

# The Purpose and Mission of the Church

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Date: 01 October 2022

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[ 0 : 0 0 ]     Father, it is a glorious morning that you've given us. We're so grateful for the occasion that brings us together week by week. But today is a special occasion.

And we're so thankful that you are at the center of that as well. We ask that as we enter into this time of joyous Thanksgiving, you will use it in a special way in the lives of each and every one of us, particularly in the life of Nathan and his family.

Thank you that you have raised this man up and that you have blessed him and gifted him with the desire to know, to study your word, and to be able to give it out.

And how grateful we are that you have given him Jamie as a helpmate, an encourager, stabilizer, and the precious children that you've blessed them with.

We are grateful and we ask that each of them may know the joy, the nurture, and admonition of the Lord. We thank you for this special morning and for you being at the center of it.

[ 1 : 1 8 ]     At the same time, our hearts go out to those who are in deep and desperate need. We think of all those dear folks on the East Coast that are suffering from the ravages of this hurricane, for the destruction that it has brought and the lives that it has taken, all of which bear testimony to the fact that we really do live in a fallen world.

And in a fallen world, these things have become a new norm. Gives us cause for rejoicing to know it will not always be like this because when our Lord Jesus Christ returns and establishes that kingdom, it will be what it ought to be.

The curse will have been removed and Jesus Christ will be honored in a way that he's never been honored by us earthlings before. We look forward to that time.

But in the midst of what these folks are suffering, some with complete loss of belongings, loss of residence, many with loss of life, we can only pray for the survivors who are facing a bleak situation.

And we know that there are a number of believers there among them, people who have a perspective that the world knows not of. And we simply pray that they and Franklin Graham and his team, as they go in there, will be able to encourage and to point people to the fact that there is a big picture.

[ 3 : 0 0 ]     Right now, they're all captivated and inundated literally with what looks like a big picture, but it's really a little picture compared to the big one. So help them, we pray, to have that perspective and to realize that you do have an end game and that these things do go with the fallenness of this world, even as our sinful natures do.

But we look forward to that glorious time when all of the wrongs will be made right. Thank you for being at the center of our lives for all who know Christ, for the empowerment that you give, for everything that is part of the package that goes to the believers who are in Christ.

We are grateful and we rejoice in it. And we commit the rest of this time to you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. Amen. I am charged with the responsibility of delivering a few verses of Scripture.

and the first one I want to turn to is Hebrews chapter 13. Yes. Is that better?

Nothing? Okay. We'll go with the podium. That's fine. Hebrews chapter 13 and verse 17 delivers a charge to the congregation and in it it says, obey your leaders and submit to them for they keep watch or because they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account.

[ 4 : 54 ] Let them do this with joy and not with grief for this would be unprofitable for you. One would think it would be different for believers because believers don't have to be concerned about being obedient.

Oh yes we do. Because even though we are believers we still are saddled with that old Adamic nature and it is fraught with self-centeredness.

And what that means is even in the life of a redeemed individual we still tend to have a resentment against authority.

And it starts manifesting itself when we're very young children. Someone said maybe that's why they call these the terrible twos for children. They start really manifesting their self-centeredness.

I want my own way. Now I want this and I want that and if we don't get it we'll bawl and we'll cry and we'll kick up a fuss and all the rest. And what that is is old Adam pouring out of that sweet little innocent baby.

[ 6 : 13 ] And we don't outgrow it. But when we come to faith in Jesus Christ and we are given a new nature we are also given a capacity to deal with that old Adam and it's called walking in the spirit as opposed to walking in the flesh.

And when you have a congregation that is walking in the spirit it simply means there will be the absence of turmoil and conflict and confusion and all that goes with it. And I am happy to tell you and I suppose it's only natural that pastors want to brag on their congregation but we have enjoyed that kind of atmosphere for a long long time and I see no reason that it should not and will not continue whereby there is a loving manifestation a walking in the spirit a rejoicing a kind of thing that has a person has a submissive spirit one to another and not like Diotrephes who loves to have the preeminence among you as Paul or John wrote in one of his epistles.

So Nathan is going to be dependent upon that kind of atmosphere and attitude in the congregation continuing.

