

Holy Boldness

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[0 : 00] As the pastor said, my name is Jonathan, and I have the privilege of serving with Voice of the Martyrs! In the International Ministries Department, I have a leadership role in that and helping to provide some leadership for about 53 years.

Men and women scattered across 23 countries from 22 nationalities who make up our international work at Voice of the Martyrs. And it's a privilege. I know you guys know VOM. It would be hard not to with Tom here and Anthony and Pat and Sean and everyone else.

But just as a reminder, our vision, our goal is to provide practical and spiritual assistance to persecuted brothers and sisters around the world. And then here in the States to bring you into fellowship with your persecuted family around the world.

And it is a tremendous privilege. Sean knows me well. He can tell you there's nothing really special about me. We used to run youth camps together and things like that.

But the one thing that is unique is this, that God has given me and our staff a front row seat to what He is doing in the earth. And to give you an example, we have the privilege of meeting with the leaders of different mission organizations and hearing about their work.

[1 : 38] Just this last week, I was in Chiang Mai, Thailand with the leadership of Youth with a Mission, their frontier missions group, hearing about what God is doing on the on the very edges of the gospel going into a dark world.

And then a few weeks before that, I know Sean was in Central Asia with leaders from Operation Mobilization. Others of our guys were meeting with IMB leaders for Southeast and East Asia. Last fall, I was with David Platt in Richmond. It's amazing what God has allowed us to do and to see and to hear about what He's doing in the earth.

And I want to be clear, I've sat through thousands of sermons, having grown up in the church, in which at the end I thought, I wonder what He was wanting me to get out of that.

So here, I want to be very clear this morning with the point of this whole message. And if you leave with one thing, this is what I want you to leave with. These are the most exciting days to be alive in the history of the church.

[2 : 41] Okay, let me say it one more time, just in case you didn't hear it. These are the most exciting days to be alive in the history of the church. Now, I know that's hard for us to believe sometimes because we sit here in the midst of a very, let's say, cynical political campaign.

We're watching ISIS and Boko Haram running rampage over parts of our world, terrorism on the increase, all kinds of things. And we see all of that and we say, oh, these are terrible days. These are dark days indeed. But I want to tell you, as a guy who has a front row seat, you'll be amazed what God is doing. God is on the move. We had a brother from Pakistan just a few months ago in our office who told us about Pakistan, of all places.

And he said, brothers, the Lion of Judah is on the prowl in Pakistan. And we're seeing God on the move throughout the Muslim world in the most difficult and hostile places.

And we're seeing that around the world. Now, this idea that as we look at the world, it seems very difficult and very dark, while in reality other things are happening is not new.

[3 : 51] In fact, I want you to turn in your Bible to John chapter 4. And I want us to see an example this morning of a time where those who have their eyes on the world don't see what's happening in the heavenlies.

So John chapter 4 is this amazing passage of Scripture in which Jesus, and I love the old King James, when it says Jesus must needs go through Samaria.

Right? And Jesus comes to Samaria, sits by a well. The disciples go to town to get some food. And Jesus has this amazing encounter with a woman from Samaria.

One of the things I love about this story is the fact that this woman from Samaria is very interested in spiritual things. And I think sometimes we forget that as Christians, that people who are outside the church, who are outside the faith, are still interested in spiritual things and will engage in spiritual conversations.

We've seen it all over the world. So this morning, I want us to begin reading in verse 27. But in honor of God's Word, I hope you know how precious it is that you have a copy of this.

[4 : 55] Or if you're like me, dozens of copies of this. But would you stand with me in honor of reading the Word of God this morning? Beginning in verse 27 of John chapter 4.

Just then, His disciples returned and were surprised to find Him talking with a woman. But no one asked, what do you want? Or why are you talking to her? Then leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah? They came out of the town and made their way toward Him. Meanwhile, His disciples urged Him, Rabbi, eat something. But He said to them, I have food to eat that you know nothing about.

Then His disciples said to each other, Could someone have brought Him food? My food, said Jesus, is to do the will of Him who sent me and to finish His work. Don't you have a saying? It's still four months until harvest. I tell you, open your eyes and look on the fields. They are ripe for harvest. Even now, the one who reaps draws a wage and harvests a crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together.

