

## Your Role in the Harvest-Part 2

### Taking Risks to Reap for Christ

Well, I remember vividly the drama of teaching my young boys how to ride a bike, that that's always an experience for parents, and certainly for the children, and is precocious and ambitious and is enthusiastic and gifted as my two boys are and were there was plenty of fear and trepidation and risk involved in launching them on two wheels down the cul-de-sac.

And all that trepidation was for good reason. Because there's, you know, there's plenty of skin knees and bumps and bruises that are involved in learning to ride a bike, I understand those feelings and that was legitimate feeling to feel in light of all that.

But like most kids, my boys through trial and error, they learn to do this, they assume the skill of riding a bike and later thanks before, Well, okay, they never thanked me for it. But they, they seem to assume happily the skill of riding a bike, which of course is apparent in my mind. I can't imagine childhood without the ability to ride a bike. I mean, that's just part and parcel of childhood, in my mind.

Well, in God's mind, part and parcel of being a child of God is getting on the big scary bicycle called personal evangelism. That is certainly what he expects of us. And he knows that once we get on this scary skill and an activity that one day, we'll look back and thank him for it. And in this case, we certainly will, there's no buddy here that walking through the gates of the kingdom will not thank God that you took the scary risks involved and even encouraged some of the bumps and bruises and skin knees in your life of sharing the gospel, because it will bear fruit.

He called us to be fishers of men. And that's not just the 12. As we learned last week, Second Corinthians five says, For those of us who've been reconciled to him, he's given us the ministry of reconciliation, and that us is a big one and includes all of us sitting here this morning, who've had their sins forgiven, you've been reconciled to your maker. If you've had that forgiveness, through repentance and faith, well, then you've also been appointed to share the message of the king, about the coming Kingdom to a generation that we now live in. Because he's coming back, we started to study Luke 10 last week, and we looked at the 72, who if you remember, historically, they're moving the ministry of Christ from the northern region of Israel called Galilee. And all the cities around the Sea of Galilee, down to Judea, which is the center is Jerusalem.

And they're going through Samaria, this is this intermediate place where you have these folks that the Jews don't get along with the Samaritans who had intermarried with the Assyrians a long time ago, seven centuries before Christ. So this transition was prepared for by Christ taking the 72, as we saw last week in Luke chapter 10, verses one and two, sending them ahead into the towns and villages of Judea, to prepare the people for the coming of Christ because he was going to make his way around all those cities.

So here we are now in verse number three, and we're going to get the instructions that he gives to the 72. And we're going to study this morning through verse number nine. So verses three through nine, if you don't have it pulled up yet, pull it up on your device, or turn in your old fashioned Bibles to Luke chapter 10, verses three through nine, here come the instructions.

Now remember, we're going to look at the parallels between their historic commission and appointment and ours because there is some we've already made that case last week, we are all reconciled to Christ. If you're a Christian, and been given the ministry of reconciliation, obviously, there's some historical unique things about this set of instructions that aren't true for us. But we're gonna try to tease out the principles here that do apply and make the application in our own evangelism.

Verse three, go your way. Behold, which is a weird Greek idiom. It's, you know, trying to get there, say, hey, look, take a ticket, take a listen to this. This is important. I'm sending you out as lambs in the midst of wolves. Now, if you're trying to encourage me to share my faith, that verse isn't going to help talking about skin knees, you're really going to skin you might even break your leg. I mean, this is how we're starting with the encouragement from Christ to go out there and share the gospel. He's going to prepare send these people to prepare people for the coming of the king and he's saying it's gonna be hard. There's gonna be a lot of opposition.

And then in verse four, he says, Why don't you tie one hand behind your back? When you go, don't even take money with you. On this trip, you're going to take don't even take any luggage. Don't take Got a backpack, a knapsack, hey, and don't take any sandals with you. Now they've got some on their feet. But if you're gonna take a cross country trip, which is much like going from Galilee to Judea, about a four day walking trip, I hope you're going to either have a spare tire in your car or you're going to have a Triple-A card or something. I mean, this is a crazy kind of command, no sandal, no extra sandals, it's a big deal when you're taking a trip on foot. and greet no one on the road, don't even make friends. So you can kind of have a, an impromptu AAA team to help you out. Don't do any of that.

Now, we got to take a sidebar here on this because if you weren't with us, when we were studying the first few verses in Luke nine, we saw the parallel they're very familiar passage that sounds a lot like this one in him saying, don't take that you know, the staff and don't take your money and don't take your knapsack. And we said he's tying one hand behind their back to do ministry for a few years. But then at the end of His earthly ministry, we saw in Luke 22, he tells the very same people now you know what, you can untie that hand. If you don't have an upset, take one. If you don't even have a sword, you better take a sword. If you don't have stuff, you got to get ready to get prepared. Now go and do it.

So we know that this instruction here in verse four is a unique set of instructions. That's supposed to make a point, just like the 12, the 72 are going to have a disadvantage. That sounds a lot like Gideon, when he was called out to fight the Midianites. Think this through with me. Now, you remember that story from Sunday school, go out and fight the Midianites. And so he gets all of these Israelite fighters together. And God says that's too big of an army. Cut it down. Oh, and it's still too big cut it down. And you know, we'll do it this drinking test by the brook and the people that drink funny out of the water. Well, we'll use those people send everybody else own. But keep saying you have too many people that makes no sense.

The Book of Proverbs talks about waging war with wise counsel, no one's going to tell you take a smaller army against a bigger army that makes no sense. Luke 14 says that count the cost, this is obvious wisdom. And so it is with this if you're going to go do a missionary journey, I think you should take some luggage with you. You ought to take some money, you ought to certainly take you know a spare tire if you're going to drive across the country. What's the point here? Gonna make a point about God's provision then make a point about what it's going to feel like for all of us to stand in a situation when we feel outgunned when we feel under clubbed when we feel outnumbered when we feel too small for the task, and he's going to ensure that they feel that.

And then some confusing verses here. Let's understand these verses five through eight. Whatever house you enter, rather verify. First, say Shalom, does that sound familiar? This is the Greek version array. But in Hebrew, the Hebrew word is shalom. And that's the standard Hebrew idiom to greet people. They still say it today in Israel, Shalom, Peace be to this house, this *oikos* this place that you live in.

Now, that would be a standard greeting. But this is no standard greeting, because he's going to make a point that's very important for six, if a son of peace, is there, a son of peace, then your peace will rest on him. But if not, it will return to you what in the weird, what's that all about?

