

A Vision of Ministry

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[0 : 00] Take your Bibles this morning and open them to our text, Luke chapter 8.

! We're ready to begin that chapter in the course of making our way through this great gospel, the gospel of Luke.

! Luke chapter 8. Luke chapter 8. And our text for this morning is verses 1 to 3. Just three verses. Now it came to pass afterward, after the events that took place in chapter 7, that he went through every city and village, preaching and bringing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with him. And certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities. Mary called Magdalene, out of whom had come seven demons. And Joanna, the wife of Cusa, Herod's steward. And Susanna and many others who provided for him from their substance.

[1 : 21] All right? Short text. And quite frankly, I was tempted, sharing this with our staff earlier this week and some others who were, well, some of our Colorado team were asking me what I was preaching on Sunday.

I was tempted really to skip these three verses. You know, just skip over them and move right on in to, you know, verses 4 through 15.

In Jesus' famous parable of the sower. That's what it's commonly called, though it's really not the parable of the sower. It's really the parable of the soils. And we'll get to that sometime after we get back from Ukraine.

And so I was tempted to just kind of move into that great passage, just dive right on into it. One of my favorite parables of the Lord Jesus Christ. But I couldn't do it. And, you know, I'm committed to preaching expository sermons consecutively through entire books of the Bible.

And so I just can't skip over those three verses. So then I thought, well, maybe I can just kind of tie these three verses into the parable of the sower or the soils.

[2 : 32] And, you know, just kind of make it fit together. Maybe I could find some kind of connection. And I guess really I, you know, to some extent maybe I could do that. But really it would require kind of forcing something on the text.

These three verses. And I can't do that. The more I studied the passage, the more I understood that this text really needs to stand alone. There's something for us to learn here.

And since all Scripture is given by inspiration, given by Holy Spirit inspiration, and all Scripture is profitable. That's what Paul said in 1 Timothy 3.16.

Or 2 Timothy 3.16. It says that's the case. Then these few verses must have something to offer to us.

And indeed they do. Now, basically, Luke's primary intent here is to summarize. This is a summary. Three verses.

[3 : 32] He kind of summarizes Jesus' ministry to this point in his earthly ministry. And it's really his Galilean ministry. That's the phase of his ministry that Jesus is in at this point.

Not finished with his Galilean ministry. And so this is kind of a pre-summary, maybe even an introduction or transition to the final stage of this important part of his ministry.

Before he moves on into the Judean ministry, which will eventually end in Jerusalem with his crucifixion. And so it's a summary. That said, then, what is the value here for us?

Well, it's really very simple. If these verses summarize Jesus' ministry, then they should summarize our ministry.

And so that's why this is important. And so what we have here, I think, in these verses, we could call a vision for ministry. A vision for ministry.

[4 : 32] For you. I think it applies to the individual believer as well as, for me, the pastor, certainly, for individual believers. But also for Highland Park, a church collectively.

Believers collectively. A church. It applies to us. It's a vision for ministry. And so in these three short verses, I think we can identify five, five key features of what our ministry as a church ought to look like.

And they're really very simple. Very basic. Very rudimentary. And as soon as I start identifying them for you, you're going to say, well, yeah. It's just very clear. And I think you'll see these kind of jumping out at you from this text, this summary of Jesus' ministry in the region of Galilee.

The first one is this. And by the way, we'll take these in the order in which they present themselves and not necessarily in the order that we might experience them. Okay?

Kind of debated which way to go on that. We'll just take it a step at a time through the text as we find them. And so the first one is this. It's very simple. Going.

[5 : 42] Just one word point. Going. That's a vision for ministry. Right? It's going. And verse 1, rather, that's what we see here in Jesus' ministry, the summary of his ministry.

Now, it came to pass afterward that he went. That's how it's translated in the New King James. He went through every city and village. Literally, he was going.

It's a participle. He was going. Jesus did not stay. He went. Jesus was not stopping and staying put. He was going. And his ministry was just like that.

