

Our Solution Prefigured: Conquest

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Date: 01 March 2015

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[0 : 0 0] For those of you who don't know me, my name is Chris. I oversee community groups here at Watermark, and it's great to see so many of you this morning. How do you define success? What is it to be successful? I've got a few pictures up here. Here is Mr. Li Ka-Shing.

Is he a successful man? What about the next one? Here is Steve Jobs. Incredible visionary, creative talent. Was he successful in his life?

Here is Mother Teresa, poured out a life for many, many people, served the poor in India. Was she a success? Here are my parents. Were they a success? You don't have to answer that question.

Okay, we all have different views of what it means to be successful in our lives. And we're looking through God's story, and it's a story about what it means to be successful in life.

So we've looked at, and if we can have a look at the icons, we've looked so far in this story about how God has created us. He's the ruler. He's the king. He's created us in his image to be like him, to enjoy relationship with him, enjoy relationship with each other, and to be people who go out and fill the world with his goodness and with his love.

[1 : 3 4] We also saw how in the story, we decided that actually we didn't want to be living in obedience to God's word. We didn't want to do that. We wanted to run life our way.

And what happened is we said, we want to be the boss. We don't want to do things your way. And what happens is things begin to break down. Relationship with God breaks down. Relationship with others begins to break down. There's fear. There's hurt. There's shame.

There's all these things which begin to make life crumble apart. And just as things have been getting bad, just as things have been getting bad, the people are not really living as God's people.

The people are not living under God's rule. The people are not living as a blessing to other people. Then God comes and promises to Abraham three things.

He says, I'm going to recreate what I've already started. I'm going to recreate a people in my image. You're going to have a people. He says to Abraham, you're going to have a land, a place that I'm going to put you in.

[2 : 4 0] He says, I'm going to give you blessing. And blessing which is going to go out to all the nations. And so we've seen how God has taken the people out of slavery, through the Passover.

Passover. He's taken them into giving them his law, which was meant to be a place where the people had his word so they could be obedient to him, to enjoy his blessings, to enjoy relationship with him, to learn how to love him first, love others.

And now he's going to bring them into the land that he's promised them. So that's where we got to in the story so far. The only problem so far has been God's wanted to take the people into the land.

And 40 years previous to where we are in this story, he took them to the land. The people of Israel said, the land looks amazing, but there are some big people there.

We're scared. We don't want to go in. So God, send us back to slavery in Egypt because it's much better there. And 40 years later, all of that generation has died out except two people, Joshua and Caleb.

[3 : 43] So that's where we come to this story. And we're going to look at this story because it's an amazing story. I think it's a great story. We're going to look at it about the commission, the mission, our plans, and God's plans.

Okay? The commission, the mission, our plans, God's plans. So let's kind of get into the story a little bit. So it starts off, this passage, after the death of Moses.

And he comes to Joshua. God says to Joshua, Moses, my servant is dead. Now you go into the land that I am giving to you.

Now, I don't know if you've thought about this, but Moses, and in the previous chapter of Deuteronomy, it says, Moses was a prophet like nobody else. He saw God.

He met with God face to face. He was someone who did incredible signs and wonders. He was the man who was the most successful leader ever in the history of Israel.

[4 : 41] In fact, he was the only leader. But that's beside the point, because he was someone who everybody looked up to. And now he's dead. And Joshua, who's been his little assistant walking alongside him, it's his turn now.

And God tells him, you're going to do something that even Moses couldn't do. Imagine how Joshua's feeling at this point. A little bit of fear. A little bit of intrepidation.

A little bit of, ooh, I'm not sure about that. And so God has to tell Joshua three times, be strong and courageous. Be strong and courageous. Be strong and courageous.

In fact, Moses has already told him, because it seems like he hasn't quite got the message. And God reassures Joshua in this moment.

He says, listen, I know this task seems so big for you, but you know what? I'm giving you this land. I'm giving you the land. It's a gift from me.

[5 : 44] It's my land. I'm giving it to you. Because you may feel overwhelmed, but realize that I'm the one who gives and wants to bless you generously with what is mine.

So it's a bit like, I'm giving you, this is my house. This is my land. I'm giving you, I've got the title deeds. I'm giving it to you. All I'm asking you to do is go and move into my house. That's what he's saying.

And then he says, he's reassuring him again by saying, also, what's going to make you successful is the fact, not of your great abilities, not of your great adequacy, not of your great career record, because it's not looking too good at the moment, but actually, what's going to make you successful is that I am with you and you need to get into my word, you need to meditate on it, you need to soak in it, and you need to obey it.