Remember back, it might be in the margin of your Bibles at this point. If not, you might want to put it in the margins or tag a note on this particular verse. Luke chapter two, verse 14, the angel said to the shepherds remember this line, it says, peace on earth? No, well, it goes this way. I know it's wrong on your Christmas card, among those in those literally, with whom God is pleased. In other words, there's going to be with the coming of Christ, a peace, this kind of reconciliation with God. And it's going to be among those that God is pleased with, so that there are those that are going to be receptive to the Christ that are going to receive Him and not reject Him. And those are the ones that are going to have this peace that Christ comes to bring.

Now there's a lot of people that do reject them. And that creates division between people, as Matthew 10 says, but the kind of peace that that we're talking about that comes from Christ and the message of Christ, the person you stay with may be receptive to that they're a son of peace. And when you go and you say, Shalom, you're gonna have an open door and a relationship there, and you're gonna have a base of operation, because there's some that are going to accept your message. So that peace is going to rest upon him.

If that's not a son of peace, then they're going to kick you out, they don't want you in their house, and they're not gonna like your message. It'll return to you.

For seven and remain in the same house as long as that peace remains upon him. As long as there is peace and acceptance there and you can use that home because they agree with you at least enough to hear you out. Stay there don't keep going from place to place remain in the same house, eating and drinking whatever they provide for the laborer deserves their wages.

That's a little bit of a footnote. You know, you may feel like a leech if you're there for a long time. That's not very respectful. Don't let your foot you know, let it be rarely in your neighbor's house. Proverbs says lets you grow weary of you and hate you. So what's with this? Well, okay, you're on a mission. Stay there, stay there, as long as the welcome mat is out, take their meals and don't feel bad about it. You're not elite, you're not aloof, the laborer is worthy of his wages, because you're bringing a really good message to them and preparing them for the coming of Christ. Don't go from house to house.

And whenever you enter a town, here's the word if they receive you will then great eat whatever is set before you, which may have some implications regarding the southern part of Samaria,

northern part of Judea, and their legal food obligations and all that, but we're not gonna get into that the point here is the reception. Sit there be among them, as long as the welcome mat is out. And in the particular house you use as the base of operations stay there as long as they welcome you.

Then verse nine, what do you call to do? Wow, this is interesting. Seems like it's not like us at all. This sounds more like the apostles, the 72 are also called, like the apostles to heal the sick that are in it in the town. Now the twos are going out, they're assigned to place they're going to go prepare people for the coming of Christ, and they're supposed to heal people.

Now remember, this healing is called here's the word for it in the Bible, one of the words for a sign, and that sign is to point to something. They're coming in here talking about new regulatory information, the fulfilment of the Old Testament promises in Christ, the coming Kingdom, we need to tell you this man coming from Nazareth, there he is the king of kings and Lord of lords. He's the one that Daniel seven talked about. So prepare your hearts for him. But I know that's hard to understand. But here's the sign, we're going to heal people that sign is going to point to the message. And here's the message, say to them, this, the kingdom of God has come near to you. So near that the King's about to walk through main street of your town, you better be ready to receive them.

And we made the parallel last week of it's much like John the Baptist, preparing people for the coming of Christ, the first coming of Christ. So there's a lot of parallels here. Let's try and tease out three of them this morning. And let's try and make sure that we put in our minds these principles, and let it help us motivate us to the next step. Last week, we said we ended as it says in verse two praying that God would send more harvesters into the harvest field. And I even allowed us to end with that prayer for someone else.

Now, let's think about the obligation that we have. And let's take these instructions to the 72. And insofar as we can apply it, let's apply it to our own lives, verses three and four. Let's start there. Go your way, behold, I'm sending you out as lambs in the midst of wolves.

Now, YouTube, you know, has got its pros and cons. But sometimes it's great in sermon preparation, to see things in the text and to say, you know what, these people grew up in an agrarian society where they probably saw a wolf, take down a lamb, Little Long Beach boy, I've never seen that. So I look it up on YouTube, which I don't recommend right now. Unless I don't know you're really daring. Gross, scary, awful. I'm the lamb in this situation. And the wolf. I

mean, this is terrible. That's what it's going to be like, for me sharing the gospel with people. Yeah.

And not only that, hey, don't even bring any money, knapsack, sandals, don't even greet anybody don't have a friend, a posse, a team a gang, you're gonna go out there really vulnerable. And I'm tying a hand behind your back to prove what these guys are going to have some success at this. That's where this is headed. And that success is not going to be based on how intelligent you are, how prepared you are, how brilliant you are. What rhetorician you are an apologist you are, it's not going to be based on your exegetical skills or your proclamation or your persuasion, it's going to be based on the fact that I'm going to do something among you, that's going to take this message to people change their hearts, and they'll be ready for the coming of Messiah when he walks down Main Street.

This is helpful for us, because we're often going to feel like lambs before wolves. We're going to feel outgunned, outnumbered under clubbed. And we need to identify with that we need to be willing to take that kind of risk.

Taking two three scenes in the narrative of the Bible, before we're done this morning that I hope will imprint itself on your mind so that you will remember this sermon, at least for a week, to be the impetus and the motivation for us to get involved in the harvest and start fulfilling our role in the harvest.

The first one I'd like you to find in First Samuel chapter 17. so caught up in your Bibles, First Samuel, chapter 17. And if you're a Sunday School graduate immediately, you know, that's the chapter that describes David's killing of Goliath turned to this text because if there's ever a picture in the Bible, that should come to the surface of your mind immediately if I say the under clubbed underdog one, well, I'm telling you, there's no greater disparaging rivalry, and David against Goliath.

What I'd like you to do, once you find that text is to jot down in your worksheet which I hope that you have with you there, but jot this down number one risk, like David, before Goliath, I want us to feel that God can with us through us and in us get a message to people that while it feels very unlikely that I can stand my ground to hold the truth of the gospel up to the people in my office, in my neighborhood or in my extended family. I want you to be able to recognize God can do great things even if you've never been to seminary, even if you've never read an

apologetics book, even if you feel under clubbed. They're like a new Christian and what can I possibly say to the agnostic at my office, you're going to feel under clubbed.

Now I'm using a battle a very real battle on a on a on a war field. I mean, this is in the valley of Elah. And there's real people dying in this battle are about to, and you're saying, well, this is this is, you know, not what I'm involved in, but it is kind of what you're involved in. It is a battle. It's a battle of ideas. And this isn't my analogy. This is the Apostle Paul's in Second Corinthians chapter 10. Which if you're a copious, note taker, jot down verses three through five, three through five, Second Corinthians 10.

