



Sermon Transcription • Abbotsford

It Gets Better - (Joel 2:28-32)

Pastor Greg Harris

[Please Note: This transcript has been lightly edited for ease of reading. Also, some headings have been added in square brackets to aid the reader in locating portions of the sermon.]

When my wife and I were dating, she planned a surprise date day for us in Harrison and she decided that this would be a great way for us to spend a day. And so we started our drive towards Harrison and on our way there I asked her, "Okay, so what are we doing next, like when we arrive there, what are we going to do?"

"Okay we are going ride on some bikes and then we're going to do some other things." And I said, "What are we are doing?" She said, "I'll tell you later, okay?" So we're on the bike, five minutes in, I'm like, "Okay, what's next? Like after the bike ride then what are we going to do?"

"We are going to go for a walk along the water, okay?"

"Okay." Five minutes into that, "So what's next, like after this, what's after that?" She said, "Well if we're still dating, [Laughter] we are going to go out for lunch." See I was fixated on what's coming up afterwards. I'm a bit of a control freak, and so, here's the reason why I'm telling you that story. Mostly to show you what great of a catch I am. No it's actually a miracle she married me. I tell you that story because in our passage here this morning, what we have, is Joel, drawing people's attention to what's happening next. So if you've been with us we've been studying the book of Joel, and what we've seen in the book of Joel is there's been a massive locust attack, a bunch of grasshoppers come, destroy the land of Israel, destroy the crops, destroy the grain and the grapes, so there's no bread, there's no wine, the people of Israel see the destruction, they plead with the Lord and the Lord responds to their repentance and their pleas with promising to bring restoration. He says okay I'm going to bring water to the land, you're going to be able to have stuff grow again. Restoration will come after this locust attack. And now what we have in Joel 2:28-32 is the Lord speaking through Joel saying what's going to happen *after* the restoration. What's next after the restoration from the destruction of the locusts. So here's Joel 2:28-32,

"And afterward, [after the restoration from the destruction, afterward] I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days. I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved; for on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be deliverance, as the Lord has said, even among the survivors whom the Lord calls."



[The Poured Spirit]

See Joel's drawing Israel's attention to what's happening after the restoration from the locust attack. He's going to draw their attention to two main things. First of all, he's going to draw their attention to the poured Spirit. Secondly he's going to draw their attention to a promised salvation. So we are going to see in this passage that after the restoration comes from the locusts attack, there's a poured Spirit and there's a promised salvation. So first, let's draw our attention to the first few verses of Joel 2 where it talks about the poured Spirit. Joel 2:28-29 says,

“And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days.”

So remember this is after the restoration has taken place, this is something that's going to be in the future that's going to take place and what's going to happen is the Spirit is going to be poured out on all people. Which is a bit of a change in the life of Israel. Cause the Spirit's been poured out on people in the past, but in the past the Spirit was poured out on particular people at particular times, for a particular reason. So in the Old Testament there were these guys and women called judges, where the Lord would raise up people in Israel before they had kings, and the judges would come and they would lead and they would call the Israelites back from sin and they would deliver the people and they would do all kinds of amazing things and many of these judges were appointed or anointed with the Spirit. The Spirit was poured out on them and then they did their mighty works. So one of these judges, his name was Samson, you might have heard of him. He's the one who had the long hair and like super strong. The Lord anointed Samson for a particular purpose at a particular time. Or King David was another person who was anointed, or the Spirit was poured on him, at a particular time for a particular reason. There was another one, one of the first people in the Old Testament, that were told, as the Spirit poured out on them, is a guy named Bezalel, whose job was to make the tabernacle, which was the dwelling place of God with his people when they were in the wilderness, Bezalel's job was to make the tabernacle look really good. All kinds of different materials he would build stuff. We actually have a guy on our staff whose name is Dave Baerg and we call him Super Dave because like it doesn't matter what material he's using, he can just make stuff. Right, this was Bezalel, he was the guy who could make stuff out of wood or out of metals or out of whatever. He could do all the crafts that were needed to be done, the Spirit came on Super Bezalel, at a particular time for a particular purpose. That's how the Spirit worked.

