

20240804_JoelSanders

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Preacher: Joel Sanders

[0 : 00] We welcome Pastor Joel Sanders and his wife Leah and their family. They've come to speak to us this morning. He is a youth pastor at Community Bible Church in Tip City.

And that's the church there, the community church there in Tip City that we've had fellowship with for quite a few years. So it's great. Joel is going to be presenting a planned missionary journey that him and his wife and family will be leaving for Malaysia, I believe, in the spring of next year.

And he's going to be presenting that message this morning. He just led a ministry in Africa here in, I think it was in the spring and early summer. And they went over there for quite a few weeks.

As a matter of fact, John Aiken's son, Beau, he was with them as they went over there. And they had a great time over there. And I'm sure that we want to keep Joel and his family in prayers as they contemplate this trip going to Malaysia.

And just pray for them. So, Joel, the pulpit is yours. Good morning.

[1 : 17] You guys are so far back there. I can't even throw a football that far. You can't either?

Well, it's so good to be here this morning. It's just, you know, it's wonderful that we can come together and fellowship together. Even though, you know, we've spent the last few years just down the road from you guys, you know, the impact that this church has on what, you know, supporting missionaries, even accepting Boaz here a couple weeks ago and listening to him in the mission that what happened in the spring, going to, excuse me, to Kenya.

You know, that was just a wonderful opportunity. My wife and I lived in Kenya. We were there during COVID. So it was neat to be able to take a team from Tip City and actually go and share.

Share. This is what I explained it as was it's kind of like two of our lives were coming together because we had spent time there and then we made a life here and then we got to take the life here and take it there.

It was really neat and it doesn't happen very often. So it was a wonderful opportunity. But I wanted to share a little about who we are, what our mission, what we aim to have our mission as, where God is leading us, and then we're going to go and dig into the word for a few minutes this morning.

[2 : 49] First of all, like I said, like we were introduced, my name is Joel Sanders. This is my wife, Leah. She can wave to everyone. And then our three children just walked out.

Enoch is the first one. He's our oldest. We have Naomi and Silas. We come from the state of Georgia. That's where we're originally from.

I lived in a town just south of Atlanta. And Leah is from the middle of nowhere. I call it the boondocks. Truly the middle of nowhere.

We are coming up on our 10-year anniversary this month. So very exciting for us that we've made it. And altogether, we have been out of Georgia far longer than we have in Georgia in our marriage. So I say we're from Georgia, but we have shared much further along outside of Georgia. We both grew up in Christian households and trusted in our Lord and Savior as our personal Savior at young ages.

[3 : 54] Isn't that funny how that works, right? Where if you have Christian parents, a lot of times they get saved, right? The simplicity behind that is great.

God is so good in that he knows that if a mother and a father stay together and they share Jesus Christ, they share him with the children, that it's almost inevitable that the child will trust in Christ Jesus as their Savior.

We both have hearts for God and a desire to serve him. And we're going to explore that, obviously, here in a little bit. I have an associate's degree from Berean Bible Institute and also a bachelor's degree from Grace Christian University.

I finished a couple years ago. And we both believe that serving God starts in the home. You have to pursue a relationship with God that is sound, which includes scripture, reading, study, prayer, and devotion.

And if you have a family, devotion with your family. Then from the home, you can reach outside of the home. So what does this look like exactly? Or rather, how do we know we are serving the Lord correctly?

[5 : 10] How do you know you are serving the Lord correctly? So praise God, we have the Holy Word of God right here today to answer those questions. And we're going to get into the whys behind mission in a few minutes.

And for the last three years, as we were introduced, we have been faithfully serving at Community Bible Church in Tip City as the youth associate pastor role. And it was such a great time of learning under Pastor Jeff Seekin's growth.

The relationships that we built are going to be lifelong relationships. And we're just so excited that God took us there for that time in our life. And we know that we're going to have a relationship for a very long time.

So please pray for those brethren at Community Bible Church as we do step away in a month from now. And they already have a new youth pastor coming in. So pray for that transition as it starts to come.

