

Roman 15:8-12

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[0 : 00] And a good morning to you all. It's very good to see you here on this day. I ask that you open up your copy of God's Word. I hope you have it with you this day. Paul's letter to the Romans chapter 15.

We're going to look together this morning at verses 8 through 12. Romans chapter 15 verses 8 through 12.

For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God's truthfulness in order to confirm the promise given to the patriarchs and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy.

As it is written, Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles and sing to your name. And again it is said, Rejoice Gentiles with His people.

And again, praise the Lord all you Gentiles and let all the peoples extol Him. And again Isaiah says, The root of Jesse will come, even he who arises to the rule Gentiles, in him with the Gentiles hope.

[1 : 15] Now I hope this morning that we're all a little more prepared than I was for Aletheia Way. But certainly we need God's blessing on the preaching of His word. So let's join together in prayer and ask for that.

Father God, we praise you this morning for the good things you've done for us in Christ. And one of those things is you've given us your precious word, a great tool, an asset to us to live the Christian life, to see how it is that we ought to serve and worship and honor you.

And we plead with you this morning, Lord, by your Spirit. Speak through me. Minister to all of our hearts. Soften them where they need softening. Harden them where they need hardening.

That we might boldly proclaim your gospel to this world. That we might display the goodness of it in our own lives. That your name will be honored to all peoples.

We pray this in Christ's name. Amen. So as we've continued through Romans, Paul has come and began to narrow the scope, the outworkings of the gospel, which he's presented to us in the first 11 chapters.

[2 : 28] He's beginning to show us how then, in light of these great gospel truths, we should live. And he does that through 12, 13, 14. And in 14, he really begins to talk about the gray areas of Christian life.

The things that the scriptures don't speak to directly. What we should and shouldn't do in those gray realms. And he talks about how we ought to have unity in those things. And in the beginning of 15, he uses Christ as the example.

You see in verse 7, Therefore, welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you. And in response to that, then he then broadens the scope once again. He then takes a step back up.

And it seems like every time Paul talks about Jesus Christ, he doesn't narrow down. He goes bigger. He says, I just said the name Jesus Christ. I've got to proclaim something huge and massive and true about our glorious Savior and Lord.

I imagine him being moved back towards what we sometimes call the high theology as he speaks of Christ and his work for us. So in response to him talking about Christ welcoming us, he expounds upon that a bit for us.

[3 : 33] And we see this here. And the teaching is fairly simple. We find it in verse 8 and the first part of 9 with support, with Old Testament scriptural support.

And here's what he's trying to say to us. Christ became a servant to the Jews, to the circumcised, to show God's truthfulness, to accomplish two things. Number one, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs in the proof of God being true.

And secondly, so that in order that the Gentiles would glorify God for his mercy. The point he's making to us, as Christ became a servant, verse 3 of chapter 15, For Christ did not please himself, but he pleased God with his action, with his sacrifice on our behalf.

And he did these things in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs and to cause the Gentiles to glorify him for his mercy. So we're going to look together at these Old Testament proofs, and I'm going to expand upon them a bit to show you God's global purpose, what he has always intended from the very beginning of time, the way in which he intended to glorify himself, the way in which he chose to expose his very character to the world.

Well, let's begin with this first little phrase, the first part of chapter, or verse 8. Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God's truthfulness.

[5 : 05] At this point, you may ask a question, but didn't Christ come to serve the world? Here the text says he became a servant to the circumcised, and my response to that would be both yes and no.

Take, for example, Matthew chapter 15, verse 24. We see a Canaanite woman come to him who's been oppressed by a demon, and she's coming to him for healing. And he responds to her in verse 24 of chapter 15, I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

So Christ was sent to serve Israel, to serve the Jews, his kin, the nation that he was born from. He was sent to serve them.

But then what do we see her response to that being? She has this great measure of faith. As he says to her, I didn't come to serve the Canaanites, I came to serve the Jews. And she said, but even the dogs get scraps from the table.

Your mercy surely extends beyond just those seated at the table. And he then rewards her for her great faith. So he expands then his mercy and his gospel beyond.

[6 : 13] So my answer to that is both yes and no. But Jesus was in fact sent to serve the Jews in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, in order to prove God faithful, to fulfill all of the promises given to the patriarchs.

