

“Win, Equip, Send”

Acts 13

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Transcriber’s Note: The recording began a few minutes after the beginning of Mike’s presentation.

Mike: Today we’re just going to take a quick picture, a birds-eye view of the book of Acts. We’re going to do Acts chapter 13 today. And I’m not trying to cover every detail of Acts chapter 13 or of the book of Acts, but kind of in the middle. Why start in the beginning? Let’s start in the middle. And so that’s what we’re going to do.

Anyway, let’s think about Acts chapter 13. Would someone like to read Acts 13:1-3 for us?

Tom Hansz: *“In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’ So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.”*

Mike: Thank you; I appreciate that, Tom. As we’re looking at this passage, it’s very interesting, the mixture of people that are named right there. That’s quite a mixture. And when you begin to look at those individuals, you have Barnabas. He was from Cyprus, and he was a Levite. And so we start out with him. I have to look up my notes here because I forgot to do that.

Anyway Barnabas was from Cyprus and he was a Levite, and he is listed in there. Of course we know some stories about Barnabas.

Then you think of Simon who was the next guy. He is Simon called Niger. He was a black man; he was from northern Africa. And so you see that he is in that mixture. We see here next Lucius of Cyrene. He was a Jew from North Africa. These people are coming in who are culturally and racially different.

We’ve got Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch. And so from what I can find he was considered a foster brother of Herod, brought up alongside of Herod. So you begin to see this mixture here again, these different individuals who are listed.

And then we have Saul—Saul of Tarsus, and we know his story. He was a Pharisee. So we have these folks gathered together. And what are they doing?

Brave Man: Worshiping.

Mike: They’re worshiping together, yep. They’re engaged in worshiping the Lord together, just spending time together in the Lord.

As we think about our world today, as we think about all the comments about race today, how we are divided into groups all over this country, being systematically divided into groups, it seems to me. And we are not being taught to love each other and walk together with each other; we’re being taught to suspect everybody. That’s kind of the way it’s been going on in our culture lately, like last year.

And so here’s a group that is completely anti-cultural in the United States, okay? This group is worshiping together in the Lord Jesus Christ. What an amazing picture we see right there of unity! No matter what the racial background, no matter what the cultural background from different places, it’s an amazing picture.

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And you see that while they're there, while they're gathered together, the Holy Spirit begins to lead them. And we see that the Holy Spirit says, *“Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul, for the work to which I have called them.”*

So I want to talk just a moment about the Trinity. The Holy Spirit isn't talked about a whole lot in Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and other books of the Bible. The Holy Spirit isn't talked about a whole lot. He is, okay? He's a He by the way, not an it. He is talked about some. Yet in the whole book of Acts we find that the Holy Spirit is talked about 43 times, four times in Chapter 13. In the book of Acts Jesus is mentioned 76 times with the name Jesus. In other places it might say “Lord,” or He might be referred to in other places. But 76 times, five times in chapter 13, we see the name of Jesus listed, and God or Father 160 times in the book of Acts, 24 times in chapter 13.

And so we see a picture of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit in the Book of Acts, probably greater than any other book of the Bible. That's what I thought, anyway. The Trinity is combined and put together in one book of the Bible. It's a powerful picture. And they interact as you read through the book of Acts, and you're looking specifically for the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. You deal with that picture, and they are so intertwined in the way the names are used back and forth that it's clear that it's one God in three Persons. We talk about the Trinity and what that's all about. So if you want a picture of the Trinity, think about that as you study through the whole book of Acts. If you really look at that it's an amazing picture.

So what we see going here though is that we see this. I'm going to back up a step. If you go back to chapter 11, where we're at here is that we're at Antioch. And we have Barnabas and Saul coming into Antioch. And they spend a year or more in Antioch. And so here they are; they're gathered together. You've got the greatest evangelists or the greatest preachers, right? So you can say that at our church we've got the greatest preachers in the world: the apostle Paul, Barnabas, and some of the greatest in the world are here. And they're advertising out in the community and they're putting it on Facebook. *(Laughter)* And they put it on Instagram and it's out all over. “Come on and see these guys who are here!” And so they're leading the church in Antioch; they've been there for over a year.

All of a sudden, here we are. We have this group that is worshiping together. And the Holy Spirit says, “Send them out.”

