

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

DATE

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SPEAKER

David Platt

SERIES

Make Known

PART

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TITLE

His Name Where He Is Not Known

SCRIPTURE

Romans 15:8-24



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If you have a Bible and I hope you or somebody around you does that you can look on with, let me invite you to open with me to Romans chapter 15. Romans chapter 15, that's where we're going to start, and then if you want to be ready, we're going to turn over to Matthew chapter 4 in a little while, and we'll close our time in that Bible book.

As you're turning, I want to say that it is sincerely an honor to be at Providence this morning. I love this church. I love the leaders of this church. Dave O. Has been a constant source of spiritual encouragement to me for many years. I love Brian, I love Phil. I could talk for a long time about the example these brothers have been and are to me. I trust you know how blessed you are with the leaders He has entrusted to this church. It seems like most every time I'm in the Triangle, I find myself somewhere in the offices here, late night, experiencing life giving food and fellowship with these brothers. I love this church, I love the mission of this church, and I'm here this morning because I believe deeply in the potential of this church to affect nations for the glory of Jesus Christ. I don't say that lightly and I don't say potential to in any way minimize what you as a church have done for years and are doing right now around the world for the glory of Jesus.

At the same time, if I could be so bold, I want to challenge you today. I believe this church can do so much more for the glory of Jesus among the nations than what you have done in the past and even what you are doing in the present, which leads to where the next few minutes are headed. At the end of our time together in God's Word a few minutes from now, I'm going to offer you a specific invitation to stand where you are in this room, if you would be willing to put a stake in the ground and to say the following, I'll put it up here on the screen. If you would be willing to say, "God, I will do whatever you call me to do, no matter what it costs to get the gospel to people who have never heard it. God, I will do whatever you call me to do, no matter what it costs to get the gospel to people who have never heard it."

The key words in this statement are, "God," this is you potentially standing before God. This is not about standing because someone else is standing or you think you should stand or you'd feel bad or guilty sitting. This is about you and your life soberly saying to the God who made you, who loves you, "I will do whatever," so no strings attached. "God, if that is to pack my bags and move somewhere else, anywhere else in the world, I'll do it. If that's to sell any or all of my possessions, if that's to rearrange my plans for my life or my family or my work or my retirement." If you are single, maybe this is not to marry or to only marry someone else who's saying the same thing. It would make no sense to say this and then marry someone who's not saying this, so at the very least, you'd be limiting the number of people you might marry. We're talking about major decisions in your life, no matter how young or old you might be, going into the future, "God, whenever, wherever, however, whatever you call me to do, no matter what it costs," knowing there is absolutely no way for you to carry out this commitment without cost, without sacrifice.

This is not for everybody. Many of you are not ready to say this, so don't stand. We're talking about sacrifice, to do what? "To get the gospel," the good news of God's love in Jesus, the greatest news in the world. For those of you who are visiting or exploring Christianity, this word gospel means good news. The central message of

the Bible is that God has created each one of us for relationship with Him and each of our hearts will only be fully satisfied in relationship with God.

The problem is all of us have turned aside from God and His ways to ourselves and our own ways, the Bible calls this sin and our sin separates us from God. If we die in this state of separation from God, we will spend eternity separated from God in judgment due our sin. But the good news of the Bible, the greatest news in the world is that God has not left us alone in this state. God has come to us in the person of Jesus and He has done what no one else has ever done or could ever do. He has lived a life of no sin and then even though he had no sin for which to die, he chose to die on a cross to pay the price for sinners. He died the death we deserve to die. Then the good news keeps getting better because he didn't stay dead for long. Three days later he rose from the grave in victory over sin and death so that anyone, anywhere, no matter who you are or what you have done, by putting your trust in Jesus, you can be forgiven of all your sin and restored to relationship with God for all of eternity. That's the gospel.

If you've never received and believed this good news in your life, I invite you to do that today. For those of you who have received and believed this good news, and I'm inviting you today to say, "God, I will do whatever you call me to do no matter what it costs to get this good news to people," women, men and kids and college students, young adults, people just like you and me who have never heard it. People who've never heard the good news that I just shared. They've not been reached by the gospel. They're unreached.