Now Joel's saying, after the restoration comes, when the water comes and the crops begin to grow again in our land, there's going to be a day after this, where the Spirit's going to be poured out on *all* God's people. Right, the language here is young and old, male and female, doesn't matter if you're a servant or a master, if you're part of God's people, the Spirit will be poured out on you, Joel says. It's a dramatic shift, its a day that they were looking forward to seeing when is this going to actually happen. It was future for them, but it's actually a past event for us.



The book of Acts tells the story of how the early church, after Jesus' ministry and life and death and resurrection and ascension back into heaven. How the early church had its start and early in the book of Acts, Acts 2, we actually hear about the Spirit coming and being poured out on the disciples. Here's how that story goes. So the disciples of Jesus, the close guys, who saw his miracles, they heard his teachings, they witnessed his crucifixion. They hung out with the resurrected Jesus. Jesus is with them in his resurrected body and he's saying here's the deal guys, I need you to hang out in this room. I'm going to go, I'm going to ascend into heaven. You need to hang out until the Holy Spirit comes upon you and the Holy Spirit's going to come upon you for the purpose of empowering you to actually declare the message about who I am. To actually be my witnesses in this city, in Jerusalem, and in the surrounding region and actually to the ends of the earth. So stay here, the Holy Spirit's going to come upon you to empower you for gospel proclamation. So the disciples stay there and then out of nowhere after what probably what seemed like a very long time for these guys of when's the Spirit going to come, when's the Spirit going to come? The Spirit shows up and what's described as like tongues of fire. So basically what took place was you have all these guys that were in a room, they were scared little kitty cats, but now they go out as bold lions into the market place, into the public square and there's been all kinds of people from all kinds of places gathered in Jerusalem at that time for a big festival and these guys, who only know how to speak one language, go out into the streets and out of their mouths come languages they don't know how to speak. People are hearing the good news of Jesus in all of their home language in their mother tongue language and they're looking at these guys like you don't know how to speak my language but you are. And in Acts 2:12-21 it says,

“Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, ‘What does this mean?’ Some, however, made fun of them and said, ‘They have had too much wine.’ Then Peter stood up with the Eleven [the other disciples], raised his voice and addressed the crowd: ‘Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel [this event that you're seeing of all these people speaking in different languages that they don't know, *this* is what was promised was spoken by the prophet Joel]: “In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.””

You see Peter's quoting directly the passage that we're studying here today and his, the way he's applying Joel's passage is he's saying, look *that day*, that that afterward that Joel was pointing towards, that's being fulfilled right now. In your presence, what God promised in pouring out his Spirit on all of his people is actually being fulfilled right now. Later in Acts 2 when Peter's still addressing the crowd, he tells them, look it's not just something that we're going to experience. It's going to be the experience of anyone who has faith in Jesus, for you, and anyone whose far away, what's going to happen is if you repent of your sin and believe in Jesus, you'll have your sins forgiven and the Spirit



will be poured out on you. On all God's people the Spirit will be poured. Here's the big idea, is that the primary purpose of the poured out Spirit is the empowering of God's people to proclaim God's message. Joel was looking forward to a day when the Spirit would be poured on all of God's people, male and female, slave and free, young and old. The Spirit would be poured out on all of God's people and Peter is saying the purpose for that pouring is empowerment to proclaim. That's why the Spirit's being poured out, is so that all of God's people will be empowered to be involved in God's mission.

