

The Honor of God: For the Sake of the Name

The Honor of God
By Grant Castleberry

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Capital Community Church

1417 Clifton Street
Raleigh, NC 27604

Website: www.capitalcommunitychurch.com

Online Sermons: www.sermonaudio.com/capitalcommchurch

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I direct your attention to Matthew 28, Matthew. 28 verses 18 to 20. This morning we are going to be looking at the honor of God as it relates to missions and evangelism. This is a passage known through history as the Great Commission as Christ commissioned to us as his disciples. So it's a very important section, it closes Matthew's gospel. Here's what Jesus says,

18 And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Just going to point out several brief things about this Great Commission. First, I want you to notice the authority, the authority of this commission. What's the authority? The authority is none other than Jesus Christ himself. That's one of the great differences when you're evangelizing someone is that you are evangelizing them with the authority of Jesus Christ. When the Mormons show up at your door, they're evangelizing you with the authority of an angel named Moroni. That's no good. You are commissioned by the Lord Jesus himself who is coming to judge the living and the dead.

And then notice the task itself in verse 19. He says, "Go therefore and make disciples." That word is matheteuo. It means a learner, a follower. You're making a learner, a follower of Jesus Christ. And he says in all nations, the Greek word is ethnos. It means people groups, dialects, languages, nationalities. You're going forth and you're making disciples of Jesus Christ in all nations. You're converting them and then you don't stop

there, you then baptize them. Notice for my Presbyterian friends how baptism comes after faith. I'll just leave that right there with you. And you baptize them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, but then we're not done, we're not done. A lot of people stop right there. We're done with the Great Commission. We've converted them, we've baptized them, but we've missed this third part which is also crucial: we teach them to observe all that Christ commands us. Jesus says, "Teach them to observe all that I have commanded you." And then he says, "Behold, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." So we must teach the people that trust, Christ as their Lord and Savior the truth of Christianity, the ethics, we must teach them skills and evangelism, apologetics in order that they might also carry out this Great Commission.

Is this commission done? Have we completed it? No, we have not. No, we have not. Jesus said this, Matthew 24:14, "This gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then, then the end will come." So before the Lord returns, the disciples must be made in all ethnos, all nations, that's the mission that Christ has given to you and to me. And it is my hope this morning that you leave with a renewed passion and heart for this mission. This mission of making disciples in the whole world across all the nations, that you would become a passionate soul winner for Christ, a discipler, a Bible teacher, an evangelist, a missionary perhaps, or God might be calling you to be a rope holder. Do you know what a rope holder is? Somebody that holds the rope for somebody else; that means that you're the fundraiser, you're the one holding it down here so they can go there. But regardless, my prayer, my hope is that you leave here this morning with a renewed passion to carry out this Great Commission.

I want you to turn to the right to 1 Corinthians 9 and I want you to see Paul's passion for this mission. 1 Corinthians 9 beginning in verse 19. Paul says this, "For though I am free from all," in other words, I have been given a freedom in Christ, he says, "I have made myself a servant to all," literally, a slave to all, "that," this is the purpose, "that I might win more of them." Notice this language of winning people, of capturing people. Paul is describing leading someone to Christ in these terms of winning a victory. This isn't new. In the Old Testament, the book of Proverbs 11:30, Solomon says, "The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and whoever captures souls is wise."

Look at verse 20, Paul says, "To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews." What he means by that is that he followed the ceremonial laws that the Jews had. He was free from them, he was free from the ceremonial laws, but he says, "I kept those laws in order that I might relate better to Jews." He does the same with Gentiles. Look at verse 21, "To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law." What he's saying is, "Of course I still obey the law of God. I don't disobey the law of God, but as far as it depends on me, I put my own preferences aside in order that I might win people. Wherever I go, I try to relate to people the best way that I can in order that I might win them." Sometimes this is called contextualization, that you adapt to the context that you're in.

