

Ambassador

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[0 : 00] My name is Jeremy, one of the pastoral staff here, and it's great to be with you this morning. And as Chris was saying, we wrap up this series on identity this morning.

And if you've been tracking with us, you'll see that on the screen behind me in a second, there's a few different identities that we've looked at.

And the series has been called, What's Your ID? You know, what's that thing you flash up to show people, to prove to people who you are? We started with this idea of a disciple, a disciple of Jesus. And we gave this definition that a disciple is someone who is growing in trusting Jesus as Savior and growing in lovingly obeying him as Lord.

So there's that twofold nature of being a disciple. And we kind of reflected on that just now when we were observing communion. What does it mean to actually recognize that Jesus is our Savior?

[1 : 05] And what does it mean to actually follow him? Not just say, Lord, I believe you, but actually, I believe in what you say. I believe in your commandments. And now I want to follow you as a disciple.

And then over the last month or so, we've looked at, can you go back for a second, a saint, family, servant, three kind of key identities that we've sort of unpacked for us.

And I encourage you guys, go back onto our website and take a look at the sermons if you haven't listened. But today we reach sort of the end of this little series.

And we look at ambassador. And we just read that passage where God is speaking through Paul. And he's talking about armor and warfare and all these things. But at the end, Paul is saying that I am now an ambassador in chains.

And we're going to take a look a little bit about what that means. And so Paul's writing to the Ephesians. And he says that he is an ambassador, but not just any ambassador.

[2 : 09] He says he's an ambassador for the mystery of the gospel. And I want us to really kind of start just remembering that. He's an ambassador for the mystery of the gospel.

But I want to actually start with that word ambassador. And I don't know about you guys, but that word can kind of seem kind of lofty out there. Like, you know, who has actually been an ambassador or a consul general here?

Anybody? I'm getting some pointers behind Aniko. And so we do have, or any kind of diplomatic staff.

Anybody? So I think we have one person. There were a couple before. They've left now, as naturally happens. Has anyone actually, maybe quick poll. Has anyone actually met, other than Thomas and Aniko, met an ambassador or a consul general and interacted with them?

Anybody? Okay. There's a few of us. That's good. That's good. But it's not kind of a typical thing you do day to day. Now, I've never really spoken to any ambassador.

[3 : 18] I don't know what you guys think about when you hear the words ambassador. I kind of imagine some kind of fancy, pomp and circumstance, high-level meeting between, you know, two superpowers, you know, maybe the U.S. and China or something, or some kind of secret backroom deal.

And I think it can seem like a distant concept to most of us that we don't really relate with. But recently I had the opportunity to attend an event that the U.S. consul general in Hong Kong hosted. And you might have heard in the news or whatnot that they had one of their aircraft carriers dock in Victoria Harbor. And the consul general and the rear admiral of the command, they hosted a reception on that ship, not just for the sailors, but also for just a variety of people in Hong Kong. And the consul general and the rear admiral, they kind of stood up and they gave a speech and they shared about how they hoped that this would be an event that fosters good relations between

the U.S. and Hong Kong.

And they also just gave thanks for the hospitality and just the beauty and splendor of our city. And as I, well, and also they gave us food and drinks, which was very, really, really important.

[4 : 42] And as I reflect on that kind of, it's a special event, but it was also an event for many different people to come together. I reflected on that and I realized, you know, to be an ambassador, a lot of things just happen in the regular course of life that bring them into the spheres of the population.

And I realized that the consul general, if you just really look at him, he's just a man or woman who represents his country. This man represented the United States.

And he didn't just represent his country in the comfort of his own country. He actually moved to Hong Kong. And he didn't just stay in his posh or, I don't know, never been to his residence.

But he didn't just stay there, but he came out into the masses. He came to meet us. He came to talk to us. And he didn't just talk with just kind of gibberish or just small talk, although I'm sure he did talk to people casually.