Here's how the Bible describes people like this. Look with me at Romans chapter 15, verse 20. Paul who's writing this letter to Christians in Rome says, "I make it my ambition to preach the gospel," there it is, the good news, "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've never heard will understand.'" You see the picture here? Paul says, "There are places where Christ has not already been named, people who have never been told of him." It's not that they've heard about Jesus and they didn't believe in him, it's they've never even been told the truth about who he is. They've never heard about who he is and what he has done for their salvation.

Are there people like that in the world today? Yes, there are. I'll show you a map that I trust is familiar to many of you at Providence, but just to make sure we're all on the same page, there are three main colors on this map. The green areas represent places in the world that have been reached by the gospel, places where disciples have been made and churches have been planted and multiplied. Obviously it doesn't mean that everyone in the green is a Christian. What it means is that there are Christians and churches in those places in such a way that people who live in the green have access to the gospel. The areas in the yellow are less reached by the gospel, meaning there are some disciples and churches there, some access to the gospel, but less access than the places in the green. Then the red areas are considered unreached by the gospel. They are places where there are very few, if any, Christians in churches, which means most of the people in the red have little to no access to the gospel.

That's what we mean when you use the word unreached. We don't just mean lost, people are just as lost in Raleigh as they are in Somalia. The difference is by God's grace. There's a few churches in Raleigh, by God's grace, there's a lot of Christians and churches preaching the gospel in Raleigh. It's not so in Somalia. There's very few Christians and hardly any churches, which means that people in Somalia don't have access to the gospel. This is why we don't say, "I don't know why we talk about unreached people around the world. There's unreached people in my neighborhood or there's unreached people in my office." It's not true. Those people are not unreached.

You say, "How do you know?" Because they're in your neighborhood, they're in your office, they have access to the gospel because you're there. We're talking about people who practically, if you live in the red, what that means is the likelihood is you'll be born and you'll live and you'll die without ever even hearing the good news of God's love in Jesus, Romans 15.

Which leads to the question, how many people are we talking about here in the red? The answer, you heard it in the video earlier, is that approximately 3.2 billion people live in the red. That's why I'm inviting you to stand and say, "God, I will do whatever you call me to do no matter what it costs to get the gospel to people who've never heard it," because well, if you're taking notes, I'm inviting you to stand and say this because one, there are more unreached people in the world today than ever before in history and their number is increasing.

Let's just unpack, let this statement soak in. Paul was writing about unreached people in Romans 15, and we don't know exactly how many people were alive when Paul wrote this, but historical estimates the world population at that time at around 250 million people and some of them had heard the gospel, they were not all unreached, but even if we assumed they were all unreached, that would still mean the number of unreached people today is over 12 times as many in Paul's day. We're talking billions, not millions. This number is higher today than ever before in history and it's increasing. You know why? Because we as the church in the green and the yellow are not doing whatever God calls us to do to get the gospel to those in the red.

Just one example. Think about how we spend our money. We know that we as Christians, as followers of Jesus, spend most of our money on ourselves. We give us small portion of our money to churches and ministries and then we give an even smaller portion of that money to what we call missions or work around the world overseas. But did you know that out of that money that Christians and churches give to missions overseas, and I want to be clear, I'm talking generally about Christians and churches here, not specifically here at Providence by God's grace, you guys turn this stat on its head. But did you know that out of all the money that Christians and churches in the green and yellow give to missions overseas, that approximately 99% of those resources actually goes to places that are green and yellow? Latin America, parts of Europe, and Africa and Asia, to places that for the most part have been reached by the gospel. Obviously it's not bad to come alongside our brothers and sisters in these places. Without question, there's some pockets of red in parts of the green. You're going to hear them more later about a pocket of red there in sub-Saharan Africa. But Jesus

said, “Where your treasure is, your heart will be also.” Our hearts are not in the red. Meanwhile their number is increasing.

