

Hold the Rope

by Paul Washer

Paul Washer's sermon 'Hold the Rope' calls men to embrace their God-given purpose and support the mission of the church through sacrifice and service.

Duration: 1:09:02

Scripture: Matthew 22:37

Topics: "Missions"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes that attending church on Sundays is not enough to truly live out one's Christianity. He urges believers to go beyond the cosmetic aspects of church and focus on the great commandments of loving God and loving others. The preacher also highlights the importance of preaching the gospel and encourages believers to actively engage in spreading the message of Christ. He specifically addresses men, challenging them to rise up and fulfill their calling to take dominion in the world. The sermon emphasizes the need for men to be strong, loving, and courageous in their faith, rather than being influenced by worldly pursuits.

Transcript

For more media content from Grace Community Church in San Antonio, Texas, go to gccsatx.com. Media used by permission of HeartCry Missionary Society. Visit us online at heartcrymissionary.com. Well it's again a great privilege for me to be here with you. Tremendous privilege.

People always laugh, they say every time you get up to preach you say it's a privilege. That's because it is a great privilege. It cannot compare with the privilege of knowing Him.

It cannot compare with the privilege of being conformed to His image. But it is nonetheless a great privilege. As I was listening to the dear missionary share about Poland, I was wondering, are you praying? As you saw the need, are you asking yourself, Lord, what shall I do? What shall I do? Missions is actually not that complicated.

It's really not. There's only two ministries in missions. You either go down into the well or you hold the rope for those who are going down.

Either way, there will be scars on your hands. Show me your scars. I don't need rhetoric.

There's no time for rhetoric. The world's going to hell. Show me your scars.

What has the Great Commission cost you? These missionaries who are on furlough or those who are on deputation, seeking to have enough funds to go and preach the gospel. The cost they are going to experience is far more than what they now know if they've never been on the field. Nothing will prepare them for what they will go through.

The attacks of the enemy. Doubts. They could each of them write a pilgrim's progress.

The battle that will rage against them. It will cost them something. But what will it cost you to hold the rope? What will it cost you? Do you realize that apart from the great commandments to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength and to love your neighbors yourself? You really have only one task.

So are you going? Or are you holding the rope for those who will go? Now, this lesson tonight is going to be somewhat unusual. I will try to keep it shorter than this morning. I think we got out at one o'clock or something.

But I want us to go to Genesis chapter one. This sermon tonight is for all of us. But primarily it is for men.

Men. Something that we do not find in large quantity today. Men.

In Genesis chapter one, verse 26. Then God said, let us make man in our image according to our likeness. And let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky.

And over the cattle and over all the earth. And over every creeping thing that creeps on the ground. God created man in his own image.

In the image of God, he created him male and female. He created them. God blessed them.

And God said to them, be fruitful and multiply. And fill the earth and subdue it. And rule over the fish of the sea.

And over the birds of the sky. And over every living thing that moves on the earth. Now go with me for a moment to Genesis chapter two, verse 18.

Then the Lord God said, it is not good for the man to be alone. I will make him a helper suitable for him. Let's go to the Lord in prayer.

Father, tonight we are gathered here. And we call upon your name. Lord, can these bones live? Can something good.

Come out of all this movement. All this activity. Lord, you know the hearts of those.

Who have set this thing up. That they desire, oh God. That it would bring you glory.

That it would be useful to you. To your kingdom. To missions.

I pray that you would honor that. I pray that there would be an impact upon eternity. Because of what is done here this week.

Father, I am too tired. To just go through the motions. And I would rather have you shut this whole thing down.

Than to be a part of something. Of which you are not a part. But Lord, I trust that you are here.

And I trust that the intentions. Of those who are here are true. That you would do something to us.

That you would deepen our relationship with you. That you would raise our eyes to the fields. That you would even turn our eyes inward.

Even if it means exposing the vanities of our lives. The temporal nature of our decisions. Our selfishness.

That you would grant us repentance. And turn our eyes toward the will of God. The doing of that will.

The glory of Christ. And the salvation of a people. For you have said, Father.

That they will be your people. And you will be their God. Father, help us today.

That in all our running. We miss not the important things. That we be sure-footed.

Walk circumspectly. Not as unwise, but as wise. That we would do the simple, small things.

Father, help us. In Jesus name, amen. In the very order of creation.

We can see something about man. And particularly those men who walk in a correct relationship with God. That is that you, sir, were made for him.

You were made for him. You were not made for you. You were not made even for your spouse.

You were not made for your children. You were not made for hobbies. And the delights of this world.

You were made for him. Every breath, every beat of your heart is on loan. It is from him.