But he actually had a message. He proclaimed a message for Thanksgiving, for good relations between two peoples. And so I looked at that and I'm like, okay, I can kind of wrap my head around that.

[6 : 02] And when I look at that passage of what Paul is doing and what he's saying this morning, I can kind of see those three rhythms, those three dimensions in a simple way.

And that's represents and move and proclaim. And that's the three kind of ways I want us to look at the passage today.

And my hope is that by the end, we'll have a better understanding of what Paul really meant when he was saying that he was an ambassador for the mystery of the gospel.

Let's start with represents, representative. The root word for ambassador only occurs four times in all of the New Testament.

And when Paul used it in the passage we just read, he certainly carried this sense of being a representative. And he might even have known that if you've read in the gospel that Jesus once told a parable about a king, a king who underestimated his enemy before he was going to war.

[7 : 11] And so the king sends a delegation, a delegation to ask for the terms of peace because he realizes he's going to lose. And that word delegation actually means embassy.

So the king literally sent an embassy to represent him in the peace talks. And that ambassador spoke for the king.

Anything that would have been done to that ambassador, to that delegation, would have been treated as the same as if it was done to the king himself. And as the king's representative, that ambassador would have followed the king's word, followed the king's standard.

Because he's not, you know, he's not a member of the new country. He is a member of his king's country. We often think about the word diplomatic immunity, right, when we think about ambassadors and consul generals.

And really the idea behind that is that the ambassador is ultimately operating under the home country's laws and regulations and standards so that he's immune.

[8 : 24] He's free from being prosecuted in the host country. He's accountable to his home, not to his host. And I don't know how many of us have really thought of ourselves as being ambassadors or representatives.

But if we think, if we try and put ourselves in the shoes of a representative, I think the reality is that every single one of us is representing someone or something in some kind of way.

Sometimes it's quite obvious. In many of your jobs, you have clients that you represent, right?

Perhaps the most kind of explicit example is those of you who are barristers or know barristers or have worked with barristers.

Because the barrister literally represents a party in the court. He or she speaks to the judge on behalf of a person, you know, a defendant or a plaintiff or whoever.

He actually speaks on behalf of that person. And that's an obvious answer, but there's also more subtle examples. I wonder how many of us are feeling these days or have been feeling our whole life that we are representatives of our family, of our parents.

[9 : 58] And we feel that burden of trying to represent them to the world, to society, trying to live up to their expectations, their standards, so that we can bring honor and glory to the family name.

I wonder how many of us feel that burden subconsciously or consciously on a day-to-day basis. And some of you may be thinking, well, Jeremy, I'm not a representative of anyone. I'm my own master. And that makes sense. That's okay. And I think if you come from a background of just independence and self-reliance, that's true. But even you, the self-reliant person who represents no one, you still represent someone really important. That's yourself. And we all do that, right? We all subconsciously or consciously kind of project versions of ourself. We try and put our best foot forward on a day-to-day basis. We kind of act a little bit differently, even if it's subtle, with different people. And so you shape sort of ambassadors for yourself to your bosses or to your parents or to your friends or even to your spouse.

[11 : 20] It might be subtle, but we all do that if we're honest. We're very sensitive to the people around us and how maybe they perceive us and how to project a way, create an ambassador, a representative, a representation of ourselves to those people.

And behind, you know, we know that there is the good. The true self has the good. It has the bad. It has the ugly. But we create, we fashion these ambassadors for ourselves to represent ourselves in the best possible way.

So the question for us, I think, and for me is not whether you're a representative, but rather who. Who or what are you representing?

And when Paul says in this passage that he is an ambassador, he means that he is a representative of God. And it's not just Paul talking about himself, because the other time that he uses the word in the New Testament, it's in 2 Corinthians 5 where Paul writes, We are ambassadors for Christ.

We are ambassadors for Christ. So if you're a Christian today, you are a representative of God. That's built into your identity.

