

1 In 1999, there was a book published  
2 called The Things They Carry.  
3 It was written by a gentleman by the name  
4 of Tim O'Brien, and it was based upon his  
5 experiences in the Vietnam War.  
6 The title of the book The Things They  
7 Carried is about the things that  
8 soldiers carry into war. When they go to  
9 battle, what is it that a soldier carries?  
10 And he had some very interesting  
11 observations in the book, and among them  
12 is that the things that a soldier carries  
13 are pictures of his wife and  
14 girlfriend, a letter from back home from  
15 his children or from his mother. He might  
16 carry little trinkets, good luck things  
17 in his pocket. He might have a crucifix  
18 around his neck. He  
19 also carries his emotions, and they can  
20 be hate, confusion, nostalgia, fear,  
21 despair, hopelessness and stress.  
22 These are the things that a soldier  
23 carries into battle. They're the things  
24 that a soldier carries into battle in the  
25 secular war. But we know that  
26 through Scripture, we're told that we're  
27 involved in a spiritual war, spiritual  
28 warfare. And so what is it that we carry?  
29 Well, the Bible tells us we have the full  
30 armor of God, but we also have the  
31 Holy Spirit within us. We have  
32 Jesus leading us on to battle. And we  
33 know that in any successful war,  
34 and we know that the spiritual war will  
35 be victorious for God, because  
36 we're told that in scripture, but any  
37 army, Any fighting force  
38 needs a strong leader, and the leader  
39 needs to be obeyed, and there needs to  
40 be allegiance to that leader and what  
41 that leader says. Our scripture  
42 this morning comes from Deuteronomy, the  
43 fifth chapter, verses six through 10.  
44 Hear God's word. I am  
45 the Lord your God, who brought you out of  
46 the land of Egypt, out of the house of  
47 slavery. You shall have no other  
48 gods before me. You shall not make for  
49 yourself a carved image or any likeness  
50 of anything that is in heaven above or  
51 that is on the earth beneath, or that is  
52 in the water under the earth. You shall  
53 not bow down to them or serve them,  
54 for I, the Lord, am  
55 a jealous God, God visiting the  
56 iniquity of the fathers of the children  
57 to the third and fourth generation of  
58 those who hate me. but  
59 showing steadfast love to the thousands  
60 of those who love me and keep my  
61 commandments. Let's pray.  
62 Dear Lord Jesus, we know that we are  
63 called to serve you. We know that there  
64 is a battle raging in this world, and we  
65 know that you are the commander  
66 of your army, and you will be  
67 victorious. We pray that you will  
68 equip us to keep fighting the  
69 good fight, to follow your direction,

70 and to have no other gods before us  
71 except our Holy Father. We pray this in  
72 Jesus' name, Amen. Amen.  
73 Now, we read this morning, it's the  
74 first of the 10 Commandments, and we read  
75 it from Deuteronomy. Usually when  
76 we look to the 10 Commandments, we look  
77 to Exodus. The account of the 10  
78 Commandments is identical in Deuteronomy  
79 and Exodus. In Exodus, though, it's the  
80 beginning of the journey of the  
81 Hebrew people out of Egypt, out of the  
82 house of slavery, into the Sinai desert  
83 and towards the Promised Land. In  
84 Deuteronomy, we come to the end of the  
85 journey. And this Deuteronomy  
86 is usually regarded as Moses'  
87 farewell address to the people that he's  
88 been leading for the last 40 years.  
89 They're at the doorstep of the Promised  
90 Land. They're about to go in, and they're  
91 about to take possession of it. But they  
92 haven't gotten there yet. They're in the  
93 land of Moab. And Moab,  
94 the people of Moab, the Moabites, are  
95 actually related to the Jews. They're  
96 related to the Hebrew people. If you go  
97 back in Genesis, you'll see that. And the  
98 founding father of the tribe of Moab was  
99 actually conceived in sin,  
100 and these are not a people who follow  
101 Yahweh. These are a people who have their  
102 own God, and they follow Him. And  
103 sometimes they're friendly with the Jews,  
104 and sometimes they're not. It's kind of  
105 an on-again, off-again thing. But here in  
106 Deuteronomy, we have Moses' farewell  
107 address to the people, and they're in  
108 Moab, and Moses is not  
109 going to live to go into the Promised  
110 Land. Like everybody else that's been  
111 wandering around in the desert for the  
112 last 40 years, he sinned against the  
113 Lord, and the wages of sin is in  
114 fact death. And we need to remember  
115 that death is not necessarily meant to be  
116 a pretty thing. We look to as Christians,  
117 we look to the resurrection, but death is  
118 something to be taken seriously. And  
119 Moses is going to die. He's going to die  
120 in Moab. He brought the people out of  
121 bondage in Egypt, out of the pagan  
122 land, took them through the Sinai Desert,  
123 and now they're in another pagan land,  
124 Moab, and that's where he's going to die.  
125 And after he dies, Joshua takes command,  
126 and Joshua leads the people into the  
127 Promised Land, and they take possession  
128 of the Promised Land. And at the end of  
129 the book of Joshua, Joshua says  
130 something that's pretty similar to the  
131 first of the Ten Commandments. What he  
132 says is this. This comes from the 24th  
133 chapter of Joshua, verses 14 and 15.  
134 Joshua says, Now, therefore,  
135 fear the Lord and serve Him in  
136 sincerity and faithfulness. Put  
137 away the gods that your father served  
138 beyond the river and in Egypt, and serve

