

1 As many of you know, Pastor Jay
2 is leading us through a sermon series on
3 Philippians, but he's out of
4 town, and so we're not doing Philippians
5 today. He will be back
6 next week, and this week,
7 he said, you know, he gave me a choice of
8 whatever I wanted to do, and I
9 decided that it's a good time to start
10 Mission Month. Mission Month isn't until
11 August, okay?uh But
12 you can never have too much mission,
13 right?So
14 think of this as the first in a series of
15 two messages for the beginning of mission
16 month. And the next part two of this
17 sermon will be given one month
18 from now in the first Sunday of August.
19 I remember many, many years ago, when I
20 was a boy, and that would have been way
21 back in the last century,
22 I was a Boy Scout, and to this
23 day, I still kind of remember the Boy
24 Scout oath. On my honor,
25 I will do my best to do my
26 duty to God and
27 my country, and to obey the Scout
28 law, to help others at all
29 times, to keep myself
30 physically fit, mentally awake
31 and morally straight.
32 Notice the word God in that.
33 To do my duty to God and my
34 country. We see the word God
35 frequently in our culture today. We
36 see it all around us in America. On our
37 money, it says, In God we trust.
38 We sing God Bless
39 America, and in the Pledge of Allegiance
40 to one GodWe pledge allegiance to the
41 flag of the United States of America and
42 to the Republic for which it stands, one
43 nation under God. But all
44 too often nowadays, the word God has
45 lost its meaning. People say it in a
46 non-reverential way. They just throw
47 it out like, oh God, can you believe what
48 she did?Or, oh God, you won't believe the
49 day that I had. It's just another word in
50 our vocabulary nowadays. We use it
51 a lot of us, hopefully none of us here,
52 but in our culture, we use God, the word
53 God, indiscriminately.
54 I was I was reading
55 not too long ago um in a book
56 called How Not to be Secular
57 by James K. A. Smith,
58 and he made this observation. He
59 said that, Go back to the year
60 1500,And if you ask people
61 in Europe or or the colonies in
62 North America, are you a Christian?They'd
63 say yes. Now, the
64 depth of their Christianity may not be
65 perhaps as deep as we would like it to
66 be, but it was just a cultural thing.
67 Everybody would say that they were a
68 Christian. Everybody went to church on
69 Sunday. They celebrated Christmas and

70 Easter. It was just part of the fabric of
71 the of the of the culture. Today, it's
72 not that way. Today,
73 if you ask somebody if they're a
74 Christian, some people will say yes,
75 just because culturally that's what they
76 think they're supposed to do. A lot of
77 people will tell you that they don't
78 believe in God. They'll tell you that
79 they're an atheist or they'll tell you
80 that, Well, you know what?
81 Jesus was just a good teacher and I don't
82 believe that he is who everybody says
83 that he is. Well,
84 That's not exactly
85 the way that it should be. People should
86 know the real God. People should know the
87 real Jesus. People should respond to
88 the real Holy Spirit and not to
89 to the way that culture is. We need
90 to, pardon the expression, get back to
91 the Bible. And the Bible tells us
92 that we are to be prepared.
93 to tell people about Jesus Christ, to
94 preach the good news. As the Boy Scout
95 motto, Be prepared. I remember
96 my grandmother used to say, You should
97 always wear clean underwear, because you
98 never know when you're going to go to the
99 emergency room.
100 We are to be ready to tell people about
101 Jesus in season and out of
102 season. And our
103 Bible passage for
104 today comes from Second Timothy,
105 the fourth chapter, verses one through
106 five. And it says, I charge you in the
107 presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who
108 is to judge the living and the dead, and
109 by his appearing in his kingdom, preach
110 the word. Be ready in season and out of
111 season. Reprove, rebuke, and exhort with
112 complete patience and teaching. For the
113 time is coming when people will not
114 endure sound teaching, but having itching
115 ears, they will accumulate for themselves
116 teachers to suit their own passions
117 and will turn away from listening to the
118 truth and wander off into myths. As
119 for you, always be sober minded,
120 enduring suffering, do the work of an
121 evangelist, fulfill your
122 ministry. Let's pray.
123 Lord Jesus, we are your people and we
124 know that you want us to tell people
125 about you. We pray that you will prepare
126 us to do so. We pray that our lives would
127 be totally surrendered to you, and as
128 such, we can go forth and tell
129 others the truth of the gospel. And we
130 pray this, dear Jesus, in your name, in
131 Jesus' name, amen.
132 So this passage begins with a charge.
133 Paul says to Timothy that, I charge you.
134 He gives them a charge. And what is a
135 charge? A charge You're telling somebody
136 what you want them to do. You're telling
137 them that this is what you are supposed
138 to do. And as Paul is

