

Thank you, guys. It is good to be here with you all. Good to see some familiar faces and a whole lot of new faces. And Tim, thank you for that very awkward introduction. I would not have expected anything less from him today.

I don't know if you know this or not, but today is the. The represents, I guess, the ninth birthday of Sherwood Oaks Bedford. So happy birthday, Sherwood Oaks Bedford. Yeah. Nine years of ministry.

And I'm just curious, show of hands, how many of you just started attending, let's say, this summer? You would say you just started attending this summer. All right, guys, can we give them a welcome? I hope that you're find a place here at home. How many of you been attending for.

Maybe. Let's go. Since Tim has been the campus pastor. Let's see. Show of hands.

Tim has been the campus pastor since you've been. All right, great. How many of you were here when I was here? All right, nice. You stuck around.

Awesome. Thank you guys for still being here. It was. I mean, well, let's not even get started about what happened in Bloomington when I came up there, but how many of you were here back and, like, you were here that first Sunday when. When Sherwood.

When CBF became Sherwood Oaks Bedford? Let's see those hands. Yeah. Can we just recognize and honor them as well? A faithful presence and service to the Lord.

So I. I've. This week has been a bit of a nostalgic week for me. Had a very, very dear friend who passed away last Friday. We did his funeral yesterday. And so I just found myself going through some pictures, reminiscing about our times together.

And then my girl started school. And so that always gets, you know, some reminiscing of, oh, my goodness, time is going by. So growing up so quickly, and then also knowing coming back here to this church family that in a lot of ways, like I came in here, my family, we. We were a little broken, to be honest, a little hurt from some experiences that we had had in our previous church. And we came here.

Not really even sure. Is ministry still something that God is calling us to, calling me to? And. And I think that we came into a church family that at the time was still. Still a little hurting from some things that had happened, and we got to heal together.

And so I was thinking about these last nine years of the Sherwood Oaks Bedford campus and about our time here and all the special memories.

And looking through some of the pictures, I came across one of our very first events that we did in July of 2017, which is when we got to join the party was the fourth of July parade. That. That's downtown. And.

And so we put together a float. Maybe some of you were part of that, to just be in the parade. We were still new, so we're like, man, let's let people know that we're here. And so we put this together. We got a little team of people that did it.

And we had this parade float pulled by a big old tractor. And it was a lot of fun. Tons of people from the campus out wearing this. And. And one of the things that's.

That was interesting from this picture, but we. We were handing out chocolate candy on one of the hottest days of the year, which meant that we were handing out like, chocolate syrup in packages to people because it just melted so fast. It was great. Lesson learned. But from that day.

This is one of my favorite videos from that day. So we've got some sound behind it if we just play this video.

So right over there on the left is Roger Gale'. That's my daughter Adelyn right there running. Just a sweet memory. And, you know, birthdays and celebrations like this, we can go ahead and take that off. They're a chance to look back and to look ahead.

And so been looking back over the last nine years of Sherwood Oaks Bedford, and there's a lot to be grateful for. Oh, one other thing, just real quick. When we were here in 2017, our girls were starting preschool in kindergarten. We've got a picture of them right there, first day of school. Some of you remember them when they were that age.

This last week they started seventh and eighth grade. And so that's where they are now. Grown up so fast. I will not show a before and after picture of me and Amber. She continues to age like fine wine.

I am aging. Whatever the opposite of that is. Stay old. Beer, I don't know, but that's where we are. But birthdays are a good time to look back with gratitude.

And there's a lot to look back on with, with gratitude and thankfulness, healing that has happened after a hard season. People who have. Who have come and found Jesus as being a part of Sherwood Oaks Bedford in this ministry. New families that are joining. Tim has really adopted this mantra of we don't necessarily care about being the best church in our community, but we want to be the best church for our community.

And Sherwood Oaks Bedford is living that out in the way that you guys host and serve with Hoosier Hills Food bank and the ministry that you have with the Men's Warming Center. Hope Resource center, all of these things. Started a preschool last year, raising up volunteers and leaders and incredible staff. Can we give a hand to the staff at Sherwood Oaks Bedford? Fantastic.

And so moments like this and today, it makes us look back with gratitude at all that the Lord has done and is doing and to see his faithfulness in it all and through it all. We, we don't want to just get stuck in the past. We also want to look ahead. We, we don't want to just constantly look back. We want to think about where are we going, what are we doing, how is the Lord going to continue to build upon what has been started over these first nine years?