Speaking expressly of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. We see in Matthew chapter 5, verse 17, Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. He says, Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have not come to abolish them, but to fulfill them. He fulfilled the law by upholding it, its sacredness, reestablishing its truth.

He expounded upon what it meant. That's what the Sermon on the Mount is all about. It's about showing people what the law was originally intended for. He fulfilled the law by keeping it perfectly. Without flaw, Jesus Christ kept the law. But beyond that, He came to verify the whole revealed truth of God. 2 Corinthians chapter 1, verse 20, reads, For all the promises of God, all of them, find their yes in Jesus Christ.

[7 : 31] That is why it is through Him that we utter our amen to God for His glory. All the promises of God are yes in Jesus Christ.

And so as Paul is writing to an audience that was both Jew and Gentile, and he's coming off this treatise on the way we ought to live together in harmony.

And the Jews were strict adherers to the Old Testament law, and many of them hadn't quite let go of the liberty that they now had in Christ. Still were very dogmatic about the things that they would and wouldn't eat.

As an example, you'll see throughout chapter 14, right? I believe he's speaking here specifically to the Jews, to show them that the gospel was always meant to expand beyond their borders.

The Jews' very calling, their very purpose from the beginning, the reason that they were called out as a people set apart for God, was to reach the Gentiles for His glory.

[8 : 33] The very purpose that they were created for. Which brings us to the second point, the thing he's trying to establish here, right? Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God's truthfulness.

Secondly, in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy. In order that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy.

Now, when we read this phrase rendered this way in the ESV, you see that word might? And for us, that raises question. We would read it maybe, in order that the Gentiles could possibly glorify God. In order that the Gentiles could have the potential of glorifying God. But that's not what the original language means at all, right? The language used here is actually something that has already been

accomplished.

I won't get into all the details of that this morning. But, what really he's saying is, in order that the Gentiles would, in order that they necessarily did glorify God for His mercy, was something that was accomplished by Christ coming, serving the circumcised, and fulfilling, showing God's truthfulness to be true, accurate.

[9 : 45] Dependable, all right? And it's entirely consistent with the promises given to the patriarchs, okay? Paul's been working on establishing that for us this far.

That, in fact, the gospel of grace was not meant just for the Jews, but meant for the world. That's that language we use. Paul's using the term Gentiles here so often, you could replace with that the nations, the world, peoples, okay?

Gentiles is what the Jewish readers would have understood to be everyone but them, all right? So, recognize that it just expands to everyone, not including them, all the other people of the world. And that's the point he's making here.

Flip with me back to the beginning of Romans. We're going to do a quick little tour through, just to show you the consistency of his argument here. Keep in mind that this would have been read all at one time, right?

So, hopefully this would have been fresh on the original readers' minds as they came to this spot. I've been tempted so many times, rather than preaching a sermon, just to read you a whole book of the Bible, because that's what would have been done in the historical church.

[10 : 46] They would have received a letter from Paul, and they would have just stood up and read it, because the context is so important. I'll probably never do it, but maybe someday. We'll see. All right.

So, Romans chapter 1, verses 4 and 5. Let's start there. He says, So, he starts it very quickly here in his prologue in Romans.

Now, turn to, well, you don't probably have to turn. Verse 13 through 16 of chapter 1. I want you to know, brothers, that I have often intended to come to you, but thus far have been prevented, in order that I may reap some harvest among you, as well as among the rest of the Gentiles.

I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. So I am eager to preach the gospel to you also, who are in Rome. For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. So there we see it again. Chapter 2, verse 24. Stated here in the negative, speaking of Israel. It says, For as it is written, The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you.

[12 : 12] Because of the Jewish rejection of God and his ways. The name was blasphemed among the Gentiles. It was intended to not be. It was intended to be honored among the Gentiles.

But because of their disobedience, it was blasphemed. Chapter 3, verse 29 and 30. Or is God the God of Jews only?

Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also. Since God is one who would justify the circumcised by faith, and the uncircumcised through faith.

Chapter 10, verse 12 and 13. For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek.

For the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

[13 : 13] Praise God. Chapter 11, right? Which is all about Israel and what will finally happen to Israel. And we talked at length about this. And I think at the end of it all, I really said, I don't know.

