

## Session 2b Wednesday AM Calvary Chapel By Floyd McClung

Speaker 1:

Ministry. And you can read more about his ministry and titles in the little booklet, but I think what I have to say to you about him is that he definitely is a portrayal to me of the Father that I have in God. And he reminds me not only of my earthly dad, so it's always good to see you, but also of my heavenly Father. And I love him from my heart. And I hope that all of us just open our hearts to listen to what God has to say to us through Him. So let's welcome him.

Floyd McClung:

Good morning. How are you guys doing? Great. Did you guys go to the first session? Wasn't that fantastic? I really enjoyed, especially the movies parts. It's great to be with you. Some more people coming in, so we'll just kind of chat for a few minutes, give them a chance to come in. Just got in last night from Colorado. I live there in a little town in southern part of Colorado called Trinidad. My wife and I lead a ministry that's a part of Youth with a Mission. We call it All Nations. We have a training program called All Nations Institute.

We help people get ready to go to the frontiers and to reach people who have never heard the gospel before. We have a focus on reaching university students in big cities in what we call the 10/40 window. How many of you have heard the 10/40 window? Okay, most of you are familiar with the expression, great. Okay, so you know what I'm talking about. We have a team working in Bishkek, most university students in Kyrgyzstan, in Central Asia. Another team working in

Tashkent in Uzbekistan, working also in India, in New Delhi, and a couple of university campuses there.

And we have a team that's working into Western Sahara, which is a closed country in North Africa, where they have the only Spanish-speaking Muslim people group in the world. Can you imagine a Spanish-speaking Muslim people group? They were a protectorate, or a colony of Spain for a long time. So you have Muslims speaking Spanish now. They speak a little bit of French, some of the people do, because Morocco took over. So that's really fascinating. I brought some books with me.

A number of years ago, my wife and I wrote a book called "Living on the Devil's Doorstep." It's about our experiences living in Afghanistan and living in the heart in the red light district of Amsterdam. Sally and I moved to Afghanistan, which is in Central Asia. You probably heard of Afghanistan. It's where the Taliban are. There's been a lot of civil war, fighting going on. Five million people have been displaced from their homes in Afghanistan. One million killed or wounded. That's one third of the population. So you can imagine if one third of the United States was killed or wounded or displaced, what a terrible thing it would be. So we lived there for a number of years working with Afghan people.

The Afghans have a legend that when Satan fell from heaven, he fell in Kabul, Afghanistan. Isn't that fascinating? We found that out after we moved there. And then we moved to Amsterdam, Holland. We worked in the red light district for 18 years. Lived right in the heart of the red light district. We ran a halfway house we called the Cleft. Two doors to the right of us was a Satanist

church. Three doors to the right of us was a homosexual brothel. Two doors to the left of us was a 24 hours sex cinema.

Eighteen thousand prostitutes in the red light district of Amsterdam. So you can imagine it was very intense. Twelve blocks long, six blocks wide. So, because we live next door to the Satanist church, we also call the book "Living on the Devil's Doorstep." I'll tell you a kind of a funny story. When Sally and I were in Afghanistan, we had our halfway house for people who are in drugs. And when we were there, there were a lot of young people traveling across Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, going to India, studying eastern religions. A lot of people would get into drugs, smoking dope. So we ran a halfway house, taking people in.

We had a Belgian guy named Chris who came to live with us. And Chris didn't do very well, so we had to ask him to leave. And when he left, he stole a picture of my wife, amongst some other stuff. He just took a whole bunch of stuff, and he found this picture. We found out later, and he took a picture of Sally. Sally is a blonde-haired Texan, took this picture of my wife down to a local Afghan marketplace and convinced this Afghan guy named Abdul that Sally was his white slave. And he bargained, and he sold my wife and got some money.

So Abdul called the house, got our telephone number, and he wanted to know where Sally was. And so Sally, innocently, got on the phone and Abdul explained that he owned her now and could he come and please have her. How many of you know that the desire of every woman's heart is to be wanted? Sally was wanted. She put me on the telephone and said, "I think you better talk to this guy. I can't get rid of him." So I was trying to explain to my kind of very

broken Farsi, the local language, and his English wasn't so good. And we're trying to communicate.

