

# Ambassadors for Christ

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[ 0 : 00 ] We're still in John 17, looking at this amazing high priestly prayer, the true Lord's prayer, I call it. We're looking at verses 17 through 19, which is the last verses of this particular section.

Remember, there's three sections to this prayer. Jesus prays for himself, verses 1 through 5 or so, and then he begins to pray for his immediate disciples, which has reference to us, but he's praying particularly for those who are right there with him.

That goes down to verse 19. And then, in particular, he begins praying specifically for us, for the rest of the prayer. All of it has application to us.

But so we're looking at that last section there, verses 17 through 19, as he was praying for his immediate disciples, which again, which again, applies to us as well.

So, verses 17 through 19, here we go. Jesus is praying. Amen. Sanctify them in the truth. Your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world.

[ 1 : 09 ] And for their sake, I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth. Amen.

That is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. Please be seated. You know, I've mentioned before that we are ambassadors, and it comes out so powerfully in this passage.

And so I decided to go back and just do a little bit more study on what ambassadors are. It's a very fascinating, interesting study. You see, as you know, ambassadors represent the country sending them.

They do not represent themselves. They must behave, therefore, in certain ways and deliver the messages they have been given by the head of state who sent them.

Now, here's where I got more into it. It's a very consuming, demanding job that affects every area of your life, if you're an ambassador.

[ 2 : 20 ] It actually blurs the line between personal and professional. Because ambassadors are on call 24-7. Socially, you know, we think about, if you see the movies, all those galas and, you know, those dinners and lunch, you know, ambassadors go to.

It looks all so glamorous. But those are networking events. And sometimes they are hosting these events at their location, and it's not really a perk.

They're working. Then there's relentless crisis management due to geopolitical changes or emergencies with citizens in that host country.

In other words, if you get in trouble, if you're in another country, and you do something you shouldn't have done, and you get in trouble, you run to the embassy. And then your ambassador, then, has to help you get home.

High-stakes desk work involving extensive management of all of their government's personnel in that host country. They are the direct representative of the head of state for their country.

[ 3 : 37 ] And as far as family goes, ambassadors live where they work. So their families are intricately involved. This is all-consuming.

I mean, these guys, I mean, we think of so many of them. And listen, several of them are wealthy in this country. But I saw about 30% are actually wealthy.

They're usually appointed by the president because he owes favors and whatever. But 70% are working stiff like us. They've worked their way up, and they're not wealthy.

But they give themselves 24-7 to represent our country in other places. And you don't choose to be an ambassador.

You don't say, hey, hey, I want to be an ambassador. Pick me. No, that doesn't work that way. You have to be chosen. So it's a great honor.

[ 4 : 35 ] An immense honor to be an ambassador of your country. Now, the kingdom of God is different from the kingdoms of this world. Whereas the world chooses the educated, and like I said,

sometimes rich and influential to be ambassadors, the Lord chooses ordinary people.

Ordinary people whom he equips. Sometimes, and many times, even poor people. The ones who have the least influence can yet be ambassadors of the kingdom of God to represent him.

Sometimes ambassadors are at risk in their service to their country. Christ is the only head of state who dies for his ambassadors to protect them, to help them.

Now, I got to ask you, and it's going to come back at the end, but which kingdom do you intentionally represent day by day? For whom are you an ambassador?

Because you are. You represent somebody. You represent somebody. When you walk out the door, man, you know, if you grew up in my house, remember who you are. You know, you represent the family.

[ 5 : 54 ] You know, Jeanette and Willie Howard Smith didn't play that. You know, and so we all do, and we all represent, but is there something more? Who are you representing?

Again, our Lord is praying for the protection of his disciples. He's asking the Father to protect them, to keep them, to watch over them. He's asking this prayer request because he knows his disciples are in danger from the devil and the world every day.

He doesn't want to take us out of the world, we saw. He wants to keep us in the world, even though it's a place of danger. Because he has a mission for his people.

In order for us to accomplish this mission, we must view ourselves in a certain way. We must view ourselves as ambassadors. Ambassadors who, to use the language of our text, who are sanctified and sent.