I had a guess at what the outcome of it would be. But chapter 11, verses 11 and 12 and 25. So I asked, did they stumble in order that they might fall?

By no means. Rather, through their trespass, salvation has come to the Gentiles. So as to make Israel jealous. Now if their trespass means riches for the world, and if their failure means riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their full inclusion mean?

In verse 25. Lest you be wise in your own sight, I want you to understand this mystery, brothers. A partial hardening has come upon Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

He's making the point pretty emphatically throughout the book of Romans so far. Now recognize that this has been canonized as scripture. The church has recognized Paul's letter to the Romans as inspired by the Spirit.

[14 : 20] And we have included it, canonized it into our scriptures. We see this as the word of God. And I fully believe that it is. I'm not so sure that as Paul was writing, he knew that's what was going

to happen.

He constantly references back. Constantly. I think it's 84 times in the book of Romans. He references the scriptures. What we would call the Old Testament. We talked last week about the great value of the Old Testament.

How poorly neglected it is. But here, as he continues to make this point, as he's really trying to drive it home for us, that the gospel was not just for the Jews, but it was for the Gentiles. Praise God for that, because I think we're all included in that number.

The Gentiles. All those who are not of Jewish descent. He, again, hearkens back to the Old Testament to prove his point. He quotes the Old Testament scriptures.

We get four of them here, beginning in the last half of 9 through 12. We see four of them, and I want to read to you the original text, what he's actually quoting from, and you can look at it here in your own copy of the word.

[15:27] So the first one is from 2 Samuel 22, 50. For this I will praise you, O Lord, among the nations, and sing praises to your name.

The second one, Deuteronomy 32, 43. Rejoice with him, O heavens. Bow down to him, all gods.

The third one, Psalm 117, 1.

Praise the Lord, all nations. Extol him, all peoples. And the fourth, Isaiah 11, verse 10. In that day, the root of Jesse, being Christ, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples, of him shall the nations inquire, and his resting place shall be glorious.

Now you may note, I hope you did, the reason I read them to you that way, is that Paul's quotes of these Old Testament texts aren't exact, are they?

I'm reading the Old Testament English, right, the English translation in ESV, and it doesn't match up perfectly, does it? And the reason for that, is that in this day, culturally, rabbis were permitted to take some liberties with the scriptures.

[16:44] They were allowed to quote them in such a way to give greater understanding to the scripture itself. So take, for example, he replaces the nations with the word Gentiles.

Speaking to a Jewish audience who wouldn't really have thought of all the nations of the world, but would have thought of them and everyone else. That's the term he's using here for Gentiles.

You've got the Jews and everyone else. So he takes the liberty in this case to do this. Recognize also that this was written, this was dictated for him.

I imagine him pacing around a room and putting out these scriptures from memory. Just toss them out there. Oh, and another thing. Pin this one down.

And another thing. In 2 Samuel. Oh, and another place in Deuteronomy. Oh, and by the way, in Psalm. It's scholars that have gone back and matched it up and found. What is he referencing to?

[17:41] Also know that the punctuation that we have in our English language didn't exist in the original language as well. So we see it as these quotes. We've got the quotation marks.

We've got clear punctuation. We've got, and it says, comma, right? And so for us, we immediately, especially those of you who are in college right now, want to quickly go to our citation rules and figure out how in the world Paul didn't get kicked out of school for misquoting and not citing it properly.

Right? We do all those things. It was acceptable for him to use the scriptures in this way. And beyond all that, okay? So that's in one hand, right? More importantly, in this hand, this is inspired by the Spirit of God.

So if he changes it just a little bit, praise God that he was trying to give us a better understanding. Help us really, it's the commentary of the Old Testament text to see that this was God's eternal purpose.

Right? I want you to notice the types of quotations he uses here. Right? The first one is from one of the books of history, 2 Samuel.

[18:51] The second, from Deuteronomy, is a book of the law. The third, being from Psalm, is a book of poetry. And the fourth, being from Isaiah, is one of the books of the prophets.

Paul used one of the, each of the four types of literary books in the Old Testament to make his point. And what he's trying to say to his readers and what he's saying to us this morning is that all of the Old Testament is consistent.