How do you explain that she's your wife? What would you say? I just said to the guy, I owned her. She was mine first. He couldn't have her. So after I got off the telephone, the big question Sally had was like, "How much did he pay for me? What am I worth?" If you want to find out, you can buy the book. The first book I wrote was entitled "The Father Heart of God." When we were working with young people in Afghanistan and then in Amsterdam, we found a lot of people coming out of broken homes, really didn't have a good picture of who God was, projected onto God, all the hurt and pain of their own lives.

And so we started talking a lot and just trying to help people understand that God was a father. So in this book, we just talk about some of the experiences we had, some of the things that keep us from seeing and experiencing God as a father to us and how to break through into that and really know and love Him as a father. And I've also got a book entitled "The Healing Power of Love." Some of the lies Satan tells us to keep us from taking hold of our identity in Christ. We got those books on the back table. They're \$5 each.

Well, I really enjoyed what John Eldridge said today. I was really tracking with him. This is a missions conference. I don't even like to use the word missions because it conjures up in our minds some of the wrong images, or it tends to make us think [inaudible] somebody who is really dedicated or fanatical does for God. But I believe missions should be more explained or

defined as mission. And we should not start with missions, if I can say it that way, but we should start with mission.

And what John did for us this morning, if you were there, and I'll kind of recap it a little bit for you if you weren't, is he talked about God's mission to us. That's what it's all about. That God seeks out his creation with a longing in his heart to have relationship with us, that he comes to us. My favorite model of mission is the incarnation that God left Heaven. He didn't stay up there, he didn't stay distant from us, but he came to us.

And the way He came to us was not in a fiery chariot with an AK-47 track gun, shooting tracks into our chest. I always had this picture of what it would be like to shoot somebody with a track, that has a little pop out track, and it says, you have 30 seconds to repent, then you will die. Would that be a very effective evangelism? Now, Jesus didn't come in a kind of chariot floating above people's heads, dropping tracks on their heads. He actually lived amongst us. Isn't that fantastic? That God, the creator of the universe, comes to us, and he came to us in humility.

See, the Jews did not understand who Jesus was for a simple reason, and that is, they had an image in their mind of what God was like. And Jesus didn't fit the image that--He was Yahweh. That He was so high and so holy and so far away that they couldn't really relate to God when He really was there. That He stepped into their lives and because He came in humility because He came with mercy, because He was so real, because He hung out with normal people, that didn't fit what they knew of God.

So they killed Him, they got rid of Him, He threatened them. Everything about Him was dissonant to who they were as people because they had created a God in their image and their likeness of what they thought He was like. And then they bowed down and they worshipped this idea they had of God instead of worshiping the real God. Mission is about God coming to us and then He invites us to go with Him. It's like we don't take God to people. You never will take God to people because God has always been there before us.

It's not like we're going to show up and all of a sudden we're going to be the great white hero or the great yellow hero or brown or purple or whatever your race is. God's already there. He made people. He is deposited into every culture a little bit of Himself. So it's not our great task to go out and change all the cultures of the world. There's redemption needs to take place in cultures because there's evil things in cultures and there's good things. Just like in America, there's good things and there's some really bad stuff. But that happens as a result of the gospel permeating the culture.

Our job is not to go and take God to people. It's not to change their culture. Our job is to join with God in persuading people's hearts to come home. The way I like to think of it is, it's a chance to come back home. There's a longing in everybody's heart for home. When I was in college, I went to college down the road at Southern California College, and my mom and dad lived about 10 miles away. We're in Costa Mesa there in Santa Ana.

And I loved to go home because I get all my clothes washed. I get chocolate chip cookies, chocolate cake. I just loved it if I could time it all right. So home was really nice for me. Home is

not very nice for some people. I remember one kid saying to me, the happiest day of his life was when both of his parents were killed. A home is not a good feeling for a lot of people because they've never had one. And our job is to, through our love for each other, create home for people. That's what we do as missionary.

I'm a missionary. I've been a missionary all my life, for 35 years. When we were in Afghanistan, what we did is we created a home. And we invited people to come home with us. Literally, we actually did that. We had a big house with about ten bedrooms, and we just said, come and live with us. And we ran into a lot of people who are searching in Eastern religions into Hinduism and so on. We'd say, well, just come and live. And if it's real, believe it. And if it's not, you don't have to.

