



Sermon – 01/08/2023  
Shane Mikeska

**Verses Covered**

*John 17:1 - 26*

Well, good morning church family. It is a privilege for me to be here to open God's word with us this morning. For those who don't know me, my name is Shane Mikeska. I'm the Missions Pastor here at this church and it is a privilege for me to stand before you just to teach. I mean, one of my heartbeats and passion is that we live a life on mission for Jesus Christ and His glory. And it's a joy as we get to open this passage. We'll be in John chapter 17 this morning. The high priestly prayer as many have called it. This prayer that Jesus gives us and we're going to look two main things. What does it look like to know God. And because we know God, what does that look like to be set out for Him, for His glory to be sent ones. You see, my wife and I, we both kind of grew up in the church. She grew up in Houston and I grew up in Dallas. And we've been blessed to be served by churches just like this one. And so since I was negative nine months old, I've been in the church and I love the church. I got taught by children's leaders. I got taught in Sunday school classes. Uh I got to go to the youth group and learn about the Gospel from youth leaders. By God's grace, He saved me when I was 13 years old. And then from there, just going off to college and I came here to Texas A&M University and sat in this church, the old building but this church, and got to be blessed by people at this church to pour into me, to show me, and model the Gospel for me. I had the privilege of working under Tim Skaggs for two years in the youth department. Being a youth leader and God just through that began to continue to stir my affections for what God has for my life. And really, in one sense, just not knowing God. Uh I'm your servant. I came, I came here to A&M. No desire to do full-time ministry at all. But just, I just, my hands kind of open, God, I want to be Your servant. God, I want to live for You. And God just you to stir in my heart. What does that look like for me to just devote my life to the Lord? And so just reading God's word and just falling in love with His truth as we'll see in a second in this passage. Just knowing God and knowing His truth and knowing His word has just led my life to be on mission for Christ.

You see, so my wife and I met here at Central and it was years later after we had both gone on. I had, straight out of college, gone to Indonesia to work for USDA and Texas A&M University doing agriculture projects in Indonesia. And God opened my heart to just want to serve the nations and to bring the Gospel to the nations. And so my wife and I reconnected later. She had been working in Houston in oil and gas and we connect and get married and then we head off to

seminary. We both get educations at seminary and God just continues. Open our hands, "God let us let us know what You want for us. Lord, give us wisdom to serve You and honor You. And God open a door for us to actually go, after seminary, to go to Indonesia to serve the nations." We spent the last 14 years on the mission field. And love it. So, we left and went to Indonesia and just loved the people. I'll be honest, we landed and it just was a struggle. What a lot of people don't know is Indonesia's the fourth most populated country in the world. We have China with over a billion. India with over a billion. United States next and then Indonesia with almost 400 million people. Largest Muslim country in the world. And so my wife and I go and we just begin learning the language. That's what a lot of missionaries do. We learn language our first year. We just kind of dive in, get into the culture, get into those people. Okay, God, what does it look like for us to minister the Gospel here, to bring the Gospel to people. And so just began falling in love with the people. God, these people don't know You. Lord, they don't know the Gospel. We ran an agriculture farm there by God's grace. Our mission organization had this farm. And so we did duck projects, fish projects, goat projects. We had a little garden that we could teach and train and equip people how to raise basic fruits and vegetables. We had a little rice patty. We even had a little coffee thing. I love my coffee. We had great coffee. And so it was just enjoyable. And so we got to do that. But see the problem was about six months in to being in Indonesia while we're in language school, I get sick. I get some kind of tropical nastiness. Still to this day, we don't know exactly what it was. Originally, it's worms, amoebas, parasites living inside my body. I had to sit on a porcelain throne about 15 plus times a day. I don't know about you but for me, that's just not fun. But worse than that, not the dysentery and all that, but I felt like I was going to pass out all the time. My body was just shut down. And so, we just prayed and we got a part-time driver to help me drive to our farm. Our farm is about 45 minutes away from our house. And I laid curled up in the backseat of the car just praying God help me get there. Help me serve these people because part of our farm, we got to train and evangelism, and disciple-making, a church planting. We have to get the Gospel out to villages and peoples. And one of the things I came to God and I just wrestled with Him. I said, "God, like, we left everything. We left America to come here to serve You. Like, how effective am I if I'm just laying at home sick." And probably many of you know this but we read in Corinthians with Paul having this wrestle with God. And if you know the story of Job and his afflictions and suffering and yet says, blessed be the name of the Lord. You give, you take away. And so me, just reading Paul and Paul has this thorn in the flesh and he pleads with God three times for it to leave him. Paul's way better than me. I pleaded like 17,000 times. Like, "Lord, get this out of me. I want to be effective for You." And just struggled. But as Paul writes in Corinthians, God reminds Him, My grace is sufficient for you. God's power is made perfect in my weakness and just amazing.