There's no reason why it shouldn't. In fact with time I suspect it will even increase and become stronger because we are all in a growth process right now.

We are all who are in Christ we are all growing developing and maturing and the Christian life is simply one that should leave you to be more like Jesus this year than you were last year and that's what spiritual growth is all about.

[ 7 : 57 ] And as Nathan teaches the word of God and the spirit of God instills the principles that he teaches in your hearts and minds it will be reflected in your attitude and in your actions and it will continue to make this congregation the place of joy that it has been for the last 50 plus years.

and I fully expect it to even increase. Obey your leaders and submit to them. Why? Because they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account.

Nathan is taking on an area of responsibility that you do not have. He is being charged with the responsibility for your spiritual care for your spiritual welfare for your growth and development and he is dependent upon your cooperation and your assistance.

And once again if that right attitude is there it will be forthcoming and he will benefit from it and you will all benefit from it as well. It's a solemn thing to consider Nathan the responsibilities that are laid upon you and he cannot function as he ought to without your cooperation and your support because he is absolutely dependent on that and he is supposed to be dependent on that.

So here this passage is talking about authority and the submission to it and that is a principle indication spiritual growth is occurring when we can respect authority and be submissive to it.

[ 9 : 46 ] Also there is a passage that I should like to turn to in 1 Timothy chapter 5 beginning with verse 17 and it deals with some very important issues.

1 Timothy chapter 5 and verse 17 let the elders who rule well and Nathan you are you are the pastor of this congregation but you are also an elder and an elder simply means a mature one an older one and you will be blessed with having some men on your elder board who have more maturity than you do and you can benefit from that wisdom and I'm sure that you will.

Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching for the scripture says you shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing.

upon first reading you may say what in the world is that? What does that have to do with anything? Well it has a lot to do with the way you treat and care for your pastor.

The apostle Paul here is using an analogy that was very familiar to people in the first century and it had to do with a grain place where there was a huge round disc that had a pole attached to it and the other end of the pole was attached to the harness on an ox and that ox had the responsibility of just walking in a circle all day long moving that huge stone that was sometimes five and six feet in diameter and about a foot wide and as that stone rolled around the trough because that ox was pushing it or drawing it all the way around there for hours at a time and those who were the owners of the ox are admonished you don't muzzle the ox while it is threshing out the grain and the meaning of course is you let the ox eat its fill as he is producing the grain because that huge stone separated the wheat from the chaff and it was the ox that was doing all the work so the principle is carried over to the servant of the lord and it is simply this those who preach the gospel are to live of the gospel that is to be their source of income now with

[ 12 : 38 ] Nathan it is somewhat different because he has another source of income and that is his own personal business that he is bringing into this situation which is going to limit the time that he is able to spend as your pastor and this is why he is considered part time the full time may come later it just depends because there are a lot of variables involved and we don't know what the future is going to hold but in the meanwhile it is the church's responsibility to see to it that the material needs of your pastor and his family are met and cared for and I can say to a credit of this congregation I have never in all the years I've been here I have never felt or had a material need that the congregation had not met or was not meeting or was not willing to meet and I suspect that there's no reason why that will not continue as well my family and I have been blessed with the consistency and the generosity of this congregation over the years and we've every reason to believe that it will continue for Nathan and for his family and then in 1 Peter chapter 5

I'm sorry I get ahead of myself here while we're in Timothy in 1 Corinthians 9 1 Corinthians 9 beginning with verse 7 who at any time serves as a soldier at his own expense who plants a vineyard and does not eat the fruit of it or who tends a flock and does not use the milk of the flock I am not speaking these things according to human judgment am I or does not the law also say these things and here's this reference again by the way originally it comes from Deuteronomy but you can see it being made use of because the spirit of God wants to emphasize it for it is written in the law of Moses you shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing God is not concerned about oxen is he rhetorical question well of course he is or is he speaking all together for our sake yes for our sake it was written because the plowman ought to plow in hope and the thresher to thresh in hope of sharing the crops if we sowed and Paul is speaking of himself and his colleagues who are serving with him he says if we sowed spiritual things in you is it too much if we should reap material things from you in other words when one is preoccupied with sowing the gospel that limits the time that he has for making a living and therefore it is incumbent upon those who are recipients of what has been sown to help compensate for whatever lack might be there in the life of the sower and he goes on to say if others share the right over you do not we more nevertheless we did not use this right but we endure all things that we may cause no hindrance to the gospel of

