

Pastor Spencer Martin
Don't Waste Your Life

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Series: Disciple
Matthew 9:35-10:15

BIG IDEA – NOT TAKING GOSPEL RISKS IS A HUGE RISK

Sending out a missionary makes me think about the well-known passage where Jesus says, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few." That's exactly the passage we're going to be looking at this morning, so if you have your Bibles, go ahead and grab those. Flip to Matthew, chapter 9. We're going to be looking at a handful of very important questions.

One of the questions we're going to be looking at is...*How should Christians feel about non-Christians?* It's a very important question. My fear is that a lot of Christians naturally view non-Christians as problems instead of potential. Think about it. When you're on Facebook and you see someone living a lifestyle that you completely disagree with, what is your natural reaction? Is it to think "problem" or "potential"? We'll talk about that.

We're also going to talk about another important question, which is...*What is our role in pursuing the lost?* The answer to that one is actually very simple. Our role, as Christians, is to take one gospel risk at a time. So, here's the big idea of this message. It's very simple. *Not taking gospel risks is a huge risk.* What are you risking? Well, if you consistently do not take gospel risks, you are at risk of wasting your life. So we're going to talk about that. You are at risk of missing out on meaningful opportunities to see and be a part of life change.

So, let's start by looking at Matthew, chapter 9, starting in verse 35. It says, "***And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction.***" This verse is a summary of the previous five chapters, Matthew 5-9. What we see Jesus doing is he has a teaching, preaching, and healing ministry, and up until

this point in the book of Matthew, Jesus has been the only person who has been doing those things.

Let's keep going. Verse 36: ***"When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd."*** If we want to know how we need to feel about lost people, we just need to look and see how Jesus feels about lost people. We're told that Jesus looks out at the crowd, sees the lost people, and it says Jesus feels just one emotion...only one...which is compassion.

In the New Testament, something that's really interesting is we see that Jesus feels a lot of different emotions. We're told that he feels righteous anger. We are told that he feels joyful and sorrowful. The emotion Jesus is said to have had more than any other emotion is compassion. It mentions that he has compassion more than any other emotion he feels.

So we need to talk about what compassion is. Compassion is synonymous in the Bible with sympathy. *Compassion* is a Latin word; *sympathy* is a Greek word. To feel compassion means that you deeply feel the suffering and pain of someone and you desire to help. The classic illustration of compassion is that you're standing on a beach somewhere, and you look out at the ocean, and someone is drowning.

As you're standing there, you feel their suffering, their pain, and you want to do something about it, so you walk into the water about knee deep, throw a life preserver, and pull them back in. That would be a good compassionate response. That is the bull's-eye for compassion. The problem is that compassion is easily corrupted. We often feel a lot of things other than compassion.

So, I want to give you two ditches we can be tempted to fall into on either side of compassion. Instead of feeling compassion toward the lost, we sometimes can feel anger. That's the first one. Unrighteous anger toward the lost is not healthy and not helpful. Unrighteous anger is fueled by sin and focused on self.

The person who feels anger toward the lost is the person who says, "I know they're having a hard time, but if they had just made better choices, they probably would not be where they are" or "If they had just chosen better friends or listened to my recommendations and my advice and come with me to church, they would not be exactly where they are." That's what the angry person says.

The angry person is also the same person who is very, very frustrated when a non-Christian is not acting like a Christian. It should be 0 percent surprising to us when non-Christians are not acting like Christians. We want them to act like Christians, of

course, but we should not be surprised when our non-Christian friends are not acting like Christians, because they don't hold to the same worldview we have.

So, one side of compassion is anger; the other side of compassion is apathy. Apathy is a deficiency of compassion. Apathy is a lack of interest. You just don't care. What I fear is that most of us naturally fall into this category. Now, I don't think we fall into this category when it comes to what we believe. I think we fall into apathy not in theory but in practice.

What I mean by that is if I were to come up to any of you after the service, and you claimed to be a Christian, and if I were to ask you, "Hey, do you care about lost people?" I don't think any of you would be like, "No, actually, I don't." Of course you wouldn't say that. You would say that you care, but if we were to sit down and review your life and how you spend your time and how you spend your money, then it may be challenging to find any evidence that you do care about lost people.