So who, what, when, where, and why Malaysia? So we are missionaries with Things to Come mission. We nearly made it to Malaysia three years ago, rather almost four years ago when the world shut down.

[6 : 24] We were just a day away from getting on the airplane. One day away. And the missionaries called and said, the world, Malaysia has shut down.

And we could not get to Malaysia. One day. It was that close. We had our bags in the van. The very next day, we were going to the airport.

And God decided to take us on a different path. We waited around for about six months. And that is when the Things to Come mission board said, guess what?

Kenya is open. Do you want to go to Kenya? And I said, well, it's better than waiting around. So we went to Africa. And we served there for six months teaching in the Bible school.

But back to Malaysia. Malaysia is located just south of Thailand in Southeast Asia. If I had a map, I would be pointing to that right now. It is located just north of the equator, making it a very hot and humid climate.

[7 : 27] Just like it's kind of been this summer. It's been pretty humid here, hasn't it? For three years now, everyone in Tip City says, you know, it gets pretty humid here. And it hasn't been humid. And I'm like, you guys are lying to me.

But then this year happened. It's been pretty humid. It is, Malaysia is considered within the 1040 window. Okay, so basically it goes all the way in the northern part of Africa and all the way to Southeast Asia.

And the 1040 window has the most unreached people groups in the world. Basically, that is the Joshua Project says that unreached is 3.5% evangelical or less within the people group.

So TCM has a very high focus on the 1040 window. As of 2022, the population of Malaysia is 33.5 million. Malaysia is a semi-closed country.

So evangelism directed toward the Muslim population is not allowed. It's cut off. It's closed. You can't do it. Yet, there is a huge population of Chinese and Indian.

[8 : 37] And the opportunity to reach out to those is fine. So it's considered a semi-closed country. So we are allowed to reach out to certain individuals.

The island of Penang is where we are going to be staying. It's a very small island. It's 8 miles east to west and 13 miles north to south and has 800,000 people located on the island.

So think about that for a second. And think about this. The elevation on the island reaches 2,400 feet. And that's all in the middle of the island. So they can't live there.

So everyone lives on the outside of the small island. It's pretty amazing. So they all live on the coastlines. But what are our six overall mission goals?

I came up with six. We came up with six overall mission goals. What's our purpose there? First and foremost, we want to glorify God in all of our efforts.

[9 : 41] 1 Corinthians 10.31 is our mission verse. It is, therefore, whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all for the glory of God. We can do nothing without the direction of our Lord and Savior.

All of our efforts should go to God. Right? Being one day away from leaving to go to Malaysia last time, and then it was shut off immediately.

All we could do is just say, okay, God, to you be the glory. Right? We don't know where you're sending us. We don't know what's going to happen, but we're going to give you the glory nonetheless. The second of our mission goals is to progress the Troas strategy in Malaysia. The Troas strategy, I don't know if you've ever seen the little circle thing there, is basically they model it after the Apostle Paul.

You've got to target a field and reach out to them and start to build the relationship. You need to plant churches, eventually leading to training people to take over those churches, and then you need to release the field and partner.

[10 : 54] Right? It's a circle. We should continually do it over and over and over again. Reach out to these locations and build them up to the point where we can actually step away and partner with them as they take the ministry on.

The best way to reach a country is for your own peoples to reach the country. So how we do that, how Things to Come does that, is to train up people so that they can reach their own people. That's the most effective way of evangelizing in a country. The third is to partner with the Kilgo family. Pat and Michelle Kilgo have lived in Malaysia for 10 years, and they have planted a church. They have also planted Malaysia Grace Bible Institute. So we're going to come alongside them in helping the church as well as teach in the Bible school that they have planted.

The fourth of our mission goal is to raise up locals in Malaysia Grace Bible Institute. So this ministry will include counseling, teaching, training, and Lord willing, releasing the ministries to the nationals in the future.

