

# Scouts For God's Purposes

by Sandeep Poonen

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*This sermon emphasizes the role of being a scout in the Christian life, focusing on the need to reach out to those who are not saved and to see them as God's creation. It highlights the importance of being ambassadors of God's kingdom, demonstrating good deeds to overcome evil, and not grumbling when faced with challenges. The message encourages believers to have a different spirit like Caleb, to see the potential in others, and to be diligent in fighting spiritual battles while extending mercy and compassion to those who oppose them.*

**Scripture:** 1 Peter 2:9, Numbers 13:30, Joshua 14:8, Matthew 22:14, Matthew 20:7, Psalm 139:14, Romans 12:21, 1 Peter 2:12, James 4:7

**Topics:** "Ambassadorship", "Spiritual Warfare"

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## Description

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## Transcript

So we've heard about being a servant, we've heard about being a soldier, and I want to speak about being a scout. There's a tendency for some of us as we are living the Christian life to think that all God is interested in is in our personal sanctification, in our own personal holiness, and we can lose sight that God died for the sins of the whole world. It's the whole world of people that God died for, and he loves every single one of them equally.

He doesn't love anybody more than others, and we can lose that as when we are caught up with being a servant of God, a bond slave of Christ as we've heard, as we've got caught up with being a soldier and fighting every last giant, we can lose sight of the fact that we are also called to be scouts, spies, scouts, ambassadors of God's kingdom to reach those who are not saved. So by reading 1 Peter chapter 2 verse 9, 1 Peter chapter 2 verse 9, he says, but you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, who are born slaves as priests of God, that select few, so that you may proclaim. Why do you do this? So that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who has called you out of darkness into his marvelous light, because you were once not a people, but now you are the people of God.

For once you too had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers, aliens and strangers on this earth, aliens and strangers living on this earth, two things, as a soldier abstain from fleshly lusts, which wage war against the soul, and then 12, keep your behavior excellent among the heathen, among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation. Glorify God on the day of judgment.

That's what that word visitation is. Glorify God on the day of judgment. These Gentiles, these heathen people will glorify God because of you, because when they slandered you and when they came against you, they observed your good deeds.

And what happened? They turned towards God. Otherwise, they're not going to thank God on the day of judgment, because they're going to go to hell. But they'll thank God on the day of judgment, and they'll glorify God on the day of judgment, because they observed my good deeds, your good deeds and said, that was the ambassador.

That was the one who showed me about God. Keep your behavior excellent among the heathen. Wage war against the fleshly sins that are the giants in your own land, but also keep your behavior excellent among those around you, because they're watching you, they're observing you, and as they see you're overcoming their evil with your good, their hearts may be changed.

And we must be gripped with that, that we ought to be these ambassadors to the Gentiles. Of course, they're acting in evil ways against us. Of course, they're doing things that they shouldn't be doing.

They're acting unprofessional. They're acting ridiculously evil and doing the wrong thing. Of course, they're heathen, they're Gentiles, but we are supposed to overcome evil, not with evil, not by taking an eye for an eye, but by overcoming evil with good.

And as they observe the good, there's a chance that they may turn from their wicked ways. And then one day when they're standing on the day of judgment, they'll say, I'll glorify God because I observed this brother, this sister, this neighbor, this coworker of mine, I observed how I threw evil at him, but he returned it with good. And we've got to see that, that that too is the promised land.

Many are called, but a few are chosen. That's from the story in Matthew chapter 22. We can come with our own righteousness.

We heard that parable where this man came with his own righteousness, with his own garments, and the king kicked him out. And at the end of that, he said, many are called, but a few are chosen. Many people will get invited to the feast, but somehow will end on slipping on their own garments, somehow thinking that something in their own is going to make it.

And then from that other story that we heard, the other parable in Matthew chapter 20, why were the people in the 11th hour still standing around? It says in Matthew chapter 20 verse seven, that little expression, because no one hired us. Why are the neighbors or our coworkers, some of them, why have they not come to the faith? Because no one has told them. No one took the kingdom, come to the labor and come to them and say, do you know that there's a king? Do you know that there's goodness available to you? Do you know there's forgiveness available for you? And why do you think God has put me in the very address that God has put me in? So that I can go to a good school district or because there's one of

those neighbors there that God can say, I didn't know I was supposed to follow Jesus because no one hired me.

No one told me about it. And then somebody comes by in the 11th hour and says, oh, they said, I didn't know nobody hired me. What about coworkers? People are throwing darts at us.