I've thought about this. Apathy toward the lost is what I naturally feel a tug toward. I've been thinking about why that is over the last week or two. Why do I tend to sometimes feel apathetic toward the lost? The answer is I feel like I just have so much going on all the time. We're all busy, aren't we? If I were to ask you and you and you, you'd say, "Yeah." "Are you busy?" "Oh yeah, I'm busy."

Between work and marriage and kids, it's hard to feel like we have any capacity to care for the lost. My wife and I just had identical twin girls a few months ago, so right now, we have four under 4. This morning (I'm not joking) at 4:50 a.m., I was putting a pacifier in the mouth of a crying baby. So I feel tired all the time. I sometimes struggle, truly, to feel like I have the energy to read my 3-year-old a two-minute Bible story at night.

We feel tired, we feel busy, and because of that, the unfortunate result is that lost people end up getting put on the back burner. Trying to reach the lost becomes an afterthought. This is one of the reasons we encourage everyone to go on a short-term mission trip. It does a lot of different things when you go on a mission trip, but one of the things it does is it reorients your heart rightly toward lost people.

Us being busy is also why we encourage people with their "ones" to try to think about intersections and not additions. Most of us don't have the capacity to add things to our lives, so we need to think about "What are some things I'm already doing that can be intersections that I can minister to this person?"

So, instead of anger or apathy, we're supposed to feel what I would call *controlled compassion*. Controlled compassion appropriately feels the suffering and pain of

someone, and it desires to help. So, if compassion is what we should *feel*, what should we *do* about lostness? Well, we're going to see.

Let's start in verse 37. It says, ***"Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.'"*** When Jesus says, "The harvest is plentiful," he is saying there are plenty of people who are spiritually ready to hear the gospel. There are so many people, locally and globally, who are spiritually ready to hear the gospel and respond. We'll talk about both of these.

Let's talk about global lostness first. There was a study that came out last year by the Joshua Project, and what they found was that right now in the world there are 3.4 billion people in unreached people groups. That means they have little to no access to the gospel. Of those 3.4 billion people, over one billion of them are in India alone.

I had ChatGPT do the math on this, and it told me that if you were to line up those 3.4 billion people in a single-file line two feet apart, they would wrap around the globe 52 times. The number of people who have never heard the name of Jesus is overwhelming.

That same study found that out of all of the Buddhists, Muslims, and Hindus in the world, 87 percent of them have never and will never meet a Christian in their entire life. So, global lostness is overwhelming, but there's also so much harvest right *here* where we are. There's probably a lot of lostness in your office.

I asked my Community Group a couple of weeks ago, "Guys, what percentage of your coworkers would you say are Christians?" One of the ladies said, "I'd say 60 to 70 percent." I said, "You work at Chick-fil-A. That doesn't count. Of course that doesn't count. What about the rest of you?" The rest of them said probably somewhere around 10 to 20 percent of their coworkers they feel like are Christians.

What that means is that the harvest is plentiful in *your* workplace, in the hospital *you* work at. The harvest is plentiful at Wake Forest University, at Carolina University. It's plentiful at your gym, at your barbershop, and at your kid's school. Jesus tells us, "The harvest is plentiful."

I'm reminded of a principle I was told about the harvest years ago by my mentor at the time. His name was Mike Echstenkamper at UNC Chapel Hill. He said, "When you think about lost people, you need to be reminded of this truth or else you'll be easily discouraged," which we'll talk about in a minute. He said, "You need to be reminded that the crowd is not the harvest, but the harvest is in the crowd."

What he meant by that is you might initiate a lot of conversations with a lot of lost people. You might invite a lot of them to church. You might ask a lot of them to read the Bible with you. You might take a lot of gospel risks all the time, and it's very unlikely that all of them are going to come to faith and have their lives changed, but some of them will, because the crowd is not the harvest, but the harvest is in the crowd.

The second thing Jesus says is "The workers, or laborers, are few." Here's what Jesus means by this. This is very important. Jesus is not concerned that lost people are not going to come to faith. Jesus seems to be concerned that Christians are not going to go to lost people.