Because when you do that, when you put me first, you know what? You will be successful. You will be successful. I will not leave you.

I will not forsake you because I'm in this. It's not about your adequacy. It's about me. In fact, your success is not even really just about the mission that I've got you on.

[7 : 02] That's important, but that's not the main thing. That's not ultimate success. The main success is not measured in your achievements, but it's measured in your relationship. God doesn't measure your success in how much you've managed to get done.

He's measuring it in terms of your obedience and your relationship with him. So if you remember, last week, God showed us that what he wanted for his people was to be a people who loved him and loved others, who were distinctive in the way they did relationships.

And who really honored him. So let me just ask the question to you. What is success for you? What is it that if you were to look on your gravestone, at the end of your life, you would want to be known for?

Because God makes it very clear to Joshua that he is to be known as somebody who was God's man, who was a man who loved, followed God.

That's the commission. So now let's get in a bit more into the juicy details of the story, because this story is amazing. And we're going to have a go and look in chapter two, because we're going to look at the actual mission.

[8 : 18] And I love this bit, because Joshua takes this commission and he comes up with a strategy for entering into the land. He kind of goes on a little bit of a recce mission to see where the lie of the land is, to see who the people are, and to work out where the weak points of the land is.

And so they come to Jericho. And if you've got a, there's a picture, I think, of Jericho here. Tobin took this picture while he was on.

It doesn't look the most exciting place, but there was plenty of things to go and see. So they go out on this mission, two budding kind of little James Bonds, you know. They're off there on their Occupy Canaan mission.

And let's call these little spies Dan and Ben. Okay? So Dan and Ben are coming along into the city and, you know, heart pounding because they're going right into enemy territory, behind enemy lines.

And they come in, and they come into the city and they think they've got in unnoticed. They slip into a local inn just at the beginning. And you can see them kind of high-fiving each other.

[9 : 23] Yeah, we made it. We got it. Okay? And they get into this little place, which seems to them a little bit seedy. Okay? A little bit on the dodgy side. But these were kind of naive, young Jewish boys, so they're not used to seeing the bright lights of the city.

And the owner seems just a little bit over-friendly. Okay? They're not sure what she's after, but, you know, their genitals pumping, and they're thinking everything's going fine.

Now, if you actually read the story carefully, and if you read it in the Hebrews where it looks, the spies are less like James Bond and are more like Austin Powers or Johnny English, because the whole thing is quite comical, the way it's written.

I mean, think about it. They're completely incompetent, because they've just walked in. They've only been there a few hours, and already the king knows everything about them. He knows where they are, what they're doing, and which house they're staying at.

That's not a good spy. Okay? Okay? Then, if that's not enough, where have they walked into but the local brothel? Okay? And for some naive Jewish boys, who are meant to be the holy people of God, representing him, it's all getting just a little bit racy.

[10 : 39] There's a few distractions going on here. Okay? And just as the boys maybe seem to be getting on rather too well with Rahab at this point, there's a knock on the door. And the king's representatives come there and say, excuse me, there are some guys who've come, and they're our vicious enemies, and they've come to search out and steal our land.

We know they're in there. Bring them out. Everything seems lost for this Israeli Jewish boys. Their spying career seems like it's coming to a very abrupt end.

End. But then Rahab comes along, and she's obviously a pretty savvy woman. She comes to these actually rather clueless kingsmen and says three blatant lies.

I mean, these are big whoppers. I mean, she says, the men came to me, and I didn't know where they were from. Okay? Being a prostitute, you can only imagine what she's actually saying. She's actually implying, they did some business with me.

They went away. They were satisfied. Okay? They left the city. I don't know where they are. And then she says, you better run after them quickly. And she says, they went that way.

[11 : 57] Okay? And these clueless guys are like, oh. Okay? And you see them running off into the distance, out through the gates, and then the gates are slammed shut, and they're locked out for the night.

And the enemies are locked in. Isn't it crazy? And if that's not enough, you see, the spies are upstairs, you know, looking really macho, lying under a load of grass or something, trying to hide them, probably, like, poking in their ears, trying not to sneeze while the conversation is going on down below.

And they're wondering, man, what have we got ourselves into? This Rahab person, what is she going to give us away? What's going on here? They have no clue what is going on.

Everything seems lost. And yet, God has planned a pagan prostitute to be the means that God is going to bring about his purposes and plans.