I don’t know if you saw the UN estimates that this week, two days from now, November 15th, the world population will surpass 8 billion people. Put it together. That means more and more people in the red being born and living and dying without ever hearing the gospel. Which leads to the question, doesn’t it, well, what happens to them when they die if they’ve never heard the gospel? I think that for most Christians in America where the gospel has come, either we don’t realize there are 3 billion people in the world like this or we think they’ll be okay when they die, they’ll go to heaven. That’s the only answer I can come up with for why we are not talking about this all the time in our Christian lives and in the church, why we’re not consumed with this because if we believed 3 billion people were dying and going to an eternal hell without ever even hearing about how they can go to heaven, I think we’d be talking about this all the time. We got to do something and not just a few people, all of us got to be a part of this. We’ve got to pull together our resources, go, send, get behind brothers and sisters in the red. This is not tolerable.

We long for justice, right? Is there any greater injustice than 3 billion people going to eternal everlasting suffering while all the people who know and have eternal everlasting life sit back and throw relative pennies to them?

We don’t have time to dive fully into what the Bible teaches about those who never hear the gospel but I’ll just say this is the reason why the book of Romans was written. Paul makes clear that the only way to be saved from sin is through faith in Jesus. People can’t put their faith in Jesus if they don’t hear about Jesus. Read Romans 10, “Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of Christ.” In other words, people can’t go to heaven if they don’t hear about the one who makes heaven possible, which is why I’m inviting you to stand and say, “God, I’ll do whatever you call me to do, no matter what it costs to get the gospel to them,” because if that was Paul’s ambition when there were 250 million people in the world, surely it should be our ambition when we’re looking at a world of 3 billion unreached people.

I know what many are thinking. I can see the thought bubbles in the room. You’re saying, “Okay, but aren’t there needs for the gospel here in the green like in Raleigh, in our country?” For that matter, many of you are thinking, “I have all kinds of needs in my own life, my family right now, my work. How can I think about getting the gospel to the red on the other side of the world?”

I just want to say I get these questions. I feel them. There are great needs for the gospel in Raleigh-Durham, in Washington DC where I live, and in our country, and there are deep needs in your life and your family and your work and there are deep needs in my life and my family and my work right now. In light of that, I just want to encourage us to think in your life, in your family, in your work, amidst your needs and challenges and struggles, just imagine facing all of those things without the strength and wisdom and mercy and hope of Jesus.

If we think there are needs in the green, in our cities, our country, just imagine what those needs look like in the red where there's little to no knowledge of the truth or love of Jesus. Without question God is calling us to pay attention to the needs in our lives and the needs of people's lives in Raleigh and Metro Washington, DC and our country. We're not supposed to pretend like they don't exist. God is calling us to press in to Jesus with the needs in our lives and to spread the good news of Jesus in Raleigh and in our country, while refusing to ignore 3 billion people who are living and dying with no knowledge of Him.

Which leads to the second statement. I would encourage you to either write down or imprint on your mind and heart. We have more opportunities to reach the unreached in the world today than ever before in history. Do you realize the opportunities we have right now, you and I together to get the gospel to the red? Think about the world we live in right now. Globalization, urbanization, ease of travel, new technologies. The church in the first century could have only dreamed about the opportunities that we have to reach the nations. It took Paul months to sail from one city to the next. We can jump on a machine and get anywhere in the world in a day. He had to write letters that would take weeks and months to be delivered. Between social media, translation software, the Metaverse, we can communicate with people around the world in real time from a device and our pockets. We have all kinds of opportunities, resources to pray for the nations.

If you don't already have it, download Joshua Project's Unreached of the Day app, Unreached of the Day. We spend so much time on our phones in front of screens, doing so much worthless stuff. Just spend two minutes during the day praying for the Sunri people of Bangladesh. 356,000 of them, no known followers of Jesus. That's a valuable way to spend two minutes of your day interceding for hundreds of thousands of people, none of whom have heard the gospel.

Go to stratus.earth and find information about countries and how you can be praying for them. These countries in the world ranked according to their urgent spiritual and physical needs. Go to a place like Somalia and zoom in there. Do this on your own, do this with your family in the morning before breakfast or at the table before a meal or before you go to bed. Look at all the needs that are there and prayer points. You can click on a little video right there and it'll lead you to pray for Somalia.