[12 : 09] Number five, to assist in Penang Bible Church and to further church plants. So basically, a second church plant, Lord willing, that we will help with, will help further the ministry of getting off of the island eventually.

So we're on the island right now. It's a high population. And in the future, we'll be able to get off of the islands of Penang. The existing Penang Bible Church will be the main location of how that's going to happen.

And then number, excuse me, the final one, number six, to partner with faithful people here in the states. So those are our six overall mission goals. If you want to know a little more about Malaysia, we have a display out in the hallway here.

Just a couple things that you can look at. I don't know what I did with them. They're around here somewhere. Oh, here we go. We have a prayer card that you can pick up on the table.

And we also have like a little pamphlet that I printed out. I really like it. Why mission? What's the point of mission? And that's really going to be what the target of my sermon is today.

[13 : 20] And I want to go ahead and get in that. So if you want to go ahead and open up to the book of Galatians, the book of Galatians in chapter 2, we're going to look at verses 1 through 10.

Galatians chapter 2, verses 1 through 10. I really want to explore the idea of a willingness to serve. I was talking to my wife as I was coming up with this lesson here.

And I've been in a lot of churches where missionaries give sermons. And the focus, obviously, is mission, right?

And the challenge is always, you need to go out and you need to go all the way across the world and leave everything. And for some reason, that idea never really sat well with me. And personally, you know, I don't want to pressure anyone into leaving the comfortableness of their home.

Being comfortable is not necessarily a bad thing. And going halfway across the world just because I think you should, right? So I explored this idea of what mission is as a whole.

[14 : 32] What is mission? And we're going to really look into that. We're going to take a look at quite a few things this morning in regard to a willingness to serve God. And this hopefully will take us deeper in our understanding of what the term mission means and how each of us can correctly apply it to our lives today where we are.

In fact, I have found that there seems to be a lot of confusion over this term mission in the church. And with confusion comes misunderstanding.

And it also can lead to misguiding or a misleading and can even lead to guilt, right? Maybe after listening to a missionary come in, you feel like, wow, he kind of guilted me into feeling like I do, right?

So what does this have to do? Well, what am I trying to say here? And I'm going to go ahead and tell you that my purpose today is not to give you that normal missionary sermon.

But I want to explore what God has told each of us our mission is here on earth. The overarching mission, if you will, for our lives.

[15 : 45] And in fact, it really goes alongside our purpose. What is our purpose here on earth? So let's go ahead and define the term mission.

As I do, I go to the 1828 Noah Webster Dictionary. It's my favorite. And Noah Webster defines mission as a sending or being sent, usually the latter, a being sent or delegated by authority with certain powers for transacting business commission as sent on a foreign mission.

Wow, I thought you said that we're not going to have the normal missionary sermon, right? He defines it pretty much like a missionary would define it, right? Being sent out, you know.

And we use that term mission quite often in our lives, even outside of the church. Maybe a spouse will tell their loved one that they are on a mission to get the house cleaned before the Christmas family get together.

Or maybe you are on a mission to fix the garage door that has been broken for 12 years, right? We use that idea, mission, quite often.

[16 : 54] But there's so much more to that. Another context here. Instead of being on a mission, someone says the mission to Mars is coming up in 2035.

Right? That's another context of the way we use the word mission. In this context, the term mission not only focuses on the action or the task being performed, but as the goal.

The goal is to get to, our mission is the goal, to get to Mars in the year 2035. Which, by the way, I don't know if that's when Elon Musk is going to send people to Mars. I just wrote 2035 down.

If that's spot on, you're welcome. But it doesn't stop there. You and your spouse may work at a mission. Or your mission within the mission is to oversee the missions being completed.

Right? So many missions here. And even further than that, another context. Right? When I was going to Berean Bible Institute, I took a class on missions.

[17 : 58] And we had to define the difference between, we had to know the difference between mission and missions. One S. Completely two different words there. The overall mission from God as mission.

Or missions being the sending forth of specific tasks. And then finally, there is God's mission.

