

(Biographies) Adoniram Judson

by John Piper

God's purpose is to spread the gospel to all peoples and establish God-centered, Christ-exalting churches through the suffering of His people, especially His ministers and missionaries.

Duration: 1:11:08

Scripture: Psalm 22:27-28, Matthew 10:16, Matthew 28:18, John 15:5, Romans 8:36-37, Revelation 5:9

Topics: "World Evangelization", "Gospel Truth"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of guarding the deposit of the gospel with fences. He warns against the consequences of not protecting the truth of the gospel, using examples of denominations that have strayed from their original beliefs. The speaker outlines five main points: God's purpose to spread the gospel to all peoples, God's plan to use suffering as a means to accomplish this purpose, the current position of the church in regard to world evangelization, and a plea to join Christ and Adoniram Judson in sacrificing for the sake of the world. The sermon emphasizes the need for a clear and powerful message that believes in heaven, hell, and the necessity of faith in Christ.

Transcript

The following message is by Pastor John Piper. More information from Desiring God is available at www.desiringgod.org A couple of preliminaries before I pray for God's help. One is that there are books, and I just want to make sure you know that what I do here in these biographies, you can do in your church, and they can be very helpful, because I'm no scholar on any of these people I talk about.

All I did was read this book, and now I'm going to talk to you from what I learned, so you can do that. This book is there, To the Golden Shore. That's the only one I've read, because that's the only one in print.

There are Wayland's two-volume commentary. There are a lot of used ones out there. Everything Courtney Anderson knows about, he got from those two volumes.

He just doesn't use quote marks anywhere or have any footnotes. Because I found sentences. I just found them.

And then here's the only book in print by Ednar M. Judson himself. It's on baptism. He turned from Congregationalist to Baptist on a 114-day trip on a boat to India.

And then here are two books for children. I didn't know these existed until five minutes ago. So I'll hold these up, and if I could get my little seven-year-old to read one of these, that would be great.

So that's what's available on Judson, and I hope you'll read something. With regard to my manuscript, we'll have this on the web Friday afternoon. So don't feel like, oh, my, I've got to write this source down or that source down, because I would say if I were you, I would just put my notes away and just relax and soak and then get convicted and become a missionary.

That's my goal. But if you bother yourself with taking too many notes, you might miss the Holy Spirit's work. And I will tell you up front, the group was just praying for me, and I've been praying that I would have discernment as to how we should close this time, because I'm fully expecting that what I said at the beginning with regard to crossroads is true of you right now, and that there are perhaps hundreds in this room that God does not want to be pastors anymore in America.

And therefore weighty things are going to happen in the next 75 minutes or so. So that's worth praying about. Let's pray.

Father, I fully believe that you have prepared men in the last decade or so for this moment in their lives, and that the Holy Spirit is moving now across this room and will, by the Word, dislodge many from present plans and create a whole new vision for the next chapter, perhaps the last chapter of their lives. So I ask you, Father, to do an absolutely stunning work here for the mobilization of pastors to be frontier missionaries and for the awakening of the rest to produce frontier missionaries and nobody to be indifferent to this great cause and calling. To that end, help me to be faithful to your Word and to be a faithful echo of the life and labor and suffering of Adoniram Judson.

In Jesus' powerful name I pray. Amen. Our Lord Jesus said in some very solemn words, Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone.

And if it dies, it bears much fruit. And then he followed that with these words, He who loves his life loses it. And he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

Which means that a fruitful life and an eternal life depend on dying and hating your life in this world. More and more, I am convinced that God's design for finishing the Great Commission and gathering his elect from all the peoples of the world is through the suffering of his ministers and missionaries. Dying like a seed, hating your life, and what overwhelms me as I ponder the scriptures in relation to the life of Adoniram Judson, what overwhelms me is the strategic place of how often he died and how often he hated his life in this world.

The suffering of the ministers and the suffering of the missionaries is a design. I'm arguing it's not a mere consequence. It's not a mere result.

It's not just a spin-off. I'm arguing it is a divine design that the darkness be penetrated, that the principalities and powers be broken, and that God-centered, Christ-exalting, Bible-saturated churches be planted through the suffering and martyrdom of his people. I think that's a divine design to which you, some of you, are called.

And all of you, in measure. Now, here's my outline of where we're going. One, five, four things I want to show you and then conclude, fifthly, with a plea to you to join Christ and Judson in dying for the world.

One, God's purpose to spread the gospel to all peoples. Two, God's plan to make suffering a crucial means to accomplish this purpose. Three, the position we are now in in the 21st century in regard to world evangelization.

