

# The Cry of God's Heart

by Denny Kenaston

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding God's heart for a lost and dying world and how it should motivate us to share the gospel.*

**Duration:** 1:20:14

**Scripture:** Isaiah 6:8, Matthew 22:37-39, Matthew 28:19-20, John 20:21, Acts 1:8, Romans 12:1-2, 1 Corinthians 12:27

**Topics:** "God's Heart"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker addresses the cry of God's heart for a lost and dying world. He emphasizes that every other cry we will explore throughout the weekend flows out of God's heart. The speaker urges the audience to go beyond simply knowing the commission to preach the gospel, but to have God's heart written upon their own hearts. He highlights the command in Mark 16 and Matthew 28 for believers to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, emphasizing the urgency and importance of this mission.

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## Transcript

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Greetings in the name of the Lord Jesus. This evening, this first night of the feast, what a blessing to find ourselves at this place. It's Thursday night.

Lots of labors have gone into what we find ourselves in. I mean, I think I can remember back seven or eight months when we started talking about the Missions Conference, and here we are. So it's beautiful, you know, when your faith becomes sight.

Amen? And of course, we know that that's the way that God is, and God wants His people to be that way. He wants us to live by faith, but He also does reward us with sight. After we have labored, after we have dreamed, after we have prayed, after we have seen with the eyes of our hearts, God does let us see with the eyes in our head at times on this side of glory.

And so, this Missions Conference is just one of those. I'd like us to open our Bibles this evening to Isaiah chapter 6. We are gathered together in this place because we share a common interest in God's burden for a lost and dying world. That's why we're here.

It thrills our hearts to see how much common interest there is in God's burden for a lost and dying world. I guess the title has already been given for my message, but the burden of my heart and the responsibility that was given to me was to speak to you this first opening meeting on the cry of God's heart. We're going to be looking at several different cries through the weekend, but I think it's good and important that we begin by looking into the heart of God, because that's where it all starts.

That's the foundation of it all. Every other cry that we're going to look at flows out of the cry that's on the heart of God, on the heart of the God of heaven. So that's what we want to look at here this evening.

In simplicity, we are here because we have been commanded to go. And I think that all of us, to a greater or a lesser degree, we understand that command. God has commanded us to go.

Mark chapter 16 says, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. That's quite an all-encompassing command when you think about it. Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

That's what Jesus said in the book of Mark in chapter 16. In Matthew 28 He said it this way, Go ye therefore and teach or make disciples in all nations. And Jesus put that therefore there because He said to them before that, All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth.

Go ye therefore. We rejoice in words like that this evening, knowing that though God gives us a great command, and at times it seems overwhelming, the words of command and commission that He has given to us, He didn't just leave us to do that by ourselves, but He, the God of the universe, the One who has a name which is above every name, has promised us that He will be with us all the way to the end. Hallelujah! So that does change the perspective quite a bit.

Amen? All power has been given unto Me. Go ye therefore and lo, I am with you always. We thank God for that this evening.

It's not our work, it's His. And Jesus said it this way, again looking at the commands or the commissions of Christ, As the Father has sent Me, even so send I you. As the Father sent Me, even so send I you.

There are many, many things in there, and I'm disciplining myself to not preach on these verses, because I want to take my text out of Isaiah chapter 6. In simplicity, we believe that these verses that I've just given to you are to be obeyed. And as it is in all Scriptures, if you begin to obey anything in the Word of God, you will begin also to see deeper. You will begin also to see the heart behind the command that God gives.

And I think that's one of the reasons why we're gathered together here. We don't need to give you the command. We don't need to give you the commission.

You already know it. You've read it. You can quote it.

You've probably memorized it. But oh, that God would help us in these next three or four days to get down below the simplicity of the commission and see the very heart of God. What is on God's heart? Why did He say those words? May God open the eyes of our understanding and help us to see into the depths of His heart.

And not only to see into the depths of His heart, but that His very heart would be written upon the depths of our heart, so that it is no longer just something that we should do because we know it's right, but we are moved in our being to do it. Although I do firmly believe that it needs to be done, no matter how deep or shallow you may see the commission, it needs to be obeyed. All right.

This evening, we want to look a bit deeper and look at the heart of God behind these commands. We're going to be reading here in Isaiah chapter 6. This is a famous missionary text. It's used for other things also, but it is an oft-used text on missionary issues.

And so, we want to look at it here this evening. And I guess probably the reason why it is so used is because of those words there in verse 8, which we will get to. Whom shall I send and who will go for us? So, let's look at this text a little bit and just read it.

Verse 1 through 9, first of all. In the year that King Uzziah died, I, Isaiah, saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims.

Each one had six wings. With twain, He covered His face. And with twain, He covered His feet.

And with twain, He did fly. And I was thinking about that a little bit, and I wondered, how many of them are there? And as I was studying a little later on in my studies, I found four of them creatures in the book of Revelation, I think, chapter 4. But anyway, here it just says, the seraphims were there above this throne that Isaiah saw. And the one cried unto another and said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God of hosts.

