

Opportunity and Accountability

by Michael L. Brown

The sermon emphasizes the importance of opportunity and accountability in the church, and encourages listeners to serve and support others in order to make a difference.

Duration: 51:01

Scripture: Galatians 6:6

Topics: "Accountability"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes that the church is not just a place to gather and look good, but a place where the mission of God is carried out. He encourages everyone to do their part and not compare themselves to others. The speaker uses the example of the widow's mite to illustrate that it's not about the quantity of what we give, but the heart behind it. He concludes by expressing his desire to deliver a message that is not just informative, but a message from God to the fire community.

Transcript

Father, we turn our hearts to you. We look to you in faith. We look to you in expectation.

We ask you to speak to us today and to give us ears to hear what your Spirit is saying. In Jesus' name, Amen. Let's turn to Ephesians chapter 4. I've had some excitement about being here this morning because as I opened my heart to the Lord through this week, I really had no sense of which direction He wanted me to go.

As I prayed yesterday afternoon and then in a concerted way late last night, seeking the Lord, I had many different themes go through my heart, but I had the distinct impression, the distinct impression that I had not yet gotten the message I was supposed to bring, which is common. I can't tell you how many hundreds and hundreds of times I've stood to speak in America, around the world, without the slightest clue which direction the Lord wants me to go. Or, the opposite of that, having received six dynamic messages during the service, depending on which song was being sung, and with each new song I'd get another message, and this is it, and then it would shift to another song.

So I came in with some level of excitement, praying as I drove over, walked in here, I said to David Benham, who was greeting us at the door, what should I preach on today? And he, brother, I love you, man, but foreclosures did not bear witness with me. I'm sorry. He shared something that's on his heart, that's on my heart as well, but I've just been saying, Lord, what do you want me to say to fire, to this

community, to us today, not just to give us information, not just to tell us something powerful or profound or interesting from the word, but but what are you saying to us today, as best as I can understand, as your vessel, Lord, what is the spirit saying to the fire community this morning? So I want to speak to you about opportunity and accountability.

Ephesians chapter four. Beginning verse seven, Paul writes, but to each one of us, grace, speaking of divine enabling and help to each one of us, grace has been given as Messiah, as Christ apportioned it. This is why it says when he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to man.

What does he ascend it mean? Except that he also descended to the lower earthly regions. He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens in order to fill the whole universe. It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, some to be pastors and teachers.

This is something that we firmly believe and hold to and feel is of foundational importance to who we are as a body and to what God is doing in the earth today. It's also something that we discussed as a team. We need to teach on, instruct on, explain how these different gifts, ministries, offices, whatever you want to call it, serve in the body.

But I want to focus on that today. But God has placed apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers in the body to prepare God's people for works of service so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the son of God and become mature, attending to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants tossed back and forth by the waves and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming.

Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the head, that is Christ the Messiah. From him, the whole body joined and held together by every supporting ligament grows and builds itself up in love as each part does its work. Say those words out loud with me as each part does its work, the account of Saul of Tarsus, recognizing that Jesus was Messiah and Lord, as is repeated three times in Acts, Acts nine, Acts 22 and Acts 26.

And it's an amazing account here, this man, this zealous Jew is persecuting fellow Jews who believe that Jesus is the Messiah. And then he has an encounter with Jesus, with Yeshua. Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? Who are you, Lord? I'm Jesus, I'm Yeshua, whom you're persecuting.

And it's interesting when you read all the accounts, you get the full story of what happened. It's interesting that he didn't just say, I have been so wrong, boy, have I been wrong? Boy, I have sinned. I am so sorry that that's not what happens, although that's obviously part of what happened.

When he asked the Lord after the Lord speaks to him, he says, well, what do you want me to do? In other words, if you are the Lord, and since I, as a Jew, understand that I'm supposed to be serving the Lord, that I have a mission, that I have a purpose, that I have a calling, I understand that I am here to do your will, since I thought I was doing your will by fighting against you. Now that I found out who you are, what do you want me to do? In other words, we are saved to serve. We have been called into God's kingdom, every one of us, young and old, rich and poor, weak and strong, every one of us called into God's kingdom saved, we are saved to serve.