[12 : 43] You are a representative of God above all other things. And there's nothing inherently bad about representing other people or other things or yourself.

Don't get me wrong here. There's nothing bad about those things, but they cannot be the ultimate. Because if an ambassador disregards his ultimate authority, if he disregards the king's policies and the king's word and the king's standard, the king who sent him, then he's basically failed as an ambassador.

Right? So we represent God even if it brings us into direct opposition with other people we're representing. You know, maybe we feel that pull, that pressure from our clients or your parents or even your own expectations.

But what Paul is saying that as an ambassador for Christ, his identity is that. His ultimate identity is that. And so the first point we need to wrestle with today is whether we understand that as Christians, we represent God.

God. The second aspect I want to take a look at is move. And we're going to spend a little more time on this because I think this is hard and this is deep and this is challenging, but it's good.

[14 : 16] Because by definition, you cannot be an ambassador if you just stay in the comfort of your own country or your own home. By definition, the ambassador moves to a new place.

The ambassadors go into foreign countries. They may need to learn new languages and new customs and cultures. And so ambassadors for Christ are no different.

When you're born again into God's family. Like that song Leo taught us this morning. As we reflected on baptism a couple weeks ago.

When you're born again into God's family. God says you are now a citizen of God's kingdom. Not this world. And scripture actually says that we are now foreigners and exiles in this world.

We don't belong here. So if you're Hong Kong, you're Hong Konger, you're from Hong Kong. The word says ultimately you don't belong here.

[15 : 27] You know, if you're an expat here this morning. And you're from your home country, your home city. You're also not truly belonging there. Our home as Christians is heaven.

In God's new creation. And the challenge is for us to wrap our minds and our hearts around this idea that we have figuratively or metaphorically moved.

From heaven into this world. This lifetime is only a temporary residence for us as ambassadors. And guys, I know this is hard.

This is really hard in reality. Because I wonder how many of us are comfortable with our lives right now. Or if you're not really comfortable right now, your implicit goal in life is to be comfortable. To get to that place of comfort. And we're putting just so much time and energy and resources into securing our lives. Accumulating wealth.

[16:34] Advancing our social standing. And running that rat race. And I struggle with that, you know. I like my creature comforts.

I like my technology. I like my air con. I like my gourmet food. We think we belong here. And I was thinking, it's maybe like if you were that U.S. consul general.

And you move to the U.S. I mean, you move to Hong Kong from your home in the U.S. And over time, you forget that you're actually not from Hong Kong.

You think you belong here. And you get so wrapped up in your identity of Hong Kong. And now you're just living like any local Hong Konger.

You're applying for local jobs. You know. You love stinky tofu. You know, you've forgotten that, you know, the glory of cheeseburgers exists.

[17:35] And whatever it is that you love from your homeland. Now, how crazy would that be if that actually happened? And I know that's a silly example. But spiritually, we do that all the time.

You've heard the term that we are spiritual amnesiacs. You know, if you've been in Watermark for a while. We forget that we actually came from another place.

We have a home in heaven. And we think that we belong here. We forget that the call of the ambassador is to move.

You moved into this world when you were born again. And you don't belong here. Now, if we're attentive, if we're attentive to that, one of the things that can remind us of this reality is warfare and suffering.

And I'm not just talking about physical warfare, even though that happens. But I'm talking about the spiritual. Because when we look at this passage about the whole armor of God, we see that we are actually ambassadors.

[18:45] Not in a vacuum, but we are actually ambassadors in a time of warfare. A time of warfare. And there are these two kingdoms who are in conflict.

Verse 12. Paul says we do not wrestle against flesh and blood. But against rulers. Against the authorities. Against the cosmic powers over this present darkness.

Against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. We are in warfare today. Right here. Right now.

And for those of you who are really struggling these days. Struggling to live as a Christian. Don't be alarmed. Don't be discouraged.