The whole earth is full of His glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of Him that cried. And the house was filled with smoke.

That is a pretty powerful being. It shakes the whole posts when it cries holy. Then said I, Isaiah, Woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.

Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar. And he laid it upon my mouth and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips, and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin is purged. Also I heard the voice of the Lord saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I, send me.

And he said, Go and tell this people. Hear ye indeed, but understand not. And see ye indeed, but perceive not.

I want us just to ponder for a few minutes here the scene that we have come upon as we have opened up the Scriptures. I believe it's good for us to picture what we have read in words. These words describe a scene, a holy scene, an awesome scene, because God is in the midst of it.

A life-changing scene for Isaiah the prophet. In the year that King Uzziah died, somehow Isaiah found himself in the midst of a vision. I don't know if he was in despair because Uzziah died.

I don't know all the reasons behind it. The Bible doesn't say. But he found himself in an earnest place before God, and in the midst of that he had a vision.

He saw the Lord high and lifted up. And it seems to me as I look at this text that he was transported in the Spirit into the throne room and saw things that many men never get to see. Saw things like maybe the Apostle Paul.

Heard things that maybe he thought shouldn't even be uttered. But nevertheless, we see that Isaiah got a glimpse of some very holy things here in chapter 6 of the book of Isaiah. Some say this is Isaiah's call to be a prophet.

I spent some time studying that. I'm not sure of that because it's in chapter 6 and not chapter 1. And it's at the end of Uzziah's life, not in the middle somewhere. But nevertheless, God did some beautiful and powerful things in Isaiah's heart and his life and so affected his ministry from this day all the way to the end because of what he saw.

What he saw. Oh, may God open up the eyes of our heart that what we see would also so change our lives that we will never be the same. Amen? I'm sure that's one of the burdens that you brought along with you when you came here.

Lord, change me. Isaiah saw the king. He says that.

He testifies. Mine eyes have seen the king, is what Isaiah said. The seraphims, they also saw the king.

Very interesting. The different responses of the seraphims who saw the king and Isaiah who also saw the king. Very different.

These heavenly beings also saw the king high and lifted up in the throne room. What did they see? That's a question this evening. Isaiah doesn't give us a lot of description.

Other men in the Bible have. Ezekiel gives us quite a description of what he saw, and I believe he saw this same throne. He saw it in a different setting, in a different scene, but I believe it was the same throne.

John, he saw a throne. I believe it's the same throne that Isaiah saw, that John saw. Daniel, he also saw a throne, and one sitting on the throne.

I believe it's the same throne, because it's the throne of the God of Heaven. But what did they see? I ponder that a bit, you know. The Bible says God said to Moses at one place when Moses was asking if he could see His glory, God said to Moses, no man can see My face and live.

So I don't know how all that fits into the things that Isaiah saw, but obviously he must not have looked right into the face of Almighty God here. But what did he see? We know that Ezekiel saw some beautiful and some powerful things, and they changed his life. And we know that Job saw the Lord, and it changed his life.

And we know that Daniel, he also saw the Lord, and it changed his life. And John saw the Lord, and it so affected his life. And here we see that Isaiah saw the Lord, and it so affected his life.

Oh, let us also see the Lord. Not necessarily in a vision like Isaiah did. I don't expect that God will transport you and I right into that throne room.

But oh, listen, brothers and sisters, these words were inspired by the Spirit of the living God that we might use our imagination a bit with the Holy Ghost helping us and get a glimpse into the same things that they saw. They all seem to respond the same way. Ezekiel, Job, Daniel, John.

Woe is me! Fall down on my face! I abhor myself in dust and ashes! Isaiah saw the King. And what they saw was awesome. It was awesome.

And I mean that word in the sense that the Bible uses it. That word is changing, you know. I don't see how they can use it the way they do, but I know it's because they don't know God.

What does the word awesome mean? It means filled with awe. Awe! Fear mingled with admiration and reverence. It means dread inspired by greatness.

What Isaiah saw was awesome. Amen? It was awesome. Pizza is not awesome.

Did you get that young people? Pizza is not awesome. God is awesome. God is.

Let the world have their slang. Let's use the words right. God, only God is awesome.

And Isaiah saw Him. And Isaiah was filled with dread inspired by greatness. He saw the Lord.

He saw God altogether other than anything that he ever knew before. That's what he saw. You know, we read some of the other accounts in the Scripture, and Ezekiel talks about colors and blues and amber and orange.

He talks about colors and colors that glow. You read over in the book of Revelation, and it talks about rainbow and things like that. And I believe that Isaiah saw all those things, but he doesn't say anything about those colors there.

But by the way, colors don't change your life. It wasn't colors that inspired him and caused him to cry out from the depths of his heart, Woe is me! It wasn't pretty colors. He saw God, brothers and sisters.

He saw God. He saw the King. Multiplied attributes of the King emanating out of His being all at the same time.

That's what he saw. Yeah. And all he could say was, Woe.