And it says this, though our battle right now is not like ISIS. It's not like the militant Muslims that are literally cutting heads off like David did in the valley of Elah, we're not talking about that. Our weapons of warfare are not of this world, and they're not fleshly but they are powerful, divinely powerful. That means they go beyond our ability, something that God is able to do through us to demolish strongholds,

Verse five, here's what it says, We are here. I love the way it's but we are destroying not people. We're destroying arguments. We're destroying arguments and every lofty opinion that is raised up against the knowledge, obviously, the accurate knowledge of God. And we're taking I know this is used out of context all the time. But here's the last phrase of Second Corinthians chapter 10, verse five, we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.

What does that mean? That means when in the workroom, someone says, Well, you know, I think all roads lead to heaven. You know, I think everyone's going to be saved. In the end, I think love wins, or however they put it. Here's a statement that's put up against the knowledge of Christ, against the truthfulness of the knowledge of God. And we, as people who are supposed to stand for the truth, or not to be arguing, as you might think, in terms of the angry red faced consternation, that sometimes takes place in debates, but out of love, and with great respect, we're supposed to correct the errors of our day, so that in hopes of someone there, being able to be persuaded to put their trust in Christ, which is the only means of salvation that we have.

There are many things you hear every single week, that raise itself up and opinion against the knowledge of God, and our weapons or the ability through God's divine power to dismantle some of those and take those stray thoughts captive and submissive to Christ.

But start this now the little shepherd boy is about to take down the champion Philistine. Let's start in verse 32. Jump into the middle of this narrative. First Samuel chapter 17, verse 32. Saul is the King David is some non, you know, nondescript, unknown, shepherd boy to most people. He says to the king, after he hears everyone stymied and frozen in their fear over this champion that sits there in the valley, defying the armies of God, he said, Let no man's heart fail, because of him. That is Goliath. Your servant, David speaks of himself and the third person to Saul, all go and fight with this Philistine.

Now that's so bold, that's so courageous. That's so you know, commendable. That's fantastic. He's so zealous for God, he's willing to go after this. He's so frustrated, like Phinehas, when you see someone do something that defies the truth of God and what's right, and he's now motivated. And he says that, but I imagined in the back of his mind, much like the words in verse 33, that come out of Saul's mouth, some of the reverberating thoughts in his mind might say exactly what Saul said to him. And that is it. You can't do this.

Saul said to David, you're not able to go up against this Philistine to fight with him. Think of your inexperience. Think of how young you are, think of how much you don't know, think of how much experience you don't have. You're just a kid, you're just a youth. But this man has been a man of war, since he was a youth, you are really no match for this guy.

Now, even if it's not true, the non Christians you talk with every week, we tend to think they know more than they do. But you need to recognize we're going to have the feeling that Listen, I can't possibly get some kind of argument, then in this conversation that's going to somehow put this argument that he's got in this opinion that he's got and put it I just can't imagine that I'm going to be the one that can do that. Get used to feeling that way. And it won't just be other people that say that to you. I hope no one says that to you. But it certainly be your own head that says that kind of thing to you.

Now, verses 34 through 37. David starts recounting some smaller victories in his life. He talks about the lion and the bear that come and steal the lamb from the flock because he's watching his father's flock and he's, you know, God's given me victory in the past. I know it's not a trained armed Philistine giant but you know, God has when I've stood up for what's right, given me some victories, and I hope that everybody in the room can recount something where you've spoken up in some way, maybe in a some fellowship group, when you've stood with the truth of God's Word. And you recognize when people got their minds aligned with that passage there it was, the answer was there and it came through you. And he recalls that.

And so he says in verse 37, David said, Let's read that punch line, the Lord delivered me from the palm of the lion, and from the palm of the bear and he will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine there's some confidence.

And Saul said to David, go now underline this. The Lord be with you. The grammar here and the statement of this, it's a wish. It's a hope. It's a prayer The Lord be with you. And I don't know how confident Saul was in that, but he was willing to let David go and do this. And he'd hoped that the Lord would, why is that so important? Because every time in the Bible, where we see someone who's under clubbed out, gun outnumbered, the thing that shows us the key to victory is always that simple phrase, and the Lord was with him.

Remember manna? Let's start with Moses sat there talking to the angel Lord of the burning bush, saying hey, go to the king, the mighty powerful king who has all the sovereign power in Egypt and go tell him to take this engine of the economy the slaves that he would tell him just to let us go, let's just say you go tell don't convince him of that. Moses go I can't do that. I'm gonna try to stand up for what's right and and I got in trouble for it. I can't go back there and argue with Pharaoh Who am I not to mention you want to talk about a persuasive person. I can't even speak without stuttering. I've never been good at talking or very persuasive at all. made God mad.

As a matter of fact, this passage is one I'll have you on the back of the worksheet in your discussion questions this week to ponder to look at that scene. They're in Exodus, where this conversation make God mad, makes him mad. And his response, I will be with you. And in parentheses, you can just hear so shut up. Stop arguing with me. I will be with you.

When a young teenager named Jeremiah was called by God to go speak to a culture to his generation saying you know what, I know these powerful people have twisted the Scripture and said it's okay we're fine you out there until they're not fine. Unless they repent of their immorality and their sin. You go tell them that set the record straight now. I gotta tell you, not a lot of people are gonna listen to you, Jeremiah, but get out there and tell these people the truth, Jeremiah, and remember his response in Jeremiah chapter one, I'm too young, too inexperienced. Who am I? These are old Sage leaders, the shepherds and rabbis of Israel, these guys, I'm never gonna persuade them, how can I stand up and talk to them? God's response I will be with you.

I mean, this is all over the Bible. When God said the difference is I'm with you. I started by talking about how the armies of Israel were whittled down under the under the leadership of Gideon against the strong Midianite oppressors. And when Gideon was first asked to do this by

God, he says Who am I? Why would you pick me? Not only that, you could look at my clan and see it's the smallest one in my tribe, and even look at me a weakest one within my clan. Why would you pick me and God's response was I will be with you.

May not feel like you're leading an army against the Midianites. You might not feel like your David there sitting there trying to take down the champion Philistine, but you will feel outnumbered, outgunned, under clubbed. And you can be sitting across from a non Christian who opens his mouth and defies the truth of God's Word. And the thing you need to remember when you there stand up for the truth and try to make a disciple out of this dissenter is that in the Great Commission, Jesus said, Go make disciples. Teach them all that I commanded you teach them to obey everything I said. And lo there it is, again, that weird Greek idiom, hey, listen, look, I am with you always. Even in case there's some 21st century Bible students think well, that just applies to the well, even to the end of the age. That the 11 disciples they're on that mountain live to the end of the age answer No.