So I attend Christ Church here at Grove Farm. And to me that would be like Pastor Gyergyo—Pastor Craig has been here now about two years—it would be equivalent to the Holy Spirit saying, “Send out Pastor Craig and send out his next in command,” who right now is Pastor Mike Arnold. “Pray for them and send them out to go and do mission work.” And then the church is saying, “What do You mean, send them out? What are we going to do?”, right? So that's kind of the picture that we see going on here right here in the middle of all this.

And so it's not just another thing going on. And this actually becomes the first missionary journey. Paul is credited with three major missionary journeys, and this is the first one that he had been sent out on. So that's kind of a little bit of the background and the history of what's going on right here.

“So after they had fasted and prayed, they laid their hands on them and sent them off.” Think about what was going on. You have kind of a picture of people coming to Christ and this church being built, right? And Paul and Barnabas were there, and Simon

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and Manaen and all of the different people that were talked about there in Antioch. The church is being built. And for the church to be built they have to come to Christ. People are coming to Christ. They are sharing the gospel and they're coming to Christ.

So we see people coming to Christ, and they are being built up in their faith. Bible studies are a picture of being built. Sermons from the pulpit are a picture of being built and equipped. The saints are being equipped to do the works of ministry. We see a picture in Ephesians 4:11 ff. the purpose of pastors and teachers and evangelists. It's to equip the saints to do the works of ministry. If you read down through there, it's an amazing picture, as people are equipped not to sit in their seats, but equipped to do the works of the ministry. So out in front of your church, wherever you go to church, the sign should say, "Pastor: So-and-So. Ministers: every member." Every Christian ministers. It's kind of the idea of what that should be like.

But we see a picture of what's going on in Antioch in chapter 11—people being won, people being built, people being equipped. And now we're seeing people being sent out, Paul and Barnabas being sent out. And of course we know from the last verse of chapter 12 that John Mark is with them. And so if you look at the very last verse of chapter 12 it says: "*Now when Barnabas and Saul had finished their mission in Jerusalem, they returned from Jerusalem, taking with them John Mark.*" And we see later on that he travels with them on this missionary journey that they're going on, this missionary journey #1 that they are going on. It's a picture of win, pray, equip, send. This is the picture that we are seeing here. And that's the picture that we should be seeing in the church, right? That's the picture that we see in the model all the way through the book of Acts. It's to win them, to build people up, and to equip them to do the works of ministry, whether it's being sent out to Chicago or Cambodia and Guatemala or wherever, or whether it's sending it out to your neighbor across the street.

At the police department over here the staff of the church was at the police department the other day. There were twelve of us over there praying with the police officers after the difficult scenarios that they had. We were praying at the fire department as well, praying with the fire chief. We go out, right? We don't stay in the building; we leave the house. So that's some of the stuff that we see going on there.

As we look down a little bit further at verse 4 of chapter 13, "*The two of them, sent on their way by the Holy Spirit, went down to Selucia and sailed from there to Cyprus. When they arrived at Salamis they proclaimed the word of God in Jewish synagogues. And John was with them as their helper.*" That would be John Mark.

Sig Tragard: Who is John Mark? Is it the apostle John or the apostle Mark?

Mike: Neither. John Mark is the guy that ends up being talked about only a couple of times. But he was with them here. He was a new believer in Jerusalem. He traveled with them as they left Jerusalem and came back to Antioch. They had been to Antioch, went to Jerusalem and came back to Antioch. John Mark came with them. And in chapter 13 in verse 13, "*At Paphos Paul and his companions sailed to Perga and Pamphylia, where John left them and returned to Jerusalem.*" And it wasn't a good thing. There was a sharp division that we find later in the Scripture. There was a sharp division, as he apparently bailed in the midst of difficulty. And we see that Paul and Barnabas actually split up over this whole situation. And then they get back together later. We see this later in Scripture.

Don Maurer: So Mike, this is not the writer of the second Gospel?

Brave Man: Yes.

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Mike: I don't believe so. Don, you're saying it is?

Don: That's what I always thought. It's the same guy who wrote the second Gospel.

Mike: Well I don't know if it is or isn't; I'm not going to pretend. I don't know if it is or isn't.

Don: Okay.

Mike: So Paul says yes, Don says yes. Maybe it is. I'm not going to pretend that I know. I'm quick to tell you if I know or don't know; I don't know. But what I do know is that there was a sharp division that happened. John Mark bailed in the midst of difficulty and was later reunited with them. That's a whole other story down the road. And he may have been the Mark who wrote the Gospel of Mark; I'm not sure.