It is to be returned to him. One of the reasons that men. Especially in their 30s, 40s, 50s.

Begin to become so shaken up about their lives. And so distraught. It is because they have spent themselves.

For that which is not bread. That which cannot feed them. They have drank deeply from the fountain of this world.

And it has turned into nothing more than rot in their belly. We are a generation of people. Who are self-absorbed.

And we as men. Are often times so self-absorbed. And we think that the entire universe revolves around us.

And everyone in a relationship with us is merely an extension of us. That it is all about us. But it is not about us at all.

It is about him. It is about him. You will not find peace.

You will not find contentment. Until you surrender your life to him. And until you begin to grow daily.

In greater and greater conformity to his image. And greater and greater conformity to his purpose. For all men.

Which is the glory of God. Now we see here in our text. That Adam and Eve were not created simply to frolic about in the garden.

This was never intended to just be a utopia. A Disneyland. A place where just everything went right.

No. We see that they were also created with purpose. And that purpose was not hedonism.

Isn't it amazing? They are placed in a perfect universe. Yet the goal of it is not mere pleasure. And it is not finding their best life now either.

The purpose is service to God. They were to rule over the earth. They were to take dominion.

They were to work hard at it. They were to find purpose in it. They were created to go forth.

To accomplish. To champion a cause. To move boundaries.

To expand in ever increasing measure. The kingdom of God. Now there are many people today.

Who suppose that in Christianity. We ought to take dominion. For some.

Especially the TV preachers. Oftentimes it means nothing more. Than becoming more prosperous.

More healthy. And that's absurd. But then there's another group out there.

That think that we can take dominion politically. That we ought to get involved politically. To work with politics.

To deal in social justice. To change the laws. And there is merit in that.

Although know this. You can labor for several generations. To create good laws.

And with one sweep of a pen. A president can annihilate them all. When I speak tonight.

About taking dominion. About living for a reason. I am not talking about politics.

And I am not talking about. Some prosperity gospel to line your coffers. I am talking about.

Men. Who are dedicated. To one thing.

The doing of God's will. And the expanding of God's kingdom. Not through politics.

But through the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Through intercessory prayer. And through sacrificial service.

Men. Men. Where are the men? Now let's just look at our culture for a moment.

To give you a great idea. Their movie came out a few years ago. Maybe several years ago now.

Called Master and Commander. The amazing thing about that movie. It's the British are chasing after French privateers.

Throughout all the seven seas. And they bring. The British bring their warship.

Alongside a French privateer. And the ropes. Are lashed.

The cables are strung. The two ships are brought together. And now the British must charge.

The amazing thing about that film. Is it's historical integrity. Because the ones leading the charge.

In that film. Seem to be around 14 years old. Now what's my point? We have grown up.

In a generation of adolescence. Which is not a biblical term. And is extremely dangerous.

I do not use that term. Because what it basically is. Is this.

In most cultures throughout all of history. What do we have? We have either boys or men. Now if I walk up to a group of 15 year old.

Boys. And say hey boys come here. They're going to get very angry with me.

They don't want to be called boys. But my question is what are they? What are they? Well they're adolescents. No they're not.

You're either a man. Or a boy. Adolescence is simply this.

It is allowing a young man. Who is not a man. To participate in the things of manhood.

Without being willing or able. To assume the responsibilities thereof. That's adolescence.

And the problem is. Because of our society. Because of culture.

The way things are structured. Most young men stay adolescents. Until their mid 30's.

I mean look at us. I see boys in college. And all they can care about is playing Xbox.

What is that? We. When their ancestors and their ancestors ancestors. Were fighting wars.

Were killing dragons. Were living for something. Not entertainment.

Not make believe. Not a video reality. But living for something.

My God man don't you understand. You were created for something. You weren't created for cars.

You weren't created for houses. You weren't created for fancy clothing. You weren't created for insurance and comfort.

You were created for him. To rise up and live for him. Fight for him.

And die for him. For that reason. You were created.

And the reason. Why you are not happy. And I intended to use that word happy.

Because you bought into the American dream. Instead of the kingdom of heaven. Some of my dear friends.

As they say in the hood. Of Chicago. Gave me a button.

The last time I was up there. And it said Jesus saves. Okay.

Then I looked closer at the button. It said this. Jesus saves.

From the American dream. I remember one time a little boy asked me. He was much younger.

Daddy, what do you do? I said, son, do you really want to know? He said, what do you do, dad? I said, are you brave enough? To understand. What do you do? Son, I fight dragons. Conquer nations.

Take on enemies. You know, there is a sense in which. The films about Harry Potter.

Are a rebuke. To Christianity. I'll tell you why.