He was always going. Going. And, see, here's the point. The Great Commission has always been about going. Not staying.

It's always about going. I mean, the most famous, most well-known articulation of the Great Commission is Matthew 28, verse 19. And what does it say?

[6 : 46] How does it begin? Go. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations. And so, we go to them.

There's no way to escape this in the Great Commission. We go to them. To the nations. The people of all nations. We go to them. Not they come to us.

Mark 16, 15. There's similar verbiage used in the Great Commission. And Mark 16, 15 begins the same way. Go. Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

Now, that's the Great Commission. It's all about going. Not staying. And I would say to you that the church, over our history, the history of the church, the church has always struggled with this part of the Great Commission.

This going part. Because we don't want to go. We want to stay. We want to stay where we are.

[7 : 53] Right where we are. And, by the way, God has, on a number of occasions, He has moved in such a way in the church to compel them to go. In a sense, forced the church to move outside of its comfort boundaries, comfort zone, and go, to go out.

And God has done that. In fact, very early on in the life of the church, God did this. You might remember the infant church was content to stay. They were content to stay right where they were. Where were they? They were in Jerusalem, worshiping there. And they were just right there. And they would not go out from there. And the Great Commission has always been about going out to all the nations.

But the church refused to do it. They were just staying right there. And so what did God do? He sent a persecutor led by a fellow by the name of Saul of Tarsus.

Do you remember him? He became who? Paul, of course, after his conversion. God actually sent Saul of Tarsus to persecute the church, the early church, with the end result being to mobilize them.

[9 : 04] In fact, take your Bibles and turn to Acts chapter 8 and verse 3. Just thumb right over there. Go right there from Luke 8. Go to Acts 8. In Acts chapter 8 verse 3, It is telling us about Saul of Tarsus and what he was up to and what he was doing.

And in the course of revealing to us Saul's work of persecutor against the church, God also reveals the end result of it.

And here in Acts chapter 8 verse 3, He made havoc. He made havoc of the church. Right? Made havoc of the church, entering every house and dragging off.

I love the verbiage here. Well, I don't love it. It doesn't sound very good. It's very negative. And yet this is what Paul or Saul was doing. Dragging off men and women, committing them to prison.

This is persecution of the church in Jerusalem. Therefore, and here's the important part, those who were scattered went everywhere.

[10:14] That's what people who are scattered do. They go everywhere. Every different place. Kind of like scattering out from Jerusalem in all directions. They went everywhere.

But what were they doing? Preaching the Word. Preaching the Word. You see God's intent in this. God's people were staying.

Staying put. They shall not be moved. That must have been a song in those days as well. We shall not be moved. And they wanted to stay right there in Jerusalem. Things weren't easy in Jerusalem. They were still oppressed by the Roman government and also oppressed by their own people, the Jews, and especially those in places of leadership.

It wasn't an easy life in Jerusalem, but they kind of adjusted to that. And they were not going out. And so God had to move them out to make them going people.

And He did that through the Apostle, or later to be the Apostle Paul. In Acts 11, 19, we have a similar statement. Those who were scattered after the persecution, that's the persecution that was led, at least the instrument of it, was Saul of Tarsus.

[11:24] After the persecution that arose over Stephen, who was consenting to Stephen's death, Saul of Tarsus, they traveled, this is how it's worded in the New King James, they traveled, or they went, or they were going as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, doing what?

Preaching the Word. There it is again. In more positive terms, in the late 1700s, God used a shoe cobbler by the name of William Carey to transform Baptists into going people.

And really, by extension, all evangelicals, to be going people. Carey drew kind of a crude little map of the world, and he hung it on his cobbler shop wall.

And he marked on that map every place where the gospel had not yet extended to, been reached, and so he marked all those places, and then he began to pray that God would send out laborers into these untouched, unreached regions of the world, not really knowing that eventually God would be sending him to those places.