[6 : 08] Thus the saying, one sows and another reaps is true. I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor.

Pray with me. Father, how we thank You for today. I thank You for the privilege of gathering together as the body of Christ.

Knowing that in the kingdom, we are gathered with people from every nation and tribe. Father, around this world, people are calling upon You. And Father, help us to never lose sight of the role that we play in Your kingdom.

Father, I pray this morning You would speak to our hearts. I pray You'd help us to open our eyes, to lift up our eyes and look on the fields. And Father, may we be encouraged, and may we be challenged by Your Word, and by what You're doing in the earth today.

In Jesus' name, amen. So this is an example of kind of where I think we are sometimes. The disciples are with Jesus.

[7 : 09] They come to Samaria. It's a difficult place. And it's time for food. So they leave Jesus by the well, and they go to get food. And their focus is on that.

Their focus is on, let's go get some food. It's time to eat. I wonder what they have in Samaria, right? I wonder what the food's like. I hope it's good. And they head off to town. And Jesus has this encounter with a Samaritan woman.

And God begins to open the door for the Samaritans of all people to come into the kingdom. And in our passage where we began to read, the disciples come back, the disciples have no idea what's going on with Jesus.

All they know is He's talking to a woman at a well, which seems rather strange to the disciples. But they're still focused, guys. Look, they still don't really notice what or why they're talking.

They just worry that maybe she brought Him food. And guys, this can be us. We can be so focused on the daily earthly things. We can be so concerned about who the next president's going to be.

[8 : 13] Or what the price of gas will be next year. Where oil will be. And all these things that we miss out completely on what God is doing. Jesus, on the other hand, in this passage is totally focused on the kingdom.

He's not worried about food. He's not sitting there talking to the woman saying, Man, I could sure use a burger. I hope they bring a burger back, right? Or maybe burritos. I don't know what the big food is in Samaria.

But whatever it is, Jesus is not concerned about that. Why? Because His focus is on the kingdom. His focus is on this one person who's in front of Him who desperately needs to know Him.

And needs to be brought into His kingdom. This happens to us all the time. There are things happening in our world today that we cannot imagine. And we cannot see them because so often our eyes are down.

I love this passage in the older translations where Jesus says, Lift up your eyes and look on the fields. I think it's an amazing picture of us. How many of us right now have our heads down?
[9 : 14] Because of everything that's happening around us. Whether it's a difficulty at work. Whether it's, again, trying to figure out who the next president's going to be. Whether it's worried about my job or worried about my family.

And our heads slowly come down. And we spend, many of us, spend our whole life walking around like this. Saying, woe is me. I don't know what God's going to do.

We often have this idea that God is in heaven wringing His hands. Wondering what will happen. What happens if Donald Trump becomes president? God is in heaven. God is not in heaven wringing His hands about anything.

Our God is a sovereign God in control of all things. If God puts Donald Trump in the White House, so be it. Right? But He's not worried about it.

He's not in heaven wondering what's going to happen. He knows exactly what's going to happen. What we have to do, what Jesus reminds these people, is lift up your eyes and look on the fields.

[10 : 12] And my goal this morning is to do just that. I just want to help you to lift up your eyes for a moment. And look on the fields. And see what we see happening around the world.

And may you be encouraged by it. May you be challenged by it. Because as we look at the world, there are things happening that are unbelievable. When I say these are the most exciting days to be alive in the history of the church, that's not hyperbole.

That's not me making something up. It is absolutely true. We are seeing things happen in the earth today that we have never imagined would happen. Could not dream would happen.

And yet we're seeing them happening day by day. So as we look at this world today, we see really three, I'm going to mention three kind of themes.

Three big things that we see happening in the world today. One, a holy boldness. A holy boldness. As we look at the church, as we look at the body of Christ moving out into the world today, one of the signature keys is that.

[11 : 20] It's a holy boldness. I want you to know this world will not be won to Christ by the meek. This world will not be won to Christ over a television screen, although God uses television.

This world will be won to Christ by brothers and sisters like you and I, who have the boldness of the Holy Spirit and the courage of our convictions to talk to people, to share the gospel with people.

