

# Philippians 1:19-26

Sunday 11/23/2014

I told him I pretty much did this as a replica. Everything that you all did here, I did it over there. So I kind of stole a little bit. It was a Christian type of stealing, Bob; it was the right way. This church has been an example.

Sometimes you do not realize the many blessings that you have because you have to get outside of it to really look into it. A lot of churches do not have this age group that you all have. A lot of churches do not have the zeal that you all have. God has given you a great group of people that have zeal for God and the desire to serve God. Never lose that. That is a wonderful thing. Always teach your children to grow up after it and to continue on. Let us not lose that next generation. Let us continue going forward.

Last time I was here, it was, I guess, maybe a year and a half ago. When I was here, it was wonderful. If I did not have the privilege of meeting you last time, or you were not here, allow me to say it is a privilege to meet you now. My name is Jeff. My wife, Mindy, and I have five children. We are trying to repopulate this world. Amen. Five children. I am half rabbit. I have four daughters and one son. We are very thankful after our quiver was full. We said, "Thank You, Lord, for saving my soul and giving my children. That is enough, Lord. Thank You." We have five children. We are very thankful for them. God has been very good to us.

Last time I came, I did not have this. Several of my friends always told me, "You need to try No-Shave November." Last November, I really wanted to have the guts to do it, but I was visiting some churches and some did not look at me so well. So I said, "I am fully on everybody this year. I am going No-Shave November." I told my wife, "How do you like it?" She said, "Well, let it grow a little bit more." I have been in a couple of weeks in this and I am trying to think, "I am starting to look like a real man." I am feeling it anyway. I said, "Well, how do you like it?" She felt it and she said, "Yeah, I am really glad you got to try it." I thought, "Okay, what is that supposed to mean?"

So here comes the end of November, I have to shave this baby off. It took me almost 15 years married until I got permission to grow it. Now I have to shave it off. But I have tried anyway. I have worked at it. The only problem is every once in a while when you see somebody who has the big Duck Dynasty beard and you walk up to him and you are talking to him and they have something in their beard, you have no idea what he is talking about. You are staring. You have oregano right here. So I am working at that. Every time I eat now, I go like this. I am always nervous about it.

Let us jump in the Bible. Philippians chapter one. The book of Philippians is one of those prison epistles. There were many epistles: the general epistles and the pastoral epistles, First and Second Timothy and Titus. Paul, under the inspiration of God, wrote this book while he was in prison. As he wrote this book, imagine with me if you were to write a book when you were in prison, how would that book be? I can tell you how it would be for me: "This stinks. I hate it. It is cold. I do not have a good pillow. Everything is horrible. No McDonald's in here for crying out loud. I hate

this place." But Paul uses this opportunity, when he is in a bad situation, to encourage other people.

He goes throughout the book and says in Philippians 4:4, "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice." In Philippians 4:13, he tells us that "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." He goes on even a little bit further in Philippians 4:19. He says that "my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." He goes throughout this book telling us, "He started something in you in Philippians 1:6, and He will perform it. He will continue to perfect it all the way until the day of Jesus Christ." He says in Philippians chapter two that he talks about humility in Philippians 2:5-11. Then he jumps over in Philippians 2:13 and he says, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." So God puts the desire in it.

Let me tell you, dear friends, if God is putting a desire in you, like you young man who is going out to preach, praise the Lord. If God puts a desire in you, God can perfect that desire and God can help you do that. Sometimes we say, "God, I am not qualified." And God says, "That is what I am looking for right there: someone who is simply willing to go out and do it." Paul writes this book and he begins to encourage people.

## I. The Purpose of Our Earthly Life

I want to focus our eyes on Philippians chapter one specifically this morning. I want to talk to you about something that I believe is very important that Paul is going to touch on right here in this passage. That is the reason that you and I are here. Not necessarily why we are here in the church, although yes. But why are we here? Not necessarily just in Missouri, although yes. Why are we upon this planet? Is it because of fate? Is it because it was an accident or coincidence? Is it that we are just floating through life? Or Mom and Dad were not expecting anybody else and we are the little surprise of the family? Why are we really here? Have you ever thought about that?

