

September 17th, 2017

THE ORDINARY MISSIONARY

John 17:18

I love the biographies of missionaries. Whether it's Andoniram Judson who buried two wives, seven children and nearly went insane to bring the gospel to the people of Burma in the 19th century.¹ Or George Müller, the missionary to the destitute orphans in England who literally prayed five orphanages into existence caring for over 10,000 orphans in his life time.² Or George Whitefield, the missionary to America who sailed the Atlantic seven times from England to bring the gospel to America dying at the young age of 55. The cause of his early death: his excessive and unrelenting preaching had quite literally ruined his health.³ I can't read a story of a missionary without tearing up.

But the main reason I love these stories of missionaries is because God is a missionary God. The first promise of mission came on the heels of Adam's fall. God told Adam and Eve that *the offspring of the woman* (foreshadowing a virgin birth) would crush the serpents head (**Genesis 3:15**). God promised this rescue *before* He judged them. Mission was promised before judgment.

This promise of rescue was so gripping to Eve's heart that when she bore Cain she said "I have gotten a man"⁴—thinking that God's promised Missionary had

¹ John Piper, *Filling up the Afflictions of Christ*, (Wheaton, IL,,: Crossway, 2009), pg. 95

² John Piper, *A Camaraderie of Confidence*, (Wheaton, IL,,: Crossway, 2016), pg. 65

³Hebrews 11 gives a Divine nod to missionaries like these. Along with their fore bearers who "suffered mocking and flogging...chains and imprisonment...[who] were stoned, sawn in two...killed with the sword...[going] about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, mistreated" of all these **Hebrews 11:38** says that "the world was not worthy" of them. The world is not worthy of such people. Who risk everything, not just their own lives, but the lives of those they love most in order form Christ in others.

⁴ Genesis 4:1

come. This expectation of the God's promised Missionary was the hope of the whole OT.⁵

Moses prophesied in **Deuteronomy 18:15** "The Lord your God will raise up for you a *prophet* like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall listen." In other words this promised coming Missionary would not only crush the serpent's head, but He would prophetically teach them who God is.

Later God promised David "When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you...I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever" (**2 Samuel 7:12-13**) Not only would this coming Missionary teach them who God is, but He Himself would be God and would reign over them forever.

The fever for this coming Missionary reached its zenith when John the Baptist came on the scene. The religious leaders in Israel asked him "Who are you?... Are you the Prophet?" (**John 1:19, 21**) And even John himself, later when he was discouraged and in prison, awaiting his execution sent word to Jesus asking Him "Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?" (**Matthew 11:3**)

The first coming of Christ was a more significant event than even the creation of the world. The great Missionary finally came. Sent from God. Sent from the Father. And I say that is more significant than even the creation of the world, because in the coming of Jesus Christ, *mercy triumphed over judgment*.⁶ By all accounts, Jesus should have condemned the whole world. "All of us have failed.

⁵ God told Abraham "your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (**Genesis 22:17-18**). Paul pointed to this text in **Galatians 3:16** and said "Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, "And to offsprings," referring to many, but referring to one, "And to your offspring," who is Christ."

⁶ James 2:13

All nations have failed.”⁷ Because all have sinned and have fallen short of the glory of God (**Romans 3:23**) And your sin, my sin, have made us so vile to a holy God that the only place fitting for us is “the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death” (**Rev. 21:8**). Hell.

The first coming of Christ should have been the last coming. But shockingly, John’s gospel records “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. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.” (**John 3:17-18**) Instead of condemning the world, the Father condemned His Son. The great Missionary of the world is not *merely* a Messenger. He is the Message itself. As one author has said:

“He has died for our sins. He has raised from the dead. Our guilt is removed. Our sin is forgiven. Our condemnation and punishment have been transferred to Christ. Our acquittal is sealed. Our reconciliation with God is accomplished. Our bondage to sin is broken. Our enemy has been put to naught. The sting of death is removed. The destiny of hell is averted. Eternal life has been given. The Lord has come!”⁸