It's very easy in this day and age to get caught up in all kinds of different programs that we can do. We're going to end poverty. Can I tell you something? We will never end poverty.

Our master said, the poor you will always have with you. The goal is not to end poverty. The goal is to win people to Christ. And we're seeing this around the world.

Sean showed me this a couple of years ago, and it still amazes me. Because one of the things when it comes to boldness and it comes to evangelism, oftentimes we talk about hindrances.

[12 : 21] And we say, oh, there's all kinds of hindrances to sharing the gospel today. Because, you know, you have to build a bridge and you have to walk across that bridge and you have to answer all their questions.

What I've learned is people rarely ask the questions that we worry they're going to ask us. In all my years, no one's ever asked me why Peter wore long robes, right? No one's ever asked me to explain superlapsarian dispensationalism to them.

People don't ask me those questions, right? But we spend a lot of time thinking, oh, I need a little more training. How many of you have been to evangelism training?

Almost everybody. How many of you have been to more than one? So I grew up in the Baptist church. So I've been to EE and CWT and WOW and just every initial you can think of.

I've been to that training. Because we have to be more prepared. Because there's so many hindrances. If you look at the last verse of the book of Acts. It's Acts 28.

[13 : 21] You don't even have to turn there. I'll just read it to you. Acts 28, 31. We find Paul in prison in Rome. Right? And there's this amazing verse. He proclaimed the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance.

And Sean first pointed this out to me. I wonder if it were true that we had more boldness, there would be fewer hindrances to the gospel. And I think sometimes that's true.

I think sometimes we are so inhibited by our fear that we don't even take the chance to talk to someone. We don't take that opportunity to share the gospel.

But what would happen if with just a holy boldness we were to begin to share the gospel? Let me give you an example of holy boldness. I was in North India several years ago. And I met, and the VOM guys know, they've heard this story a hundred times. My favorite VOM story. We're at a meeting with a thousand indigenous church planters. And I can't remember if Sean was there this year or not.

[14 : 26] He's been there before. And I met a young church planter, an Indian brother. He's about this tall, small little guy. And I said, tell me about your ministry.

And he had a bicycle. And if you've been to VOM's headquarters, you've seen a picture of this bicycle at VOM. He had a bicycle. And it was not like a Trek mountain bike. It wasn't a really cool bicycle.

It was just a bicycle, right? Except it had a few accessories. And one of them was a drum. He had a drum like you would bang on, on the crossbar. So that's a unique bicycle.

I haven't seen those around the States much. Then he had a little speaker on the front. And on the back, he had a stack of gospel literature and a lantern. And I said, brother, tell me about your ministry.

And he said, oh, the Lord has given me a wonderful ministry. And I said, I bet he has. I said, I can't wait to hear about it. What do you do? He said, well, I ride into villages where there is no church and there are no Christians.

[15 : 26] And I bang on my drum. Now, could you imagine? Could you imagine if the outreach strategy this summer for Highland Park Baptist Church was you guys were going to ride down to the mall and bang on drums in the parking lot?

He said, I bang on my drum until a crowd of people comes out, which doesn't surprise me. If there's a guy in the middle of the road banging on a drum, people are going to go say, what is this guy doing?

He said, when a crowd comes out, I preach the gospel. I said, that's amazing. Because brothers and sisters, that's amazing. An Indian guy riding into a village with no Christians banging on a drum and preaching the gospel.

I said, well, brother, how does that work out? And he said, sometimes it's amazing. He said, people hear the gospel. The Lord touches their heart. He changes their heart. They repent. We see the birth of a church in a village where there had been no church before.

I said, that's incredible. So what about other times? He said, oh, they beat me. And I said, oh, brother, I am so sorry. What do you do when they beat you? And he said, when I wake up, I ride to the next village.

[16 : 29] Is that not incredible? I can tell you this morning as we sit here, there are hundreds, maybe thousands of little guys like that in UP state in North India, riding into villages, banging on drums.

And you know what they're seeing? A mass movement of God among Hindu peoples. We're seeing one of the largest movements to faith in North India that we've ever seen.

And a lot of it being driven by little guys on bicycles banging on drums. This is a holy boldness. This is what it would take. Could you imagine if that was what God called you to do?