139 the Lord. AndIf it  
140 is evil in your eyes to serve the  
141 Lord, choose this day whom you  
142 will serve, whether the gods your father  
143 served in the region beyond the river, or  
144 the gods of the Amorites in whose land  
145 you dwell. As for me and my house,  
146 we will serve the Lord. And all the  
147 people responded like, You rock, Joshua.  
148 They made a promise that they were going  
149 to honor God and God alone.  
150 And now, after the book of Joshua, we  
151 know that we have the book of Judges, and  
152 things start to spiral down. It's kind of  
153 a up and down thing with God's people.  
154 Sometimes they're following them, and  
155 other times, well, they follow the  
156 desires of their own hearts. They  
157 follow other gods. But God sends  
158 people, the judges, to to bring them  
159 back, bring them back to Him.  
160 The period of Judges is, I think,  
161 something like about 400 years. And  
162 towards the end of this period, about  
163 three quarters of the way through the  
164 period of Judges, we come to the  
165 story of Naomi. And Naomi,  
166 her story is told largely in the Book of  
167 Ruth. And we think, Oh, Ruth. It's about  
168 Ruth. Well, yes, the Book of Ruth is  
169 about Ruth. It's also about Naomi.  
170 The Book of Ruth is divided into six  
171 sections. And I know if you open your  
172 Bible and you look, well, there's four  
173 chapters. Okay, well, get  
174 beyond the four chapter part and actually  
175 read what the text puts there, and you'll  
176 find that there are six stories in the  
177 book of Ruth. And Naomi is in each and  
178 every one of those stories. And so you  
179 could say that the book of Ruth is also  
180 the story of Naomi as well as Ruth.  
181 The book of Ruth has 84 verses.  
182 And out of those 84 verses,  
183 27 of them make some sort of a  
184 mention of God in some way. A  
185 third of the book of Ruth talks about  
186 God. And so you could  
187 say, well, the book of Ruth is the story  
188 of Ruth. It's the story of Naomi. It's  
189 the story of God. And that's what we need  
190 to remember in Scripture. It's the story  
191 of God. And one of the things that's said  
192 about the book of Ruthis that it's a  
193 story of common people in common  
194 situations being led by the hand of  
195 God. Now, in the book of  
196 Ruth, as we look at the story of Naomi,  
197 we see that Naomi is living with her  
198 husband in the city of Bethlehem.  
199 And there's a famine that comes across  
200 the land. And famines are a pretty common  
201 thing. They were common back then.  
202 They're common in the world today. There  
203 are a lot of ordinary things that go on  
204 that we think are extraordinary,  
205 but they're really not. This is the way  
206 that things progress through the world.  
207 Just this this past week, we had a