Because we're in the midst of a massive cosmic battle over the hearts of mankind. And that's why we need that armor.

[19:48] We need, as ambassadors, we need God's truth. We need God's righteousness. His peace. His faith. And his word.

We need all those things if we're going to win the battle. Every time you feel tempted to get angry at your child. Or you're tempted to take shortcuts at work.

Or you're tempted to indulge in sexual sin. And that's warfare. You know, every time you wrestle with that desire to disobey your heavenly father who loves you and created you.

That's warfare. You're engaging in warfare. So as ambassadors, the reality is that we are foreigners.

In enemy territory. But here's my fear. For myself and for us. My fear is that on a regular basis.

[20:54] On a daily, weekly, monthly, yearly basis. I don't know how many of us really understand. How many of us really understand the warfare that we're in.

I wonder how many of us actually have a deficient understanding of the war. And this is what I mean. I had a friend who works for the U.S. Foreign Service.

And what I found out from him is that diplomats typically move, or at least in common practice, they move between easy and hard assignments.

So if you're a diplomat and you've been assigned to a cush, you know, relaxing, so to speak, first world city like Hong Kong, there might be a high chance that your next assignment will be in Afghanistan.

You know, somewhere that's not nearly as relaxing and not as nice with not as much food or whatnot.

[21 : 56] And what he was saying is that the essence of diplomatic work is that it has to happen everywhere. Not just in the nice places. Not just in Asia's world city.

Not just in Asia's world city. And I wonder, as Christians, how many of us say to God, you know, implicitly, yes, God. I know I'm a foreigner in this world.

I know I'm an exile. I know my home is in heaven. Thank you for saving me. I want to represent you. Hallelujah. I want to represent you.

But only where it's comfortable. Only in the world-class city. Only in the safety of our comfort zones. Far from the front lines.

Yes, Lord, we'll fight for you. But we'll fight for you in the comfort of our little middle-class bubble here in Hong Kong. But to be an ambassador is to move.

[23 : 00] And it's not just this idea of spiritual movements from your heavenly home to this worldly battleground. But it's actually also a literal movement in this world.

As Jesus commanded his disciples, Be my witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria. And what? To the ends of the earth.

The apostle Paul in this passage, he wasn't just an ambassador. Verse 20. I am an ambassador in chains.

And scholars think that it's most likely that Paul was in Rome when he wrote this letter. Far away from his home, languishing in a Roman prison.

And he wasn't there just because he was stupid and did some silly acts. He was there because he took a stand for Jesus Christ.

[23 : 58] And as I think about myself and about us as a people of God, I wonder how many of us have truly battled and suffered as ambassadors of Christ.

I thought back, way back earlier in my career when I was still a lawyer, and I spent a year in Calcutta, India, volunteering in human rights work.

And I obviously didn't run around saying that, but I mean, I felt good about myself. Right? You know, the story is the young lawyer moves from the comfort of Canada into the chaos and confusion and the pollution and crowds of Calcutta, India.

And people patted me on the back. They said I was doing good work. And I knew Calcutta was famous because Mother Teresa had moved there, and she lived and died there.

And I had the opportunity when I was there to go to Mother House, which is a shrine to her, her burial place in Calcutta.

[25 : 15] And aside from being in the presence of, I guess, the figurative presence of such an amazing, godly woman, there was also a room in Mother House that documented it.

It just kind of gave you this tapestry of her life's journey. And what I learned was that back in 1928, almost a century ago, before the advent of smartphones and email and even commercial plane travel, Mother Teresa decided to leave her homeland in Macedonia, in southeastern Europe, and she moved to Ireland to study English so that she could ultimately serve in India.

The tapestry said that her father had died when she was a child. And when she had reached the age of 18, that's when she decided to leave.

And she never saw the rest of her family again. She never saw her mother or her sister again. And the rest is history. I don't know if you've heard or read anything about this amazing woman of God, but she went to South Asia, she went to India, and she had left an immeasurable impact on that society.