I watched a couple to see where all the fuss was about. You know why there were a rebuke. To modern day American Christianity.

Because when you watch them, you see this. They have something to live for. Something to die for.

There's heroics. There's risk. There's sacrifice.

There's loyalty. There's do or die. There's throwing yourself in the mouth of the lion.

They're alive. And then your children. Come to church.

They see our Christianity. No war. No battles.

No sacrifice. No daddy coming home wounded. Nothing of the sort.

One of the best things that ever happened to my boys. As I was preaching last year. And some men became extremely.

Angry with me. Extremely angry. And they were in my face.

And they were saying things. And my little boys are standing there. And then they walked away.

I could see. Especially my son Ian. He goes.

Daddy, why are they so mad at you? I said. Because I'm standing for Christ. He said.

Daddy, they hate you. I'm standing for Christ. This is what you were created for.

What created to watch football players beat themselves to death on the football field. Or watch ball games. Or tailgate parties.

You were meant for him. To find your place. In his ranks.

And to advance his kingdom. Advance his kingdom. Some of you.

Some of you young people. You have no spiritual eyes. You see.

You'll see this throughout the week. You'll see these little missionaries come up here. With their little families.

There's nothing cool about them. They wear no labels on their clothing. There's nothing.

There's just nothing there. In the eyes of the world. But you can't see.

The way heaven sees. The way those who are filled with the spirit of God see. They see champions.

Yes, lambs sent out in the midst of wolves. That's true. No power in themselves.

But champions. Who's going to risk it all? Walk away from this. Walk away from family.

Walk away from security. Walk away from everything. You say, well I'm not called to be a missionary.

That I can agree with. But you are called to the Great Commission. With the same dedication as any missionary.

That goes into Indonesia tomorrow. And if the ones hanging on the rope. Have scars on their hands.

The ones holding the rope. Will have scars to an equal degree. Where are your scars? After a while.

This world can only give you so much. It's sort of like. You know, I'm amazed.

I go into a lot of cities. And a lot of times I see billboards. This city has more restaurants per capita.

Than any city in the southeast. I'm going to. You're boasting about that.

But if you're like me. And you travel a lot. And you eat out so much.

You don't want to ever eat out again. Because everything tastes exactly the same. You can't get excited about anything.

It's the same way. You feed at the world's trough. You feed at the world's trough.

You chase the American dream. Pretty soon it's just rot in your gut. And you find that although you do love the Lord.

You have forgotten so much. And you've become so lost. So much of your time.

Is given to things that do not matter. So much of your money. Is given to things that's not eternal.

So much of the strength of your youth. Is wasted. When you were called to do what? To take dominion.

And how are we to do that? Again, let me iterate. In this day. When there are so many religious fanatics.

Doing so many political things. We are not a people. That should fight, frighten any magistrate.

We do not go out as wolves. We do not go out as lions. We go out as lions.

And we out love our enemies. We out die our enemies. We out think our enemies.

And we out preach our enemies. Now I want to talk for a moment about leadership. Women.

Dear women. The Bible says. The Bible commands.

That you are to be subject to your husband. Whether feminism likes that or not. Doesn't matter to me a whole lot.

That's what it says. And to be honest with you. When you.

When I look at what the Bible has commanded me. I think you women got off quite easily. Because.

I'm required to die for mine. But now men. I want you to think about something.

Here is a woman. A godly woman. Or a woman who's new in the faith.

But a woman who sincerely wants to do what the Bible says. Subject herself to this man. Whom she has married.

And she looks over. As she hears that command from our God. From our Father.

And she looks over at you. And she becomes angry. And bitter.

Almost to the point of rage. It just doesn't seem fair. That she ought to have to subject herself.

To a man. Who is all about himself. His work.

It's about him. The decisions he makes at work. Are about him.

And his job. His free time. It's about him.

His hobbies. His boats. His bows.

His guns. His golf clubs. Free time.

Everything. It's about him. And she thinks to herself.

I've got to subject myself to that. To a man. Who makes his decisions.

Based upon the adolescent needs of a little boy. Or wants of a little boy. Women can become so embittered.

When they look. At the vision of their husband. When they look at the purpose of their husband.

When they look at the things their husband is living for. Now let's look at the difference. Jesus said.

When he was asked with regard to praying. Well let's just go there. Go with me to Matthew chapter 6 for a moment.

In Matthew chapter 6. Jesus said. Pray then in this way. In verse 9 of Matthew 6. Pray then in this way.

Our father who is in heaven. Hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come.

Your will be done. On earth as it is in heaven. Now what is the difference? When a woman looks over.

Looks into the face of her husband. And what she sees is this. A man who is supremely dedicated to what Jesus just prayed.