Every one of us has a specific role given by God. If I preach this every week for 10 years, it would remain equally true. The fact that every several months something like this might come up is not too much, but too little, because this is a spiritual reality that we have to work against in the body here in America.

I say we have to work against it because we have a wrong mentality. We have the mentality which is so common in our American Christianity of going to a meeting to be entertained. In fact, we'll often go to a meeting and then rate it.

I remember being in a service with a mutual friend of Scott's and mine years ago. We were visiting another church and during the service, the fellow that was with us stood there with his arms folded, just watching. And I looked at him and said, what are you doing, man? Because it was clear he was not entering into the worship.

I said, what are you doing? He said, I'm trying to discern if there's pride on the worship team. Buddy, who appointed you to come in and visit a service somewhere to discern if there's pride on the worship team? In fact, I'm discerning where some pride is right now. But this mentality that we are supposed to show up at services and then leave and critique them, that worship team just didn't have it today.

I think he pulled that message out like an old message he pulled out. I think they're always asking for money, you know, that we are some somewhat what I've referred to in the past as connoisseur Christians, one of some kind of gourmet gospel. And if we don't like it, the cooking and this and that, we'll just go somewhere else.

This has nothing to do with the New Testament mentality in which all of us are part of the body. I don't want to be trite, but to emphasize this again, the New Testament does not have the idea of going to church, but rather being the church, being the body. And we come together as the body at different times.

When I asked David before the message with a smile, what should I speak on? He said, man, everybody I'm talking to, you know, they're sick of just going into a building, you know, different, different believers, different parts of the city, all just sick of going into a building is what I call four wall Christianity or white collar Christianity. Someone someone sent an email, got to me. And it was anonymous, there was an anonymous email address, the way it was sent, you know, just a phony email address.

And it was an anonymous email. And if you have something important to say, don't send it like that. Just a word of advice, if you have the truth, bring it into the light and nobody here is going to attack you or firebomb your house if they don't like the email.

So it's completely anonymous, which means you can't analyze the integrity of the person sending it. You don't know if this person is reliable and solid and living sacrificially or a critical judgmental flake. I'm just being straight with you.

So the moment I get something like that, it's got two strikes against that person. It's one thing you're in the midst of a crisis and you you cannot explain certain things because you can't betray a confidence or or embarrass someone. But I'm talking about when you just have an issue.

Biblical communication is not hiding behind some anonymous stage name online, but communicating openly. So whoever this was, male or female. This individual explained that they had come upon my ministry some years ago and they had moved by my messages, whatever, and been coming to fire, but but they're just having a hard time showing up there.

It just seems like church as usual. And we don't have our fire and passion the way we used to. And then it went on with heavy judgmentalism and God's going to separate the sheep from the goats, et cetera, et cetera.

I had a hunch it was one of the two witnesses from the book of Revelation, but I didn't want to say that publicly because I've been waiting to find out who my colleague is for years. Just a little joke. A guy did call me years ago.

Dear fellow, but a little bit deceived, he did call me years ago to tell me that God had revealed to him the identity of the two witnesses in Revelation 12. It's him and me. I knew it wasn't God because I knew I was not one of them, but anyway, when I read the first part of the email and leaving our first love, it's like, yeah, well, who would argue with that? I've looked at my own life areas where I've left my first love and areas where I had something in God that I don't have now.

And I preached on that for this individual wasn't there when I preached on a few weeks ago on a Friday night, but challenged all of us. You missed the message. Get online and listen to it.

Have we left our first love? Something we should always be looking at and examining, but this idea. I'm bored with church as usual. This is not where it all happens, friends, this is not what it's all about.

Gathering together has a distinct purpose. Gathering together has the purpose of encountering God and worship together, being in an environment where God can move by his spirit. It can be with healing or something else, and then hearing a message together, that's the purpose of it.

We are not in here to try to change the world. Let's come back and have another powerful meeting next week. Give the devil a black eye.

You don't give him a black eye by going to church service. Seems like church as usual to me. I shared this illustration the other day, maybe with students.