I know I'm giving a lot of examples right now, but there are, right now, around 3,500 International Mission Board missionaries. I understand there are a lot of different mission organizations that do great work, but for this illustration, there are 3,500 IMB missionaries. That is one missionary for every one million unreached people. It's overwhelming how few workers there are in comparison to the harvest.

In the same way, at your office, I imagine that there are not very many people who you work with who are trying to take personal risks to bring Christ to the relationships you have in the office. So we know, like Jesus said, that the workers are few, and then what does Jesus tell us to do?

The third thing he says here is "In view of the fact that the harvest is plentiful and the workers are few, pray earnestly for more workers." To do something earnestly means you are doing something with sincere and intense conviction. When was the last time you prayed for something with sincere and intense conviction?

Many of you know who Charles Spurgeon is. He was a pastor in the nineteenth century. He said that this passage in the Bible, more than any other passage, haunted him. He said the reason this passage haunted him was not because he couldn't see the need. He said it haunted him because even though he could see the need, he didn't feel this kind of compassion, the kind of compassion that caused him to pray for something earnestly.

So, if Jesus tells us to pray earnestly for more workers, I want to take a second to talk to parents and grandparents. Parents and grandparents, what would it look like for you, in the years to come, to be openhanded about your children being called into some kind of full-time ministry?

What prayer are we often praying? All of us are normally praying something like this: "Lord, I pray that my child would come to faith at a young age and not date until they're in their 20s. Once they get to their 20s, though, maybe they can get married

quickly, have some babies, move into my neighborhood, and reach my neighborhood with the gospel." Isn't that what we often want to pray?

Unfortunately, what ends up happening... I see this every year on the college campus. When I say "every year," I mean *every* year I see this. I'll have a college student who wants to take a step of faith and go on a mission trip, and they are met with resistance from their parents. Their parents give them so much pushback. Oftentimes, what's confusing about this is sometimes these parents claim to be genuine Christians.

So this happens, and I'm just like, "What's going on? Why is this happening exactly?" Well, I've been doing this long enough to know exactly what's going on. What's happening is that we have a young man or young woman who's wanting to take a step of faith. They're wanting to go somewhere with the good news of the gospel, and their parents will either shame them or scare them.

The parents will say something like this: "I've paid for your college, and you're considering doing something else with your career?" Or they'll say, "You've been gone all semester away from your family. You're going to do something missional with your summer?" I'm so grateful my parents didn't do this.

Sometimes the parents will try to scare them. They'll say, "Are you sure you want to go to India? It's dangerous there. Do you know how dangerous it is in India?" Or they'll say, "Well, are you sure you want to do that with your summer? If you don't spend every summer doing research, you might not get into medical school." They try to shame them or they try to scare them.

Now, to be clear, I'm not saying parents should not try to provide sound counsel to their children with the long-term in view. What I *am* saying is that parents ought to be openhanded with their children. Something I've said to parents for years at this point is that from the time you start trying to grow your family until forever, you are going to have to be openhanded with your kids. There is no other option.

From the time you start trying to get pregnant, you are openhanded. Then, once you get pregnant, you're openhanded until you see a heartbeat, and then you're openhanded until the anatomy scan, and then you're openhanded until delivery. And who knows what's going to happen at delivery? Then you're still openhanded until they're 2 or 3 and you find out whether or not they have developmental delays. You're openhanded all the way until the point where your child is in college and is considering giving their time to the mission of God.

So, my encouragement to you is... What would it look like for our church to be full of parents and grandparents who are openhanded with their children, who genuinely

say, "Lord, I am trusting you with my children. My child is an arrow; they are not a piece of artwork"? Jesus says, "The harvest is plentiful and the workers are few, so pray earnestly." Let's keep going. Pick up in chapter 10, verse 1.

"And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every affliction. The names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him."

There are a few things here that I find to be really interesting. First, notice in verse 1 that the Twelve are referred to as *disciples*, but then in verse 2, the Twelve are referred to as *apostles*. An *apostle* is someone who is sent out. The principle here is actually very simple: God saves you to send you.

What happens all the time is that we come to faith in Christ, we become a disciple, we are learning from Jesus (and the learning from Jesus is going to be a lifelong adventure), but then what he will often do is he will send us out. Something else that's really interesting is that when Jesus sends out the Twelve... If you look in Luke, chapter 10, you'll see that after Jesus sends out the 12 apostles, he sends out 72 other people.