Four, the pain of Adoniram Judson as an illustration of all these truths. And fifth, a plea to you to take the deposit around which we have built necessary fences because it is so infinitely valuable to the people who need it so badly. If you'd ask me what would be one of the main reasons for the theme of this conference, I would say because if you don't guard the deposit with fences, you will have nothing to take to the nations in 80 years.

Like the American Baptist, and the PCUSA, and the United Methodist Church, and the Episcopalian Church, and the UCC, just like them. They used to have a gospel. They used to believe in missions.

And your little denomination, so evangelically vibrant today, will be exactly where they are in 80 years without fences. I want there to be a message, clear and powerful, that believes in heaven, believes in hell, believes in the necessity of Christ and faith in this Christ, so that we have something to give. That would be one of the reasons for having this conference.

So here's number one of those five points. The invincible purpose of God is that the gospel of the glory of Christ spread to all peoples of the world and take root in God-centered, Christ-exalting churches. To all the peoples, it's His purpose that this great gospel spread and produce churches.

This is a promise in the Old Testament. All the ends of the earth shall remember and worship the Lord, and all the families of the people shall come and bow down, for dominion belongs to the Lord, and He rules over the nations. Psalm 22, verses 27 and 28.

It's an Old Testament promise. It is also a promise of Jesus. This gospel will be preached throughout the world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

It's a design of the cross. They sang a new song, saying, You were slain, and by your blood did ransom men for God from every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and has made them a priest or priesthood to our God, and they shall reign on earth. It was a design of the cross.

If you love the cross like we sing, you must love what it was designed to do, namely, gather a people from every people group on planet earth. If you don't love that, you don't love the cross. You're creating it in your own imagination.

And it was the final command of the risen, all-powerful Lord. All authority in heaven on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you.

I will be with you. I will be with you. What more could we ask to the end of the age? You take that charge and say, All right, I'll do it.

Will you be with me? He resounds. You don't have to have any extraordinary gift here to know the word of the risen, all-authority Christ coming through this mouth right now is straight into your heart. I will be with you.

And therefore, you don't have anything to fear, but fear. It was the divine aim of the apostle Paul and the grace of God in him. Through him, Romans 1-5, we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the peoples, all the nations.

It burned in the apostle that this is why grace had come upon him, that all the nations would become obedient to King Jesus through faith. It was his holy ambition. And here there's something very relevant for us all, because we might think, well, the apostle, he had his Damascus Road experience, and I've never had anything quite that clear, and so I'm living in limbo, and it seems more appropriate to be here.

There is a way Paul says this that alters that a bit. He says in Romans 15-20, I make it my ambition to preach the gospel not where Christ has already been named. He's just passionate to get away from America.

He's just passionate to get out of here. Where it's not already been named. Lest I build on someone else's foundation.

Is there anybody in this room with that passion? I don't want to build on my predecessor. I don't want to go to a church that's established. Give me a totally pagan people.

Give me a people that don't want me to come. Oh, God, grant me to do what Paul did. If there's nobody like that in this room, we may as well fold up the shop of Christianity, because that job's not done.

But that's my third point, and I'm still on point one. I'm still reading in that context of Romans 15-20. Lest I build on someone else's foundation, but as it is written, those who have never been told of Him.

Now he's quoting Isaiah 52-15. Isn't this strange? This man had a Damascus Road experience with the living Christ, and he quotes Isaiah to authorize his calling. If that doesn't liberate you men to hear the Word of God in Isaiah, I don't know what would.

Those who have never heard will understand. He does it again in Acts 13. The divine purpose of the falling and the filling of the Holy Spirit in Acts 1 is also to this end.

You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will therefore be my witnesses in Jerusalem and all Judea and Samaria and to the uttermost parts of the world. That's why He came! That's why He came! We sing that song. I thank you for leaving your spirit here.

Are you? Point one then. The invincible purpose of God is that the gospel of the glory of Christ spread to all the peoples of the world and take root in God-centered, Christ-exalting, Bible-saturated churches that bring cultures under King Jesus. Adoniram Judson came to faith and was called in about 1812, a little bit before that, in a milieu where the Holy Spirit began to move mightily.

The Haystack Prayer Meeting was in 1807 near Williams College, and Adoniram Judson went to Andover Seminary where those students from Williams had come, and he was caught up into a flame of missionary zeal that was born out of the beginnings of an awakening. Wherever the Holy Spirit is quickening and awakening the church of Christ, this kind of passion will be born. Otherwise, it's a defective awakening.