When Hudson Taylor went to China, one of the interesting and groundbreaking things that he did is he discarded his Western clothes and started wearing Chinese clothes, the clothes of the Orient, those wicker hats, and all those things. You know, if you're going to be a missionary in Texas, what do you have to have? That's right, if you're going to play in Texas, you've got to have a fiddle in the band. In a serious sense, this is what Paul is doing is he's saying, "Look, I don't like to fiddle so much, but I'm going to use it because it's what they like. I'm putting my preferences aside." You see this passion, he's willing to put aside his own security, his own desires in order to win people to Christ.

Look at verse 22, "To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak." Now look at this encompassing statement, "I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some." Do you hear the passion there, that his heart is to win souls to Christ? Now this, I believe, is the mark of the mature believer where you are no longer simply the rescued and now you have become a spiritual lifeguard. Now you are involved in the rescue effort of saving others, that you are advancing this mission, this cause of Christ in the world.

Paul says this in 2 Corinthians 5:20. He says, "Therefore we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God." He said in Colossians 1:28, "Him we proclaim," Christ we proclaim, "warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ." Listen, "For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me." Friend, is this your toil? Is this your heart, to win people to Christ? Is this your struggle? Is this where you are putting all the energy that God gives to you to advance Christ's mission in the world?

I think one of the great problems in the West is that too many Christians are just trying to stay afloat in the kiddie pool. We send our kid to the kiddie pool, he's got the puddle jumpers on, that's where so many believers are because they're baby Christians and the reason why they're baby Christians is because they've been untaught in shallow churches. Paul told the Corinthians, he said, "You know, you're still drinking milk like a newborn babe but you should have moved on to food, to whole food, to meat, but you're still drinking milk." And that is where so many in the church are, is that they're not, they're not advancing the mission of Christ, they're barely just hanging on. And my prayer for you is that you would get in the game, that you would become a spiritual lifeguard.

What Daniel calls these people, I want you to turn to Daniel 12, Daniel calls the people that win others to Christ the stars. They're the stars of Christianity. Turn to Daniel 12 and then look at verse 3. Daniel 12:3. A few weeks ago, my family and I were out in Los Angeles, and we drove down Hollywood Blvd and, of course, right on either side of the road they have the Walk of Fame where they have the stars of the different celebrities that you can go and see. Listen, those aren't the real stars. These are the real stars. Look at verse 3, "And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky above," listen to this, "and those who turn many to righteousness," hear that work of winning people, turning people to God's way, those who turn many to righteousness, they are "like the stars," for how long? "Forever and ever." The lights which shine brightest in history are

those that turn many to righteousness. Jesus said in Matthew 13:43, "Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

So if you are a righteous person turning many into the kingdom, your life is a reverberating light for all of eternity. That's what your life is like. You are a light. Now here's the thing: this doesn't describe every single Christian. Not every Christian's life is a light that leads many to righteousness unfortunately. One commentator I read on this Daniel passage said this, "This is describing those who were prominent among the people by their piety, fidelity and steadfastness, who accomplished more than others by word and deed, and suffered more than others for the holy covenant." So what we're talking about here are true Christian leaders, those who lead many to righteousness through their words and their deeds. Is that your desire this morning? Do you want to be a leader in the game, someone whose life leads many to righteousness? C. T. Studd said, "Life is short, will soon be past, only what's done for Christ will last." Is that your heart?

What do you have to be to be that type of person? There's a book that Charles Spurgeon, many of you probably have heard of Charles Spurgeon, the Victorian preacher in London. The book is called "The Soul Winner," a soul winner. We're going to start a bookstore here and we're going to carry it in the back. But in the beginning of the book he goes through the qualities of the soul winner, the star, and let me just give you a few of these qualities very briefly. He said if you're going to be this type of person, this leader, this is what is required of you. First, holiness. Holiness. He said, "No wise man would pour his wine into foul bottles. No kind and good parent would allow his children to go see an immoral play. And God will not go to work with instruments which would compromise his holy character."