Most of us can't imagine walking across the street and knocking on a neighbor's door, much less banging on a drum. But what would happen if this holy boldness that we're beginning to see around the world would happen here?

What if you and I, what if we were able to encourage one another and challenge one another and hold each other accountable with a holy boldness to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ? Do you know that the Lord has given you the privilege of living in what is now the largest English-speaking mission field in the world?

[17 : 36] I know sometimes when we have missions week, we think about the poor little brown guy on the other side of the planet. Can I tell you something just maybe that you don't know? Those little brown brothers and sisters on the other side of the planet are praying for you because your country is lost.

And they're sending missionaries to you because you've become the mission field. You're no longer the mission sending field. Another example, this happened to me personally.

I've been a Christian for a long time, about 35 years I've been a Christian. And I've said for a long time, no one has ever shared the gospel with me.

And I do this survey where I go, how many of you have had someone that you don't know share the gospel with you outside of a church? Outside of a church context?

Anyone? Just a few. This is what I see everywhere. I grew up in the church. I was around the church my whole life. And I always would say, no one has ever shared the gospel with me.

[18 : 38] Not one time outside of a church. No one has ever walked up to me and said, can I tell you about Jesus Christ? Not one time. All that changed last year. I was on a flight flying in China out of Arumqi, way out in western China.

And I get on the flight. Now, those who know me know, I joke that I don't like people, right? I'm not the talkative guy on the plane. I took my wife on a trip this year.

She spoke more to people in airports than I have in my entire life. And she did it in like two flights, right? I don't talk to people. I'm the guy who gets on the plane, sits down, opens a book, and dares you to talk to me, right?

So I'm doing that. That's my favorite thing to do. So I'm sitting on a flight in Arumqi. And I'm on the aisle. And there's a little Chinese lady who sits in the middle seat next to me.

And I'm really happy because I'm aggressively built. So small people next to me means more room for me. So I was excited about that. And I'm reading my book. And we're taxiing on the runway.

[19 : 42] And this little Chinese lady, as I'm reading my book, taps me. And she says, excuse me, sir. Do you know Jesus? No one's ever asked me that question before in my life, right?

Do you know Jesus? Now, can you imagine? She's a small Chinese woman. And English is her probably second or third language. And there's a big, gruff American sitting next to her reading a book.

And what does she say? Excuse me, sir. Do you know Jesus? This is a holy boldness, right? She may be the most bold person I've ever met. And I looked at her and I said, yes, I do know Jesus. She goes, oh, are you a follower of his? And I said, I am. And she said, I have to ask you, are you a good Christian? And I said, I think so, right?

I mean, I don't know how you answer that question. I said, I think so. She said, well, do you read the Bible every day? And I said, well, I do. And she said, do you tell people about Jesus?

[20 : 45] That was convicting. And I said, sometimes. And she said, oh, she goes, then you are my brother. She goes, it's so wonderful to talk to you. And then she talks to me for a little bit about her favorite passage in the Bible and her favorite worship song.

And then she turns to the brother on the window and she starts having a conversation with him in Chinese. After about a half hour, she turns back to me and she says, please pray for this brother. I told him about Jesus, but he doesn't believe.

And I thought, that's unbelievable, right? In China. And then what I learned later is across the aisle and up one is her husband who's sitting in a center seat.

And he's doing the same thing on his row, sharing the gospel with the people on his flight. Now, this is a boldness that we're beginning to see around the world.

Could you imagine if you would pray that God would give you a boldness? How exciting things would be, right? I think sometimes we're so bored with our Christian life because we see so little.

[21 : 46] We kind of, you know, we just, we're good moral people. We're outraged at evil in our world. And we come to church on Sunday and we get kind of a warm fuzzy when we sing.

And then the pastor preaches a good word. And we go home and we think, there's got to be more to that, right? There's got to be more to it than that. Can I tell you something? There is. God has put you here for a purpose.

The people who are called to win this world to Christ are not just the pastor. It's all of us. And imagine if we had this holy boldness. And around the world we're seeing it.