I believe, as it was mentioned in our song service, that the Lord Jesus Christ is coming back soon. I believe it with all my heart. The times, the signs, everything is pointing towards it. Our Lord is coming back soon. If He is coming back soon, that means the devil is working overtime. He cannot take me to hell because I am in the hands of Christ, which is in the hand of God. No man can pluck us out. I have eternal life. He paid the debt. I did not pay the debt. There is nothing that I did that would get my salvation. I crossed from death into life and I can never turn back. He saved me. What a blessing!

Since the devil cannot take me to hell, the devil can do everything that he can to frustrate my life so that I do not produce fruit in my life. Therefore, my children do not see God in my life, or they do not hear in the next generation, and all those around me, they never see God because I have gotten all confused about the reason that I am really here upon this planet. So many times we think maybe we are here because we have talent, or maybe we are here because we are making a lot of money, or maybe it is here because of who we are, or whatever it may be. Although there is nothing wrong with money, and there is nothing wrong with family, and there

is nothing wrong with sports, and there is nothing wrong with any of the other things, in and of themselves, they are wrong because we are to put Him first.

*Matthew 6:33*

*But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*

You and I are to have our focus on what is right, and the devil is trying to push our focus away. I want to show you very quickly, very easily, very simply some basic principles of why you and I are here upon this planet. I am not a very deep theological person. I will leave that up to Bob and other people who are a lot better at it than myself. I am very simple and I hope that you can make it through with me. Let us see some very simple steps that you probably know, but I want to remind you because sometimes it is those simple things that we need to be reminded about. Sometimes it is those things that we neglect because we know them so well.

Go with me if you would to Philippians chapter one. Let us begin our reading at Philippians 1:19.

*Philippians 1:19*

*For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,*

In other words, Paul is in prison right now. He says, "I know that I am going to be delivered. I am going to be saved out of this prison. I am going to get out of here." You say, "How in the world do you know that?" "Because of your prayers and obviously the supply of the Spirit, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Jesus Christ." He says, "I am going to get out of here." It seems like he has a very positive attitude, although he is in the midst of all his problems.

I ask you very quickly before we jump in here, how do you handle the problems? How do we go through life? Many times, dear friends, someone said, or I read it in a book a long time ago, it made a lot of sense to me, but most of life, only 15 percent is what happens to us in life. Probably 85 percent is how we react to what happens to us in life. In other words, you cannot help what happens to you, but you can control how you react to what happened to you in life. Sometimes we get into deep discouragement, rough times, family problems, work problems, financial problems, and everything else, and we do not handle those right. Paul gives us a good example. He says, "I know I am going to get out. I know this is going to be all right. God is still in control. He is still on the throne. Everything will still work out."

Let us jump down to Philippians 1:20.

*Philippians 1:20*

*According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death.*

Paul has this attitude here and he says, "Whatever happens, I will first of all realize that Christ will be magnified." So why are we here upon this planet? Why did God place us here?

## II. 1.) To Magnify Jesus Christ

Number one, we are here to magnify Jesus Christ in our lives. Would you say that with me? Why are we here? Number one, to magnify. Paul said, "Whether it be by life or by death, I am here simply to magnify my Savior."

In other words, just as you get a magnifying glass and you look and you can see all the big picture, so close and all the little details, in the same way Paul says, "When somebody looks at me or somebody hears me or someone is around me, I want them to see Jesus through my life and my attitude, my heart and my actions and everything I do."

### ➤ Living a 24/7 Spiritual Life

Christians, church is not something that we do, or the spiritual life is not something that we do only on Sundays and midweek. It is a way we live 24 hours a day, seven days a week. I am a child of God and you are a child of God. So we do not box different areas and say, "Well, this is my spiritual life. This is my family life. This is my work life. And this is my free time." No, no, no. If you are a child of God, all of this is your spiritual life because it all belongs to God. So Paul says, "Whether I die, and I sure do not want to, but I am ready to, and whether I die or whether I live, anything that happens to me, I am here to magnify Jesus Christ in my life."

It is very interesting. In another portion of scripture in 1 Corinthians 10:31, Paul, speaking again by the inspiration of God, says this:

*1 Corinthians 10:31*

*Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.*

So whatever you do, let it all be to the glory of God. May He be magnified in your life. That is your testimony. That is what you live. That is what other people see. You and I are to magnify Him at our workplace tomorrow. We are to magnify Him even when we are at home.