Those who are doing evil towards us. Why are they doing that? Because no one has hired me. I've been not hired by God.

You've been hired by God. Well, then you should act good. No one hired me.

I'm not a slave to anybody. I'm just a slave to myself. And there are people in our neighborhood, people in our families, people in our coworkers who are standing around saying, no one has hired us.

We're alone to ourselves. We are our own masters. No one has hired us.

And they're waiting for people like us to come around and say, oh, I'm hired. I'm a bond slave. I'm a servant.

I'm taken. I overcome evil with good. You do evil towards me because no one's hired you.

But there's a vineyard and I'm working in this vineyard and it operates by different principles and God saying, well, sending us to say, well, you can come be part of it. And I saw the story in Numbers chapter 13. That's the story that comes to me when I think about a scout.

When they were in the wilderness, the worst place to be is in the wilderness. Jesus said, I hate that you're lukewarm. You're neither cold nor hot.

And the worst place to be is not in Egypt, but in the wilderness. Halfway in between and we can build our tents and try to reside there. Numbers chapter 13, Moses is instructed by the Lord to send out scouts to sign out spies in that case, but scouts to scout the next land.

These people have been winning every victory that had been available to them. They have been progressing. And then this was literally two years after they left Egypt on their way to the promised land.

God said, okay, now send out scouts to the final destination. And Numbers chapter 13, verse 30 onwards, you don't have to send out scouts. You know what they said, right? They came back and said, it's an incredible land flowing with milk and honey, verse 27, but there are huge giants there.

And Caleb, Caleb is the one who quiets the people and says, we should by all means go up and take possession of it. For we will surely overcome it. But the men said, Nope, it's too difficult.

Verse 31 and 32. The land is great, but they're big, big people. They're giants.

And verse 14, the congregation lifted up their voices and wept. And the people wept all night. Who says that weeping is such a good thing.

These people wept. And then verse two, they grumbled. They said, I wish we had just died in Egypt.

Verse six, Joshua and Caleb stood up and tore their robes and said in verse seven, the land, which we passed through the spy out is an exceedingly good land. If the Lord is pleased with us, then he will bring

us into this land and give it to us a land flowing with milk and honey. Just do not, verse nine, rebel against the Lord for they will be our prey.

Their protection has been removed from them and the Lord is with us. Do not fear them. But all the congregation rose, took up stones to stone them with stones.

Here are a couple of thoughts that I wanted to share with you. The promised land is not just our promised land. I want you to also think about that is definitely the most primary promised land that there exists.

That is it. The Holy land is my body with all of its giants. That is the desire to do its own will with my eyes, with my tongue, with my feelings, with my thinking, with my actions.

That is the promised land. But I want you to consider this promised land as it relates to some of our coworkers and some of our neighbors and some of our family members who don't know the truth because no one has hired them. The Lord has not hired them as yet.

And I want you to see what Joshua and Caleb say in verse seven. Think about your relatives. Think about your coworkers.

Think about those who haven't been said. And you look at them and say, man, all they do is that this is wrong with them. That's wrong with them.

They react like this. They react like that. Look at what Joshua says about this.

The land, even though it's inhabited by giants, is an exceedingly good land. Am I looking at my coworkers? Am I looking at those who are heathen, those people who are doing evil towards me, those people who frustrate me, my loved ones, whatever it is, I say, Lord, when I look at them, I want to see the land and it is a good land. It's an exceedingly good land.

Or do I criticize them? Do I judge them in my mind saying, well, they're useless. They're not good. They got this from their parents, just like anybody before.

They're so selfish. They're so this and that. And then maybe that's why I have no chance of reaching them.

Because I haven't seen them for the land that God has created them to be. Weren't they created in the image of God too? Are they any different from us? We too were like them until we received mercy or we were born in a good Christian family. They're no different.

They just have not been hired as yet. They're an exceedingly good land. And that's what the Lord wants to change our eyes about these people who are evil towards us or doing bad things to us.

And we look at them through eyes of mercy, because that's how God looked at me. Not with the scales saying, I'm going to come and judge you. But with his blood, he forgave us.

With compassion, he reached out to me. God's asking me, look, when you look at these people who are doing evil towards you, do you see them as an exceedingly good land? You see, this is prime real estate for God to work with. They're not there yet.

But this is an exceedingly good land. This neighbor, this loved one, this coworker, I'm talking about the ones who are evil towards you too. They're not the enemy.

God died for them. God loves them. A land which flows with milk and honey.