In our passage this morning Jesus says “As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world.” Jesus was sent by His Father into the world to be the Divine Missionary. And now He sends us into the world to be ordinary missionaries. This prayer is not for the elite. There is no such thing. Paul, the greatest missionary after Christ said “What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you have believed, as the Lord assigned to each” (1 Cor. 3:5) No, this prayer is not for the elite Christian. There is not such thing. This prayer is for you. Both the vocational missionary and the ordinary missionary. Both for the George Whitefields who preach themselves to death transforming

⁷ John Piper, *Let the Nations Be Glad: The Supremacy of God in Missions*, (Grand Rapids, MI.,: Baker Academic, 2003), pg. 28

⁸ John Piper, *A Hunger For God: Desiring God through Fasting and Prayer*, (Wheaton, IL.,: Crossway, 2013), pg. 79

continents, and sickly widows who can't even leave their own homes. Both for the Adoniram Judsons who suffered malaria in the jungles of Burma, and the ordinary blue collar worker in middle class America. Both for the George Mullers that pray 10,000 orphans into homes, and the mother who prays to have patience for her three screaming children. "As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world."

☆The Divine Missionary

☆The Vocational Missionary

☆The Ordinary Missionary

(I will give my big idea in a few minutes)

I. The Divine Missionary

The most profound prayer

If you are new to us, John 17 is Jesus' high priestly prayer. He just finished the most profound sermon ever preached when He spoke to His disciples in the upper room. Now, on the eve of His crucifixion, He is praying the most profound prayer ever prayed.⁹ He prayed for Himself in v.1-5, and then He prays for eleven disciples in v.6-19. In v.9, we learned this prayer is exclusive—He doesn't pray for the world, only for those the Father has given Him. In v.11 and v.15, Jesus prays for their protection from the evil one. In v.13, Jesus prays for their happiness. In v.17 and v.19 Jesus prays for their holiness.

Jesus prays for mission

⁹ This is truly the Lord's prayer. The prayer in Matthew 6:9-13, which is commonly called the Lord's prayer is actually the Disciple's prayer. Jesus taught us to pray things He never needs to pray "Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgive our debtors" (v.12). Conversely, the prayer here in John 17 includes things we could never pray "And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed" (v.5)

And now in **v.18** Jesus prays for their mission. **v.18**, Jesus prays “As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world.” Notice first how Jesus recognizes His Father as the **sender**: “*You* sent me.” Any notion that you might have that God the Father is emotionally detached, or that He is the mean one of the Godhead whom Jesus has to persuade to love the human race is false. Father sent Jesus. “For God so loved the world, that *he gave* his only Son” (**John 3:16**).

Secondly notice, Jesus is the one being sent: “As you *sent me* into the world.” But Jesus’ point here is the comparison. “*As* you sent me...*so* I have sent them.” Comparisons are a particular type of relationship. Comparisons show what is *similar* and what is *dissimilar* between two things. The disciples were being sent into the world in a way that was *similar* to how Jesus was sent, and a way that was *dissimilar* to how Jesus was sent.

The disciples were not sent to...

For instance there are many statements that show why Jesus was sent into the world that would be blasphemous to say that we are sent in the same way..

Mark 10:45 “For even the Son of Man *came* not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

1 John 4:10 “In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”

John 10:10 “I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.”

Our mission is not to give our lives as a ransom, or to be a propitiation for sins, or to satisfy the longing of human souls. That mission is utterly unique to Jesus’ death, burial and resurrection.

Why did Jesus come into the world?

Yet the comparison that Jesus makes is not an empty one “*As you sent me...so I have sent them.*” So how did the Father *send* Jesus that informs our being *sent*? The question behind that question is: why did Jesus come into the world *mainly*? Many evangelicals would answer: “Jesus came into the world *mainly* to save sinners.” Dear congregation, that is not accurate. That is to confuse *means* with *ends*. If I were to ask you “why do you go to work?” To earn money? To what end? For what purpose? Certainly, Jesus came to lay down his life for sinners. But for what *end*? For what *purpose*?

Let’s look at what Jesus says.¹⁰ Please turn to **John 4:23-24**. Here Jesus is speaking with a sexually immoral Samaritan woman. When the woman realizes she can’t hide her sin, she quickly changes the subject to where people ought to worship God. Jesus answers her in **v.23** “the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, *for the Father is seeking such people to worship him.*” Hold onto that thought: the Father is seeking *worshippers*.