And that's putting it on the line, I'll tell you, because then they see you argue with your wife, and you don't have a quiet time every day. But that's what it's all about. It's being real. I grew up with church. My dad is a preacher. I want to say this in the right way, but I hate religion. I love Jesus, but I believe the greatest enemy of people coming home is religion. And it is so easy to get religious. I mean, like, do you have a place already where you like to sit in chapel? Do you have your favorite place?

How many of you have a place where you like to sit? But religion has come to Biola already. You are religious? Just little traditions. Oh, I want to sit there. That's my little place on the floor when we have chapel. We get into little habits. We get into little routines, little ways of thinking about things, and then we get this religious spirit, and it keeps people from coming home. God

has created every one of us. Can somebody take this away from me? I don't know. I like to wander around. Is that okay? You can just take it backwards if you want to. Thank you.

Every one of us were created--I love what John said. Every one of us were created for ecstasy.

And we're not talking about a drug here. What we're talking about is Krispy Kreme. Where's my

Krispy Kreme box? Where you guys live? What dorm is it? What floor? I did the Emerson

Krispy Kreme trek last night. They picked me up at the airport and said, where would you like to

go? We know where you want to go. So you want to go there, right? So I had the Krispy Kreme

ecstasy experience last night. It was great.

Every one of us, we're created for pleasure. And the problem is if we find our pleasure in the

wrong place, there's pleasure in sin for a reason. There's thrills, there's emotion in it. But God

created us so that the superior pleasure of intimacy with Him is to, what shall I say, starve out the

passions of pleasure, the lesser inferior pleasures of sin. We are to be pleasure people, but the

pleasure is to be in God. So mission is all about calling people to the pleasure of relationship

with God. It's not about beating people over the head. It's not about trying to civilize them. It's

about inviting them into relationship with the most wonderful being in the whole universe.

So God created us with this capacity for passion. I'm not talking about personality. My wife is so

different from me. I am this ranting preacher guy. If I do something, I'd do it with all of my

heart. And played basketball. I wanted to kill people on the basketball court. In the name of

Jesus, of course. Now I hike, I hunt, I fish. Everything I do is with passion. Sally, she's got this

quiet, neat, orderly personality. I used to think, I know this is bad, but I used to think, she is so



unspiritual. Why did I marry this woman? And then I saw, well, she's my best friend. Of course, now. I love the way she is.

We're not talking about personality. Some of us are loud. Some of us are quiet. Some of us are extrovert. Some of us are introvert. When I talk about passion, we're talking about something deeper than behavior or personality or belief. Passion is not a TV evangelist who's got this charismatic personality who convinces you even though you don't like the guy, to give you your money. You think, I've got to go buy into this thing. I won't go to heaven or get my reward or something. Now, we're not talking about manipulation or anything like that.

Let me define passion for you because the theme of these three days is about the passion of God's heart and delighting in His passion. And we can't delight in His passion unless we're passionate. Amen? Let me give you a definition of passion. Passion is whatever you're willing to die for. It's believing in something so much, you will sacrifice for it. The word passion in the English language comes from a Latin word, "passio." It means, literally, "suffer." So in certain traditions in the church, we talk about the passion of Christ. You ever heard that expression? Maybe you come from a liturgical tradition where we talk about the passion or we talk about the passion play. And the word has so changed now in our vocabulary.

What does passion mean? It is titanic, man. It is music. It is romance. It is something you enjoy, and that's okay. But the meaning literally is much deeper than that. And God created us to be passionate. Not just intensity, but belief. Another word for passion is core values. At the core of the core of the core of our being. It's what we really believe in. So we're not talking about

doctrine. Doctrine is important. What we're talking about here is what we really believe. And everybody really believes in something. Everybody does. You inherit them from your family, from your culture. America believes in things. What does America really believe in? Let's just do this for a second. To illustrate core values or passions, let's talk for a minute about the United States.

What are the core values of our culture? Money. Comfort. Individualism. Education, success. Freedom. Entertainment. Krispy Kreme. This is our culture, isn't it? We believe in freedom so much you can carry AK-47s around. It is really weird. We love success. We like status. And don't say you don't believe that yourself because if you're wearing Levi's and a t-shirt, you've been affected by it. It's a part of our culture. If you go to the Gap because that's cool clothes, that's a part of core values. Are you tracking with me? Are you awake? Everybody has them. Everybody has values.

