



## Shine as Lights

Series: *Philippians – To Live Is Christ*

Philippians 2:14-18

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One of the best things about preaching through books of the Bible in a sequential fashion – in consecutive, expository fashion – is that we really come to understand the heart and the themes of the books we preach. Especially in the letters of Paul, we get to see mind and heart of the Apostle at work – what he is thinking, what he loves, what he values, what he emphasizes, his motivations, his sincerest wishes for the people of God to whom he is writing.

Skipping around in the Word of God misses much of this and it is especially true of the text that we are looking at this morning. I have heard this text preached or referenced before in a topical way. I have heard preachers use this text to talk about how sinful it is to grumble and complain – and it is. It is absolutely not a personality trait that we want to see developed in our kids, or in our friends, and it is not in keeping with the character of someone who has received immense grace from God in salvation through Christ. Certainly if you have been saved from the death that you deserve for sinful rebellion against God, what have you really got to grumble and complain about, right? But this text goes much, much deeper than that and I want for us to see that this morning. This is much deeper than just a command to be sweeter and more likeable.

We have seen how Paul has been commanding, exhorting, and encouraging the Philippian believers to life that is worthy of the gospel. This whole section begins with Paul's words in chapter 1 and verse 27: ***“Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel.”*** (Philippians 1:27, ESV) That was the springboard from which he encouraged the Philippians to wholehearted commitment to Jesus Christ and to the diligent pursuit of working out their salvation in fear and trembling, to pursue the implications of their salvation in every area of their lives. To do

this, to work out your salvation, to work out in your life who you are in Christ – at the level of your thinking, your actions, your desires, your affections, your choices, your very body, day after day – is hard but necessary work as the people of God.

The most basic reason for this command, of course, is that this is the very thing for which God is at work in us. God, and Paul as His spokesman, wants us to enjoy the fullness of the salvation that we have been given by a life of increasing holiness, increasing Christlikeness, increasing freedom from the power of sin and increasing faithfulness. He wants us to enjoy the richness of our salvation. But there is a deep and abiding reason for this command and it involves more than our joy. It is so that we, as a church, as the chosen and redeemed people of God would do what Israel failed to do. The purpose of the Philippian church, our purpose in life as a congregation together as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ gathered into this local church, living and pursuing Christ together, ministering together faithfully, is so that we would do what Israel failed to do – gladly bring glory to God. Israel was to be the children of God, who by their life and light, were to be a witness to the nations, a blessing to the nations, so that the nations would come to glorify God. But they weren't. They failed, but we must not. That is the great theme of these 5 verses that we are looking at together this morning. Where do I get this? It is evident by the language that Paul uses in this text. Let me show you what I mean. Look with me, first, at

**A New Testament Command With Old Testament Roots (14-15)** Paul moves from the general exhortation of verses 12 and 13 to work out our salvation and says: ***“Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world,”*** (Philippians 2:14–15, ESV)

Now I want you to see that there are some very specific phrases and words that Paul uses that help us to see the comparison and contrast that he is making between Israel and the church. He doesn't just pick the words, “grumbling and disputing” out of the air, for instance. He has something very specific in mind. He is thinking about the nation of Israel in the wilderness -- the “wilderness generation” -- all those who originally came out of Egypt in the Exodus but who died in the wilderness without seeing the Promised Land. Let me show you. Turn to the book of Exodus and the 15<sup>th</sup> chapter. Now to set the context, you need to know that the children of Israel are on the way to MT Sinai to meet with God. God had delivered them from the bondage and oppression of the Egyptians by mighty miracles. He

had established them as a nation, redeemed them by the blood of the Passover lamb, rescued them from the pursuing armies of Pharaoh at the Red Sea, and now they had come to a place called Marah, where the water was bitter. Having been rescued from all of these things, still they are unconvinced of God's goodness. What do they do? ***“And the people grumbled against Moses, saying, ‘What shall we drink?’ And he cried to the Lord, and the Lord showed him a log, and he threw it into the water, and the water became sweet. There the Lord made for them a statute and a rule, and there he tested them, saying, ‘If you will diligently listen to the voice of the Lord your God, and do that which is right in his eyes, and give ear to his commandments and keep all his statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you that I put on the Egyptians, for I am the Lord, your healer.’”*** (Exodus 15:24–26, ESV) That should have been the end of it, right? Not quite. Moses continues...