It's incredible. And if you think about this story, we've got to kind of... The story's not really what you might call a good Christian story because there's a part in it where there's lies going on.

[13 : 15] And some people have said, in this story, Rahab lies, that means it's okay for Christians to lie. Okay? Because she does. God seems to not mind too much about it. Is it okay for people to lie?

Well, I'm not going to go into much detail, but I think if you think about it, here's just a couple of thoughts. When we lie, our lies are mostly about saving ourselves, advancing ourselves, making ourselves look good so we can get something out of the situation.

Rahab lies, and she's saving others, and she's putting herself on the line. Because, you know, if the king finds out what Rahab has done, do you know what's going to happen to her?

Now, she's going to be dead. She is willing to sacrifice her life for theirs because she's seen something about God which is different.

Now, could she possibly have avoided lying? Maybe. But remember who she is? She's a rough woman who is a messy character, and she does the only thing she knows how to do in a life-or-death situation.

[14 : 26] And she chooses to honor God, the God of the Israelites, more than saving her own skin. And this is incredible.

I mean, look at verse 9 and 11. This is just quite extraordinary. Rahab says, Think about the scene.

These guys, they're just lying under some grass, heart pounding, okay, looking a complete wreck, and she's saying, everybody's melting away before you. Something supernatural is going on because I don't think anyone else will be melting away before them.

And she says, Your God, the Lord, is the God of the heavens and the earth. Rahab is a pagan Canaanite.

Remember, pagan, at those times, they had lots of different gods. They had the gods of the storms, gods of fertility, gods of marriage, gods of war. They had every kind of god you could imagine, okay?

[15 : 46] And your purpose as a follower of the religion was to make sure you appeased, make sure you were loyal to these gods because if you weren't, they might kind of strike you down.

If you were, if you managed to get their favor like we talked about last week, then they might get blessing. But she's actually being disloyal to her gods and she's saying, I know your god is more powerful, stronger, mightier, greater than any of my gods.

And think even further about who this woman is. Rahab is an outcast in society. She's the lowest of the low. She appears to be unmarried.

No husband is mentioned. No children are mentioned when she talks about who she wants to save. And in a woman where your honor came through having your children, she had none.

in a place where the women would look at her profession and would scorn her and the men would look at her and they were probably her clients and they would think she was good just for one thing.

[16 : 53] God looked at her and saw something bigger and greater. He wanted to save and reach out and work in Rahab's life.

All the others are under his judgment and she knows that she would be under God's judgment as well and she turns to God and she strikes a deal.

She says, if I put this cord in a window, when you guys come back because I know God's given you this land, when I come back this will be a sign that you're going to save me. That just like, remember, at Passover the blood, as Celeste said earlier, was the protection that when God saw it they were safe.

So when the Israelites were going to see this cord, the whole of that family was going to be saved, protected from death. And the story's amazing because the spies managed to get home and do you know what they say?

In spite of their incompetence, in spite of their everything seeming to go wrong, God has actually brought them to the right house, he's got them the right information and he's even increased their faith that God is at work and God is going to give them the land.

[18 : 22] They were fearful but it takes a pagan prostitute to encourage them to trust in their God. Would you have planned that? Would you have planned that?

Because God's great plan as well was to bring Rahab into his family. An outcast is welcomed in. She lives and dwells with the people of God.

God's God's I'd never have planned that. I don't think Joshua and the spies would ever have planned that. But when we make our plans, generally they're often centered around making us more comfortable.

Maybe getting us, making us look competent, making us look capable, making us look as if we're we can do it by ourselves. But when God does his plans, do you know who gets the glory?

It's God because he's the one who's made to look more infinitely wise, greater, stronger, more glorious. His plans are so much bigger and he invites us to be part of his plan and to fall more in love with him as you see how he works.

[19 : 37] He doesn't work the way we work. That's the mission. It's an extraordinary story, isn't it? Who would have thought it? So we thought about the commission that God told Joshua to go in and to trust him, to obey him.

We've looked at the mission and how everything seemed to go wrong. Now let's think about our plans for a minute. I think in Hong Kong this is a place where we love making plans.

You know, we make plans for our financial security. We make plans for our investments. We make plans for our children. We make plans for our vacations. We make plans for our career development. We're always making plans.

Big plans, little plans. Everything has to be planned. Now Joshua made plans. God told him to go into the land but he didn't give him detailed instructions on how to do it.

So he's there. He thinks, okay, I'm using my best military tactics. I'm going to plan to go in. But the thing is, with the plans, God didn't have a problem with them making plans.