It's not a a model story of something positive, it illustrates the point. When I was in eighth grade, I had been hearing about this gathering where the students and the teachers at the school went to this place in Pennsylvania, lived on Long Island, went to this place in Pennsylvania. And it was kind of a crazy time, you'd hear all these stories about this one getting in trouble and that one getting in trouble and these wild things happening.

And that was before my drug days, I was not a troublemaking kid, but we heard about this. My sister was three and a half years older than me. She told me stories of what people did.

So so we knew this is going to be kind of a wild, crazy weekend. And I remember we were sitting in the room, we'd be talking, we were all kind of good kids at that point, talking about it seems kind of a boring trip. It's not like any of the stuff we heard about all the crazy things going on and people getting in trouble and tearing things up.

And this must be kind of a dud trip. Oh, we did have one highlight. We did have one highlight.

The gym teacher was named Mr. Levi. And he came in to take a look at our luggage just to make sure we weren't stealing stuff. Came in to take a look.

He was he was really drunk. And he kind of staggered in the room, looks around, looks at the stuff. We've never seen him like this.

He leaves the room. And everybody starts laughing, man, Mr. Levi was drunk. Suddenly the door swung open, he hadn't closed it all, swung open like a cat, jumped in, he said, and I was being quick.

I said, we said, Mr. Levi, just check my trunk. It's OK, and he closed the door and we were laughing and I don't know if we did high fives in those days. That was it.

That was the highlight. That was the big moment. Well, we come to find out when we left that all the crazy stuff happened, just like it always happened, and people got in trouble and teachers did things with students and drunk or just crazy stuff happening or someone breaking in here and there.

Oh, it happened because the people didn't stay in the room. Staying in the room was not the place where it was happening. Now, I said it's not a positive illustration as people get in trouble, but you get the point.

This is not where it's happening, except for what's supposed to happen in here, which is not a fashion show. Oh, you look so good. I love your hair like that.

Oh, it's not the purpose of it, nor is the purpose to see how the worship team performs or for us to just get more information. I dare say that if all of us took the messages that we've heard and never heard another message for the next 500 years, we still would not be able to put into practice everything we've heard. And work out in our lives and families, everything we've heard with that, I'm done.

So I want to talk to you seriously about opportunity and accountability. I want to exhort you and I want to encourage you. We have a mission from God at fire.

We have a mission from God, just to just hear me, OK? We really have a mission. Every group of believers that God has raised up has a mission. There is a purpose at the end of the day, there is accountability to God.

As a group, as a corporate body, as leadership, as individuals. As I've said before, we are not the corporate blob of Christ. We are a body with distinctives, with purposes.

We have a mission in the city by God's grace. We have a mission that's actually across America. By God's grace, we have a mission that's actually across the world to do our part.

And the only way that we will succeed in our mission is with my radio program getting bigger and better. No, that's not it. The only way that we will succeed in our mission is we can have one multibillionaire in our No, the way that we will succeed in our mission is by each member doing its part.

May I share with you, may I ask my fellow linguistic experts here, like Dr. Deloge, Steve Alton, Bob Gladstone with expertise in New Testament, Greek and biblical Hebrew. May I ask you to confirm what I am saying? That there is no calling office, gifting, anointing. Function in the body called that of a taker, I am a taker.

Would you confirm that if I'm correct, there are no takers. You are not called to just sit and soak it in or worse still sit and drain everybody else's resources and time and energy. If you're hurting, there are folks that will joyfully pour into you, all of us in one way or another in the Lord, do pastoral shepherding ministry, we're all helping people, caring for people.

And maybe you've just been through the most hellish experience in your life, and it was a miracle that you got out of bed and showed up here. There are folks that will stand with you and give a helping hand and help get you back on your feet. We've said that 100 times over.

And hopefully, as you come in and get to know folks, you understand when you walk in the door without thinking there's another live body we can put to work in the slave mines. Oh, boy, get him to do the hard work while we sit home and enjoy the luxuries of ministry. But I want you to understand something.

If God has called you to be part of fire, you have a job to do. And if you don't do your job, we will all be hurt. And if you don't do your job, our mission will not be fully successful.