She looks in the face of her husband. And this is what she sees. Hallowed be his name.

His kingdom come. His will be done. No matter what.

That's what I live for. And a truly Christian woman. Looks over there and says.

Yeah. I can subject myself to a man like that. Because he is not making decisions based on what he wants out of life.

Based on his individualistic and selfish self-centered desires. He is not making decisions. Based upon the culture.

The whims and fads of our society. He is making his decisions. For himself.

For this family. For the sake. The honor.

The glory. Of God. And the advancement of his kingdom.

Selflessly. Selflessly. When we look at this prayer.

It is in my opinion. A perfect reflection. Perfect example.

Of the way Adam was to be. His life. The focus.

Every beat of his heart. Every thought of his mind. Was to be focused on this.

Hallowed be thy name. Now what does that mean? Holy be thy name. Maybe a wonderful way to put it.

For us to truly understand it. Would be. Unique.

Special. One of a kind. Be your name.

That the passion that drove Christ. Was this. His greatest desire.

Was that God's name. Would be honored supremely. Esteemed.

As having a value. Above all other things. In heaven and earth.

His desire. Was that this. Would be the attitude.

Of every inhabitant on the planet. And so you. You get up in the morning.

I. I get up in the morning. The focus of our lives. Should be this.

Gentlemen. Hallowed be his name. That when someone looks at me.

They know. That to me. He is holy.

He is supreme. He is above. All things.

And his value. Is infinitely greater. Than the combined worth.

Of all the universe. Him. Hallowed be his name.

That's part of what it means to be holy. Did you know that? If not what it means to be holy. So many people equate holiness.

With sinless perfection. As though they were one in the same. For example, I'll ask someone.

What does it mean that God's holy? And they'll say, well, he's without sin. Then I'll say, well, what does it mean that God's righteous? Well, he's without sin. Well, which is it? Are they synonyms? No.

Two distinct things. What does it mean to be holy? To be holy. Means.

Separate. You know, there's greater difference. Between one and two.

Than there is between two and six million. Because one is one. Once you move out of that category.

Got the multiplicity. More than one. You've got common.

One is unique. Holy. To say that God is holy.

Means that there is no one in his category. There is no one like him. There is no one.

Holy. Like the Lord. Let me just give you a quick theological question.

Which of these two creatures is more like God? The great archangel or the cherubim that stand in his presence. Or the worm that floats around in the sewer. Which one is more like God? The answer is neither.

God's not like us. Just bigger and better. He's not like anything.

You can't put him in a category. Do you see that? It's impossible. You don't put him in a category.

You put everything else in a category. But not God. That's why when Moses says, who are you? He says, I am who I am.

I mean, if a Martian or something came down into Detroit. And I understand there are a lot of them already here. If an alien came down.

I'm in Alabama. There's a lot of them there. But if an alien came down and looked at me and said, who are you? I could say, well, I am like him.

And in some ways, I'm like her. And I'm like him. And I could point to about 7 billion people and say, I'm like them.

I can use them as an example. You ask God who he is. I am.

Who I am. There's no one outside of himself to which he can point. To give us an example.

Until, of course, 2000 years ago when God asked. When someone asked God, who are you? And he pointed down to Jesus of Nazareth and said, I am him. But the point is that holiness means that he is completely and utterly separate.

He's not to be compared. That's why this idea of God and country and so on and so forth is absurd. You do not put God in a conjunctive relationship with anyone or anything.

It's always God alone. God alone. Now, for a man to be holy.

It doesn't mean that he just has a whole bunch of things he does not do. But it means he is a man. Who is given over to this God.

Who has separated himself unto this God. Who esteems this God above all the worth of the universe. Do your children.

See that in you. Would any of them ever wake up at 2 in the morning? To go downstairs to get a drink of water. And find the light on in their father's study.

And peek in to see him. Laying on his face. Worshiping God.

Leonard Ravenhill used to say this. Everybody's wanting to give a new definition for Christianity. What we need is a new demonstration thereof.

The attitude of a Joshua. As for me and my house. We will serve the Lord.

Not in some legalistic. Life destroying way. But just a man on fire.

A man on fire. Imperfect. All his flaws.

Everything about him. But nonetheless on fire. Nonetheless the first one to battle.

Nonetheless the first to go down with the ship. If it is necessary. Mary.

That's the type of men. Our wives. Should see a wife will forgive a lot of failures in her husband.

I am a great illustration of that. Not only if she is merciful. But if she knows.

He really is about him. He will do anything. If he sees it.

For him. Thy kingdom come. You know, in mission.

Mission conferences all over the world. We hear about the needs. And they are great.

There's no way to overemphasize the needs. Not at all. And the needs need to be displayed before us all the time.