So as we look at the picture though—the picture of the Holy Spirit here in verse 4—they are sent on their way by the Holy Spirit. So here we see that again: the Holy Spirit in verse 2 and the Holy Spirit in verse 4.

So let's talk about this for a moment. As you guys see it, what do you see is the mission of the Holy Spirit? We have the Father, we have the Son, and we have the Holy Spirit. Bruce Bickel used to always say, “What the Father has ordained the Son accomplished, and the Holy Spirit applies in our lives.” Bruce talked about that a lot.

And yet let's get into more detail. Let's talk about the Holy Spirit for a minute. When we think about Him all of a sudden saying, “Set apart Saul and Barnabas,” here we see that they were sent on their way by the Holy Spirit. How do you react to this in your minds? What comes to mind when you think about that??

Bryan Whittington: What are you asking us?

Mike: So when you think about the Holy Spirit's job, His role, do you think about the Holy Spirit sending you to your neighbor? Do you think about the Holy Spirit sending you on a missions trip somewhere? Do you think about the Holy Spirit leading you to somebody to share the gospel? How do you see the Holy Spirit in His role?

Bryan: To leverage off of what Bruce has said, it's convict, convert and compel. So the Holy Spirit convicts you of your sin, converts you into belief, and then compels you to live out who you are in Christ. We talk about the Ephesians verse. Be who you are because of who you are: indicatives and imperatives. The role of the Holy Spirit is to empower people before they go out into the world.

Mike: Yeah. Back there? Yes, Matt?

Matt Reichart: I know how controversial this is. Scripture is our final revelation. So here is a curious question. How did the Holy Spirit speak to all these men who prayed? Was it an audible voice? So I guess the question applies to us even as believers. How do we know that it's His and not our idea? I think that's where the leadership of my particular organization comes into play. So if we all agree, great. If we don't, let's pray about it and come together to reach a consensus, because the Holy Spirit really impresses this on our hearts. I know the discussion that surrounds it, but I believe that the Holy Spirit only speaks through the Word. But I do believe that the Holy Spirit leads us and guides us. And so I guess they were coming together as believers—in the Word, praying, fasting, seeking the Lord. So I'm curious how the Holy Spirit is speaking. He mentions the challenge of going forward..

Mike: Right.

Matt: How do we know that this is God's will? My experience is that through the Word He directs us.

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Mike: Yeah. Ted has his hand up over here. Then I’ll answer.

Ted Wood: This is an excellent question. I mean, to me that was the question. I don’t know anybody in the church historically within the last two thousand years who would say that the Holy Spirit doesn’t speak to the church, and that we don’t have to listen to what the Spirit is saying. But the question is how did that happen? Because it doesn’t say that after they sat around and read the Bible for half an hour that they came up with this idea. It sounds quite Pentecostal to me. *(Laughter)* But how does that actually happen? I mean, churches are sitting around and not seeking the Holy Spirit to find out where we go. That’s a problem. But if you just say, “Okay, we feel like seeking the wisdom of the Holy Spirit based on Scripture.” How does that actually happen?

Matt: So I’m asking the question, and you can repeat it there. The question is what does it mean to be ministering to the Lord? Could you define that? They were ministering to the Lord and fasting. So what does that mean?

Mike: Okay. So let me take one at a time. So it’s the idea of how exactly did the Holy spirit do this? Did He speak out loud like you hear me talking? How did this operate?

Well, let’s back up one step. You know, one of the issues that we have as, using the term “the Reformed church,” the church as we see it today, one of the issues that we have is this. I’ll use a different example. The Catholic Church has a very high emphasis on Mary. As a result the Protestant Church never talks about Mary. We step back and say that we’re afraid that if we talk about Mary, then we’re going to end up sounding too Catholic. Meanwhile Mary was blessed among women, so let’s talk about her. No problem, right?

And so it’s the same thing with the Holy Spirit. Ted, you brought up the term “Pentecostal.” We’re afraid again because of the super emphasis on the Holy spirit by the Pentecostal church or the charismatic church—however you want to label that—because of the high emphasis there. And I would say that with the rest of the church the reaction is that we pull back and almost never talk about the Holy Spirit. It’s almost like we’re afraid to talk about that because we don’t want to be labeled. I don’t want to say something wrong and be labeled as a Pentecostal, because we’re quick to label, right? Isn’t that true? We’re quick to label. And yet here we face this in the Scripture. And we say, how do we deal with that?