Right? What is God's overall mission or purpose for humanity in all dispensations for the future?

You see, even the word mission, the context is so very important when you're using that word. So, in the Bible, we see God working with people throughout ages in different ways.

The tree to Adam. The curse to man. The ark to Noah. The distribution and confusion of mankind and the language. The introduction of the promise to Abraham. And eventually, the leading in of the law to Moses and Israel.

These are all ways God worked with man throughout the scriptures. Right? And the specific tasks to today. Let's talk about the specific tasks for today, though.

[19 : 10] You can learn a whole lot about someone's heart for mission when you hear their desire. Praise the Lord that we know a little about God's desire from the word of God.

Right? In 1 Timothy 2, 3-4, it states, For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God and our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

Wow, this verse, I tell you. It's debated. What does that mean, you know, by all men? Right?

It's a very debatable verse. But not only that, but in Acts, we get a glimpse of how important this is to God. It says in Acts 13, 41. For so the Lord has commanded us, I have set you as a light to the Gentiles that you should be for salvation to the ends of the earth.

See, God's desire is expressed in these couple verses here. His focus is on humanity and the salvation of humanity and the bringing back and the reconciliation process.

[20 : 19] Right? We know that as our mission for today. Ministers of reconciliation. In fact, let's go to that little passage.

I know you guys have heard it many, many times. You're going to hear it again. 2 Corinthians 5. 17 through 21.

Sorry, I told you to turn to Galatians and now I'm telling you to turn somewhere else. 2 Corinthians 5, 17 through 21. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.

Old things have passed away. Behold, all things have become new. Now all things are of God who has reconciled us to himself through Jesus Christ and has given us the ministry of reconciliation. That is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

[21 : 27] Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ as though God were pleading through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. For he made him who knew no sin to be sin for us that we might become the righteousness of God in him.

All of us are ambassadors of heaven, proclaiming God's precious salvation to anyone and everyone that will hear it so that they can be reconciled back to their God, reconciled back to the creator. God does not look at the unsaved in one specific region with more desire to have him or her back to himself than those in other regions. Right?

He's not looking at the unsaved in Africa and saying, wow, they belong to be back to me more than the ones in America do. Right? God's mission is right here.

Right? He is on mission to see people reconciled back to God. His mission for, we read just a minute ago in 1 Timothy, for this is good and acceptable, his desire is for all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

[22 : 47] God's desire is to have all of his creation back to himself. His desire, he desires to lead each person in their own life's struggles and glories. Finally, we can get back to Galatians.

Go ahead and turn back to Galatians. Galatians chapter 2. We have such a big God.

As I just explore these many Bibles, these Bible verses, I'm just constantly amazed on how big of a God we have. Right? It's amazing to see God's mission throughout Scripture and how it flows together so beautifully.

Let's go ahead and read Galatians 2, 1 through 10. Then after 14 years, I, Paul speaking here, went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas and also took Titus with me.

And I went up by revelation and communicated to them that the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to those who were of reputation, lest by any means I might run or had run in vain.

[24 : 08] Yet not even Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. And this occurred because of false brethren secretly brought in who came in by stealth to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus that they might bring us into bondage to whom we did not yield submission even for an hour that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.

But from those who seem to be something, whatever they were, it makes no difference to me. God shows personal favoritism to no man. For those who seemed to be something added nothing to me. But on the contrary, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcised had been committed to me as the gospel for the circumcised was to Peter. For he who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles.

And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be the pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised.

They desired that only that we should remember the poor, the very thing which I was also, I was, I also was eager to do.

[25 : 27] I probably chose what seems to be the least mission passage in the Bible for mission, right? It's kind of interesting here, but let me tell you, some amazing things are going on here when you dig into what's going on here.

First and foremost, we need to understand that there is a time to learn and train. Verse 1 is a very unique word, excuse me, a unique verse as well as the last bit of chapter 1.

We're seeing kind of what's happening in Paul's life, the lead up to what he's doing. It shows and represents specific set-aside time of training and preparation. This can be tough to decipher how to do it and for how long when it comes to our individual lives.