208 shooting here in Reno where three  
209 people were killed. And we say, Well,  
210 that's not a common thing. But you know,  
211 in New York City this past week, the same  
212 thing happened. There's violence all  
213 across our nation, all across this world.  
214 And we look at things that happen like  
215 famines and murders. We look at  
216 them as things that are extraordinary,  
217 but they are the things in the world. We  
218 look at things like, for  
219 example, women in other cultures,  
220 how they're subservient and  
221 held as virtual slaves. But  
222 we need to remember that here in our  
223 country we have domestic violence.  
224 These things go on all the time. This is  
225 not. A really happy world  
226 for the people who are not in Christ.  
227 So there's this famine that takes  
228 place in Bethlehem,  
229 and Naomi's husband takes her and their  
230 sons into Moab. And while they're in  
231 Moab, the sons marry and have  
232 wives who are Moabites. They're not Jews,  
233 they're people of Moab. And Naomi's  
234 husband dies. And not only does he  
235 die, but their two sons die. And now  
236 it's Naomi and her two daughters-in-law.  
237 And Naomi sees that  
238 things have returned to a better  
239 way of being in Bethlehem, and she  
240 determines that she's going to go back to  
241 Bethlehem and she's going to be with her  
242 people, with the Jewish people. And she  
243 starts out on her journey, throws  
244 everything into the Toyota and takes off  
245 down the interstate. And her  
246 two daughters come to her and say, Wait a  
247 second, wait wait just a minute.  
248 We want to go with you. And what Naomi  
249 tells her two daughters is,  
250 Count the cost. She  
251 gives them instructions about, Well, you  
252 know, it might be better if you stayed  
253 here in Moab where you have  
254 family and you have your God.  
255 You don't know what's going to happen if  
256 you come with me back to Bethlehem. You  
257 don't know what the future holds. Count  
258 the cost. You decide. What are you going  
259 to do? And one of the  
260 daughter-in-laws, Orpah, says, I'm  
261 going to go back. I'm going to go back to  
262 my people, and I'm going to live in Moab.  
263 And hopefully, I think she hopes that  
264 things would return to a normal life  
265 for her, with her family, and with  
266 her God. Ruth, on the other hand,  
267 says that she wants to come with Naomi.  
268 She said, from all indications in the in  
269 the scriptures, she also counted the  
270 cost. It wasn't some frivolous thing  
271 where she said, Well, you know, if Orca's  
272 going to do this, I'm going to do the  
273 opposite, and I'm going to go with you.  
274 It doesn't appear that it was that way at  
275 all, because when you look at the  
276 second chapter of Ruth in the 11th verse,

277 there's an indication there that  
278 Ruth's mother and father were still  
279 alive. that she did, in fact, have  
280 something to go back to, that she did  
281 have a family. But Ruth decides  
282 that she wants to continue with Naomi  
283 to an uncertain future.  
284 And she makes this compassion speech  
285 to Ruth, which is what we...  
286 Ruth makes this  
287 compassion speech to Naomi, which was  
288 our call to worship this morning. And she  
289 says, Don't urge me to leave you or to  
290 return from following you. For where you  
291 go, I will go, and where you lodge, I  
292 will lodge. Your people shall be my  
293 people, and your God, my God. Where you  
294 die, I will die, and there will I be  
295 buried. May the Lord do so to me, and  
296 more so, also, if anything other  
297 than death parts me from you.  
298 So she's really, really serious about  
299 going to to this,  
300 to to Bethlehem.  
301 Why would she do that? Why would she  
302 leave something that is more  
303 certain to go somewhere that is less  
304 certain? One of the answers to that  
305 is relationship. She had  
306 a relationship with Naomi. Naomi  
307 had lived in Moab, had been among the  
308 Moabite people. She knew them.  
309 Ah She obviously had a good relationship  
310 with her two daughters-in-law. And you  
311 know, that's what our missionaries do.  
312 When they go abroad, they they enter into  
313 a relationship with where they're going.  
314 And we support a lot of missionaries who  
315 are overseas. And they go to countries  
316 that sometimes they're able to get along  
317 okay in the country. Sometimes they don't  
318 get along very well in the country  
319 because of local customs that  
320 are anti-Christian. But  
321 nevertheless, when they're there, they  
322 establish a relationship with the people.  
323 That's one of the things that's very  
324 important about missionaries. And it's  
325 not just missionaries that go abroad,  
326 but it's also missionaries that are here  
327 at home in the United States.  
328 Missionaries that are working in our own  
329 community, that are  
330 representing Jesus Christ, to  
331 people who don't know him, to people  
332 who perhaps knew him at one time, but  
333 have fallen away. This is one of the  
334 things that missionaries do, is establish  
335 relationships.  
336 And one of the things that we read in the  
337 in the quote from the book of Joshua, was  
338 Joshua says, Decide this day whom  
339 you will serve. And that's an important  
340 thing, because it's not just that  
341 missionaries go and they create a  
342 relationship with the people that they're  
343 ministering to. But they want to to  
344 represent Jesus Christ.  
345 They want people to see that Christ is

