CBC WEEKLY RESOURCES

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COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH
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SERMON RECAP

Pastor Gary continued CBC's missions' emphasis by showing how the gospel enters places of deep brokenness with both spiritual authority and tender compassion. Through the story of young men in South Africa who were once divided by gang violence but are now playing soccer together, receiving discipleship, vocational training, and spiritual fathering, we were reminded that missions is not simply "sending help." It is entering the lives of real people with prayer, accountability, encouragement, and the hope of Christ.

A major pastoral invitation was to "call a truce." Some need to call a truce with others. Some need to call a truce within themselves, ending the war against who God says they are. The sermon pressed us to receive our identity in Christ: loved, blood-bought, valued, called, and useful in the kingdom. Like the young man who turned discarded driftwood into something beautiful and valuable, God restores dignity and honor to people who feel unseen, unheard, or worthless.

The message also called CBC to deeper prayer. Pastor Gary connected Psalm 68's picture of God scattering His enemies with God's heart as "Father to the fatherless" and "Defender of widows." Biblical missions involves both warfare and compassion: praying against strongholds while caring for the vulnerable. CBC's calling is not merely to fund missions, but to pray, go, disciple, support, and bring honor to the overlooked—for the glory of God.

II. STUDY GUIDE

Key Points

- The gospel brings purpose, identity, and belonging where sin and brokenness have created false substitutes. Gangs, radicalization, addiction, and despair often grow in places where people are hungry for community, honor, and meaning.

- God calls His people to “call a truce” where there has been war. This may mean pursuing peace with others, but it may also mean ending the internal war against our God-given identity in Christ.

- Missions requires both compassion and spiritual warfare. The church must care for the vulnerable while also praying against darkness, oppression, and generational strongholds.

- God is Father to the fatherless and Defender of widows. CBC’s missions work must reflect God’s heart by tending to children, youth, widows, the oppressed, and those who feel like “driftwood.”

Key Scripture

Primary Sermon Text

- Psalm 68:1–6 — God arises, His enemies scatter, and He reveals Himself as Father to the fatherless and Defender of widows.

Scriptures and biblical themes mentioned or directly referenced by Pastor Gary

- Psalm 68:1–6 — Main text; God scatters enemies and cares for the vulnerable.

- Psalm 68:4 — God “rides on the clouds,” alluded to in the closing prayer.

- Matthew 5:9 — “Blessed are the peacemakers.”

- Matthew 22:39 / Leviticus 19:18 — “Love your neighbor as yourself.”

- James 2:17, 26 — “Faith without works is dead.”

- 2 Thessalonians 3:10 — “If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat.”

- Acts 20 — Referenced regarding Paul’s pastoral ministry; Pastor Gary connected it to spiritual fatherhood. The exact “many teachers, not many fathers” idea is found in 1 Corinthians 4:15.

- Proverbs 31:8–9 — “Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves,” alluded to in the call to advocate for the vulnerable.

- Matthew 6:9 / Luke 11:2 — “Our Father in heaven.”
- James 1:27 — Pure and undefiled religion includes caring for orphans and widows.
- John 9:4 — “Night is coming, when no one can work.”
- Ephesians 1:3 — Every spiritual blessing in Christ in the heavenly places.
- Philippians 2:4 — Look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.
- Hebrews 13:20–21 — Closing blessing: the God of peace equips His people for His will.
- Matthew 19:14 / Mark 10:14 / Luke 18:16 — “Let the little children come to Me.”
- Isaiah 10:27 — The anointing breaks the yoke, alluded to in the closing prayer.
- Deuteronomy 32:10 / Psalm 17:8 / Zechariah 2:8 — “Apple of His eye.”
- 1 Peter 2:9 / Revelation 1:6 — Believers as priests and ministers of the Lord.
- Luke 13:10–17 — Jesus heals the woman bent over for eighteen years, alluded to as an example of compassion restoring honor.
- Mark 3:1–6 — Jesus heals the man with the shriveled hand, alluded to.
- Mark 5:25–34 — Jesus heals the woman with the issue of blood, alluded to as restoring someone excluded from social life.
- John 9 — Jesus heals the blind man, alluded to.