When I was in Argentina, it was very interesting because sometimes people would come to church and they would get in their cars and they would be on their way to church, and they were going at it. You know how some Sunday mornings, not exactly thrilled about waking up, it is almost like the pillow is calling, "Please stay with me a little while longer." You are tempted. You really want it. You are looking, you finally wake up and you get the kids ready. You have the shoes on the wrong feet and then you have the wrong shoes put together and half the clothes on. You get everybody in. "I am hungry!" "Just shut up and get in the car!" "I need to fix my hair!" "Well, why did you not think about that?" Everybody is in a rough mood. You are on your way to church and you close the door. Everybody is screaming at each other. "Would you be quiet? Can we turn on the music?" "I do not want music!" "Would you be quiet? Shut up! Quit fighting back there!" Everybody is going at it.

All of a sudden, and I know this is only in Argentina, it does not happen here, but all of a sudden someone would drive up and they would get to the church parking lot. They would put it in park and they would get out. When they opened the door, it was almost like some spiritual air was outside and it goes in the car and everybody gets out of the car and they all start smiling. "How are you doing today? Good to see you. Wonderful. Oh, God is good. How about that?" The preacher gets up and he goes on preaching and God really touches their heart. They get done and they are like, "Wow, that was amazing. I never realized that spiritual truth." Then they go back and you think this is going to change your life. All of a sudden they get in the car and they are back in the car. "Come on in, kids. Great. It was a good message." The last door shuts and all the spiritual air goes up. They shut the door and they are like, "What are you looking at? Shut up back there! I am hungry! Shut up! We will get food when we get food!" All of a sudden you are like, "What in the world just happened?" It is like we magnify the Lord at church, but it is a whole different thing at home and at work and in our normal life. Does that make sense?

He told us that we are the salt of the earth. We are the light of the world. Remember Matthew 5:13-14. We will go down just a few verses in Matthew 5:16.

*Matthew 5:16*

*Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

We are not to be a goody-two-shoes to be a goody-two-shoes, but we are to live in a way that our attitude and our actions and our behavior and everything about us honors God so that when other people see us, they can glorify our Father which is in heaven.

### ➤ Inward Transformation

We have an idea sometimes that if we change our outward garment, we comb our hair just right and we look just right, then everybody is going to think that is a Christian. That has nothing to do with being a Christian. We used to see people saved in Argentina and get out of jail and we thought, "Praise the Lord!" They would get out of jail. One of the guys, he was a dentist in the jail and he would lead people to the Lord and God started this ministry right there. People would get out of jail and they would go to other provinces and some people would come to our church and they would put on a tie and they would look beautiful and wonderful and they would walk in our church. But what changed of them? Nothing but the outward appearance. They were still the nasty inward person that they were before and they would go right back to it.

God says, "I do not want to work from the outside in, I want to work from the inside out." As your heart changes and as your life changes and everything about you changes, then I will be glorified. I will be magnified and other people can see Me. It is like the moon and the sun. Did you know that the moon really does not have any power in and of itself? It receives all of its power from the sun and when the sun shines and it hits the moon, then the moon begins to brightly shine in the night and we can see it and so we can see around us. Dear friend, you and I are absolutely nothing, but when we let the Lord shine in our lives, wonderful things can happen.

Go with me very quickly to 2 Timothy chapter 2. Several of you are looking at what is going on in the back walls. There are some demons in the back walls if you are wondering. It is okay. We will work our way through it, all right? I used to preach in Argentina and when we started our second church in Argentina, I remember I would go up there and I would preach on a patio and there were chickens and these demonic chickens started clucking every time I would say, "Open your Bible." I thought, "You have got to be kidding me. Kill those little things. Chick-fil-A sandwiches free for everybody. This is ridiculous."

We had all kinds of things. I remember sometimes I would get out there and all of a sudden a dog would come in our church and he would run around all of the seats just like this. He would run around the seats and I would be standing up there singing and I thought, so I would stop the song service and I would say, "Would somebody get the dog out of here before I have a sacrifice unto the Lord? Get the thing out! It is killing me here!" So many things happened. When we first started, there was nobody that was ready, really a lot of, few people that everybody would visit and so we did not have any ushers. We did not have any, I did everything. I led the singing. I gave the offering. I preached. I gave the announcement. I did everything. I had some men that were starting to grow, maturing in the Lord, and so they could be ushers and stuff. I remember multiple times, someone would walk up in front. He was a drunk guy and I would be leading the singing. He would walk up and he would go, "Blah, blah, blah." I thought, "Somebody help the man. Get him out of here." So it is okay. All right? Second Timothy chapter two. Turn there very quickly. Second Timothy chapter two. All right. Let us see if we can focus just for a minute. All right. Second Timothy chapter two.