Second, he said we must be filled with the Spirit and this comes through the word of God dwelling within us, that we, as all believers are baptized with the Spirit, but we must be filled with the Spirit, directed by the Holy Spirit.

Third, he said we must be humble. We must have humility. God humbles the proud but gives grace to the humble. All of our success is owed to God.

Next, we must have earnestness towards men and God. That means passion. We must be passionate about our relationship with the Lord and winning men to Christ. He said, "The Lord Jesus Christ wept over Jerusalem, and you will have to weep over sinners if they are to be saved through you. Dear brethren, do be earnest, put your whole soul into the work or else give it up."

Next, he said you are to have a living faith. That means that you have a faith that God has empowered you and you have a faith that this word saves, that the gospel saves, that this word is powerful, that you have faith. Jesus says that the kingdom advances by faith.

Next, he said that you must have sincerity. What that means is that you believe the message, you believe the truth that God has called you to proclaim. If you don't believe

this, people will pick up on that in a moment. If you're just like, "Well, I think it's true." They'll sense that. So you have to be sincere.

There also must be a seriousness about your life and your work, that you take the Christian life seriously, that you take the gospel seriously, that you take hell seriously, that you take Satan seriously, and that you take God's kingdom seriously.

Next, he said you must have a love for the lost, really a love for all people. He said, "It is very sad when the failure of any ministry is caused by want or lack of heart. You ought to have a great big heart like the harbor at Portsmouth or Plymouth, so that all the people in your congregation could come and cast anchor in it and feel that they were under the lee of a great rock. Do you not notice that men who succeed in the ministry and win souls for Christ just in proportion as they are men with large hearts?"

And then lastly, he said you must have simplicity in heart, in other words, that you're committed to the mission of Christ not for money, not for selfish gain, not for applause, but for the glory of God. That's why you're in it.

Well, that's Spurgeon's list and what I want to do with the rest of our time this morning is I want to give you one more quality and one great motivation if you're going to be a star. I'm going to add on one more quality to Spurgeon's list, and then I'm going to give you one great motivation. I want you to turn to the right now to 2 Corinthians 4 and I want to look at verse 15. 2 Corinthians 4:15. Right here you're going to see what I think is one of the most important qualities of a discipler, of a star, and second, the motivation that you need to be this type of person.

First, the needed character quality is that of endurance. Endurance. If you are going to be a star in the kingdom, if you are going to be a soul winner, you must have endurance. Look at that first phrase in verse 15, he says, "For it is all," Paul says, "for your sake." Of course, "your sake," he's referring to the Corinthians, those that have come to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. But look at that little word "it." What is the "it" referring to? What is it that is all for the sake of the Corinthians? Well, look back at verse 8. Look back at verse 8. He says, verse 8, "We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed." That word "afflicted" is the Greek word "thlibo" and what it means is, it means to be compressed in a tight space where the walls are closing in. Any of y'all see the original Star Wars? They get stuck in the trash compactor. Paul's saying, "This is our experience in the ministry, the walls are constantly closing in. We're compressed in every way but not crushed." He says, "We're perplexed, we're uncertain or unsure of what the future holds, but not driven to despair. We're persecuted," that word means, the Greek word dioko, it means harassed because of your beliefs. That's what it means to be persecuted. It's an ideological abandonment by people and suffering that they impose on you because of what you believe. He said, "We're persecuted but not forsaken. We're struck down," literally thrown down, "but not destroyed." So the "it" that Paul is referring to, friend, is suffering. Suffering. Persecution. Affliction. And what that demands on the part of you and me is endurance. Endurance.