The theme of this thing, of God coming to earth, condescending, in order to make himself known, to glorify himself to all peoples, is consistent in the Scriptures.

It didn't start with Paul. Certainly Paul's ministry. He was an apostle sent to the Gentiles. Right? But it didn't start with them. A great example of that would be Nineveh.

Jonah was sent to a people that were not of Jewish descent. Right? To preach repentance. A good example of this.

[19 : 55] It's consistent. And I want to broaden. I hope that Paul's argument is enough for you. It should be. It should be enough. He's showing you this theme here. But let me pull it up a little bit more.

Let's look at a few more examples. And let's do the same thing he did. Let's look at a book of the law, history, poetry, and a prophet from the Old Testament. And then we'll look at a few New Testament examples as well.

I'm going to Bible drill you a little bit this morning. So get ready for it. Let's go to Exodus chapter 9. And we'll go in order. Okay? Is that moment when you worry that your neighbor is going to judge you for not knowing exactly where some books of the Bible are?

Okay? I cheated. I marked mine this morning. Exodus chapter 9, verses 13 through 16.

Showing us the twofold purpose of the Exodus. The very reason that God delivered his people from Egypt. Then the Lord said to Moses, Rise up early in the morning and present yourself before Pharaoh and say to him, Thus says the Lord, the God of the Hebrews, Let my people go, firstly, that they may serve me.

[21 : 12] Verse 14. For this time, I will send all my plagues on you, yourself, and on your servants and your people so that they may know that there is none like me in all the earth. For by now, I could have put out my hand and struck you and your people with pestilence and you would have been cut off from the earth.

But for this purpose, I have raised you up to show you my power so that my name may be proclaimed in all the earth. That's quoted in Romans 9, verse 17, isn't it?

So the twofold purpose of God bringing the people out of Egypt was that they would serve him, honor him, glorify him, and that all the peoples of the world might know of this God, might sing his praises one day.

Book of History, Joshua, chapter 4. Just a couple of books over. This is the point that most papers usually tell you the page number that they're on.

I think they're doing that to get you to buy the same Bible they have. I'm not really sure. Page 180, if you're using the same one I'm using. ESV Thinline, in case you needed to know.

[22 : 30] Joshua, chapter 4, verses 19 through 24. This is the purpose of the people crossing the Jordan into the Promised Land. They crossed on dry land just like they crossed the Red Sea to escape from Pharaoh's army.

They crossed the Jordan on dry land. And here's the stated purpose for that very thing. Chapter 4, verse 19, we'll read through 24. The people came up out of the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month and they encamped at Gilgal on the east border of Jericho.

And those twelve stones which they took out of the Jordan, Joshua set up at Gilgal. And he said to the people of Israel, when your children ask their fathers in times to come, what do these stones mean? Then you shall let your children know Israel passed over this Jordan on dry ground.

For the Lord your God dried up the waters of the Jordan for you until you passed over as the Lord your God did to the Red Sea which you dried up for us until we passed over so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the hand of the Lord is mighty that you may fear the Lord your God forever.

So here we see it again verse 24. So that, why? Why did all these things happen? So that all the peoples of the earth may know that the hand of the Lord is mighty. Book of poetry.

[23 : 36] Turn to the book of Psalm. Smack dab in the middle. You can find it. Over a hundred times in the Psalms this very point is made.

We're going to look at three real quick. We're doing three because they're so good. Psalm chapter 2 verse 8. This is a record of God speaking to Christ.

That's important here. God speaking to Christ says, Ask of me and I will make the nations your heritage and the ends of the earth your possession. He says to Christ, Ask of me and I will give it all to you.

Psalm 46. Verse 10. Be still and know that I am God.

I will be exalted among the nations. I will be exalted in the earth. A promise. This will in fact come to pass. And Psalm 67.

[24 : 50] Psalm 67. The entire Psalm. This is so good. May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us.

Why? That your way may be known on earth. Your saving power among all nations. Let the peoples praise you, O God. Let all the peoples praise you.

Let the nations be glad and sing for joy for you judge the peoples with equity and guide the nations upon earth. Let the peoples praise you, O God. Let all the peoples praise you. The earth has yielded its increase.