139 telling this to Timothy, he's saying, you
140 know, this isn't just my charge.
141 This is a charge that comes from God and
142 from Jesus, and Jesus is the judge of all
143 mankind. We have a charge.
144 And I know that you can look at this and
145 you can say, well, you know what? Paul was
146 writing to Timothy, and that's fine,
147 but. What does that have to do with me?
148 Well, actually, it's God's word to us,
149 and so we should pay attention to it. And
150 we have a charge, and that charge is, in
151 fact, the Great Commission. That's what
152 we're supposed to do. It was never a
153 secret. In Jesus' ministry, it was never
154 a secret that he wanted us to go out.
155 When he first calls his first disciples,
156 what does he say? He says, Come, follow
157 me, and I will make you
158 fishers of men. And then later, at the
159 end of his ministry here on earth, he
160 gives the Great Commission. It's a
161 Commission to each and every one of us.
162 And just as Timothy was commissioned, so
163 are we commissioned to go out and to tell
164 people about Jesus Christ. And we're to
165 do it in season and out of season. It's
166 when he puts the opportunity before us.
167 That is when we are to be ready to tell
168 the people about Jesus Christ. It's a
169 time. Often not of our own choosing,
170 but here again, we are to be ready in
171 season and out of season.
172 And he he says
173 several things here. He says, To go out
174 and to reprove and to
175 rebuke and to exhort
176 and have complete patience and
177 and do complete teaching. To
178 reprove means to admonish.
179 It means to tell others, to tell
180 others that there is a different and
181 better way to their lives, and that
182 better way for their lives is the
183 Christian way of life. But we have to be
184 careful that if we go out
185 and we tell people that there's a better
186 way to lead their lives, they're going to
187 look at us and they're going to say,
188 Well, how about the way that you lead
189 your life? And we're warned in Scripture
190 about things like gossiping.
191 Uh We need to avoid things like that. We
192 need to avoid anything that would damage
193 the message that we are given,
194 damage the commission that we are given
195 to spread the word of Jesus Christ, to
196 spread the gospel. And so we don't want
197 to do things like like gossip
198 or tell
199 dirty stories, things like
200 that. No, we want to live a
201 Christian life. And therefore, when we
202 do tell people, when we do give
203 them a word of reproof,
204 they can take it seriously, and they'll
205 know that we are living what we
206 say. And we're to show
207 rebuke. We're to rebuke. And that means

208 that we show disapproval, that we don't
209 go along with the things of the world. We
210 don't go along with the things that we
211 know that Christ is against.
212 We maintain the course. We're
213 steady. We're consistent. And
214 here again, people look at us and they
215 go, Who are you to tell me?
216 And we need to be in a position that they
217 will be, that we will be
218 believable when we tell them, Well,
219 it's not actually us telling you. It's
220 the Lord telling you. And we need to
221 make sure that we are prepared to do this
222 by the way we lead our lives in season
223 and out of season. And here's the
224 big one for me. It is we're to
225 exhort. And when I saw
226 that and I thought, well, you know, how
227 am I going to explain this? And the first
228 word that came to me was the word adjure.
229 And I realized that if I said that,
230 nobody would know what I was talking
231 about. So exhort
232 means to tell somebody
233 emphatically, to have
234 passion. And to have
235 passion doesn't necessarily mean that
236 you're going to yell and shout at
237 somebody, but it means that you actually
238 believe in what you're saying, that
239 you're willing to be there, you're
240 willing to stand up, and you're willing
241 to take a little abuse if
242 that's what it comes to. And there's a
243 there's a thing that that
244 tends to be a problem among a great
245 deal of evangelical Christians, and
246 that is that we want to hide behind what
247 are the supposed words of St. Francis of
248 Assisi, where he
249 says, Go out
250 and do good deeds,
251 preach through the deeds that you do,
252 and if necessary, use words.
253 He never said that, okay? That's
254 That's complete bunk. He didn't say that.
255 And the Franciscans, which
256 is the Catholic
257 organization that that named itself after
258 him and follows his teachings, they will
259 tell you, He never said that.
260 And it's not even biblical. We're to do
261 good deeds, we're to do good works, that
262 is true. But everything that we do
263 needs to point towards Jesus
264 Christ. And if it doesn't point towards
265 Jesus Christ, then it's really not a
266 good work. And I get that lecture all the
267 time from my friend Jerry Dunlap, who
268 tells me, You can do all the good works
269 you want, but unless Jesus Christ is
270 praised, it does not count. And Jerry
271 Dunlap is right, okay?
272 His mother brought him up right.
273 What? What? It, this is something
274 that's been adopted by a lot of people
275 about good works, and you know, you don't,
276 Our good works will speak for themselves,