Don't underestimate what God will do as you are praying for the nations. Just last week I put out something on social media asking people to pray for two brothers who had been imprisoned and beaten in the Middle East and people started praying and a few days later I got word that these brothers, one had stayed faithful to the gospel, shared the gospel with prisoners around them and with some leaders in very high positions, and then as they were doing that, people were praying. The very men who arrested and imprisoned and beat these brothers in Christ, those very men ended up arranging their release and today our brothers and sisters in Christ are back home with their families and their church.

Do we realize we can join with God in what He is doing in the red before we even get out of bed in the morning? Are you doing this? Are you praying for the nations? Have opportunities to pray, learn about, and inter-

cede for the nations to give. Think about it. Why do we live in one of the wealthiest countries to ever exist on planet earth? Why? How do we have such wealth? The answer is clearly not according to this book, to waste our lives on a bunch of stuff that's going to burn up in the end. We have been given wealth for the spread of Jesus worship. That's why we have wealth. We have more opportunities today in this context in the world to reach the nations with the resources He has given us than most people have ever had in history. If we'll take them to pray, to give, to go, to go short term to the red for a week or two, to go midterm for a month or two or a year or two for college students or those with flexibility with your jobs or retirees or to go long term.

I'm looking out across this church and this city where there's hundreds of college students right beside us here who are getting world class degrees and adults with world class degrees that open doors to all kinds of jobs in the red for the spread of the gospel there. For any medical students or nurses or doctors, I can point you today to just about any job you could want in the heart of the Middle East. I think about one nursing student, she graduated with her nursing degree. Instead of looking for a job in the green, she started looking for a job in the red. She ends up moving over, she's started working at this hospital, significant hospital in the heart of the Middle East, she's risen up in the ranks of nursing, she's now head over nursing in this hospital. She has a Bible study in her office every week with Muslims and nobody stops her. Do you know why? Because she's really good at nursing.

You see what's happening? The Middle East is paying for her to spread the gospel in the Middle East. Now they don't know that, but God's got the whole thing rigged. There are opportunities like that for teachers, for engineers, for fitness specialists. I could go on and on and on. Accountants, there's so many opportunities if we'll open our eyes to them. What if God has designed the globalization of today's marketplace for the spread of the gospel among the nations? It's exactly what He's done. If we will open our eyes and see it.

Retirees, did you know Uncle Sam will pay you not just to play golf, but to spread the gospel among the nations? What is going to be the better use of your time in your last days before you see your savior's face? Spend it on what's going to matter 10 trillion years from now, not that which is not going to matter next week. It's just wise way to live to steward the resources, the opportunities we have to reach the nations.

Which leads to the final statement I'll put up here and why I'm inviting you to say this. Because to be a Christian is to live for this, is to live to see disciples made among all the nations, particularly the unreached. In other words, I'm inviting you to stand and say, "God, I will do whatever you call me to do no matter what it costs to get the gospel to people who've never heard it because this is what it means to be a follower of Jesus Christ."

Now obviously to be a Christian is fundamentally to believe in Jesus, as I mentioned earlier, to believe that Jesus came to give his life so that you might have life, to trust in Jesus as the Savior and Lord of your life. That's just it. He's the Lord of your life.

I mentioned that we turn to Matthew chapter 4 and close our time in this Bible book. Go there with me if you have a Bible. If not, you'll be able to see this on the screen. I want to show you Jesus's first words to his followers in the book of Matthew, his last words to his followers in this book, and then his words right in the middle. I just want you to ask, honestly ask, "Is there a biblical basis behind this invitation for you to stand and say this before God?" Is this just Preacher David Platt giving you this invitation or is this actually Jesus giving you this invitation? That's a really important question because if it's just David Platt, well I would be the first to encourage you not to stand. You don't need to do what I'm telling you to do. You certainly don't need to rearrange your life.

But if Jesus is actually the one giving this invitation, well then that changes everything. Is this invitation coming from him? That's that's what I'm after. Just for you to see. Is this invitation coming from me or him? Is this actually what it means to be a Christian, to be a follower of Christ? Let's listen to Jesus's first words to potential disciples in Matthew chapter 4 verse 18.