This mission, if we are going to carry it out, is going to be difficult. Difficult. There was a Marine Corps recruiting poster, this big drill instructor on it, and it says, "We don't promise you a rose garden. We don't promise you a rose garden." This is not, we used to say in the Marine Corps also, this is not an afternoon barbecue. This is not an afternoon barbecue. When I was doing two days in high school football, you know, two days those are the not fun days where you're practicing in the spring, May and June before the football season, and we were doing spring football, spring two days, and the outgoing seniors decided just to kind of have some fun and have a little grill out right next to the practice field. We're practicing in the heat and doing all this, they were sitting in pools and grilling hot dogs and hamburgers making fun of us. So the mission that we're in is to be on the field. It's not to be grilling the hamburgers on the side having fun.

So this is what Paul's saying is that we go through this affliction, we go through this cost for you. This is the cost of doing ministry. And it was like that for the beginning for the Apostle Paul. I'm just going to give you some references, but when Paul was called to ministry, remember on the Damascus Road, he was walking, the Lord Jesus appeared to him, Paul is struck blind. He goes into Damascus, and this is what Jesus says to a man named Ananias. Jesus says Acts 9:16, "For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of [the] name." Whose name? Christ's name.

Paul says this to the Philippians, Philippians 1:29, "For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake." Who was that granted by? God. It was granted by God that you would believe in Christ and also suffer for his sake.

Paul tells Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:3, "Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus." 2 Timothy 3:12, he says, "Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted." 2 Timothy 4:5, "be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry." Do you see a theme? Listen, when you are advancing the mission of Christ, who's your enemy? Satan. You are going to be opposed. If you're not opposed, it probably means you're not being effective. If you are effective, Satan will stand against you. You will encounter suffering, difficulty, trials.

Peter said 1 Peter 5:8, "Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world." It's everyone. If you are resisting Satan, being sober minded, you are enduring suffering.

Jesus said, remember the words of our Lord, John 15:20, "Remember the word that I said to you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours." So friends, we follow a crucified Lord who was persecuted and Jesus says, "If you carry out this mission, expect resistance, expect persecution."

One of the great missionaries that really was a pioneer in the missionary movement was a man named Adoniram Judson. He was the first Baptist missionary from America. And he left this country on a boat not a Baptist, but he became a Baptist on the boat over to Burma. You see, there's still hope for some of y'all. But he became a Baptist on the boat over to Burma, and on the way, they experienced difficulty at every turn. His wife miscarried their first child in the harbor on the way in. He got there eventually, took him a long time but he finally got to Burma. It took them over four years before they saw their first convert. Twelve years in, there was a war that the Burmese had with Great Britain. Even though he was American, he was arrested. He was put in prison. He was hung every night by his hands, his feet from the ceiling attached to a bamboo pole. So just literally hogtied to a bamboo pole every night in jail. While he was in prison, his wife Nancy died. She had a little baby. And after his wife died, his two-year-old daughter Maria also died.

And I just wanted, this is a book called "To the Golden Shore," and I'm just going to read you Judson's note on this. So he's released from prison and he's basically going back to the missionary station with his sick daughter after seeing the doctor. He says, this is first the biographer and then I'll give you the quote from Judson. "During their absence, two new missionaries had arrived at Amherst and installed themselves. George, Dana Boardman and his beautiful blue-eyed wife Sarah with their own baby girl barely six months old. But though the meeting with the Boardman's was pleasurable, Adoniram had little time for them, for Maria continued to sink rapidly. Four days after the return to Amherst, at three in the afternoon on April 24th, 1827, Maria Elizabeth Butterworth Judson died. She had lived two years and three months. Adoniram and the Wades and Mrs. Boardman closed her faded eyes and folded her little hands on her cold breast. Boardman built her coffin himself."

"The next morning," wrote Adoniram to Judson's mother, "we made her last bed in the small enclosure that surrounds her mother's lonely grave. Together they rest in hope under the Hope Tree which stands at the head of the graves, and together I trust their spirits are rejoicing after a short separation of precisely six months and I am left alone in the wide world. My own dear family I have buried, one in Rangoon and two in Amherst. What remains for me but to hold myself in readiness to follow the dear departed to that blessed world where my best friends, my kindred dwell, and were God my Savior reigns."