277 not biblical. The saying is
278 actually preach the gospel at all
279 times and use words to
280 explain what you do,
281 okay?So it's not about doing
282 good works. Now the Bible
283 tells us that our works are a fruit of
284 our faith, that they're a fruit from the
285 Holy Spirit that it's a demonstration of
286 our faith. But here's what the Bible
287 says about preaching. And this
288 comes from Romans, the 10th chapter,
289 starting with verse 14 and going through
290 17. It says, How
291 then will they call on Him
292 in whom they have not believed?And how
293 are they to believe Him of whom they have
294 never heard?And how are they to hear
295 without someone preaching?And how are
296 they to preach unless they are sent?As it
297 was written,How beautiful are the feet of
298 those who preach the good news, but they
299 have not all obeyed the gospel. For
300 Isaiah says, Lord, who has
301 believed what he has heard from us?So
302 faith comes from hearing, and
303 hearing through the word of Christ.
304 We are to tell people about
305 Jesus. We don't just demonstrate it,
306 because if we demonstrate it, they don't
307 know why. They don't know why we do it.
308 We can feed people, but you know what?
309 There's a lot of secular organizations
310 that do the same thing. We can hand out
311 clothes, but there's a lot of secular
312 organizations that do the same thing.
313 There are a lot of things that we do, and
314 we do them because. We are Christian,
315 but other people will never know unless
316 they're told. Now, I'm not in favor of
317 hitting somebody upside the head with a
318 Bible. That's going a little too far,
319 usually. Come
320 on, you all have children, okay?But
321 people do need to be told what we're
322 doing. and they need to be told the
323 complete story. Not something that we
324 make up to excuse ourselves, but they
325 need to be told the whole story.
326 And he says that Paul, in talking to
327 Timothy, says we're to do this with
328 complete patience and teaching.
329 And my interpretation of that is we're to
330 do it with complete patience and complete
331 teaching. I'll tell you a story.
332 Back many years ago,Actually, it was
333 13 years ago. I took a
334 friend out to look at Christmas lights.
335 It was December. It was a great setting.
336 It was cold. It was snowy. It
337 was just, you know, exactly what you how
338 you would want Christmas to be pictured.
339 And we drove around Reno and we looked at
340 Christmas lights and had a really good
341 time. And then we came back
342 and we went out and we had dessert. And
343 my friend is from a foreign country. She
344 was here doing research at the University
345 of Nevada. And I told her, I said, You