Point number two. God's plan is that this gospel-spreading, church-planting purpose triumphs through the suffering of His people, especially His ministers and missionaries. God's plan is that the peoples be reached, the church be established, authentic worship rise to the King through the suffering and

martyrdom of His people, especially His ministers and His missionaries.

Jesus said to His disciples, Behold, I am sending you out like sheep in the midst of wolves. Be as wise as serpents and as innocent as doves. Nobody, nobody doubts what happens to sheep in the midst of wolves.

And to make it crystal clear that it was not a possibility, but a reality, Paul said, We are being killed all day long. We are counted as sheep to be slaughtered. But in all these things, in, in, in all these things, we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

And the first thing that cannot separate you from Him is death. That's the calling. Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone.

Jesus said, Beware of men, for they will deliver you over to courts, flog you in their synagogues. You will be dragged before governors and kings for my sake to bear witness before them and the Gentiles. Do you notice witness is not the thing you do after you've gone to jail to try to make it turn out better.

It's the reason you're in jail. That's what the text says. Ace Marturian, our toys.

They will drag you before governors and kings for a witness to them. They didn't do it for that reason. God did it for that reason.

Nobody's in jail by accident. Nobody is a sheep amid wolves by accident. It's an appointment.

It's a promise from the Lord who laid his life down as a lamb among wolves. A disciple is not above his teacher nor a servant above his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his own house? Who do we think we are? We could have our nice little church as though the master, the infinitely worthy one, the one who is last to be persecuted, surely it will not happen to him.

Us? Yes, not him. And it happens to him. And he draws out the implication.

You're not above your master. If you would be my disciple, you will take up your cross and get on the Calvary Road and follow me. There's not another road of ministry.

Martyrs are not an accident. Revelation 6, 11, when they cried out from under the altar, how long, how long until you judge our blood and avenge us? The word comes back, rest a little longer until the number of their fellow servants and their brothers should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been. Rest a little longer.

There's some more of you planned. Till the number is complete. And some are in this room.

May God give you strength. May God give you strength. Might be a sniper.

Doesn't like your church. Might be a bomber. Doesn't like where you're headed on the airplane.

Just might be a mob. Might take you down in Yemen after 30 years in a hospital there. Loving people.

Might take you down with Martin Burnham in the Philippines. Might take you down with Graham Staines in India. It won't be an accident.

It will be a design to break open the world. We keep running like we are in the American evangelical church from suffering. The Lord will reject us and get it done with 10,000 Korean missionaries.

The South Korean church in the last 10 years has gone from, I'm going to do ballpark numbers now, about 2,500 missionaries to 10,000 cross-cultural missionaries, putting to shame us dying Westerners who are so infatuated with our securities and our ease. Now, lest you think we put our martyrdom too close together with Christ's witness martyrdom. Listen to this amazing sentence from Colossians 124.

Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church. Brothers, we are called in our sufferings to complete the afflictions of Jesus. You really need to ponder that.

That's a design for the in-gathering and the up-building of the church of the living Christ. And it does not mean you atone for anybody's sins or that his atoning death was in any way deficient. It means this, I believe.

The sufferings of Jesus acted out by him in fully sufficient atoning worth are meant to be displayed, portrayed, offered through the sufferings of his body on earth. It's a design, which is why I abominate the health, wealth, and prosperity gospel. Not just because it gets a few things wrong.

It destroys the message of the cross, which is designed to come through a suffering church. So, the second point is that it is a divine plan or a divine design that this gospel-spreading, church-planting purpose triumphs through the suffering of his people, especially his ministers and missionaries. Point number three.

The position we are now in at the beginning of the 21st century is one that cries out for tremendous missionary effort and tremendous missionary sacrifice. Patrick Johnstone in Operation Whirl. I saw a stack of them back there.

If there are any left, I should probably run right now to get it. But they're very inexpensive. You can get them anytime on the web.

And they are among the most important books. It is among the most important books in my library. I have a little prayer nook in my study.

And there are a few books on the shelf right here beside that. And that's one of them. Not merely because I want to pray, but because I am wired to forget the world.

And Patrick Johnstone has done all of us such a tremendous favor to keep our hearts alive for the unreached peoples of the world. Well, he said that in the 1990s, for the first time in history, we were able to get a reasonably complete listing of the peoples in the world. Ethnolinguistically, he estimates 12,000 of them.