Woe is me. He saw purity. He saw omissions.

He saw an all-knowing, all-seeing God. He saw omnipotence. He saw justice.

He saw judgment. He saw the absence of all evil and the presence of everything right all at once. That's what he saw.

He saw mercy. He saw kindness. He saw love.

He saw mercy. All of these things emanating forth out of the being of God. And that's why Isaiah said, Woe is me.

Woe is me. How can it be, brothers and sisters, that this God loves you and me? How can this be that we sit here this evening washed in the blood of the Lamb, having received in our own hearts an understanding about this God that Isaiah saw? And when Isaiah saw Him, Woe is me. I am undone.

I am shattered. Yeah, he saw God. He saw infinite moral perfection all at the same time.

That's what he saw. He saw holiness in its perfection. That's what he saw.

Well, you know, the seraphims, they also saw the same thing. Their response was different. But they saw the same thing.

These are the seraphim. They do that day and night, it says in Revelation 4. Day and night they're there. Day and night they're before the throne.

Day and night they're there with God. Day and night they see God in all of His graciousness, in all of His justice, in all of His holiness. Day and night they see God.

And the Bible says that up out of their hearts, not a memorized word, by the way, but up out of their heart comes the highest word in their vocabulary in all of heaven to describe what they see as they fly around in the throne room with God. And that is the word holy. Holy.

So set apart. So other. So different.

So high. So transcendent. So other than anything else that ever was in all the world or all the universe that you God is.

Holy. Holy. Holy.

Holy is what they said. Being heavenly beings, they could be there and take all of that in. And up out of their heart came those words.

We're going to get to be there someday. Hallelujah. Wouldn't it be nice to take somebody along? Wouldn't it be nice to take somebody along? We're going to be there.

So the seraphims, they said, holy, holy, holy. But Isaiah said, woe is me, I am undone. He saw God.

He saw God who He is. And he also at the same time saw who Isaiah was. And this wasn't a wicked man.

This is Isaiah the prophet. You read the things that he preached already. Chapter 1 through 5. This is not a wicked man.

This is a holy man. This is a godly man. But when this godly man got in the presence of the holy God of the universe, all of a sudden he was an unclean man.

Maybe you feel the same way this evening as you come here to this missions conference. Woe is me. I am a needy man.

That's alright. Because I want us to notice here that Isaiah's response was a response of honesty. Isaiah's response was a response of open confession.

And because of Isaiah's response of honesty and open confession, the seraphim went and got a hot coal off the altar and touched his lips. Hallelujah. So if you feel that way here this evening, there's blood on the mercy seat.

Amen? Even tonight. So God, through that angel, cleanses Isaiah. And immediately after that cleansing, Isaiah hears a voice.

He hears a voice. The voice of God. And by the way, these words that we read here are way more than just words.

Remember, this is God speaking those words. And as you well know, if you've ever had any of those sweet times alone with God, know that when God speaks to you, it's way more than words. Amen? When God speaks, it's way more than just words.

God speaks His very heart when He speaks to us. God speaks His very nature when He speaks to us. And that's what flowed into the heart of Isaiah.

He heard words. He heard the words of the longing heart of God. I don't know.

It's a little hard for me to tell for sure, but it seems almost like Isaiah is hearing a conversation. Because it's not like God turns and speaks to him and says, Isaiah, I have something to do. Will you do it? But it's almost like he hears a conversation.

Whom shall I send? And who will go for us? I wonder who you think that us is. Who will go for us? Is what he heard. And I like to think that Isaiah was just kind of tuning his ear into the counsels of the Trinity there.

Whom shall I send? And who will go for us? And Isaiah responded, Here am I, Lord. Send me. Here am I, Lord.

Send me. Down through the ages, men who have drawn near to God, it seems to me that they hear the longing heart of God. They may not hear those exact words that Isaiah heard, but they hear the longing heart of God.

And, brothers and sisters, the longing heart of God doesn't change. It's always the same. His burden is for a world that does not know.

That's the longing heart of God. I don't know. Did Noah hear that voice that day when God shared His heart with him? Did Abraham hear that voice? Did Moses hear that voice? Is that the voice that David heard? The man after God's own heart? The history of God's movements among peoples bears testimony to this fact that whenever an individual or a people draw close to God, they begin to hear the heart of God.

Their heart begins to beat just like God's heart begins to beat for the lost around them. And that's what this mission conference is all about. It's that our hearts would begin to tune in and hear the heart of God, and the heart of God is for a lost and dying world around us, whether it be Ephrata or whether it be Harrisburg or whether it be Manitoba or whether it be on the other side of the world.

God's heart is the same. His heart is everywhere. His heart is burdened.

His heart is brooding over those who do not know. The history of God's movements among peoples would bear testimony to this. I think of the Moravian movement which started in 1727.

Those dear Moravian people drew near to God. Those dear Moravian people had a revival in the midst of a communion service. God came and visited them.