God, our God, shall bless us. God shall bless us. Let all the ends of the earth fear him. A prophet. Ready for it?

Zephaniah. Zephaniah. You're going to find Zephaniah between Habakkuk and Haggai if that helps you. See how you're flipping?

[25 : 59] If you're sitting judging your neighbor right now, these are hard because they're little. So don't be too hard on people. Don't be too hard on people. Don't be too hard on people. chapter 2, verse 11.

If you're not there yet, just listen. The Lord will be awesome against them for he will famish all the gods of the earth and to him shall bow down each in its place all the lands of the nations.

There it is again from a minor prophet. Let's look in the New Testament together now. Notice I'm doing the very same thing Paul did. Now I get the advantage of the New Testament. Paul didn't have that at his disposal in this time.

Letting the Scripture speak for itself. Notice the theme. Let's look at a Gospel. John, chapter 3, verse 16. And I use this one specifically to show you that the theme carries on.

Okay? For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through him.

[27 : 26] Whoever believes in him is not condemned. Whoever does not believe is condemned already because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. The point of the text being the point of it being Jesus here is recorded talking to a Jewish audience and he's saying this salvation the Son of Man did not come just for you.

He came for all the nations. Stop thinking you're so special Israel. It goes beyond your borders. This is what Jesus is saying in this text.

It's beautiful and it's precious because in this is our salvation. Right? It expands beyond just the Jews. Me as a I don't even know where I'm from. I think maybe England.

I'm guessing. Maybe I'm of like Norman descent. Dad would probably tell you exactly where we're from. Not now, Dad. I don't know. But it doesn't really matter. I'm not of Jewish descent. Okay? But the promises of God are yes to me in Christ. Right? And let's look at some New Testament prophecy. Let's turn to the book of Revelation. See how this all works out in the end.

[28 : 36] Revelation chapter 5. Verse 9 and 10. John gets to peer into heaven at the end of things.

And this is what he observes. Chapter 9 of chapter 5. Excuse me. Verse 9 of chapter 5. And they sang a new song saying, Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals.

For you were slain and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. And you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God and they shall reign on the earth.

And then again, chapter 7 verses 9 and 10. Verse 9 of chapter 5. Verse 9 of chapter 5. Verse 9 of chapter 5. And then again, So it's accomplished.

From the beginning this was God's intent. And in the end it's accomplished. Now people have debated throughout time what is meant by these different things, the tribes, the nations.

[29 : 52] What is meant by this? And I really, honestly, don't know. We tend as Baptists to believe that this will represent there will be those named in heaven amongst every people group.

Every tribe, nation, language. But you know what's the really important thing? Really important thing is that Christ hasn't returned so it's not done yet. We can bank on that.

We know we're not finished yet. God's mission in this world is still being carried out because Christ hasn't returned. When it's finished he'll come back. We're guaranteed that. So we're still to be about the work however it's defined.

We're still meant to be advancing the gospel in this world. So back in Romans chapter 15 the important question for you to ask and not in an irreverent way is so what?

Why? Why is the case being made to us? What are we meant to do with this information? Why have I spent all this time sharing it with you?

[30 : 55] Proving the point. Hopefully pressing it through your mind into your heart. There's two things at least two things that we ought to be doing with this kind of info. First we need to be praising God for his goodness to us in Christ.

Praising God for his goodness to us in Christ. This is the gospel ladies and gentlemen. The fact that God has chosen to make himself known to display his mercy to us verse 9 in this way is such a blessing.

That God as he's zealous for his own glory to make himself look more like he is to show himself to this world has chosen to let us be the benefactors of it is such a blessing.

The gospel is not first and foremost primarily about us. It's firstly about God and we get to benefit. Praise God that he decided to work this out in this way.

That he chose to show mercy to us so that we'll sing to his name. Do you praise God the way the saints in Revelation praise God?

[32 : 09] God. Notice the emotion that we poured into that. We read that kind of stuff so boring sometimes. I hope I didn't just do the very thing I'm accusing us of doing.

Emotionless. It's a great passion poured into the praise of God because of what he's accomplished on our behalf. So firstly, we ought to praise God for his goodness to us in Christ.