The needs of Poland. Of England. Of Utah.

Of all the places that are here. Africa. They need to be shown to us.

But I want to. Go to a higher motive. I want to appeal to a higher motive.

Yes, you should be sitting there saying. We need to do missions. We need to do this.

Because there are people who have not heard. But let me give you a higher motive. We must go.

Because there are places on this earth. Where God is not worshipped. And I can't rest because of it.

There are places where his glory is being given to idols. And I cannot bear it. I must go.

Not primarily because of them. But I must go primarily because of him. Because of him.

An old word that used to be used. With more frequency. Besought.

God besought. It's just saturated with God. And he cannot rest.

Until what was given to Adam. And what was displayed in Christ. Has come to pass.

That the gospel is being preached. In every nation. And the kingdom of heaven.

Is being advanced. I know that's the intent. Of the men and the women.

Who have worked so hard for this conference. I know it. It's the intent.

But men. It has to begin here. And it has to begin with the men.

We have to lead. Us. We have to burn.

We must. We must. Or go the way of all flesh.

I started preaching when I was 21. I'm 48. In some ways.

It seems like it's been a very, very long time. In some ways. It seems like it was yesterday.

It all began. Young men. I have not regretted.

Pouring out my life for Jesus Christ. I have regretted. Pouring out so little.

I have never met a missionary. Who regretted. The price he paid on the field.

But I have met every missionary. Who only carried one regret. That they didn't pay a higher price.

Think about the things. You've never heard. Regretted.

By a dying man. You've heard dying men say. I wish I hadn't worked so hard.

To make so much money. You hear a dying man say. I wish I hadn't neglected my family.

Have you ever heard a man say. Man. I come to the end of my life.

And I really have such regrets. I loved my wife and my children too much. I served my God too hard.

I gave too much to the kingdom. No, but you've heard. Countless times.

Men and women. Lamenting the fact. That they felt.

At the end of their days. As though they had given nothing. How should you live? You should live in a way.

That will be very comforting to you. On the day that you die. And that must be.

Christ-centered. Christ-saturated. Involved in doing.

Christ's work. Now am I saying. That everyone should be a missionary.

Absolutely not. Everyone in here. Is to be in the very.
Center of God's will. Some of you are to be missionaries. On the foreign field.
Others of you. Are to stay at home. And be salt and light.
In your communities. In your churches. But you're always to be aware.
The primary commission. Is to preach the gospel. Where it's not being preached.
You can't say. Simply. I'm taking care of my family.
You cannot say. Simply. I'm a light in my community.
You have got to be burdened. With the fact. That there are places.
Where his kingdom has not come. And his will is not being done. Some of you.
Teach your children. Idolatry. You know that.
Don't you? That's why they've got pictures. Of famous football players. In their room.
And not pictures. Of some of the missionaries. That are going to be sent out here.
What is a football player? To a missionary. You see how we teach them. We school them.
In worldliness. And then wonder why they're worldly. Now I want to get to that point.
When pastor's wives. Hear me preaching this. They get a little scared.
Why? Well is my husband going to. I know my husband. They say to themselves.
I know him. He's going to hear this message. He's going to give more time to ministry.
He's going to be farther away from the home now. He's not going to pay even. He's going to pay less attention to us.
In his quest to see the gospel preached. That's not what I'm talking about. And I want to cut that dragon's head off.
Right now. You. Do not.
Fulfill. Your job in the kingdom. You do not advance the kingdom.
Simply by doing. A bunch of ministry. Because much of the ministry we do.
Turns to nothing more than rot. We advance the kingdom. By being men.
Passionate about Christ. Passionate about his gospel. Passionate about his kingdom.
Men who have renewed their mind. In the word of God. And find themselves in the center.
Of the will of God. Now let me explain that. There was a time when I was a single missionary.

I was. Single. Footloose and fancy free.

It's going to be the apostle Paul. To the Andes mountains. That was my desire.

I was never going to marry. Nothing. I'm going to die in the Andes mountains.

Preaching the gospel. And you know what? I had all the freedom in the world. To do ministry.

18 hours a day. I did. Why? There were a whole bunch of commands in the scriptures.

That had absolutely nothing to do with me. That's why. All those commands about a wife.

No problem. Didn't even need to study them. All those commandments about raising children.

Don't have to worry about that. 18 hours a day. Preaching in villages.

And getting chased out of them by the evening. Pray all night. Then God gave me.

A wife. Now. God gave me.

A wife. See that? So at that moment. Something had to change.

Why? Because ministry is not my idol. It can't be. The will of God has to be my focus.

So what does that mean? There's a whole bunch of commands in scripture. That now are placed upon me. I was free from them.