346 the better way. They want people to  
347 come out of the slavery and bondage in  
348 which they live. And the slavery and  
349 bondage in which they live is often the  
350 things that we described earlier in what  
351 the things that people are, what the  
352 things are that soldiers carry into  
353 battle, their emotions. their  
354 hate, their their  
355 hopelessness. All of those types of  
356 things are the things that often people  
357 experience. Hopefully those are things  
358 that we Christians are not into,  
359 because Jesus has delivered us. We follow  
360 Jesus. We live a good life  
361 spiritually, because he reigns within us.  
362 And Ruth also says, Your people shall  
363 be my people. And this is a very  
364 important thing. And it's an important  
365 thing right now with this CityFest thing.  
366 Your people shall be my people. Because  
367 basically what we're doing is we're  
368 inviting people to come to church.  
369 We would like people to come. It doesn't  
370 have to be this church necessarily,  
371 although I highly recommend it.  
372 But we want people  
373 to be part of us.  
374 It's important, and this is one of the  
375 things that missionaries do. It's  
376 especially important in places where  
377 missionaries are not welcome, and they're  
378 out there crusading in the name of  
379 Christ, trying to show people the better  
380 way of life through Jesus Christ.  
381 It's hard to explain to  
382 people that there are  
383 other people in this world that want to  
384 welcome you into fellowship. Quite  
385 often, the people in these foreign lands  
386 don't get to have the same kind of  
387 fellowship that we have. They're They're  
388 not going to have a picnic for  
389 believers after a service. That just  
390 isn't going to happen. They have to keep  
391 their their faith secret. But at the same  
392 time, and I can tell you from  
393 missionaries that I've talked to, these  
394 new converts to Christianity do seek out  
395 fellowship. They want the fellowship. The  
396 fellowship builds them up. It  
397 helps them, it strengthens them. And  
398 fellowship is good for us as well,  
399 because it strengthens us. And so  
400 Naomi, or Ruth says, Your people shall be  
401 my people. And it's very, very important  
402 that people are welcomed into the church.  
403 Not necessarily welcomed into this  
404 congregation, or any congregation in  
405 Reno, but they're welcomed into the  
406 whole church, the bride of Christ.  
407 But it's not always easy. Making that  
408 that transition from the  
409 old way into the new way can be  
410 really, really difficult. And  
411 in in Luke the 14th  
412 chapter, here's what Jesus says.  
413 If anyone comes to me and does not hate  
414 his own father and mother, and wife and

415 children, and brothers and sisters, yes,  
416 and even his own life, he cannot  
417 be my disciple. Maybe some of you have  
418 had an experience like I have when I know  
419 that there's some scripture that I want  
420 to quote and I look it up to make sure  
421 that I get the quote right. And when I  
422 find it, I look at it and I think, oh my  
423 goodness, why can't God say what I want  
424 him to say?