[20 : 37] God doesn't have a problem with us making plans. But what was the primary goal of their plans is the essential thing. You see, at every different stage of life, it's really interesting, every different stage of life, you'll have different plans and a different view of what you think success is for you at that moment.

We recently had a two-year-old staying with us and success for her, the thing which all her plans revolved around were getting a frozen pencil from Disneyland.

This was her great life's work that if she could get some piece of merchandise which showed somebody looking more like a Swedish pop star than anything else, if she could get this, then her life was complete.

I look at this a little bit cynically, thinking, this is just a tactic to guilt parents into lining the pockets of rich companies, but I had to let it go.

And the thing was, when she didn't manage to get the pencil or her parents said, no, you can't play with that now, all hell let loose.

[22 : 01] It was like the end of the world was happening. Life was collapsing all around her. But you know now, I don't know how many of you think that that was a really significant thing to get worried about.

Because as you get older, perspective changes. And actually, you work through every single different stage of your life and as you look back, you get a different perspective on what is really important and significant in your life.

And you know, that frozen pencil, I think it's fine. I mean, it can be important for her. It's creative. I mean, it can help her maybe develop some skills of writing or something. But in the grand scheme of things, it's secondary.

It's not primary. It's not the most important thing. And for us, if you think about the plans that you are making in your life, what are the things that you consider to be ultimate at the moment?

It may be short term, it may be long term, it may be just getting your to-do list done this week. It may be getting a spouse, it may be booking a holiday, it could be anything, but those things can sometimes become the center of our world.

[23 : 11] And if you were to take God's perspective, perspective, which is actually far bigger than ours, he might look at it and say, important, but not primary, not ultimate, not the most significant thing.

Because you think what happens when you don't get what you want, when your plans don't quite work out. Because your reaction will show you whether something is primary or secondary.

You know, when you are frustrated, when you're getting impatient with people, when you're having critical words towards other people because they're not doing what you want them to do, that may be showing you something about whether you're trusting in things which are secondary or ultimate.

Because God wants us to put him as ultimate, to put growing in faith like God did with the spies as ultimate, to put our character, the way we reflect and image him in our lives as ultimate, to put loving him, loving others as ultimate.

Everything else, important though it may be, is secondary. And many of us are stressed over things which are actually, you know, health, education, holidays, getting work done.

[24 : 33] And we come to church service on a Sunday and we're stressed out from everything which has gone wrong in the week and then we say, God, bless my plans this week because my world is out of control.

And maybe God might say to us, stop trying to fit me into your plans and maybe start trying to think about how do I fit into God's plans?

because the problem is if you try and make your plans ultimate, do you know what happens?

Three things happen. One, we mess up our own plans. You know, the spies, they were completely incompetent. They bungled everything.

They got everything wrong. And we can live under delusions that if I am competent enough, if I just do this path, if I just manage to succeed in my plan, get my kids to grow up to be like Einstein, be wise enough to get my right choices for my career move, then I'll be successful.

[25 : 48] And it's big things and little things. This week, Friday, I was going off to teach at Mayfoo. I'd prepared this amazing lesson. All the resources prepared. The whole lesson was based around certain resources and so I left and I was at Prince Edward on the MTR and suddenly I realized something.

I'd forgotten all the resources that I planned. My whole lesson was based on these things. And at that moment, I was thinking, I have three hours with 16 students and I'm just going to have to talk at them because I've got nothing.

I'm going to have to wing it because, you see, I make my plans but, you know, I mess up my plans. And if it's not you who mess them up, then you can be guaranteed somebody else is going to mess them up.

You know, think about the story. Somebody told the king. Who was that little snitch who went to the king and told him? Wouldn't the whole of the story have been so much less stressful if they hadn't told the king?

They could have just walked in, merely done a little look around, taken a few pictures and then gone away. It would have been fine. But God wasn't working like that. You know, I have this all the time.

[27 : 01] Big things, little things. I was going into the supermarket the other day. I was in a hurry. I had two minutes. I knew what I wanted. I went straight to get it, straight to the checkout. Just before I reached the checkout, a lady came in front of me who seemed she had been shopping, ready for Armageddon to come because she had produced everything in the whole store.

So here I am. I'm in a hurry. I've got to get to a meeting. And so she slowly starts putting the things on the little conveyor belt. Time just stands still for a little while.

And as I think she's beginning to get through the next three years' supply, then the lady, the cashier, suddenly finds the barcode doesn't work.