Very interesting to me to read the accounts of all of that and to see what happened in not too long of a time, all of a sudden, the brethren at Hernhot were hearing that voice saying, Whom shall I send? And who will go for us? Who will reach out to the world? To those who have not heard? And, brothers and sisters, this was 1727. People were not sending missionaries in 1727. But those Moravian people began to hear the heart of God.

And the heart of God was saying, there are people all over this world, there are people groups, there are nations who have never heard about Jesus Christ. This afternoon I thought about the early Anabaptists again. Think about them.

It's 1525. God's heart hasn't changed. The fullness of time has come.

The dark ages are passing. Europe sits in darkness. The people sit waiting.

The people are searching. The people are hungry. But God needs some men who are willing to step up to the plate and serve their generation.

Amen? God needs some men who are willing to do that. Those twelve men that gathered there in that little upper room at Conrad Grebel's house, do you realize this is what they were coming to grips with? God's heart for the world who has not heard. That's what they came to grips with.

Those were the issues. There wouldn't have been any problem at all if they would have just kept quiet. But they heard a voice, brothers and sisters.

They heard the voice of God. Oh, it may not have been exactly the words that we read here in Isaiah, but they heard the heart of God. And the heart of God was brooding over Europe.

And the heart of God was looking for somebody who would step up to the plate and serve their generation and open up their mouth and tell the people at all costs that Jesus Christ is Lord. That's what God was looking for. And He found twelve men that were willing at all costs to start.

You say, it's amazing what those twelve men did. And it's amazing what the people after them did. Yes, it is amazing.

But I want you to remember, they heard a voice. And the voice they heard, it wasn't just a few words written down on a piece of paper somewhere. The voice they heard was the very voice of God.

And when God speaks, God doesn't just give words. He infuses His very nature in the words that He speaks. And His very nature is a burden for a lost and dying world.

And those men were consumed with a burden for the lost world that was around them. And they shook Europe because they heard that voice. You say, well, they read it in the Bible.

Yes, they read it in the Bible. But it was a rhema to them, not just logos. It wasn't just a written word to them.

It was God's Word to their very heart and life. So much so that they were able to go in the grace of God and lay down their lives for the people in Europe who had never heard. God has not changed, has He? I think of the great awakening in 1858 and 1859 when God's Spirit began to brood over this land of ours, America, 150 years ago, something like that.

I think it was a stock market crash or a recession or something like that when all the people's security was taken away and the businesses weren't going too well and the businessmen didn't have much going on, so they decided to have a prayer meeting at noon every day and closed down their businesses and went to the prayer meeting. Two or three months later, God was moving in beautiful ways. And I'm not going to tell a lot of the story of that, but the only point that I would like to make is as God's Spirit drew near to the hearts of God's people, all 150 years ago, 100,000 young people raised their hand and said, I will either go or I will do everything I can to support those that are going.

100,000 young people raised their hand and said, I'll go or I'll support. 10,000 of them went and 90,000 of them supported in prayer and finances and all those things. 10%.

They tithed! They tithed people. How did that happen? Was that just somebody going around saying, hey, you know, it would be a good idea if you'd just go to the mission field? No, we know by now you don't get people to go to the mission field just by making little suggestions like that. They heard a voice.

They heard the voice that Isaiah heard. They heard the voice that Ezekiel heard. They heard the voice that David heard.

Whom shall I send? Who will go for us? Over there. Then over there. Who will go for us? What about the heathen over there in Africa? That's what they heard.

It's very evident that in this our day that people are also hearing that voice. That's why we're here. Because we're hearing that voice.

I wonder if you realize that that's why we're here. Not here in this building. Here.

Alive. Born again. Blessed.

Guided by God. Growing all the time. I wonder if you realize that's why we're here.

I thought about Isaiah's ministry. You know, you heard those little words there. And as I said already, those weren't just little words.

They were powerful words. From there, Isaiah became the Christ-centered prophet of the Old Testament. Is it not true? Isaiah.

He became the Gospel prophet of the Old Testament. Isaiah became the missionary prophet of the Old Testament. That's what God did with Isaiah.

I mean, that's where Paul got his missiology, by the way. On the backside of the desert, reading in the Old Testament. And you can be sure he spent a lot of time in Isaiah as he searched the Scriptures and saw that word again and again.

Gentile. Gentile. Gentile.

You know, that's the word that he took to the wilderness. Gentile. Yes, Paul, you Pharisee.

Yes, Paul, you who will not even talk to a Gentile. Yes, Paul, you who see a Gentile as a dog. Gentile, Paul.

Gentile. I've called thee to go to the Gentiles. Gentile.

Gentile. And Paul, in Arabia, searching the Scriptures. Gentile.

There it is again. There it is again. Gentile.

And he started reading those verses. That was his Bible, wasn't it? I mean, he didn't have a New Testament. That was his Bible.

Imagine the thrill of that man's soul as he read through the book of Isaiah and saw that word again and again. I have made thee a light unto the Gentiles, and the isles shall wait for my law. That's where he developed his missiology.

Right there. He got that from Isaiah. Isaiah got it from God.