But when I read that fact on that tapestry, the fact that she never saw her family for the rest of her time in this world, she never saw her mom again, she never saw her sister again.

[26 : 54] When I read that fact, it just sunk into my heart. It just hit me. Gosh, I have no idea what it really means to be an ambassador for Christ and move for Him.

You know, here I was, committed for a year. You know, I could FaceTime or email my family or friends any time I want. You know, Canada was just a 20-hour flight.

Away. And I went back to visit and go back for a wedding even during that year. And don't get me wrong, India was a great experience, but I just share that story because it's what I thought about when I thought about All in Chains.

I share that story because I realize I can get so comfortable in this world even when I'm supposedly doing great things for God. I realize that I have never been an ambassador the way that Paul was. I've never moved in the way that Mother Teresa moved. And so I wonder how many of us have really even fathomed battling and suffering as ambassadors of Christ.

[28 : 06] You know, I have my comfortable home here in Kennedy Town. I have my jobs, my routines. I have my wife, my family, my friends. I've done some radical or more radical things in my past so I can rest on those laurels.

And I don't have to really do or risk anything anymore. And I think what God is saying to me as I even prepared this and to us this morning is that some of us, a lot of us just need to take that first step out of our comfort zone.

You know, maybe God is asking you to move to Africa right now. I don't know. Maybe that's between you and Him. But maybe He's just asking you to step outside that comfort zone.

That first little step outside of the routines of your life. A place that you don't normally go. A neighborhood that seems foreign to you.

Maybe it's a mission trip that you can go on this year to get out. To go. Maybe your lease is coming up for renewal and maybe God wants you to move to a place that's just less comfortable.

[29 : 20] There's less English. You know, there's no Jasons or International or Fusion. And all of that connects to the final aspect of being an ambassador for Christ.

And that's to proclaim. To proclaim. So we represent our King by moving into foreign lands and making proclamations on His behalf.

Because Paul says in Ephesians, he says to them in the passage, he wants prayer. He wants prayer that words may be given to me.

Given to me in opening my mouth to what? To boldly proclaim the mystery of the gospel. To proclaim the mystery of the gospel.

So the ambassador for Christ has to understand. He's not just proclaiming whatever the heck he wants. Even though we do that sometimes, you know. You know, brain fart.

[30 : 26] The words just come out. But that's not the message that God gives us. He's given us a message to proclaim. And Paul says it's the mystery of the gospel.

So what is that? And if you've noticed, as we've gone through Ephesians, when you read through it, you see this word come up a lot in chapters 1 and 3. And that's in your bulletins if you want to look at it later.

But basically, to summarize, the mystery of the gospel is this. It's that it's not only that Jesus saves sinners.

As powerful and as true as that is. But the mystery is that Jesus saves sinners equally. That all sinners can be equally saved.

And that's what Paul says in chapter 3, verse 6. Let me just read it for us. He says, This mystery is that through the gospel, the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise of Christ Jesus.

[31 : 31] Together, together, together. And church, this was a radical reconciliation. Because as you may know, historically, God chose the people of Israel to be his people.

And even Jesus was a Jew, right? But even though God had always said that he was going to use Israel as a means of blessing the entire world, you know, the people of God over time, they'd gotten to this place.

And this place was that they saw Gentiles or non-Jews as spiritually unclean. Or even second-class citizens in God's master plan.

You know, they were the chosen ones. And everyone else was more or less heathen. Their prejudice and their discrimination was even justified somehow.

But here's what Paul's saying. A big part of the mystery of the gospel is that the gospel is truly for everyone.

[32 : 37] And as an ambassador for Christ, Paul wasn't just called to move outside of his comfort zones. He was to move to a people that were different from him, a people that even made him uncomfortable.