346 know, we went and we saw a lot of really
347 nice things. We saw Santa Claus
348 and Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer.
349 We saw Mickey Mouse, all
350 sorts of really great things. But that's
351 not what Christmas is about. What we
352 didn't see was a manger scene,
353 and we started talking about that.
354 And she
355 pointed out to me, she said, Yes, you
356 know, the mother of Jesus was not
357 married. I'm like, oh, okay.
358 And she said, And she
359 had a child, Jesus, and it
360 wasn't even by her fiance.
361 And I'm like, oh, last time I ever tell
362 about Jesus.
363 And And I'm thinking, you know, I need to
364 get out of this somehow. And
365 I kept thinking, well, you can't. You've
366 got to tell. You've got to go ahead
367 and tell. I'm like, I can't.
368 And why can't I tell this person about
369 the virgin birth? The reason that I cannot
370 tell this person about the virgin birth
371 is she's a doctor,
372 okay? That's a tough sell. I mean,
373 you just... But But I
374 I just felt that it was something that I
375 needed to do. And I know that
376 Scripture tells us that the
377 Holy Spirit, he will provide the
378 right words at the right time.
379 And so I went ahead and I told her about
380 the virgin birth and what it means and
381 and all this stuff. And
382 she used to come to covenant. She
383 came to covenant for like about a year
384 and a half. And eventually
385 she went back to her own country, and
386 I've talked to her since then, and we've
387 kind of stayed in contact. And
388 A while back, I I started talking to her
389 about Jesus again, and she
390 told me, she said, and
391 I quote, My religion is
392 communism. But that's not the whole
393 story. You see, my friend
394 had another friend who is also
395 a doctor, and this other friend is
396 actually a pretty sharp lady.
397 As a matter of fact, she's one of these
398 people that collects
399 academic degrees, like,
400 they're so easy. And she actually goes
401 internationally and gives lectures.
402 And my first friend
403 told this other lady, her friend, about
404 things that I'd been saying about the
405 virgin birth, and she brings her friend
406 to me, and it's like, Oh, great, we're
407 going to go through this again. Her
408 friend comes with me to church,
409 and comes to church throughout the
410 summer, throughout the year, actually,
411 for a year, and she becomes a
412 Christian. And I will tell you
413 that 13 years later,
414 every week, she and I get

415 together over the phone, because she's in
416 another country, we get together, and we
417 pray together, and she prays for you,
418 okay?And I asked her one day, I
419 said, What is your conversion
420 story?How did you come to Christ?
421 And she said, When I walked in the door
422 at covenant, I knew there was something
423 different, and it was the Holy Spirit.
424 And I'm thinking to myself, Don't I get
425 any credit for this?
426 And the answer is, no.
427 Conversion is an act of the Holy Spirit.
428 And let me point something out to you
429 when it comes toComplete patience
430 and complete teaching. Our
431 patience is in the Lord. Our
432 patience is that He will do
433 that which He said He will do.
434 And the complete teaching is to
435 tell the whole story.
436 Don't be shy. It may sound strange at
437 times. And Scripture says that to some,
438 it'll sound like idiocy. It'll just be
439 confusion. But it's the Holy Spirit
440 that brings people to Christ. It's
441 not us. He works through us,
442 and we should always be ready in season
443 and out of season to let the Holy Spirit
444 work through us. But it's not us
445 that brings people to Christ. It's the
446 Holy Spirit, and we are to have patience
447 with God, and we are to tell the whole
448 story, and we know that Scripture
449 tells us His word,
450 will not return void.
451 So even though you may think that you're
452 butting your head against a wall when you
453 when you bear witness to Jesus Christ,
454 please know that, first of
455 all, Jesus knows what you're doing
456 because He's having you do it. And
457 secondly, His purpose is
458 going to be attained.
459 We have challenges as we go forward and
460 we tell people about about Jesus.
461 And the scripture tells us that there's
462 going to be those who turn away, that
463 that you know their ears are tickled,
464 their imagination is excited,
465 and they're going to to look in this
466 direction, and they're going to look in
467 that direction, and they're going to to
468 just be all over the place. A
469 rhetorical question for you, and
470 rhetorical question means, I'll ask the
471 question,I'll also give you the
472 answer, but if you really want to give
473 the answer, you can just shout it out or
474 raise your hand or whatever. What
475 and when was the first
476 sin?And you're all sitting there going,
477 This is a trick question. Yes, it is.
478 The first sin was when Satan turned
479 away from God, when Satan
480 rebelled against God. Not to
481 be confused with the first sin of
482 mankind, which was the Garden of Eden.
483 But here's what happened was, Satan