So look there's a few implications of that for us. The idea that the Spirit empowers the Spirit's poured out to empower all of God's people for the proclamation of the gospel and the fulfillment of his purposes here. Here's the first implication of that idea, that the point isn't the gifts that come when the Spirit is poured out, but the point is the goal to which the Spirit is being poured out for. So even in this passage right, the passage says the Spirit's going to be poured out on *all* people and your old men will dream dreams your young men will see visions, male and female servants, everyone's going to prophesy. And as we're hearing that passage being read many of us are people thinking to ourselves, "Ohhh let's talk about the visions, man, let's talk about the dreams and the prophesying, cause everyone's going to have them. Let's talk about the evidences of the Spirit coming." But the point, according to Peter in his usage of Joel 2, the point isn't the ways in which the Spirit's arrival manifests, or the evidences that we know the Spirit has come, the point is the purpose for the pouring of the Spirit. How does God empower us for the goal of actually being involved in gospel proclamation and have the news of Jesus go forth. That's what the whole book of Acts is all about. How as people come to saving faith in Jesus, the Spirit comes upon them and they go and they become bold proclaimers of the gospel so that it reaches the ends of the earth. That's the whole point of the pouring of the Spirit. And yet I think for many of us, we would rather spend our time thinking about the particular gifts. Investigating them, and maybe doing spiritual gifts test, right, spiritual gifts inventory. Cause I got to know what are my gifts. Cause if I don't know what my gifts are how am I supposed to be involved in anything. So I'm just going to hang back, I'm just going to you know, observe, and then once I take the spiritual gifts test then I'll know these are the areas and the only areas in which I should be serving, cause I took the test. Now look, I'm not against spiritual gift tests, I think they can be helpful. But I think they're an evidence of a deeper problematic thing in us, that we're so fixated on the gifts, not the goal of the gifts. Rather than just saying you know what, I'm going to serve places until I find the place that actually gives me joy and I can't wait to get back there. We have the mindset of saying, you know what I'm not going to serve *unless* I have the perfect spot that meets my gift set, so I have to do the gift test to know where I need to serve. The gifts are for the goal. The Spirit's poured out to empower us, so that the mission can go forward. So that the gospel can be preached. This is what Peter actually says in 1 Peter 4:10-11, he says,

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ."

See Peter's like look, if your gift is like a speaky gift, cool. If your gift is like a servy gift, awesome. Whatever you have, use it, is Peter's point. The mindset then of Christians shouldn't be, oh what gifts do I have, the mindset of Christians, should be one of how do I participate in what's actually going on



in the local church. I think of the problems we have though, is that for many of us, church has become something that we consume as like a product. We want to come and we want to judge the teaching, we want to judge the music, we want to be involved and come here and just observe the show. But what this is saying is that actually no, the Spirit comes and the Spirit gives gifts and is poured out on all of God's people for the purpose of actually mobilizing them into serving and using those giftings. It's a mindset of participation, not of observation. It's a mindset of not saying, you know what someone else will give them money and someone else will serve the kids, and someone else will do the coffee things and someone else will be an usher, someone else. The mindset of a Christian is not someone else will take care of that. The mindset of a Christian is how do I engage with whatever I have for the purpose of the mission going forward and God being glorified. Because the Spirit's been poured on all people for the purpose of empowering them to be involved in God's purposes.

Here's another implication of this idea though, which leads out of the first one. It's that ministry isn't something for the few but it's something for the all. Being involved in God's mission is an all y'all kind of thing. It's not a let's have a few leaders and we're going to like get them to do the work, and we'll all support them doing the work. No the role of leaders and teachers, the way the New Testament talks about it is those people exist to help equip the body to do the ministry. So it's not let's set up a few people and they're the ones who do all the ministry. We're the ones who support them, we'll pray for you and then we'll watch and do your thing. No the local church is something where we're all actually called to be involved in. The church is not an observe performance. It's a participatory operation. Something we all engage in as believers. If we're Christians, then we are not only disciples of Jesus but we are supposed to be disciples who make disciples of Jesus. We could serve whatever gifting you have you should use it to that end of having Jesus be clarified in people's mind and help people follow Jesus better and love him fuller in all the things that it means to be a disciple of Jesus. That's in all of us kind of deal.