At that moment the disciples return from town bringing food for Jesus to eat. But Jesus says in **v.32** “I have food to eat that you do not know about.” Paradoxically, Jesus had been feasting during His conversation with the Samaritan woman. On what? Look at **v.34** Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of him who *sent* me and to accomplish his work.” Do you see? There is the language of *sent*. Jesus’ food is to do the Father’s will. Jesus was sent to accomplish the Father’s work. So what is the Father’s main work? **v.23** “...true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, *for the Father is seeking such people to worship him.*” The main reason Jesus came into the world was to create worshippers. In other words, Jesus’ ultimate goal wasn’t the mission, it was worship. Worship is the ultimate purpose in every action that God has ever taken.

Every act in redemptive history is aimed at creating worshippers

¹⁰ We can also look to the Lord’s prayer itself here in John 17 v.1, 4, 6, 26 (also cf. John 12:27-28; John 7:18)

Scripture is so clear on this point. Every act in redemptive history is aimed at creating worshippers of the Triune God. Please turn to **Joshua 4:23-24**. Here twelve stones were lifted out of the Jordan River as memorial stones—as signs to testify to God’s salvation of Israel from Egypt. But Joshua gives the ultimate reason of Israel’s salvation. Look at v.23 “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 he 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.” ‘Israel—you were rescued so that you may fear and love and worship the Lord your God *forever!* God *sent* Moses to deliver Israel from the hand of Pharaoh *so that* they would be made worshippers of God. The mission was not ultimate. Worship was.

Please turn to **1 Kings 8:42-43**. Here King Solomon is dedicated the temple to God. And he asks God to hear prayer for the sake of worship. Look at the end of v.42 “ when he [a foreigner] comes and prays toward this house, hear in heaven your dwelling place and do according to all for which the foreigner calls to you, *in order that* all the peoples of the earth may know your name and fear you,” Lord answer the prayer of the foreigner so that all the nations would know you and fear you and worship you. Dear congregation, how this should inform our prayers. God heal so-and-so, deliver so-and-so, provide for so-and-so, in order that they and their children and their friends may know that there is a God in heaven so that you could be worshipped and admired and adored. Prayer exists *mainly* to make worshippers of God.

Missions exist because worship doesn’t¹¹

Everything is subordinate to this end. Jesus was sent into the world *ultimately* to create worshippers of God. Listen to John Piper on this point

¹¹ **What is sin? Refusing to worship.**

Why is God angry? Is He angry because of abortion, and murder and rape etc? No, that is the *revelation* of His anger (Romans 1:18) He is angry because the universe screams that God is great and worthy of your worship, but sinful man refuses to give Him that honor (Romans 1:19-23). Therefore He hands them over to all manner of sin i.e. abortion, murder and rape, etc. (Romans 1:24-32)

“Missions is not the ultimate goal of the church. Worship is. Missions exists because worship doesn’t. Worship is ultimate, not missions, because God is ultimate not man. When this age is over, and the countless millions of the redeemed fall on their faces before the throne of God, missions will be no more. It is a temporary necessity. But worship abides forever.”¹²

The Big Idea...

Jesus sends you into the world for the sake of worship

II. The Vocational Missionary

What is a vocational missionary?

Look with me again at v.18 in our text. Jesus prays “As you sent me into the world, *so I have sent them* into the world.” As I’ve said, v.6-19 in ch.17 are specifically focused on the eleven disciples. That’s important to remember here. There is a specific way the disciples were sent that doesn’t apply to everybody. Just as Jesus was set apart for the ministry, so were the eleven. After He rises from the dead, he flat-out tells them in **John 20:21** “As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.” The apostles were vocational missionaries. Apostle means “messenger...he that is sent.”¹³ Vocational comes from Latin meaning “a calling.” The Apostle’s received a specific *calling* from Christ to devote

¹² John Piper, *Let the Nations Be Glad: The Supremacy of God in Missions*, (Grand Rapids, MI.: Baker Academic, 2003), pg. 28

¹³ Source: <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongs=G652&t=KJV> accessed September 16, 2017

themselves to full time missionary work. Their full time mission was to make worshippers of God.¹⁴

Jesus taught them that worship was their mission

We can see this if we again visit that conversation that Jesus had with his disciples in Samaria. So please turn to John 4 again. Recall they disciples were urging Jesus to eat (v.31). Jesus told them in v.34 “My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work.” That work is clear from v.23—to make worshippers. Now Jesus applied this immediately to the disciples. Look at v.35 “Do you not say, ‘There are yet four months, then comes the harvest’? Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest.”