And if each member doesn't do its part, the body doesn't function properly. I was praying about something about funding for radio. I'm not saying this for anyone here to give.

In fact, the exact opposite of God speaks to you to give that then given other places, give to our missionaries, give to help our benevolence, give to help our school. But I'm using this as an illustration as we're praying for hundreds of thousands more dollars to do everything we're supposed to do with national radio. I just looked at the number of cities that we would be on, major cities, key cities.

And I thought, you know, if 50 people in each of those cities, some of them are like New York City, big cities. New York, for those who've never been there, has like a lot more than 50 people. But if.

If we just had each city, 50 people who gave twenty five dollars a month for a year, we would more than meet our budget for the year. And I thought, that's not a lot of money and a lot of people. It's just a bunch of people doing what they can, less than a dollar a day.

Again, if God's speaking to you, you're supposed to give systematically and regularly, then give to our missionaries, give to fire church for benevolence, give to fire school. All right. This is a non fund appeal for radio.

This is the opposite. It's an illustration. That guy uses reverse psychology.

No, this is not reverse psychology, it's not a game. All right. But it was interesting to see that everybody doing their part or even a few people doing their part would enable me to speak to hundreds of thousands or millions of people from him, from Jesus, the whole body joined and held together by every supporting ligament grows and builds itself up in love as each part does its work.

I was wondering this person who wrote the anonymous email. Which, again, I can't respond to rightly because I don't know the person and therefore can't evaluate it rightly. I'm wondering, are they involved in our pro-life work as we stand with other ministries in the city and serve in front of abortion mills and other places? Are they involved with doing that? That's a bit more cutting edge than showing up and singing a song and listening to a message.

Are they involved in one of our many outreaches every week? Are they involved in serving the poor in this region? Are they involved in going overseas and helping our missionaries build a building or get their hands dirty and work? How can I serve? What can I do? Are they involved with going to a house of prayer and crying out to God all night? Are they involved in giving until it hurts? I want to encourage you. If we are to succeed in the things that God has called us to do at fire, we're going to have to walk our talk, meaning for all who say, I didn't come here for church as usual. OK, then let's not be church as usual.

I didn't come here just to sit on a chair. OK, then let's not just sit on chairs. You say, I am praying and I haven't found my calling yet.

OK, then serve and support those who have found their calling. If you don't know what your calling is yet, then just do something to help those who do know what they're calling. You know, sometimes you just need a body standing somewhere.

I don't know what to do. Stand here. The thing that's so interesting.

Is that most of the important stuff is not what happens in public or behind a pulpit. Most of the important stuff is the little stuff that no one sees. Most of the important stuff is the people serving quietly behind the scenes.

I don't want the credit or attention. Most of the important stuff happens out of the limelight, out of the spotlight, where people just get their hands dirty to make a difference. And you never know what can happen with one individual life.

I just want to give you an illustration. This is not so much about someone serving, but what can happen through an individual life. We had our engage class on Tuesday night of this week, the first engage class, which thoroughly enjoy getting to go to meeting new folks that have come to fire and are praying about.

Is this where God's calling me? Is this where I'm supposed to be? Remember, if he's calling you here, it's not just to sit. He's calling you just to sit. Don't go to the engage class.

Don't waste your time with that, because we want to talk to you about how we can serve you and how you can serve the larger vision. How you can be involved in a way where your life makes a difference, because that's what we all want, isn't it? I mean, if you just want church as usual, stay home and flip around the channels. There's better preaching on, well.

Some, some. You know what I'm saying? I don't think that's what's in your heart. I don't think that you feel that America is going to be touched or the nations are going to be touched or Jesus is going to be glorified just by us coming together and hitting some crescendo.

Did you hear that note we hit in worship? Do you remember that story that Scott told us? Amazing. Give the devil a black eye. And let me say this.

In my book, Revolution in the church, there's a chapter that the church is not a building. There's another chapter that the body is not an audience. Audiences are not threats to the devil.

Audiences don't start revolutions. God didn't call you to be part of an audience. Called you to be part of a family, and he called you to be part of an army.