But look I think that there's something in us as humans that we crave to belong to a group of people that are about something bigger than themselves right. This is why the Canucks can sell tickets by having their slogan be, "We are all Canucks." Cause they're like we're all going to be terrible together. [Laughter] Right but there's something in that, when you buy into it right. It's not just like a team that's out there that's doing their thing. It's like we're all in this man. And then in 2011 when they're in the Stanley Cup finals, and we're like, "We want the cup, we want the.." Right, we're chanting because we're part of something bigger than ourselves. Because our souls have this thing in them that craves a belonging to a people for a greater purpose than our own individual lives. Maybe sports isn't your thing, but this is the same idea with music. This is why we go to concerts. It's cause we want to be involved in a group of people that are on the same page, or on the same journey, we're having the same experiences. It sets us out of our normal everyday circumstance. It helps us be a part of something bigger than ourselves right. There was a video that went viral this past week or these past few weeks, I'm not exactly sure when it came out but it was of James Corden, who's a celebrity guy and he has this little segment that he does called, *Carpool Karaoke*. So he had with him in his *Carpool Karaoke* Paul McCartney, the Beatles right. And this episode was about them, in Liverpool, hanging out in the different spots where Paul like, he lived in this house, and this is where he wrote this song and they drove on Penny Lane where it was <singing> in their ears and in their eyes, right there's the barber shop they went in the barber shop and the barber was like, "What's going on in my life?!?" And



as people are watching this, you know you watch it and you start, you can't really do anything but get a little bit happy right. You're hearing these stories and these memories and you're a part of this bigger story and you're a part of this event and you're hearing these songs that you recognize and there's a concert at the end of the whole video of Paul and his band, some of the guys in a team with them and they're in a pub playing to like 30 people. They're all singing the songs everybody knows and you see people just enjoying the moment because they're involved in something bigger than themselves and the moment there's a shared experience where they're actually lifted out of their individual state for a moment and they're a part of something bigger than themselves, cause our souls crave that. Here's the deal though, the church is designed to fill that soul craving. The church is that place where we belong to a people that we have no purpose belonging with, we don't have anything in common except for our love for Jesus. We're called into a community of people and we're given a purpose. It's about something bigger than ourselves and it takes all of us to actually be involved in it. It's not just the Spirit being poured out on the few anymore, it's the Spirit being poured out on all of God's people to empower them to accomplish God's purposes. The Spirit's been poured out on all God's people so that all God's people can be empowered to actually be the church.

[A Promised Salvation]

Here's the second thing that the passage teaches us about what happens after the restoration from the locust plague and it's a promised salvation. Joel 2:30-32,

"I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved; for on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be deliverance, as the Lord has said, even among the survivors whom the Lord calls."

So in our passage in the way it's structured, is Joel starts it by saying, and afterward, and then there's two things that take place afterward. There's the poured Spirit and then there's the, I will show [the] wonders, part of the passage. So when we hear that language of. I'll show wonders, it's easy for us to think oh wonders is good. That's wonderful. Wonders means awesome. Well the word wonder here doesn't necessarily mean good, it just means, awe-inspiring. Something that captivates your attention but not necessarily for good reasons. So think with me a little bit about how, I don't know if you've been seeing in the news the Kilauea volcano in Hawaii that's been like lava bursting out all the time. If you see footage of the lava coming out you look and you think, oh man that's really beautiful. But the lava coming out actually has a really destructive power, right. Homes are being destroyed and communities are being overtaken and highways are being blocked. And there was actually a video of pilot taking a news crew really high in the air so they could see the effects of the volcano eruption that's still going on. And the pilot says, "Isn't this beautiful to look at? But it's terrifyingly deadly." Right, that's the kind of wonder that Joel is talking about here. There's a captivating, getting your attention, kind of dynamic to it, but not in a, it's wonderful kind of good way. He says, here's how the wonders are going to play themselves out. It's going to happen on the earth and it's also going to happen in the heavens. So on the earth he uses the language of blood and of fire and of billows of smoke. So Joel's drawing people's attention to the imagery of someone or some army coming into a



city and coming into it to conquer it. So they're going to kill the people and then once people have been killed they're going to light the whole town on fire and then the fire is going to cause billows of smoke. So he's drawing their attention to this site that you could see from far distance of the flames going up and the billows of smoke coming up and it will catch your attention, but not for good reasons.