That's who we are. We are the sanctified and the sent. We are ambassadors for the Christ and his kingdom. First of all, Christ's ambassadors are protected by the truth.

[ 7 : 14 ] Verse 17, Jesus prays, sanctify them in the truth. Your word is truth. We sang some great songs today about the word. Order my steps.

I love that song. I remember when that thing came out. It came out a while ago. Truth keeps us from error in the world.

The enemy may not be able to physically kill us, especially in this country. But he can destroy us socially.

He can kill our influence. He can mess with us economically. Jobs, promotions, lawsuits. Maybe even mess with us emotionally and spiritually when we allow the thinking of people who are not listening to the spirit to get in our heads.

The world is always speaking to us. Telling us what's important. Telling us what you need to be happy. Telling us who we are.

[ 8 : 19 ] The world is speaking 24-7. To whom are we listening? Sometimes we can be even so afraid of the repercussions of the world in our stand for Christ that we even shut our mouths when we should be speaking.

Careful how much stock you put in worldly thinking. Whether it be in psychology or political influence or materialistic desires, ambitions, personal identity.

Just be careful how you listen. We've got to be a bit more critical as Christian people in how we listen to the messages that come toward us on a regular basis.

Whether it be in school, whether it be at work, whether it be social media, whether it be on TV. We are always being bombarded. There's so much information at our fingertips today.

It's exciting to me. But it's also damaging if we're not critically listening as God's people. The truth.

[ 9 : 35 ] The truth is what the Lord gives us to protect us. So the Son prays to the Father for us to be sanctified by the truth.

Now what does that mean? Sanctify. It means to be made holy. To be set apart for God's use and to be purified before him in our lifestyle.

Now, first of all, holiness is an attribute of God. It's what we call a communicable attribute of God. It's an attribute that he has that he shares with his people.

Peter heard Jesus make this prayer. And so later on in 1 Peter chapter 1, here's what he writes.

First of all, you must understand that holiness is our place via our union with Christ.

We live in it. We are attached. We are connected to holiness. The moment you said, I do to Jesus, he made you holy. He set you apart.

[ 10 : 55 ] He said, you're mine now. You're mine. You belong to me and I ain't sharing. God is very possessive. Praise the Lord.

Because I don't want him to share me with anything. Take me. Listen. He makes us his. And now we're for his use alone.

You see, before we were in Christ, we were unholy. In other words, the world used us as it wanted to. The devil played with us like he wanted to. We were always being blown around.

New ideas. New this. New that. New way of seeing ourselves and seeing life or whatever. We're blown around. We're living in that world. But then God rescued us. Christ comes in. Snatches us. Pulls us out of the kingdom of darkness. Brings us into the kingdom of light. And now he says, listen. You're not like that anymore. You're with me.

[ 11 : 54 ] You're mine. And so the old lifestyle of unholiness has been replaced by a new lifestyle and position of holiness.

Of belonging to him. Sanctified. We're holy unto him. And because we are united to Christ. Spiritually in Christ.

That's Paul's language. And Jesus in him. He begins to transform us from the inside out. So now we begin as we in the other place.

We live out of our hearts according to our path. As the Bible says. Our passions. Our desires of the flesh and of the mind. That's Ephesians chapter 2 by the way.

Now we live out of our hearts. But according to the word. His ways.

[ 12 : 51 ] His teaching. His instruction. You see the Bible is more than. It's so much more than an instruction manual. You know I.

I got to confess this. I don't like to read instruction manuals. You know. Come on guys.

Help me out. You're putting something together. I just. Just show me the picture. It's supposed to look like that. Okay. Let's go. And. And. And. And. And then you know.

And then it's. Always extra parts later. I don't know. Extra. Who they come from. And then you're going to take it apart. To put. Because you read the instructions. And you realize.

Oh. That should have went that way. And that should have went that way. I mean. But I don't like reading instruction manuals. And I think a lot of people don't too. When you think of the Bible. As an instruction manual.

[ 13 : 48 ] You just short circuited your desire to read it. And I've heard Christians. I've. I've probably even said it myself. The Bible's an instruction manual. Holy smoke.

There's much more than that. It's not. I mean. The Bible's the word of God. It is God speaking to us. It is God telling us. He loves us. It is God telling us.