Carey had read Andrew Fuller's book, *The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation*, where Fuller said, if it is the duty of all to believe whenever the gospel is presented to them, it must be the duty of all who have received the gospel to endeavor to make it universally known.

[13:09] And I agree with that. Eventually, Carey became involved in a local association of particular Baptists. We, as Southern Baptists, have our roots in the particular Baptists.

And so he joined that, became a pastor himself, and at a minister's meeting in 1786, Carey suggested that it was the duty of all Christians to spread the gospel to the world, throughout the world.

One of the hyper-Calvinists in the meeting that day said to Carey, young man, you sit down. When God pleases to convert the heathen, he will do it without your aid and mine.

How wrong he is, or was. Carey would not sit down. Carey would not be quiet. And three years later, he published his now famous missionary manifesto, entitled, and get this title, *An Inquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens*.

That's quite a title, isn't it? Carey later preached a sermon that changed everything for Baptists, everything for the church, Baptists or otherwise.

[14:22] Changed everything in England and also in America. And in this sermon, he repeatedly declared, expect great things from God, attempt great things for God.

This led to the founding of the very first missionary organization in October 1792, the particular Baptist society for the propagation of the gospel amongst the heathen.

They loved long titles in those days. And later they shortened it to the Baptist Missionary Society, and Carey was their first missionary. And he was sent to India and spent his life, literally spent it in India.

And Carey became known as the father and still known today as the father of modern mission. You see, God used, and we could cite other examples where God has used events and people, special people, to compel his church out of their slumber, out of their ease, their desire to stay and to compel them to go.

God wants his church always going. Always going. And that should be our vision for ministry, and Jesus models that here in this summation of his ministry.

[15:37] And notice a few things about this going. In the first place, this is an inclusive thing. Going is inclusive.

That is, Jesus going was inclusive. It says here that he went through every city and village. Through. Every city and village.

The preposition through is a very common preposition in the Greek text, and it's kata, if you like to take those kinds of notes. And in the context here, it carries the meaning of throughout.

Throughout. And the King James then translates it pretty close to that. He went through every, or throughout every city and village. New American Standard, some of you may have that version, and it gives a fuller translation, really.

It says he began going around from one city and village to another. That really expands. It gives us the idea that he went throughout.

[16:39] See, the Great Commission is decidedly inclusive, not exclusive. Again, I would remind you of the Great Commission. In Matthew 28, 19, Go therefore and make disciples of all nations.

All nations. That's ethnos. It means all peoples. You know, there are the great nations and definable nations, and there are also people, what are called people groups, kind of loosely fit, civilized societies, and some of them are very loose.

They're all people groups with different languages and dialects and customs and cultures. And the Great Commission is not just to go to the recognizable nations like Ukraine or China or some of those places, but also to go to small little groups of people.

So we're to go to all the nations. Mark 16, 15 says the same thing. It ought to, because it was spoken by the same person, Jesus.

And he said, Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. So it's inclusive.

[17:52] The inclusivity of this is very clear. There is also an intentionality of it. It's very intentional. Jesus going is intentional.

It's part of a plan. It's not just some off-the-cuff kind of thing. It's not just a last-minute type of decision. It's part of a plan, part of a strategy.

Jesus had a strategy to go to all the various points in Galilee and then move from there and eventually to the cross. It was a plan. It was a strategy. And this is a model for us.

The church must also always have a strategy in her obedience to the Great Commission. And we need to work that strategy. But let me quickly admit something else.

There is also an inconvenience about this. Can we just admit that? Yeah, it's inclusive and we don't have a problem with that.

[18:52] It includes all people of every country, every people group, every color, every economic status, every educational level, every language, every culture, every person.

And it is intentional, certainly. I mean, you can't do a thing and do it effectively without a plan, without a strategy. But what about the inconvenience about it? Dare we admit that?