As a single man. But now they are placed upon me. So if I am to be obedient.

I must not only do the work of the kingdom outside of my home. I must do kingdom work in my home. And according to the requirements of an elder.

Which we can. Apply to other ministers. If I'm not carrying out the duties of my home.

I don't even qualify as someone who can minister outside of the home. And then came children. Lots and lots of children.

Not too many. There's never too many. But three little children.

And guess what? A whole bunch of commandments. That my wife and I never had to deal with. Because we were just a couple.

Of missionaries. We could do whatever we wanted. Didn't have to change diapers.

Bottles. Buy shoes every five days. Because the kid's feet's growing like.

We didn't have to do any of that. We were free. But then.

They arrived. And everything changed. Now.

After that. This is what I want to teach you. Many of you have come here.

To talk about foreign missions. But you're in direct rebellion against God. Even now as I speak.

And there's no sense you thinking any further. Than what I'm about to say. Men.

When I talk about being totally dedicated to the kingdom. Given over to the things of Christ. And I'm talking about men with families.

What does that mean? It means you do the will of God. In concentric circles. And what is that? First of all.

The first circle of God's will. With regard to expanding his kingdom. Is your growth in godliness.

Your wife. Her greatest need. My wife's greatest need.

Is that her husband be conformed to the image of Christ. That is their greatest need. Every problem in your marriage.

Comes back to not being conformed to the image of Christ. There's so many men that run around doing all sorts of things. Their family's a disaster.

And their wife is constantly doubting their integrity. Why? Because they've not made this a principle matter. My wife's greatest need.

Is for a husband more conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. And it should be my daily task. To seek greater and greater sanctification.

Greater and greater death to self. Greater and greater manifestations of love. Greater and greater manifestations to service.

That's what she needs. So the first thing. That I must deal with.

Is conformity to Christ. I don't want to know about. When we support a missionary.

I don't want to know all kinds of stuff. I don't even care about where he graduated from necessarily. I want to know about his godliness.

Christ-likeness. Devotional disciplines. What kind of man is he? You can teach him anything.

But what kind of man is he? So in the advancement of missions throughout the world. Sir, our greatest need is godly men. One of the things that most hurts Christianity in the West.

Are all these wicked men. In the ministry. All these wolves in sheep's clothing.

We need men to dedicate themselves to godliness. You understand that in 1 Timothy. Paul is speaking about.

All throughout the letters. Of Paul to Timothy. Think about this.

He's basically saying. Okay, Timothy. The world is going to hell in a handbag.

Wickedness is rampant. In latter days they will even depart further. Following doctrines of demons and everything else.

Now, Timothy. Here's what I want you to do. Start an evangelistic association.

It's not what he says. New mission organization. No.

He says this. Discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness. Tozer said this one time.

He said. All these young men running around saying. Oh, I just want God to use me.

Why won't God use me? Tozer said. I have discovered that if a man will make himself usable. God will wear him out.

It is character. It's godliness. Then.

If you're a married man. I'm not going to be able to go out. And do a lot of things tomorrow.

The activities. They're great activities. You say.

Yes. Brother Paul. The reason for that is.

He's got to prepare the message. Well, I've actually got to homeschool an eight year old. Yeah, but the ministry.

Now, I don't talk in terms of ministry. I don't like that terminology. I'd rather talk in terms of the will of God.

In the will of God. Your next concern. Concern.

You stand there first of all. And you say. God, with regard to me.

Hallowed be your name. That holiness grow in me. May I be more conformed to the image of Christ.

Your kingdom come in me. Your will be done in me. I want to be more and more submissive.

To every one of your desires and commands. And then. Your next step is.

And this is where we fail. So often. It's where I most struggle.

Not with my children. With my wife. He has given me a wife.

So the next step is what? Oh, God. That she grow in sanctification. That the kingdom come in her.

That the will of God be done in her. A man said something a couple weeks ago. And it convicted me.

And I'm not saying convicted. Because I try to appear humble. I was convicted.

Because I should have been convicted. This is what he said. Draw a line on a chalkboard.

He said. All right. Let's just use the number 10.

Put children here. Wife here. Put the number.

That represents the time you spend with your wife. The number represent the time that you spend with your children. It ought to sum up to 10.

He said. Most men who are dedicated their families. Put a three on their wife.

And a seven on their children. He said. It should be the other way around.

That I just described to me. Missions begins with your wife. And then your children.

Then your children. Then your children. Men.

You came here tonight to talk about missions. Let me ask you a few questions. How much time every day are you spending with your children? How much time every day are you teaching your children the scriptures? Are you praying with your children? Are you investing in your children? How much? Now.