Christ this is why Paul was in a very unique position because they didn't have the advantage of a pastorate and congregations back in that day this was just beginning and he was dependent upon no one because he did not want anyone to think that he was doing what he was doing for the money that was in it and that's why Paul said I made my own way I served as a tent maker and I labored so that I would not be dependent upon others for their need for their help so the Lord directed those who proclaim the gospel to get their living from the gospel and then he says I've used none of those things for if I preach the gospel I have nothing to boast of for I am under compulsion woe is me if I do not preach the gospel which of course is his primary concern and then by way of a charge to Nathan I would return once again to 1st

Timothy and this time from chapter 3 1st Timothy chapter 3 it is a trustworthy statement if any man aspires to the office of overseer some translations render that a bishop and an overseer it simply comes from the word episkopos which means to look over from which the episcopal church takes its name and it simply means one who is put in a position to look over or scan or view what is happening in a given area and the given area is this church and it is Nathan's responsibility to oversee what is taking place and what needs to take place and to provide whatever it is that is required in order for this to be met it is a fine work he desires to do and all I can say to that is amen

I don't know of a finer work I do not I do not know of anything for one who is called to the ministry that is more joyous and more fulfilling than the proclamation of the word of God to people with receptive ears who are ready to take it in and grow thereby as far as I'm concerned that's traveling first class in a fallen world and Nathan you will have an opportunity to do just that and I can only pray for you that it is as glorious and as rewarding as mine has been an overseer then must be above reproach the husband of one wife temperate prudent respectable hospitable able to teach some translations render that apt to teach it conveys the idea of somebody who is willing and eager to teach truth at the drop of a hat think of that what a wonderful privilege wherever you go whatever the circumstances be ready and willing to teach at the drop of a hat it's a beautiful thing not addicted to wine or pugnacious but gentle uncontentious free from the love of money he must be one who manages his own household well keeping his children under control with all dignity but if a man does not know how to manage his own household how will he take care of the church of

[ 19 : 57 ] God so your household consists of the wife with whom the Lord has blessed you Jamie and the number of children that you have born and enjoy together and the congregation needs to hear this as well as Nathan and Jamie and that is this of course your first and foremost responsibility is the same as it is for all of us it's to the Lord to your creator your savior your sustainer that's your number one priority and your number two priority is not the church it's your wife and your family they are your number two priority God has blessed you with them and you are responsible for every aspect of their life awesome responsibility but he has equipped you to fulfill everything that is required and the congregation then comes next and one of the reasons that it's supposed to work like this is because for every husband and every father who is here or will be here eventual future fathers or whatever you will be learning from

Nathan seeing in action how he cares for and relates to his family and this is the reason why he is to put his family ahead of you because he is to be your role model for a husband and a father and you are to get your cues you men are to get your cues from the godly example set forth by Nathan as to what kind of a husband and father you are supposed to be and the only way you can get that is by seeing him put his family first I know and history tells us that there have been many ministries destroyed because a well intended a well meaning pastor gave virtually all of his energy and time and effort to the congregation and he did so in good faith thinking that was his primary responsibility meanwhile his own family and his own wife suffered often from neglect and lack of time and commitment and everything else because every ounce of energy he had was somehow spent on the congregation which made the wife and the children feel neglected almost abandoned

Nathan will not have that problem and as you witness him and see him in action you will understand he's the role model for you and that's the way your families are to operate as well and it's a beautiful thing to see something like that in action so be thankful that Nathan is being scriptural in putting his wife and his family even ahead of you and you are supposed to put your wife and your family ahead of everybody else and you know what that is really even though it sounds paradoxical that's how you put the Lord first by doing and being what he said to be and do that's how you put the Lord first and it's a beautiful concept nobody's ever improved upon it nobody ever will in 2nd Timothy chapter 4 while we're in the neighborhood