425 That seems what we just read is a very  
426 harsh statement. At least that's the way  
427 that it comes across. And I look through.  
428 Different translations and they didn't  
429 help. They said the same thing  
430 and I finally found. translation that  
431 that was a little softer, but the  
432 problem is it was too soft, and it just  
433 missed the point. And the point here is  
434 that the word hate,  
435 when you go back and you look at where it  
436 comes from in this context,  
437 actually means, from a Semitic language,  
438 it means to love less  
439 than. And so what we're being told is not  
440 to actually hate people, but  
441 to love them Less than  
442 we love God. And remember, it talks here  
443 about, you know, hating your your  
444 parents. One of the commandments is honor  
445 your father and mother.

446 We're to love others as we love  
447 ourselves. So this isn't really about  
448 hating people for their destruction,  
449 but what it's about is honoring God  
450 and in honoring God we follow his  
451 commandments. And we also love  
452 our parents, our family. We love  
453 those around us, and we love ourselves.  
454 And this is a hard thing sometimes for  
455 people who are brought up in cultures  
456 where hate is  
457 is the way things are, that women are  
458 put down, that people are held in bondage  
459 and slavery. It's hard to get that across  
460 to people, that Jesus is about love.

461 Jesus wants us to love one another. and  
462 Jesus loves you. But there's a  
463 lot of times we think that that would be  
464 such a good, joyous message to people.  
465 But remember, people are  
466 being asked to come out of their former  
467 lives and into a new life  
468 in Christ, a life that they don't know  
469 what it's going to carry for them. But  
470 they can look back on the life that they  
471 have now, the life of bondage  
472 and feel a certain amount of security in  
473 that. And that's what they want to return  
474 to. Remember that when people were  
475 wandering around in the desert for 40  
476 years, a lot of them wanted to go back.  
477 They'd been taken out of the house of  
478 slavery, and they didn't get what they  
479 wanted by following the Lord. And they  
480 wanted to go back. If only  
481 they had been faithful and hung in there,  
482 they would have eventually made it to the  
483 Promised Land. But they didn't.

484 And that's one of the things that  
485 missionaries face is,  
486 Not just telling people about  
487 Jesus, not just telling them the good  
488 news of Jesus Christ, but bringing them  
489 into fellowship. Bringing them into  
490 fellowship in a way that is going to  
491 strengthen their relationship with Jesus.  
492 And this is a hard thing. It's not just a  
493 hard thing in a foreign land. It's a hard  
494 thing right here in Reno. And  
495 one of the things that that God  
496 talks about is  
497 You don't make images of God, okay?  
498 That's one of the things that we know, is  
499 you're not supposed to make an image of  
500 God. Now, other religions make  
501 images, and they bow down and they  
502 worship those images, but we're not  
503 supposed to do that. God is Spirit,  
504 and we're to remember that. And because  
505 God is Spirit, He's everywhere  
506 all the time. He's not bound to a piece  
507 of land, and He's not bound to our  
508 imagination. We're not to make an  
509 image of God. However,  
510 if we're not allowed to do something, is  
511 God allowed to do it? And in the first  
512 chapter of Genesis, it says that the  
513 Trinity says to himself, let us make man  
514 in our own image. And I  
515 can tell you what this does not mean. It  
516 does not mean that we are little gods. It  
517 does not mean that we will ever become a  
518 God, and it does not mean that we can  
519 speak for God other than what is  
520 contained in the Scriptures. And people  
521 don't get that. And you find all sorts of  
522 wacky versions of so-called  
523 Christianity that are going to try  
524 and teach that. But that's not what it  
525 means. What does it mean? Well,  
526 I don't know. Theologians have debated  
527 this for. centuries, or  
528 thousands of years, actually. What does  
529 it mean to be in the image of God?  
530 And who is it that actually is  
531 bearing this image of God? I remember  
532 back when I was a boy, and my  
533 grandmother, my grandmother was  
534 a huge Christian. She She was just  
535 rock solid faith.  
536 And in her living room, she had a  
537 picture of Jesus. It was on the wall. It  
538 was big. It was like that. And it was in  
539 the living room. And I used to see it,  
540 and I'd kind of cringe a little bit  
541 because I was like, We don't do that.  
542 We're not Catholic.  
543 Here's the thing. My grandfather was not  
544 a Christian. And I would  
545 imagine that when my grandmother put that  
546 picture up on the wall in the living room,  
547 that perhaps she had counted the cost.  
548 I know that she paid the cost for  
549 years and years and years.  
550 My grandfather did not want anybody  
551 invited over to the house, because in the  
552 house was this huge picture