So why in the world are you and I here upon this planet? Why did God place us here? Is it by accident? Is it by coincidence? What are we here for? The very first reason you and I are here, number one, remember what we said? Why are we here? Number one, to magnify. Would you say that loud? Number one, why are we here? To magnify. The Lord Jesus Christ in our lives. Whether it be by life or by death and anything that we do and anything we say, we are to magnify the Lord.

### III. 2.) To Multiply Ourselves

Let me show you something else. Second Timothy chapter two. We see once again that Paul, under the inspiration of God, is writing. Paul is the same author of Philippians. Look what he says in 2 Timothy 2:1-2.

*2 Timothy 2:1*

*Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.*

*2 Timothy 2:2*

*And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.*

What is Paul saying? He says, "You have heard." He is speaking to Timothy and he says, "Now Timothy, the things that I have given you and I have received from the Lord and the others have

taught me these things, Timothy, I am giving them to you. You have received them amongst many witnesses and these things, Timothy, I do not want you to keep in your pocket. I want you to give them to others, but not just anybody. I want you to give them to faithful men. And these faithful men are not just going to put it in their bag or they are not going to throw it under the desk. These faithful men are going to teach others also."

In other words, we are going to go from one generation to another generation to another generation to another generation of people hearing the gospel because you and I are multiplying ourselves as God's children. We are passing along what God has chosen us. So why are we here? Come back with me. Why are we here? Number one, we are here to magnify. Not ourselves, magnify the Lord so others can see it. But number two, why are we here? We are here to multiply. Would you say that? Why are we here? Number two, to multiply. To multiply ourselves. In other words, you and I as God's children are to multiply ourselves. We are to share the gospel of Jesus Christ so that others can hear and then others can be saved. Obviously, as the Holy Spirit, it does not work. But I am the vessel to be used to open my mouth and when I open my mouth, the Holy Spirit can begin doing the work and that person can hear the gospel, the Holy Spirit can do the work and that person can be saved. We are to multiply ourselves over and over and over and share the gospel with other people to multiply ourselves. That is our responsibility.

Wherever he went, Paul and Timothy, they went over and Paul began to multiply himself by sharing and by teaching men such as Titus and Timothy and Sylvanus and other men. He was teaching the gospel of Jesus Christ and multiplying themselves and other people were hearing the gospel.

### ➤ The Great Commission

What is the Great Commission? The Great Commission is that you and I, every one of us, not a certain group, not just preachers or missionaries or just the faithful ones, all of us as God's children are to go to preach and teach the gospel and then see them baptized and then continue teaching them, discipling them so that they can grow so that other people can hear the gospel.

### ➤ A Story of Multiplication

We were in Argentina. I told you we stole many of your things that you did right here. So we started these groups and we would tell them, "We had some lessons. You go through these groups and ours you go about eight lessons long and you go through these lessons and you teach somebody and then you let go of that person and that person will start teaching somebody else." The goal was you are never finished discipling somebody until that disciple, the one you taught, has now begun to teach somebody else so that our church can multiply themselves. They can go forward, they can continue to grow and that is the way we are going to grow, dear friends.

They say that Muslims are taking over the United States of America. They say that different religions are spreading. Why? The reason is because there is more influence and they are pushing more, they are multiplying themselves much quicker than you and I are. As children of God we have the truth, we are to multiply ourselves, we are to share the gospel with other people.

When we were in Argentina there were some young children that we used to pick up on our bus route. We got this bus, someone helped us get this bus and we used it for a while and we took it around and we used to pick up these little, I guess there were about three little girls in this one area. My wife would go over with the other, now one of the pastor's wives, at the time he was assistant, they would go over and they would pick them up and my wife would pick them up. One day the mom and dad would never come out. When we would go pick them up, the dad, according to his testimony, he would always run inside. He was always drunk and he always had his lifestyle so he would always run inside and he wanted nothing to do with us. "Here come those weird church people." So he would run inside.