***“They set out from Elim, and all the congregation of the people of Israel came to the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they had departed from the land of Egypt. And the whole congregation of the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness, and the people of Israel said to them, ‘Would that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the meat pots and ate bread to the full, for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.’”*** Then the Lord said to Moses, ***“Behold, I am about to rain bread from heaven for you, and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in my law or not. On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily.”*** So Moses and Aaron said to all the people of Israel, ***“At evening you shall know that it was the Lord who brought you out of the land of Egypt, and in the morning you shall see the glory of the Lord, because he has heard your grumbling against the Lord. For what are we, that you grumble against us?”*** And Moses said, ***“When the Lord gives you in the evening meat to eat and in the morning bread to the full, because the Lord has heard your grumbling that you grumble against him—what are we? Your grumbling is not against us but against the Lord.”*** Then Moses said to Aaron, ***“Say to the whole congregation of the people of Israel, ‘Come near before the Lord, for he has heard your grumbling.’”*** And as soon as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the people of Israel, they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud. And the Lord said to Moses, ***“I have heard the grumbling of the people of Israel. Say to them, ‘At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread. Then you shall know that I am the Lord your God.’”*** (Exodus 16:1–12, ESV)

These are by no means the only places that we read of Israel's stiff-necked response to the Lord and to His Word. It went on and on. When they were in Egypt they grumbled because they were in Egypt, and when they were out of Egypt they grumbled because they were out of Egypt. No leeks, no garlic, no onions, no fish in the desert. Plenty of them back in Egypt's slavery. They complained because they had nothing to eat and then they grumbled the food. They grumbled against God's commands, against His blessing, against His leaders, against His ways. They grumbled about pretty much everything. It displeased and dishonored God, hamstrung the nation in their witness, and ripped gaping holes in their unity and identity as the people of God. They drove Moses to misery as they grumbled on and on for forty years. As a result, God refused to let them enter the Promised Land. That generation all died and were buried in the desert, except for Joshua and Caleb. That was the judgment God brought upon these murmurers and complainers.

In the last sermon that Moses gave to the people of Israel who were going in to dwell in the Promised Land, he says of God and of the generation who all died in the wilderness, in Deuteronomy 32: ***“Give ear, O heavens, and I will speak, and let the earth hear the words of my mouth. May my teaching drop as the rain, my speech distill as the dew, like gentle rain upon the tender grass, and like showers upon the herb. For I will proclaim the name of the LORD; ascribe greatness to our God! “The Rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and upright is he. They have dealt corruptly with him; they are no longer his children because they are blemished; they are a crooked and twisted generation.” (Deuteronomy 32:1–5, ESV)***

The similarity in speech, the key words are pretty obvious. This text is more than just an exhortation to have a sweeter, kinder, and gentler disposition. This command finds its roots specifically in the failure of the wilderness generation to work out its salvation from Egypt both individually, in the case of most, and corporately as a nation. When Paul speaks these words to the Philippians, the heart of what he is saying is “Do not be like the Israelites who failed to walk worthy of the salvation they received and failed to shine as the people of God in this world so that God would receive the glory He is due from His people.”

When Paul says: ***Do all things without grumbling or disputing.*** Do all things as you are working out your salvation, without grumbling or disputing. Grumbling is the outward expression of the inward disposition of disputing. This “grumbling” is an onomatopoeic word, “gongusmon” (gong goose moan). It sounds like what it describes. The idea here is

groaning and grumbling against God's work in our lives. Grumbling against His commandments or His providence in our lives. Grumbling against the way He is pruning our lives of sin, pruning our lives of ungodly relationships, grumbling about the tests and trials he brings, grumbling against His program of spiritual growth for us. The second word, "disputing," describes the inward disposition of the heart – arguing with God, questioning God's goodness, questioning His love, and questioning His commands. It a kind of running dialogue of discontent in the heart. The whole idea is treating life in Christ as a great bother, a great burden.