Who's he talking to? To all of us? Your follower of Christ, your disciple of Christ, you've been called a fisherman. Yeah, you're called to make disciples. Yes. Here's the thing you need to remember I will be with you. If you don't have that you got nothing. But if you have that you've got everything you do understand that. I don't care if you are a such a neophyte in your theology. I don't care if you've never read an apologetics book, speak the truth of the gospel. And if God says, I'll be with you, then those who are ready those who are prepared those who God has called, you're going to see fruit.

You need to be bold. You need to take that risk, even when you feel outnumbered. The Lord be with you. Well, he was going to be with David and you know the story.

But first verse 38. Let's have a crash course in apologetics. Verse 38. Hey, get the armor on. Take this home, read Josh McDowell figure something out here about Francis Shaffer. Let's get out there and do some, some crib notes and some you need some arguments here. So now I'm not against preparation. And you should read apologetics that's helpful.

But when David is told to put on all the accoutrements of the warriors of Israel, he wasn't used to it, but they threw it on him armor helmet, clothes with a coat of mail. That Coat of armor. David strapped the big sword over the armor and he's like, I can't do it. But I'm a verse 39, he tried in vain to go for not tested them.

Now there'd be nothing wrong with David going into battle with armor. But in this case, God is sure that David will be facing Goliath with one hand tied behind his back to prove a point so that when we read it 3000 years later, we would say, Well, you know what, even if I feel under clubbed, God can work through me, even if I don't feel ready.

A lot of you will sit there on your hands and not speak up in a conversation which you know, you should speak up in. And you'll say, because I'm under clubbed for this, I can't do it, too precisely when I want you to remember David standing in the shadow of Goliath, having tried on all the things that everyone else should have on if they're going to go face Goliath. And he said, I can't I haven't had time to try it out. I can't do it. So David, put them off.

Verse 40. He went back to the things that he had used in the past things that were successful, is staff right now there's going to be an important phrase that shows up again in a different word in verse, verse 43. But in verse 40, he says, and take my staff, my stones, going to go to the brook and to get the shepherd's pouch filled, you know, the story sling in my hand, and he's going to go after the Philistine.

The Philistine moved forward, verse 41, and came near David. He had so much armor, he couldn't carry it all himself. He's got an armor bearer, shield bearer in front of them. And the Philistine looked at David and he underlined it, disdained him, disdained him. You're what do you what are you doing here? You're just a kid. He was just a kid, just a youth ruddy and handsome and appearance. I don't know why we need to mention how handsome he is. But there it is. You're just a little guy, rosy cheeks, and you're not a warrior not even dressed in armor.

Verse 43. And the Philistines said to David, am I a dog, that you've come to me with sticks. Now God had used the staff in David's hand to do a lot of good when he stood up for what was right when he was tending his father's sheep. Now he comes with that same weapon in his hand. And he's to stand you're going to be sitting there talking to someone who says, Oh, here we go. So my grandma used to talk about Jesus dying on the cross my sins forgiven? What am I an idiot? What do you think I am some kind of old time, you know, fundamental, why would you? Why can we talk about the modern theories? Haven't you? Haven't you read? Don't you know? Are you come against me with these things? My a dog that you would come against me with sticks, the Philistines curse David by his gods.

And the Philistines said to David come to me, I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the fields. And David said to the Philistines, you come to me with a sword and a spear. And all the modern arguments against why Christianity is so stupid to put it in our terms, and a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts.

See, the Word of God is living and active and sharper than any two edged sword sharper than any two edged sword. The truth of one Bible verse can take the entirety of the Discovery Channel and, and blast it with the truth of God's Word. Because one day everybody who spins these lives about all the things that they believe are true from their naturalistic man centered philosophy, all of them will be bowed down one day you do understand this with their forehead against the dust of the of the ground, confessing that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory, this ends really well for us. And you need to be bold about the fact that the truth of God's word, a weapon that is sharper than any two edged sword, will one day come back to haunt every single person that marks it.

Think about this, this shepherd boy with those simple shepherds tools, you know where this is headed, is going to take down the biggest warrior in all of Philistia. And he says, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you've defied, that's why I'm coming, coming to you in the name of very confident, verse 46, I'll deliver you into my hands, I'll strike you down and cut off your head, I will give the dead bodies of the host of the armies of the Philistines this day to the birds of the air and the wild beast, and all the earth may no look at that underlying that, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel and so that all this assembly may know that the Lord saves not with a spear or sword or a spear for the battle is the Lord's and He will give you into our hands.

Now I can't promise every conversation you get into trusting in God taking a risk is going to win that person to Christ. But remember, sometimes it's the Goliath in the room that really God is not after. I think of a time when my wife and I were taking a course to supplement some of our university studies, we were taking a course at a college. And it was a speech course of all courses. And the professor in this course was the most liberal professor. At that point I had ever had to stain Christianity took every opportunity he could to minimize and undercut the truthfulness of the Bible and to mock Christians.

And of course, I was angry about that. And so I had opportunity because I could raise my hand and I would raise my hand and I would engage this professor in front of everyone. And of course, my hope was if long as I kept my focus on God and not in my flesh was to convince him, as the Bible says, answering the fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own eyes. I didn't want him to Think that he was right and go on challenge. So I went after him, and saved

my longest speech that I got to give for dismantling, as best I could every argument he gave us in the class, which by the way, was the only speech I ever got a bad grade on in that class.

And you know what, that Professor never ever came to Christ, at least not in that semester. It was amazing as my wife and I shared vocally in that class to stand up against this professor, that we had other people come out of the woodwork after the class going, you know what, I felt the same way. But I was just afraid to speak up. And then one person saying, you know, you talk about Christ and the way you said, I just want to know more about this Jesus you're talking about, we were able to lead people to Christ in that class, because all the assembly of people that listen to this, were some of the the collateral gains, if you will, of people that came to Christ just because we were willing that day to take a risk as as young college students against the bearded very Sage professor in that class, people came to Christ, sometimes it's not the people you think. But the battle is the Lord's, and he's gonna give whoever he's going to give into your hands, but we need to speak up.