What’s going on here? Well, while the disciples were talking to Jesus, the Samaritan woman had gone back to town and told everyone about Jesus, v. 29—“Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?” [30] They went out of the town and were coming to him.” So now this massive crowd is coming to Jesus. And Jesus see them. And what He sees is worshippers flocking to the Father. He’s telling his disciples ‘Look at the harvest. These people are ready to be made into worshippers.’ That’s why He says in v.36 “Already the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together.” Jesus connects His work to theirs. Jesus was sent to accomplish the work of making

¹⁴ The apostles were not unclear about this like many modern missionaries in our day. I have been a very confused missionary. A decade ago I went to Africa with a group from church. For over six months we “trained” for the mission. But the gospel was conspicuously absent. There was no talk of God’s glory. No talk of His Divine worship being the chief end of our mission. We were trained in two main areas 1) how to make sure we didn’t get sick, and 2) how not to offend the Africans. It’s no wonder why I’ve heard of nations pleading with America to stop sending them missionaries. Now don’t get me wrong, there are legitimate support staff for missionary teams. Voice of the Martyrs will tell you that one of the best ways to serve over seas in missions is to go to school to be trained in a vocation that you love and know that it serves others and one that is needed in a foreign missions field. Get your degree. Get a job for a couple years and then go over seas to serve in the mission’s field. Yet still all of these are means. Means to get create worshippers of the Triune God. The problem is that the means often have become the ends.

worshippers, and the disciples were meant to rejoice in that work with Christ. ‘I have made worshippers, now you go and do the same.’

Dear congregation, I plead with you to make this paradigm shift in your mind. If you are a Christian, ask yourself: ‘why should I evangelize *mainly?*’ Whether it be to your kids, or your neighbor, or your co-worker, why should you tell people about the gospel of Jesus Christ? If you say: so they can be saved. You are aiming too low. Listen to what one missionary John Dawson (a YWAM—er) says.

“It is not primarily out of a compassion for humanity that we share our faith or pray for the lost; it is first of all love for God.¹⁵ Humanity does not deserve the love of God any more than you or I do. We should never be Christian humanists, taking Jesus to poor sinful people, reducing Jesus to some kind of product that will better their lot. People deserve to be damned, but Jesus, the suffering Lamb of God, deserves the reward of His suffering.”¹⁶

Our salvation is not God’s ultimate purpose in redemption

Our salvation is not God’s ultimate purpose. God’s ultimate purpose is that He would be worshipped. “Because God is more important than you and me. He is more important than our salvation.”¹⁷ And the apostles understood this. When the apostle Paul wrote to the Christians in Rome, he said in **Romans 1:5** “we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith [*we were sent to preach the gospel so that people would believe*] **for the sake of his**

¹⁵ The Bible says in **Ephesians 6:7-8** we are to render “...service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man, knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a bondservant or is free.”

¹⁶ John Piper, *Let the Nations Be Glad: The Supremacy of God in Missions*, (Grand Rapids, MI.: Baker Academic, 2003), pg. 42

¹⁷ Ian Hamilton from his sermon: “Why There Was A Reformation, source: <http://www.sermonaudio.com/sermoninfo.asp?SID=824172232557> accessed September 16, 2017

name among all the nations,” In other words, we preach the gospel so that Christ would be worshipped.¹⁸

The apostle John spoke about the missionaries the church was supporting in 3 John 5-7 “it is a faithful thing you do in all your efforts for these brothers, ...You will do well to send them on their journey in a manner worthy of God. **For** they have gone out *for the sake of the name*,”

Dear believer this is why you have been saved. **1 Peter 2:12** “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.”

All missionary activities on planet earth, if they are legitimate ones are aiming at this ultimate purpose—to create worshippers of the Triune God. They translate the Scriptures, they endure hardships, they let goods and kindreds go, they preach the gospel of Jesus Christ for this ultimate end: that God would be worshipped.

III. The Ordinary Missionary

What about the rest of us?