But my question for us this morning is do you know that God? You know that God when you're struggling and you're living life and we live in a broken world, even in Bryan/College Station. Whether you're in Indonesia, Bryan/College Station, we live in a broken world, a hard world. And sometimes life is good and do we know God? Sometimes, life is hard and do we know God? And so as we dive into this passage, do we know God and as we know that God, does that compel us to live on mission for Christ? John chapter 17, this amazing prayer. I've been, I've been wrestling last couple of weeks. Do I, do I, which part of which section do we read, which part of this prayer? And I've decided, you know what, we're going to read the whole prayer. We got plenty of time. Philip graciously gave me two hours to preach. So, buckle up. We'll be fun. John chapter 17, the high priestly prayer. As we dive into this, it's just a beautiful prayer that Jesus gives us.

<sup>1</sup>When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, “Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son that the Son may glorify You, <sup>2</sup>since you have given Him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given Him. <sup>3</sup>And this is eternal life, that they know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. <sup>4</sup>I glorified You on earth, having accomplished the work that You gave me to do. <sup>5</sup>And now, Father, glorify me in Your own presence with the glory that I had with You before the world existed. <sup>6</sup>“I have manifested Your name to the people whom You gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and You gave them to me, and they have kept Your word. <sup>7</sup>Now they know that everything that You have given me is from you. <sup>8</sup>For I have given them Your words that You gave me, and they have received them and they’ve come to know them in truth that I came from You; and they have believed that You sent me. <sup>9</sup>I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but I’m praying for those whom You’ve given me, for they are Yours. <sup>10</sup>All mine are Yours, and Yours are mine, and I am glorified in them. <sup>11</sup>I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your name, which You have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one. <sup>12</sup>While I was with them, I kept them in Your name, which You have given me. I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost except for the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. <sup>13</sup>But now I am coming to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves. <sup>14</sup>I have given them Your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. <sup>15</sup>I do not ask that You take them out of the world, but I ask You keep them from the evil one. <sup>16</sup>They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. <sup>17</sup>Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth. <sup>18</sup>As You sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. <sup>19</sup>And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth. <sup>20</sup>“I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, <sup>21</sup>that they may all be one, just as You, Father, are in me, and I in You, and they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that You have sent me. <sup>22</sup>The glory that You’ve given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, <sup>23</sup>I in them and You in me, and they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that You sent me and loved them even as You loved me. <sup>24</sup>Father, I desire that they also, whom You’ve given me, may be where I am, to see my glory that You have given me because You loved me before the foundation of the world. <sup>25</sup>O righteous Father, even though the world does not know You, I know You, and these that You have sent me. <sup>26</sup>I made known to them Your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which You have loved me may be in them, and I in them.”

Let's pray.

Father God, what a glorious passage. This high priestly prayer, this prayer that You have given us to the saints, to know what it looks like to know God and the one whom You have sent, Jesus Christ. Lord, we thank You for the Gospel. We thank You that You've given us this Gospel. And if you've given us, Lord, we pray as You send us out into the world that we would take this great news to others in Christ's name. Amen.