I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus who is to judge the living and the dead and by his appearing in his kingdom preach the word there it is three words Nathan preach the word preach the word and ignore the chapter division because this is another poor chapter division but this is all connected and in verse 16 of the preceding chapter he says all scripture is inspired of God is profitable for preaching for teaching for reproof for correction for intraining chaining in righteousness so that the man of God may be adequate equipped for every good work therefore preach the word because that's the only thing that'll get the job done and you've been provided with the content from this old and new testament we call the bible to see to it that your efforts are well invested and well spent as you preach the word be ready in season out of season reprove rebuke exhort with great patience and instruction for the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine that's speaking of an age to come and one wonders by the way how close that may be one wonders if we are not on the brink of that when people will not endure sound doctrine wanting to hear their ears tickled which means they want to hear what they want to hear they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance with their own desires and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths but you you Nathan be sober in all things endure hardship do the work of the ministry of an evangelist fulfill your ministry and Paul is giving that counsel to all who would stand in the pulpit for the next 2,000 years even up to this time and the last reference is in 1st Peter chapter 5 therefore I exhort the elders among you as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of

Christ and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed shepherd the flock of God among you not under compulsion but voluntarily according to the will of God and not for sordid gain but with eagerness nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge but proving to be examples to the flock not lording it over I think we've all known Nathan long enough to know that he is not an authoritarian person and yet if there is anything that Nathan needs it is to be able to speak with authority and as a congregation you need to recognize that his authority comes from the scriptures and as he is bound to the authority of scripture then so are you as well and it means that a pastor is not supposed to be an authoritarian but he is to be authoritative and there is a huge difference an authoritarian and there is authoritarian strikes of my way or the highway it's kind of dictatorial like and there is no room in the body of Christ for that kind of attitude so he needs authority and he needs to be able to speak with it and it comes from the scriptures it is thus saith the

[ 27 : 44 ] Lord and as he teaches and preaches that word and you absorb that content and take it unto yourself you have a beautiful chemistry going that is the kind that God intended and there is nothing quite like it as you read the scriptures and come to the letters to the seven churches in Revelation you can see all of the difficulties that they were undergoing there in what is today what was then in the Bible was Asia Minor and now it's Turkey but those seven churches were all fraught with problems and yet they were relatively young churches and one of the greatest reasons of course is that spiritual maturity had not taken hold in them and they are criticized for their acts and their actions in those first two chapters chapter two and chapter three of the Revelation so there are lessons to be learned from those but we have had here for the last 50 plus years a relationship a connection with God at the center and with with eager teachable generous people on the receiving end and I don't mind telling you it's been an incredibly wonderful ride and I thank you all so much for making my ministry as pleasurable as enjoyable and as beneficial as you have and we have every reason to believe that it's going to be exactly the same for Nathan

I think after 50 years you people are starting to get the hang of it and that's a good thing so it will be a time of change and people will say well Nathan is this or Nathan is that Marv was this or Marv was that that's no matter no matter the chemistry changes it has to change and that's just the nature of life and living but I want to close with this anecdote actually it's true many of you remember when my first wife my beloved Barbara passed away can't believe how many years it's been but anyway one day Lynette came to me our oldest daughter and she said dad have you ever given any thought to remarriage to getting married again and I said well no not really I said I just really have no interest in that at all at the time at the time

I'd been widowed for about five years and I had no interest in another marriage and I told Lynette I said you know what your mom and I had for almost 50 years and how incredibly wonderful it was and I just I just have no interest in and she said well you need to think about something I know what a time you and mom had because I was very much a part of it but there's no reason why you couldn't have that again and it would be wonderful it would just be a different wonderful and I thought to myself wow out of the mouths of babes well she wasn't a babe at the time but you know what she grew up with her mother's wisdom I know that so Marv is passing off the scene here at

Grace Bible Church and I don't mind telling you the last 50 plus years have been absolutely wonderful for me and for Marie and with Nathan coming to the pulpit I fully expect it to be a different wonderful but it'll still be wonderful God bless you Nathan if you will come up and take a seat here and elders if you will follow him and I'm talking about all of our present elders and all of our former elders who may be here this morning would you come forward also and just form a circle around Nathan turn the mic on turn the mic off and reach out put your hands on