You ask how can a missionary, somebody that's putting it all on the line for the mission encounter the loss of his entire family? Why would God allow such a thing to happen to one of his stars? Maybe you're walking through something like that and you're asking the same question, "Why is God allowing me to endure this trial? This illness? This catastrophe? Why?" Well, look at verse 10. I think you'll find that the answer is startling. Look at verse 10, Paul says, "We're always carrying in the body the death of Jesus for this purpose, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies." This is what he's saying, he's saying that the Lord Jesus achieved our salvation not by exercising strength but weakness on the cross, dying in our place for our sins. He's saying in a similar way, we reach people, we reach the lost through our weakness and our suffering because in our

weakness and suffering, look what is seen, that the life, the resurrection life of Jesus may be manifested in our bodies. I think that's remarkable. He says, verse 11, "For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake." Who's giving them over to death? God is. We're being given over to death for Jesus' sake, purpose, "so that the life of Jesus," this resurrection life, this resurrection power that's in you in the power of the Holy Spirit, "also may be manifested in our mortal flesh." So he says, "death is at work in us, but life in you." In other words, you believed this resurrection life has come to you because you saw the power of that life through us because of our weakness, because of this death that's at work in us. In other words, God's strength is most greatly seen in your weakness and in your suffering.

This is what Paul says, 2 Corinthians 12:10, just a few chapters later. He says, "For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities." Listen, "For when I am weak, then I am strong." What he's saying is, is that resurrection power that is seen by others won't be seen unless you're weak, unless you're in the hardship, unless you're in the calamity. And it's then that that supernatural power of God is displayed.

Look back at verse 7. 2 Corinthians 4:7. Paul says that this treasure, this power of God in us, he says, "we have this treasure in jars of clay." A jar of clay was not a good jar, it was a bad jar. It was a throwaway jar. It wasn't a golden jar, it was a clay jar. And he says the reason why God puts the power in us, these weak vessels is "to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us." That's the purpose. That's why God uses weak men and women to do extraordinary things in the kingdom so that the resurrection life might be manifested through you.

You see, this isn't the prosperity gospel, is it? This is the power gospel and God demonstrates his power through your weakness. And when he does, who gets the glory? God does. God gets the glory. And so what is required of you and me is simple: endurance. Endure. Be sober-minded. Endure suffering. Do the work of an evangelist. Fulfill your ministry. You know, over the past three years with COVID and all, everything in our culture, more pastors have resigned their ministries than all the 30 years combined. People said, "It's too tough. I'm out. I can't take it anymore. Psychologically, physically I can't do it anymore." People are abandoning the ministry right and left. They've forgotten what ministry is about. The whole point is so that they might see God's power through your weakness. That's the point.

So what sustains you when you're in that moment? 1. Christ's example. Hebrews 12:3, "Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or faint-hearted." Remember, Jesus promised that he is with you in the Great Commission even to the end of the age. Paul says in verses 13 and 14 that we are promised a future resurrection. Look, I'm giving myself but if they take me out, verse 14, Paul says, "knowing that he who raised Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence." So you might kill me but guess what? I'm still standing. Yeah, yeah, yeah. There's a future resurrection.

And then fourth, what motivated him is the right motivation. The right motivation and let me give you this quickly. Look at the second part of verse 15. Look at what motivated him. So you have this characteristic that you're going to need to be a star, you need endurance and then you need this motivation. He says, "We do this suffering all for your sake so that as grace extends to more and more people," that's people being saved, look at this last phrase, "it may increase thanksgiving to the glory of God." It may increase thanksgiving to the glory of God. That word thanksgiving is the Greek word eucharisteo, it's where we get our English word eucharist. It means worship. The worship increases. The praise to God for what he's done increases. And what is the ultimate purpose Paul says this is for? What's the last phrase in the sentence? To the glory of God. To the glory of God.