Today, now, sitting in your seat, you ought to be praising God for his goodness to you in Christ.

You, a Gentile. You, one of the peoples of the earth. Secondly, we need to recognize that we are the tools by which God accomplishes this task.

This task, making himself known to all the peoples of the world. See, this to be accomplished in the book of Revelation. How is it that he does that? He uses his church to accomplish this. He uses his church.

I like to think of it like this. And somebody said this. I can't remember who. Somebody smarter than me said, God has not given a mission to the church, but rather he's given the church to his mission.

[33 : 17] Got a cool way of thinking about it? God didn't have a church that said, now, I've got to get them busy doing something. Oh, proclaiming my goodness to the world.

That's the task I'm going to put him to. He's about proclaiming his goodness to the world. He's about making himself known amongst all peoples, and he called us together, he formed the church so that we could be the tool by which that's accomplished.

Every time I say this, I'm also going to say, God does not need us. He could do it another way. He could do it on his own, but he's chosen to use us because he loves us.

He's chosen to let us get caught up with him in accomplishing this thing, to experience him in this way because he loves us. Romans chapter 10.

You can flip back a little bit here. Verse 14, how then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard?

[34 : 18] And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, how beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news?

God is zealous for his own glory. And in the same way, as children of the Most High, those who have been delivered, welcomed by Christ, we're just talking about the beginning of chapter 15, we also ought to be zealous for his name to be proclaimed amongst the nations.

Do we go to peoples, our neighbors, our co-workers, those we sit in class with, and those at the very furthest possible place we can imagine in the earth because we love them?

Absolutely. But the lesser includes the greater, the greater being that we're zealous for God's name to be proclaimed among all peoples.

We serve a great and a glorious God, and we want, I hope I can say this with confidence, we want his name to be proclaimed everywhere. We want people to serve him and bow in adoration of him and speak the truth of the gospel.

[35 : 30] Our vision statement for our church, Christ's family church exists to glorify God by experiencing, proclaiming, and displaying the supremacy of Jesus Christ in all things to all peoples.

We want that to be true of our own lives. We want to be truly regenerate believers. We want to experience the supremacy of Christ in our own living. We want it to affect how we respond to things. We want to affect how we feel.

We want it to affect what we hold to in this world. But not just that. It can't just be for us. It needs to be for everybody. So we want to proclaim it. We want to speak the truth of the gospel.

The gospel is necessary to be heard, for a heart to be pricked to believe. We want to speak the gospel. We want to proclaim it. And we want to display it with acts of mercy. We want to carry the gospel in our actions to the world around us.

In all things. To all peoples. It's a great website I'll encourage you to go to. There may be a better one, but I've used one called Joshua Project.

[36 : 34] You can Google Joshua Project. And according to Joshua Project, in the world right now, there are 16,594 people groups. Of those, 7,162 are unreached.

Now the way the Joshua Project defines unreached is that less than 2% of the population are confessing Christians. And even at that point we could say, are they really Christians?

They've confessed it, are they regenerate, are they bearing fruit? But that's the way they do it. They had to pick a number. So less than 2% are unreached. That's 43.2% of the people groups in the world.

You break it down by population, and again, we're talking about those who confess to be Christian, 60% of the world's population.

It's a huge, huge number. And it can be so staggering at times that it cripples us. We don't even know. How do we get that accomplished? You know what the great thing is?

[37 : 38] It's God's mission. God's accomplishing it, and he just wants to use you in some way to accomplish that. It doesn't mean that you're necessarily going to be called to go to a people group that's unreached.

But it could, and I really hope that you're opening yourself up and being available for that. You being obedient to God's call in your life could mean that you live right here in Dahlonega, and you're a valuable member of our church, and you work a job, and you create money, and you have a family, and you raise them up in the way of God, all those things are a huge possibility for your life.

Absolutely. That may be exactly what God wants for you. But he also may, on the other end of the spectrum, want you to go and spend your life on the mission field.

He may want you to go and be martyred in a place that's dangerous, that the gospel has yet to be proclaimed. We're excited about it.

In verse 20 of chapter 15, Paul says, And thus I make it my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named, lest I build on someone else's foundation, but as it is written, those who have never been told of him will see, and those who have never heard will understand.