Nathan wherever you can find a spot this is to signify our solidarity our support our unanimity with Nathan in this ministry you need to understand there are no mystical magical powers being transferred from these men to Nathan because it just doesn't work that way in this dispensation so what we are doing is signifying our solidarity our support our encouragement our approval of this man and the ministry to which God has called him so let us pray our father we recognize that with the passing of time you have provided those who will replace those who move on for whatever reason and we're so grateful that in the life of Nathan you have chosen him to be the pastor of Grace

[ 34 : 15 ] Bible Church we are a blessed people and we pray that as he continues to serve you here in the capacity of pastor you will instill within him the wisdom that is necessary for decisions that need to be made we pray that you will pour upon him the joy such as I have experienced and even more for being able to shepherd a generous teachable loving congregation like Grace Bible Church we commit him to your care to your keeping to your wisdom we pray for his dear wife that you will undertake for her that you will allow her to be the kind of support and aid that Nathan needs and that Jamie may in ministering to him be ministering to you as well for the precious children that you brought into their family we are grateful for each and every one of them for the potential that lies within them to honor and to glorify their wonderful Lord we pray that you will undertake for

Nathan as he has decisions to make in the future that he now cannot even imagine but they will be alone and there will be times when things will be critical and things will be difficult but you will always be there and you will be a ready help in time of need we bless you for this man and for the gifts that you have given him and for his willingness to take charge of this ministry and to break forth the bread of life we bless you for it all in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ amen amen gentlemen you may take your seats pulpit and Nathan you may take your pulpit thanks everybody and especially thank you pastor Marv not just for today but for all you've done over the last 50 plus years this is as you have said quite a wonderful group of people and you know some pastors might leave a mess behind but that's not the case here and so this is quite a quite a good group of people and you're such a big part of that and thanks to everybody else for your love and support during this kind of new new venture here for me and the family and for our church as well so question what are we doing here why do we why do we show up to this church every Sunday or most

Sundays why are we part of the life of this church why do we get together on a regular basis some of us are here more than just once a week sometimes many times a week prayer meeting on Wednesday but what is it that we're doing what is this thing that God calls the church what is the mission and the purpose of this thing called the church that God designed and he created it was God's idea it's not ours it's not that it's not like we came up with this idea hey let's start this thing called the church and we'll get together and we'll do interesting things right this is something that comes from the Bible something that God intended for us I've been part of different companies in the past throughout my work life and career and one of the important things when you have a company especially as it grows is you need to be able to communicate what is the mission and purpose of this company this organization if it's an organization what are we doing what are we here for what's our purpose what's our mission it's easy if you don't communicate that if you just assume that everybody knows or even if you as a leader don't know yourself it's easy to get off track right there's a saying see if I can screw this up but if you don't know where you're going you'll never get there all right if you don't know where you're going you'll never get there if you don't know what your mission and purpose is you'll never accomplish that mission and purpose so with the time that I have left I just want to talk about that it's important for me as I lead this congregation to know what that is and also to make sure that it's communicated to you so what is the mission of the church we're going to open up we're actually going to look at some of the same scriptures that we've already looked at but we're going to start with second Timothy chapter 3 so yeah if you have a Bible let's open up to second

Timothy chapter 3 and let's just go ahead and read from 10 down to 17 but you Timothy and again this is this is Paul this is one of the last letters that he wrote to what he calls his son Timothy son in the faith giving him some really what might be final instructions he says this in verse 10 3 verse 10 but you have carefully followed my doctrine manner of life purpose faith long suffering love perseverance persecutions afflictions which happened to me at Antioch at Iconium and Lystra what persecutions I endured and out of them all the Lord delivered me yes and all who desire to live godly in life

Jesus will suffer persecution but evil men and imposters will grow worse and worse deceiving and being deceived but you Timothy must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of knowing from whom you have learned them and that from childhood you have known the holy scriptures which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Jesus Christ all scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine for reproof for correction for instruction in righteousness that the man of God may be complete and thoroughly equipped for every good work as part of Paul's kind of final proclamation is charged to Timothy and what Pastor Marv charged to me is to preach the word to give diligence to understanding the word because this