One day they were having all kinds of problems. They were going so far that he was living a whole different lifestyle, his wife hated him and they were going to separate. His wife got this piece of glass and she tried to commit suicide at least once or twice. So she held this piece of glass, she was getting ready to slit her wrist according to what she says, she was getting ready to kill herself and then it was all going to be over. She woke up that next morning according to her own testimony, she woke up that next morning, the piece of glass fell out of her hand. She said she had it gripped in her hand, she was going to kill herself when she got enough nerve when her husband went to sleep but she did not, she fell asleep and it fell out of her hand.

So they woke up that next morning and when they woke up he said, "This has gone too far. Let us try to go there with our kids this morning and see what is going on at that crazy house over there, that church place." So they came over and both of them heard the gospel and both of them got saved. Very soon they both got baptized and I began to talk to them. I said, "Hernan, why do you not come and would you like to study the Bible a little bit more?" He did and then he jumped into the Bible college and as he jumped into the Bible college he began to study the Bible more and he began to do wonderful things. They began to bring people to church left and right. They were not just bringing a couple people to church, they were filling up the bus and I thought, "This is awesome! I wish everybody would do this! This is great!"

So we were filling people up and so one day my wife goes up to her, her name is Rosa. My wife says, "Rosa, how in the world are you filling up this church, bringing so many people to church? This is wonderful! I know you are a new Christian but tell me how you are doing it. We have got to learn this secret and share it with everybody." So she looks at my wife, a very sincere new Christian, and she says, "Well, what I do is I go around the people in my neighborhood and I knock on the door and I tell them, 'Today is my birthday and I want to invite them to my birthday party.' And so I tell them to come out to the street corner and meet me at such and such and I am going to pick them up and I am going to take them to my birthday party." My wife said, "But Rosa, do they not realize when they get to church that it is not your birthday?" She says, "Oh yeah, by then they are hearing the gospel, it is all okay." Thinking, "You can do that, that is lying. But God bless your lying, keep it up, you are doing well." Thinking, "What in the world are you thinking?"

This lady simply began to bring people, not the best way around, but she began to bring people left and right and they were bringing tons of people. The reason in her mind was, "God has saved my marriage, God has given me a home in heaven. This is too good to be true, I have got to share

this with other people." She went around her very ingenious way of going and brought people to church. A couple years later they started the next Baptist church in our area and he took about 40 to 50 people out of our church to go start the new church and the majority of the people that he took to go start the new church, almost all of them he brought to church or went to the Lord himself. What a way to start a church! This is amazing.

Now we see pictures of the church, how they are growing, how they are going well and he is already talking about, he tells me, he calls me pastor, he says, "Pastor, I think God wants me to go out to another area and start." I said, "Hernan, you have got to leave it with a lot of men and do all these." So he is always sending me pictures. "Here are all these men who are prepared, they are all preachers and they are all going." I am saying, "Praise the Lord!" You know how it all started? She began to get on fire, he began to get on fire, they said, "We have got to share this." They began to multiply themselves and wonderful things began to happen.

They say, I read a book, it was a wonderful book actually, I think it was called \*One Heart Beat Before Heaven\*, \*The Only Thing You Can't Do in Heaven\*, a couple different books, very good. He says some stats in that book and he says that less than 2% of the Bible-believing, church-going Christians actually share the gospel with other people. Sometimes we wonder, "Why are not more people getting saved and why are not more people?" Maybe because you and I are the ones who have the responsibility. So why did God place you here? Did God place you here so that you can gain all the money, that you can get all the friends? Why did God place you here? Or was it because God wants you to multiply, sharing His gospel all around the world? So why are we here? We are here first of all, let us turn back to Philippians chapter one. We will make our way back there, Philippians chapter one.

#### IV. 3.) To Minister to Others

So why are we here, dear friends? Why are we upon this planet? Why are we in this world? Is it because, "Well, I do not know, we are just making our way through"? Why are we here? Is it because God has a purpose? I beg and plead with you, God does have a purpose, a specific purpose for each and every one of us. God wants to use your life. You are not another number for God. God wants to use you specifically. You have influence with people at your work and influence with family members that nobody else has.