Listen. Follow me. Listen. Avoid that. Follow me in this. It's God revealing himself. And. The way he is. For us. So it's. Don't call the Bible an instruction manual.

Please stop it. Because you don't want to read it. If it's that. If that's all it is. But when you hear it as the communicate from heaven. The voice of God.

Speaking to us. Let me tell you. What Christian doesn't want to hear the voice of God? I mean. Don't you want to hear God speaking to you? I mean. I mean. We. We got a whole group in the church.

[ 14 : 48 ] The Pentecostals. Who constantly. And I admire them for this. They want to hear God speaking. Sometimes they go to extremes.

But they want to hear God speaking. He is speaking. He's always speaking. Not just in creation. But. He's always speaking. These pages. Sanctify them by the truth. Remember. He's praying for protection. For his disciples.

So. So. If he's. Part of that protection. Is to be sanctified in truth. That's how God protects us. When we stay away from the truth. Or we refuse to deal with our lives.

In a way. And there's sin in our lives. And we do have it. Because we're still in the flesh. The flesh wars. The Bible says. The flesh wars against the spirit.

[ 15 : 45 ] You in a battle. Inside of you. There's a war. And the flesh is our fallen humanity. It's. It. It. It doesn't get redeemed.

It gets replaced. And right now. So. We have it. And there's a battle going on. Because. I am naturally. In my. In my sinfulness.

Self-centered. It's really about me. I'm going to be honest. It's really about me. The rest of you.

Yeah. You know. You show up. But you know. It's about me. Sam.

That was not a good place for amen. We're going to talk later. Me and you brother. I love you man. He said amen. Okay.

I'll own it. In my weakest moments. In yours too. In our weak moments. We fall into this me. Mind. [16:40] I. Mentality. In those moments. When we wanted our way. Or the highway. You know what I mean. You. You know what I'm talking about. Don't you. Those moments. When you just said. Listen.

I don't care what. Y'all think. He thinks. He thinks. He thinks. This is what I want. He thinks. He thinks. Sanctify them. Sanctify them. Father. Sanctify them in the truth. The world is all around them. The world is coming for them. Father protect them. Protect my disciples. Protect my ambassadors. Protect those who represent me. So God's word is that means, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, it is that means of making us holy in all that we do, think, and desire. One way Paul talks about this is in 2 Corinthians 7, verse 1. He's in the context of chapter 6, which comes before, but here's the verse. Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God.

[17:59] Now, the promises he's referring to are in chapter 6, and they are promises that we are God's temple, that he will be our God, that he will make his dwelling among us, and he takes us to be his children, that he will be our father.

Are you listening? Because of those promises. Because he promises that he will dwell in us and among us, that he will take us for himself, that he will be a father to us.

That's the gospel, y'all. That's the good news. God has done something in Christ to make you his, and he says, now I'm your father. Who's your daddy? I am.

God is. And you're not just that, but I dwell among you. You are my temple. That's why the building is not the church. It's the people. God dwells within his people.

You are, as Peter calls us, living stones that make up the temple of the living God. He dwells in our midst. This is better than what Israel had. Israel had some good stuff, y'all.

[19:02] Don't get me wrong. But God tended to be outside the camp. He was the pillar of fire or the pillar of smoke. You remember that? But he's outside the camp. Then when they finally brought him inside the camp, they put him in a tent, as it were.

I'm just, believe me, I'm using language, but you can't contain God, okay? But he dwelt in a tent called the tabernacle, a portable temple. But only Moses could go in there.

And all the Israelites would line up around him. But they couldn't go in. They still, even though he was in the camp now, they still couldn't go in and be near him. But in Christ, in Christ, God takes up residence in our lives, in us, and in us separately, and in us together.

Because you're not a temple by yourself. The temple is us together. You're a stone. You're a brick. Amen to that.

But together, we are the dwelling of God. Because of these promises, Paul is saying, because of what God has done, because of this truth, put away stuff in your life that defiles body and spirit.

[20:23] Cleanse yourselves, he says, from every defilement of body and spirit. Whatever in your heart that takes you away from God, that takes you away from obedience to him, that takes you away from loving him, that takes you, whether it be attitudes, whether it be actions, whether it be words, things you say and things you type.