He also said there's going to be wonders displayed in the heavens. The sun will be darkened and the moon will turn into blood and there's probably two ways that the original audience would have understood that phrase of the sun being turned to dark and the moon to blood. The first way might just be like a ground up kind of way, you know what I mean, the sun and the moon being obstructed because of what took place and the destruction of the city. So have you been to like, you've been camping when there's a big wildfire going on all around you. And your deciding you're going to go anyways because you paid \$300 for the campsite for the week and you're like, "What am I going to do, not use it? It's crazy, I'm going to go, they say it's safe, I'm just going to go even though I won't be able to breathe. It will be fine." And you hang out at your campsite, and it doesn't really matter what time of day it is it's still pretty dark. Because the cloud the smoke's covering the sun you can't really see. If you do see the moon at night sometimes it's just kind of discoloured from all of the different stuff going on from the wild fire. So it could be this idea of like a ground up obstruction of the moon and of the sun. Another way the original audience might have heard this language of the sun being dark and the moon turning into blood is they would have in this time frame, kings would regularly have people on their team whose job was to basically just predict when eclipses were going to happen. So there whole life was, okay, I think there's going to be an eclipse next month. Here's why that mattered. Was it a solar eclipse or a lunar eclipse if the sun was darkened or if the moon looked kind of the reddish, orangy that it does sometimes in lunar eclipses then what that meant was bad things are going happen. So these guys on the kings staff, their job was to come and say, "Hey, bad things are going to happen. So just so you know." So however they understood it in the original audience, what the language of the wonders coming of the blood and fire and the billows of smoke and the sun dark and the moon blood, what it means is imagery for destruction. It is imagery for something worse than a locust plague destroying everything. That's what Joel's trying to draw his audience's attention towards, is this idea that there's a day coming when the destruction that is going to be resulted there is actually worse than the locust plague. The whole point that Joel's trying to get, that the Lord through Joel is trying to get to people, is realizing the deadliness, the devastation, the danger, the destruction that's going to come on the day of the Lord. But, Joel says everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. See the point of these verses is that in the future after the restoration comes to the locusts plague where everything's finally dealt with there in that temporal thing. There's a future day coming where the destruction is worse than you can imagine but the salvation is more beautiful than you could imagine. That even though it's coming, this dreadful day where rebels will be punished. It's coming, but everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. There's a promise.

So with our time remaining I want us to just think through three implications of that line, everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. Here's the first one, Joel says that *everyone* who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. So there's a breadth, there's a wideness to the invitation. The



apostle Paul actually picks up on this idea when he's quoting Joel in Romans 10:9-13. Here's what Paul wrote,

“If you declare with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved. As Scripture says, ‘Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame.’ For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile [he’s saying there’s no difference between anybody]—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, for [because, here’s why I’m saying that, Joel 2:32], ‘Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.’”

See the apostle Paul is quoting Joel 2:32 to make the point that it does not matter, who you are, what your background is, what your family background is, what your sin background is, what your ethnic background is, *everyone* who calls will be saved. There’s a breadth to the invitation.

This idea is also made really clear in the great commission when Jesus is talking to his disciples in the book of Matthew and he’s sending them out as his sent ones who are going to go and be a part of the early church. He tells them, Matthew 28:19,

“Therefore go and make disciples [so that’s your job, make disciples, of who?] of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”

See the role is to make followers of Jesus, but the kind of people that should be followers of Jesus, is *all* kinds of people. From all nations. Jesus is the answer for the hope of all of the nations. Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. See Christianity is the most inclusive religion, worldview out there because there is no distinguishing feature that prohibits someone from being able to call on the name of the Lord to be saved. It’s for everybody. Anyone who calls will be saved.

So the question for us is if you’re here it doesn’t matter what your background is, it doesn’t matter what your sin history is, it doesn’t matter who your family is, the invitation of salvation from the destruction that’s going to come when the Lord returns to judge rebels, the salvation from that, through Jesus Christ is available to you if you’ll call. Doesn’t matter where your from, doesn’t matter what you’ve been through. This is available for you because everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

Here’s the second implication of this phrase, that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. This language of calling on is, it is this like, yeah Lord help me, but it’s more than just a thing you say. It actually has to do with pledging your allegiance to someone. So go back with me again to that image of another army coming into your city and they’re going to destroy everything and they’re going to kill everybody who’s not a part of their kingdom and they’re going to light the whole thing on fire and the billows of smoke are going to go up. The way you get out of that is you call on the name of the king who’s coming and conquering. You say, “I’m not a citizen of this city anymore, I’m one of your guys man. So kill him not me, I’m calling on your name. I’m pledging my allegiance to your flag.” See what Paul is saying here actually in Romans 10, he’s saying, look if you declare with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, that’s what he’s saying. That phrase, Jesus is Lord, it’s a very political phrase. Cause in Rome, you know what you said, Cesar is Lord. That’s who’s Lord, that’s who’s in charge, I



pledge my allegiance to Rome. My identity is as a Roman. And Cesar's my lord and Paul's saying, "Nah nah, if you want to be saved you have to say Jesus is my Lord. Jesus is the boss, Jesus is the king." That's what it actually takes.