And he called unlikely people. Read the list in First Corinthians, the first chapter, the foolish things he calls to confound the wise. I mean, you may look at my life and I'm Dr. Brown and a Ph.D. in this and written all these apologetics books and and debated rabbis, so I didn't know that.

Oh, can I take a few minutes? Say who I am. New York, you were there, you might have said, OK, well, you're debating rabbis, I can look. God did not call Dr. Michael Brown or Mike to you.

He didn't call that person. He called a heroin shooting LSD using diesel gas, huffing, rebellious teenage rock drummer, a jerk and an idiot so that if any good thing comes out of this life, you know who's responsible for it. I guarantee you on the day we stand before God, no one's going to make the mistake of praising me or praising you.

Trust me on that one. He chooses foolish things like you and me to confound the wise and weak things. It could found the mighty.

Paul says things that are not he chooses to so as to bring to nothing the things that are so that no flesh can glory in his presence. The more unqualified you are, the more God's checking off perfect. Just what I've been looking for.

I'm a nobody. I got nothing going for me. Perfect.

This way, no one will confuse your ability with my ability. So we finished the engaged class the other day. Right at the end, someone wants to share a testimony.

The mother of wife of one of our church staff team, she wants to share a testimony. I had mentioned at the engaged class that during the time of revival in Pensacola that we were part of the Browns Revival. Many times the kids would be powerfully touched by God, radically transforming, go back to their schools, middle schools, high schools, radically touch.

They'd have prayer meetings during lunchtime. And I told a story about one kid, 40, 50 kids praying during a lunch break. One kid overpowered by the spirit that had to help him back into the class, and he was falling out of his chair in class, just overwhelmed by the spirit of a nerdy looking kid with glasses, didn't seem like some wild troublemaker.

So what happened was the teacher thought he was just goofing off. And she decided, all right, you know, you say you're not just trying to be silly here. So she said, all right, take him to the nurse's office.

So gets two kids, unsaved kids in the class to carry him to the nurse's office. And as they're carrying him to the nurse's office, the power of God falls on them in the hallway. So I just happen to share this story.

So this dear sister says, I want to say something before we're done. She said, I was teaching third graders in Florida, eight years old. And one of the kids comes into class, eight years old, not what you would expect in terms of let's do something crazy and wild at the class today.

Eight year old kid overcome by the spirit. In the class, this woman, the teacher's wondering what in the world is going on, what happened to this kid overcome by the spirit? She talks to her daughter about it. Her daughter wants to go to the services and find out what's happening.

She gets mightily touched, ends up coming to our school, graduating and meeting a fine young man there named Simon. So they're together here serving in ministry with us because this boy got touched. Other members of the family get touched, the woman sharing this story says it was because of him being touched that she herself went into ministry from the school teacher going into ministry.

And the boy, she said, you know, grown up, he's in ministry today. It's one little kid comes into school with the spirit on him and who knows the rest of the chain reaction. There's a saying I was just trying to remember it during the services, this theme was rolling around in me.

That that no one ever. Believed it's like a worst lie or something that he couldn't do something because he could only do a little, what is it? Somebody knows. Somebody here at fire knows it'll come, it'll come.

Somebody will. I'll get a text or an email in a month. Can I illustrate something for you? Can I do that? All right.

I, I want to touch. I'm a big guy, almost six, three, and I need to get to that over there, but I can't. It's I'm the big guy here.

I won't. No, I'm not going to, I, if I just had somebody like a little guy, maybe like seven years old with red hair, if I just had a little guy that I could pick up. Is there anybody like that in the building? Wait, come here.

Come here, man. What do you know? Look, check this out. Right.

A fire usher. Whoa. Hang on.

Hang on. If I could just get that little guy. Hey man, you always have to work the grandkids into the message.

If everybody would do their part, maybe my reach is this long. It doesn't make me bigger or better. That's just my role.

Maybe your reach is something else, but without you, we don't get there. Remember the story of the widow's mite, the gospels. Jesus is looking, looking at the monies people give rich people given a lot.

That impress him. No, because they had a lot little lady, widow, a couple of cents in her pocket. What does she do? Here's what she has.