And our mission as a church, whether it is Sherwood Oaks or Sherwood Oaks Bedford or Iglesia Spana or wherever the expression is, it is the same mission that has been the mission of the church, the Big Sea church, for nearly 2000 years. It is the mission that Jesus gave his disciples us back on a mountainside in Galilee, as he was about ready to ascend back to heaven. So if you have a Bible or a Bible app, turn with me to Matthew chapter 28. That's going to be our text today, Matthew 28. We'll also have the words up on the screen.

And we're coming to the end of our summer series that we have called Mountains and Lakes. And we've used this series as an opportunity to just follow the life and the ministry of Jesus to those places where mountains or lakes served as the backdrop of what was happening in the Gospels. And so it's kind of been a fun way to do this survey of the life of Christ. And so today there is a mountain in the backdrop as, as Jesus again is coming to the end of his earthly ministry, about ready to ascend back to heaven. He has been crucified.

He has been buried in the tomb. He has been resurrected. He has spent the last 40 some odd days with his disciples, teaching them, eating with them, continuing to walk with them. And now he is about ready to give this mission that he started over to them. And he's been preparing for them for this day.

They knew that it was coming. He's been leading up to this moment. And then he gets to this place where he knows that it's time. And this is the scene that is set for us in Matthew chapter 28, starting in verse 16.

Then the 11 disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshiped him, but some doubted. When they saw him, they worshiped him, but some doubted I just. I love this part that Matthew includes this little detail, that he includes the disciples, which. Which means the 11.

But then also the. The multitude have started following Jesus. I mean, this is a larger crowd than just the 11. They're coming, and some of them are coming to worship Jesus. They know who he is.

They've seen what he's done. They believe. But there are still some in the crowd that are like, I don't know what's happening here. Like, is this true? Did Jesus really die?

I mean, we heard it. Some of them maybe had seen it. But, like, did. Did he really die? Or just close enough that, like, he.

He was able to get back up and come back up, and now, you know, know he's. He's back to health, and he's telling us to go. Like, some doubted. We don't know what their doubts were. We don't know, is this the real Messiah?

Like, he's not coming to restore Israel to this great nation. He's not the military leader that we thought that he was going to be. We thought that we could put our hope in, like, the politics of our nation, but. But it doesn't really seem like Jesus cares as much about that as I care about it. And they're looking at Jesus going, are you the one who is the chosen One of God?

They doubted, but they're there. Like, they're in the metaphorical room, and they hear Jesus give them this command to go. And what I love about this little detail in Matthew's Gospel is that it shows us that faithfulness is so much more important than perfection. Like faithfulness in our faith, working things out, struggling, wrestling with our doubts, with our fears, our worries, and that's so much more important than perfection. Jesus doesn't call us because we're perfect.

He calls us to be faithful and to bring all of these doubts and all of these insecurities, all of these things to him, and he's going to use them. We don't have to be all the way over here before Jesus says, I'm going to use you. No, he invites people into this mission that day who came to worship him. And he invites people into the mission that day, those who came and still weren't quite sure what they believed. And so that just speaks to me that wherever you are today in faith, wherever you are on that scale, man, Jesus wants to use you for this mission that he has called his church to.

This is what he says, says. Then Jesus came to them and said, all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. Jesus says, all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. All rule and reign.

He is crowned victorious. He has conquered sin in the grave. And now he is sending his disciples out on mission to continue doing what he did, which was to seek and save the lost, to restore what sin has broken. And if you allow me, I just want to get a little bit nerdy here with the grammar of this verse. And the first thing is that word go.

When, when Jesus says go, this is. This is not just like a one time thing. The grammar in this is like, no, as you go. Not just like this moment where you say, I'm going. What Jesus is saying is, as you go, do these things as you go about your daily, ordinary, sometimes maybe mundane lives that we all live.

Jesus is saying, take this mission with you. Take it into the place where you work, take it into your school, take it into your neighborhood. You are being sent out into these places. And so go does not mean a line in the sand moment where I was here, but now I'm over here, I'm packing my bags and I'm doing something else. No, go means as you go.

Take this message of the Gospel with you and share it with others.

And then what I find super fascinating in this. And this is where hang with me. I promise I'm not going to stay here long. But if we look at that passage in our English translations, we read four verbs in this text, four verbs that are actions. We are to go and do, go, make disciples, baptize and teach.