This beautiful prayer that Jesus prays. This is right before Jesus heads off to the crucifixion. And so here, Jesus is just praying. He is praying and He's coming before the Father and He says,

“Glorify Your Son that Your Son may glorify You.” Jesus is given all authority. All authority over all flesh. We see this in Philippians as well. Jesus says, over all things, one day, every knee will bow at the name of Jesus and is to give us eternal life. But what's eternal life? We live in a world. We live in a culture that I'm not convinced your neighbors know what eternal life is. I'm not convinced your coworkers and your friends and your family know what eternal life is. I mean, we've had the privilege of traveling around the world and so we engage with Muslims and Buddhist and Sikhs and agnostics and atheists. Those that are far far from God. But I'm not convinced that's not unlike Bryan/College Station, Texas. You see, I'm fascinated in just engaging other religions around the world that that they all kind of boil down to almost kind of one kind of thing. Like whether you're a Muslim or Buddhist or a Sikh, you're all trying to appease a god or a goddess or a spiritual reality. Even if you believe in the reincarnation which for my perspective, a little weird. But it's like, I don't want to come back as a grasshopper. I want to come back as like a turtle. Like, that's weird. But you're still trying to do enough good that that's going to happen. Even if you believe in like enlightenment and nirvana, you're still trying to do enough good and that I can have enough knowledge or I can seek this peace that I'm okay when I die. The Gospel, the Gospel is the only one that's not about us. It's about God and Jesus, His Son, whom He sent because it's about His glory and not ours. It's about what He's accomplished on the cross, not what Shane has done. You see, we've been separated. We see beautifully in this prayer that He keeps going back to several different themes and we're not going to have time to dive into all those themes but one of those is the oneness. That we get to see the beauty of the Trinity. God the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit. That He's praying that we are one just as the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit are one, united. And we get to see this beautiful picture of what that looks like. And the question for us is, do we understand that we know this God? Do we understand that the beauty of eternal life is found in God? Do we know this God and Jesus Christ whom He's sent? You know, my heartbeat and my prayer is that we know God. As a church family, like I said before, I was blessed to grow up in churches that continually taught me the word and truth and about God and His Son, Jesus Christ. You know, I think sometimes in our lives, we just get so caught up in the busyness. And in today's world, we got, we got these things in our pocket that give us information in a matter of seconds. We've got Netflix and sports and everything else to entertain us to death. That our lives stay so busy that I'm not sure we're focusing on what it looks like to know God. And my challenge and my question for us constantly is, how do we know God? Like, how do I make this a priority in my life? And I think Jesus through his prayers, He reminds us constantly, like your word is truth. I have given them Your word. I've given them Your word. We are blessed. We have the whole council of God right here. But the question is, is Netflix more important than this? I went to the Aggie basketball game last night. Is the Aggie sports more important than this? The things that we do in life to keep us so busy is that more important than knowing God? You see, I think if we don't know this God, if we don't understand the God of the Bible, how we ever, as He compels us later to be sent out into the world, I'm not convinced we're going to go out into the world as sent ones. I'm not convinced that we're going to be excited about sharing this eternal life that people can be, that people can have through Jesus Christ without knowing God. So, it starts with knowing God. It starts with devoting myself or devoting oneself, devoting yourself to know God in such a way that it compels you to love others.

There's four words we use constantly in my household. I've got four little boys. But four words we say all the time. It's, love God, love others. But we've gotta love God. Love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. We've got to love God. We gotta seek God. We gotta know God. We gotta pursue God. We gotta know Him. You see, going back to Indonesia, we were there. I