See this past week we had the opportunity to baptize almost 70 people at a lake and it was great. I had this moment where everyone gets dunked in the water and it's a symbol of them dying to their sin and they come out of the water, it's a symbol of new life in Christ. And it was amazing, we got to see the gospel be preached 70 times through action, right. One of the things we told everyone who's being baptized though in the baptism class was that look you can't just say Jesus is my Saviour if you're not actually going to follow him as your Lord. He has to be Lord also if he's going to be your Saviour. This is what Paul's saying, everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. Everyone who says, Jesus is Lord will be saved.

So look it's amazing that we get to be a part of a Christian, part of a nation that is warm to Christianity, the point that we can actually meet public and not fear for our safety. That's a blessing, being a part of Canada is a huge blessing, so we should totally go and wear the Canada colours and eat the hot dog and maybe wear a Canada jersey, like hockey because it will be cold, but whatever. Let's enjoy ourselves cause there's a thankfulness we should have about where we live but let's not kid ourselves. Our allegiance is to King Jesus. We're dual citizens but our heavenly passport outweighs our Canadian one. Cause he can't be your Saviour if he's not your Lord. He can't be your Saviour if he's not your King. The way that we express the fact that he's our king is more than just standing in church and singing songs and declaring it to be true and having words come out of our mouth that he's our Lord and our King, but by actually following it up with our feet when we leave here. Cause King Jesus had followers who started the early church and those followers actually wrote a lot of what the commands are, all the commands we need to know about following who Jesus is we have through his followers writings, in what we call the New Testament. So if you want to call Jesus, Lord, you have to be willing to follow the marching orders that he actually gives us. Cause you can't say Jesus is Lord of my life but then when he tells you to jump you say, nah. If Jesus was your Lord and he told you to jump you'd ask how high. Cause he's King. So if we want to be saved, Jesus has to have the kind of authority over our lives where when he says we need to do something, our response is, right, because you're my King I'll respond, I'll do it. When Jesus says this is the way I want you to treat your sexual life, we say okay. When Jesus says this is the way I want you to use your money, we say, okay. Cause he's Lord. And look he can't be our Saviour if he's not going to be our Lord. Anyone who *calls on* the name of the Lord will be saved.

Here's the third part, everyone who calls on the *name* of the Lord will be saved. The language here is the name of the Lord but for Joel's audience was Yahweh, it's his personal name. That's the name by which he identifies himself to his people. This is who I am, God says is Yahweh. Joel's saying if you call on the name of Yahweh, you'll be saved. So that's not just some kind of like generic, like, "Oh God who might be there, help me." But call on his name. That's why Paul picks it up and he says look if you declare with your mouth that *Jesus* is Lord, you'll be saved. It has to do with the exclusivity of the person of Jesus to offer salvation. This is what makes Christianity a little bit crazy. It's massively inclusive of every kind of person you could possibly imagine from any kind of background regardless of where they were born or what their history is, anyone can be saved. But only through Jesus. Only



through calling on the name of Jesus. It's not enough to just say I believe in some kind of generic God out there right? It's not enough to just get all giddy and excited when we see a celebrity twitter bio that says, "God #1." And we're like, "Wooo! He said God, that's awesome!" No! Who? What God? Maybe they love Jesus, maybe it's just some generic, in the sky, grandpa with the big beard who's always kind to you kind of God. What God are you calling on? Paul says, Joel says it, if you call on the name of the Lord, if you call on Jesus as Lord you will be saved. There's a specificity to it there's a particularness to it, there's an exclusiveness to this. It's for everyone, but it's only for those who call on the name of the Lord.

