.

And thousands and thousands of people will be in heaven because of your life. Shall we pray together? Lord Jesus, you ask us to follow you and we desire to do that. And Lord, we also want to stimulate one another to love and to the work that you have for the church.

Lord, I pray that you help us to look away from ourself and our little world and look to the ripe harvest fields, that we have your eternal perspective. And Lord, I pray that we get busy encouraging and stimulating one another to serve you, to serve your kingdom. Lord, we commit ourselves in your hands and we pray that you give us the grace for all you have called us to do.

Thank you, Lord. Amen.

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