For the Apostle Paul, the Bible says in chapter 1 of Galatians here that after Paul's conversion he went into Arabia. Of course, we know that he needed to learn directly from Jesus Christ and had to separate himself as not to hear anything from people.

He makes a big deal about that. In verse 18 of chapter 1 it says that he went up to Jerusalem after three years. Finally, he went into the region of Syria and Cilicia.

[26 : 42] After 14 years he went up again into Jerusalem. Being on mission for God requires training. Right? We see God's focus.

So what does that look like for our lives? Well, there's no way around it. If you want to be on mission for God even here it requires training.

So what am I talking about? Does this mean that you have to go to school? No, not necessarily. Whether this involves schooling or simply time invested in the Word that is between you and the Father.

Let me say this. I have seen people who have spent many years in school and compared them with people who only study the Word of God and it seems that a lot of times the ones that are invested in the Word of God have a better focus on God than the ones that have all these degrees and stuff like that.

I've seen that a lot. Training also isn't about what you learn or what you get out of it. It is about what God is doing in and through you for His glory.

[27 : 55] Although school is wonderful, sometimes it can distract you from the true focus of what's going on.

It becomes more about the degree than it does about God's glory. Ask yourself, is God getting the glory? Is God getting the glory? God getting the glory?

I've put together some areas in which you should grow in for His mission. We need to grow in our knowledge of the Bible rightly divided. What does the Bible say to us today?

And then what does the Bible say to all the generations and all the ages throughout the Scripture?

We need to be able to rightly understand God's Word. We grow in our prayer life always remembering that prayer is a two-way street for His glory.

We just talked about this at Community Bible Church in Tip City. What is prayer? So many times it's just beg, beg, beg, beg, beg, beg, right?

[29 : 02] But what is prayer? prayer? I'll leave that one with you. We need to grow in getting our life in order.

This includes getting rid of those sinful tendencies. This includes turning from our old man ways in true repentance. Right? Repentance is turning away.

We need to grow in our relationship with our family. We all have roles and the Bible has instructions for each of those roles. Whether father, mother, child, grandparent, we always need to turn to the Bible for instruction.

And then we need to grow in our forgiveness habits. Right? This includes both forgiving and asking for forgiveness. Those five mechanisms will really help you in the training side of understanding what your mission is here on earth.

What your mission is for God. God. And I even added here, having trusted individuals in your life. See, Titus and Barnabas are both mentioned in verse 1 who were accompanying Paul to Jerusalem.

[30 : 13] So being on mission for God requires us to have people in our lives who will uplift, encourage, and challenge us. Without these types of people, we can easily become complacent and lose focus on what we are called to do as ambassadors.

Complacency. See, when I was saying earlier that missionaries get up here and they talk about don't get comfortable, what they're really trying to say is don't become complacent.

And the Bible does a great job showing this type of relationship, the relationship that is between Paul, Titus, and Barnabas. Having someone you can go to for help, pray with consistently, and rely on will boost your confidence to share the gospel with those who are unsaved at your own work.

And without this type of help, it is so much harder to gain the courage to reach so many lost souls. Moving on, we need to fulfill the mission according to God.

Okay, verse 2 says here, and I went up by revelation and communicated to them that the gospel which I preached among the Gentiles, but privately to those who were of reputation, lest by any means I might run or had run in vain.

[31 : 41] I'm going to ask you a serious question here. Who here has received a revelation recently to go up to Jerusalem? I'm waiting.

many people often forget even with the apostle Paul that many of his tasks were specific to him as an apostle.

Right? In like manner, we must fulfill the mission according to God in our lives. So one might ask then, how can I interpret the will for my life according to God?

As a pastor, this is probably the first, this is the biggest thing that people come to me and ask. I think of everything that I, as for as long as I've been in the ministry, I have been asked this more than anything.

How do I know what the will of God is for my life? I have been asked that probably 150 times or more of all ages.