The Philistine arose, verse 48, he came and drew near to meet David and David love this, I've underlined it ran quickly toward the battle line to meet the Philistines. Now, it'd be a long line to talk to David when you get to the kingdom. But if you get a chance to sit down and have lunch with him, I just want to ask him, tell me about what was going on in your belly when you were running toward that line. I mean, you're human, right? So you're not robotic. Here is a man who's like us has a nature like us to use the phrase about Elijah. And I gotta tell you, there's got to be some butterflies in his stomach. Gotta be scary.

See, the people that we admire that do what God asks him to do are not people that don't feel fear is the people that are able to overcome their fear with an act of obedience. And in this case, he knew I'm not gonna let someone defy the God of Israel. I'm not gonna allow him to mock the armies of God or the Church of Christ in our case, without a retort without a response.

This, by the way, reminds me every time I read it at first Corinthians chapter one, verses 18, through 24, First Corinthians one chapter 18, through 24, that reminds us that the word of the cross, it's folly to those who are perishing. And while Goliath was quick to mock David with his stick in his sling, I mean, this is the power of God to those who are being saved.

David runs quickly to battle he puts his hand in the bag takes out of stone, you know the story, verse 49, and he takes down the giant.

First Corinthians one, Paul says, Hey, where's the wise man? Where's the scribe, where's the debater of this age, in all of their intelligence, and with everything that's ever been put on some program against Christ, they never could make peace with God and ally their sins and have their conscience cleansed. But see, the truth of the gospel is powerful to transform lives for those that God has prepared.

And speaking of that phrase comes from Acts 13, by the way, that God prepares people, it's put in a theological phrase by Luke in the book of Acts, the Acts of the Apostles. He says this in Acts 13, as Paul turns to the, to the Gentiles. And there's this great rejoicing that they turn up it says this, that everyone who was appointed to eternal life, trusted believed fisto, they put their trust in Christ, God had prepared people, you see, and God had prepared people in these towns that the 72 were being sent to. And as they went to these towns, as we read earlier, look at it again, verses five through eight, and Luke chapter 10, you can keep By the way, Acts seven, or, wow, I want to study Acts today. First Samuel chapter 17, keep that open, right, don't lose that, pass it and we come back just a second.

But in our text, which is printed on your worksheet, there it is, you're going to enter some towns, and there will be some sons of peace there. What does that mean? there'll be people that are prepped, and you're going to come saying, I want to talk to you about the coming Messiah, he's coming. And he's coming through Samaria right now. And I want you to be ready for him. They're going to be people, you're going to give that message to and there will be this sympathetic copacetic you know, Union, and you'll have that peace, a welcome mat will be out and they'll be ready and you're going to eat their food and you're going to stay there as a base of operation. There'll be towns, verse number eight, that will receive you and I'm going to get them ready. God's gets them ready before we ever go to speak to them. And the Bible says those who were appointed to eternal life, those that God has called to each one, they're going to hear our message and they're going to be saved.

I had to keep up in first single, and I want to go back in time, one chapter in First Samuel chapter 16. were identified with David in the shadow of Goliath. I want to identify for just a second, just a few minutes here with Samuel, the great prophet who did so much in the ministry of Saul, but Saul was a bad seed and you know how When it didn't turn out so well, so God said, as far back as chapter 13, I've got a man after my own heart that's going to replace this guy. Chapter 15. You know what, the kingdom is going to be ripped out of your hands. I got someone better than you that's going to take the kingdom.

Well, Saul was the quintessential warrior. I mean, he was head and shoulders above everybody else. He didn't look so strong when Samuel met him, but everyone thought, well, this is the guy and God said, No, I got a guy after my own heart that's going to replace him. Problem is Saul is still on the throne. Things haven't gone well between Samuel and Saul. And God says this in verse number one at First Samuel chapter 16. He says, Listen, we're done talking about the one that I have rejected. be done with that, how long will you grieve over Saul, since I've rejected him from being king over Israel, fill your horn with oil, that special perfumed oil that the Bible talks about, and go and in this ceremony, I'm going to send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I provided for myself, a king among his sons.

Now there's a group here, you're gonna go to a house. And in that house, we're going to be people there, and you're going to speak to them, and I'm going to give you the green light on one of them, that's going to be the next king, there's going to be someone there that I've chosen. And I want you to go and find that one that I've chosen, you see the parallel and trying to make, God has prepared people. And you need to put it this way, trust, like Samuel before Jesse number two on your outline, I need you to get that scene in your mind. And the second scene is you walking to a town called Bethlehem to try and find the next king that God has already picked. You're just trying to figure out, I gotta, I gotta get the message to the one that God has picked. I gotta, I gotta anoint the one that God has picked.

Sidebar on this for just a second two passages and put together in your mind, one of them have already given you Acts chapter 13, all those appointed to eternal life believed me give you another one. Acts chapter 17. Paul's before the Athenians and he says this, the God has put people in their places of inhabitation and in their times in which they would inhabit those places, and he's done that so that purpose clause, they might seek God, reach out for God, grope for God and find him.

I know this God is an evangelistic God. He's got people at places and times where they're at, and he's got them there so that they can seek God. Now, here's the thing, they're never going to know God, Romans 10, I guess I'll give you a third passage here, unless the preacher preaches the gospel to them. And that's not me preacher. That's you preacher. That's people who bring the message of the gospel can be me can be you proclaims the truth of the gospel, some, someone's got to get the message to him.

So put all those together for a second, let's just think of the people in this room right now. If you're a Christian, you've been put in your job in your neighborhood in your family, and you are a light right there. And you in that sphere of influence, know this, God has put people in their places of inhabitation at the time of their inhabitation so that they can seek God and find God.

And they're only going to do that when someone brings the message of the gospel to them, you've got a sphere of influence. And you've got to go to those quote unquote, houses that put out the welcome mat for you. And if there is peace, so to speak, and you're able to speak the message and they're willing to hear the message, you got to keep giving that message until you find those that are appointed to eternal life, because you'll know you found one when they believe that put their trust in Christ. You follow all that?

Let's put this now for saying chapter 16 verse three, I'm sorry, verse two, verse two, Samuel said, How can I go there, if Saul hears it, he'll kill me now we're not on good terms. He's still in charge. He's got an army that's willing to fight for him. If he knows I'm out here trying to find his replacement, he's gonna be mad, he's gonna kill me.

The Lord said, He's not asking him to lie. Now note that take a heifer an animal with you and say, I've come to sacrifice to the Lord. So you're gonna go to Bethlehem. And you're going to say, I'm here, and I'm doing my duty as a prophet, and we're going to have some sacrifice and some worship. And so that's what he'll see. And he won't know that you're out trying to find his replacement. And that is part of your job. This is shrewd, this is not lying.