Does v.18 only apply to the apostles and vocational missionaries? No. **v.20** makes this clear. “I do not ask for these only, *but also for those* who will believe in me through their word.” **v.18** applies to every Christian. Just as the Father sent Jesus into the world, so Jesus has sent you into the world.

It is not God’s will that everyone be vocational missionaries

But it does apply differently. It is certainly not God’s will that everyone be vocational missionaries. For most of you in this room, I can say unequivocally that God doesn't want you to be a vocational missionary. As Paul rhetorically asks “If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing?” (1

¹⁸ This is the reason the Holy Spirit was given. Jesus said of Him in John 16:14 “He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you.”

Cor. 12:17) In other words, if everyone was a missionary, the body of Christ would be a grotesque monster. Imagine a huge eye ball. That's not what God wants. In fact Paul expressly told the Corinthians who were coming to Christ "...let each person lead the life that the Lord has *assigned* to him...in whatever condition each was called, there let him remain with God" (1 **Cor. 7:17, 24**)¹⁹ No God doesn't want all of you to be a vocational missionary.²⁰ God wants you to be an *ordinary missionary*.

Holiness overflows into missions

Now I'm taking liberty with the word *missionary* by adding *ordinary* to it. I realize that *missionary* does mean something. My aim is not to blur real distinctions. But I do want to be faithful to what Jesus says in our passage. Believer, Jesus has sent you into the world. But what does that mean if you are a average middle class citizen living in America? What does being sent into the world mean if you are so sick that you can't ever leave your house? Or if you don't have any particular ministerial gifts? What does it mean to be a missionary if most of your time is consumed by educating your children? What does it mean to be sent into the world if you have a job that provides little to no opportunity to share the gospel?

Let's answer that by looking back at our context. We can't dislocate **v.18** from it's context. Notice what surrounds **v.18**. In v.17 Jesus prays for our sanctification, and then again the same thing in v.19. But stuck right in the middle is this verse on mission. Why did Jesus do that? Why change the subject? Why not just just pray for our sanctification and then move on to mission? Why break the flow? Because Jesus wants us to see the connection.

¹⁹ Paul actually says the same thing three times, with the third time being **v.20** "Each one should remain in the condition in which he was called."

²⁰ What God has called you to in life does not determine your "rank or privilege in the body of Christ." Michael Horton, *Ordinary: Sustainable Faith in a Radical Restless World*, (Grand Rapids, MI.: Zondervan, 2014), pg. 162

Holiness overflows into mission. Holiness makes you extrospective.²¹ Why? Because the essence of holiness is love. **Galatians 5:14** “The whole law is fulfilled in one word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” The essence of obedience is loving others as Christ has loved us: “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.” Holiness is measured by love.

And therefore your main mission is not to storm the jungles of Africa. It's not to start up a nonprofit charity, or to direct a new Christian movement. Your main mission is to love the particular people that God has placed in your life.

Tess Warren's blog

The problem with that message is that it sounds so ordinary. It sounds so vanilla. That's what Tess Harrison Warren thought. Raised in the commercialized evangelical culture where slogans replace substance, she constantly sought after the next big thing, the next big movement, next big mission. After the thrilling years of college and trips to Africa, she discovered a more difficult mission field: being ordinary.

“Now, I'm thirty-something with two kids living in a more or less ordinary life. And what I'm slowly realizing is that for me, being in the house all day with a baby and a two-year-old is a lot more scary and a lot harder than being in a war-torn African village. What I need courage for is the ordinary, the daily everydayness of life. Caring for a homeless kid is a lot more thrilling to me than listening well to the people in my home. Giving away clothes and seeking out edgy Christian communities requires less of me than being kind to my husband on an average Wednesday morning or calling my mother back when I don't feel like it.”²²

I hope you caught that. ‘Seeking out edgy Christian communities requires less of me than being kind to my husband.’ I was so convicted this week by these truths. Monica has been really sick. I had to stay home with her a couple days

²¹ Michael Horton, *Ordinary: Sustainable Faith in a Radical Restless World*, (Grand Rapids, MI.: Zondervan, 2014), pg. 199

²² *ibid*, pg. 15

this week. A missions trip to Africa would have been easier. Not because my home life is particularly hard. But because dying to myself, and *actually* loving her requires more of me than probably anything else.