Sometimes in Argentina people would say, "Well, I just do not know the verses like so and so and I just do not have the way to talk to them and I will get nervous if they ask me a question. So maybe I should invite pastor or somebody over with me to my work." I say, "Oh no, God has given you influence with that person like nobody else has. So you share the gospel where God has planted you and begin to do what God has placed you to do."

Go over to Philippians chapter one. Let us continue our reading where we left off there.

*Philippians 1:21*

*For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*

*Philippians 1:22*

*But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not.*

*Philippians 1:23*

*For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better:*

That parallel passage of 2 Corinthians 5:8:

*2 Corinthians 5:8*

*We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.*

There is no purgatory as they taught in South America. There is no middle ground. There is no waiting period. There is no time there. You are absent from the body, you are present with the Lord. You are a child of God. You are going to go straight with Him. What a blessing! Paul says, "I am really not nervous here. I know when I leave here, I know exactly where I am going. So the sickness and the pain and the struggles, all this does not scare me. I am ready for it. I am prepared for it." He says, "But I am having a hard time here."

*Philippians 1:24*

*Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.*

Paul said, "I would rather get on out of here." Nevertheless, Philippians 1:24, "Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you." What is he talking about? He says, "I would love to get on out of here. That would be awesome. I would be with my Lord. I would have no more problems. I would have nobody else giving me all these, my neighbor problems or work or financial struggles. I would not have any sickness. It would be awesome just to get out of here. I would stay with my Lord, but I know I need to stay around here." He said, "It is more needful for me to stay here for you."

Look at Philippians 1:25.

*Philippians 1:25*

*And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith;*

*Philippians 1:26*

*That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again.*

So he says over and over this pronoun, "you." You are saying, "What in the world are you talking about?" These pronouns, "you," speaking of a group of people, he is speaking of the church of Philippi. So what is he talking about? He said, "I would love to go with my Lord. No more problems, no more struggles, but it is more needful for me to stay for you." Obviously, Paul is saying it is because life is not about me. I am here to minister, to serve you.

So Paul says, you and I, many times as Christians, think everything revolves around us. Life is about me and my happiness and my fun and my family and my friends and all about me and what I can do and my health and everything about me. Paul says, "No, it is not. Who made you think that?" God has placed us here to magnify Him, to multiply ourselves and to minister to others. That word "minister" is a very fancy word for the word "serve." In other words, you and I are here to serve, to serve God, to serve others.

### ➤ Serving God by Serving Others

It would be easy, and maybe I should ask you, how many of you all want to serve God with your life, in your life, so you want to magnify Him? How many of you all want to serve God? Would you raise your hand? I do. All of us, we say, "Yeah, I want to serve God." But listen, here comes the tricky part. It is impossible to serve God without serving others.

Do you know where some of the biggest struggles are? Let me veer back to the churches in Argentina, because I know this is not a struggle here. But in the churches in Argentina, some of the biggest problems were amongst, not these outward fights of people throwing these rocks. Yes, we had people who did not like us, and people against us, and we had people rob, and all kinds of crazy things. But the biggest problems were not the people from the outside, the exterior, it was the interior amongst each other, getting along and loving each other, and serving each other, and going forward together as one army for God.

Sometimes, I remember a lady in Argentina said, "Pastor, I want to let you know something." I said, "Sure." "I want to let you know that I forgive you." I said, "Great, thanks. Did not know I did anything. Thanks for forgiving me. By the way, what am I being forgiven for?" She said, "Well, about four months ago, I know you know this, but about four months ago, you walked into church, and I know you saw me because you looked in my direction. But about four months ago, you walked in, and I was standing right there, and you began to shake people's hand, you walked right by me, and I know you saw me. And since that day, I have been mad at you." I thought, "Are you serious? Why do you not tie a stone around your legs, jump off the bridge?" I was like, "For real? You are mad at me because of that?" It was so crazy.

But listen, how many times we look amongst each other, and we say, "Did you see what she was wearing today? Did you see that jerk? Did you see how he looked at me? I know he saw. That guy makes me mad. I cannot believe it." We are very spiritual going talking to God, but we are lacking in the part of serving right here. So if we are going to serve God, we must learn to serve each other.