Can I look at these people who are doing evil towards me and say, Lord, change my eyes. I want to see that as the potential you saw in them when you died for them 2000 years ago. I want me to see the potential.

I want my eyes to be the eyes that my captain of my salvation, the head of my army had. He looked at these same people and they saw an exceedingly good man worth dying for. And I look at them and I just see problems.

Lord, change my eyes towards this land. If the Lord is pleased with us, he'll even give it to me in my lifetime. The Lord is pleased he may touch your relative through you.

He may touch that coworker who's messing you up because of you. He may touch that neighbor because of you. If the Lord is pleased with us, and I'm not going to make it saying that just because the Lord is not pleased with us, that's why people don't come to the Lord.

But I say, Lord, it's up to you. It's up to your timing, whether you give it to me or to my children, but Lord, I'm going to do my part to look at these people as an exceedingly good land. And then Lord, it's up to you.

Lord, if it pleases you, bring this land and give it to me. Bring this loved one and give it to me. I want to pray for them.

I want to long for them. I want these people to come to know the Lord. I want to seek them, not thinking of them as projects, but thinking of them as an exceedingly good land that Jesus died for.

That I'm supposed to be the one who they'll observe our good works and I'll be the one who demonstrates mercy towards them and God will reach them. Just, verse nine, do not rebel against the Lord. And how do I rebel against the Lord? Don't fear them.

Don't fear them because you live in the 21st century. Don't fear them because they have signs that backs up everything they do and you believe in God's word. Don't fear them because they're going to laugh at you.

Don't fear them. Don't rebel against the Lord by fearing them. Make a stand for God.

I have a screensaver on my laptop and a couple of times, I'm not usually worried about who it is, but sometimes when I'm in a meeting and there's some higher execs, I'm like, maybe I should change my laptop screensaver. Don't fear them. I'm not making some big theological statement in my thing, but I'm making a statement.

One of my screensavers or one of my laptops says, one day closer. I'm waiting for somebody to ask me, one day closer to what? You ask, I'll tell you. One day closer till I'm going to see him.

One day closer. You know that all of us are one day closer. We have one day left, one day less before God's going to finally say, time's up.

Game's over. Playtime's over. Now is the day of judgment.

It's not happening just to the heathens, it's happening to me too. One day closer. Don't fear them.

Just don't rebel against the Lord. It's an exceedingly good land. And when these opportunities come up to share the good news to the people, to those who are around us in our lives, you have a sphere that God works with in your life and I have a sphere.

And God puts these people around my life. And this is the land God gives me, my neighbors, my coworkers, my loved ones. Don't rebel against the Lord.

Don't fear them. The protection has been removed from them. The devil has been defeated.

That's the protection over them. The devil has been defeated. Resist him in the name of the Lord and he will flee from us.

Their protection has been removed. I don't have to fear them. So I can pray for them and I can witness to them.

I can tell them about God, not through words, as I said, but as they observe my good deeds, when they come at me with me, they say, wow, you don't act like a human being. Because I know how humans act. I know how humans speak.

I know how humans work with their political adjustments. Let me go above him. Let me go to his boss.

Let me go above her. Let me go to a boss. Let me align all my chess pieces to manage the situation.

Lord Jesus, I want to reach them. Let them get the promotion. I want them, I want their soul.

That's a prayer that we must have as we are scouts. Dear brothers and sisters, we're aliens in this land. We're not here to become high up executives.

God gives that to some of them according to their calling. But God wants all of us to be aliens who are scouts, scouting out your area, saying, Lord, where do you want me? Who's going to come and attack me with their evil works? I want to be a scout saying that's the one who I'm going to respond with my good, with my kindness, with my kind words, because they're an exceedingly good land. Yes, it's covered up with evil eyes and evil actions and evil emails, but Lord, there's a good land in there.

And I want to reach them. The Lord is with us. Do not fear them.

What a wonderful expression. The Lord is with us. Do not fear them.

Dear brothers and sisters, those are the two people out of 600,000 who made it to the promised land. And through these simple words, God is trying to tell us the kind of people who make it there. One last thing as we go on, we read in verse 22.

God was going to punish them. God was going to get rid of these people because they were grumbling. And see, in verse 22, they say, God is saying this.

Surely all the men who have seen my glory and my signs, which I performed in Egypt and the wilderness, yet have put me to the test these 10 times. 10 times these people have done it. This was the 10th time, have not listened to my voice, shall by no man see the land that I swore to their fathers.