Cleanse yourselves, he says. Get rid of it. By the way, that means you can. Why would he tell you to do it if he's not empowering you to do it?

He's empowering. He is present in us to help us do it. You know what? Something that frustrates me, and I must share this with you.

I don't know. Whatever it's worth. You know, I get a, I'm so glad we're talking about grace more, and people are getting a handle on what it means, the grace of God. But some people sometimes have this attitude.

When God says obey me, the first thing they say is I can't. And they think that's because, you know, I'm relying on God's grace, I'm acknowledging my total depravity, I'm a sinner, and they say I can't.

[21:44] Wrong place to start. He's in you. Spirit of God is in you. The first thing to say to God when he says obey me is yes.

And the second thing you say is help me, Lord. Come on, somebody. The second thing you say is help me, Lord. But the first thing you say is I'm your man, I'm your girl, I'm going in. Yes.

God speaks. We don't say I can't. What is this? That's not grace. Yes. That's living beneath your privileges. That's forgetting that you have been, you've been given the spirit of God.

You've been sanctified. You've been made holy. He lives in you. Therefore, your first word is yes. And then you say, Lord, help me. Because you can't do it on your own. I got three amens and a grunt. Okay. That's all righty. We'll keep moving. Get through this today. I mean, even in that context, I just mentioned in 2 Corinthians 7, in chapter 6, he talks about, you know this verse, verse 14, do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. [ 22 : 58 ] That's part of dealing with stuff in our lives. In other words, what he's talking about, don't let the most intimate relationships in your life be with unbelievers.

Doesn't mean you can't have friendships, but don't, don't make the most important and most intimate, as much as you're able, relationships be with unbelievers. Why? Because you see, he knows that there is, go back and read for yourself, in that same, what communion has light with darkness? What communion has the temple of God with idols? He says, so we have to be careful.

Sometimes, sometimes, in order to deal with our own stuff before the Lord, we gotta cut ties with some folk. See, that was weak. Yeah, we, see, y'all don't, I see you out there. Listen, I'm not preaching some live in a holy commune thing. The Bible's not talking that way. I'm just telling you what the scriptures say. Sometimes you have to cut ties with folk because you can't deal with their stuff and it keeps bringing out your stuff.

[ 24 : 03 ] And you find yourself going places, doing things, living things, thinking things that you know you shouldn't be doing. And so therefore, sometimes, not all the time, but sometimes, you may have to say, now if you're married to the person, oh, that's another story now.

Don't be, don't be getting divorced. I said, don't go there on me. You married him. So, amen. God got word for you too, but that's another word.

We have to deal with those intimacies. I remember I was, whenever I do premarital counseling, I always, or pre-engagement counseling, whatever you call it, I always looking to make sure both of them are Christians.

That's my first priority. Do you know Jesus? Do you know Jesus? Because if one of them doesn't, I won't marry them.

I can't. Before the Lord, I can't. I gotta, I gotta, I gotta respond to him. I gotta deal with him. I can't do it. It may break their heart. It may, their family may leave the church. They may hate me for life, but I will not disobey the Lord here.

[ 25 : 12 ] If you are looking for someone today, I'm, okay, this is no charge. This is coming out. If you are in that place where you're dating and you're looking, listen, if you are a Christian, make sure the person you are connecting with is dating a Christian.

I don't mean, well, you know, he or she kind of has a faith. No, I mean, it's obvious.

They are an ambassador for Jesus. They are walking in sanctification before the Lord. Just, just, just, please, please listen to me on this.

It's, it's not, it could not, it's not gonna end well if you don't. The word sanctifies us by, by diving into our minds, our emotions, our, our, our feelings, our ambitions, our ideas.

The word comes and it sits in judgment on those things. It critiques and corrects so that now we begin to say, oh, oh, I'm sorry, I was, I didn't see it.

[ 26 : 23 ] Oh, now I see that. Okay, thank you, Lord. The word comes to do that for us because brothers and sisters, we, sometimes we're like, Pilate, what is truth?