I want you to think about something for a moment. The typical child in the typical church. In the typical Christian family.

From the time that they are in preschool, kindergarten and on. They're in some preschool class. Then they go to kindergarten.

Then they go to grade school. And that whole time. Eight hours a day.

For years and years and years. They are beyond your instruction. And being instructed by someone else.

Not in the things of the Bible. Not in the things of the Lord usually. But actually in things that are totally counter.

To everything you personally believe. And then. They go on to high school.

And it even gets worse. And then they go on to college. And it even gets worse.

And even from their infancy almost. As soon as they are out of school. You put a soccer sticker on the back of your van.

Or a ballet slippers. Or something. And you take that child out of school.

At two o'clock or three o'clock. And your ballet, soccer, football, softball. This and that.

You don't have a home. You have a condo. And a bunch of people you don't know.

Come back to it every night. To eat and sleep. Not even eat anymore.

Just sleep. And the teachers. The peers of your children.

Are foolish children. And so it's handing over an entire generation. To the world.

But on Sunday you're going to bring them to Sunday school class. And they're going to learn to paint really pretty pictures of Noah's Ark. You say you're being sarcastic.

You're right I am. Because we're so blind. Let me give you an example.

Do I have anything against Sunday school? Do I have anything against some youth groups? Things like that. No it's not the point. I just want to show something to you.

Now you listen very, very carefully. Because what I say right now. A lot of times.

Gets me in a whole lot of trouble. But I'm going to say it anyways. Because it's true.

You add up. How many millions if not billions of dollars. The Baptists spend on Sunday school.

And youth groups. You add up the millions of man hours in Sunday school and youth groups. You add up all that is done for Sunday school and youth groups.

And you bring me those calculations. And then you add up. All the conferences that are going to happen this year around this country.

All the money that's going to be spent. All the countless millions of man hours. That are going to be spent in teaching men.

To disciple their own children as scripture commands. Almost zero. The church is just like big government.

Government wants to take over the responsibilities of individuals. You've given your children. To everybody but you.

Your Sunday school teacher is not supposed to teach your child. Can't teach your child. Sunday school is nothing more than a little bit of cream on the top of the cake.

God doesn't have a plan B. He only has plan A. And plan A is. Fathers. Bring up your children in the fear and admonition of the Lord.

That's God's plan. You're to dedicate yourself. Don't come in here talking about missions.

My question is. Are you going to have a Bible study tonight with your children? Are they going to see the reality of that in their dad's life? That's the question. Did you know that early Baptists were totally against Sunday school? They fought it like you cannot believe.

You know what their main reason was? This. If we bring this into the church. Then it will not be long.

Before the church has assumed the responsibility of the religious training of children. When the when the scriptures clearly give that responsibility to the father. I mean, if I went down through right now.

I mean. If I just went down through here to every father and said, OK. Describe to me the religious training in your home.

Describe to me the hours spent. Describe to me the amount of time your child is learning to play football. And hockey and everything else.

And you're the one carting them around and encouraging. And then tell me the amount of hours. It's given to the things of the kingdom and scripture.

Now you know why I preach in a lot of places once. But it's true. It's true.

And I'm having to live this out myself. You have to turn away opportunities. Preach here.

Preach there. No, can't do it. Why? Family.

Yeah, but the kingdom. The kingdom doesn't need a disobedient preacher. The kingdom needs obedient men.

Obedient men. And then you go out from there. You're looking at the church.

To be honest with you folks, I have become just so. I don't know what it is. I don't even know hardly what is a church anymore.

Just big corporate structures. Organizations. It's amazing.

Go over to Denmark just recently. There was four different groups. And they came up and they said.

You know, Brother Paul, they were the reason I went over there. They said. This is what they said.

We've been meeting together. For about three years. Each group had about 20 or 25.

We've been meeting together. Preaching the word. Fellowshiping with one another.

Praying. And breaking bread. And reaching out to people in our community.

But we feel like now it's time that we become a church. And I went. Oh, OK.

After the fourth one told me that, I understood what he was saying. It's time for you now to bring upon yourself. All the American trappings of so-called Christianity.

So that you can kill everything that God's doing. Listen to me. Church needs structure.

Organization. Church has leaders. All sorts of things.

But I want you to see something. You're not doing church. If you're coming in this building on Sunday.

If the extent of your Christianity is that. You're not doing church. It's all cosmetic.

People will sit there and they'll go, How's church going? It's going great. How do you know? Well, man, I went to church on Sunday. And the preaching was powerful.

And the worship was really good. And there was a really good attitude. It seems like it's growing.

That tells you nothing. Go home with everybody Monday. Go see how hospitality is being practiced throughout the week.