At that moment, instead of being a sensible person looking at the barcode, typing it in, she decides that she'd like to have a conversation about this with every other employee in the whole shop.

Twelve hours later, she arrives back with me fuming, okay, my heart was not at peace. And she, then the lady in front of me says to her, actually, I don't think I'll take it.

[28 : 10] I'll leave it. You see, if you want to make plans, if you don't mess them up, somebody else will mess them up for you. And if it's not that, then circumstances will mess the things up.

You know, the spies, they're trapped on the roof, lying under this kind of grass, like sticking out of their ears, and they can't get on with any spying. Think about it, when they go back to Joshua, what are they going to say?

Hey, Josh, you know, we had a few problems, there wasn't a great view, but we'll just go back tomorrow, do a few street interviews, and just get a bit for you. The circumstances were not looking good.

And we can have circumstances, health problems, the economic climate, all kinds of things can come in and can mess up your plans. We can, other people can, circumstances can.

But do you know what? I think, ultimately, behind many of those things, actually, God sometimes wants to mess up our plans. Because, I don't think we want to think about that, but because as you realize how you react when your plans are messed up, it begins to show you what you've really been trusting in, what you've really made ultimate.

[29 : 35] And what God wants to do is he wants to expose your heart to you to show you that maybe you're living for something, that when you look back at the end of your life in full perspective, you're going to say, actually, that wasn't really worth it.

That actually, when you look back at your plans, maybe they were just so narrow like this, and that God had something so much bigger that he was wanting to do.

How are you fitting into God's plans? And maybe think about this, how are your plans and what stops you from loving people as God's plan calls us to, to trusting him as God's plan calls you to, that stops you maybe noticing the people around you?

Because you know, when you're stressed, in that situation, in the supermarket, I was not thinking loving thoughts towards other people. Because you actually get so wrapped up with yourself that you actually lose sight of everything else.

Society will tell you success is found in certain things. It will tell you, look at someone like Li Ka-Shing or Steve Jobs, and they'll say, earning that much money, being that creative, being that visionary, that is success.

[31 : 02] And you know, they'll write books about it. You know, people who become successful, they always write a book about how they became successful. Do you notice that? And they say, this is how you should do it. You know, there's even a book, Steve Jobs, for kids.

Okay? You can go out and buy it. You can, okay, your life's kids will be amazing afterwards. Because we look at people with those kind of talents and those things, and we say, that is success.

Society applauds. But in God's eyes, is that success? Did he use his amazing talents for the glory of God?

Did people look at him and say, wow, that is a testimony to how good God is? I don't know Steve Jobs' heart, but I do know that many of the people in our society that we say success, God, in his perspective, which is so much bigger than us, says, failed.

Says, you missed it. You lived for something which was that big when I wanted you to live for something that was that big. God may be messing up some of your plans at the moment because he actually wants you to live a truly, lastingly, successful life.

[32 : 27] Not just getting your frozen pencil, whatever that is for you right at the moment. But he wants to be able to say, when you're on your deathbed and you look back and you have trusted him and you have obeyed him, he wants you to say, he wants to say to you, well done, good, faithful, servant.

You trusted me. You look to love me. You look to love the people around you. In your messiness, you're not perfect. That, in God's eyes, is success.

So that's how our plans work. God's plan, we've said it's so much bigger. Well, let's think about how God's plan is. Just look at the mission. It seemed to go wrong, but God was doing something bigger.

What was God doing? Joshua and the spies thought they were just taking the land. But God wanted to rescue an outcast prostitute and bring her and her family into his family.

And more than that, he was wanting to fulfill the promise, remember, that he'd made to Abraham, the promise that blessing would go to all the nations. Well, this is the beginning of a microcosm of how God is doing that.

[33 : 49] And you might even say, well, what about all the other people? God's judgment came. That's the bad news. That's the hard part of the Bible message. The people of Jericho's sin had grown so bad, God had waited 500 years.

You look, Genesis 15, God says, they're not ready yet. Their sin is not bad enough. But he's waited 500 years for them to repent, and they haven't. And sin brings death.

Same with Adam and Eve, same with Passover. But where there is deserved judgment, there is undeserved grace. And the question, I don't know why God sometimes does the things he does, but when I would look in a bigger perspective, and I don't have that yet, I think my question would be not why does he judge some people, but it would be more, why does he save some people?

Because would you have planned for an outcast prostitute to come into your community group? Would you have chosen that as your plan, your technique, your strategy?

Would you see the people that no one else in the society sees? Probably we wouldn't, but God does. And part of living in God's plan is to begin to get his heart and to see the people that he sees.