Great Commission is not convenient. That's why many of God's people are not part of it, not obedient to. It's not convenient. It's not convenient when it means going to your next door neighbor. It's not convenient when it means going down to the church on Tuesdays for grow. It's not convenient when it means giving your Wednesdays to work with Awana children or to give a week of your summer for vacation Bible school.

It's not convenient for those who meet here every third Friday and travel down to the prison. It's a blessing, yes, but it's not always convenient. It's not convenient when it means going to Colorado or Mexico or halfway around the world to Ukraine or China.

[19:59] There's nothing convenient about the Great Commission. But then there was nothing convenient about the cross, was there? The inconvenience of it.

Here's the vision for ministry. Going. Going. Jesus models that for us here. He was going throughout every city and village and that's what we must do as well.

Second, proclaiming. Here's the second part of the vision of ministry. The second thing revealed in the text. Going. Proclaiming.

Proclaiming. Verse 1 says, what was he doing while he was going? He was preaching and bringing the glad tidings. That's how it's translated in the New King James.

Preaching and bringing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. Proclaiming. Now, there are two words in the text, in the Greek text, more words in the English, but just two words in the Greek text that seem to be synonyms.

[21:07] They seem to be two different words that mean the same thing basically have the same meaning. In fact, they are used interchangeably in Scripture to mean the same kind of thing.

Those two words are keruso, very important word in the Greek New Testament. Keruso, translated preaching here in the New King James.

Proclaiming, if you have the New American Standard, ESV, so preaching, proclaiming. Keruso, preaching, or proclaiming. The other word is euangelizo. Euangelizo.

It's a little difficult to articulate. Euangelizo, and it means to bring the glad tidings. The verb also means to bring the glad tidings or the good news or if you have a New American Standard, it just simply translated preaching.

Preaching. And really, with that, it seems a little redundant, doesn't it? I mean, it looks like, you know, and you may have noticed when I told you how it appears in each of these different versions, the New King James translates it preaching, and if you have a New American Standard, the first word, or the second word, is also translated preaching.

[22 : 24] So you have preaching, preaching. So I guess if we put the two together, we have Jesus preaching and preaching to. Preach. It sounds the same. I mean, are they synonyms?

Do they just, is this just redundancy? Not really. Well, what do we make of this? Well, the first word, keruso, speaks of the act of preaching.

And by the way, not just preaching in this context, like I do every Sunday morning and Sunday evening, not just preaching according to this vocation, those who are called to preach, but all believers are to be involved in this activity of being a keruso.

Or to keruso means what? It means the act of an official herald. And that's the origin of this word keruso.

To be a herald. It's actually kerux. But the activity of it is keruso. An official, to do the work of an official herald.

[23 : 32] You see, in ancient times, of course, they did not have TV or radio or the internet. They didn't have email. And they, you know, didn't have all the technology we have for communication today.

And so, when the king wanted to convey to the people of his kingdom his edicts, his commands, and information coming from the king, announcements from the king, when he did that, he would send out an official herald.

A kerux. An official herald. And the herald would go from city to city and walk usually to the center of the city, you know, the marketplace where most of the people would be.

And then he would roll out his scroll and he would read what the king has to say to the people, whether it's a new command or some new procedure or some announcement or some great event that's coming up that he wants to notify the kingdom about.

And so, the herald was a very important person. And so, the official herald then would go and represent the king and speak the king's message. It wasn't the herald's message, it was the king's message.

[24 : 42] And he would also speak it with the full authority of the king. It wasn't the authority of the herald, it was the authority, the full authority of the monarch, the king.

That's what this word keruso comes from. And so, just like the ancient heralds of old, God's people, Christians, represent their king, our king, our eternal king.

And what do we do? We speak his authoritative message. And God's people do not create their own message. Some are trying to do that and attempt to do that in our day.

Get away from the word of God and teach some psychological principles or some sociological idea or such. But we don't speak our own message, we don't come up with our own message and I'm so glad that I don't have to prepare and get up here every Sunday and speak something from Don Coleman.