Other Relevant Verses

- 2 Corinthians 10:3–5 — This passage directly speaks of spiritual warfare and strongholds. It reinforces the sermon’s call to pray against entrenched darkness with spiritual weapons, not merely human strategies.
- Romans 8:15–17 — This passage expounds upon our identity in Christ as adopted sons and daughters who cry, “Abba! Father!” It connects deeply to the theme of God as Father to the fatherless.
- Galatians 6:9–10 — This passage encourages perseverance in doing good. It ties thematically to long-term missions’ partnerships, faithful prayer, and practical care for those in need.

III. DEVOTIONAL MATERIAL

Day 1 — Calling a Truce

Reflection Question

Where are you currently at war—with another person, with yourself, or with what God says about you?

Reading

- Matthew 5:9
- Matthew 22:39

Thought

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus says, “Blessed are the peacemakers.” In Jesus’ world, peace was not merely the absence of conflict. The Hebrew idea of shalom meant wholeness, restored relationships, spiritual health, and life rightly ordered under God. A peacemaker is not someone who avoids conflict at all costs, but someone who steps into broken places with the character of Christ.

Pastor Gary used the image of a truce from the South African soccer ministry. A truce is not always the final healing, but it can be the first step toward it. The gangs stopped fighting long enough for a new community to form. Over time, former enemies became teammates. That is a picture of what grace can do.

Jesus also commands us to love our neighbor as ourselves. That assumes we receive God’s love rightly enough to extend it outward. If we constantly accuse ourselves, belittle ourselves, or reject our identity in Christ, it will affect how we love others. Some of us need to call a truce with our own souls and come back into agreement with Scripture.

Challenge

Ask the Lord to show you one place where you need to pursue peace this week. Then take one concrete step: make a phone call, ask forgiveness, seek counsel, or write down what God says about your identity in Christ.

Day 2 — Father to the Fatherless

Reflection Question

Where do you need to experience God not only as Lord, but as Father?

Reading

- Psalm 68:5
- James 1:27

Thought

Psalm 68 is surprising. It begins with the language of battle: God arises, enemies scatter, foes flee. But then David turns our attention to God's tenderness: "Father of the fatherless and protector of widows is God in His holy habitation." The warrior God is also the compassionate Father.

In the ancient world, widows and orphans were among the most vulnerable people in society. Without a father, husband, or extended family protection, they could be economically, legally, and socially exposed. To say that God is Father to the fatherless and Defender of widows is to say that God personally takes up the cause of those who lack earthly protection.

Pastor Gary connected this to missions and to the deep wounds of fatherlessness. Many young men in violent or unstable environments are not merely looking for trouble; they are looking for identity, protection, honor, and belonging. The gospel does not simply tell them to behave. It brings them into the family of God and places spiritual fathers, mothers, mentors, and coaches around them.

Challenge

Identify one person who may be experiencing fatherlessness, loneliness, widowhood, or spiritual isolation. Pray for them specifically, and consider one practical way to encourage or include them this week.

Day 3 — Prayer That Scatters Darkness

Reflection Question

Do you believe your prayers are connected to real spiritual change in real places?

Reading

- Psalm 68:1
- 2 Corinthians 10:4

Thought

Psalm 68 opens with a battlefield cry: “God shall arise, His enemies shall be scattered.” This echoes Israel’s wilderness journey, where the ark of the covenant represented God’s presence among His people. When God moved, His people moved. When God arose, His enemies could not stand.

Pastor Gary reminded us that some places carry deep spiritual heaviness. Scripture gives us categories for this. Paul says our weapons are not merely human but have divine power to demolish strongholds. Strongholds are not overcome by money, strategy, or human charisma alone. Those things may have their place, but the church must learn to pray.

This does not mean we become fearful or obsessed with darkness. God is omnipotent and omnipresent; darkness is not. Christ has already triumphed. But the church is called to participate in that victory through prayer, obedience, proclamation, and love. Missions without prayer becomes activism. Prayer without obedience becomes sentimentality. Biblical mission joins both.