Here's why this grumbling and disputing with God is such an issue. It is rooted in deep ingratitude in the face of saving grace and the continued mercy and working of God in our midst. A grumbling and disputing spirit is an expression of ingratitude, of lovenessness and of pride toward God – we know better. It is a denial of grace and it is working against salvation rather than working salvation out into every aspect of our lives. God desires that we would trust and obey Him, that we would embrace His Lordship and pursue godliness from our hearts and that we would do it gladly. God wants us to do it for the sake of the community of faith and the world.

Grumbling and disputing are more than bad attitudes. They have more far-reaching effects than we many times imagine. When it comes to working our salvation in fear and trembling, grumblers and disputers impede their own souls and the souls of their brothers and sisters. They are undertows on the body of Christ and on the gospel. It ruins the soul. Let me share a very sobering a very serious thought with you that I have been thinking about this week as a result of studying this passage. My life, everything that I do, every way in which I interact with people will make it easier or harder for them to believe in Christ, easier or harder to grow or regress in Christ, easier or harder to become more or less like Christ. That's true of me but it is also true of you. That's serious business.

But Paul doesn't stop with telling what we shouldn't do; he gives us positive exhortations in keeping with the spirit of those who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ. **"Be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation..."** Let's take "innocent" since innocent is the inner disposition of the heart.

**Innocent** means pure, without mixture. It was used of gold or silver with no impurities. In other words, what Paul is calling us to is integrity and uprightness, sincerity and realness, to faith and contentment in Christ, to trust in God and His purposes in our hearts first. Then the idea of **blameless** is the idea of proper conduct as a representative of God, to live so that those who are around us, looking at us and observing us, will never be able to see or find anything in us which is worthy of blame, or of criticism, or of reprimand. In other words: Let your yes be yes and your no be no. Be above board in all of your dealings with people. Speak the truth – not keeping part of it back or misrepresenting some case. Be reliable. Be faithful. Keep your word. Walk uprightly. Obey the commands of God and do it joyfully. Both of these terms – blameless and innocent, comprise the idea of a pattern of your life that is without blemish.

This description reminds me a lot of Daniel in the OT. Daniel lived in about the most ungodly place that you could imagine but he lived for God in the very midst of it. He didn't live off in a compound somewhere, not off in a cave; he lived in the very palace of the king. When his enemies sought his demise, the only fault they could find with him was his faithful worship of God. ***“Then these men said, “We shall not find any ground for complaint against this Daniel unless we find it in connection with the law of his God.”” (Daniel 6:5, ESV)*** They proposed a law, which was approved by the king, that for a certain period of time, no one was allowed to ask any favor of god or man except the king. Stupid law. And when Daniel continued to pray, they used his integrity against him and had him thrown into the lion's den. You know how that worked out. God shut the lions' mouths and vindicated His servant. Daniel lived a blameless life, a pure life without blemish before God and man and that's what Paul is calling us to. Is this possible?

Yes, because we are the “children of God.” When Paul refers to these believers as “children of God,” this isn't wishful thinking, or some fond hope – this is who and what they actually are. God lives in them and in us, we saw that last week. God as adopted us into His family and placed His Spirit within us. We show our adoption by our lives. We show whose child we are by our behavior. He gives us the strength and the will to live in a manner pleasing to Him. We can live lives of integrity and obedience because we are God's children. This is a present reality and the Philippians and we must live like it, because in this way we will be lights in the midst of a dark world – and that is the whole point. It's what Israel failed to be.