Jesus said she gave more than the rest. You are not in competition with anybody. You are not trying to outperform anybody.

You are not trying to be something. God didn't call you to be. But if everyone that's here would get involved by, okay, what can I do? I can't use me.

I know there's a calling on my life and I know you want to use me, Lord. What can I do? We need ushers. No, I don't have to be an usher.

I'm called, I'm called by God. Maybe you'd fulfill your calling to be the next Billy Graham by being an usher first. Maybe God can entrust you with being the next Billy Graham because you're not willing to be an usher.

You get the point. I was reading a message on our voice of revolution magazine last night. By Dan Colenda, Dan's one of our grads, one of our spiritual sons.

That's assuming the preaching responsibility of Reinhard Bonnke's ministry. I've seen millions of people come to faith, even seen the dead raised. He's not 30 years old yet.

Dan was talking about world missions. Look at what he, look at what he says. If you want to read this, go to ask drbrown.org and click on voice of revolution.

That's our online magazine. There's one ordained minister for every 200 people in America. Got that one ordained minister for every 200 people for every million unreached Muslims.

There are less than three missionaries in Afghanistan. There are 17 million people, 48,000 mosques, but not a single church. In Turkey, there are 44 million people, but less than 200 Christians in India alone.

Country I've been to 17 times, 500 million people have yet to hear the gospel. 30% of the world's population, more than 2 billion people have had virtually no exposure to the gospel. There are an estimated 6,700 unreached or nearly unreached people groups.

Oswald Smith said, well, we talk of the second coming, but half the world has never heard of the first. Okay, what's the point? Why? Why read that? Because if everyone did their part and people got involved, it wouldn't look like that. Let me talk to you plainly.

The last thing on my mind is to try to impress you with a powerful message. I want to be as practical as I can. It's so common in church communities all over America.

Commonly said that 5% of the people do 95% of the work. With the amount of people that we have here, if everyone got involved, the challenge for the leadership and for those that help serve the body to get activated and mobilized, the challenge would not be getting positions filled. The challenge would be creating new opportunities to serve.

The scripture is real clear about financial support for the work of ministry. Very clear. And the amazing thing is that because of a few corrupt people or a few money hungry people, which out of all the thousands of leaders that I've worked with around the world and all over America, I can't remember working with anybody ever that was in it for the money.

Most everyone I've known worked with anywhere around the world, all over America, make some level of sacrifice in their lives for the work of the gospel. And goes without because they're not in it for the money. But it says in Galatians six, let him who's taught in the word share all good things with his teacher.

Paul in first Timothy five and then elsewhere in his letters to the Corinthians emphasizes this quoting from the words of Jesus, the labor is worthy of his higher and quoting from the words of the Torah, the law of Moses. Don't muzzle the ox when it's treading out the corn, and if you have been blessed with spiritual things, it is your privilege and responsibility to honor with natural things. It's amazing how many people can think they have the ministry of the taker and that somehow they are doing God a service by giving one percent of their income on occasion.

I have been with people, the restaurants. And by the way, we don't know what people give her because we don't look at lists. You don't really go.

Someone told them about. If you put a million dollars in the offering last week, well, we didn't see it if you did, but. If you did, you would not be getting a personal visit, you know, with a gift certificate to a steakhouse here in the city.

And, you know, we'd like to have you meet all of our leadership team. We're not looking at that. People look at financial records.

I know plenty of churches where we're leadership is not allowed to look at what people give because we don't want to even think in terms of who gives, who doesn't give. This is ultimately between you and God. But have you ever been to a restaurant with folks? And the people with you or maybe you yourself kind of demanding and want everything done a certain way and this done and not done and really run this person ragged and then someone else picks up the tab and they leave a really lousy tip.

And maybe the people saw you praying before the meal. You know, when we've had students working in different places. We were in Pensacola.

There was a restaurant that was owned by some believers there. And some of our folks work there, but they would always try to get out of working Sunday afternoons, not because it was the Lord's holy day, but because all the Christians would come in there and work them to the bone and not tip them adequately. That's the same mentality we have in the body.