553 of Jesus. And I kept thinking,  
554 Yeah, you don't make an image of God, and  
555 Jesus is God. But then it  
556 occurred to me one day that in the living  
557 room, There actually was an image  
558 of God, and it wasn't that picture.  
559 It was my grandmother  
560 and she was  
561 invested in the Kingdom.  
562 And when I say that she was invested in  
563 the Kingdom, I don't mean this phony, you  
564 know, prosperity gospel stuff. I mean,  
565 her life was invested in the Kingdom.  
566 She went to church. She read the Bible  
567 when she was sick. She would pray and  
568 then take a little nip out of the bottle  
569 she kept in her closet.  
570 That's actually true.  
571 But she was invested in the kingdom. And  
572 when you invest in something, you want a  
573 dividend. You want to see a return on  
574 your investment. I'm the dividend.  
575 I'm the return on investment. That  
576 was my grandmother. And that's what she  
577 meant to me. And in her, I  
578 saw the image of God. I didn't realize  
579 it at the time, but that's what  
580 she was representing to me, was the image  
581 of God. That's what missionaries do, is  
582 they represent the image of God. And  
583 it's a tough thing to do, because  
584 you really have to live a very  
585 disciplined life. A lot more  
586 disciplined than I like to live, I can  
587 tell you that. But that's what you have  
588 to do, and that's what missionaries do.  
589 We don't always realize how much they  
590 give up in order to join  
591 the spiritual fight for people's  
592 souls. And they're led  
593 by the hand of God. You see  
594 missionaries and you wonder, Why would  
595 this person give up their life and go  
596 live in a foreign land like they do? It's  
597 because of being directed by the hand of  
598 God. Why would somebody go downtown  
599 and work with the drug addicts and the  
600 and the homeless people and  
601 people that our parents tell us,  
602 Stay away from them. Why would people do  
603 that? It's because they're directed by the  
604 hand of God, and they're ordinary  
605 people. They're just common people,  
606 often like you and I, but God  
607 calls them and they respond.  
608 God calls each one of us. And we  
609 are required to respond. That's the Great  
610 Commission. Each one of us  
611 bears a responsibility to tell people  
612 about Jesus Christ.  
613 We're to be ready to do this in season  
614 and out of season. It doesn't matter  
615 what's going on. We need to be ready. We  
616 need to be prepared and we get ready  
617 and we get prepared. by coming to church,  
618 by being involved in the  
619 church activities like Bible  
620 studies or the children's  
621 program after school on Wednesdays.