would not have sustained myself, or my wife and I as a family would not have sustained ourselves if we didn't know God. Would have been so much easier to pack our bags and leave. The sickness was debilitating. The riding curled up in the back seat of a car was miserable. I was taken folic acid and vitamins. They sent me to medical in Thailand and Singapore. They even sent me back to the States for two months to get well. Got better in the States, flew back to Indonesia, got sick again. It was miserable. I used to do injections in my leg every day just to boost my immune system to just try to make it through the day. And I don't say that for sympathy. I say that that God compelled us to go to the nations to bring the Gospel to people and it is worth it. We see in God's providence and wisdom and council of churches and just like Central, God opened up an opportunity for us to move and so we move from Indonesia. We landed in Manchester, England. Never in our wildest dreams that we think that we would live in in an English-speaking context in Europe. But that's where God placed us. And let me tell you, it was not perfect. Our four, our first four months there were not good. My wife and I didn't like it there. We knew that God had led us. We knew that through prayer and everything else that this is where God had placed us. But we're just like, God, why are we here? We don't feel like real missionaries. They speak English here which is a good thing. I kind of speak English. But nonetheless, why are we here? There's churches that have been here a thousand years. They've sent the Gospel to the nations from here. There's Christian ministries here. Why are we here? We had Judson in Indonesia. He was our oldest. He was a year and a half when we moved there. And so my wife would take him to parks to play and to engage with people. And I was, we were, well, my wife and I are both prayer walking the city. Just God, give us a heart for the city. Give us a heart of faith. The only thing we knew about Manchester was Man United. Any football fans here? That's soccer for you Americans. Football fans, Man United. It's the only thing we knew. Arturo may say something different but Man United is the best football club in the world. So, if you don't support one, that's it. It's the only thing we knew about Manchester. And so we just didn't have a heart like God, give us a heart, give us a heart for these people. Anyways, I was I was reading this book. I grabbed every book I could on Britishness and Englishness and European worldview and culture. God, help us understand this people. I came across this one. It's called Watching the English, written by an English anthropologist, Kate Fox. She's not a Christian. She only writes this one tiny little section in the back of the book. This is what it says. It says, we're not a country of atheists nor are we agnostics. Because both of those require degree of interest and whether or not there's a deity. Enough to reject or question the notion. Most English people just aren't bothered about it. And when I read that it just struck a mission chord in my heart. These people don't know their left hand from the right hand. They're no different than the Muslims of Indonesia. These people are lost. They're literally living in apathy. There's just nothing. And so we begin just pouring our lives into Europe and spent the last 10 years in Manchester and then London for three and a half. And just bringing the Gospel to bear in people's hearts. And it was amazing because as God just kind of shifted in our prayer life and again going back to prayers. God we want people to know eternal life. We want people to know You. And so we just did what we could. Just serving and just going to college campuses. I mean we had 100,000 university students that lived in Manchester. And one story in particular. So, I had done a lot of different things partnered with a lot of different organizations. And so we were on campus once and just kind of sharing just the Gospel. We actually had a question and answer panel afterwards. And so afterwards, one of my, me and one of my mates, we're just like, "Hey, if you want to ask a Christian anything, we'll be at this coffee shop on Thursday nights. Come hang out. We'll answer any questions you've got about God, the Gospel, the Bible, truth, whatever." So, my mate and I, we went, sat at this coffee shop, Thursday, seven o'clock. Nobody shows up. We're like, we're pretty awesome. Praise God. So,



go the next week, Thursday night, seven o'clock, sitting there, nobody shows up. So, we're like, I guess we're, I guess, nobody's coming. Great. So, cancel that. Stop doing that. About two months later, my wife and I are on another campus event and there's literally, it's I mean, we're good Baptist. There's a little dance there. It's called a Scottish Cèilidh. Almost like a square dance. And so we're there and this girl comes up to us and she's like, "Hey, I think I met you a couple of months ago. You were you're speaking at one of our events and you said that if you had any questions about Christianity, you could come and ask questions. We're like, "Yeah, we did that and we were there two weeks and nobody showed up." She's like, "I came the third week. I was out of town those first two weeks." And I was like, "Sorry. We stopped doing it." I was like, "But do you still have questions? Well, I'm happy to answer them." And so we met up at a coffee shop. Actually, y'all met Duncan, the church planter in Dublin. Duncan went with me. So, Duncan and I go sit in this coffee shop with this girl, Rihanna, Iranian background girl, Muslim background. She had just taken off her head covering after wearing it for 25 years of her life. Just asking questions, who is God? Wrestling through the hard like the Trinity. I don't understand. So, as you sit down to this coffee shop, she pulls out of her bag a hundred typed questions about the Gospel of Christianity. Me, I mean, y'all are probably better than me. I was like, we're probably not getting all those today but we'll answer your questions. We started our first Bible study with Duncan. This girl, Rihanna, another girl who had just got baptized just didn't know why she got baptized. That's fascinating. And then another like British rapper who is nuts. He's got a nice neck tattoo. He's awesome. My boys want tattoos. Anyways, it was awesome. Started this Bible study and then over the next couple months, Rihanna gave her life to Jesus Christ. It's the God that we know that compels us that there's a lost and dying world out there. If we don't know God, if we don't seek after Him, if we don't love Him, why do we ever tell anybody else about the Gospel of Jesus Christ? Do we love God that much to tell others of His glory and of His praise and of His name. Jesus goes on to pray in the middle section of this passage. He says, in verse 15, I do not ask that you take them out of the world but what? To keep them from the evil one. That's a tough one. He's praying that we're not taken out of this world. No, keep them in the world. As you sent me into the world, I'm sending them into the world. Don't take them out of the world. Leave them in the world. But I'm praying it's the evil one. We can spend a lot of time here. I've taught lots on spiritual warfare. Every time my wife and I moved to a different location, we have insane spiritual warfare everywhere we move. I mean, just what it was. Two months ago, I killed two cows on OSR. It was not fun. I was picking up Duncan, the church planter, from the airport. Come on back at mid night, hit two cows head on, totaled our car. We're okay. We walked away without a scratch by God's grace. It's not fun. Life is not always easy. I don't ask that you take them out of this world. I ask you to put them into this world. Put them into those jobs. Put them into those schools. Put them into that college campus. Put them in that neighborhood so that they can engage those neighbors. Send them to the ends of the earth. I want them to go to the ends of the earth. Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and to the ends of the earth. I want you to, I want them to go. Don't take them out of the world. Father, they're not of the world just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in truth. Your word is truth. As You've sent me into the world, so I sent them into the world. And for their sake, I consecrate myself that they also may be sanctified in truth. Verse 20, I do not ask for these only. I don't ask for these only. But also those who will believe in me through who? Their word. As you sent me into the world, God, Jesus comes to the world to be the Savior of the world. We just celebrated Christmas. We just celebrated the birth of Jesus Christ. What a glorious and beautiful thing that that is. Jesus came to the world to be the Savior of the world. Jesus was sent into the world. He's going to be with God the Father. He will return but