And so we can read those things as four different things that we are to do. But in the original text, there's actually only one verb in what Jesus says, and it's the verb make disciples. Make disciples. That's the only verb. All of the other words, go, baptize, teach, participles that show us how we make disciples.

They are telling us how we go, how we spread. And we take this mission that Jesus has given us and this grace that we have received in him, and we share it with others. And so you could say that we make disciples as we go about our everyday lives, helping people find and follow Jesus. This is how we live out the Great Commission. It's how we live it out individually and it's how we live it out as a church.

All right, hang with me. Come back. I'm Done with the grammar? All right, everybody. Everybody still here?

Okay. And as we go, Jesus assures us that we don't go alone. We. This is what he says, the end of verse 20. And surely I am with you even to the very end of the age.

Surely I am with you even to the very end of the age. So we don't go alone. We have received the Holy Spirit that Jesus promised. His

presence goes with us. We go together as the church on mission.

All of us are in this room today because at one point or another, someone took this call to make disciples seriously. I'm in this room today because of Bill and Linda Strickland. Bill and Linda were my best friend's parents growing up. I did not grow up in church. In a lot of ways, I was a really bad influence on their son.

And yet through it all, they loved me, they were faithful to the Lord, they were faithful to me. There should have been times where they were like, nope. But they kept inviting me in, they kept inviting me around their table. And eventually everything that they would say to me, it clicked. One of the things that they said often was, Sean, God loves you and he has a plan for your life.

And as this arrogant, obnoxious high schooler, my thought was, well, good for him. I'm not really interested in that right now. But when the time came where I got to the end of myself and really experienced my brokenness, man, I was so grateful to hear Bill and Linda's words in my minds again. Sean, God loves you and he has a plan for your life. And they helped me find and follow Jesus.

I'm wondering, who is that for you? Who is that person that took this great commission seriously and they helped you find Jesus. They taught you and showed you what it's like to follow him and be a parent, a friend, friend, a neighbor, a co worker who helped you find and follow Jesus just as part of their regular, ordinary, everyday life.

And the follow up question is, who are you doing that for? Who are you investing in?

Who are you coming alongside of praying for that they will come to know, love and follow Jesus too?

Who in your life is close to you but is living far from God and it breaks your heart and you want so desperately for them to know and experience the grace of a God who loves them, the freedom that is found and the life in him.

And you may think, I don't know what to do, I don't know what to say. I feel totally inadequate. I'm not even sure fully what I believe about these things. I don't have all the answers. To which I'd say Jesus is still inviting you to go, trusting that he is with you even to the end of the age.

And through the Great Commission, Jesus is challenging us, calling us, to take the good that we have received in him and give it away to others, to not let it stop with us. The gospel always comes to you on its way to someone else. It always comes to you on its way to someone else. The good news of God's grace should never stop with us. It ought

to flow through us as we share it with others, as we share about the good news of God's grace and the freedom from our sin and shame that he offers.

The gospel comes to us on its way to someone else. And so who is it moving through you to?

So this is the mission that we've been sent out on individually and as a church. I'm going to wrap up here.

And this is the mission that we want to continue here at Sherwood Oaks and Sherwood Oaks Bedford. And in this mission of God, it is always required resources of some kind, sometimes emotional resources, time, energy, effort.

I'm walking with a guy right now who's close to me and far from Jesus. And every time I think he is getting closer, he, like, takes a couple more steps back. I'm like, ah. And it is exhausting. I get another message from him, hey, man, I had another relapse, man.

We have been talking about this, and you know that life is not found there. You know, it is found in Jesus, and it weighs on me. I hurt for him and it's costing something.

It's worth it. It's worth it because I know one day it's all going to click like it did for me, like it did for you, and he's going to start following him. So living out the mission of God personally requires something from us. But we also know that living on mission as a church requires something from us. One of my favorite things to see this morning as I walked in and walked around was not just the people in the room, but the people serving up and down this hallway.

That's amazing. It's costing them something to be in those rooms, but they're paying it because they want to raise up children to know, love and follow Jesus. So as we give our time and our talent and our treasure to the Lord, he uses them to build up his church and his kingdom in our community and beyond. And a couple of years ago, we began sharing a little financial health snapshot for our Bedford campus. One of our elders, Andy Allard, has been here.