Some of our values are shaped by pain. So a lot of people who don't want to get really fanatical have what I call reactionary values, or reactionary Passionists. They'd say, well, I'm not going to go to church and raise my hands and act like an idiot. So they have another passion. And their passion is not to look like an idiot. Anybody got that passion? I don't want to look like an idiot. I don't want to be religious. Some people, I'll tell you what, passions, core values, come out of vows. You ever said, "I'll never do that, that is so weird"? Or have you ever said something like this: "I'll never let that person get close to me again. That hurt too much."

Vows create values. I remember, I had a conflict with a friend a few years ago and I said to myself one day, we had tried and tried and tried to work it out. You ever done that? And just hurt each other more every time you do it. It was just so painful. I said, God, this just hurts too much. He'll go to heaven, I'll go to heaven. I'll be on the right side, he'll be on the left side. We both love you. But I hate him because he doesn't listen to me. He's got his own agenda. He's manipulative. I had all this stuff in my heart and I said, I am not going to do this again. It's not worth it. What's the value behind that? Self-protection.

Now, it's not altogether bad. Sexual abuse. We should protect ourselves against emotional, sexual abuse. So there is a certain degree of self-preservation that God ordains, He wants us to protect ourselves. He doesn't want you to walk in front of a car in the street or submit yourself to certain kind of abusive behavior. But this was not so much abusive. This was just conflict between a friend. And you know what I learned through that experience? That when I raised the wall between me and that friend, the process of hardening myself to him made me hard to everybody, made me mistrusting in general.

Are you guys tracking with me here? So what happens is we go through life absorbing values of our family and our culture, making vows, reacting to painful experiences and we develop a worldview that has comes out of our core values and everybody has a world view. Everybody has a set of values that shape our view of life. So whatever you will suffer for or whatever you are committed not to suffering for is what you really believe. Now here's the deal with us as Christians, it is possible to believe the gospel with our head, but to have values in our hearts that are different. Hello, are you with me? I like people to kind of like, do this like those little dolls in

the back of 50 cars and just makes me feel good. I just want to make sure I'm connecting with you. In fact, if you don't understand something, then that's okay. Raise your hand and say stop or something.

It is possible to have an evangelical mind and a Babylonian heart. It is possible to say the right stuff, but to believe something different down here and what counts to God, not only I mean, it's important to have right doctrine, because right doctrine applied to our heart can convert our values. But it is possible to be living up here in our head in one world, in another world, have a whole different set of values shaped by the culture we come out of or our life experiences.

And if the two are different, we will say we're a Christian and we'll live like a pagan. Even a nice pagan, a religious pagan. You see, you can be religious in your spirit and have nothing to do with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Like John said this morning, we can live by tips and techniques. We can live by ideas that have nothing to do with the cross of Jesus Christ. So everybody needs not only to get saved, they need a values conversion. We need to open up our hearts and say, "Jesus, show me what I really believe. Help me see what's really valuable to me."

Is it status? Is it comfort? Is it security? Everybody hates the faith gospel. At least I do. I think it's really weird. I think it's bad news. The success, name it and claim it stuff. It is so American. It is just so American. What does it have to do with Rwanda? What does it have to do with Kosovo? Name it and claim it. I mean, I'm driving down the freeway when my kid is five years old. My son says, "I claim that Mercedes in Jesus' name." "Where did you hear that?" Like this

little five year old all of a sudden feeling the wrath of my indignation at a whole world of doctrine, and he's just shivering like, in the backseat. "I'm sorry, Daddy."

Name it and claim it. It's a value that comes out of our culture. And then we put a name on it call it doctrine. We baptized it and called it Christian, and all it does is reinforce something that has nothing to do with the gospel. Now, why I'm saying all this let me just kind of bring this down to where we are. Missions, quote unquote, is what people do when they go off and they've heard a voice in the middle of night. See? Have you heard a voice in the night? I've never heard one.