And from the heart of God, when God spoke those words into his heart, whom shall I send? Who will go for us? You know, God's still saying that today. Do you realize that? Maybe not in exactly those words, but He's still saying it today. What about Christ? We know that Christ also heard these words, don't we? In eternity past, He heard those words.

In eternity past, Christ heard those words. What was His response? Very much like Isaiah's. Very much like Isaiah's.

In Psalm chapter 40, we find these words. Sacrifice, an offering, thou didst not desire. Mine ears hast thou opened.

Burnt offerings and sin offerings hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come. In the volume of the book, it is written of me.

I delight to do thy will, O my God. Yea, thy law is within my heart. Look at that.

These are messianic words. We find them again in Hebrews chapter 10. They're messianic words.

We get a glimpse into the heart of Christ and by these verses and other ones, we can see very clearly that Christ also, the Son, heard the Father say those very words. And the Son said the very words that Isaiah said. Send me.

Aren't we glad this evening that Christ said, Send me. I'll go. As the Father sent me into the world, even so send I you, is what Christ said to His disciples shortly before He ascended back to His Father.

Hear the cry of God's heart in the commissions in the New Testament. Do we realize that this is the burden of God's heart even as we sit here this evening? Yes, there may be many other good things that God wants us to do. Yes, God wants us to be a holy people.

Yes, God wants us to raise up a godly family. Yes, God wants us to be a testimony where we are. Yes, God wants us to have good stewardship over our finances.

Yes, there are many, many things that God wants us to do in the Bible, but brothers and sisters, do you realize that all of them flow to this? God wants us to be a testimony, yes, that a world, a lost and dying world, may see our good works and glorify our Father which is in Heaven. God wants us to raise our families for Him. But why? For us? No, for Him! That He might take them and shoot them like arrows around the world.

God wants us to have control over our finances. We're supposed to be stewards of our money. But what do you do with that money? Build bigger barns? Buy bigger farms? No! There's a world out there.

There's a world out there. It seems to me, brothers and sisters, that all roads lead to Rome on this one. All roads.

God's heart for the nations of the world, for the people of the world who have not heard. Some of them are right here in Ephrata. New Holland.

Some of them are in Harrisburg. Some of them are in Lancaster. And in Judea.

And in Samaria. And in the outermost parts of the earth. That's God's heart.

Christ heard those words. Aren't we glad this evening that He responded properly to them. There's another place where we see and hear the heart of God.

If I may just take us a little bit deeper yet this evening. And that is in the actual atonement itself. We see the heart of God in the atonement.

The incarnation of Jesus Christ. The sacrifice of His Son. We see the heart of God in the atonement.

Oh, if somehow God could take us beyond the beautiful reality that the atonement was for me. And it was for me. And I thank God for that this evening.

That I've been washed in the blood. That that atonement was for me. And that there's blood on the mercy seat this evening.

And yes, that's there for me. Hallelujah! But oh, it's not only there for me. It's also there for the rest of the people of the world who have not heard.

It's also for them. Oh, we can see the heart of God so beautifully in the atonement itself. The atonement is actually the expression of several of God's attributes being worked out.

That's what the atonement is. You know, I thought about those verses over in Hebrews. Hebrews 1. There's a couple of staggering verses in Hebrews 1 and 2. Listen to what God says through the Hebrew writer.

He says that God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, in the past, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets. And we thank God for that, don't we? That God, through the prophets, spoke. And we have the writings.

And we read some of them this evening. That God spoke through the prophets. And God even speaks to us this evening through the prophet Isaiah.

But listen to the next verse. It goes on to say that God, who spoke that way in time past, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son. God has spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, and by whom also He made the worlds.

God has spoken to us by His Son. Now, there are many ways that we could say that God has spoken to us by His Son. God has spoken to us by His Son.

We have His words. The beautiful words that flowed. The gracious words that flowed out of the mouth of Jesus.

God has spoken to us by His Son. By the beautiful life that He lived while He was here upon this earth. God has spoken to us by His Son.

Yes, it's true. But, oh, dear people, do you realize that God spoke to us through the atonement of His Son like God has never spoken to man before? Do we realize that? That God has spoken to us. God has shared His heart with us through His Son in these last days.

He has. The atonement is actually the expression of several of God's attributes. It is God responding to the tragedy of the fall on the basis of who He is.

That's what the atonement is. God is who He is. He is the just God that He is.

He is a God of judgment. He is a holy God. But He's also God who loves.

He's also a God of mercy. How does a holy and a just and a right and a judging God deal with the fact that He has love in His heart for mankind? How does God respond to those two when He sees the fall of man? The atonement. God has spoken to us.

God has shared His heart with us in the very atonement. You see, that's beautiful, Brother Denny. That God would do that for me.

Yes, it is, isn't it? That God would do that for me. That is beautiful. That God did that for me.

That somehow God, through the atonement, worked out His very character and being so that He could make a way to bring Brother Denny back into the fold of fellowship with God. That's beautiful. Thank You, Lord, for that.