I'm sending them into the world. And Lord, I'm praying for those who will believe in me through their word.

Question for you and I. Are we sharing that word? Do we have a heart's desire to proclaim the Gospel to others? Here the reality. I mean, a lot of people look at us. My wife and I, missionary, 14 plus years. We came back to the states, spoke at different churches, spoke at different missions conferences, I preach quite a bit. And so, we come back and people always like, "Oh, well, it's easy for you because you're like a professional Christian. I mean, you get paid to be a Christian." I mean, I'm a missionary. I mean, I get, I get. I do. I do. I get paid to be a Christian. It's awesome. But at the same time, just that alone doesn't make me a better evangelist. It still makes it hard for me to go in and to talk to people about Jesus. I have the same fear of man that you do. But I think as my wife and I reflect and we look back ten plus years ago. What shifted? What changed in us? One was as we saw here at the beginning just this love of God. I want to know God. I want to know the Son that He sent. And as I know them, I am compelled to take the Gospel to the nations. But it doesn't make it that much easier. And so my question for us is what does it look like for us to share that? My friends are not your friends, my neighbors are not your neighbors. The people that you're in class with, I'm not in class with. So, what does it look like for us as a church to be a light for the Gospel, for the glory of Christ? And so those, those things that my wife and I wrestle through, I think there's two things. We boil down to it. It's really just purposefulness and intentionality. I mean, it's not complicated. Purposefulness and intentionality. Like, it's not just the message. It's literally, am I willing to share the Gospel? Am I willing to bring people into my home that I may share the Gospel with them? That I may love them enough to share the hope of eternity of Jesus Christ. And so the question is, like, how do we do this? So, I think one practical thing I've been teaching in some of the life groups. We're walking through Acts 17 and one of the, so if you've been in life group, you probably heard me share the story. It's just a simple kind of illustration that God gave me years ago to do. So, we're living in Europe at the time. I'm a huge coffee fan and we're not talking about Folgers or Maxwell House or even Starbucks. While we partner with Starbucks, we're talking about good coffee. Anyways, you'll find me at coffee shops a lot. And so here's the question like, what is that look like when I go into a coffee shop? I mean, all over Europe, I'm in coffee shops all the time. That was my office in Europe. And so even here in Bryan/College Station. I'm constantly going to coffee shops. But as I go into the coffee shop, tomorrow morning, you'll probably find me in a coffee shop. Tomorrow morning, I'm in a coffee shop and then, there's a barista there serving, making the coffee for you. And normally, it's going to look something like this. When I walk in, it's Monday morning and there's some kind of verbal exchange. Hey, how was your weekend? What you do? And so me, they asked me that question. It's like, oh, oh, I got to take my boys the first Aggie basketball game. That was fun. We did, we did that. Uh, my boys are playing actually. They're playing basketball right now. So, we did Central Sports here. It was awesome. Um, and then we kind of rested and chilled. Uh we'll be on a date night with my wife on Friday night. It was awesome. We had a great time. Where are you at right now? Church. Yeah, we're in church. How come it's the last thing that ever comes out of our mouth? And so God convicted me and challenged me. How come you don't speak about Me? Just a normal conversations. And let me let me be, let me be clear here. Me telling somebody that I go to church is not the Gospel. That is a spiritual conversation. That is a good conversation. That is something we probably should be sharing but that's not the Gospel but that's at least a starting point. That why are we not bold enough to just talk about God? I mean, I read God's word. I actually pray. Sometimes, I even listen to Christian music on the radio in the car. My wife does a lot more than I do. She's more holy than I am. But why don't I