And he says 3,500 have, on average, 1.2% Christians. That's 20 million Christians out of about 1.7 billion people, using the broadest definition of Christian and including expatriates. Most of these 3,500 most unreached peoples stretch through the 1040 window from West Africa and North Africa right on across to Japan.

And most of them don't want you to come. In fact, they are openly, most of them, hostile to your coming. Well, they don't know what they need.

They are blind. Is that going to make a difference to you? It didn't make a difference to God when he saved you that you were blind. When Ednarm Judson went to Burma in July of 1813, it was a hostile, utterly unreached place.

William Carey had said to Judson, across the Bay of Bengal, don't go there. It's useless. All the missionaries that went there either died or quit.

There were no missionaries there when Judson got there. Fierce war with Siam, anarchic despotism, enemy raids continually, constant rebellion, no religious toleration. And Judson, hearing that there was a boat in the harbor heading for Rangoon, looked at his 23-year-old bride of 17 months and said, will you go with me? And Anne did.

Thirty-eight years he ministered there till he died when he was 61. Went home once after 33 years, not by choice, but to accompany his sick wife. He was a seed that fell into the ground and died over and over.

And the fruit God gave is celebrated today even in scholarly works like Barrett's World Christian Encyclopedia, which says the largest Christian force in Burma is the Burma Baptist Convention, which owes its origin to the pioneering activity of the American Baptist missionary Adoniram Judson. He was a Baptist when he went there in 1813, because although he'd come out as a congregationist on the 114-day voyage, his mind was changed and William Ward, the partner of William Carey, baptized him and Anne on September 6, 1812 there near Calcutta. And today, Patrick Johnstone estimates that in Myanmar, the new name for Burma, in Myanmar, the Baptist Convention has about 3,700 congregations with 617,000 members and 1.9 million affiliates.

The fruit of this dead seed. Of course, there were others and they died too. The church today in Myanmar is the fruit of many lost lives.

Now, my question is this. If Christ delays another 200 years, which is just a fraction of a day in his reckoning, that seems long to use. Oh, he wouldn't do that.

Surely he wouldn't. He wouldn't do that. Well, from him, he said, well, I can't wait five more minutes.

If that happens, if that happens, my question is, which of you will have been the dying instrument such that among the 3,500 unreached peoples, some will have 1.9 million adherence to the church of Jesus Christ because you laid your lives down there. That's a good legacy. Number four.

The pain of Adoniram Judson illustrates the truth that we've been talking about so far. So here I move to biography. Adoniram Judson hated his life in this world.

Adoniram Judson was a seed that fell into the ground and died. Adoniram Judson filled up in his own sufferings, what was lacking in the afflictions of Christ where they had never been heard of. And therefore, Adoniram Judson's life bore much fruit.

And today he is alive to enjoy it. And he will be forever. And I think, could he speak right now, he would say it was worth it.

Judson was a Calvinist. Everybody seemed to be a Calvinist in New England in those days. He didn't wear it on his sleeve.

The evidence for it you can read in *Nettles, By His Grace and For His Glory*. His father was a Congregationalist minister. His teacher was Bellamy, who was a student of Jonathan Edwards.

Judson inherited a deep belief in the sovereignty of God. And the great importance of stressing that here for me is not primarily soteriological, though it had that function, of course, for the way he understood people getting saved in Burma. But it mainly, in my point here, is that it stabilized him in the midst of incredible and never-ending calamities in his life.

Let me read you a beautiful sentence that I hope you all will be able to say. If I had not felt certain that every additional trial was ordered by infinite love and mercy, I could not have survived my accumulated sufferings. There's another reason why I want to build fences around the sovereignty of God.

I listen to the people in my church. I listen especially to the suffering people in my church. And I don't know what I would tell them if I could not tell them, this has been ordered by infinite love and mercy, not... He just didn't know this was going to happen.

That's something I want to put outside the fence for the sake of my flock. Because they're going to suffer. They're going to suffer.

This was an unshakable confidence in his wives. He had three wives. And it isn't because he was a polygamist.

It's because Anne died and Sarah died. And Emily died three years after he died. Anne was... They were all absolutely remarkable.

There's a book called *The Three Mrs. Judsons*. And if you find it on the web, go ahead and get it. Because there's a lot more on them than there is on him.

And I'll tell you why later on. Anne, he married February 5, 1812. He left on a boat with her.

Mark this. On February 19, that's what? Fourteen days later, they're on a boat. She never came home.

And I take that back. She did make one trip. She was 23.