But do we see, brothers and sisters, this evening, can we look deeper into the heart of God in the atonement? We know the verse so well that I don't think we know it anymore. Did you hear me? We know it so well, I don't think we know the verse anymore, that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son. That's the atonement.

God so loved the world, brothers and sisters. Not just me. Not just you.

God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son through the atonement. In simplicity, the cross of Jesus Christ is the holiness of God, the justice of God, and the love of God coming together in one radiant display of God's glory. That's what it is.

His holy hatred of sin separates Him from fellowship with man whom He made. His righteous justice moves Him to inflict just punishment for sin. And His tender love moves Him to do whatever must be done

to restore fallen man and to renew fellowship and unity and union again with mankind.

The heart of God this evening, brothers and sisters. And amen. Our hearts should fill with gratitude as we realize God did all that for me.

But oh, that God would somehow carry our heart further than me. Further than me. Out of all of that comes the atonement, the gory, agonizing sacrifice of His Son.

In God's being, in His very being, these three must be satisfied. His holiness, His hatred for sin, His justice, His just punishment for sin, and His tender love for man. They all must be satisfied.

In God's being, they must be satisfied. He cannot just simply say, oh, I don't think I'll be a just God right now because I love man. He can't do that.

Because justice is part of who God is. And you cannot separate who He is. So He can't just say, I think I'll set my justice aside because I love man.

He can't do that. Because He's God. So how can God bring these together? How can His own being be reconciled? Only one way.

Whom shall I send? And who will go for us? The Lamb, slain from the foundation of the world. That's how God worked all of that out in His holy being. Through the atonement.

The Father says, I will give My only begotten Son. I will slay My only Son. A pure and a perfect sacrifice to redeem man whom I love.

God so loved the world that He gave. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. Look at that verse, brothers.

God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself through the atonement. The Son says, I will become flesh and live a pleasing life and lay down My life. I will bear the sins of the world.

I will let You slay Me and release Your wrath against sin upon Me for love's sake. That's what the Son says. He who knew no sin became sin for us.

He bore our sins in His own body on the tree, the Bible says. And the Holy Spirit says, I will be in you the strength that you need to live that life and to lay down your life. And thus we have the Trinity.

And what are they after? What is God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit after? Out of every nation and kindred and tongue and people, a bride for His Son. That's what they're after. And so it says in the book of Hebrews that He, Christ, through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God.

He offered Himself to God and He offered Himself without spot to God through the eternal Spirit. That's what He did. Romans 5, verses 6-8 says these words, For when we were yet without strength in due time, Christ died for the ungodly.

For scarcely for a righteous man will one die. Yet for adventure, for a good man, some would even dare to die. But God commendeth His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

And that's beautiful, isn't it? But God's heart is not just for you and me. It's not just for you and me. God so loved the world that He gave.

Before the foundation of the world, God decreed that the atonement needed would be a blood sacrifice, a slain victim to appease the life of one. For the life, as I said already, we can see the heart of God in the very atonement, can't we? And so what's the call of God? What's the heart of God? What do we get as we look at the heart of God this evening? We see in the heart of God this evening a God who is still burdened about a lost and dying world who has not heard. Some of them live here where we live.

Some of them live in Judea. Some of them live in Samaria. And some of them in the uttermost parts of the earth.

The call of God to missions at home and abroad is not in words, brothers and sisters. It's in the very nature and character of God. And my prayer is that somehow we would even get beyond the words this evening and hear and see the nature and the character of the God who saved us.

Amen? That we would see that. That somehow we would imbibe that very heart through this weekend. Remember the Moravian phrase? May the Lamb that was slain receive the reward of His suffering.

Do you know what the reward is, brothers and sisters? I mean, it's me. That's true. It is me.

But it's more than me. I mean, Jesus paid the dowry for His bride when He died on the cross. He bought and paid for a bride out of every nation and kindred and tongue and people.

And don't you doubt it, brothers and sisters, if Jesus died for some out of every nation and kindred and tongue and people, you can be sure they're all going to be there. They're going to be there. Praise God! We have the opportunity to go and gather some of the bride for God's Son.

I thought about the prophet Ezekiel this afternoon as I was meditating and praying. I thought about the prophet Ezekiel. You know, where God said through the prophet Ezekiel, speaking about the needs there in his day, He said, I sought for a man among them that would make up the hedge and stand in the gap for the land.

Does anybody know what the rest of that verse says? I found none! I found none! Don't you think we could apply that verse somewhere else? I wonder how long God looked for a man to go to the Concoma people. I wonder how long. I wonder how many years He sought for a man who would make up the hedge and stand in the gap for Concomaland, for Dogomaland, for Gonjaland.

I wonder how long God looked. I wonder how many years. I wonder how many hundred years.

There are so many testimonies, so many shameful testimonies that missionaries give as they go to these places and that and begin to open up the glorious good news of the atonement of Jesus Christ to a people who have never heard. To hear those people say back to them, How long have your people known this? Oh, a long time, said the embarrassed missionary. How long is a long time? Oh, a long, long time, said the embarrassed missionary to those people.