Challenge

Choose one mission field, ministry partner, city, campus, or family situation to pray for daily this week. Pray specifically for strongholds to be broken and for the light of Christ to be seen.

Day 4 — From Driftwood to Honor

Reflection Question

Where have you believed the lie that you are disposable, unseen, or without value?

Reading

- 1 Peter 2:9
- Zechariah 2:8

Thought

Pastor Gary shared the story of a young man who saw himself like driftwood—discarded, unnoticed, and without worth. Yet that same young man shaped a piece of driftwood into something beautiful that was sold to support the ministry, changing his life. The image is powerful because it mirrors the gospel.

Peter writes to believers who were scattered, marginalized, and often socially powerless. Yet he tells them they are “a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His own possession.” Their identity was not determined by their social status, past sin, suffering, or exile. It was determined by God’s choosing and Christ’s redeeming work.

The phrase “apple of His eye” communicates preciousness, nearness, and protection. God’s people are not spiritual debris. We are treasured by Him. Missions is not pity for “less fortunate people”; it is participation in God’s work of restoring honor to image-bearers and calling them into His kingdom purposes.

Challenge

Write down three lies you have believed about yourself. Beside each one, write a Scripture-shaped truth that confronts it. If needed, share this with a trusted believer, counselor, pastor, or small group leader.

Day 5 — Faith That Goes

Reflection Question

What step of obedience is God asking you to take in prayer, giving, going, serving, or mentoring?

Reading

- James 2:17
- Philippians 2:4

Thought

James wrote to believers scattered among the nations, urging them to live an embodied faith. “Faith without works is dead” does not mean we earn salvation by good deeds. It means genuine faith produces visible obedience. Real trust in Christ moves toward the hurting, the poor, the orphan, the widow, the lonely, and the lost.

Philippians 2 calls believers to look not only to their own interests, but also to the interests of others. In its original context, Paul was writing to a church in a Roman colony, calling them to live by the humility of Christ rather than the status-seeking values of Rome. This is deeply connected to missions. The missionary heart asks, “How can my life serve the purposes of Christ beyond myself?”

Pastor Gary’s call was practical: pray, join the intercessory team, consider a short-term mission trip, give strategically, mentor someone, care for widows, notice the lonely, and help lift up those who feel like driftwood. The question is not whether every person will do the same thing. The question is whether every person will respond.

Challenge

Choose one action step: join a prayer effort, inquire about a mission trip, encourage a widow or lonely person, give toward missions, or begin praying about legacy generosity. Take the first step this week.

IV. SMALL GROUP RESOURCES

Opening

Welcome everyone warmly. Remind the group that this week's discussion centers on missions, prayer, spiritual warfare, compassion, and God's heart for the vulnerable.

Begin with a brief time of prayer using these themes:

- Ask God to make the group humble and teachable.
- Invite the Holy Spirit to reveal where peace is needed.
- Pray for courage to care about what God cares about.
- Ask for faith to believe that prayer changes real lives in real places.

Thematic Recap

This sermon called CBC to embrace missions as both compassionate care and spiritual warfare. Pastor Gary showed how God restores dignity to those who feel discarded and calls the church to pray, go, give, disciple, and advocate. The heart of the message was that God is Father to the fatherless, Defender of widows, and the One who scatters darkness as His people seek Him.

Core Message Highlights

- God restores purpose and honor to people who feel forgotten.
- Some of us need to call a truce with others or with ourselves.
- Missions must involve prayer, not merely funding or programs.
- Fatherlessness is a deep spiritual and cultural wound.
- The church is called to care for widows, orphans, children, youth, and the oppressed.
- CBC's mission calling requires participation from the whole body.

Icebreaker

Question:

Think of a time when being part of a team, family, church, or group gave you a sense of belonging. What made that community meaningful to you?

Allow 5–15 minutes. Encourage brief sharing so everyone who wants to speak has space.