They had three children. All the children died. The first baby, nameless.

They dropped in the water between India and Rangoon. The second, Roger Williams Judson, 17 months old, dies. The third, Maria Elizabeth Butterworth Judson, outlives her mother by two months and... or six months, and dies.

Now, Anne, who lost two children, then died, and then her other child died, wrote this after her second child died. Our hearts were bound up with this child. We felt he was our earthly all, our only source of innocent recreation in this heathen land.

But God saw it was necessary to remind us of our error and to strip us of our only little all. Oh, may it not be in vain that he has done it. May we so improve it that he will stay his hand and say, it is enough.

I preach to produce mothers like that. There are not many around. Most American mothers and fathers get angry at God, and many pastors tell them that's good for them.

In other words, his wives and he himself was established by the rock-solid confidence in the sovereignty and goodness of God in all of his calamities. There were roots for this confidence. One, his father.

Two, his Bible. Oh, was he a man of the Bible. 38 years he devoted to translating Old and New Testament.

He left a complete translation behind. He translated, that is, he created a Burmese English dictionary that all the missionaries after him were able to use in language learning. He once was approached by a Buddhist teacher who said, no way could this gospel be true because no king would ever let his son be treated with so much indignity as you say.

God allowed his son to be treated to which Judson responded. You are not a disciple of Christ. A true disciple inquires not whether a fact is agreeable to his own reason, but whether it is in the book.

His pride has not yielded to the divine testimony. Teacher, your pride is still unbroken. Break down your pride and yield to the word of God.

He was a man of the book. The book established him in his confidence in the sovereignty of God. And then there was a third source, remarkable, namely the story of his conversion.

It is an absolutely astonishing story. Let me tell it to you. He was brilliant as a little boy.

Three years old, his mother teaches him to read in one week so she has a surprise for his father when he comes home from a trip. He reads a chapter of the Bible at three after studying for a week. When he was 16, he went as a sophomore to Brown University and graduated head of his class three years later, 1807, same year as the Haystack prayer meeting.

Little did his parents know that while he was at Brown, he was losing his faith. He came in contact with a fellow student that blew him away with his intelligence named Jacob Eames, who was a deist. And by the time Adoniram Judson was done with his education, he was no longer a believer, if he ever was a believer.

He kept it from his parents all the way through, even delivered his valedictory address in such vague terms they couldn't quite tell what he was saying. And then on his birthday, August 9, 1808, 20th birthday, he broke the news to his parents and broke their hearts and said he was going to New York to learn how to write plays for the theater and would his daddy give him a horse as part of his inheritance. And his father, through tears, gave it to him and let him go.

It wasn't the dream he'd hoped for. Bound himself to a pack of strolling players. Later, he wrote, they were a reckless, vagabond, vagabond life.

I found lodgings where I could, bilking the landlord wherever I could find opportunity. Finally, the disgust that he felt for the people around him proved to be the first of some very remarkable providences. He decided to leave them and visit his uncle in the wilderness, his uncle Ephraim in Sheffield, Massachusetts.

Instead of finding his uncle at home, he found, quote, a pious young man that stunned him because of how strongly he held his Christian convictions. And yet not without the stridency of so many of those he had known earlier. He left there wondering, hmm, maybe there's another way to be a Christian instead of a

deist.

And the next night, he didn't have far enough to go to get home. He stayed at a little village where he'd never been before and asked for a room. The man apologized and said, I only have one room and it's next door to a man that's very sick and he may bother you through the night, but if you'd like to have it.

So he took the room and through the night he heard the voices and the groans and the gasps of this man who seemed to be dying and it made his mind think about his own death and about whether he was ready for death. The morning came and as he was getting ready to go, he asked how the man was and the innkeeper said, oh, he died last night. And Judson was struck with the absoluteness of death and his unpreparedness for it.

And as he was walking out the door, he said, do you know who he was? And he said, oh, yes, young man from Brown. His name was Jacob Eames. And Judson was frozen.

He just trembled. He could not move. He couldn't leave for three hours.

He just stayed there in the inn, terrified, saying, if Jacob Eames, the deist, is right, this is meaningless. This is meaningless. This has no significance.

And he could not bring himself to believe this was a coincidence. But that God was on his trail. And he was.

His conversion did not come quickly. It took months. And it was December 2nd when he had enrolled at Andover, groping.

He settled it. It was almost simultaneous with his conversion that he felt the call to take the gospel to the east, as he said. But June 28, 1819, he and four others presented themselves to the Congregationalists as foreign missionaries.