I would love to hear a voice in the middle of night. I mean, not my wife's, I'd love to hear that, but God's voice. What do we need? "Floyd!" How many of you would like to hear God just wake you up in the middle of night and say, "Go to this address. There's a boy there named George and he's ready to get saved." Say, "Yes, Lord. Here. I am your servant here." And you go and he gets saved. Whoa. You can write a book about that. You'd be famous. I would love that.

I've never had an angel come to me. I would love an angel. Again, in addition to my wife. I've got a little dog named Sassy. She's angelic, but I mean, like a real ten foot one with a sword and with fire. I would fall down on my face and say "Yes!" I'd probably say "No!" I would love a cloud in the shape of Ethiopia with a neon sign that says "Go." Then I would know. How do we know what we hear is really God? I would like to suggest to you that a lot of the stuff that we feel and hear and believe doesn't come from the gospel. It comes out of our passions.

We don't call them passions because they're reactive, they're protective. There's this kind of value set that says "Me first." Status, comfort, security comes out of our culture. I'm going to get my share. I'm going to get my piece. Yes. God wants this for me. I know because I feel it really deeply. I have a peace about it. And that's missions in a lot of people's minds. Hearing voices to go someplace. And I'd like to suggest to you that mission is something different. It's about being passionate about what he's passionate about. We can be honest. We can test our passions. Just look at your checkbook. What do you spend money on? I know you spend money, everything you got to Biola, has pledged for the rest of your life. In addition to that, like, what do you do with your free time? What do you dream about? What really turns you on? Besides Krispy Kreme and surfing? Yeah, I love to hike and hunt and spend time in the wilderness. I love that. That's a passion for me. See, God has passions. He's not this unfeeling kind of God who started everything and stepped out of it and said we will observe it for a few billion years. Then we will have an emotional reaction.

The theologians, bless their hearts, don't get it. The Bible says in Zephaniah, He rejoices over us with singing. It says in the book of Genesis, He saw the sin and He was grieved in His heart. And then, bless the Lord. Theologians come along and say, oh, Floyd, you don't understand. Those are anthropomorphisms. That's man's way of putting God in man's form so we can relate to Him. And I say, who are you to tell me what God's like? If my Bible says He feels, I believe He feels.

On some infinite level, He cares. He has passions, He has commitments. And what He invites us to do, He romances us, He woos us, is to share those with Him. Say, you know what? We're in a battle of passion. And the enemy says, "I love you. I've got a plan for your life. You're so sweet.

I want this for you. Don't you want it?" So that's where spiritual warfare takes place. And God keeps saying, "I want your heart. I love you." How do we know if we have His passion? Ask yourself what you're passionate about. Find out what He's passionate about.

Let me just give you a few ideas of what I think He's passionate about. You know what? He's passionate about people. I love your generation. I've got a 26 year old daughter and 24 year old son. My kids are into their relationships in a way that my generation was not. We were into walking in the streets and protesting. We did the civil rights thing. We protested the Vietnam War. My son, his religion is his friends. In a good way, if I can say it that way. He is so loyal to his friends. He remembers them. He's in contact with them all the time. Email, phone calls. He visits them. I love that.

God created us for people. It's not about how many souls we can save. It's about people. God loves people. He doesn't want us to use people or manipulate them. He wants us to love them. But I want to tell you what, it's hard, because people are weird. Just look around you. Go ahead. Just look. They're really weird. I mean, look at noses, eyes. People have weird feelings. They reject you. People, we're weird. We have a free will. We're unpredictable. And I love being a hero. I love going to people. And then they say, you know, I'm hungry, but I don't want you in my life. And that hurts.

We worked in the red light district in Amsterdam for years, 18 years. And you'd like to think that people want you there. I can tell you how many times drug addicts said, you know, "Take a hike, man." So I go home and think, "Why am I doing this? These people want to shoot me. They steal

my car. They threaten my kids.' I had people break into my car nine times. Other people were using my car more than I was using it. Why should I like them? Finally I gave it away. I thought, okay, take it.

So we can't be idealistic about this. But the most valuable thing in the universe outside of God himself, is His creation. And He said, He's made us higher than the angels. There's certain value and worth in every person. Like a girl named Paula. Tell you about a girl named Paula. She lived in the red light district. She'd been a heroin addict for 17 years. She stood on a bridge 50 yards away from where we live, 75 yards away. Amsterdam has little cobblestone streets. It's always cloudy, like today's. Always cloudy, always drizzling. Summer comes July 3rd or 4th every year, like you get one day, and everybody says, wow, it's summertime. It's drizzly, cobblestone streets, little canals, four story tall buildings, the red light district.