"While walking by the Sea of Galilee, and Jesus saw two brothers, Simon, who's called Peter and Andrew, his brother casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. And he said to them, 'Follow me and I will make you fishers of men.' And immediately they left their nets and followed him." Did you hear that? Jesus said, "Follow me," and he did not tell them where they were going. "Just trust me. You go where I'm leading you." But he did tell them what they'd do. "I'm going to make you into fishers of men." Jesus just told these fishermen, "Instead of searching for fish all over the lake, you're going to spread the gospel all over the world." That was in the first sentence he said to them, from the very beginning, and look at what they did. "Immediately," without hesitation, "they left their nets," their security, their comfort, their possessions, their positions, and without hesitation, "they followed him," and learned to fish for men. That was their first interaction with Jesus.

Then, so let's turn to the middle of the book, 12 chapters later, Matthew chapter 16. Look with me at verse 24, Matthew 16:24, "When Jesus told his disciples, if anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it but whoever loses his life, for my sake will find it." Did you catch that? Jesus said, "If anyone," this is what's involved for anyone who wants to follow Jesus. You must deny yourself, take up a cross, and die to yourself and follow him wherever he leads, lose your life. You can't come to Jesus and keep your life as you know it. If anyone would come to Jesus, you must lose your life as you know it and follow him and do whatever he tells you to do.

What does he tell us to do? Not ask us, tell us. Well, let's look at Jesus's last words to his disciples 12 more chapters later in Matthew 28 verse 18, Jesus's last words to his disciples in this book.

"Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I've commanded you, and behold, I'm with you always to the end of the

age.”

Just put the picture together. To follow Jesus, if anybody's going to follow Jesus in this room, it means you die to yourself, to do whatever Jesus tells you to do. What is Jesus telling us, commanding us to do from the very beginning? Fish for men. The very end? Make disciples of all the nations and with 3 billion people among the nations who never heard the gospel, doesn't it seem like it would make sense for Christians to say, "I'll do whatever you call me to do, no matter what it costs to make disciples of the nations, including among people who've never heard the gospel"?

Maybe let me put it this way, ask you the question right where you're sitting. Are you willing to pack your bags and move permanently to the Middle East for the spread of the gospel if Jesus tells you to do that? If you are not willing to do that, if Jesus tells you to do that, then I would just ask the follow up question, what makes you think you're following Jesus?

Followers of Jesus have sacrificed the right to determine the direction of our lives. We don't call the shots anymore. He calls all the shots. What we do with our possessions, what we do with our plans, where we live, it's all up to him. We do whatever he calls us to do. Fish for men, to make disciples of the nations. God help us to be finished and done with a cultural, unbiblical Christianity that thinks following Jesus involves praying a prayer, attending church, and coasting things out in a nice comfortable Christian spin on the American dream. Where did we get that in this book? It's not here, it's not Christianity. Christianity is dying to yourself. Galatians 2:20, "I've been crucified with Christ." I no longer even live. It's Christ who lives in me, the life I live and the flesh I live, by faith in the son of God who love me and gave himself for me, my life's his. I want to do whatever he calls me to do.

You were created for so much more than a nice comfortable Christian spin on the American dream. You've been created and called by the God of the universe to make the greatest news in the world known among the nations through your life. Don't settle over anything less than that. This is biblical Christianity and it changes everything about your life, about your family, about the way the church.

Let me give you an example, social media the other day. I saw a video of a 17 year old girl who is Mormon and she was preparing to do what all seniors in high school do in Mormonism, to spend the next year on mission, taking to be clear, a false gospel that damns around the world. On this video, she's reading this letter from the leaders in Mormonism who have are telling her where she's going to go and she's shaking with nervous excitement. She's got a huge smile on her face. She can hardly contain herself. She gets to the point where she reads where she's going to go and as she says it, immediately the camera pans out, just like an iPhone video. It pans out and they're in the backyard are her parents and her family and her friends, they've all gathered together, they start jumping up and down shouting with excitement. Why is a teenage girl and the community around her in a cult more passionate about getting a false gospel to the nations than we who have the true gospel when it comes to the next generation in our lives, our families, our churches? Why is it that when

I spend time on college campuses, one of the biggest hindrances to college students going to the nations is their Christian parents who are discouraging them from doing that? Why are we not raising up our kids with a heart for the nations that this would be expected among us? Why?