Look man, our world is dark. Paul uses the words “crooked and twisted,” the words first used to describe the faithless Israelites. The word crooked means “bent” and it refers to activities and actions, the way that unbelievers live. The word twisted means “topsy-turvy” or “distorted” and it usually refer to its values. You can see this, can’t you? The steady decay of West is evident everywhere: greed and materialism, defiant rejection of biblical marriage, incessant drug and alcohol abuse, violent crime, alienation, antagonism, hatred, addiction to sexual immorality in its various forms, addiction to entertainment, the idolatry of self, political corruption, the idolatry of our government that holds itself forth as a comprehensive savior from cradle to grave, the exploitation of children and the elderly. But perhaps nothing demonstrates the twisted perversity of our society like the abomination of the wholesale slaughter of children in their mothers’ wombs and the grisly atrocity of selling those children’s body parts. It is an unconscionable, callous, unnatural disregard for life. But that is the darkness in which we live. The world is astray, living the upside-down life of those who do not believe, but that is where the light shines brightest. In the darkness of this culture, we cannot simply bemoan the darkness, we must shine as lights.

Geoff Thomas has said: **God’s Messiah did not live in a palace protected by soldiers. When he was born shepherds wandered into the maternity room not long after his birth and looked at him. He lived in a large family sharing a bedroom with his siblings. Throughout his public ministry the crowds followed him everywhere. If they couldn’t get at him through a door or window they would remove the roof to get at him. He came into a world where men dragged a woman caught in adultery into his presence and asked him why they shouldn’t stone her to death. He came where they whipped men with 39 lashes, and crucified young men, and gambled, and blasphemed. That is where Christ lived a blameless, pure and faultless life, and that is where we are called to live the same life. He gives us strength to do this. You can do all things by him. There is no temptation you cannot overcome, no command you cannot obey, no duty you cannot perform, no burden you cannot bear, because you have received this Christ into your life.**

If grace has changed us, and it has, it ought to be obvious in this world. To not shine in a world as dark as this one is against nature itself. We’re new creations in Christ, the old has passed away, the new has come. The grace of God is powerful in those who are His. To the Thessalonians, Paul wrote: **“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.”** (2 Thessalonians 1:11–12, ESV) To Titus he

wrote: **“For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.”** (Titus 2:11–14, ESV) We are markedly different in our thoughts, our character, our affections, our values, our pursuits, our actions, our ethics – or at least we should be. There is nothing more unnatural, unreasonable, impossible to explain or justify than that the children of God, new creatures in Christ should grumble and dispute with God, living impure and selfish lives like all the people around them who have never met Christ Jesus, who have never known the love of Christ, and who do not have the Spirit of God dwelling within them working to transform their lives. We ought to shine as lights in the darkness.

When Paul speaks of us as lights, he is using a word that is interchangeable with the word for star. Now think about that for a second. We live in a culture that is infected with “stardom.” Movie stars, sports stars, TV stars, music stars... Everyone, it seems, wants to be a star. How else do you explain the success of shows like The Voice, or America’s Got Talent, or American Idol? Thousands of people line up for hours for the chance to audition in order to expose their talents or lack thereof, to judges and cameras. The all want to be famous, to shine for their own glory and get the stuff that comes with it – money, travel, and fame. But not us. We do not pursue shining for our own glory but instead to make God’s glory known. We shine for something bigger, something greater, something eternal. We shine for the glory of Christ.

And how does that happen? When we hold fast to the word of life and hold forth the word of life. In fact, the point that Paul is making is even more powerful when we remember that he has in mind the failures of the “wilderness generation” of Israel. Instead of Israel’s grumbling, twisted, and blemished unbelief, showing their failure to live as the “children of God,” we are to be His people who are distinguished by a life that “holds fast” and “holds forth” the word of life. The verb that is translated here as “holds fast” expresses both ideas. It is the deliberate use of a word with two meanings.