We're not told their names. We know they're doing an important work. Most people think Jesus sends out the 12 professionals, and then he sends out 72 volunteers. I just want to take a moment to say that we, as a church, are so grateful for the many of you who give your time so generously to this church. You volunteer in kids' ministry or with the Weekender or with students, and we are so grateful. It is a meaningful work, and our church could not function were it not for our faithful volunteers.

Let's keep going now. Verse 5: ***"These twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them, 'Go nowhere among the Gentiles and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And proclaim as you go, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'"*** What's really interesting here is this is one of the only times in the New Testament where we are told Jesus feels compassion but doesn't do something about it personally.

So, Jesus sends out the apostles. He says, "First, you guys need to go, and you need to temporarily go only to the Jewish people." Then, of course, later on in the book of Matthew he's going to tell the disciples to go to all nations. What Jesus is saying here is "There are so many people, there's so much need, so I will send you." He says, "You are sent."

The Christian understanding of things is that we are not just thrown into the world to do our best. The Christian understanding of things is that we are *sent* into the world. Things are not aimless and accidental. This is why at the end of our services we say, "You are sent." It's why it says in our kids' ministry back there, "You are sent."

Lost people will not normally come to us, so we have to go to them. Now, go to them to do what exactly? Well, Jesus says in verse 7. Jesus says to go and proclaim that the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Jesus is saying, "You guys need to go out, and as you go out, you need to open your mouths."

Have you ever heard the saying, "Preach the gospel, and if you must, use words"? Now, I understand what people mean when they say that. Basically, they're saying, "You should live in such a way that people are intrigued by your life. You should live in such a way that people are able to see the grace of God in your life."

But I can remember being back in college, and my pastor used to talk about this quote all the time. He used to say that to say, "Preach the gospel, and if you must, use words" is basically like telling someone, "Tell me your phone number, and if you must, use digits." He used to go on and say that the message of the gospel is not that you are a good person.

The message of the gospel is not that you're someone who lives a good life and behaves and your friends should see what you do and act right. That's not the message of the gospel. The gospel is that you are unable to save yourself, and it is only through repentance and faith in the person and work of Jesus that you can be reconciled to God, and that is a message that requires words. No one can learn that just by watching you live a good life.

So, Jesus says to go out and proclaim, and he says you need to go out and proclaim that the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Here's what he's basically saying. He says, "Guys, go out and take gospel risks." When you think about the last 90 days of your life, would you say that you've been taking gospel risks?

A couple of weeks ago, I got lunch with a guy in our church who has a successful career, and he told me that he has been trying to go more public with his faith at work. What he did is he sent out an email to his coworkers who are guys a couple of weeks ago, and he said, "Guys, here's what I'm going to do. I'm going to start to pray at *this* date and *this* time in the office every week, and I would love for you guys to join me."

Guess how many people showed up the first week? Zero. You guessed it. But listen to this. He told me that over the last couple of weeks, there has been one guy who has shown up, and he says it has been so meaningful, the two of them praying together

for their office in their office. As he was telling me this, I thought to myself, "This is exactly how the gospel goes forward."

I think sometimes we think that the gospel is going to go forward in big, loud, bold steps of faith and gospel risks, and sometimes the Lord may ask you to do that, but more often than not, the gospel risks you are going to take are going to feel very simple and ordinary.

For example, just having your coworkers or your lost neighbors over to your house and trying to take the conversation from casual to meaningful to spiritual. That is a gospel risk. Giving generously to the kingdom of God is a gospel risk. It's first and foremost a matter of obedience since God tells us to give our first and our best back to him, but you could consider generosity a risk.

Going on your first short-term mission trip could be a risk. One of our elders right now, at this very moment, is on his first international mission trip in over 20 years. He's about to turn 70. I promise he feels like it is a risk. He's excited to be there. There is no time like the present to take a gospel risk. What gospel risk is the Lord asking *you* to take?

Let's keep going to verse 8. I want to show you the motivation behind all of the gospel risks we take. Why should we take them? Well, we're going to see in verse 8. It says, **"Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons."** Here we see Jesus cares about spiritual needs *and* physical needs.