[32 : 38] How do I know what the will of God is for my life? And that's a good question.

That's a really good question. And the word of God does talk about it. Okay? First, you need to know that you need to fulfill the mission according to God in your life.

So how can you truly know what God is calling you to do? We learned earlier that God's desire is to see all men come to the knowledge of the truth. Does this have to be in Jerusalem or in Malaysia or in here in Springfield?

Not necessarily, but it will for some. So how can you know if you are doing what God wants you to do? And this is what I usually respond back with when I'm asked that is ask yourself, what are your own desires?

That's not a selfish thing. I'm telling you, that's not a selfish thing. God gave you desires. Ask yourself or ask the person, what are your desires? Ask yourself whether or not what you are doing is aligned with scripture.

[33 : 49] That one's a good one. A lot of times when I ask that question, they're like, well, I don't really know. Is it aligned with scripture? And the third thing, do you have peace?

A peace that is not of your own desire? Right? And I know that can lead to even more questions. Well, how do you know if it's a godly peace? That's a good question. That's what all those things I mentioned earlier about getting into your word and staying faithful in prayer.

You'll be able to understand those things. Let's go on in verse 3. Verse 3 says, Titus has a circumcision concern.

Titus, being a full Gentile, did not have a need to be circumcised. First, this would have made what Paul was trying to teach much more complicated if a full Greek man was circumcised.

Right? That would really be confusing for what Paul was trying to accomplish. Second, it shows that each person's circumstances may differ based on a number of things. Where were they born?

[35 : 04] Who were their parents? Their social status? Maybe even denominational status. But I want all of you to look at the broader picture here. Paul had a decision to make with Titus and also with Timothy even later about circumcision simply.

do they become circumcised or not? What is right or what is wrong? In like manner, you have decisions in your life. And I truly believe God has given you a mind with likenesses, with convictions, and with willing personalities to fulfill His ministries regardless of where you end up. People ask me, I was even asked right before this sermon here. Why Malaysia? When you see a need in the ministry, you need to be willing to fill that need.

Right? That doesn't necessarily mean Malaysia, but for us it meant Malaysia. We saw a need, we're willing, and we're willing to go, and we have a heart to see people come back to God.

We have a heart to come along God to see His mission being fulfilled. And this applies where you are right now in your own church and in your life.

[36 : 34] It may mean stepping out of your comfort zone, right? You might be working each and every day, Monday through Friday, and you haven't talked to that person that needs to hear the gospel.

That is a lot harder to do than I know you guys are Christian. Most of you should be, right? That's hard, right? I used to give an example. You can either choose to go down the self-checkout aisle in Walmart, or you can go down the aisle where the person is, right?

You don't ever go down that aisle. It's easier just to go down the self-checkout aisle. But what happens when you choose a self-checkout is you miss an opportunity to talk to someone, right? So that's what I'm talking about, stepping out of the comfort zone, stepping out of your comfort zone. But before moving on, I want to point something out in the following two verses here. It has to do with an understanding of the enemy's misleading in his role in general, right?

Verse 4 says, That's a hard pill to swallow.

[38 : 02] If God is leading you to do something, it will become evident that the enemy will not want you to accomplish this task. Right? If you don't believe me, let's look at 2 Timothy 3, 312 says, Yes, and all who desire to live godly lives in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.

I know immediately Americans and most people will look at that and say, Oh, persecution has to be physical. Not necessarily. Right? These persecutions are most often thought about in the physical sense because Paul suffered a lot of physical persecutions.

Right? But we have so many spiritual persecutions. Right? The idea of being ready to preach the gospel to someone in Walmart or wherever you are and then all of a sudden you turn away and you walk away.

Well, you just missed an opportunity. Why? Maybe fear crept in. Maybe you didn't want to be rejected. Right? Those are all persecutions. Those are all things that Satan is taking you down the wrong direction.

Paul was on a mission for Christ Jesus and the enemy did not want the gospel to spread. So when you ask yourself, what does God's mission look like in my life today?