God is pouring out this boldness. And people are preaching the gospel in the most difficult and hostile places in the world. Now, it is true that in America, in Bartlesville, Oklahoma, this may be a difficult place to preach the gospel, right?

Because they've heard it. But here's what I would be willing to bet you. I would be willing to bet you that within walking distance of this church, and we'll say my walking distance.

[22 : 45] I'm an old fat man. It's not that far, right? Within walking distance of this church are people in this city who've never heard the gospel. Now, they've heard of Jesus and they've seen your church and they read the signs on the billboards as they go by.

But they've never had someone who actually cared about them, who loved them, who sat down with them and said, can I please tell you about the most important thing in my life? People right here in this town you could walk to.

They've never heard that. What would happen if God were to give us that kind of a holy boldness that would allow us to say, excuse me, sir, do you know Jesus? I've learned this over time with doing evangelism that sometimes that's the easiest way to do it, right?

The longer you build that bridge, the harder it is to walk across. Sometimes it's good just to say, do you know Jesus? Can I tell you about Jesus? You might be surprised what God would do. So we're seeing this holy boldness around the world.

And it's exciting. And we're seeing people come to the kingdom like never before. Many people would tell you that there are more Muslims coming to Christ today than in the history of the church. And they're coming in the most difficult and hostile places across northern Iraq and Lebanon and Syria and Jordan.

[23 : 56] I was with brothers this week from YWAM who live in Brussels. And they're talking about, you know, we've all seen on the news the millions of Syrian refugees that are flooding into Europe.

And he's opening his home. He said he opened his home to two Syrian refugees. And when they made their beds, he put Injils, New Testaments, on their bed. And he said the two men walked into the room and one of them said, is that an Injil?

And he said, yes, it is. It's New Testament. And the man began to weep. He said, I've been looking for one of those for years. I've never been able to find one. He said they're so open to the gospel. People are coming to Christ in droves. So rather than seeing this as a huge crisis, this may be a great moment in the kingdom of heaven. What God is doing among Muslims. Second thing, this holy boldness, we also see the power of God.

In Acts 4, we see that the disciples after one of the first times that they're persecuted, the early church. Acts 4, 28 and 29, the Bible records the disciples praying.

[24 : 58] Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant, Jesus.

In verse 31, after they prayed, the place where they was was filled with smoke and they were filled with boldness. Right? We're seeing the power of God. Now, we're going to talk about, well, dreams and visions, signs and wonders.

But I want you to not be the most cynical extreme as a guy in a white suit in a stadium full of people waving his coat around and taking an offering. It's not what we're talking about at all this morning. Okay? Here's what we're seeing. We're seeing God move in power around the world. And we're seeing it in the Muslim world through dreams and visions. This has become such a common thing. It's not even really that big of a deal anymore. We were in Malaysia last year. We were talking with some missionaries. And they said, it's really become so common. We just always begin that way.

[25 : 57] Have you had any strange dreams or visions lately? With Muslims. And they're finding that these Muslims are having dreams of Esau, a man in white, who comes and shares with him that he is the son of God and to follow him.

A missionary was in our chapel recently who works among the Muslim world. And he said, you know, the amazing thing about that is God is way ahead of us. He's not waiting on us. He's decided it takes too long to wait for the Christians to do it.

So he's going to do it anyway. He's going to go in front ahead of us and share with people. And it seems to be what's happening. We're seeing Muslims have these dreams of Jesus. And then among Hindus, we see signs and wonders.

Right? Again, not stadiums, not monetized. No one's selling prayer cloths or things like that. What we're seeing is simple people who believe that God has to be more powerful than their gods. If you live in India, there's some people say 300 million gods in India. If it's half that, that's 150 million. If it's half that, it's 75. It's still a lot of gods.

[27 : 03] There's a lot of gods in India. And what we see happening is this. A Hindu spends his life in fear of the gods. So I go and I appease this god.

I make an offering. Well, now I've angered this god. Now I have to go take care of this god. Now this one's upset. And if my crops fail, it's that one. And if my children flunk their exams, it's that one.

They spend their whole life in fear of the gods. So if they're going to follow Christ, they're going to change gods. This god has to be more powerful than their god.