Then he says, **"You received without paying; give without pay. Acquire no gold or silver or copper for your belts, no bag for your journey, or two tunics or sandals or a staff, for the laborer deserves his food."** I love what Jesus does here. Before he sends out the disciples and before they go out and get to work, he reminds them of the grace they have already received.

He says, "Guys, you did not earn the authority and power you have. You did not earn your salvation." He says, "You have received without paying." Salvation, forgiveness that is made available in Christ, is given freely. There's nothing you can do to earn it. It is to be received freely as a gift.

Sometimes I find myself talking with folks who have a hard time receiving God's forgiveness. It's usually a genuine Christian who, for whatever reason, is struggling to look past their past sins or current failures. What I will say to that person... It sounds sort of intense when I say it, but I believe it's true.

I will tell them, "I want you to imagine the sinless Son of God. I want you to imagine Jesus hanging on a cross, beaten, bloodied, bruised, having absorbed the wrath of God

instead of you. I want you to imagine him in that condition. Now think about this. How insulting is it to Jesus to look to him in that condition and say, 'That's not enough'?"

"That's not enough for me to be forgiven. I need to beat myself up and feel shame and guilt even though Jesus has paid it all." To which I would say you cannot earn what you've been freely given. Jesus says, "You have received without paying." Now let's keep going. Verse 11:

"And whatever town or village you enter, find out who is worthy in it and stay there until you depart. As you enter the house, greet it. And if the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it, but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. And if anyone will not receive you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet when you leave that house or town. Truly, I say to you, it will be more bearable on the day of judgment for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah than for that town."

Jesus is saying, "As you go out and proclaim and take gospel risks, you are going to get opposition, and you are going to get open doors." I believe that every Christian, if he is doing his best to live faithfully, should expect both open doors and opposition. If you're being warm and winsome and kind and thoughtful, you should expect some open doors when you're taking gospel risks. At the same time, if you are being bold and truthful and holding to your convictions, you're probably going to experience at least some level of opposition.

What Jesus seems to be saying in this passage is we have to figure out how to live in the tension between being patient with people and never giving up and dusting off our feet and moving on. This is a very difficult thing to do. We need to pray and ask the Lord for wisdom on how to do this.

On one side of things, we need to never, ever give up on people. We need to never stop praying for people. We need to be so patient with the non-Christians around us, but what Jesus says seems to suggest that there comes a point where, when you are met with a significant amount of rejection and opposition, it may just be best for you to dust off your feet and move forward.

My wife Olivia came to Christ in college at UNC Chapel Hill, but her best friend from childhood, who she also went to college with, to this day is still not a Christian. Once Olivia and I got married, we started to try to get creative with how to reach her friend. Olivia would write her letters, and we would try to bring up spiritual conversations when we were talking with her.

After doing this with her friend for a year or two, she eventually came to Olivia and said, "Stop it. Would you please stop it?" Which was very difficult to hear. At that point, we had to basically just say, "You know what? We've done our best. We've prayed for her. We've tried our best to reach her. Maybe we will circle back with her when she's in a new season of life. We're not going to stop praying for her, but we have to move forward."

Jesus says, "Dust off your feet." Rejection does not always mean you have failed; rejection means you have tried. When you are experiencing opposition, when you feel like you're rejected, Jesus' word to you is to dust off your feet, to move forward. The reason this is so important is that, as the people of God, we must have big hearts and thick skin. We must not be derailed by discouragement easily. We need to be very resilient. We need to have thick skin.

About five years ago, I was trying to get our college ministry off the ground at Wake Forest University. At the time, there was a handful of students...maybe. What I was doing was planning events that hopefully students would want to come to. One of the events I planned was called *Puppies and Popsicles*. I was looking forward to it, very excited about it.

I had arranged for a handful of different people in our church to bring puppies to campus, and I was picking up some popsicles. We had some things to hand out to students. We invited a lot of students, and it was going to be great. Well, I woke up the morning of the event, and I saw that it was going to be raining all day long, so we canceled the puppies. No puppies.