You know, and stand up here and say, thus saith Don Coleman. I don't preach my own message.

And we as believers don't have a, come up with our own message to announce to the world.

[25 : 56] And likewise, we do not speak with our own authority, do we? We speak with the authority of the king. The great king, the eternal king.

And so you don't have to get all tense about people not listening to what you have to say about Jesus. You don't have to get all worried about rejection of the gospel. It's not your authority, it's his authority and God will deal with it as he desires.

We just speak it. It's not our message, not with our authority. We proclaim exactly what God has commissioned us to proclaim, to speak, and we do so in his name.

And Paul said that people receive it not as the word of man. This is in 1 Thessalonians 2.13 by the way. He said, when we proclaim the gospel, we herald the message.

He said, people receive it not as the word of men, but as what it really is. The word of God.

[26 : 57] The word of God. Now, that's keruso. And it speaks of the act of preaching. The other word is jungalizo. And it speaks of the substance of the message.

The substance of it. So the first word, keruso, focuses on the messenger, in a sense, and the actions of the messenger as God's official herald.

And keruso, or jungalizo, the second word, focuses on the message. The message itself. Jungalizo is a verb.

And so it means to bring the good news. Bring the glad tidings. The noun form of this word is euangelion.

And it's the gospel. The euangelion. The evangel of the church. And it means that. And it's translated that in nearly every place in the Bible. Either good news or gospel, depending on your translation.

[28 : 02] Euangelion. And what is the euangelion? The good news. Well, John R.W. Stott said that God's good news is Jesus.

That's it. God's good news is Jesus. He said, the gospel does not begin with a set of events. Now they figure in there. We'll get to that in a minute.

But the gospel does not begin with a set of events. It begins with a name. And it's Jesus. In Acts 2.22, Peter preached a gospel sermon, that famous gospel sermon on the day of Pentecost.

And after quoting from the prophet Joel, Peter began his sermon, his sermon proper. And this is how he began it. He said, Men of Israel, hear these words.

The herald. Hear these words. Jesus of Nazareth. That's how he began. And the sermon followed that. It begins with Jesus. The gospel begins with Jesus.

[29 : 07] When Philip sat down beside the Ethiopian, you know, he ran up and caught that Ethiopian. And the Ethiopian is sitting there and he's perplexed about a certain passage in Isaiah.

It's Isaiah 53. And in Acts chapter 8.27, the Bible says, Then Philip opened his mouth and beginning at this scripture, Isaiah 53, he did what?

preached Jesus to him. You see, the gospel is Jesus Christ. The gospel, the heart and soul of the gospel is that name, that person, the Lord Jesus Christ.

In Paul's introduction to his letter to the Romans, he described himself as a bondservant of Jesus Christ set apart for the gospel of God concerning, concerning what?

Well, not what, but who? Concerning his son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. See? The gospel does not begin with a set of events.

[30 : 20] The gospel begins with a name. It begins with Jesus. It begins with him, his person, who he is. And then, it continues with the historical events concerning Jesus.

His birth, his life, his death, certainly, victory over sin, his resurrection, victory over death, his return and rule, that's part of the gospel, his return one day and rule, victory over all and all eternity.

So the person of Jesus and the works of Jesus and the eternal significance of all of that to fallen, hopeless sinners, that's euangelion.

That's the gospel. As I shared a few Sunday nights ago, it is a story, the greatest story ever told. It is a doctrine, a truth that must be believed.

It is a sincere invitation to come to Jesus Christ for salvation. It is an urgent appeal, passionate plea from the heart of God and from our heart as well.

[31 : 27] It is a promise, a promise of life everlasting. It is a command to repent of sin and to trust Jesus as Lord and Savior.

It is a demand to worship and serve Him. That's euangelion. And that's what Jesus was preaching. And so that's what we must preach.

Well, we must proclaim to every people, all people, everywhere in this world. Here is a vision for ministry as modeled in this passage in Luke.