Or else it just won't help them in the long run. So what we find, we had a friend tell us. I know Sean was with me for this. We had a friend tell us, you'll never want anyone to Christ in North India with an argument.

God has to show up. And what we're seeing across North India is God shows up. I was preaching in a church in North India last year in which at the end of the service, the pastor came up and said, how many of you have someone sick in your neighborhood, in your village?

[28 : 05] So in your neighborhood, three or four people raised their hand. He had them stand the church around and prayed that they could go and pray for the sick. See them healed and preach the gospel. I thought that was amazing.

I'm a born and bred Southern Baptist. You know, I grew up afraid of the Holy Spirit and we didn't talk much about those things. So it was kind of eye-opening for me. But I asked the question, how many of you in this church came to Christ through power?

About 80%. And they said, and again, guys, it's not the weird stuff. It's not, you know, people making money on television. It's just the simple fact of I live in a village where there are no doctors. And my child is sick. Will you come and pray? I read in your Bible, if you will anoint them with oil and pray, God will heal them. And God heals them. And then the pastors preach the gospel and we see people coming into the kingdom.

God is moving like never before. God is coming alongside his church as his church marches into the darkness of this world. And he's preaching the gospel and showing signs and wonders and power that he is the God of the universe.

[29 : 10] He is the God of all power who is greater than all of our needs. Probably the most interesting of these power of God things that we're seeing is forgiveness.

Supernatural forgiveness. You know, you've watched the news. You've seen what has happened in northern Iraq and in Nigeria of Christians being wiped out, of girls being kidnapped and forced into sexual slavery.

We've seen husbands drug out and shot in front of their families. We've seen so many just horrendous things. And at Voice of the Martyrs, we open our email on a daily basis and we see horrendous things.

But the other thing that we're seeing is this. It's God giving people the ability to forgive those who persecute them. Now, you and I, I don't know about you. I'm going to guess that you're probably a better Christian than I am.

So you're probably much more forgiving than I am. But for me, sometimes it's hard for me to forgive someone when they do me wrong. When they put a picture of me and my cat in the bulletin.

[30 : 18] It's difficult for me to let that go and not just be driven, fueled by rage, right? But think about this. We're seeing brothers and sisters who've lost everything.

Everything. They're living in a tent in the middle of a refugee camp in Lebanon, surrounded by Muslims. The Muslims have killed the brother, you know, his wife and they've kidnapped his children.

And still that brother can say, I forgive them. I pray for them. I remember there's a brother named Habila from Nigeria who was shot in the face by Boko Haram.

Shot in the face and still says, if I were to see them, I would invite them to my home and serve them tea. How can someone do that?

I mean, it's going to take me days to get over the cat. I can't imagine how in the world that can happen. Well, there's only one way. The absolute power of God. That God in the midst of all of our circumstances and trials can give us the power and the ability to forgive.

[31 : 28] And I can tell you, brothers and sisters, as we move forward in this land, and as we look to see God's kingdom established once again in America, we will have to have the ability to forgive.

Because people will say terrible things about us. It's without question. Will we have that? We will if we have the power of God. And I believe God is moving in power like never before.

Never in my lifetime have I seen anything like it. The third thing is this. Harvest. These are days of harvest. Now, you have to lift up your eyes here, right?

I was just this week, as I said, with leaders of YWAM. And one of the leaders with YWAM had just come from a meeting. There's this thing in missions. Kind of a weird thing that most people have

never heard of.

Called Table 71. Which refers to a meeting back. And it's basically the leaders of all of the big mission orgs. And they meet twice a year. And they're kind of the think tank strategist of the mission world, right?

[32 : 36] So you've got folks from the IMB and YWAM and OM and Wycliffe and Travis Crusade. All these folks meeting. Well, this leader had just come from that meeting. And here's what she said to me and to the group.

Table 71 is convinced that this is the generation that will see the completion of the Great Commission. This generation. Never before has this happened.

So there are these things called unreached, unengaged people groups. These are peoples of the world who are, as it says, unreached. They haven't heard the gospel.

And they're unengaged. Which means no one is trying to target them. No one has targeted them yet. There are only about 123 of those left in the world right now.