And he was to proclaim a message of love and reconciliation to them. And I know that, you know, we don't really have a huge Jew-Gentile dynamic in Watermark or maybe even Hong Kong.

But if we think at the essence of what that means, of the us versus them mentality, the haves and the have-nots, I think we see that dynamic play out every day in Hong Kong.

And globally. And sometimes we do this. We see a person over there and we say, yes, I know you're saved. I know Jesus loves you.

I know that I want you to be reconciled with God. But maybe it's best if you do that over there with your community, with people who are like you.

[33 : 43] You know, who maybe you can be more comfortable with. And even worse, sometimes we won't even go to that person because we have these obstacles in front of us.

We've written them off. Or we're discomfort. They bring kind of discomfort into our lives for whatever reason. We won't even go to them. So if we look at the essence of this dynamic, I wonder, who is a Gentile to you?

I was thinking for myself, and I know I wrestle with judgments towards people who maybe don't see social justice the way I do. They're the other.

They don't get it. And if I'm honest, I do get a little discomfort with people who are just dirty and unkempt when I interact with beggars or people when I was in Calcutta.

It actually makes me uncomfortable. What about you? Who is a Gentile to you? Maybe it's that colleague or family member that just, you know, annoys the mm out of you.

[34 : 59] But that's the mystery of the gospel. It's for them equally. You know, maybe it's a person with just radically different views from you about the relationship between Hong Kong and how it fits into mainland China.

That's the mystery of the gospel. And maybe it's someone who voted for Donald Trump and you're American. That's a huge mystery of the gospel. But it's serious, right?

We look at those people, red, blue, them, us. They're Gentiles. I can't go to them, Lord. They're so different.

Maybe closer to home. Maybe it's just the secretaries in your office. The mystery of the gospel. Maybe it's the domestic helpers in your community.

Mystery of the gospel. And here's the thing. God doesn't want us to just be comfortable even with the Gentiles that are around in our immediate circles.

[36 : 07] That's the first step. I wonder how many people in Hong Kong that we don't even see who are Gentiles in our society because they're outside of our comfort zones, they're outside of our routines, and they're invisible to us.

And that's why we spend so much time looking on that point that ambassadors have to move to see things. And I think the challenge for us is when was the last time you really looked even beyond your routines and your comfort zone?

I think if we did that, we would see the people who are marginalized in this city. The poor, the voiceless, the forgotten.

There's a large Nepali population in Hong Kong. You may know of them. They're fully Hong Kongers, but as a minority group over the decades, they have just been sucked into systemic poverty, drug abuse, broken families.

You'll see teenage girls who go through the shame and trauma in this society of being single mothers. You'll see elderly home who are simply languishing in loneliness, elderly people languishing in elderly homes.

[37 : 27] You might see young women who come here from abroad selling their bodies for sex because they need to provide for their family's home. You might see asylum seekers who come here from Africa and South Asia fleeing poverty and danger.

And that's just a snapshot of some major groups that are really treated as Gentiles in Hong Kong. I'm sure there's more. And we even have to remember that in each and every one of these groups, there are individual men and women and children with actual names and stories and triumphs and tragedies.

And therein lies the mystery of the gospel. That we are ambassadors to all of them. And God loves them and he loves them enough that he wants us to represent him to them.

So we represent, we move and we proclaim. And maybe some of you look at that with passion and vigor and you're like, yes, sign me up. I'm there.

And that's amazing. Hold on to that conviction right now. But some of you have been striving as ambassadors for a while now. And you get it.

[38 : 46] Everything I've said, you've heard it in some shape or form before. But you're burning out. You're tired. You want to give up. And the comfort that comes from this challenge in today's passage is that Paul got it too.

He was also imperfect. He was also sinful. You'll notice in that passage that Paul asked for boldness. Not just once, but twice. And I can imagine the heaviness and tiredness he may have felt when he was in that prison.

Maybe he even wanted to give up. To throw in the towel. But Paul knew that he had the people of God supporting him. Praying him for him.