So, Puppies and Popsicles turned into just popsicles, and it was also cold that day. I wish this story had a happy ending, but it doesn't. What we did is a handful of us stood in the common area of a building with our popsicles that no one was eating, and no one came to our event. Let me tell you, I felt so discouraged. I felt so silly. It makes me feel awkward even telling this story right now.

What I needed to hear in that moment was "Just because you feel rejected, doesn't mean you failed; it means you tried." We have to be quick to dust off our feet and move forward. I've heard it said before that when you are discouraged, you can visit "pity city," but you cannot live there.

Yes, none of us here are superhuman. All of us are going to have times and moments where we are sad, where we're moping around and we need to eat some ice cream, or whatever. All of us, every once in a while, can visit "pity city," but you cannot live there. You can't do it.

Do not take out the things from your suitcase and unpack them in "pity city," because there is too much at stake. There is too much lostness around you. There is too much opportunity around you for you to be easily derailed by discouragement and opposition.

So, the word some of you may need to hear this morning is you need to dust off your feet, and by the grace of God, you need to move forward in faith. I believe that in the years to come we are going to see more and more opposition in our churches, but by the grace of God, Two Cities Church is and will continue to be a place where people take gospel risks.

I think about Jacob Scott who just came on this stage earlier. He is taking a gospel risk by leaving his career and moving to Panama. I think about Pastor Jordan Taylor. He left his career, a successful career as an engineer, to step into a pastor of care position here in our church, and now he oversees the discipleship and care of this whole church.

I think of Cappy Dixon who left her job as a nurse, and now she is a resident in our student ministry, and she is walking alongside dozens and dozens of middle school girls. I think about each of *you*. The Lord is probably not going to call you to leave your job, but he *is* going to call you to take some risks.

I think about a good friend of mine who's about to transition from the marketplace to ministry. When you think about this friend, don't think of a 23-year-old who lives with his parents. I want you to imagine a man in his 30s with a wife and kids leaving a six-figure income for a five-figure income.

Is that friend taking gospel risks? Absolutely. He's going to have to move some things around. He's going to have to figure out what this means for his future, but what are the chances that he's wasting his life? Zero. Zero percent. He understands that the harvest is plentiful and the workers are few, so he is going out into the harvest.

So, my question for you is...*What gospel risk is the Lord asking you to take?* Who is your One? I'm not asking you to leave your career. What I *am* asking you is to start with one...one conversation, one relationship, one gospel risk at a time. Who is your One? If you have your "One" cards, you can go ahead and grab those. In just a second, I'm going to give you a chance to write down your One's name, and I'm going to give you a chance to write down a bold prayer for your One.

We're not going to take these up. We're going to actually send you home with these, and I want you to do two things when you see this card. I want you to put it somewhere you can see it. Maybe put it in your car. Maybe put it in your Bible. Maybe put it on your bedside table.

When you see this "One" card, the first thing I want you to do is to pray earnestly for your One. In the same way that Jesus says to pray earnestly for more workers, I want you to pray for the salvation of your One with the hopes that your One is going to come to faith and that they, too, will be a laborer.

At the end of that video we watched earlier, there were two guys. One of the guys was named Burke. Did you notice that he said, "I came to faith in Christ about a year ago"? Guess where Burke is right now. Burke is in Southeast Asia serving alongside some of our missionaries, sharing the gospel this summer. He has gone from lost to laborer.

So, pray for your One. The second thing I want to ask you to do is when you see this card, I want you to ask yourself, "What is one gospel risk I can take this week to try to reach my One?" Go ahead and take a moment, and then I'll close us in prayer.

Father, I want to pray right now in faith that you will answer many of these bold prayers. I think about all of the names that are written down on all of these cards, and there's a lot of heartbreak associated with these names. There's a lot of disappointment. There's a lot of fatigue. Father, I'm praying right now for breakthrough with these Ones.

Give us, the people of God, the energy and the courage to take steps of faith, to take gospel risks with our Ones. Lord, I pray that there would be many of them... In the months and years to come, we will see many of these Ones come to faith in you and be baptized here in this church and then sent out as laborers.

Lord, I pray that you would help each of us here to feel compassion toward the lost. Help us to not feel angry, help us to not feel apathetic, but would we see people like you see them. Lord, I pray that you would open our eyes and open our hands. In Jesus' name, amen.