They had never sent a foreign missionary away from American soil. And he said, we're going to start it. And if you don't, we'll go to the London Missionary Society and get them to do it.

And so they voted to do it. The same day he was ordained to that, he met Anne and fell in love. Now, to show you the fiber of which this tree was made, both the man and the woman listened to this letter of courting sent to her father.

I have now to ask whether you can consent to part with your daughter early next spring to see her no more in this world. Whether you can consent to her departure and her subjection to the hardships and sufferings of missionary life. Whether you can consent to her exposure to the dangers of the ocean, to the fatal influence of southern climate of India.

To every kind of want and distress, to degradation, insult, persecution and perhaps a violent death. Can you consent to all this for the sake of him who left his heavenly home and died for her and for you? For the sake of perishing immortal souls, for the sake of Zion and the glory of God. Can you consent to all this in hope of soon meeting your daughter in the world of glory with the crown of righteousness? Brightened with the acclamations of praise, which shall read down to her savior from the heathens saved through her means from eternal woe and despair.

The mindset among us in America today is so fragile. We'll go try this out, this mission thing. Let's just try this out a little bit.

Six months or 18 months or a couple of years. Let's try this out. Her father said to her in modern English, it's your call, which was amazing.

And she wrote to a friend. I feel willing and expect if nothing in Providence prevents to spend my days in this world in heathen lands. Yes, Lydia, I have about come to the determination to give up all my comforts and enjoyments here, sacrifice my affection to relatives and friends and to go where God in his Providence shall see fit to place me.

A year and a half later, February 5, 1812. They sailed for India. I might have my dates wrong there.

You can check it in the manuscript. They sailed for India. They went to Rangoon, even though it was dangerous.

And there began a lifelong battle in 180, 108 degree heat with cholera and malaria and dysentery and no medicines to speak of, except some ones that you wouldn't even want to think about. Salvation with mercury, things like that. She bore him three children, as you know.

His next wife bore him eight children. His third wife bore him two children. Of the 13 children that he had, seven survived.

But the first news they got from home was two years and four months later. This is one of the deaths. I can imagine a missionary today getting bent out of shape if an email isn't there the first week.

Two years before they heard anything from anybody. They died to that. He didn't go home for 33 years.

Missionary time in those days was very different than our time. We sort of assume now that all time is the same everywhere in the world because of jets and email. Then missionary time was like this.

If you get sick enough, you don't take a 10-day antibiotic regimen. You get on a boat and disappear for six months from your wife or your husband in the hopes that salt water might help. That's what you could do.

That's how time, we'll have a little six-month interval here before we pick up again and go on. A boat ride that's supposed to make two weeks up to the northern part winds up taking six months because of the storm that blew them south. If you were married and you loved your wife and you felt like you needed sex often enough, Ann's departure when she was sick for two years would be a death if you chased.

She went back for two years. She was so sick. She went to New England.

One of the joys that sustain you in those days is knowing that God's up to something good. That particular example is that she got well. She came back and guess what she had done while she was in New England getting well.

She wrote a book called An Account of the American Baptist Mission to the Burman Empire, and it exploded on the American Baptist scene, raising up hundreds of congregations ready to go, ready to give, ready to pray, which would have never happened had not she been on the brink of death and had her husband not died to his needs for two years. His first convert, Meng Nau, baptized six years after he came. Long sowing, harder reaping, and then 1831 arrives and God honors the dying and the self-hating,

as it were.

Listen to this quote, 1831. He arrived there in 1813. The spirit of inquiry is spreading everywhere through the whole length and breadth of the land.

We have distributed nearly 10,000 tracts, giving to none but those who ask. I presume there have been 6,000 applications at the house. Some come two or three months journey from the borders of Siam and China.

Sir, we hear that there's an eternal hell. We're afraid of it. Do you have a writing to tell us how to escape it? Others from the frontiers of Cathay, 100 miles north of Ava.

Sir, we have seen a writing that tells about the eternal God. Are you the man who gives away such writings? If so, pray, give us one for we know, for we want to know the truth before we die. Others from the interior of the country where the name of Jesus is little known.

Are you the Jesus Christ, man? Give us a writing that tells us about Jesus Christ. That's an excerpt from Judson's own writing. However, between 1813 and 1831, the price had been absolutely enormous.