Verse three, invite Jesse to the sacrifice, because he's the guy's house, I want you to get in. And I'll show you what you shall do. And you'll anoint for me, the one whom I declare to you saying you'll did what the Lord commanded. And it came to that one, I just want to know, if I stand in line and get a lunch with Samuel, how did that feel? Knowing that this was a really, I mean, a treasonous act from the mind of the government? I mean, Saul was the king, but you're going to find his replacement. You had that animal with you. You had your little entourage with you, and you're going to find his replace— That must have been scary for you. Must have been hard but you knew God had called you to this and you knew there was someone there appointed to be the king in Bethlehem and you knew it was even within that clan or that family of Jesse? That must have been something. What was that like?

Now? We read it in two seconds, and we find out how it works. But in his stomach, what was that risk feeling like? One that certainly demanded some trust in God.

Verse four, Samuel did what the Lord commanded he came to Bethlehem and the elders of the city came to meet him trembling with good news or bad news. We got the big wig, high profile prophet now visiting our town, do you come peaceably. Here's our word again. Now we actually have it in Hebrew Shalom. And he said, Yes, shalom. I've come to sacrifice to the Lord.

Now they could have said get out of here. We don't want you here. We're scared, we're afraid. But they didn't. He extended peace to them. And they accepted the peaceful exchange of the prophet in town. They want to stretch this too far. But I see that you need that you never can have a dialogue with someone didn't want to hear about Christ. But if the door is open, and the welcome mat is out great. And he says, Listen, consecrate yourselves come to me the sacrifice and he consecrated Jesse and his sons and he invited them to the sacrifice.

And when they came, he said, Okay, now, I know I got a message. And I know I'm gonna find the next king. So let's see if I can find him looks around for the perfect. Put in our terms. Christian convert, who's gonna be Oh, here comes one. He's bright, he's intelligent. He's reasonable. He's kind he's compassionate seems to be responsive to God. It's this. It's Eliab. I know it. Surely the Lord's anointed as before him.

How many times have you thought and sharing the gospel? Someone this guy's gonna get it. This guy would be the great Christian. I know it's gonna it's gonna hit. But sometimes we're wrong about that.

The Lord says, Listen, stop verse seven, looking at the outward appearance. Don't look at the height of his stature because I rejected him earlier, I must have looked a lot like Saul, Saul was really tall. And here's Eliab he comes in. He's benchpress. And a lot of weight. He looks like a big boy. Maybe he'll be our king. Wasn't uh, maybe for Samuel. He said, Surely, Lord doesn't see. As man sees man looks at the outward appearance, the Lord looks at the heart.

I can never see the preparation of someone's heart when I share with them. I really can't. Even if a positive response comes out of their mouth, sometimes a quick positive response, like people in that parable, the seed and the soils, right, they spring up immediately and receive the message with joy, but they really don't have any route. And they fall away quickly.

See, I don't know I don't always know what's going on their heart. I got a message and I'm going to share it. Tammy says if it's not him, I'm gonna see the next one. So Jesse calls Abinadab verse 8, made him pass before Samuel and Samuel doesn't get the green light on him. Neither has the Lord chosen this one. Then Jesse said, Here's Shammah make him pass by neither has the Lord chosen this one.

Verse 10. Jesse made seven of his sons pass before Samuel, I just want to ask Samuel one day, what was that like? At what point did you get discouraged and think maybe I'm in the wrong house. It had to be discouraging, because I'm sure you're presenting the best first. Now we're down to the seventh one. And he's like, I don't even know clearly not.

Samuel says to Jesse, now we're out of sons. I am a little discouraged here. Let me just check. Are you sure that's all the sons you have? Are they all here? Well, there is another one. But come on. If you're looking for a king, he ain't no king. I mean, yeah, he's the youngest. He's out just keeping the sheep. We don't even invite him to the important dinners in our family.

Samuel says, we'll get him—love this—for we will not sit down till he comes here. He's got this persistent faith that God has a king among the sons because he knows God's called them to a sphere. And in that sphere, there are people that are going to respond and there are people that God has chosen for himself. And so he goes, I'm not even gonna sit down until he gets here.

And so he sent him and brought him and now he was ruddy. This again, remember is the chapter before we saw that quick comment by the writer of this book thing. Yeah, he's ruddy and handsome. Well, now you can get more he got beautiful eyes and he was handsome. Just a regular Prince Harry, I guess, only a lot smaller, scrawnier? Not that I would know. But you know, rosy cheeked, good looking little scrawny shepherd boy.

And the Lord said, that's the guy. Because I'm not looking at his outward appearance. I don't really care about that. I care about what's going on in his heart. And this is the one I got ready. This is the one I spoke of in chapter 13, as the man after my own heart perfect Course not. That he was the one arise, anoint him for this is he and Samuel took the horn of oil anointed him in the midst of his brothers and the Spirit—love this—of the Lord rushed upon David from that day forward.

Now the relationship of the Spirit with people in the Old Testament, is really differently described than it is in the New Testament. You want to talk about the Spirit in indwelling people for a certain task? Well, this is a good example of that to be the king of Israel. But the great characteristic of New Testament converts is that every single person that's called to be a child of God has—I mean, we don't see it. But we certainly see the effects of it. The Spirit of God at that moment rushes into their lives and changes who they are.

That's a great parallel, there are people in your sphere of influence right now they do not have the Spirit in their lives, that you need to be willing to take a risk, are willing to believe that there are people in your sphere of influence. And if there's a welcome mat to describe the gospel, somebody, right, there's going to be somebody that the Spirit of God is going to rush into their lives when you share the gospel with them. And Samuel gets up and he's done. His work is done that day.

Consider the effect of that persistence, that faith filled persistence. Consider the effect of that. What if he bailed after, you know Shammah and Eliab and Abinadab—done? No. He stuck it out and continued as long as the welcome mat was out to share the message of the gospel, which by the way, helps me remember the continuance of the passage I quoted for you earlier, First Corinthians chapter one, verses 26 through 31. First Corinthians chapter one, verses 26 through 31, which continues that discussion, which would be a great homework assignment to look at that whole passage, speaking, first of all about the wisdom of the world and all of its armor and hardware, it cannot save people.

And then he says, think of the people that are saved that do respond. Not many wise, not many of noble birth, not many people that really are seen as powerful in this world. No, because God's choosing the weak to shame the strong, the low and the despised, and the things that aren't even—the ruddy little shepherd boy—they end up ascending the throne and being the real king that I want to do great things in this kingdom. Why so that no one can boast before God.