**Hold Fast and Hold Out the Word of Life (16a)** Paul calls them to be **“holding fast to the word of life...”** (Philippians 2:16, ESV). We are to hold fast to the word of life and then we



hold forth the word of life. Again, Paul deliberately uses a verb that encompasses both ideas. Now let's see how these are connected.

The light of Christ shines brightest in us, first, when we hold fast to the word of life. We stake our lives on the word of life, gripping it and holding it an never letting it go -- the word that explains life as it is, the word that gives life, that supports life, that shows us how to live life, the word that makes us mature and accomplishes all of God's purposes in us, the word of God's promises that are all yes and amen in Christ.

Holding fast to the word of life is really just another way of saying "holding fast to God." Sometimes we slip, sometimes we grumble or dispute, but God won't leave us there. Asaph, in Psalm 73, talks about this. He had slipped into grumbling but not for long. ***"Behold, these are the wicked; always at ease, they increase in riches. All in vain have I kept my heart clean and washed my hands in innocence. For all the day long I have been stricken and rebuked every morning. If I had said, 'I will speak thus,' I would have betrayed the generation of your children. But when I thought how to understand this, it seemed to me a wearisome task, until I went into the sanctuary of God; then I discerned their end. Truly you set them in slippery places; you make them fall to ruin. How they are destroyed in a moment, swept away utterly by terrors! Like a dream when one awakes, O Lord, when you rouse yourself, you despise them as phantoms. When my soul was embittered, when I was pricked in heart, I was brutish and ignorant; I was like a beast toward you. Nevertheless, I am continually with you; you hold my right hand. You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. For behold, those who are far from you shall perish; you put an end to everyone who is unfaithful to you. But for me it is good to be near God; I have made the Lord God my refuge, that I may tell of all your works."*** (Psalm 73:12–28, ESV)

Living life in joyful obedience to God's Word sets the Christian apart from the world. Wherever you go you will find grumbling, because no one apart from Christ has learned to be content. People will grumble about their lot in life, their marriage, their family, their job. When people seem to have almost nothing in common, they can almost always find someone who will grumble with them. It's why they are always chasing the wind. But a life that holds fast to God's word, that trusts in Him, that is content in Christ will stick out. But there is more.

When unbelievers see Christians who are content, joyful, and hopeful in the midst of suffering, by God's grace they may open to hearing the reason why that is and it is then that we can hold forth the word of God in integrity and with effect. If our lives are just like the unbeliever in character and quality, why would they want to hear the gospel? They are justified to ask, "What difference does it make?" But an excellent life makes for a powerful witness. We can hold forth the word with confidence and with gladness, hold forth the gospel with boldness to a world that needs to hear it.

You can see how this all makes sense. Alec Motyer says: "The light of Christian character is an uninterpreted parable" – a mystery in other words – "if we do not speak about Christ. Equally, speaking about Christ is futile if our lives do not back up what we say." You be a light in the world. Show your sanctification in your living. Show your doctrine by your life. Let your sanctification, let your holiness, let your Christ-likeness, let your pursuit of godliness serve as a witness to unbelievers. Let your life together testify to the reality of gospel grace. It is the very thing that Israel failed to do. And it is what Christ calls us to.

The brightest and most glorious light in human history was that of Jesus Christ., who though he was in the form of God, did not His equality with God a thing to be grasped but brought His light into this world – ***"In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."*** (John 1:4–5, ESV) He manifested His light in this dark world for the sake of sinners beneath the curse, to save us and to bring glory to God. It is this very light of Christ that the word of life imparts to us. And we must shine, holding fast to the word and holding out the word of life to the lost, shining in this crooked and twisted generation, exposing and condemning sin, illuminating and transforming our lives holding out the hope of eternal salvation and life in Christ. We must do what Israel failed to do – gladly bring glory to God.

But Paul doesn't leave this on the level of devotion and faithfulness to God alone; he makes it intensely personal. Look at this.