We have things so backwards. The goal of biblical parenting is not to help our children get a great education or be a great athlete or go on great dates or have a great career or make great money. The goal of biblical parenting is to lead children to know and love a great God and to spend their lives accomplishing a great commission. This is Christianity. This is what we live for and to show next generation.

I want to show you what it looks like to know and love God with all your heart and soul and mind and strength more than I love anything else in this world. I want to show you what it looks like to lay my life down and sacrifice whatever it costs to get the gospel to people who've never heard it. I want to make disciples of the nations. I want to show you what this looks like in my life by example.

God, help us to realize this is Christianity and if it feels like too much, if this feels like too extreme, maybe too heavy of a commitment, as in I don't know if I can say this to God and do whatever no matter what it costs? If you're thinking that I would just encourage you, please listen real close. You can trust Jesus. It's the whole point. He's worthy of your trust. You can trust him a lot better than you can trust yourself, that's basic Christianity. You turn from yourself, you say, "I trust you." If you can trust him to save you from sin and death and hell for the next 10 trillion years and beyond, then why can you not trust him to lead you for the next few years on this earth? You're missing the whole point.

Remember Matthew 13:44? I don't have this one on screen but remember the man walking in a field. He stumbles upon a treasure that he realizes is more valuable than everything else he has put together. What does that verse say? It says, "This man goes and with gladness," the text says, "With gladness, he sells everything he has," with a smile on his face. He's getting rid of everything. I can imagine people coming up to him being like, "What are you doing? You're selling everything you have." Says, "I'm going to buy that field over there." They're like, "You're crazy. You're going to buy that field? You're selling everything you have." He smiles. He's like, "I got to hunch." He smiles. Why? Because inside he knows he has found something that is worth losing everything for.

Ladies and gentlemen, we have found someone who is worth losing everything for. Jesus is this good. We believe what we're singing in Christ alone, I have life, then we give our to do whatever he calls us to do. This is what it means to be a Christian. Whatever you want me to do, God. Believing that Jesus will leave you to do far more with your life than anything this world could ever offer you, believing that He has plans for you that are immeasurably more than all you could ask or imagine.

I know some of you might be thinking, "Well, I'm only one person. There's 3 billion of them. What can I really do?"

If you're thinking that, I would just encourage you, of course you're only one person. God made you that way and God made them that way too. I've been talking a lot about 3 billion people, but these are individual people, see them. We're talking about Hajira in Afghanistan. Her people group is Pashto, largest people group in Afghanistan. She, her close knit tribe, lived by a code of protecting each other's honor and showing generous hospitality. She works hard for her family, day in and day out in the barren mountainous region where she lives.

We're talking about Tahil in Somalia. He lives in the capital, Mogadishu port city just north of the equator on the Indian Ocean. Many of the men he knows have left Somalia, but he's stayed, convinced this is the best way he can provide for his parents and his wife and his kids. We're talking about Amir and Aaliyah and Yemen, older brother, younger sister. They still possess childlike zeal for life even though they live in the middle of the largest humanitarian crisis in the world right now, surrounded by war and conflict that they were born into. Their parents are struggling to put food in their mouths every single day. Hear what God is saying to us about them in His word. God is telling us that He loves every single one of them, so much that He sent His son Jesus to die on a cross.

God is telling us there are more of them right now than ever before in history and He knows all their names and He's given you and me more opportunities than ever before in history to reach them. What a time to be alive. As the people of God, let's not waste it. Let's say with no strings attached, "God, I will do whatever you call me to do, no matter what it costs to get the greatest news in the world to them."