[ 42 : 04 ] Bible these scriptures this is the foundation of our faith we don't just get to make things up and there are lots of people in this world you know you turn on the television and everybody's got an idea right everybody's got some kind of wisdom to impart some kind of knowledge and sometimes the ideas are okay and sometimes they're not okay sometimes they're complete trash right but there's no no end of in fact Solomon says this right there's no end of books and reading and knowledge in the world with the on the with the internet right it just continues to expand and expand you can spend all day watching YouTube videos and reading the internet and finding all kinds of ideas but the ideas that are most important the ones that we want to found and base our life on come from this book and so as a church this is where this is what we want to preach and teach from this is what I will be preaching and teaching from it's not a book that we just we just honor and revere that we put on a nice bookshelf or on the coffee table right the Bible is meant to one be read we don't stop there do we it's meant to be studied we need to dig into it it's meant to be understood right and so we don't just read the

Bible just to feel good about ourselves we need to understand what it is that God wants us to know is the Bible is a book to reveal for God to reveal himself to us not that so we'll be in the dark but so we'll be in the light once we understand what these scriptures say God intends that we would believe what he says and then for those things that are commanded that we act upon the things which he says continuing on Paul says to Timothy you've learned the scriptures you've learned it from your youth you've given lots of attention to it and so as Pastor Marv read here in chapter 4 it continues on I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus

Christ who will judge the living and the dead at his appearing in his kingdom preach the word be ready in season and out of season convince rebuke exhort with all long suffering and teaching in season and out of season that means when you're scheduled to preach on Sunday morning and then when it's just needful at any other time right convince rebuke sometimes that's necessary isn't it exhort give encouragement and with all long suffering in teaching now I don't know if the long suffering there is to the congregation who has to suffer through a boring sermon sometimes or if that's to the one preaching who has to suffer through the people sleeping in church turn to Ephesians we're going to look at another passage here Ephesians chapter 4



Ephesians chapter 4 and verse 11 and he himself this is Christ gave some to be apostles some prophets some evangelists and some pastors and some teachers so God has said leaders in the church for the equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry for the edifying of the body of Christ till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God to a perfect or complete man to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ that we should no longer be children tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the trickery of men and the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting but speaking the truth in love may grow up in all things into him who is the head Christ from whom from who from whom the whole body joined in it together but by what every joint supplies according to the effective working by which every part does it share causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love now the beginning here he's talking about leaders in the church those who teach and there are people in the church who teach who have a lot of times giftings or strengths in that area and everyone has different strengths and and weaknesses in their life including me but one of the things I wanted to focus on here is that it's not just the leaders who are involved in teaching or the word that

Paul uses here is edifying edifying just means to build up to build someone up and that's something that we all do isn't it at the end of this passage it says this but speaking the truth is verse 15 but speaking the truth in love may grow up in all things into him who is the head Christ Christ from whom from Christ the whole body the whole body of Christ joined and knit together by what every joint supplies according to the effective working by which every part does its share the big picture that the Bible uses of this thing called the body of Christ the church is the picture of a physical body a human body if joints different parts different parts of the body and each of us has a part in a role to play and we all build one another up it's not just the job of one person or two people or three it's all of our jobs to build each other up in this church this thing that God calls the church the body of Christ the local church also the church universal so it's each of it's risk it's a it's our responsibility each one of us to one to grow you ever known somebody and they just they just never seem to grow in their life whether it's just in learning how to be an adult sometimes or for others sometimes learning how to become a good Christian right some people just they just never seem to get their their feet off the ground to spread their wings but that's what we all ought to do when we become

[ 49 : 31 ] Christians right we start as babes the Bible says drinking milk but each day we need to grow and eventually we move on from that milk to meatier kinds of food and as we grow we ought to not just engorge ourselves and continue to feed ourselves but we ought to pass that along to others to become teachers maybe not from a pulpit but all of us are teachers aren't we if you have a family if you have children every single day teaching your children day in and day out how they ought to live how they ought to love the Lord how they ought to fear the Lord we have opportunities in a church setting whether it be here in this building or in other places to pass along what we have learned sometimes it's just being a good example and we can teach with our example can't we sometimes it's a word in due season something that is need whether it's encouragement or sometimes an admonishment but each one of us has a responsibility to teach in our lives as we grow in understanding