But how long is a long, long time? And finally the missionary hangs his head in shame and says, it's been two or three hundred years since my people knew what I'm telling you now. Oh, missionary, your people waited way, way too long. God, He looks for a man.

He goes to and fro throughout the whole earth looking for a man, looking for a woman, looking for a couple, looking for a family, looking for a church, looking for a people who will stand in the gap. For

Kukumba land, or Gunja land, or Dagumba land, or who knows how many other lands, I sought for a man, and I found none. And another generation went by, and I looked, and I found none.

And another generation went by, and I looked again, and I found. And finally, I found one. I found one.

Do you get it? Do you understand what I'm saying? My mind goes back twelve years. I think it's twelve years. When some of us in very much ignorance got this inspiring idea from the Lord that maybe we could adopt, as a church, we could adopt a people who's never heard before and start praying for them and get under the burden of it, and maybe God would use us to reach a people who have never ever heard.

Now, I look back on all that. We were so ignorant. We really didn't know what we were doing.

We weren't much, I'll tell you that. But you know what? God heard those words. And He'd been looking for a man for a long time.

And He was looking for a people for a long time. And though we didn't know what we were doing, God leaned forward on that one and said, Whoa, there's... And they're over there in northern Ghana. And there's two or three tribes up in the north who've never heard.

Whoa! I'll just put my hand extra on that. I wonder how long God sought before He found somebody to go up there. Maybe God's looking for a people.

A people. Not a little church. A people who would stand in the gap for Islam and say, We'll stand there.

We'll pray. We'll prepare. We'll go.

We'll give. We'll die. I wonder if God's still looking for a people who would say that about Islam.

We'll do it. You know, I thought about this, you know. Dads, let me give you a good holy exercise for your family.

You get one of those Operation World books, you know, and just start going through there and find yourself a little people group who don't know anything. And just, as a family, just take them into your heart and start praying for them and find out who they are and look into their life and their culture and just begin to carry them upon your heart. You might be surprised what God would do with something like that.

Just on a dad level with one family. But I wonder what God would do with a church who said, Yes, there's people out there who've never heard that God is looking for a church who will carry the burden. And you may say, What? Who are we? We couldn't do it.

We don't know what we're doing. Listen, God doesn't have anybody for that people. What do you think He'll do with somebody who says, Oh, I don't know what I'm doing, but I'll go.

I don't know at all, but I'll start praying. I don't really know what kind of people they are, but we'll start bearing their burden. What do you think God will do? Since He doesn't have anybody for that group.

I'll tell you what He'll do. He'll just put His hand out there on you. That's what He'll do.

Because, maybe you forgot it, but the Bible says that God delights in taking the foolish things of the world and using them to confound those that are mighty. He delights in taking the baser, the are-nots, the nobodies, the noble ones, the not-so-smart, the not-the-greatest, the not-the-talented. He delights in

taking those and putting His hand on them when they're willing to give their heart over to what His heart is all about.

He'll put His hand out there on them. Do you believe that? Do you believe that? Let me see your hand. Do you believe that? I mean, did you ever read it over there? I'm not sure.

Is it Acts 10 or 9? I forget exactly where it is, but you know when the first ones that were scattered out of Jerusalem because of the persecution, and it says that some of them went as far as Antioch? And, of course, nobody heard in Antioch yet. Remember, amen? Nobody heard in Antioch. And some of them that got chased out of Jerusalem because of the persecution, or booted out I might say, booted out of Jerusalem because of the persecution, went as far as Antioch.

That's what it says. And most of them were Jews. And the Jews, they went and only preached to the Jews at Antioch.

But there was a few of them who were not Jews. And they decided to preach the Gospel to the Grecians also. And the Bible says, I mean, the Bible says, and the hand of the Lord was with them.

That's what it says. I mean, can't you just see God watching Antioch? Nobody's gone there. Sitting there in Jerusalem year after year after year.

Nobody's going there. Nobody's going there. Hungry souls in Antioch.

Nobody's going there to tell them, I mean, the blood's on the altar. There's blood on the mercy seat. The atonement has been paid.

Everything is all done. And there they sit in Antioch and nobody goes. And finally here goes a few who decide, you know, maybe we ought to preach to the Grecians.

And they start to preach to the Grecians. I mean, God must have leaned forward on that one. Look what they're doing.

And the hand of the Lord was with them. It says that. You read it.

And get this. The Bible never even says who they were. They were just a bunch of nobodies that we still don't know their names.

But a mighty church sprung up in Antioch. It became a powerful church. It became a missionary church.

It became a sending church. It was a soul-winning church. I mean, it won souls in Antioch and it won souls in all the cities around Antioch.

And it won souls in Illyricum. And it won souls way out and sent missionaries to all the uttermost parts of the earth in those days. It's just a few nobodies that dropped in there in Antioch and started preaching to the Gentiles.