talk about God? I think that's a struggle for our church and I'm not talking about just Central. I'm talking about the global church. That we as Christians sometimes just can't talk simply about the God of the Bible. That we're afraid of what other people may say or think of us. I mean, here clearly we see that that they hated them because of the truth, because of the Gospel. Sometimes, I don't think we understand what persecution looks like. Sometimes, we can learn from our brothers and sisters all over the world. But the question for us now in Bryan/College Station is, what is that going to look like if we just shift slightly? As we go into our neighborhoods and we go into our schools and we go into our workplaces. We go into the coffee shop. We go into the restaurant as we're dialoguing and talking to people that we unashamedly talk about God and Jesus. And then from there, we actually talk about the Gospel. You see, the Gospel is awesome and sometimes even that transition is sometimes even complicated. But we hope that we can get there. And it's not just inviting people to church and it's not just telling people. But it's hopefully, I'm getting into my house and hopefully I can share the Gospel. Because see, all those things are good but we need to get to the Gospel. Jesus says in the beginning of His prayer, and this is eternal life that they know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he has sent. The world needs to that we're sinners. The world needs to know that we're broken and separated from God. That's the Gospel. And the only way back, the only way to be brought back in a relationship with a living God is to be saved by Jesus Christ. Because you see, Jesus took on his sin on the cross. He died the death that we should have died. He took on our sin and if we believe in Him, if we trust in Him, if we give our life to Jesus, we can be saved. That's the Gospel and that's the message that we want to bring to people. That's, as sent out ones, what we want to tell this lost and dying world.

But the question for you and I is, will we do it? I mean, do we love and know God so much? That we want others to know of the Gospel. Because, you know, I think sometimes I mean, I look at my own life and I'm just like, "Okay, God, that neighbor is hard to deal with. I mean, really they're hard to deal with. Like do I really share the Gospel with them." Or, you know, that coworker. Uh they hate me. Like, they don't even like me. What about some family members that are just difficult? We all have it. That's all part of our life and our story. But I think the more and more we know the God of the Bible. So, more and more, we're reminded of our own salvation. How God has brought us from sin and darkness and death to life and light in Jesus. It changes everything. It changes everything. And so then it compels us that we want to be sent out into the world to bring the Gospel. So fascinating. We were just in Dublin a couple weeks ago. Got the privilege of taking a couple of people. There's a couple that's praying about Lord where are you sending us? What is that look like? A privilege and joy me. Just two weeks ago to listen on a bus ride. On a bus ride. We're just going back to the church planter's house to go hang out. And one of our teammates just sharing the Gospel on the bus. Awesome. Like he wishes he could've got more conversation in because we had to jump off. It's just a ten-minute conversation but just being bold enough with the guy sitting next to him to talk about the Gospel. Just last week, just standing actually right outside of these doors. Got to hear from a young lady at this church. Been praying for years for her grandfather. Years. Sharing the Gospel with her grandfather. Her grandfather came to faith in Jesus Christ just this Christmas. How joyful, how amazing is that? But the challenge for you and I is are we sharing the Gospel? Are we literally as sent out ones, loving people enough to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ to others? Do you know that God? Do you live for that God? Do you live that you want others to know of truth? My heart and prayer for this church is that we live on mission. A desire for us to live a mission. And that's not, some of us are going to jump on planes and we're going to go overseas. Um some of us are going to stay right here in Bryan/College Station and praise God for that. Praise God that you can engage with the