484 rebelled against God. And you may have
485 heard it said, There are only two
486 religions. There's Christianity and
487 there's everything else.
488 Christianity is led by Jesus Christ and
489 Christ alone. Everything else is
490 led by the Lord of the Flies,
491 Beelzebub, Satan, whatever you want
492 to call him. If it's not
493 Christianity, then it's a
494 false religion. It's not really a
495 religion, the true religion.
496 And one of the things that we have to be
497 aware of, something that we need to be
498 very sensitive to, is
499 what is paraded under the banner of
500 Christianity. We,
501 in our culture, we encounter
502 people that say that they have
503 a word from God, that God gave them a
504 message. We have people that say,
505 God gave me new scripture, and they write
506 it and publish it. We have people who say
507 that they're prophets, and they get a
508 lot of money for it.
509 Sometimes, the worst enemies of
510 Christianity are those who claim to be
511 Christians themselves. We
512 need to stay within the bounds of
513 orthodoxy. And the bounds of
514 orthodoxy are contained within the pages
515 of the Holy Bible. That is what we
516 are to teach, and we are to be ready
517 in season and out of season. And
518 when somebody comes and starts to tell us
519 differently, then we need to
520 reprove, rebuke, and
521 exhort. We need to set
522 people on the right path. That is the
523 commission that we are given, the Great
524 Commission, is to tell people the truth
525 about Jesus Christ. It's
526 a challenge that we face, and
527 oftentimes we're not patient. And what
528 happens when we're not patient is that
529 we allow false teaching to go
530 unchecked, and we ourselves
531 need to check ourselves. We need to
532 remember that we are ambassadors for
533 Christ. That's what it says in the Bible,
534 we are ambassadors for Christ. And
535 as you know, an ambassador
536 represents their sovereign.
537 They don't represent themselves.
538 We are ambassadors for Christ. We must
539 always proclaim the truth in season and
540 out of season. And Second
541 Corinthians, fifth chapter,
542 verse 20 says, Therefore, we are
543 ambassadors for Christ. God making
544 his appeal through us, we implore
545 you on behalf of Christ, to be
546 reconciled to God, and that
547 reconciled to God is really,
548 really important. That's one of the
549 reasons why we confess our sins, that we
550 have the prayer of confession, is so that
551 we ourselves are reconciled to God, that
552 we know when we have gone astray, and

553 it's it's a plea from us to
554 God to bring us back on the right track,
555 because we always want to be ready in
556 season and out of season. And we don't
557 want to be in a position where we
558 have to make apologies for
559 what we believe. Like, well, you know,
560 you say that we shouldn't do this, but I
561 know you're doing this over here. No.
562 We need to examine our lives, and
563 therefore we are ready to
564 tell people about Jesus in season
565 and out of season, not always
566 easy, not always easy.
567 And that's one of the reasons why we come
568 to church, because we have we have
569 this fellowship. We We
570 talk to each other. We build each other
571 up. We We bear one another's
572 burdens. This is what a church
573 does. And this is why I love
574 it here, is because we have
575 people that are not-- we have people that
576 are not continually putting me down,
577 although you have good reason to.
578 We stand together, we stand united for
579 Christ, and we must always do
580 that. So what we get out of
581 our scripture reading this morning
582 is that we are to be ready to give an
583 accounting for our faith. And in
584 doing so, we are to be prepared to
585 do it. And we're prepared to do it as we
586 worship the Lord, as we confess our
587 sins, we're prepared to do it as we study
588 scripture, We're prepared to do it
589 as we we come together and and
590 in fellowship, and we we tell each
591 other how much we love each other. That's
592 important, you know, is to tell each
593 other how much we love each other. We're
594 to always be ready to do this. We're
595 always to be prepared. We're
596 always to be ready to give an account of
597 our faith in season and out of
598 season, and the season is
599 now. Let's pray.
600 Lord Jesus, we come before you
601 knowing that you have commissioned us to
602 go out into the world and tell others the
603 good news. We pray that as we do
604 so, it will be received as good
605 news. We know that some of us will have
606 to suffer in various ways for our faith.
607 We'll be turned away by our families, by
608 our friends. We know that
609 the world out there does not
610 give its allegiance to you, but we do
611 give our allegiance to you. And we pray
612 that you would build us up and make us
613 your people, now and forever.
614 And we pray this, dear Jesus, in your
615 name, in Jesus' name,
616 amen. And now as we prepare
617 for communion, because
618 this is Communion Sunday, let's
619 stand and together sing our hymn of
620 preparation number 465,
621 Marvelous grace of our loving God, Lord.