**Paul's Personal Plea and Perspective (16b-18)** Paul says to them, do all this ***"so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain. Even if I am to be***

***poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. Likewise you also should be glad and rejoice with me.” (Philippians 2:16–18, ESV)***

I want you to see here the legitimate interconnectedness of a pastor with his flock. Paul actually ties his joy to their obedience. Let me show you how he does this. First he says, and not selfishly, but honestly, “I don’t want to have run or labored in vain for your sake or for Christ’s sake.” The worst thing that he could have imagined – because He loved them and loved Christ so much – was that his ministry to them fell flat, that it bore no lasting fruit.” I get that. Moses must have felt this at times.

But then he uses the image of the OT sacrifices that were offered by the priests in the temple. ? In the Old Testament the drink offerings were poured over or beside the burnt offering. It completed the primary sacrifice. The always accompanied the greater offering.

The main offering that Paul envisioned was the faithful life of the Philippians offered to God. ***“I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.” (Romans 12:1, ESV)*** Peter speaks to the church and says: ***“you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” (1 Peter 2:5, ESV)*** The “sacrificial offering of your faith” is nothing less than the sacrificial life of obedience, character-building, holiness, worship and witness to which our faith empowers and leads us. This is our priestly service to the Lord.

Follow what Paul is saying. He wants the Philippians to give themselves wholeheartedly to pleasing God, whatever the cost so that Christ and the power of the gospel would be magnified in them as the greater sacrifice. Then, if Paul loses his own life, his sacrifice is merely the drink offering poured out on top of their sacrifice. The drink offering was meaningless unless it was poured upon a more substantial sacrifice. What Paul is saying is this: “If I suffer or die in the service of your growth and faithfulness to Christ, in the service of you making the power of the gospel known, I am delighted. What I don’t want, what would grieve my soul, would be to die a martyr’s death without seeing the fruit of salvation and faithfulness to Christ in your life. So if I die, if my life is poured out for your growth in

Christ, for your sake and for the sake of the kingdom, don't be sorrowful, but rejoice with me for it is the greatest thing that I could have hoped for.

### **Two Thoughts From This Text**

When I read this text, it resonates in my soul, in my heart, in my mind. I hear these words and they strike a chord in my heart and I trust that they do in yours as well. They resonate with me first, because I want to be faithful to Christ. I really do. I want to live in manner that demonstrates that I understand and that I am thankful for the grace that I have been given. Don't you? The cost to redeem us was massive – the incarnation and sacrificial death of our Savior Jesus Christ. I don't want to regard that lightly. I want the investment that God has made in my salvation – the blood of His Son, to bear the dividends in my life – obedience, submission, holiness, uprightness, integrity, transformed thinking, righteous living, deep and abiding love for Christ, for His people and for the church as it should. I want to be a blessing to you and to help you in working out your salvation and I want to be a light that leads people that I love who are lost out of the darkness and to the True Light of the World, Jesus Christ. I now you feel it too.

But they resonate with my soul, as well, because I want my life to count for something more than just me. I want it to matter. Don't you? I think that's why I love football so much. There is not a better team game in the world. I love the idea of a group of men or boys, sacrificing for one another, sacrificing for a greater goal than personal statistics, putting aside personal glory for the team. And this text calls us to the same kind of thing, but something of eternal importance. I don't want to be like the wilderness generation who blew their and now are remembered and used as illustrations of how not to live for the glory of God. My heart resonates at the thought of as a congregation, together as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ gathered into this local church, living and pursuing Christ together, ministering together faithfully, so that we would make the name of God and the gospel of Christ great in this world – in our homes, in our church, in our community, in our neighborhoods, in our schools and workplaces, on our teams, in our classrooms – everywhere. This has been the story of the church from its very inception – ordinary followers of Christ living extraordinary lives in ordinary ways and shining as lights in the world. It is a bigger picture, a higher calling, a great mission that I can get excited about. It is not the narrow focus of my own life and my own glory but the glory of God in Christ that never fades. That excites me. How about you?

I'll gladly lay down my life for that. Like Paul, I will rejoice to do so. Will you? Let's do it together.

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