If you're here, if God called you to be here, that means God called you to sell your finances in. And you're not giving enough until you have to give by faith until you give when it hurts, because that's that's how we all do it together. And the more that comes in, the more that goes out.

The more that comes in, the more we pour into our missionaries, the more that comes in, the more we pour into the poor in this community, the more that comes in, the more we serve your kids as they come here. The more that comes in, the more we support the school to raise up and send people out. But what an amazing thing when when people realize, hey, God's given me stuff so I can make a difference.

I'm not a taker. There have been times in restaurants like this where I someone paid the bill and then as they walked out, I just found an excuse to stall for a minute so I could take money out of my pocket and lay it down on the table to supplement the tip because I was so embarrassed to leave it like that. And the worst thing of all is when you leave a lousy tip and a track.

Do we have any folks that have worked in restaurants here that will say amen to that? If everybody does their part, if everybody recognizes that we are called to serve. If you say, okay, I am part of this church community here. I am part of this fellowship of believers.

Then I'm asking you, what are you doing? How are you serving the larger vision? You're a parent with kids. How are you helping our other kids? You're someone who has income and you actually eat. Here, if this does not apply to you, if you do not have a roof over your head, if you have not eaten a meal in the last six months, this does not apply to you.

But everybody here, if God is calling us to give proportionately, and it seems a pattern in Scripture always begins with a systematic proportion. This way you give first to the Lord. Whether you have or not, you give first to the Lord.

You honor him. If everyone does it proportionally, the person that makes a hundred thousand a year is giving a proportion, if they're giving at least ten thousand, or twenty thousand, or whatever it is, to the work of the gospel. It feels exactly the same as the person who makes a thousand a year and the person who makes a million a year.

In fact, my own opinion is that the less you have, the easier it is to give, because it's hard to be covetous. Let me explain. If you're walking down the street, and there's a dollar bill just blowing the wind, you're in the middle of nowhere.

It's a dollar bill. Well, I guess it blows right in your hand. Cool.

And then a minute later you stop at a gas station, and someone says, buddy, can you spare a dollar? It's like, I just got a dollar. Here, take it, man. Picture if the same thing happens, and you find out like a pot of gold somewhere worth ten million dollars, and a minute later, someone comes up to you and says, hey, can you spare a million? It's like, whoa, whoa, whoa, buddy.

We're gonna establish a foundation, and think about this, talk about it. And I never have enough. Some of us never have enough, because we don't give what we have.

Well, I'm so blessed with fire, and I love the way that people, anytime of the day or night, I could call Scott Volk. If you don't have his number, I'll give it to you in a moment. I can call Scott Volk anytime of the day.

There are folks, they pour into my kids. I love it, and I sow my money into some other ministry somewhere. Just try that out at the restaurant.

I paid, I paid Applebee's, but you're a child. But I like, I paid Applebee's. Well, the Spirit told me to.

No, he didn't. I know, I know that we are about to step into some times, the likes of which we've not yet seen as a community. I know some of the stuff we talked about, and have wanted to see for some time, especially in areas where I'm burdened.

This is not for everybody on the same level. Some of the revolutionary Jesus impact on society, where a changed people, through the power of the gospel, bring about change and stand as witnesses. We're about to step into some things, but the only way that we can really fulfill our mission is if everybody does their part.

In other words, it's not up to just Lou Angle and a team to come in and pray and fast for 21 days until they drop. Because if we're not carrying the prayer burden and throwing ourselves in together, it's not going to happen. And it's not just a matter of the worship team getting up and doing another wonderful job and praying and working hard and practicing.

That's wonderful. But if we don't become worshipers in our own lives, we're not going to see things happen. This is part of your home here.

God expects you to throw yourself in. If you can't throw yourself in here, if you can't give your finances here, if you can't get involved here, find out where God wants you and we will joyfully help you get there. Because we want to see the kingdom advanced.

We want to see Jesus glorified. Just about done. Each one has strengths.

Each one has unique abilities. If people don't recognize unique ability and strength, serve wherever you can serve and God will make a way. And God will open the door.