Going. Going everywhere. Proclaiming. Proclaiming the gospel, the good news concerning Jesus Christ.

And third, worshiping. That's part of our vision for ministry. Again, not in the order of how we experience these things, but in the order in which they are revealed in the text.

[32 : 28] Worshiping. Now, the word worship doesn't appear here in the text, but it is here. Luke says, and the twelve are with Him. And then this in verse 2, and certain women.

And then verse 3, many others. Certain women and many others. All right, so Jesus had His twelve apostles and He poured His life into them.

But also, there were others who followed Him. These women and many others who followed Him and they poured their lives out for Him.

And why? Because of what He had done for them. See, they worshipped Him. That's the implication here. They worshipped Him. They worshipped the very ground He walked on and they followed Him and they served Him.

And why? Again, because He had transformed their lives. Absolutely. Luke said they had been healed. Healed of evil spirits, first of all.

[33 : 35] That's spiritual healing. And that includes salvation. The greatest healing you and I could ever experience and hopefully you have is spiritual healing, salvation. Mary Magdalene was the example of that given here by Luke.

Jesus had cast out of her seven demons. And so, was she grateful? Absolutely. She worshipped Him.

In fact, at the end, at His resurrection, we have Mary Magdalene going to the tomb. And when she sees Jesus, she falls at His feet and grabs His feet and is weeping.

She adored Him. She loved Him. She worshipped Him. He had absolutely, radically, changed her life. But, her life was really no different than ours.

You say, well, I didn't have any demons in me. Well, you don't really know that for one thing. And second, she was saved just like you.

[34 : 41] Absolutely transformed by the saving grace of God. She worshipped Him. That's the implication here. And then, He healed of infirmities also.

Sicknesses, diseases. So, this physical healing. God was, Jesus was gracious to grant physical healing to many of these. Not only spiritual healing, healing, but physical healing.

And He worked His grace in their life. And listen, this is the idea. Worship is always, always a response to the grace of God in our lives.

And so, when we're reminded of that through the singing of the great hymns and the substance of our choruses that are scriptural, when we're reminded of those things, and when we are reminded of what God has done for us and continues to do for us through the preaching of His Word, we are brought to worship.

And so, their response, the response of these women was worship because Jesus had radically transformed their lives. Have we forgotten what God has done for us? Then, we're having difficulty worshipping Him.

[35 : 50] Have we forgotten what Jesus has done for us? This is a vision for ministry. This is what our ministry, our lives as believers ought to look like. It's going and proclaiming and it is worshipping and it is, number four, serving.

It's really very difficult to separate these two, worshipping and serving. They really are closely linked together. And it's implied in the text, but it's made explicitly clear in other places in the Bible that these women, they traveled with Jesus to minister to Him, to minister to His needs, and also the apostles with Him.

Let me ask you something. We put these two together, worshipping and serving. Let me ask you something. What does your worship and service look like?

Now, I'm just asking you to do a little self-examination. What does your worship and service of the Lord look like? How would you describe it? Are you committed to Jesus? I'm not just talking about here on Sunday morning as we are gathered here.

Worship goes way beyond what goes on here. Worship really takes up the whole of the life of the believer. What does your worship and service look like?

[37 : 12] Are you committed to Him? But let's just take this time that's set aside every Sunday morning. We do so by command.

We're commanded to not forsake our assembly. What does that look like for you? Do you hold the same standards of faithfulness, faithfulness to your worship and your service of the Lord, the same standard that you expect to find elsewhere in your life?

For example, if your car starts once every three or four times, is it reliable? if your refrigerator stops working every now and then, do you say, well, it works most of the time?

If your hot water heater gives out cold water, gives you a cold shower every now and again, do you say, well, it works most of the time?

And what kind of standard does your employer have? For example, if you don't go to work once or twice a month, are you a loyal employee?