So first of all, I don’t know the answer as to whether they sit around and hear the voice of the Holy spirit as you hear me talking. I don’t know the answer to that because it doesn’t clearly say that. It sounds like that might have been the case. However, what I view it as is exactly what you talked about, Matt. That is unanimity. And here all of a sudden it begins to pop into people’s hearts and minds, coming back to what you said that Bruce said, that He convicts us and compels us. And how does that compelling look? What does that compelling look like? In a group all of a sudden we begin to think, hey. Maybe it’s time for Paul and Barnabas to go out. And pretty soon everybody is compelled, however that happened. I don’t know exactly how that happened there. But that unanimity that you talked about in your leadership team was present here.

Take a husband and a wife in marriage. If I think the Lord is leading me this way, and my wife says, “Oh no, no; we’re going this way!”, then one of us is wrong, and maybe both of us.

Ted: It’s you. *(Laughter)* You learn the hard way.

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Mike: Et tu, Brutus. So as a married couple you have the absolutely important part of having unanimity to have a solid marriage. You have to learn to walk together. And that doesn't mean that I'm always right and she's always wrong. That doesn't mean that she's always right and I'm always wrong, although it sometimes might work out that way. But what it means is that if we're not agreeing on something fundamental we need to really work together and say, "Lord, what direction would You have us go in?" And we don't give up until we're on the same page. Like you're talking about, the compelling of the Spirit of God isn't going to lead somebody this way and somebody this way in marriage or in a situation like this. Go ahead, Matt.

Matt: I think it's interesting with the history of this church, because I've watched John Guest since I was in high school and college. He started this church downtown, right? And then the church allowed him to be an evangelist. So he is part of the history. In our text you get this as an example. They sent him out for a while. I don't know how long he was out, but—

Mike: He did not start Christ Church at Grove Farm. He was called to be the pastor after the church started, okay? So the church was already organized and put together and he was called as a pastor. At that time he was the head of the John Guest Evangelistic Association. He was traveling the world as kind of a Billy Graham type of deal, and they called him to be the pastor. And he went back and accepted the call. Yes, Don?

Don: For what it's worth, I think we have to keep in mind that the Canon had not been completed yet. So I have no problem with the Holy Spirit speaking audibly to them at that time. They certainly knew it was the Holy Spirit, unlike us today who may have to struggle with that. I think today that the Holy Spirit convicts me to speak to my neighbor or to go to a certain place to preach the gospel—not just me, but whatever—by circumstances, by the principles of the Word that He gives each one of us. That's my two cents.

Mike: I agree with you 100%, Don, that it very well could have been the Holy Spirit speaking audibly. It could have been God speaking right in their midst. Just by the way you look at this, talking about the Canon of Scripture, this is not about new Scripture. This is about leading them to go to minister somewhere. And I have no problem with saying this. Some of you may not like this. But I have no problem saying that the Holy Spirit can do the same thing today. It isn't normal, but I think it can happen today in leading people to go and do ministry. Not new Scripture, not new direction, that sort of thing. So I'm going to move on because of the amount of time here. Are there other comments?

Bryan: Another question.

Mike: Yes.

Bryan: I was just going to say that I think we get ourselves wrapped up and we worry too much about what God's will is. And we go back to where it starts and just deal with Scripture, and there is such tremendous grace. And it would be so much easier for us to go, "Well God said this," or "God said that,"—legalism and whatnot.

Mike: Right.

Bryan: There is so much freedom in grace that God allows us to go forward with what we think is right. But to your point, the Lord will let you know if you're wrong, and there are going to be some circumstances to get you back on track. But it often occurs in

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the context of the counsel of other godly men to get you on track, as it were. On your own you can make stuff up and come up with really good excuses as to why this is right.

Mike: Yep. Again, coming back to the counsel, it's not one person that is freelance saying, "God told me to do this." And he goes off and kills four people because God told him to do that. But it's a matter of counsel—your people together, the staff, a husband and wife together. It's not about you; it's about the building of the church and about the bigger picture of the kingdom.

What I want to do here is due to time is that I want to move on down through a little bit real quick. In Acts chapter 2 we see the Spirit of God leading Peter, and he preaches a message. And what happens when he's done preaching that message in Acts 2? How many came to Christ?

Ted and Don: Three thousand.

Mike: Three thousand, yes. And there were people added daily to that number after that. An amazing story; we love to talk about that. But it says that Peter, being led by the Spirit, did that.