Will you bow your heads with me? All across this room, I invite you to bow your heads, to close your eyes. I really want to challenge you to keep your eyes closed in this time just to focus on God. This invitation is about no one else but you and God. This is not about seeing how anybody else responds and it's sure not about letting how they respond affect the way you respond. As best as I can, I just want to help you look to God alone right now. In this holy, still moment to hear Him speaking to your heart, tune everybody else out. In just a moment I'm going to ask you to stand if you would say, "God, I will do whatever you call me to do, no matter what it costs to get the gospel to people who've never heard it." Really, I really want to encourage you to stand only if you're willing to put a stake in the ground and say that before God, to say, "I'm willing." The Lord may lead you to pack your bags, move the Middle East. The Lord may lead you to stay in Raleigh-Durham, but this is you saying, "Whatever." Some of you, for a host of reasons are not at a point where you're ready to say that and the same time others of you maybe have said something like this in the past, and I want you to feel free to stand and say in a fresh way today, "That stake is still in the ground in my life. God, here I am. Whatever you call me to do." You alone know what's going on in your heart and life right now but I'm praying that God will raise up men and women and students and kids will say, "Whatever you want me to do, God. My life is yours to spend for the spread of the gospel to those who've never heard it."

God, I pray that you would help every person in this room right now to respond with honest authenticity

and humble courage.

In this moment before God, just you and God, if you would say, “God, I will do whatever you call me to do, no matter what it costs, to get the gospel to people who have never heard it.” If you would say that to God, would you just quietly stand up where you are right now, just you before God?

Oh God, I’m struck by the sobering reality of what many are saying to you right now in a Isaiah 6 way, here am I, send me before you, the holy God of the universe, knowing we’re saying, no matter what it costs. I don’t presume to know all it costs in my own life. I certainly don’t presume to know the cost in others’ lives, what this might lead to. Oh God, I pray for spirit of faith over those who are standing, boldness in having taken this step to take the next step and the next step, the next step to do whatever you call them to do, no matter what it costs.

I pray that you would guard them from every attempt of the adversary to distract them, to deceive them, to divert them. I pray that you would draw them into deeper trust in you, deeper love for you, deeper intimacy with you, deeper understanding of your love for them, of your trustworthiness with their lives. God, I pray that you would bless them, you would lead them, you would guide and direct their steps in the days ahead for the spread of the gospel through their lives among the nations. However, wherever, whenever, wherever. God, I would be so bold as to ask that there would be people in the red who are unreached right now, that would be reached one day because of what you’re doing in this room right now and may it be so. May lips and lives from this room, whether through praying, through giving, through going, lead to ripple effects among the red for your glory. We pray for that, God, that you would spend us however you desire in your wisdom for the spread of this gospel to the nations. God, I pray at the same time for those who are seated for any number of different reasons, God, for anyone who has not put their trust in Jesus. God I pray that right now they would hear, receive your love for them. They would know they’re loved by you and that you are worthy of their trust, that you would bring them to trust in Jesus.

For others who are Christians and yet are hesitant or not at a point where they would say this to you, God, I pray that you would give them spirit of faith, God, that you would open their eyes in a greater way to who you are and how worthy you are of their trust, and draw them closer to yourself and to deeper surrender to you. God, in all of this, I pray over this church specifically. I praise you for what you have done over years for your glory among the nations in the past. I pray that it would be prelude to all that you do in the future. Would you bless Providence Church, this church family? Cause your face to shine upon this people for the spread of your glory among the nations in ways far beyond what anybody in this room could ask or imagine right now. As we anticipate the day when, Jesus, you will be praised by every nation and tribe and tongue gathered around your throne, we long for that day spend our lives toward that day. We pray in Jesus name. And all God’s people said amen, amen.

Would just have a seat. As you're taking your seat, I want to just show you an example of somebody who took the next step in following Jesus to the unreached. Watch this with me.

One of the last things that Jesus said before he left the ___ language. It's called ___ and it's very important because these chiefs are being presented Bible resources. They have many books of the Bible already translated, and they have other resources, how to raise your family, biblical family, and two-thirds of it is scripture. They have had chiefs come to Christ and they are starting to govern that way, and it's transforming the way these people live, which is super exciting.

What I love most about coming to Malawi is just knowing that I get to go to a place that's unreached and to actually look in the eyes and hold the hands of people that their eyes haven't been opened yet and to be able to pray with them and hoping that those seeds have been planted. Year after year you get to know these people when you come back and they remember you. It's important because they know you care enough to come back. I wish more people would want to come to a hard place because these people are desperate. They're lost, they're unreached. I pray that more people would just pray and ask God, "Where do you want me to go?" It might be Malawi.



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