[38 : 29] How about your bank? If you miss a couple of payments, loan payments every year, does your bank say, well, you know, 10 out of 12 isn't bad?

Or guys, how about your wives? If you are devoted to her 364 days out of the year, but you reserve one day for other women, what would she think of that?

I'm not joking. I've got a witness right over here. Huh? Well, see, listen, if you fail to worship God corporately, as we're commanded to, if you fail to worship God one or two Sundays a month, would you expect to be called a faithful Christian?

Or if all you do is attend church, about to step on somebody's toes, that's just your neighbor I'm talking to, remember? If you, all you do is attend church on Sunday mornings and sit in your pew, then are you serving the Lord?

Are you? See, listen, here's the problem, and listen to this very carefully, it's kind of twofold. In the first place, we have a tendency to make a distinction between our secular activities, that part of our life, and our religious activities, that part of our life.

[40 : 02] And we separate these two things in our minds, and so we have a different standard for them. And then the problem is made even worse because in our way of thinking, when it comes to the religious activities of our life, in our way of thinking, we are volunteers.

Huh? When it comes to that part of your life, we have a tendency to consider that a kind of volunteer thing rather than a duty-bound, consider ourselves duty-bound, bond-servants of Christ. And that's where our problem is. We don't think of ourselves in that context as we should. I mean, we who owe everything to Him. Everything.

And we can't carve out a little time to come together with God's people and worship Him. I know I'm speaking to the choir this morning because you're here, right?

We owe everything to Him. Our lives, just like Mary Magdalene, maybe not as profoundly, maybe some here as profoundly, but like Mary Magdalene, our lives have been transformed by His saving grace, worshiping, serving.

[41 : 26] Romans 12, 1, I think, fits well here. Paul wrote, and let me give it to you in the ESV because I like the way it's translated. I appeal to you, therefore, brothers and sisters, I'll add that, by the mercies of God.

I appeal to you in view of the mercies of God. The NLT has it. When you think of what He has done for you, here, I mean, is it too much?

Is this too much to ask? When you think of what He's done for you, is this too much to ask? Well, what is He asking? Well, it says to present your bodies a living sacrifice.

I mean, it's all on the altar. Sacrifices do not give a partial commitment. A sacrifice is all or nothing. That's what He's saying. Present your bodies, everything about you, everything that is you. Present yourselves as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, which is, the King James says, reasonable service.

[42 : 34] ESV has its spiritual worship. What's the difference? Well, there's no difference. You see, our worship is our service. Our service is our worship, and it includes the whole of the life.

Not just what we do corporately, as important as that is. But everything, at home, at work, everywhere. This is a vision for ministry, clearly.

Going, proclaiming, worshiping, and serving, and then there's one more. Giving. See, I knew it would get to that.

Giving. Verse 3, many others who provided for or supported him with their, or from their substance. That is, their private, personal means.

I think it's translated in the New American Standard. Giving. And I'm so glad that the Holy Spirit included this because, of course, you know preachers love to talk about money.

[43 : 45] Your money. No. But, frankly, everything, everything we have belongs to God. Everything. Every penny, everything, belongs to God.

And giving a portion of that back to him, what he requires to be given back, and also what he leads you to give back in tithes and offerings, giving it back to him is an important part of our ministry. Important part. Because it's putting our money, our resources, back into gospel circulation. So important for the kingdom of God.

That includes tithing, includes giving to missions, our gospel debt. You haven't forgot about that, have you? Forgotten, excuse me.

Our gospel debt, our giving to meet needs, special needs in the church and outside the church. This is a vision for ministries.

[44 : 53] Going. Where? Everywhere. Proclaiming. Proclaiming what?

The good news. And it is good news. Best news ever. Worshipping and serving. Why? Because the Lord has saved us.

He has blotted out all of our sin. And transformed us as His children. Worshipping, serving, and giving.

Giving to support the work of the kingdom of our Lord God. Throughout the world. Is this your vision? We have no other vision.

This is our vision. Thank you.