She stands on a bridge. Her teeth are falling out, her eyes are sunk in her head. She's got hepatitis. Maybe she has AIDS. And for three and a half years, we invited her in for a free meal, and she turned us down every day. And I could not figure out why. And two of my friends and coworkers just made it their dream and goal in life to love that woman into the kingdom of God. They did what we heard this morning in the chapel.

They romanced her. They loved her. They reached out to her, and only afterwards. It makes sense to me. She had so much shame in her life. We were the clean Christians. We were in another world. We were so far away from her existence of living in a street and sleeping with guys, and she couldn't relate to us. But one friend, co-worker named Marita, just reached out to



her. And one day, one day, Paula said, okay, I'll come for a meal. After three and a half years. She was hungry, she was cold. She came in.

Now, we didn't have a palace. We just had a simple little coffee bar. She came in, they set a plate of food in front of her, two or three people there. She was so overwhelmed, she got up and ran away. And Marita was just brokenhearted. And Marita chased after her. I don't recommend this. She ran after her and grabbed her and said, "You've got to come back." She'd been praying for her so much and pulled her back in and said, "You got to eat." And she sat there, ate the meal, and she just burst into tears.

It's like God chasing us until we finally stopped running. She stopped running. We actually called that coffee shop on the cliff, as I said, and we ran a Pancake restaurant in it because Dutch people like pancakes, and we were trying to relate into the culture. And then we ran a church in the pancake restaurant, so we were nicknamed the Pancake Church. So Paula would come on Sunday mornings or Sunday afternoons when we had our celebration times in the red light district.

And I mean, you can imagine. We had all kinds of people coming. Paula would sit in the front row, second row, right hand side, and glow. You talk about worship. She would weep tears, raise her hand, and she'd just say, 'thank you.' She came to me one day, I want to tell you, this is really great. She came to me and she said, "16 and a half years ago, I had a little boy, and I put him up for adoption." She'd been a heroin addict for 17 years. "I would love to find my son. I know it's impossible. Please, can you help me? I want to tell my son, I'm sorry."

You guys, at the same time, in a little village in Holland, a 16-year-old boy went to his adopted parents and said, "Now that I'm a Christian, I want to find my mother and tell her that it's okay. I love her. I want to tell her about Jesus." And a miracle took place. A miracle of miracles. And a couple of months later, they met each other. Can you believe that? That must be like heaven. Now that, to me, is missions.

I like this stuff because I get to brag about God. I get to invite people to redemption. This is what it's about. You might say, Can't I do that through another vocation? Absolutely. But not 'instead of,' 'In order to,' but not 'instead of.' This is what life is about. This is the deal. The deal is not a BMW and a white picket fence and a condo. That's not the deal. That's the lie. That's the lesser pleasure. And I'm not saying things are wrong. I'm just saying there's a higher pleasure, and He invites us into His passion. Come on in. I want you to share my passion.

Can I say it this way to you? It takes God to love God. It takes God to love God because we're so messed up. We're so frightened. We're so the product of our culture. We don't even know what it's like to be loved and to love God. So you know how it works. You say, okay, love me, win me, romance me, seduce me. I want to be loved. And you will kick and scream and you'll fight, because it is the most amazing, changing, captivating experience to be loved by God.

When I was in college, I played basketball. It was my passion. It was the passion of all my passions. In my junior year, I was captain of the basketball team, and we were doing really well. We had a guy who was a small college all-American. We had another guy that was being scouted by pro teams. For a little tiny college, we were beating state schools, traveling all over the

country, and as captain of the basketball team, and that guy was really passionate, and I'm the guy. I spent 16 hours a day in my summers, man, I was going to be the best.