[38 : 49] Paul was zealous for the name of Christ to be named amongst the Gentiles. That's why he went, look in the appendix of your Bible, there's probably a little cool map of his missionary journeys.

That's why he traveled far and wide to share this gospel. So God may call you to do that very thing, to go to an unreached people somewhere in the world.

I learned of a new one. I try to keep my mind into unreached peoples. I try to pray for them. I try to kind of have a global mindset.

As God has a global mindset, it's really easy for us to get our little small box, Dahlonega slash Gainesville, Georgia, and not think about God's eternal purposes for the world. So I try to read about this, and I found, I get a couple of magazines that help me with this, but this one I found in The Bathroom Reader.

You guys are familiar with that? It's a great book, The Bathroom Reader. It's just interesting facts, and we keep it in the bathroom. But I learned about a people group in The Bathroom Reader called the Sentinelese.

[39 : 55] They live on an island in the Bay of Bengal, which is off the eastern coast of India, and I'm going to say it wrong, Burma.

I know it's called something else now. Thank you. Okay. Off the western coast of Myanmar. That's right. Thank you, guys. There's a little island there.

And The Bathroom Reader, of course, wasn't speaking from a missionary perspective, but talked about this people group that have been encountered in a very small way by the rest of the world.

A very, very small way. In fact, the only real western interaction they've had is the British, back in the 1800s, there was a visiting family from this island on a neighboring island, and they captured them.

And the hope was that they were going to make them like them and send them back to their people. But in the meantime, the two parents died of sickness, western diseases that they weren't, ready for.

[40 : 53] And so they took the kids and dropped them off in the bay and let the kids swim to shore. And that's been about it. The Indian nation for a while was working on trying to build some rapport with them and connect with them and see what they could accomplish.

And so they sent throughout the 80s and 90s, they sent out boats regularly who just simply went into the little bay and threw things overboard for them to wash up on shore. Because if they went on shore, they were likely to be killed.

So this is people that have been accessed in such a limited way. How are they going to believe in the gospel if someone doesn't preach it to them? They won't. The gospel needs to be carried to this people group.

people who really have been isolated for the last thousands of years will probably die as neighboring tribes have died on other islands if they're exposed to western diseases.

And now India has seen it fruitless. Somebody just one day said, why are we trying to do this?

These are tribal people living on this island. Why are we trying to be friends with them exactly? This is costing a lot of money.

[42 : 01] We're throwing a lot of coconuts into their bay for no reason. What are we doing? So they just stopped and in fact now they enforce a three mile radius with planes and boats.

They enforce a radius around the island so that people can't touch it. So they can't get there. How does the gospel of God get to the Sentinelese on North Sentinel Island in the Bay of Bengal?

I don't know. I actually for fun have been trying to rack my brain about how in the world you would even get there and how you would accomplish people who probably speak a language that no one else in this world knows.

How do you do this type of work? And you've got a nation India actually enforcing it keeping you away from it. How is the gospel going to be carried? And I don't know but praise God we serve a sovereign God who is in control of these things.

He knows right? And he knows that maybe someone in this room is going to go to the Sentinelese and find a way to preach the gospel there. There are countless others 7162 as qualified by the Joshua Project people who have never heard the gospel of Christ.

[43 : 15] God has not given a mission to the church but rather the church to his mission. And whether we stay here or go there, we're all called to be caught up in this, to be zealous for Christ's name to be proclaimed everywhere.

So don't think that if you're not called to foreign missions that you're in a different category. The term missionary was invented. It's not in the scriptures anywhere. We see followers of Christ. We see perseverers.

We see disciples. We're all meant to be missionaries if you want to think about it in that term. It's okay that we've created a term for people who spend their full time, it's a vocation to go overseas. It's okay that we do that. But the danger of it is that we cease to do anything because we're not missionaries. We're not radical like that. We're all called to serve God in this way.

The things of this earth are fading away. They're turning to dust. They're passing. Soon they will be gone. Do you spend your energies on those things, on the finite, or are you spending your energy on the infinite?

[44 : 29] joy, joy, abounding joy will be yours if you do. Verse 13, we'll talk about that next week. Let's pray together.