This friends, is the highest motivation that you can have. If you're going to be a star in the kingdom, you must be motivated by the glory of God. This was Paul's highest and greatest motivation that propelled him to go across the ancient world four times. Now it might seem counter-intuitive what I'm about to say, listen very carefully: missions and reaching people was not the highest goal for Paul. It was an auxiliary goal. It was an important goal. He cared about the lost people. He said in Romans 9, "I wish myself accursed on behalf of my brethren, the Jews." He cared about the souls of people but it wasn't his greatest care. And if you reverse these in order, what you're going to find is that your missions work putters out because your compassion will ultimately not be great enough to take you to the ends of the earth. Something higher than your compassion and your sympathy for people must motivate you and that is the glory of God.

This is Paul's chief passion. Listen to this, he says in Romans 1:5, he says, "through whom," through Christ, "we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for," what's the purpose? Why do we bring about the obedience of faith everywhere we preach? "For the sake of his name among all the nations." In other words, that Christ's name might be praised among the nations. That's why we're doing this. He said Romans 11:36, "For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen." Romans 16:27, "to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen." 1 Timothy 1:17, "To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen." 1 Timothy 6:16, "To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen." 2 Thessalonians 1:11, "To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling and may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power, so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ." He says 1 Corinthians 10:31, "So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all," for what? "The glory of God." Whatever you do, the highest motivation is the glory of God. And so if you are going to be a star, if you are going to be effective in carrying out this mission, you must be passionate about God and his name reverberating through the nations.

Andrew Murray, "The enthusiasm of the kingdom is missing, and this is because there is little enthusiasm for the King." When Adoniram Judson finally saw people converted, he said, "It seems almost too much to believe that God has begun to manifest his grace to the

Burmans, but this day I could not resist the delightful conviction that this is really the case. Praise and glory be to his name forever. Amen." The highest motivation for your missional evangelistic work is the name of God.

John Piper wrote a book I read in high school called "Let the Nations Be Glad," and the thesis of the book is very simple, it's this: missions exist because worship doesn't. Missions exist because worship doesn't. Yes, we want to see people saved but that's along the road of seeing them worship. Our desire is to see God's name worshiped throughout the world. He says, Piper, "Missions is not God's ultimate goal. Worship is. And when this sinks into a person's heart, everything changes. The world is often turned on its head and everything looks different, including the missionary enterprise."

Been preaching through John and in the passages we looked at in John 4 with Jesus and the woman at the well, I was really struck by this one statement that Jesus made about God the Father. He told the woman at the well, he says, "The hour is coming and is now here when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth," listen, "for the Father is seeking such people to worship him." The end game of missions is worship and the only way that you are going to get there is to have a big view of God. One of the first things that I said when I became the pastor of this church is that we wanted this church to be a God for God church; that we desire to worship the living God, to experience his presence, to know him, to know Christ, and to desire at all cost for the name of God to be glorified because that is God's purpose in this world.

You want to get in line with what God is doing? What is God doing? He's exalting his name among the nations and so if we want to be a part of that, we need to get on board with exalting his name and that is the motivation behind being an excellent missionary evangelist, being a star is that you are obsessed with the glory of God, the glory of his name. And with that, when the moment comes, when the trial is there, you will be ready to endure, you will be ready to push through, you won't give up, you won't bail out, you will be faithful.

Look at verse 16. Paul is preaching to himself, "We do not lose heart, though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day for this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison." We do not lose heart. God is going to glorify his name and we get to be a part of that. Praise be to God.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for these truths. Lord, we pray that we would be encompassed with this glorious mission to make disciples here, there everywhere, that we would be stars in the kingdom, that we would not be content to sit on the sidelines, sit in the bleachers, and we would be spiritual lifeguards rescuing people from the torrents of sin. We ask, Lord, that we would have the grace to endure through difficulties and the vision to see that your glory above everything else is worth it. We ask all this for the sake of the name, for the sake of your glory, for the sake of Christ. Amen.

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