And one day I looked around and I thought, you know what? I'm a captain, and I'm leading people into another passion. I'm not happy with this. So I just resigned in the middle of the season. That was really weird. I know it, but I did it. And I felt like, I've got to do this for God. I've got to get my priorities right. All hell broke loose. All hell broke loose. I found out that people around me were far more committed to basketball than they were to Jesus. When I'd say to them, "Listen, you guys, I'm worshipping this round thing called a leather ball, and I want to get God first in my life. But you don't have to be weird to do this." I said, "Please, I just need to do this." And nobody supported me.

I needed to do that because it had become a god in my life. Now, I went back to it a couple of months later, but I had to go through that period in my life where I let Him love me, I let Him invade my life. I let Him win my heart so that everything else was a lesser passion. Does that make sense to you? It's not that I had to do it. You know what? I just wanted to do it. I wanted Him. I grew up in church. I hated, I hated the church scene and all of its politics. Thank God for my mom and dad. My mom and dad were better than that. But I decided it was real or not real. It was all or it was nothing. It was play the game of church or it was be a fanatical follower of Jesus. To me, there was no middle ground. And God invites us to that as the longing of His heart. So like I said, it doesn't make any difference what location you have.

See, here's the paradigm. It's not home or foreign missions. It's not going or not going. It's not hearing a voice or not hearing a voice. It's not being a missionary or not being a missionary. That's not in God's thinking. God is into God. Hear me. What this is about is the worship of Jesus. It is about a romance where He says, "It's about me." Now, no other being in the universe can justly, righteously do this. If I said it's to you, it's about me. Today, you can just walk out the door. But God says it's about me.

He invites us to the reality of Himself. Everything else is out of focus and out of place until He is our passion. And you know what? Two things will happen for you. I'll promise this to you. When He captures you with His passions and His passions become yours, you'll know it for sure.

Because you'll want the poor and those who have never heard, to hear. Listen. When I fell in love with Sally, a little girl in Texas, I was 19 years old. I could not keep my mouth shut. My friend said, what has happened to you? You're smiling like an idiot all the time. I started writing poetry. I've never written poetry in my life. My mother, she said something. "Is it a girl?" You can't hide it. He's everything.

You'll want two people. Two classes of people in this world don't have a choice: the poor and the unreachable. And if God has a bias in His heart I know the scripture says that He's not partial, but I'd like to suggest He's a little prejudiced and His prejudice is toward the poor because of poverty of mind. They think they cannot do it. They think there's no option. They are hopeless. They are poor in spirit. And those who have never heard, they're the prisoners of idols. And God longs for them to at least have a chance so that His Son will be worshipped, so they can come home. This

is all about Him. That is like saying, 'If He gives me the Swahili languages by Friday, I'll know I'm to go.' It's the 'Show me a cloud, Lord, in the shape of Ethiopia.'

No, this is about a romance of heart, a love affair with Him, where we say, "God, I want to tell somebody." Does that make sense to you? See, there's three steps to knowing God's will. Well, I'm not going to preach that sermon today, but I'll tell you the wrong place to start. The wrong place to start is, 'Where should I go? God, tell me where it is, and then I'll tell You if I like it.' A geography fixation is not the way to hear God. A God fixation a passion, heart for God, letting His passions capture your heart is the way to hear God. That's step number one.

And see, people, another confusion. Some people want to go and they say, God, show me where it is, but please don't let it be there. Then, you know, they haven't figured it out because they're starting with geography instead of God. They're starting with dirt instead of the Creator or other people. They get another fixation and it's like, 'Well, I'm artistic, so certainly He would not send me to a rough place.' So they're vocationally fixated. My sister was like that. I was off in Afghanistan. My brother went--was smuggling bibles into Eastern Europe. My brother had a burden to reach KGB back in the days when it was not a popular thing. I'll tell you, literally, he was trying to figure out ways to find secret police in Russia.

What do you do? You do a survey? 'Are you a secret police?' There's a reason why they're called secret police. And he was trying to figure out ways to find them, and he did. He went to a museum in Leningrad called the anti-God Museum. Russians in those days, and this was 1977, had set aside a museum dedicated to the death of religion, mocking religion. My brother said,

'Hey, I figured out how I can find secret police.' So he went and stood in front of the museum handing out gospels.

He found them, so he's off doing that weirdness. I'm in Afghanistan. We have one sibling left, my sister. She's Mama's girl. She stayed at home. She is the Ralph Lauren lady. That's her style.