God's word and how we ought to live our lives to pass that along to others so when it comes to the mission of the church the number one thing this has to be the foundation is teaching the word of God it's my responsibility to make sure that happens I won't be the only one who teaches all of us will be involved but we need to proclaim and teach the word of God that's the very foundation but there's another part of the mission it can't just be proclaiming and teaching the word of God the second part the church is a community of believers we even call it a family in the Bible we read Christian people called brothers and sisters right we call each other brothers and sisters brothers and sisters in Christ we are part of the family of God turn to first Corinthians chapter 12 and how is a family supposed to operate first Corinthians chapter 12 and we'll look at verse 25 he's talking about this thing called the body of Christ and how it works together how each part has its own or how each member of the body has its own part to play actually let's start with verse 23 and those members of the body which we think to be less honorable on these we bestow greater honor and our and our unpresentable parts have greater modesty but our presentable parts have no need but God composed the body having given greater honor to the parts to the part which lacks it that there should be no schism no division in the body but that the members should have the same care for one another the members of this body the intention is that we have to care for one another he continues on and if one member suffers all the members suffer with it or if one member is honored all the members rejoice with it now you are the body of

Christ he's given this illustration about a physical human body and he says this is what you are as a church you are like this physical body and each of you is a member of this corporate group and so we are called to care for one another as a church to share our lives with one another when others are suffering to suffer with each other as it says elsewhere in the scriptures to grieve with those who grieve or to mourn with those who mourn and to rejoice with those who rejoice when there's something to celebrate I don't think there's any church where there's a lack of need where there are people there are needs and I as one person cannot meet all the needs in this church now I do have the responsibility as pastor Marv mentioned to oversee to make sure that needs are being met to make sure that things don't fall through the cracks and that's that's a that's a hard responsibility as I consider it it's difficult and I imagine that there were things that I might miss I don't want to I imagine that might happen so I need help and this is a responsibility that we all have you know in a in a family in a in a nuclear family everyone has a part to play right the dad's got to lead the family but everybody has a part that can't just do everything by himself and in our family that's the way it works right everybody has a part to play everybody has responsibilities to care for others in the family so if there's a need typically right it's the older ones that help care for the younger ones so even in our family we've got Isabella she's seven years old and sometimes her little brother Adam is just a little baby he's about to be one year old can you believe it but he has needs he can barely do anything for himself so Isabella can be that big sister it helps him that cares for him when he needs it each one of us can offer care and support love rejoicing and one of the interesting things I've been at this church for almost six years it's coming in December six years and I have seen this over and over and over and over again people caring for one another and it's delightful it's delightful see it's really one of the reasons why we why we stayed here why we came here in the first place number one part of the mission teach the scriptures number two care for one another like a family and number three as part of the mission of the church this the local church and this church in particular is that we are to be ambassadors for Jesus Christ turn to 2nd Corinthians chapter 5 2nd Corinthians chapter 5 start with verse 18 now all things are of God who has reconciled us to himself through Jesus Christ and has given us the ministry of reconciliation ministry means service

we have this service we've been given this role this job this ministry to bring 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 a word to proclaim now then we are ambassadors for Christ as though God were pleading through us and he does God wants to plead with the world those who are lost pleading with them and he says this we implore you on Christ's behalf be reconciled to God that's our message as our message to the world as Christian believers to those who don't know maybe those who do know but they need reminding they need encouraging they need to be exalted be reconciled to God you know there is a day of judgment coming in which God will judge the whole world and it will be a dreadful day fearful day in which God's wrath will be outpoured on the wicked those who have resisted him in every way but he has provided a way of escape he has provided a rescue plan and that rescue plan is a man named Jesus Christ a God man

Jesus Christ who gave up his life was crucified on a cross to atone for our sins to pay a price that we couldn't pay that is the message that we need to get out everywhere and as a local church as part of the body of Christ we are an embassy to send out ambassadors to let people know in whatever ways that we can and it's going to look different for everybody and I've thought over the years that we've been here of all the different ways that I've seen this happen in this church I've seen people post things on Facebook that's a way you can spread the message right we have gospel CDs out there and I've seen those go out to restaurants and different places with a gospel message I've seen people collecting tracts out here we have this little colored pamphlet what's that called?