### ➤ The Example of Christ

God has placed us here not so that we can get. The Lord Jesus Christ, the example for all of us in John chapter 13, when He was up there in that upper room, He grabbed the basin and they finished, and He grabbed the little bit of towel, and He began to walk by, and He began to wash the feet of the disciples. Peter said, "What are You doing? You are not touching my feet." He said, "Then I have nothing to do with you." He said, "Wash my feet and my head all over my

body. Take all of it." "We are trying to teach you something that you will go out and do likewise." We are to serve each other. Then He commands later in Galatians 5:13:

*Galatians 5:13*

*For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.*

You and I are to serve.

## ➤ A Call to Action

The biggest problem in the days of Jesus Christ, the harvest was great, but there were few laborers. The problem is not the group. The problem is not the amount of people who love God, but rather the amount of people who want to get involved in God's work so that we can continue going forward.

Let me ask you, dear friends, and please understand, I do not want to demean or belittle anybody because the Lord knows that once I point one finger, I have three or four looking back at this ugly face. So I am not pointing any fingers. But when was the last time that you picked up the phone and texted somebody who has not been at church lately? When was the last time you baked a cake or a pie or something and took it over to somebody who has not been, maybe he is upset or maybe he is mad? When was the last time you took it over and said, "Hey, just been thinking about you, have a great day," and just walked away? When was the last time you called somebody and said, "Hey, we really missed you the other day. Bob preached an awesome message. Wish you were there." When was the last time you just tried to simply minister to other people instead of coming to church and saying, "I wonder what I can get today?" When was the last time you came and sat there and said, "I wonder what I am going to learn so I can put it in practice in my life?" God has placed us here to minister to other people.

Go with me very quickly to 1 John chapter 3.

1 John chapter 3. God placed us here for a reason, dear friends. So many times you and I are quick. I am very quick. I get involved that so many things begin to happen and life becomes so full and I have so much going on. I am running around and all of a sudden I am doing all these different things and forgetting about the real reason I am actually placed upon this planet. So I am busy about life, but what are you busy doing? Maybe we are not doing what really matters. Maybe we are not doing what really is a good investment in our life at the end. It really does not matter because once we are laying on a bed, all that we have is what is laying on that table. Nothing else that we have in vehicles and houses and everything else. That is not all going to go with us. So what are we here for?

## V. A Call to Surrender

We are here, go back with me if you would. Think about it. We are here number one. What are we here for? To magnify. The Lord Jesus Christ. Are you magnifying? How is your testimony? I am not talking about an outward. I am saying your attitude and your actions. Proverbs 3:6 says:

*Proverbs 3:6*

*In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.*

Are you here? When somebody sees you, do they say, "You are different. I appreciate your attitude. Wow, your family is different. Wow, everything about. This is just wonderful." Can they see Christ through you? Are you magnifying Him?

Not only are we magnifying Him, number two, we are here. What are we here for? To multiply. Are we multiplying ourselves? When was the last time we simply took a tract or opened our mouth or said, "Hey, why do you not come to church with me?" When was the last time we did something, an effort to evangelize, to spread the gospel, to multiply ourselves spiritually so that other people can hear about the gospel? We cannot blame President Obama. We cannot blame anybody else when we that have the truth are not fulfilling what we are supposed to be doing. Does that make sense? Amen. So we must do our job. So we are here to multiply.

Number three, not only are we here to magnify and multiply, number three, we are here to minister. Serve. As we serve God, as we serve each other, we go on doing God's work so the body can stay together. If we as a body are not in agreement, if we in a body have problems, we invite somebody to church and they say, "Really? You want me to go there? You guys cannot even get along and you want me to be part of your fight now? No way. I am not having anything to do with that." But what could happen if the army of God stood hand in hand, elbow in elbow, all stood up and went the same way? Some good things would happen, would they not?

*1 John 3:17*

*But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?*

Allow me if I could, very respectfully. I want you to think about this. Paul in Romans 9:1-2, in Romans chapter 10, same thing. Paul said, "My brother according to the flesh," the Jews. Now your brothers are all mankind. Our neighbor. Jesus said, "So who is my brother?" The Lord said, "Look around. There they are. All of them." It is not just the people at church. He says, all of them, when we have this world's good. I will stop one second. Instead of speaking, sometimes we think this world's good, okay, he who has got money and he shares with other person. No, no, no, that is what I am talking about. The best good that there is in this world, do you know what it is? It is having the assurance of salvation. It is knowing you are going to heaven when you die.