[39 : 22] That's a good way of seeing if you're heading in the right direction. God's mission. This can easily make doing things for the Lord so much harder when you stay on that side.

Saying yes to sharing the gospel at your job might even cause an issue. But the truth is God is calling us to do something. If he's calling us to do something, he will sustain us. We have teachers at Community Bible Church and I often talk to those teachers, how are you doing it?

Right? The education system is in a bad place right now. Teachers are not allowed to open up about their faith, their Christian faith. You guys saw the opening ceremonies in the Olympics.

Right? How sad was that? Public, a public display of going against Christ Jesus.

How, man, wow. Saying yes to the gospel, like I said, might cause issues in your life. But in verse five, what does Paul say?

[40 : 33] To whom we did not yield submission. That was such an easy thing for Paul. Hey, these false brethren came and they were doing their thing. We just said no. Right?

In modern terms, we just didn't listen to them. And I believe Paul took a page right out of our Lord and Savior's book, no pun intended, and shook the dust off their feet and moved on.

Right? These false brethren crept up and they moved on. The reason I paused on this subject today is because it is a very real thing in the Christian's life. Deciphering who is talking to you in your mind and where your peace comes from is vital in making life choices or life changes.

Is this from God or something else? Getting into your Bible, praying, talking with close and trustworthy people, and self-examining all help in deciphering who you are listening to.

And ultimately, God's mission to see all people come to the knowledge of the truth is in motion.

God's mission to God's mission to God's mission to God's mission to God's mission. We should all be participating in this mission one way or the other.

[41 : 44] So being on mission for God, as we have already discussed, is important for the Christian's growth. So are you on mission for him now? Something I like to ask, I ask this of myself, I ask this a lot at Community Bible Church when I'm preaching, is when was the last time you shared the gospel?

Just going to put that out there. Think about it for a second. When was the last time you shared the gospel? This isn't a call to go to Malaysia. When was the last time you shared it? Here.

To your family members, to your friends. The even harder question is when was the last time you opened the Bible? Right?

Let's move on to verse 6. But from those who seemed to be something, whatever they were, it makes no difference to me. God shows no personal favoritism to no man.

Actually, let's just read again 6-10. God shows no favoritism to no man. For those who seemed to be something added nothing to me. But on the contrary, when they saw that the gospel for the uncircumcised had been committed to me, as the gospel for the circumcised was to Peter, for he who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised, also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles.

[43 : 09] And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcise.

They desired only that we should remember the poor, the very thing which I also was eager to do. verse 6 starts off with a big point.

God shows no personal favoritism. Simply, we are all equal in God's eyes. That means we can fulfill different tasks all remaining in God's perfect plan.

The dispensation of the grace of God is the current plan of God for mankind and it is currently being worked out in his mission. We all have various skills and roles as we allow God to work through our lives.

And so God does take this kind of thing into consideration. He takes into consideration our strengths and our weaknesses. Sometimes he places you somewhere where the weaknesses show forth, but maybe he has placed you in a certain area for a time where your strength must prevail.

[44 : 20] I have a weakness. Well, I have a lot of weaknesses. One of my biggest weakness, straight up, is that I'm terrible at math. Terrible.

When I was a little kid, I wanted to be an astronaut. Someone told me one day, son, you're never going to be an astronaut because you can't do the basic math problems. Thank God that someone told me that.

Right? So I didn't go down and get stuck on an international space station like the Boeing pilots.

Guys, just joking. Come on, guys. Y'all need to laugh a little. They're going to be okay.

Elon Musk is going to go and rescue them if he hasn't already done so. God may have you in one place for only a time and in another place for another time.

God had us in Tip City after the world shut down. And that was the weirdest time ever I lived through. Right? Probably for you too. The world shut down and all this kind of stuff was happening.

[45 : 25] We couldn't get into countries. Went to Kenya, thought we'd be there forever. Got sent home, couldn't stay on a visa. Was working with my brother in an axe throwing place.