In 1823, Anne and Adoniram moved from the coastal town of Rangoon, up about 300 miles, into Ava, the capital, in the hopes that there might be more influence with the despotic emperor who could lop your head off in a minute. And little did they know that when they got there, Britain was going to attack Rangoon, which they did, June, May of that year, 1823. Immediately, everybody Western was suspect and thrown into prison.

And Judson was put in prison, dragged away from his home and his crying wife who was pregnant at the time. He was bound in his feet and every night a bamboo pole was put through the binding on his feet and all the other prisoners lifted up above the ground so that only his shoulders and his head was on the ground. And every night he was hung that way.

She was almost at wit's end with fear and not knowing how to help. She walked the two miles in the 108 degree heat over and over again every day to the palace, pleading for the Westerners that they're not spies and could they please have some mercy. And she got some mercy and they were allowed to go out into the court during the daytime.

But the vermin had so infested their hair from the rotting food that they had to be shaved bald and still they were hung up at night. Some months later, almost a year, they were suddenly whisked away to another village prison, gaunt, hollow eyes, dressed in rags, crippled from the torture. And they laid them, bound them and this time their feet, open with wounds, were tortured by the mosquitoes that would come in at night off the rice paddies and just drive them to distraction with screams because it hurt so bad.

She went with the baby who had been born by this time, following him because without somebody to help, nobody would take care of you in prison, providing food while she's trying to nurse this baby. She became as gaunt and thin as Adeniram, her milk dried up. He pleaded for mercy to the jailer and the jailer let him at night go out, if his wife would stay there, and take the baby to women, begging them to nurse the baby so that the baby would live as he walked through the village.

And then suddenly, 17 months into the imprisonment, he is released because they need him as a translator to broker the negotiations with Britain. And now he's freed. And 11 months later, Anne dies.

And 6 months later, the baby dies. It's now 1826. He had said in prison, it is possible my life will be spared.

If so, with what ardor I will pursue my work. If not, his will be done. The door will be opened for others who would do the work better.

So God had given him strength, confidence in the sovereignty of God had given him strength through the imprisonment. But now the darkness began to fall. And oh, did it fall.

He heard in July, 3 months after the death of his little girl, that his father had died 8 months earlier. And all these losses produced psychological effects of devastating proportions. Self-doubt began to overtake him.

He began to doubt that he was a believer, he began to doubt that he had come out for any other reason than the aggrandizement of his own pride. He began to read Catholic mystics like Madame Guillaume and Fenelon and Thomas Akempas, who led him to do solitary ascetic efforts in a kind of self-mortification, trying to lacerate himself and somehow discover God again. He dropped entirely his Old Testament translation work, which had been the love of his life.

He retreated more and more from people, from anything that might conceivably support pride or promote his pleasure. He refused to eat outside the mission compound. He destroyed all his letters that had been sent to him of any commendation.

He formally, in a letter to the Baptist magazine, renounced his honorary doctorate from Brown University. He gave away all of his private wealth, which was \$6,000 at the time, to the Baptist board. He took a cut in his salary.

He built a little hut out in the jungle and moved out there to live all by himself near Mulmaine. And on October 24, 1828, the second anniversary of Anne's death, he lived in total isolation, moved in. He dug a grave beside the hut and sat in front of the grave, contemplating his own dissolution in the hope that somehow there would be awakening of spiritual life in his soul.

He ordered all of his letters in New England destroyed, which is why we have so little. In Whelan's biography, it's almost all oral. And he kept a legal document sent by his sister, refusing to sign it until she provided legal evidence that all of his letters had been destroyed, which they were.

It was a time of absolute spiritual desolation. He said in a letter, God is to me a great unknown. I believe in him and I find him.

And then his brother, L. Nathan, died May 8, 1829. His brother was 35 years old. And ironically, that proved the turning point.

Because when he left L. Nathan, he could remember with that little boy, I mean this teenage boy, walking with him toward the boat, pleading with his brother to believe in Jesus. And he wouldn't do it. And so he left behind an unbelieving brother.

And the letter that brought the news of his death told him he died believing. And it totally changed his attitude. And God used the death of his brother in the faith to say, all right, I will move forward.

It's now 1831. What? You think that's an accident? That's design. The outpouring of 1831 corresponds with the end of the darkness, the end of the loss, endured in faith, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, lets its children die, lets its wife die, lets its feet be hung in the sky.

It remains lone. But if it dies, they will come from China to say, are you the Jesus Christ, man? Are you the one who can tell us how to escape hell? Speak to us. Give us some writing.

Well, that's the beginning of his sufferings. And I'm not going to spend too much time with the rest. She died eight years later.