All right. Then we see in chapter 7 Stephen being led by the Spirit. And his outcome wasn't quite so good. He was stoned to death for preaching a similar message. They were cut to the heart with Peter. And they said, "*Brothers, what shall we do?*" They were cut to the heart with Stephen. And they didn't like it and they killed him. Both men were led by the Spirit.

And we see Philip and the Ethiopian in chapter 8 led by the Spirit—Philip talking to the Ethiopian along the highway and along the road. And we see the Ethiopian coming to Christ saying, "Can you baptize me here? Why don't you baptize me?", all right? And we see what we would call success in leading somebody to Christ there.

Then we move forward down to chapter 13. We see the first missionary journey going on. Here Paul is talking to different people through the end of the chapter. We're not going to be reading all the way through the chapter because of time. But at the end of the chapter we see Paul making a plea. And around verse 38 he's wrapping up with that plea. He says, "*Therefore, my friends, I want you to know that through Jesus the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you. Through Him everyone who believes is set free from every sin with the justification that you were not able to obtain under the law of Moses. Take care.*" And I'm not going to keep reading all the way down, but he's pleading with them.

Verse 42: "*As Paul and Barnabas were leaving the synagogue, the people invited them to speak further about these things on the next Sabbath. When the congregation was dismissed, many of the Jews and devout converts to Judaism followed Paul and Barnabas, who taught the church to continue in the grace of God. On the next Sabbath almost the whole city gathered to hear them.*"

Wow! Big things are going on; the whole city is gathering. How do you think the whole city knew about it? Somebody had to open his mouth and start telling people, right? Isn't that our job every single week, every single day, to tell people? We have to get the word out. And here the whole city is gathering after one time at the church. I guess they go to church, right?

At the end, though, in verse 49, "*The word of the Lord spread through the whole region. And the Jewish leaders, and some of the God-fearing women of high standing and the leading men of that city stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas. And they were run out of that city.*"

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Those are just four different responses from them being led by the Holy Spirit. They are preaching a message starting way back in the Old Testament. Peter brings it into that time and three thousand are saved. Stephen starts back in the Old Testament and brings it to them at that time. He gets killed, and guess what? It wasn't about him. It was about what happened as a result of Stephen being stoned to death. Because of persecution the church spread all over the place. The gospel was let out; it was no longer located in one spot. Boom! It explodes.

Being led by the Spirit, guys, doesn't take us to pretty places sometimes. I think of Jeremiah the prophet. He preached for forty years with no success, and he got angry with God. And God said, “Okay; I'll take away your prophethip.” (*Laughter*) He reinstated it later. But following the Lord doesn't mean instant success as we see it.

I want to deal with one more thing here. And that is that David is talked about two times right in the center of this passage. So if you just think a little bit, we'll look at 13:22. “*After removing Saul He made David their king.*”

This is in the middle of Paul preaching the gospel. He's going from the Old Testament coming up through the present. He says, “*After removing Saul He made David their king. God testified concerning him: 'I have found David the son of Jesse a man after My own heart.'*” Why is David called a man after God's own heart when he was a murderer, an adulterer, a man of war? Why was he called a man after God's own heart?

Brave Man: He repented?

Ted: He did God's will.

Mike: He repented and did God's will. So look at what it says in verse 22. I only read part of it; I didn't finish it. It was because he will do what God wants him to do. Yes, he would do what God wanted him to do. A man after God's heart because he would do what God wanted. Ted?

Ted: But he didn't; he didn't always do it. I mean, he was a man of blood and a murderer. even so, we say that. But maybe you're saying that he's a man after God's own heart after the Bathsheba episode; I don't know.

Mike: But he had an amazing trust in the promises of God. He had the desire to follow God and to follow the law of God. That desire was there; he made it really clear in so many things that he did. He didn't kill Saul when he could have. Why? Because he was God's anointed. He understood the bigger picture very well. And yes, he was a sinner like you and me. But he was a man who did what God wanted him to do.

Matt: I don't know if we have time to go through this. But I don't see anywhere where any time God told him to do something that he didn't do it. He had pride with Bathsheba. He lost his senses; there were consequences. But when God told him to do something he did it.

Mike: That's right. I don't think you can find one instance where when God would lead him to do something that he didn't do it.

Matt: And that's a challenge to us.

Mike: Yes, right. It's a huge challenge to us.

Matt: That's right.

Mike: Do you want to be a man after God's own heart? We're going to look at one more verse and then we're going to wrap up. Verse 36 of chapter 13 is the second part of David's story. Ted, would you mind reading verse 36?