[ 60 : 26 ] have a good day or something like that and it's just nice little messages in there but at the back on the back is a message about how to come and find eternal life in Jesus Christ I've seen people in this church passing those out I've seen people put up yard signs right this is when did we do this in the last spring put up yard signs John 3.16 billboards putting up billboards with John 3.16 there are people here who worked at crisis the crisis pregnancy center helping mentor women and at the same time sharing the gospel with them there's a ministry here called that we've promoted called Kids Hope USA working with young people in school we have opportunities to share with them the gospel of Jesus Christ parents here discipling their own children grandparents discipling their grandchildren helping to bring them to the faith always presenting the gospel people before them people having discussions at work and then finally what we think of more is kind of a when we talk about mission and our mission as ambassadors is helping missionaries overseas who are getting the word out beyond our local community to those who are in other parts of the world and how we are ambassadors is going to look different for everybody not everybody's going to be the same not everybody's going to go talking to strangers on the street but we all have a part to play in getting that message out

Colossians 4 5 through 6 says it this way Paul says walk in wisdom toward those who are outside those who are not believers redeeming the time let your speech always be with grace seasoned with salt that you may know how you ought to answer each one we have opportunities for those who don't know Christ who don't know what Christ has done for them or who have decided at this point not to take advantage of it and they might have questions and hopefully we have the answers we don't have all the answers they're tough questions I've thought about this as I teach and preach from the scriptures here I won't always have the answers sometimes there are things in the Bible that still confound me maybe we'll figure it out maybe we'll figure it out together when there are things like that but we take the wisdom that we do know and try to get the word out make Jesus famous make sure everybody knows and everybody has a chance to hear

I'll wrap up with this as I was putting this message together and thought about well let's talk about the mission of the church and I thought last night so you know our church actually has a mission statement or a purpose statement in our what do we call it our bylaws and constitution and all that we have an official little pamphlet if you've gone through the membership process you've gotten a copy of that and I pulled it up and this is what it says the purpose of Grace Bible Church shall be the teaching of the word of God check the organized worship and fellowship of believers knit together in the love of Christ and one another the growth and spiritual improvement of its members that's the family part the community part isn't it and then bearing witness to the Lord Jesus Christ in our own community and the spread of the gospel of the grace of God in all the earth those three things right there teach the word work as a family build one another up and then family finally be ambassadors for Christ get the word out to our community and beyond about this gospel of the grace of God that has been made available to all

I want to finish up with this this isn't just this commission this mission this purpose isn't just for us as individuals though it is for us as individuals but God intended his idea is that we would do this together not as Lone Rangers and you know people are difficult has anybody ever noticed that people are hard to get along with sometimes even in our own families right sometimes there's little squabbles but we need to have a commitment to one another because we have a mission to accomplish and we need to be able to work through all those little things work together as a community and a family because this is what God intended that we would work together to accomplish his mission that we all might come to the unity of the faith through the teaching of his word that we might care for one another as a family as part of the members of this body of Christ and that we might proclaim

Jesus Christ and him crucified to the world in ways big and small that we might do those things together my final admonition as we have a change in leadership here would you commit to this mission together with me here at Grace Bible Church it's my job to cast the vision to make sure that everybody's on the same page but I'd like to ask for your commitment to doing this not by yourself but together thank you Joe thanks everyone peer pressure is piling on

[ 67 : 22 ] I appreciate that it's a big responsibility and I'm I'm looking forward to the days ahead I'm excited I hope any of you are as well looking forward to what we can do together as this just one little body in this big body called the body of Christ just one little instance one little part of it we can do what we can to accomplish God's mission on the earth let's close in prayer Father thank you for these people here thank you for what you created this your idea of the body of Christ it's been such a blessing to me I know a blessing to so many here I ask that you would work in each one of us to take seriously to use wisdom to grow that we might be fruitful members of your body accomplishing what you intended for us to accomplish here in this short season that we have in this life as believers strengthen us give us the strength and the wisdom to do it well in Jesus name amen and we to done the, anything mond