Same reason he pared down Gideon's army same reason he chose a stuttering stammering leader to convince Pharaoh to let the people go, same reason you chose a teenager to speak to Israel at the end of their days in the southern kingdom, through Jeremiah. And the same reason he wants you to get out there this week into the harvest. And trust God that there's someone out there, there are people out there that will respond positively the gospel and will be saved and their lives will be changed.

One more verse, verse nine, Luke chapter 10. Heal the sick in the town that you go to, and say to them, the kingdom of God has come near to you. Now I'm thinking how cool would it be if you would just enable me to do a little healing service before every evangelistic encounter I have, that would be helpful. Bring the sick from the office to me, I'm just going to say the word they're going to be—he'll get a real bad one. Someone that's clearly obviously messed up. I'm going to speak the word, they're going to be healed. Then you're going to listen to me talk about the gospel, aren't you? That'd be awesome.

Which by the way, before you fantasize about how great it would be to be the gifted first century healer, be able to speak the word have someone healed and that sign point to the message and then people sit there in rapt attention listening to you. Just remember Jesus said He performed most of his miracles in towns that never repented. Remember that. And he says, people that just want that sign that's really a sign of perversion. There's a lot of people healed in cities like Chorazin in cities like Capernaum, who never repented, even though they saw the miracles firsthand.

So before we fantasize about the very unique thing that's going on, according to Hebrews, chapter two verses one through four, that the people in the first century without a New Testament in their hand, could do things signs that would point to the truthfulness of their message. That's what the sign of healing was. Someone being able to speak the word have someone paralyzed, stand up and walk away, and then say, Listen to my message. Signs. You never see a sign on the road. As you drive down the road says, this is a sign read this. What was that sign about? It just wanted me to read it. It was really great. I enjoyed that sign. Signs always point to something. Signs always inform you about something else.

The sign is not an end in itself, because every single person that was healed in every city in Judea that that 72 went to guess what, they all got sick again and died. Even Lazarus raised from the dead. Guess what? He died again. He got to die twice. Bummer. I'm just thinking, What's the point then it's a sign. It's a sign to point to what to the message so that people will get it and listen and hear it.

Well still, I think it'd be pretty cool to be able to have the ability to do a supernatural sign when you don't have that ability. Turn with me if you would Acts 26, our last passage Acts 26. I want to show you the Apostle Paul, who according to Second Corinthians 12 had done miracles. He brought the signs of the apostles the miraculous he could do them he did them. But in this particular passage as he stands before the King, King Agrippa, specifically King Agrippa the second, the great grandson of Herod the Great, who killed all those babies in Bethlehem, that one who poured all the money into that refurbishing of the temple, Herod's temple, that one powerful man and the governor Festus—short term governor two years all he spent in that office—he was the governor of Judea.

He'd already dealt with the Apostle Paul who is now in prison because the Jews put him there. And it says the—Festus says Agrippa II is coming to town. I'm going to have Agrippa hear this guy cuz I don't know what to do with him. This is all about theological debates, and I don't

know what he's talking about resurrection. I think he's crazy. And so let's have Agrippa listen to him.

Now. The apostle Paul is about to share the gospel. He's about to try to make someone a Christian. Now think about this. I'm thinking if I have the ability to raise the dead or heal the sick, that'd be a great thing. Hey, let me start, hey, let's pick one I got a soldier with some kind of illness. Bring him up here. He doesn't do that. He does something I think is so great, because it's something that we can pattern our evangelism master after he points to two things that are miraculous that we have access to right now. Every person I don't care what kind of cessationist you are we have this miraculous access.

And the first one is found in verse number 22 Acts 26:22. Paul, under house arrest here are under arrest. He's being held. He's going to get shipped off to Rome. But he's speaking before King Agrippa and Festus and he says this to this day, I've had the help that comes from God—Acts 26:22. And so I stand here testifying both to the small and the great, saying nothing—underline it—but what the prophets and Moses said, would come to pass.

Okay, there's the first one, it's called predictive prophecy. I want you number three, to speak like Paul before Agrippa. And Paul before Agrippa is going to give a persuasive evangelistic presentation, and there'll be no miracles preceding it. He's going to point instead to Old Testament prophecy, which, by the way, is miraculous. It's miraculous.

If there is a God who sits outside of space and time and has created us, and the personality and the humor, and the and the intelligence and the beauty of this world really is the product of an intelligent, you know, beautiful God who has created a designer and architect and manufacturer of life, then it's no surprise that that God that sits outside of space and time can certainly know the end from the beginning and let us know that and then authenticate his message on paper to us. That's no big deal for God, and it makes perfect sense. And so he has a document here that precedes the fulfillment even puts, by the way, a pause of 400 years between the testaments to make sure no one confuses that the Old Testament was written before the New Testament, which should be obvious. But if you want to look it up, there you go, 400 year gap.

Well, really smart people can figure out maybe was written after the fact because all these exacting prophecies of Daniel and Jeremiah and Isaiah, it just looks like maybe it's too exacting if it's a human product, and there is no God who tells the end from the beginning. Well, then, somehow these things were written after the fact, they're just too exacting. And in European

theological studies, that was starting to become more and more of a prevailing view. Certainly in Germany, there was a lot of things being said about the Bible, maybe these things are just manufactured looking like their prophecies, when really, they're just historical rewritings of things. And maybe maybe there is no gap between the testaments.

And that's why I often say it's great that God stuck a whole library of the Old Testament and all the commentaries on the Old Testament, in a bunch of arid caves sitting outside of the sea, we call the Dead Sea, you know, the places Qumran and stuck a whole library of Old Testament documents in there and hid them for 2000 years, and not until 1947, when this was becoming the prevailing view that this is all just a shell game that people were playing with the documents, he pulls this out. And we have now irrefutable evidence that the Old Testament is—if we needed it—was written before the New Testament. And God is only the God who can tell the end from the beginning and any other religious book on the planet doesn't do that.

And Paul defers to that in verse 22, and says, let's just look now about the prophets and Moses, he said, and they said, things that came to pass, they must be prophets of God. This is no ordinary person,

Verse 23, that the Christ, for instance, must suffer and that by being the first to rise from the dead, he would then proclaim both to our people, the Jews and the Gentiles, this light, proclaim light.