And the hand of the Lord was with them. Oh, brothers and sisters, do you realize that God has not changed a bit? And if there's anything called success among the Konkomas and the Dagombas and the Gunjas, I'll tell you why it is. The hand of the Lord was with them.

That's all. Back to the woe. Let's go back to the woe.

Oh, woe. It's time to be done. Alright, I'll finish here.

Back to the woe is me in Isaiah. What a beautiful, open, honest heart that Isaiah had there. Isn't it? I mean, he just got honest right there.

He saw God for who He was. He saw Himself for who He was. And opened up His mouth and got honest and said, woe is me.

I'm undone. I'm a man of unclean lips and I dwell in the midst of an unclean people. Or a people with unclean lips, I believe is the way it says it.

Maybe you sit here this evening as you come into this missions conference and you have a need. I just want to encourage you and admonish you a bit tonight. You know, if you'll do what Isaiah did there and let those things be cleansed, I believe you'll hear that voice a little easier through the weekend.

What do you think? See? See, if things aren't right in our heart, we won't hear that voice right. We won't. We've all come here to hear, haven't we? But we must hear beyond words and pictures, brothers and sisters.

We must hear beyond words and pictures. Although you're going to hear a lot of those and see a lot of those. But we must hear deeper than that.

Turn away from our prejudices. We must turn away from our fear. Fear is sin.

We must turn away from it. Or we won't hear the voice of God. We won't hear.

We must turn away from our pride. We must turn away from our unforgiveness. We must turn away from our envy.

We must turn away from our jealousy. We must turn away from our bitterness. We must turn away from those things.

Oh, we won't hear. We won't hear that voice. Oh, you'll hear all the sermons, no problem.

But there's something deeper than the voice of the sermon. And it's the heart of God. And God's heart has not changed one iota.

It is still the same. It's the same as it was there in Isaiah 6. It's the same as it was when He slew His Son on a tree. It's the same when His Son said, You shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost has come upon you and you shall be witnesses unto Me.

In Jerusalem and in Judea and in Samaria and in the uttermost parts of the earth. And He disappeared out of their sight. God's heart is still the same.

It hasn't changed. It's still the same. It's the same as it was when He kicked those disciples out of Jerusalem and got them going.

It's still the same. I mean, must we wait for a boot, brethren? I mean, it's so nice here, isn't it? So nice. Well, it was so nice in Jerusalem too.

I mean, think about it. The twelve apostles were there. Wow, these guys have been with Jesus for three and a half years and they've got the inside story on everything that Jesus did.

We're just all going to sit around here and learn more. They got the boot! And you know where they went? Oh, to the villages and cities of Judea and Samaria. That's right.

Oh, and a few of them ran all the way up to Antioch. Yeah. Must we wait for the boot? There are easier ways to get the job done, by the way.

Much easier. Whatever unforgiveness, jealousy, envy, bitterness, fear, prejudices, let's put them away. Let's be honest like Isaiah and let God cleanse our lips that we may be able to hear that voice that says so clearly and deep in the heart of man.

Whom shall I send? And who will go for us? And then our hearts would say, I will. I will. I will.

I will. In closing, reading in Isaiah chapter 42, listen to what this missionary prophet wrote. Behold! Stop! Gaze! Look long! Look deeply! At My servant whom I uphold.

Mine elect in whom My soul delighteth. He's talking about Christ. I have put My Spirit upon Him.

He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. And by the way, this is not just talking about Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Because the Father put His Spirit upon Him way more when He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

I have put My Spirit upon Him. He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. How is He, sitting at the right hand of God, going to bring forth judgment to the Gentiles without you and Me? But He's going to do it.

He shall not cry nor cause His voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall He not break. A smoking flax shall He not quench.

He shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He, Christ, shall not fail nor be discouraged till He hath set judgment in the earth and the isles shall wait for His law. Thus saith God the Lord, He that created the heavens and stretched them out, He that spreadeth forth the earth and that which cometh out of it, He that giveth breath unto the people upon it and Spirit to them that walk therein, I the Lord have called thee in righteousness and will hold thine hand and will keep thee and give thee for a covenant of the people for the light of the Gentiles to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.

I am the Lord. That is My name. And My glory will I not give to another, neither praise to graven images.

I read those words just to close, to remind you that God is still doing those verses right there through His Christ, which is His body here on the earth. Now brothers and sisters, ye all are the body of Christ and members in particular. Oh that God would open our hearts to hear and help us where we have dulled our ears and shut our eyes.

May God help us to open our ears and open our eyes that we may see and we may hear throughout the weekend. Let's pray. Oh Father, thank You Lord.

Thank You for that still small voice. Oh Father that works so beautifully in our hearts and our lives. God, we do open our hearts to You in the beginning of this missions conference.

Oh God, we didn't come here Lord just to hear good stories, look at pictures, see booths. Lord, we came for more than that. We pray.

Take us deeper Lord that we may hear Your voice speaking even today. Whom shall I send and who will go for us? In Jesus' name we ask this, all of us Lord. We ask You to help us.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

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