"Called to the mall" was her motto. I get this call in Afghanistan. My dad says, 'Well, son, he said, the speaker for the missions conference got sick, and I need somebody to take his place.

And it's just a couple of weeks. Can you fly home and preach in the missions conference?' This is the headquarters church of our denomination. And there's professors and seminary guys and everything. My dad hasn't seen me say in two years.

And I have hair down my shoulders, this big beard, and I'm wearing this Indian Guru outfit. So I'm saying, "Okay, dad, I'll come." Thank you. So I get an airplane, I fly into Atlanta airport. I walk off the airport, off the airplane, come through customs, immigration, and my mom and dad are looking for me, looking past my shoulder. I'm walking up to them, they're still looking. You talk about surprise. And I kind of look at them and my mom goes, all she said was, "my son." My dad was the closest he ever got to swear. And he said, "Oh, my God."

Anyway, I go to the missions conference, Indian Guru McClung, preaching on missions. Second night, my sister, at 18 or 19 years old, sitting next to my mom, because she was vocationally fixated. She knows that [inaudible] her sayings were like, "I'm not cut out for that stuff. I've got a calling to stay because I have a burden to be a school teacher." And I was preaching away. I looked down the second night and the spirit of God touched her heart and gripped her. See, His

passion touched the capacity in her for real pleasure. And she felt the divine romance. She felt the passion of God for her. And she started crying.

And my mother looked at me and looked at my sister and looked back at me and shook her head. She was just saying, "Don't you even think about taking her." Next year, she went to Turkey. What's the deal? The deal is God. See, the deal is God. It's his glory. It's his worship. And when we fall in love with God and we become God people, and we delight in His passion, they must say, 'God, whatever my gifts are, whatever my vocation in this life, use it please, that others will be attracted through me to You.'

You know what? Geography will take care of itself. In fact, you'll say things that will scare you. You'll say things like, 'God, I think I'm willing to do that. Send me, Lord.' And then you know that you've come to that place where His passion has grabbed your passion. The way I like to say it is this: Why should America get all the people who don't want to go? Why should America get all the people who've not let God's passion touch their passion? So they come up with, "Well, I'll stay until God calls me to go." Those are old-fashioned, out-of-date, out-of-touch missionary paradigms. They're man-centered and man-oriented. This is about God, you guys.

You know what? It's not even about how many people get saved or how many unreached people groups. It's about Jesus being worshiped everywhere. I long that people will worship Him who've never worshiped him because of my obedience. You know one of my prayers to the Lord? "Lord, I pray that You will hear a language in heaven You've never heard before because of me.

Something I do out of obedience and love for You will touch people. I long for the poor to rejoice in You." Do you guys get this?

When you get to this point, then you can say, "Okay Lord, what's my assignment? Take me, use me." This was Isaiah. When you see the Lord, you'll say, send me, send me somewhere. When this grabbed me in college and I was your age, I got in my room, my dorm room one night, I locked the door, kicked my roommate out, put a map on the floor and I said, "Okay God, I'm not leaving until You call me. If You don't give me a country, I'm going to take one." How many of you think God gets mad at people who show initiative in the kingdom? Do you think God will get upset? If you say, "God, I'm going to go anyway"? "You better tell me where." Do you think? No way. When He touches your heart, you want to brag, [inaudible]

Let's pray. Be our passion. Be Thou our vision, o Lord of our life. Deliver us from the small ambitions and may You be our ambition, may You be our dream. May you be our passion. Your worship. Your grace. Your goodness. And Lord, we pray for values conversion at the very core of our being, that our worldview will not be based around our happiness, but Your worship. Not around our fulfillment. But around Your pleasure and joy. Convert us all the way, lord, we pray sanctify our values and our worldview that You are the center and we're not. Come, Holy Spirit of God.

Could I invite you this morning just quietly to ask Jesus to romance your heart? Whatever words you feel comfortable, just be real with Him. But would you take a moment? Would just take a minute here? Would you say to Him, 'Lord, romance me, fascinate me, embrace me. I open the



door of the secret inner chamber of my heart and invite You to invite me. You're everything we want, Lord.' Overcome our fears, Lord, overcome our hurts, overcome our wrong ideas. Win me, Lord. Amen.

Bless you guys. He's good.