[35 : 10] People in your office, people in your workplace, wherever he has placed you, God has people that he wants to reach out to and save. And if we're so wrapped up in our plans, do you know what? We may miss out on being part of what he's up to, which is so much bigger.

I remember two years ago, I got a Facebook message from a name that I didn't recognize. And he said, Hi, Chris.

And I was feeling a bit suspicious at that moment. And he said, Do you remember me? And I had to write back and say, No, I have no clue who you are at all.

And he said, Do you remember ten years ago? And I can't remember five minutes ago, so that was a stupid question. He said, Do you remember ten years ago? Like, I met you once and you walked, you just took me to a dinner, a lunch or something at some of your friend's house.

And he said, You've probably forgotten. You said some things to me and do you know what? That was the beginning of me starting a journey of coming to Christ. I'd forgotten the guy completely.

[36 : 21] I didn't have a clue what was going on. All I'd done was just try and I saw someone there on their own and God began to do something in his life which even if he'd never sent me the Facebook message, I would never have known.

But that's the kind of God we have who has such a bigger perspective that we may not have a clue what we're doing, but if we're walking in obedience to him, he will multiply exponentially what you do.

And it gets even bigger than this. The story, if you go to Matthew chapter 1, it's a genealogy of Jesus, probably the bits that you skip over.

Read that one. It's the best genealogy in the Bible because do you know who Jesus' great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great, something grandmother was? Rahab.

God was working something 1,500 years later that not even Joshua knew was going on, that he was going to use Rahab to bring blessing to these people and he was going to use that story to bring about salvation through Jesus to each one of you here.

[37 : 39] Any of you Jews here? Maybe there's a few. Fantastic. Great. Most of us are not Jews. God was working something to take the Jewish people, to take Jesus, to take Rahab and to take this story and he wanted to multiply it so that you and you and you would come into relationship with himself.

Would you have planned that? If you're following just your own little plans, they're going to be that big. You follow God's plans, that plans which, you know, sometimes when everything in the world seems to be going absolutely wrong, do you know it's going absolutely right in God's eyes?

You know, you may think that the things that are happening in your life are out of control but there's not been one second in the whole of history which have been out of control in God's plans because God and when we meet with him face to face we will look back from his vantage point and we'll say why did you allow that to happen?

Why did you allow that woman in the supermarket to be there? Why did you allow all those things sometimes to be taken away from me? Why did you allow this and that and that and that and then you'll be able to see wow, you were doing something so much greater because you're that kind of God.

That's why he calls us who are just like those bungling spies who are just like Rahab who are not adequate who are not competent who even though we think we are are deluded in that and yet he wants to come into our life in the same way and use you.

[39 : 34] so the question is what are the little frozen pencils that you're holding on to at the moment? Do you want to live for something so much bigger than just your plans?

Those plans are good maybe but maybe they're secondary if you put what God wants and remember what his heart is his heart is for you to trust him for you to have a relationship with him for you to respond even in the chaos by saying I don't know what you're doing God but I trust you and if you begin to see that he wants you to open your eyes to see the people around you how you can love them how you can reach out to the outsiders that nobody else wants to reach out to do you know what?

You'll look back and you will not have wasted your life. God will say well done good faithful servant because I will get the glory from your life and he's so much more worthy than we as bungling spies are.

Let's pray. Father forgive me forgive us where we we do get so wrapped up in so many things we get wrapped up in just the things of life which happen we think that our plans are going to bring us security for the future we think that our plans are going to give us security for the present we think that we can make everything happen and Lord we strive after success in so many different things and yet we so often fail to see Lord I so often fail to see that you want me to trust you that you want to open my eyes to see the people around me things which maybe the society will not say that that's glorious but you will say that is beautiful

Father as you said to Joshua you told him to keep remembering your word keep meditating on it Lord because your word is what will bring us perspective Lord I pray help us as your people to be a people who know your word who love your word who actually want to just saturate ourselves in it to obey what you call us to do whatever you're calling us to do right now because we know that you have something so much greater even though we're so tempted to find success everybody else tells us that this is where life is found Lord help us to remember that you're greater you're beautiful thank you for saving us thank you you didn't just save us to be left on the sidelines of history but you saved us to invite us in to what you're up to in history let us be a church which we know we are here for such a time as this we are here not by accident but by your plan to be a light in this city to be a light in our office to be a light in our families please give us the strength help us to be courageous and strong in obeying whatever you're calling us to do we love you you're amazing amen