Loving your neighbor tougher than loving causes

Dear congregation to be sent into the world as Jesus was sent into the world doesn't require you to change your location or vocation. It requires something far more difficult: love. As Michael Horton says "Loving [your] neighbor is tougher than loving causes...It is easy to turn others into instruments of our own ambition rather than loving them for their own sake, as fellow image bearers of God. They become supporting actors—if not props—in our life movie."²³

Jesus commends the most ordinary acts

But Jesus takes an entirely different approach. In **Matthew 25:31-46**, a description of the final judgment is given. This is where Jesus separates the sheep from the goats. This is what Jesus says to the sheep in **v.34-36**

"Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me."

Now there is an interesting twist here. Many of us can read this and say: 'Man I don't feel like I do anything of these things.' That's how the sheep respond to Jesus. They ask Him in v.37-39 "Lord, when did we..." do these things? Jesus responds in v.40 "'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.' Do you see what Jesus is doing? He is commending the saints for the smallest most slight, most invisible acts of ordinary and mundane faithfulness. The ordinary acts of husbands loving their wives, of

²³ *ibid*, pg. 161

mothers nurturing their children, of saints caring for one another, of kindness shown to strangers, of mercy shown to the downtrodden. These acts were so ordinary, that the sheep didn't even remember or acknowledge that they were done.

Jesus is worshipped in the ordinary

Dear congregation, Jesus Christ is honored in your ordinary life. He specifically says so "Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me." Jesus sent you into the world for the sake of worship. Will you worship Him in your ordinary life? Will you be an ordinary missionary?

Application

Our Delight: The mission was already accomplished in Christ

Whenever we start to talk about mission or good works or obedience or holiness, it's easy to slip right back into a self-salvation project. This is how the goats approach the judgment seat. Instead of saying like the sheep did "*When did we?*" They self-righteously said "Lord, Lord *did we not?*" (**Matthew 7:22**) They sought to justify themselves like every other world religion: "If I just do x then the gods will do y."²⁴

Dear congregation, this is not the gospel of Jesus Christ. The burden is not yours to carry. The mission was already accomplished in Jesus Christ. Listen to how Michael Horton says it:

"Here is the good news: it is not your ministry, church, or people. You do not have to create or protect a personal legacy...You don't have to bind Satan and storm the gates of hell. Christ has already done this. We're just sweeping in behind him to unlock the prison doors. You

²⁴ Michael Horton, *Ordinary: Sustainable Faith in a Radical Restless World*, (Grand Rapids, MI.: Zondervan, 2014), pg. 195

don't have to live the gospel, be the gospel, do the gospel, and lead the troops to redeem culture and reconcile the world to God. We are not building a kingdom that can be convulsed with violence like other realms, but we are (Heb. 12:2) "receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken."²⁵

Jesus' mission is not repeatable. Your mission is not ultimately or primarily or about what you do. It's about what Jesus Christ has done. The temptation is to arrive at v.18 and forget everything that Jesus already prayed for us.

Dear believer, you already have eternal life—v.3 "And *this is eternal life*, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent" You don't have to go on mission to earn that. Jesus has already given it to you. It's finished.

Dear believer, the devil cannot touch you—v.15 "Father keep them from *the evil one*." You are free to be an ordinary missionary without any fear of condemnation.

Dear believer, Jesus will be glorified in your life—v.10 "All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and *I am glorified in them*." Your life will cause other people to worship God. He already guarantees it.

Your identity is not determined by what you accomplish. Your identity is determined by what Christ accomplished for you. Dear congregation, it is a glorious thing that we have been sent into the world. It is glorious to imitate Him. But the greater glory consists of the things that we can't imitate.

He earned a perfect righteousness. That is not repeatable. It's yours by faith.

He was punished for your sin. That is not repeatable. It's yours by faith. Your mission is not to redeem the world. Your mission is simply to sweep in behind

²⁵ Michael Horton, *Ordinary: Sustainable Faith in a Radical Restless World*, (Grand Rapids, MI.: Zondervan, 2014), pg. 120

Him and unlock the prison doors. You do not have to build a kingdom. You need only receive. Christ has won the victory.