And that's what the church needs to be. And ultimately, he would have understood that Christ was the ultimate ambassador. He would have looked to his example because Jesus was not just God's representative.

He was God. He didn't just kind of metaphorically come to earth. He literally incarnated God in flesh.

[40 : 00] He didn't just proclaim the gospel. Jesus was the gospel. And so he would have known, Paul would have known, that my job is to be an ambassador, not to be the king.

My job is to faithfully represent, trusting that God, the king, is in control. His policies are good. But I think there's a third group of us in here, and I think that's most of us.

I think many of us, including me, there's a big part of me, is look at that and say, gosh, I cannot do that. I can't be Paul. I can't be an ambassador in chains in a foreign land, proclaiming the gospel to people who are nothing like me, people who make my skin crawl or make my blood boil.

And guys, hear me. The last thing I want for us to feel when we leave today is that we just need to suck it up, pull ourselves up by the bootstraps, and put on our ambassador hats, and just go and do stuff.

That's not what we want. If we don't see Christ for who he is and what he did for us, if we don't see the gospel applying to our own lives, if that is not our motivation as ambassadors, our efforts would be futile and counterproductive.

[41 : 28] We will fail, and we will burn out. The big idea in this entire series is that all those identities we talked about, disciple, saint, servant, family member, ambassador, they're not something we earn.

Those identities are given to us when we are born again as children of God. And when you look at the pattern of Ephesians, it's very simple. God is telling us, this is who you are.

This is who you are. Now learn to live it out. It's not the other way around. It's not do, do, do, so that you can be someone better. What you do is always shaped by who you are.

And God is saying to us this morning, who you are is that you are unconditionally loved, unconditionally accepted. God's saying you have eternal life.

God is saying that you are an heir to his kingdom. God is saying that you have eternal riches today so that you don't have nothing to lose in this lifetime.

[42 : 46] God is saying that he will win the war. He will win the battle. And he will make things well. He will make things right again in eternity.

That you have nothing to fear today. This is what it means to be a Christian. A child, an ambassador of the greatest king in all of history.

So as we grasp with that truth, my hope, my prayer is that we'll think less that we have to be ambassadors and more that we get to be an ambassador of the king of kings.

Before we rush into singing again, I just want us to take a moment. I'm going to invite the band to come up, but just pray now. If you want to close your eyes and bow your heads, feel free to do that. If you want to just stand and look out into the skies, you can do that. But what is God saying to you right now as the next step?

[43 : 56] Because as I was thinking about this and praying, I don't think God, I don't think God is saying, Jeremy, I want you to wake up tomorrow and be Paul. I think he's saying, wake up tomorrow and be who I created you to be.

To take the next step that I have given you. You know, maybe for some of you, it's just to see that person in your office that is unseen.

To talk to that person who's different. Maybe for some of you, it's to, it's to just go somewhere, to walk into Hong Kong and walk the streets and see what's out there.

Maybe for some of you, it's just to start praying for that someone that God has impressed on your heart that you've been avoiding for weeks and months, maybe your whole life.

Maybe for some of you, you're in a season where you just can't go and be mobile, but you can speak to someone who's on the front lines. You can find out more.

[45 : 10] You can find out about how you can pray for them and support their ministry. Maybe there's some of us in here this morning that long ago, God put that flame in our heart, that vision, that calling to do something, that divine burden, that holy burden, that holy discontent, but over the years, you forgot about it.

And maybe today's the day to just seize that again and not let it go and say, God, what is the next step you want for me to pursue that vision that you gave me in my youth?

And maybe some of us have no idea what it means to be a Christian. And today, our step is just to say, God, I want that.

I want to be a child of the King of Kings. I want to represent the greatest nation that ever existed, the kingdom of God. Would you accept me?

Would you forgive me? Would you forgive me? Take a minute now and listen to the word, listen to the voice of God.