Go see how people are ministering to one another according to their gifts. Demonstrating that they are truly members of Christ. Ministering to one another.

Then tell me if it's church. We talk about missions. You have to understand something.

Missions is not some separate category out there. It is something that flows from a fountain. And what is that fountain? A local community of believers.

Who are dedicated to one another. Ministering to one another. And want the same thing they found going out into all the world.

It is being dedicated to a body. Let me give you an example. Is there a young man here who can run? Okay, come here for a second, please.

They'll pay you something for what I'm going to make you do. Okay, I want you to just stand right down there. Run back to the pastor there.

Just fast as you can go. Dude, you're fast. Now, I want you to come halfway back.

I want you to just grab your leg like this. And run as fast as you can. Can you do that? No, just start there.

Grab your leg. Run halfway back. Okay, that's good enough.

Now, I want you to grab this leg right here. Go ahead, follow me on this. Okay, grab the other one.

Okay, you can have a seat. Now, I want to show you something right here that's so important. I told him to run and he ran.

I took away one member of his body and it decreased his ability by more than half. I took away one more member of his body and it totally shut him down. He could no longer function.

What's wrong with your church? Maybe it's you. Find. Be obedient to Christ.

Find his will with regard to your growing in devotion. Find his will with regard to your family. Find his will with regard to your place in this local community of believers.

And from that will flow missions. You see, there's so many things. It's like, let's say that a man comes up to me and he's got a... His whole forehead is bloody.

Just bloody. And he goes, Brother Paul, he goes, I really like your preaching and stuff. Gone to doctors and they can't figure out what's wrong with my forehead.

Could you just pray about it? Maybe the Lord will give you a word. I go, well, I'm no doctor, but sure. So I decide I'm going to follow this guy around.

So I start out. It's midnight. I'm sitting there right in his bedroom.

He can't see me and I'm looking at him. And the clock strikes one. So he jumps up, walks over to a brick wall, hits his head against it once and goes back to sleep.

It's two o'clock. Bell rings twice. He gets up, smacks his head against the wall twice.

He does this all the way around the clock. It's twelve o'clock lunchtime. He jumps up from where he's working, walks over to a brick wall, smashes his head against it twelve times.

So I get to him and I say, look, I'm no doctor, but I think I figured out your problem. It's kind of the same way with us. Everyone's looking for some just key, just some mystery that hopefully will show us why we're all seemingly so messed up.

It's not a mystery. It's really a no brainer. Men, God has revealed his will to you with regard to your own need for godliness.

Pursue it. God has revealed his will to you with regard to your family. Start obeying it and do not think you've obeyed it just because you bring your kids to church on Sunday morning.

Thirdly, God has revealed his will to you with regard to your local church to serve, to serve, to serve according to your gifts. And God has revealed his will to you with regard to missions. Go ye therefore into all the nations and you are to go there knowing this.

I either go down into the well or I hold the rope for those who are going down. Now, young people will finish here in the words of dear Dr. Piper. Don't waste your life, your strength.

I'm 48 and weak. When I was your age, I was stronger than you. You're going to get weak.

Your beauty. Oh, your ugliness will know no end, ladies. Get married now while you can.

Wealth. You've seen what can happen to wealth, haven't you? In a day, take wings and fly. Fame.

Men are fickle. Don't seek their fame. You're going to die.

You are going to stand before the judgment throne of Christ. How then shall we live? Not as unwise, but as wise. Fathers.

Your children are so influenced by you. They will learn to admire what you admire. They will see important what you see to be important and words won't matter.

I tell that to young men that hang around a certain girl. They say, well, I've told her that there's no relationship with her. I just know nothing romantic.

I just we're just friends. I see young man. She does not hear a word you're saying.

She hears what you're doing. It's the same way. Son, go out there, you know, football, hockey, this, that, everything else.

And oh, yeah. By the way, keep Jesus first. Say for the party, totally against sports.

No, just mostly against sports. The way it's done today. I am.

It can be something good. If there's a godly father. You take your kid everywhere, father.

You ever taken him out witnessing. Take him to a Bible study. Spend time in prayer.

Again, young people. Don't waste your life. Just don't do it.

Everything is going. Everything is dying. Everything is fleeing.

Everything is falling apart. Don't waste your life. Live for him.

Live for him. That on that day, you will be glad that you lived the way you lived. On that day.

Because there are only two days that matter. The day when Christ hung before men. And the day when all men will kneel before Christ, only two days that matter.

Live for those days. Let's pray. Father, I come before you and pray that.

You would use these words. As mixed and hapless as they may be, use these words. To change the lives of men.

In Jesus name. Amen.

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