Now, we ran over it. But in verse 23, we have a second miraculous event that I think you can attest to historically, and that is the bodily resurrection of Christ, jot it down. Verse 23, Christ rises from the dead, which Festus has already said, in the previous chapter, you're crazy, Paul, for believing that kind of stuff. This is nuts. A lot of people say it's crazy. But again, if you want to disprove Christianity, according to First Corinthians 15, you better go after the resurrection of Christ. If Christ did not bodily rise from the dead if he wasn't truly dead, and truly came back to life, then Paul says, our theology falls apart is the linchpin of all of it in terms of the historic message of Christ. If that didn't happen, eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow, we die, let's spend our Sunday morning some other way. That's what the Bible teaches.

And a lot of very thinking people knew that this naturally and they go after the resurrection, and try to disprove it. But the more you try to disprove the bodily resurrection of Christ, I think the more reasonable people are convinced of its veracity, and if you're convinced of its veracity, now we got an issue, we got to deal with a Christ that rose from the dead, which is really dealing

with the problem I have. And you have and that is our sin problem causes death, not only biological death, but relational death. And I need a problem like that fixed, which is the whole message of Christ, at least as it relates to our future.

Verse 24, he was saying these things in his defense and Festus and that had enough you'd already talked about this in the previous chapter, he says, with a loud voice, this governor of Judea, he says, Paul, you're out of your mind, your great learning. I know you're really smart. You say a lot of stuff that convinces me you're learning but you're crazy. You blew a fuse. Last time you were studying the scrolls, you're out of your mind.

And Paul said, I'm not out of my mind, you jerk. Is that what he says? No. Again, remember this and all your evangelism—Do what Paul did—very careful. Most Excellent Festus and I don't think there was some some kind of sarcastic snarl in his voice, gentleness and respect. Love that helpful. I'm speaking to you true and rational words self control in our evangelism. Don't reduce this to arguments against people. I told you we're not trying to win an argument. Ultimately, we're trying to win people, which means we destroy arguments I get that. But this is with gentleness and kindness.

Verse 26, the king knows about—I love this right over the shoulder, Festus. Hey, I'm talking to the king right now. Okay, King. You know this. I know how Jewish your family wants to be. I know how much you studied the scrolls. I know your respect for the prophets. Hey, King, you know these things. I can speak to you boldly about this. I'm persuaded that none of these things, the fulfillment of the prophets, none of these things have escaped your notice. It's not been done in the corners. It's not some mystery religion. This is all out there for you to see.

Hey, Agrippa. Let me ask you a real poignant question. What about the prophets? You believe the prophets, the good guys, bad guys? Fabricators, just guessers? Who are these people? Come on? I think I know what you think about this. I know that you believe the prophets—mean think about how that made Agrippa think, Hmm, okay.

Agrippa said to Paul, In a short time would you persuade me to be a Christian? Love that—feeling the pressure?

Verse 29, Paul said, whether short time a long time—Eliab, Shammah, Abinadab—my professor, I don't know who it is going to be what I'm going to share the message, I would that all of you would be as I am. I wish that all of you that hear my voice, they would become like me a convinced persuaded follower of Christ. Except I'd prefer not to have these handcuffs on, except for these chains be great if you could take those off.

The apostle Paul speaks the gospel message persuasively and rationally to people. And he points the two things that you and I today this week can point to with our non Christian friends, co workers and family members. You got to do something with fulfilled prophecies, you got to do something with a bodily resurrection.

Look down the worksheet if you would. But the words I printed there for you the verbs risk, trust, speak, I'm gonna take the message and put it into three words. That's my prayer for you last week, I want you to pray that God would send out somebody into the harvest fields this week, I want you to risk trust God, and that in your sphere, there are people called an appointed to eternal life, and then speak. Now they'd say that you speaking humanly speaking, that got to have you speak.

And the three images I want you to remember, is David standing there in the valley of Elah looking at this giant warrior. And saying, I'm going to take a risk here and I'm going to run into this battle. I want you to engage in the battle of ideas take the risk, even if you feel outgunned.

Once you then remember Jesse marching to Bethlehem walking into a house that welcomed him, trying to find the person that was appointed to the kingship, and being persistent and trusting not giving up. After lots of rejection. He kept on until he found that one that the Spirit of God was going to rush into.

And then I want you to picture the Apostle Paul standing there, across from a man who could release him condemn him or kill him. And to say, let's talk about the prophecies. Let's talk about a resurrected Christ. Let's examine the consistency in your own mind. What are you gonna do with these things? I need you to speak about Christ that way. Let them know the kingdom of God has come near to them as they consider and ponder the implications of God's Word.

One day the king will return. That we've got a risk trust and speak like David Samuel. And Paul, would you stand with me? Let's dismiss with a word of prayer.

You know that that old saying, if you aim at nothing, you'll hit it every time. When it comes to evangelism, same way, right? You can go out this week, aim at nothing. The end of the week, you'll hit it. You get to the end of your life. You say well, I never really tried to speak Christ to anybody. I never tried to share the gospel. Well, you'll, you'll get exactly what you aimed at. You got to aim at something which is a risky thing. You got to have trust that you're going to hit even after lots of misses. But the only way to do that is to speak—to speak rational words, true words, words that point to things that every thinking person has to grapple with, and see what God does.

Let's pray God help us. In a world in a culture that seems to be increasingly hostile toward the gospel. I can read things like I did in this Islamic website yesterday that can just take potshots at the Bible with no truth behind it—roll. Can read that Salon article about the Bible last week and just see people make unchallenged statements about your word. And I know that's the kind of conversation that goes on in lunch rooms and work rooms and parking lots and across mailboxes and all these people saying things and it needs a response.

God, I know it's hard. Sometimes we need to remember not to answer a fool according to his folly. Last week we talked about pearl before swine, there's a time for us, obviously to say this is going nowhere. This is rejection I'm done. But God when the welcome mat is out, let us trust you, that as long as people will converse with us about the message of the gospel about Jesus Christ, about the forgiveness of sins about the Second Coming, that we'll speak the truth, the Word of God, living and active, sharper than any two edged sword, will be willing to trust that the battle is the Lord's, and that you can do things through us even when we look in the mirror and think I don't know enough to do this. I'm not experienced enough. I'm not smart enough. I'm not articulate enough. I wish somewhere else somewhere, someone else was here to argue with this person to confront his issues and answer his questions.

God, help us to stop thinking that way. And remember the words that the Great Commission is coupled with, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. The job's not done. We've got to make disciples, embolden this crowd and get them into the battle. I pray in Jesus name. Amen.