Sometimes our nation is just like that. What is truth? We're gonna come to that later. What is truth? And Jesus says the truth is the word of God and he is the truth.

So we have a different message, right? We have a different message. We have a different way of seeing life, a different worldview. The world says we don't know where truth is but the Bible says yes we do.

That's a whole different head. So you don't, so you want to make sure you're lining up with people who think that way, who know life that way, especially in the most intimate relationship you will ever have.

But here's the thing. Jesus says sanctify in the truth, your word is truth and then in verse 19 he says for their sake I consecrate myself that they may also be sanctified in truth.

[ 27 : 35 ] He's repeating himself but notice what he adds. For their sake I consecrate myself. By the way, it's the same word. For their sake I sanctify myself.

That's what he's saying. So hold it now. in order to walk, in order for us to truly be sanctified in the truth, Jesus has to die.

Jesus dies for this very purpose that you may be sanctified, walking in holiness, walking in a, and growing in the likeness of God that you may have this.

He dies to give this to you. For their sake I sanctify myself. For their sake I set myself apart. I set myself apart to die in the name of the Father.

I give myself to this cause, to this place, for your sake. Here's the thing. Jesus always gets his prayers answered by the Father.

[ 28 : 41 ] So you are sanctified. You are his. And he's at work in you to bring you more and more into the image of Christ.

Stuff your life matters. Stuff you go through matters. God is at work to sanctify, to, to, to, just as the son suffered, yes, you're going to have to suffer too. But in that suffering, God is doing a work to, to mold and shape you into the image of your son via the truth of God so that you can look more like his son.

I love that phrase. For their sake I consecrate myself. Then verse 18 in the middle.

Jesus is the Father's ambassador to the world. He's the first ambassador. Verse 18. As you sent me into the world so I sent them into the world.

First of all, as you sent me into the world. Jesus is the Father's ambassador. Now listen, the word for sent is the word, where we get our word apostle. The apostles of the Lord are his sent ones.

[ 30 : 02 ] Jesus uses that same word to describe himself. He is the capital A apostle. He is the ultimate apostle. He is the one whom the Father has sent.

How he is sent, he is not of the world, but he is sent into the world. And he is sent into the world on the Father's mission. He is the Father's ambassador.

He reveals the Father. He speaks what the Father tells him to speak. We've seen this before in John. He speaks what the Father says. He does what the Father tells him to do. He represents his Father so that the world might understand what it means to live in the kingdom of God.

what it means to be fully human. Jesus shows us what it means to be fully human. He's the ultimate human, but he's also God.

In him, the writer of Hebrews picks up, I think, on this idea in chapter three, verses one and two.

Therefore, holy brothers, you who share in the heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the apostle and high priest of our confession, who was faithful to him, who appointed him.

[ 31 : 16 ] He was appointed apostle and high priest by the Father. He is the one the Father sent. And then, what does this mean then?

Because what did Jesus come to do? He tells us to seek and to save the lost, right? Am I right? You know that? See? So hold it. If he is this ambassador, this ultimate sent one, that means God has always been what we call a missional God.

He's always been seeking. He's always been seeking. Listen, he sought Adam and Eve after they sinned against him. He sought Noah to preserve humanity after the flood.

He sought Abraham to bring him into the promised land and create a nation through him. He sought a people to bring them out of slavery to himself in Israel. He sought a king to lead his people named David and made a dynasty through him by which he would send the ultimate sent one, the ultimate king, to bring final salvation to his children.

And even now, the Lord Jesus said, the Father seeks worshipers. Remember that in John? The Father seeks worshipers who will worship him in spirit and in truth through his son.

[ 32 : 41 ] God is a seeking God. He's always seeking and we see it fully in Jesus and then he says, I've sent them. That's the last thing.

Christ's disciples are his ambassadors to the world. We are those now whom the Son has sent.

Jesus ascends back into glory. Remember? He talks about this.

He ascends back into glory and then he pours out someone like himself. The Holy Spirit comes to take up residence in his place in all of our lives.

In all of our lives. So that now, we are now endued with the power and presence of Christ to live as now his ambassadors.

I know. It's deep, ain't it? I just said that. I like that kid. We are your sent ones. And see, listen.