Remember, I believe it is Luke chapter 10. They came back and said, "Lord, it was awesome. We went around all these demons, they submitted to us and we were able to heal people. It was awesome." The Lord said, "No, no, no, no, no. You have lost track. What you should be excited about is that your name is written down. That is what you should be excited about. That we are safe." What a blessing! You and I that have this blessed assurance, when we see our brethren in need, when we see the people that are our brother according to flesh, their sons of Adam, that they are out there and they do not have what we have. We see them and we hold it to ourselves and, "Somebody else's problem. They do not live in my neighborhood." When we hold it and we

do not share it, how in the world can the love of God dwell in us? Because we need to share it with somebody.

So I ask you this morning, it is very simple. What are you here for? What am I here for? There are specific details maybe that we can go into and you know very well and God might have someone work here and someone work here, but I am not talking about, I am talking about very general. What are we here for? We are here because God has a specific purpose.

I remember when I was a kid, there was this game and it was called Red Rover. Anybody ever heard that game? It was so cool. I used to love that game just because I like to hurt people. So we would stand, there were two different groups and we would stand, elbow in elbow, all of us on this side, on that side, elbow in elbow. We would stand and all of us would stand and say, "Red Rover, Red Rover, send Johnny right over," whoever. Here he would come and so he would let go of them, he would come run and say, "Get ready guys," and we would hold on like this. When he would come flying, you know the game, when he would come flying, if he could break our chain, then he could take this whole half to his side. But if he could not break the chain, he fell down and he said, "Haha," so he had to join our group. We would do our best to hold strong, tight, tight together and then we could do some great and awesome things.

What about spiritually speaking, if you and I hold strong, we all realize why God has placed us here. We all begin to say, "Let us minister to each other as we minister to God and let us bring more in our family." Some wonderful things can happen.

I love to read missionary biographies and one of them was a young man, he was 17 years old and he made his way to Chicago to work in his uncle's shoe store. As he made his way over to work in his uncle's shoe store, his uncle had only one prerequisite and he said, "You have to go to church." He said, "Fine, whatever, as long as I can work here." So he went to church. After a while, a Sunday school teacher started visiting him at the shoe shop in Chicago and as he began to visit him, his name was Kimball, and as he began to visit him, he began to talk to him. Finally, he won this young man to the Lord. This young man began to grow and God was using him. Later he began to serve God in an amazing way and this young man's name was D.L. Moody. He went all around the United States and all over in England, all over in Europe and he began to share and he had big revivals and literally thousands of people were saved.

A turning point in his life, when he was this young man, he heard this preacher came in and he said, "The world has yet to see what God can do with one individual totally surrendered and given out to God." D.L. Moody heard that and he said, "God, let me be that man." So I ask you this morning, will you say, "Independence in Kansas City has not seen what God can totally do with an individual totally surrendering and giving out to God?" Will that be you? Do you realize why God has placed you here? Will you fulfill that? Let us all get together. Let us stand for the Lord and serve Him together.

Would you close your eyes and bow your heads? Father, I am so thankful for the opportunity to be here. Lord, I am so thankful for these wonderful people, the Spirit of the Lord. I do the work that I cannot do, God, to move into work in the hearts and lives of these sweet people. Lord, bless Bob as he leads the church, bless these wonderful leaders of groups, and God bless all these

great people here and use them, Lord. May we realize so many times we get about our own life and busy and go around everything, Lord, and we forget really the reason that we are here for. So, Lord, may we jump back on track if anything else today. May we say, "God, I know I am here. I know how You placed me. So God, I am going to get busy about it, and I am going to serve You with everything." Lord, bless Bob as he continues with the service and as he guides. Lord, I ask that You would help all of us to respond in our hearts and say, "Father, whatever You want, here is a blank piece of paper with my signature. Whatever You want, God, here is my life. I lay it out for You. If You want my children, God, I lay my life down as a bridge so they can cross over and You can use them. If You, God, want my life or my spouse or what, God, You name it, it is Yours. It belongs to You. I am only here upon this planet, God, to serve You." We love You, Lord. Thank You. In Jesus' name, Amen.