I can guarantee you here from our team and from the pastoral leadership, I can guarantee you nobody wants to suppress or hold back a gift or anointing of God. And if God started using you in healing the sick and we had to open this building every night because sick were flocking in from all over and your name or picture is everywhere, we'd be tickled pink. We'd be thrilled.

No one's trying to hold anybody back. If God's calling you to plant a church that's going to be ten times bigger and more prosperous and influential than anything else. We will rejoice.

It's not about personalities. It's not about trying to advance an agenda. It's about glorifying Jesus.

We don't have pews here, which means we can't have pew sitters, but we can have chair sitters. We can have the phenomenon of Sunday morning Christianity because we're so habituated to it in America. Can we break out of it? Is the only way we can break out of it by meeting at midnight in somebody's house? Is the only way we can break out of it by not having buildings? Will it take a shaking persecution to break us out of this or can we enjoy the liberties that we have and make a difference? When Lou Engel was here with us, elders, home group leaders, just be ready to come up and pray for folks.

When Lou was here, he was asking me about the things we're about to take on and some of the things God's called me to do and do I have any fear with it? I said, no, I don't relate to that. We were just talking about it. I said I would fear falling short of what God wanted me to be and do.

But as far as you know, if there was some angry crowd with guns and knives or hostile, you know, I'd be running to get there to share the gospel or to speak the truth. I said, no, if God spoke to me today, go on a 40-day fast. I'd have a little trepidation.

He goes, oh, I'd love it. But the stuff I'll tackle joyfully, it's not his cup of tea and the stuff he'll tackle joyfully, it's not my cup of tea. We all have a part, but here's the key thing.

It's not only opportunity, but we're gonna stand before God and be accountable. We're gonna stand before God and be accountable. There are numerous parables where Jesus teaches this very thing and the one that gets severe rebuke is the one who takes what they have and hides it in the ground.

I'm appealing to every single one of you here who says fire is my home. God's called me to be here. I'm appealing to every single one to find out what your part and role is.

We know many of you are super busy with work, just paying bills, not living high off the hog. We know that many of you are just with pouring into your kids and the business, especially Homeschoolers or others. I'm not laying a trip on anyone.

I'm saying there's an opportunity Whoever you are, wherever God has stationed you, whatever your situation is in life to be a difference maker Through your praying through your service in one capacity another serve with your whole family through your financial giving everyone should be sharing the burden together equally and through that Making an eternal difference for the kingdom and then when you want to see someone taking credit Nobody can because we understand it was Jesus working through a team of people So I'm appealing to everyone here. Are you in your place? Are you giving are you serving? Are you involved? Are you making a difference? Are you doing your part? I Guarantee you if you'll make yourself available to God if you need help to get plugged in Call the the church folks will sit with you talk with you figure out ways to get you involved Everybody in a small group setting can grow and get involved Let's find out the potential of what would happen if we went for it together Let's find out if we are just gonna be talkers and dreamers and it's always next year Let's find out if we're actually gonna do it. I Assure you I can't complete the mission.

God gave me without you I'm pretty sure you can't complete the mission. God gave you without me, but I'm sure I can't Together we can make a massive Difference if the Lord stopped everything right now and

said, all right Accountability time let's find out what you've done with the money With the time I've given you with the gifts I've given you with the influence I've given you the relationships I've given you talents. I've given you would you say? No, no No, give me another shot or would you say here Lord and when you say well done good and faithful servant Opportunity accountability.

Let's go for it friends. All right and stand at your feet with me Elders home group leaders if you could come up if you need prayer touching your body You need prayer for anything going on in your life where you're just struggling it You want another human being that knows the Lord to pray for you to agree with you? These folks up here love to pray and love to help those in need So you have any kind of need whatsoever if you submit I'd love to do something But I am in agonizing pain reach my whole life's falling apart These folks joyfully want to get involved and help see you whole and strong father We bless you in Jesus name. Everyone.

Just close your eyes one second father. Here we are Lord if we are not in the right place, I'm asking you to make us uncomfortable but I'm also asking you to show us our value and show us what we could do and show us what could happen and The impact we could have for you Give us ears to hear what your spirit is saying. Here.

We are your servants your sons and daughters in Jesus name. Amen

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