Without the sanctifying work of the word in our lives, we would not be able to represent Christ as ambassadors.

[ 33 : 53 ] It all goes together. That's why I say, see, we are sanctified and sent. The sanctification equips us to be sent into the world and not live according to the world's standards, but according to the kingdom's standards.

See, we have all we need, y'all. We have all we need in Jesus to live the kind of life that lets people know what it is like to live in the kingdom of God with Christ as king.

We're representing that king and that kingdom. And it can be intense in times. It can be very intense. Because it's a 24-7 job. 24-7 reality.

Because we are in the family. And so you never stop being a child. Your children represent your family 24-7, by the way. And so do we as the Lord's ambassadors represent him 24-7.

When you wake up in the morning, you wake up as an ambassador for Christ. When you eat your Wheaties, you're eating your Wheaties as an ambassador for Christ.

[ 35 : 09 ] When you clean your house, you are cleaning your house as an ambassador for Christ. When you play with your kids, you are playing with your kids as an ambassador for Christ.

When you go to work, when you walk out the door and go to work, you are laboring in that job as an ambassador, a sent one, small-a apostle for Christ.

When you go to school, you walk into the university, whether it be a Christian school or not, you are walking in as an ambassador for Christ and his kingdom.

When you join me on the disc golf course and your disc hits a tree, it has happened to the ambassador for Christ.

so watch your language. Just like being an ambassador as I read to you in the very beginning is all life-consuming.

[ 36 : 15 ] Being an ambassador for Jesus is just, is even more so. Even more so. Every area of our life is connected to the fact that we have been sent by Christ.

You've heard me say this before. So I'm going to say it again. Where you live is not an accident. You were sent there. But I don't like where I live. I understand and God may want to move you out of there.

Amen to that. But you were sent there. You're there as his ambassador. I hate my job. These people drive me crazy. They treat me badly. I hear you. And God may move you to a new job.

Amen. But don't forget the fact that where you are right now, you didn't have, that's not an accident. You were sent there by Jesus.

We have to start seeing ourselves as sent people. This is where, and I think sometimes we see our, okay. Sometimes we see ourselves as everything else but that.

[ 37 : 22 ] God help us. Some of us, we see ourselves as more American than Christian. we love this nation more than the kingdom of God. Or worse, we equate this nation with the kingdom of God.

That's even worse by the way. We are Christ's ambassadors, watch this, who've been sent to America.

And I don't care if you don't like the president. I don't care. I don't care who the president is. I'm going to vote, though. I'm going to do my due diligence.

And by the way, I'm not commanded by God to vote. So I know some of us have tried to do that. Don't go there. Please don't go there. We're not commanded by God to vote. But if you want to impact this nation, you should vote.

You should vote often as you can. Engage. But that's not the only way to engage the culture. The question is, not are you voting, the question is, are you living as a sent person engaging the world around you?

[ 38 : 25 ] Whether you're voting, I hope you are, but there's so many other things you need to be doing. So many other things. Because politics will not save this nation.

We want good laws, amen. We want religious freedom, amen. So you probably should vote.

Because that stuff is going to be attacked. However, that's not where we're putting our hope.

It's in the work that you do. In the work that you do. In the people you encounter. In the people whose lives you touch. And the systems that you touch.

Because you're a part of that, whatever system it is. Maybe you work in government. Maybe you work in healthcare. You're a part of that system. You can be used by, you were sent there. You were sent there.

You're a teacher. We got lots of instructors in this church. Lots of teachers. You, wherever you, wherever you're instructing, wherever you're teaching, you were sent there. Let his word, let his word, let his word, sanctify you.

[ 39 : 33 ] Correcting your thinking, desiring, speech, whatever it is. Actions. Let his word continue to sanctify you so that you will represent Christ as an ambassador in those places.

And I'm telling you, people gonna notice. Some will notice and come to Christ. And some will notice and attack you. That's not your call.

That's in his hands. We've been sent. Okay, there we go. It's exciting.

I don't know, I think ambassadors are probably excited to be ambassadors for their country. Are you excited to be an ambassador for the kingdom? For the king, do you understand?