Ted: Verse 36?

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Mike: Yes.

Ted: *“For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep and was laid with his fathers and saw corruption.”*

Mike: That’s good right there. So just read that first part one more time.

Ted: *“For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep.”*

Mike: So when David had fulfilled God’s purpose, when he had done what God wanted him to do, he fell asleep; he died. You have purpose until your last breath. I don’t care what your situation is; you have purpose until your last breath.

I had three great examples of that in my life. My mother, after she was in a nursing home for three years, had bone cancer. Her arm was broken off in here. She had nowhere to reattach it; they put it in a sling. She was blind in one eye and she was half-blind in the other eye with macular degeneration. She had dementia.

She always remembered my name, and we started talking about the Lord. The Lord gave her a gift. She could instantly wake up out of her sleep, and her mind would instantly wake up. And she could counsel with you; she could talk with you; she could pray with you. And it was guaranteed to be confidential because twenty minutes later she didn’t know you were there. *(Laughter)*

But I watched her. And until her last breath I would say, “mom, what do you want me to pray with you about?”

“Just pray that the Lord would send one more person here that I could share Christ with.” The last person that I know who came to Christ was the result of my mother talking to a hospice worker before she died. And I could speak of other examples like that. But you’re going to have breath until you’ve fulfilled God’s purpose for you. Remember, it’s not about you. It’s about the King, right?

Brave Man: Amen.

Brave Man: Also Ephesians 4:1: *“As a prisoner of the Lord I implore you to walk worthy of the calling to which you have been called.”*

Mike: Amen. So I have a tentmaker here. And the average life expectancy in Western Pennsylvania for a man is 78.7 years. That’s the average life expectancy for a man in Western Pennsylvania right now. It’s 78.7, give or take, all right? Right here is 67, and that’s how old I am in two weeks; I’ll be 67. I’m not sure how old you are. But you’re on this scale or you’re above this scale.

Jim Hamilton: I’m looking at 86. *(Laughter)*

Mike: If you’re 86 that means that God has given you an incredible amount of extra purpose; that’s what that means. So if we die younger than this or we die older than this, the average is 78 years on the scale.

So now we have a young man. He’s way back here and he has a long way to go. I’ve just shown you that because time is short. Whether you’re 22 years old or 14 years old or 87 years old, or whatever it is, time is short. And we have an opportunity right now. Matthew 28:18 tells us in the Great commission to *“go and make disciples, baptizing them,”* and all of that. Go; make disciples.

Does anybody know 2 Timothy 1:7?

Matt: *“The Lord has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and a sound mind.”*

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Mike: Yes. God has not given us a spirit of fear or of timidity, but of love, power and self-discipline. So think about it. He has not given us a spirit of fear or timidity until you're 65. Then you can be fearful and timid, right?

Anyway, Galatians 2:20 says what? *“I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me. And the life I live I live by faith in the Son of God.”*

And so think about some of these things; put them together. As Bruce would say, you've heard it. Now what are you going to do with it? I'll wrap it up right there. But guys, we have a purpose. We see the Spirit sending men out as we see the church being built. That hasn't stopped. We stand on the shoulders of the generations before us. The people after us stand on our shoulders as did previous generations. So it's not time to say, “Well, I've done enough.” It's not time to say, “I gave at the office.” It's not time to say, “Let somebody younger do it.” It's time to say, “It's about the Kingdom; it's not about my comfort. It's about the Kingdom being built.” And we need to be a part of that kingdom being built.

Brave Men: Amen.

Mike: All right. See you guys; have a good day. *(Applause)*

Let me close in prayer and then we'll wrap up. Father, thank You so much for the great morning You've given to us. Thank You, Lord, for Your word that's so convicting. Holy Spirit, thank You that You do empower us. You do convict us; You do teach us; You counsel us. Thank You that You kick us in the butt sometimes and push us along when we don't want to. Lord, may Your Spirit this morning lay upon us the desire to have the passion that we see in the apostle Paul, the passion that we see in Barnabas, the passion that we see in Peter and in the other men of the Scripture. Lord, raise us up to be men who are not afraid. Raise us up to be men who, even if we are afraid, will move forward by the power of the Spirit of God. Lord, may we be more gathered in worship with a few brothers, like these guys were in Acts chapter 13. May we be gathered in worship; may we be seeking you with other brothers who move forward to build Your church. Use us, Lord, any way You see fit. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Brave Men: Amen. *(Applause)*