Why? You see what they did? They didn't. First 14, chapter 14, verse 1, they lifted up their voices. They wept when they saw this land, this promised land, and they grumbled.

We cannot have a spirit of grumbling when God sends us afflictions through people who are heathen. And we can't just shed sorrows for how bad we have it. God says, I'm counting the number of times you grumble against me.

That's a sober warning for all of us who are still living and still have breath and still have promised lands around us, people around us who haven't been saved. God is saying, stop grumbling when I send these people and they do evil towards you. I was trying to get you to have them see your good works.

I wanted them to observe your good works so that they could be turned so that they could glorify God on the day of visitation because of your good works that they saw. But you kept grumbling and you kept asking God, get me out of this situation, curse them, Lord, get them, let them have a disease, get them out of that position. You kept wanting that to be solved and you never saw yourself as being the one who needed to be an ambassador.

That you were, I was sending you out as a scout. You lose your opportunity to reach them for the Lord. They may get reached to the Lord.

I hope that for every single person in the world. But you lost that chance. God.

And so while we still have opportunities with some of our loved ones and some of our neighbors before God moves us to our next physical location, God's saying, don't grumble. Don't grumble when they come at you. Don't be afraid of them.

Don't rebel against me. Zero spirit of grumbling because the earth will be filled with the glory of the Lord. That's what it says in verse 21.

And here's what 24, but you know what? Let me tell you in exception to all of these thousands and hundreds of thousands of people, here's my servant Caleb. That one guy, he has a different spirit. And I want to have that different spirit who follows God fully.

And I don't have time, but we saw in Joshua chapter 13, that Joshua was advancing and he kept fighting. And the next chapter, Joshua 14, Caleb says, I'm 85 years old and I've been fighting the giants for 45 years and I've still got strength. Give me that with those giants.

That was the spirit of Joshua and Caleb for 45 years later, they were still fighting the giants in the land. Till the end of their lives, they were fighting the giants. They had a different spirit because they wanted to follow the Lord fully.

And we can't be satisfied for only the giants in my land being killed. That absolutely takes a priority. We must be soldiers that relates to my holy land, which is my body.

But I can't stop there. And I'm no good to anybody else's holy land or anybody else's precious possession. If they're going to observe me and see just a mess, shouting back at them, responding back with nasty emails, throwing daggers at them with my eyes and my tongue.

No point. Kill the giants in your own land first. But as we kill the giants in their own land, we start to see God starting to give us possession of land.

God wants to open our eyes to see that there are exceedingly good lands around us. And he put you in a particular home address, which is different from mine for a reason. So you could see the exceedingly good

lands in you.

May we have a different spirit, the spirit of Caleb. We've got a new physical location here. There's going to be, let me just apply it in a very practical way relates to this physical location.

There's going to be a lot of temptation to grumble. There's going to be a lot of temptations to murmur of some things that are not right. Let us be warned.

We don't want this church to be a church that grumbles at all about anything. We've been gotten so much better in this place, but this may not work. Projectors may not work from time to time.

We may not have as many Sunday school rooms like we could have and things like that. We cannot have a spirit of grumbling. Cannot.

Let us eliminate it before it comes out of our mouth towards even one other brother or sister. Let us eliminate it and say, Lord, I want to be so deeply thankful for what you've given me. If it looks different, thank you God.

If it smells different, Lord, you give me a place to meet. It feels different. Oh, I love it back when it was a little home and you were just a few families sitting on the couch, watch for a spirit of grumbling.

The Lord has brought us here to this bar. He wants to take us to the promised land. He wants to introduce us to many other promised lands that are around us that who have not yet been hired as yet.

They're waiting to be hired. And it's the 11th hour. It's the last hour, dear brothers and sisters, some of our family members, some of our coworkers, some of our neighbors, especially the ones who are evil towards us, especially the ones who have it out for us.

I want to have the attitude of saying, Lord Jesus, those are the ones who want, I want them to observe my good works because I was also one who was without mercy until you got me. And I didn't deserve it and they don't deserve it right now, but you came and got me, Lord. I was one who now had received mercy.

And that's what these people need. These people who are being evil towards me, they need to receive mercy. So I'm going to wage war as a excellent soldier against my fleshly lusts and bodies.

But Lord Jesus says, when people come at me and are evil towards me, I want to have them to see that my behavior is excellent. So that one day, Lord, let me get my reward when I get to heaven. And when I see their name being called and they stand before the day of judgment, and I see that they glorify God because they observe my good behavior and get a reward.

May God help us. Servant, soldier, scout.

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