123. And they're all with populations above 10,000. They've already kind of reached the 10 million. The 1 million. They've kind of been working their way down. They are really convinced that this is the generation.

[33 : 37] We are the generation. Well, maybe not me. Maybe Anna's generation. Is the generation that will see the completion of the Great Commission. Lift up your eyes and look on the fields.

They are wide unto harvest. God is moving like never before. Before us. God is not sending us to the nations. God is inviting us to walk with Him to the nations.

To see what He is doing. And to be involved. And I want to encourage you. I want to challenge you as a church. To be a part of that. To be a part of what He's doing.

I heard this morning in the announcement. You'll have opportunities even this summer. Even now. To share the gospel. Guys, there are people who desperately need it. And they're all around us. You don't have to get on a plane.

And go halfway around the world to share the gospel. You can walk from here. And share the gospel. And what will happen? You know, I'm from Voice of the Martyrs. So maybe I'm supposed to talk about persecution.

[34 : 35] Will there be persecution? Is there persecution right now? Absolutely. Persecution is horrific around the world. Our brothers and sisters in Christ are suffering like never before.

And they're being killed in large numbers. And yet this is still cause for rejoicing. Jesus said, if you want to follow me, take up your cross.

You will be persecuted. The bigger question is this. Why aren't we being persecuted here? Now, we talk some about persecution in the U.S. Some of what we talk about happening lately.

I don't really see that as persecution. I see that as a loss of privilege. As much as anything. My whole life, people have deferred to the church. Thought even if I'm not a Christian, even if I don't go, it's good that you go.

Right? It's good that you go to church. Those days are quickly leaving us. I think this is a good thing. I think the days of the country club church are soon to pass away.

[35 : 32] The country club church being, I get up on Sunday and I put on nice clothes. I go down. I get my warm fuzzy. The pastor says something really encouraging and nice to me. And then I go for lunch.

And then I go about my week. And I don't think about Jesus again until next Sunday. That church will quickly disappear. Because it will cost you too much to be a Christian in the coming days in America.

And what will be left will be gatherings like this. Brothers and sisters who believe in Jesus with all their heart and don't come for a warm fuzzy. They come because they are the body of Christ.

And they believe that they are part of the church triumphant who is to take the gospel to the world. And that church will change America rapidly. That's my two cents.

But I'm going to beg you this morning to be a part of that church. To be a part of that church. Will you, with the help of God and the power of the Holy Spirit, have a holy boldness this week?

[36 : 29] We put a point on it. Is there someone that you can think of right now that you'll talk to this week about Jesus? That you'll just share your story? You don't have to give them the EE presentation with all the verses and all that.

Is there someone this week that you'd sit down with and say, hey, can I tell you the most important thing in my life? Can you think of someone like that? If you are, would you make a commitment to talk to them this week?

Not next week, not next month. This week. Is there someone that you could do that with? Is there someone that you could have a holy conversation with? And then trust the outcome to God.

Right? But have that holy boldness. And trust that God will show up. And God will show up in power and will help you, give you the words to say. Change people's hearts.

Like my little Indian friend says, change their hearts. May they come to know Christ. Because that's how your church will grow. That's how churches do grow around the world. You don't grow with the next big plan.

[37 : 30] You grow with reaching your people. The thing that was talked about every day in Chiang Mai last week is, how many of your people, in other words, your people group, how many of your people will hear the gospel today?

Well, how many people do you know who don't know Christ that will hear the gospel today? If there's none, then make one. Find one. And share the gospel with them. So that's my invitation to you this morning.

To come and be a part of what God is doing in the earth. To have a holy boldness. To have a trust in the power of God to show up. And to believe that these are harvest days.

So, what I want to do, real quick. I just want to pray for you. And then I want to give you the opportunity. This is a Baptist church. We do invitations here, right? Okay? Good.

I'm glad. It's been a while. What I want to do after I pray is I just want to invite you to come and to pray. You don't have to talk to me or the pastor. You can if you want. But to come and pray and ask God to give you that person this week.

[38 : 38] We'll just make it real simple. The invitation is there one person this week that you can talk to about Jesus. If there is, come. Pray about it. Lay it before God. May He give you the boldness to do it.

May He give you the boldness to do it.