He's given some updates. Jeremy Earle, our director of operations, he's been here even this last May to share some updates. And so we've been just kind of wanting to be more transparent about some of the financials of our Bedford campus because there's been a, I don't know, maybe a misunderstanding that I heard even when I was here that, oh, whenever we give offering, it just goes up to that big church in Bloomington. I heard that multiple times when I was here. We give and it just goes up to that big church in Bloomington.

I just want to say, not quite. Not quite. This is just in the spirit

of transparency, if we can put up that graph. This is the. This is kind of the Bedford campus offering versus expenses starting in 22, 23, 23, 24, and then finishing off with this last fiscal year.

And so you'll see in the green, that is the offering that comes in designated for the Bedford campus. And then the orange are the expenses for the Bedford campus. And so you can see in 22 and 23, the Bedford campus was able to support 62% of the ministry that happened here financially, so speaking. And then last year made a great jump, able to support 76%. And each year the giving has gone up.

But as the church grows and expands, the ministry grows and expands. And so, you know, we get to this year and starting a preschool and some other things that were going on. The operating expenses for Bedford was about 490,000. And then what we took in from Bedford was about 351,000. So it leaves a gap of about \$139,000.

And. And again, there is no agenda here other than just financial transparency. Just so you guys know where. Where we are, that as a church, we were investing about \$140,000 last year into the work of Sherwood Oaks Bedford. Over the last nine years add up it's close to a million dollars.

And, and what we are wanting. And again, this is a worthy investment because we believe in the ministry and mission that is happening in Lawrence County. We believe in it so much that we. We recently, like within the last week, picked up the note on this building like it's now the financial responsibility of Sherwood Oaks. We have been in a lease agreement.

We now own the debt of this place because we believe in what is happening here at the Bedford campus. And I think what we're wanting to just express and invite you into is to consider prayerfully how you might be able to help us close that financial gap. It'd be hard as a Family to live with that kind of discrepancy, about \$11,000 a month. How can you contribute to help close some of that financial gap? We are committed to it.

And what I would love to do is to stand up here, Tim. Stand up here. Someone stand up here. If I'm invited back after this, I don't know, Tim. I might not be, but I'd love to stand back up here a year from Today on the 10th anniversary of Sherwood Oaks Bedford, and say, look at how much we've closed this gap.

Look at. Look at how close we are. Even better yet, look at what we were able to do together to close it completely. So Jesus invites us to go on mission for Him. He invites us to give all of ourselves, our time, our talent, our treasure, to this mission that he has called us to.



Our mission as believers and as the church. It starts and it ends with Jesus. It is about building his kingdom. It is about making his name known and great, not anyone or anything else. As our hearts align with him, we also align with what he is going, what he is doing.

We go where he is going. Every time I read this text, every time I study it, every time I preach it, man, I am convicted yet again to give my life to Christ to recommit to his mission.

And more so it is a recommitting to Jesus who is behind that mission, a recommitment to give myself fully to the One who gave Himself fully for me. As we close today, I want to give us a chance to respond to that. If you want to talk more with someone about giving your life to Christ, you have been walking your own way. You've been doing your own thing for a long time, and it's getting you to that place where you just keep bumping up against the sand. Same dead ends.

The same dead ends. I want you to know Jesus is inviting you into something so much better. He's inviting you to surrender to him, to follow him, to find grace and love and forgiveness in Him. If you were ready to take that step, I don't know who, but somebody is going to be up and really would love to talk to you. Even if it's me, come find me.

We also have communion prepared. I believe it's in the back. Go grab communion. During this time, let it be a time to resurrender to Jesus, to recommit to what he is doing in you and what he is doing in this world and how he wants to use you. It's a mission.

He believed in so much that he gave his life. We remember that as we take communion. The bread that represents his body that was given and the cup that represents his blood that was shed. Let me pray.

God, thank you for the way that you have loved us, Jesus, the way that you pursued us. You left the treasures in the glory of heaven to come to us. You who are so generous for us. Lord, may our lives be a reflection of generosity to you. May everything that you have entrusted to us, may we give you good stewards of it, our time, our talent, our treasure.

May we hold them with open hands and say, here I am Lord, Use me, send me. And as we go into our homes and our neighborhoods and our jobs and our community, Lord, I pray that as we go go, we will make disciples. We will help more people find and follow Jesus.

God, we won't think that this is just a mission for the church or it's a mission for others, but that we will see and truly embrace that it is a mission for each and every one of us who have called on the name of Jesus to be saved. And so send us, Lord, and remind us that you are with us always, even to the very ends of the age. And pray it in Jesus

name. Amen.

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