people that are right here. And praise God for those that He sends to the nations. The question is, are you going to be sent out? And Jesus tells us here, I'm sending them into the world. I'm praying for those that are going to believe because they have told them Your word. Do you know that God? Do you believe in that God? As we close, my four sons are all named after missionaries. I've got a Judson, a Pat, and a Taylor, and an Elliot. This one, John G. Patton, Scottish Presbyterian, he went to serve cannibals, the tribal people group. If you think about Australia, go east of Australia to an island chain there called the New Hebrides. Right before Fiji and Tahiti is an island chain there. 1800's, cannibals. Felt compelled. He had a great ministry in Glasgow, great church in Glasgow. God had done amazing things in and through them. Just longed that he would be sent to the nations to bring the Gospel to this people group. And so he goes, not without trial, not without suffering, not without struggles. But yet that the Gospel may go out and I won't give you away all the story. Um, grab this book. I've got many more. Uh, first one, I'm sure I've got one of these in my office. Come grab it. It's amazing to see what men and women of faith have done for the sake of the Gospel. So, John G. Patton is on this island trying to share the Gospel. Some people have come to faith but yet the islanders and the tribal people always just hate him. They're always trying to get him off the island. They do not like the message he's preaching. Kinda like what we see here in John 17. They will be either hated because of the word that you bring. And so one of his, one of the tribal guys that actually becomes a believer comes to him and says, "Hey, you've got to flee for your life. You've got to flee to get away or they will kill you." So, we pick up the story right here and so he is fleeing. He says, being entirely at the mercy of such doubtful and vacillating friends, I, though perplexed, felt it best to obey. I climbed into a tree and left there all alone in the bush. The hours I spent there live all before me as if they were but yesterday. I heard the frequent discharging of muskets and the yells of the savages. Yet, I sat there among the branches as safe as in the arms of Jesus. Never in all my sorrows did my Lord draw nearer to me and speak more soothingly to my soul than when the moonlight flickered among the chestnut leaves. And the night air played on my throbbing brow as I told all my heart to Jesus. Alone yet not alone. If it be to glorify my God, I would not grudge to spend many a nights alone in such a tree. To feel again, my Savior's spiritual presence. To enjoy His consoling fellowship. If thus thrown back upon your own soul alone, all alone in the midnight, in the bush, in the very embrace of death itself. Have you a friend that will not fail you then? John G. Patton gives us a great testimony of what does it look like to know God. Do you know that friend? Do you know that God? Do you know God and the Son, Jesus, whom He sent to be the Savior of the world?

Pray with me.

Father God, we thank You so much for this morning. Lord, to briefly dive into this prayer in John 17. To think and to ponder and to wrestle through. Lord, what does it look like to know God? And Lord, because we know You to be sent into the world as your messengers. Lord, I pray for this church. Lord, I love this church. Lord, I pray that You would help us, compel us, use us, send us, that we may be a light for the Gospel, for the glory of Christ. Lord, I ask that You just help us to know You in such a way that we long to see others come to faith in Jesus Christ. Lord, give us boldness. Open our mouths. Lord, open our homes. Lord, let us go out to our neighbors and to our colleagues, and to our friends, and to our family members to be a faithful witness for the glory of God. Right now, I just ask that You just, I want you to think of one person right now. And I want you to think of them by name. Not the neighbor that you just don't know who their name is. And if you don't, maybe go find out their name this week. But maybe it's a coworker, maybe it's

a son or daughter, maybe it's a grandchild, but somebody that does not know Jesus. I want you to spend a moment praying for them right now by name. Pray that God will give you boldness to share the Gospel with them. Pray that God will give you an opportunity just to invite them in your home or go have dinner with them to just spend time with them. Father God, we thank You for this morning. Lord, may we live on mission for You, Your glory. In Christ's name we pray. Amen