Scripture Exploration

Passage 1: Psalm 68:1–6

Discussion Prompts

1. Psalm 68 begins with God arising and enemies scattering. What does this teach us about God's power over darkness?

2. Why is it significant that this same passage also describes God as Father to the fatherless and Defender of widows?

3. How do spiritual warfare and compassion belong together in the life of the church?

4. Where do you see "fatherlessness" or vulnerability in our community or mission fields today?

Passage 2: James 1:27 and James 2:14–17

Discussion Prompts

1. James describes pure religion in practical terms. Why do you think care for orphans and widows is so central to biblical faith?

2. What is the relationship between genuine faith and visible action?

3. How can churches unintentionally separate spiritual ministry from practical care?

4. What is one practical need around us that our group could begin praying about or responding to?

Passage 3: Ephesians 6:10–18

Discussion Prompts

1. Paul says our struggle is not ultimately against flesh and blood. How should that shape the way we think about missions, conflict, and prayer?

2. Which part of the armor of God stands out to you most right now, and why?

3. Verse 18 emphasizes praying “at all times in the Spirit.” What might it look like for our group to grow in that kind of prayer?

4. How can we pray seriously about spiritual warfare without becoming fearful, sensational, or distracted from Christ?

Grand Synthesis Prompt

Psalm 68 shows God scattering enemies and defending the vulnerable. James calls believers to practical care. Ephesians 6 calls the church to spiritual readiness and prayer. How do these passages together give us a fuller picture of CBC's missions calling?

Application: Growing in Personal and Communal Prayer

As a group, consider choosing one or more of the following practices for the next month:

- Pray Scripture together. Use Psalm 68:1–6, Ephesians 6:10–18, or James 1:27 as a guide.

- Adopt a mission focus. Choose one CBC mission partner, location, or ministry and pray for it weekly.

- Create prayer triads. Groups of three check in once a week to pray for personal needs and mission's needs.

- Practice "truce prayers." Ask God to reveal where reconciliation, forgiveness, or internal healing is needed.

- Pray for the vulnerable by name. Widows, children, students, the lonely, the fatherless, and those in crisis.

- Set aside one short prayer gathering. Meet before group, after group, or on another day for focused intercession.

- Include listening prayer. After bringing requests to God, allow silence for reflection and Spirit-led conviction.

- Move from prayer to obedience. Ask, “Is there one practical step God is asking us to take?”

Closing

Prayer Needs

Use this space to collect requests:

- Personal needs:
- Family needs:
- Reconciliation or “truce” needs:
- Mission partners or global needs:
- Widows, orphans, children, youth, and vulnerable people:
- Opportunities to go, give, serve, or mentor:

Closing Prayer Prompt

Close by inviting one or more people to pray around these themes:

- God’s fatherly care for the fatherless.
- Courage to pursue peace.
- Protection and strength for CBC mission partners.
- Strongholds to be broken through the power of Christ.
- Compassion that becomes practical obedience.
- A deeper prayer culture in the group and church.

Leader Notes

- Create safety. This sermon may surface painful issues such as fatherlessness, loneliness, trauma, family conflict, or low self-worth. Do not pressure anyone to share more than they want.

- Honor confidentiality. Remind the group that personal stories should not be repeated outside the group without permission.

- Keep the focus on Christ. Discussions about spiritual warfare can become speculative. Keep returning to Scripture, the victory of Jesus, prayer, and practical obedience.

- Make room for application. Do not let the conversation remain abstract. Help each person consider one faithful next step.

- Be sensitive with missions language. Avoid talking about mission fields or vulnerable people as projects. Emphasize dignity, partnership, mutual learning, and the image of God.

- Encourage participation. Some people will connect with prayer, others with giving, others with going, others with mentoring or care. Help the group see that the whole body is needed.

- Follow up pastorally. If someone shares deep loneliness, depression, trauma, or relational crisis, encourage them to connect with pastoral care, counseling, a trusted leader, or appropriate church support.

This Week’s Assignment

Look for someone who needs to be seen, valued, heard, or understood.

Pray for them. Move toward them. Encourage them.

And ask the Lord how He wants you to participate in His harvest.