Another whole story intersects. Some of you read perhaps the biography about Sarah Boardman. What a legacy.

Sarah Boardman had come out the same age as Ann. And George Boardman, her husband, dropped dead just like Ann dropped dead. Sarah Boardman didn't go home.

She took her little baby on her back and walked into the tiger infested jungles and preached among the Karen people. And then he married her. He found out that she was a widow.

He knew he was a widower. He looked at this legacy. He wrote her one of those letters.

She was the kind of woman, just like Ann was, that said, that's my kind of man. And they married. And in 11 years, six, eight children later, two of them dead, six children.

She is so sick now, Sarah. Her only hope is a voyage. And everybody said it would be absolute brutal not to go with her.

And so he broke his pledge not to go home. Got on the boat with Sarah to head for New England. The three oldest kids they took on the boat.

The three youngest kids they left behind, one of whom died before his daddy ever saw him again. And as they rounded the tip of Africa, Sarah dies. Three children, a husband, on the high seas going home.

They're just short of St. Helena. The boat docks just long enough to dig a grave. And that's the end of Sarah.

And you sail away. I tell you, when I read that, I cried like a baby. You can't leave her.

I mean, yeah, she's dead, but you just can't go away like that. And the three kids crying on his neck. And he comes home.

Which isn't home, of course, at all. 33 years, nothing was the same. His mother was dead.

His daddy was dead. His sister had not changed one thing in his room for 33 years. And she didn't until the day she died.

And then, as he was packing to go back, all he dreamed about was finishing his course in Burma. And so, as he was getting ready to go, he met, by arrangement, Emily. 29 years old.

And he is 57. That's how old I am. And they fall in love.

She's a writer, a very famous writer of children's books and novels. And it was an absolute scandal. Which he didn't care a rip about.

He had found another one of those wild-eyed, wonderful women. Who was willing to give up everything. And go with this man.

And God, in his mercy, gave them four of the happiest years of their lives. She wrote on her first anniversary from Burma. It has been far the happiest year of my life.

And what is in my eyes still more important, my husband says, it has been among the happiest of his. I never met with any man who could talk so well, day after day, on every subject. Religious, literary, scientific, political, and nice baby talk.

They had one child. And then, the old sicknesses attacked Adenarum one last time. He's 61 now.

The only hope of voyage. She's pregnant. She can't go.

One man, Thomas Ranney, is put on the boat with him and they head for the Isle of France. The healthiest place in the east. The suffering is absolutely unspeakable.

There would be these convulsions of terrible pain, ending in vomiting, over and over again. That's where I got the title for the message. One of his last sentences were, how few there are who die so hard.

Fifteen minutes after four o'clock on Friday afternoon, April 12, 1850, Adenarum Judson died at sea, away from all his family and all of his church. The crew assembled quietly in the evening. The larboard port was opened.

There were no prayers. It was a totally pagan crew. The captain gave the order.

The coffin slid through the port into the night. Location, latitude, 13 degrees north. Longitude, 93 degrees east.

A few hundred miles west of Burma. And the Aristide Marie sailed on. Ten days later, Emily gave birth to a dead baby.

Four months later, she went home. And three years later, she died at age 37, broken in health with tuberculosis herself. The Bible was done.

The dictionary was done. Hundreds of converts were leading the church. And today, 3,700 congregations in the Burmese Baptist Convention.

So, brothers, my closing plea. Life is fleeting, brothers. In a very short time, you will give an account not only to how you have shepherded your flock, but how you have obeyed the Great Commission.

Many of the peoples of the world are without any indigenous Christian movement today. Christ isn't enthroned there. His grace is not known there.

The people are perishing there. And most of them don't want you to come. At least they think they don't.

They're hostile to Christian missions. And today, that's the final frontier. That's what's left to be done in obedience to the Lord Jesus.

Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Some of you they will put to death. You will be hated by all for my namesake, but not a hair of your head will perish.

I just ask you, brothers, as we close, are you sure that God wants you to finish your course in this church-saturated American soil? Or might he be calling you to fill up what is lacking in the sufferings of Christ and to die like a seed falling into the ground so that it might not remain alone, but bear much fruit or to hate your life in this world so that you may keep it forever? Listen to this closing word from Judson, writing a letter to missionary candidates. Remember, a large portion of those who come out on the mission to the east die within five years after leaving their native land. Walk softly, therefore.

Death is narrowly watching your steps. So the question, brothers, is not whether you will die. The question is whether the death you die will bear much fruit.

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