He owned an axe throwing place. I get a phone call from one of the board members at Community Bible Church and they said, hey, we heard you can't get anywhere in your mission.

Do you want to come up and become an interview for the pastor position there? And I was like, well, no. Don't really want to do that.

We're trying to get to another country. But I realized quickly after that, after talking with my wife, that we were called to the ministry. We were called to see, to come along God and his mission.

It didn't have to be in Malaysia or Kenya at the time. At the time, it was just right here in Ohio and Tip City. And so we moved from Georgia up to Tip City. We just said, OK.

[46 : 25] See, God had us. He's had us here for the last three years. So maybe he has us in different places at different times for different purposes or excuse me, for the same purpose in all of those places.

Right. For Paul, he was given the gospel of the uncircumcision. For Peter, the gospel of the circumcision, as this passage says for you, if anything else, he has placed you exactly where you are right now for whatever purpose that he has you there.

His main purpose, of course, is to see all people come to the saving knowledge of the truth. God could have you in the same place for 35 to 45 years, or he could have you move to another state or even to another country.

God's overall plan is so great. So I did not want to stand up here today and force you to make a decision to move halfway across the world.

What I want, more importantly, is for you to self-examine where you are today, right now, where God has you. Ask yourself, how am I contributing to the mission that God has set forth in his word?

[47 : 35] Right. To see, first and foremost, to see all men come to the knowledge of the truth. How glorious it will be in heaven one day when we see all these people, right, maybe with some influence that we had, right, sharing the gospel with up there in heaven.

And then, of course, God's overall mission to see the reconciliation that he has for us so that we can go around and share of that glorious reconnecting of creator and creation.

needs are out there to be fulfilled. And then willingness is a strong force, but often is avoided. You might be willing to go, but decide maybe not to.

I've talked to a lot of people. We went on deputation right there in 2019, early 2020. I talked to a lot of people and said, yeah, we were going to go on the mission field one time.

And I said, what happened? And they usually say, I don't really know. Right? I was going to share the gospel with that person at my job.

[48 : 42] What happened? I don't really know. Answering a willing heart is pretty tough. Sharing the gospel is not easy.

Before we went to Kenya, I don't know if Boaz shared that with you, but before we went to Kenya, I took the group out into Tip City. I sent a group to Troy and I sent a group to Tip City downtown after church one day.

And I wanted them to evangelize. And they were so nervous. Right? And they said to me, well, we just don't do that very often.

Here's your chance. Right? Very simple. The truth is you're going to get rejected a lot. But remember, and I told them the same thing, they're not rejecting you.

They are rejecting God. So to go or not to go, this is not only a call for foreign missions, but is also a call for you right now when it comes to sharing the gospel in your own backyard.

[49 : 48] So why Malaysia? We are willing to go. There is a need. And God has given us the mission for this time and the peace to see it fulfilled.

I don't know what God has in store for us after that, but we're answering the call right now. Let's pray. God, we thank you so much for this opportunity that we can come here, Lord, at this beautiful church here in Springfield, Lord, to hear, just to hear from the word, but also to fellowship together with like-minded believers.

God, what an honor it is that we have unique passages like this here in Galatians, Lord, where maybe it's not typically used for a mission sermon, but that we can see amazing points that as Paul's walking through his ministry.

Lord, we just thank you so much for what happens at church, Lord, for open doors and for open hearts, Lord, that it can fuel us for the week to come, Lord, and that we can come back, energize the next week, but also help us to focus on your mission.

Help us to help to start the mission in our home, to start it, start it getting outside of our home, Lord. Really, truly start where we are. We are all on mission for God, for you, Lord, and we thank you so much for your son, Jesus Christ.

[51 : 12] We thank you for that precious salvation. Christ died for our sins, was buried and rose again the third day. There's nothing we can do to earn our way to heaven.

Just trust and believe in you and what you did for us. We give you all honor, glory, and thanks this precious morning. We thank you, Jesus Christ. Amen.