Look this whole idea that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved, this is a massive motivation for missions, right? So look if you are visiting Northview and maybe you're kind of kicking the tires of Christianity, welcome here. I'm really happy that you're here. Maybe you're here because you just, you know you're burnt out and need a break and just kind of be filled spiritually for a season before you go out and do something else. You're, just let me just sit in the back pew. Awesome, welcome here. But I'm going to say something to like people who call Northview home, okay? Look if you say Northview is where I go to church, Northview is my home church. I want us to really get behind this idea that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved and the implications for that is that we need to be aggressive in helping people hear his name. They have to call on it to be saved. Anyone can call on it to be saved, but they have to call on it, and right now there are millions of people who don't have that opportunity because they don't know his name. And our church just recently in the last season has committed ourselves to say look here's what we want to be a part of, as a church we want our mission and our vision to be, is we want to be a part of making healthy, making disciples of Jesus but by seeing healthy churches multiplied here and in the city and the region and all across the world. We're committed to areas across the world globally where there's the least reached people in Northern India where there's hundreds of people groups who have never heard the name of Jesus. In places like Turkey, where they don't hear the name of Jesus. In places along the Mekong River in Southeast Asia like Laos and Thailand where they don't hear the name of Jesus and our church has said, look we want to plant churches here, but also be involved in planting churches there so that people can actually hear his name. Cause anyone who hears his name and calls upon his name will be saved but they got to hear his name. This is why we got involved with this multiplication idea, the multiplication fund, where we set a budget apart from our normal operating expenses to say, can we give money to see that kind of stuff happen everywhere. Let's train leaders, let's be involved in equipping people. Let's be involved in sending people, let's be involved in giving money to that fund so that we can see this kind of Jesus preaching, gospel centered, proclaiming the name of Jesus, so everyone one who calls on it will be saved, kind of ministry happen everywhere for years and years and years. Not for our glory but for God's glory. Our church has said yes, we're on board with that. So look, I've been praying that the Spirit of God, who is poured out on all of his people would just disrupt our lives. Just shake us out of our petty little individual focus and give us a vision to be a part of something bigger, something cosmic to give our lives to it. Maybe that means going, maybe that means being trained to be a leader who's going to equip the saints for ministry. Maybe that means learning a different language and travelling to a different part of the world. That would be awesome. But what it also means for all of us who call Northview home, is we got open up our wallets to this thing man. We can't just sit on the sidelines and observe church and say, man wasn't church great



today? But then sit back and say someone else will take care of it. No, God wants to use us to do it! Look we've set up a separate fund that you could give the money to, so you're not like, oh well how did Greg get that new polo? Hmmm? No, it's give the money to the multiplication fund so that we can have the churches go forward and be planted and see that the gospel be preached. We set a target for the next 10 years of 30 million dollars which sounds like a big number right? But I think God has a lot of money. God's invested a lot of money in us. And his Spirit's been poured out on us to empower us to be involved in the mission going forward. So look I've been praying for the day when we look back a few years later and say man remember when we only raised 30 million, now we're at 50, 60, 80, because the gospel needs to go forward people have to hear the name of the Lord Jesus to be saved. Not for our glory, but so that people can avoid the destruction that is actually coming. They'll be delivered from it if they call on his name, so look the question for us isn't, should I be involved in what God's doing? well we have to think seriously about, we've been given so much as people a part of this nation who call Northview home. We have to ask ourselves the question, how will I be involved in making the name of the Lord Jesus famous?

Let me pray for us. Father you're good, Father we see how you predict things, you say you're going to do things and then you fulfill it. Father we're thankful that your Spirit, which you told the people in Joel's day that your Spirit would be poured out for empowerment and we see that being completed in the book of Acts and now we know it's a reality for us today as well that your Spirit pours on us so that we can be empowered to just actually be involved in your purposes. And so Father, I pray that you would disrupt us, don't let us become complacent and comfortable with the little and the ordinary, but help us be focused on what you're actually calling us to be involved in. Lord would you make your name famous, here, in our province, in our nation, and around the world. We pray this for your fame and in Jesus name. Amen.