We're dealing with cosmic stakes. Not just geopolitical stakes, we're dealing with cosmic stakes.

We're in the center of the work of God, saints. We're in the middle of the kingdom of God, which is, which reigns forever and ever in the king.

[ 40 : 42 ] We're right here. Jesus said, I have all authority in heaven and in earth. That's our president. That's our king. That's our czar. That's, hello. Hello.

We're in the center of this thing. The center of what God is doing in the world. There's no better place to be. But we gotta stay on mission.

You see, to get off mission, you have to let go of some part of the truth. You gotta, just get back on mission. Maybe the Lord, maybe you've seen somewhere in your life where you've let go of some part of the truth.

Maybe you never even thought of yourself as a small A apostle, one who has been sent by Jesus. Well, correct that thinking and let's begin to see ourselves rightly and get ourselves back on mission.

So when you walk out these doors, matter of fact, stop that. When you, when you look around this room, when the sermon is over and you are ambassadors hanging out together, this is our gala.

[ 41 : 47 ] This is our, we're, we're ambassadors for Christ hanging out together, encouraging each other, praying for each other, hugging and loving each other, doing what we can to support one another so that when we go back out those doors, we go back out ready.

Ready. Strengthened in Jesus. Knowing that he is with us. Knowing that we're not alone. Knowing that we have all the resources of heaven at our beck and call to achieve the mission that God has called us to.

There's nothing more exciting than this. It's more exciting than the Knicks winning this, the NBA final last night. And that's very exciting by the way. Maybe we should think more, maybe we should get kind of an Olympian attitude.

I thought about this this morning. Olympians, athletes, the Olympic athletes. athletes. You know, you do know that each one of those athletes is an ambassador, right?

They're all ambassadors. Literally, they're ambassadors from their country to the Olympics. So however they behave in that country where the Olympics are taking place reflects upon their country.

[ 42 : 59 ] So they truly are ambassadors. And I love about them because they recognize they compete, they're in a competition. they recognize there's a battle going on. And in order, in order to be at their best, they train constantly.

They're not slouching around. They watch their diet, they exercise, they do what they got to do. They are experts in their field. We can learn from them.

Because Paul uses a lot of athletic imagery in his letters, by the way. He loved the games of his day. And we need to think of ourselves a little bit like that.

We're in a competition with the forces of darkness. Not each other, not other churches, but the forces of darkness. Not even people per se, though people are right in your face, there's something behind the people.

We're fighting that force behind the people in particular. Yeah, we have to stand against the people too because they're being used by the forces of darkness. But Paul says, we wrestle not against flesh and blood.

[ 44 : 11 ] So the real enemy is behind them. We got to see ourselves in competition. And if you're going to fight with those guys, you better come right. I hope you're working out. We got to get into the gymnasium.

Lift the Bible a few times. Press the word. Let it sink in. That's how we work out. And then we fellowship. We come around each other and we coach each other. Oh yeah, your form's a little off there. We help each other because we're in a competition that's cosmic and life and death stuff at stake here.

Eternal life and eternal death. we got to see ourselves a little bit like Olympians. Are you in training? Remember, he died that he might sanctify you in the truth. That means he's about doing it.

[ 45 : 18 ] He's about doing it right now. He's about doing it. Are you resisting or yielding? He's at work right now in this message and your Bible reading, your Sunday school class.

He's at work in things you're going through. He's at work. Are you yielding to him? Are you listening to him and say, okay, now put your hand right here. Put your hand right here. He's checking your form.

He's making sure you won't hurt yourself when you exert yourself for his cause. He's working with you. Listen, if you get out of training, when you get out of training, that's when people get hurt. Come on, somebody. Tell me where my athlete's at. You stop training and then you try to do what you did before. Ouch. We got to get, stay in training.

Stay in training. So God can use us as his sent ones to influence the world. I ain't saying save the world.

[ 46 : 21 ] I ain't gonna save the world. We certainly can influence it now. As we, as people are, escape darkness and come into light. Wow. What's better than this?

What's better than this? Father, bless your word to your people's hearts. May we begin to see ourselves truly as those who have been sent, who are sanctified and sent for your cause. In Jesus' name.