622 We also get involved by  
623 fellowship out in the parking lot with  
624 the with the meal. If you read  
625 the Old Testament, even the New  
626 Testament, the amount of fellowship that  
627 takes place around a meal is just  
628 staggering. You know, we  
629 Christians need to beef up a little bit,  
630 you see. It's not just missionaries that  
631 are called to spread the word of Christ.  
632 Each one of us has  
633 has a story to tell. It's our testimony.  
634 And you know the thing about Ruth, about  
635 Naomi, is after Ruth  
636 makes her pledge and says, I'll follow  
637 God. I'll be with you to the very end.  
638 What is the next thing that Naomi says?  
639 She says, Oh, God's treated me  
640 harshly. God hasn't really been that  
641 great to me. I'm bitter.  
642 Well, actually, that's her  
643 testimony, because she was always loyal  
644 to God, and now God is leading her  
645 out of the of the land of Moab.  
646 He's leading her out of that  
647 pagan land. She has her  
648 daughter-in-law, a great woman, Ruth, to  
649 be her companion. We sometimes talk  
650 about God sightings. Did you see  
651 God in your life this week? What was your  
652 God sighting this week? There are so many  
653 God sightings that we don't see in our  
654 lives. He's there. His hand is  
655 guiding us, and that should give us  
656 confidence. That should give us strength.  
657 That should build us up, and that should  
658 let us know that we're not alone in this.  
659 The Holy Spirit is with us. The Holy  
660 Spirit. comes with us,  
661 or actually, we go with the Holy Spirit.  
662 Ruth says, Where you go, I will go. And  
663 where the Holy Spirit goes, that's where  
664 we go. And sometimes it's to a foreign  
665 land, but a lot of times it's right here,  
666 and a lot of times it's as simple as  
667 being handed opportunities like  
668 CityFest, okay?  
669 In our daily lives, we have these  
670 opportunities all the time. And  
671 we just need to respond to them. We need  
672 to be ready in season and out of  
673 season. And sometimes,  
674 we just blow it. When I was  
675 in college, I had a professor. His name  
676 was James Barber. And Professor  
677 Barber, early in his academic career,  
678 got his bachelor's degree with the  
679 intention that he was going to become a  
680 pastor. He was a great man of God.  
681 But as things happen sometimes, you don't  
682 always get to go with your plans. You go  
683 with the plans of God. And as it turned  
684 out, he didn't become a pastor because he  
685 didn't go to seminary. Instead, he  
686 became a professor of early American  
687 literature. And being a man of  
688 God, Professor Barber never missed an  
689 opportunity to point out to his  
690 students. Where God

691 appeared in early American  
692 literature, in the in the early novels  
693 and the early stories that were  
694 published in the United States between  
695 the years 1830 and the Civil War,  
696 there was this presence of God. God was  
697 part of the fabric of our of our  
698 society, and so the  
699 professor. was really, truly a  
700 man of God. This was a secular  
701 university, and he would preach to his  
702 class. And somehow, by the hand of God,  
703 he got away with it. So,  
704 there was this one Monday morning where  
705 he came to class and he said, Let me tell  
706 you about what happened to me this  
707 weekend. He said, It was Saturday  
708 morning, and I was sitting in the living  
709 room, and I was watching TV, and my wife  
710 came up to me and she said, 'I want to go  
711 to an antique store.'And he said, Go  
712 ahead.  
713 And she said, I want you to go with  
714 me. And he said, I've got a lot to  
715 do. And she said, You're watching  
716 TV. He said,  
717 Look, I have to mow the lawn and I have  
718 to do other things out in the in the  
719 yard. And after that, I've got to  
720 straighten up the garage. And she said,  
721 You're watching TV. And he finally gave  
722 in. And he went with her, downtown  
723 Albuquerque, to an antique  
724 store. And he goes in with her,  
725 and he's there for not  
726 even 10 minutes, and he's starting to get  
727 angry. And it's really bubbling up inside  
728 of him. He doesn't want to be there.  
729 He doesn't even want to mow the lawn or  
730 anything like that. He wants to watch TV.  
731 He's missing the end of the game.  
732 And he just feels this anger, and he  
733 tells his wife, he says, You know what?  
734 I'm going to go outside, and I'm going to  
735 wait for you out there. And she says,  
736 Okay. And he goes out, and he's standing  
737 in the parking lot. And as he's standing  
738 there, this elderly woman comes along,  
739 and she says, very politely,  
740 Excuse me, sir, can you tell me where the  
741 bus stop is?And he looks around, and  
742 he goes, It's over there. She  
743 says, Thank you, sir, and starts  
744 to walk off. She goes a few feet, and she  
745 comes back, and she says,  
746 The bus stop is across the street?  
747 He's like, Yeah, the bus stop's across  
748 the street, lady. See it?She  
749 says, Okay. She says,  
750 How do I get across the street?  
751 He says, Well, you go down to the corner  
752 and you cross the street. Just wait for  
753 the light. There's a light?  
754 Yeah, yeah there's a light. So I have to  
755 wait for the light. Yes, look. There's a  
756 crowd of people standing on the corner,  
757 OK?Go down, be with them, and when they  
758 go across the street, you go across the  
759 street. Thank you, sir. She

760 goes down to the corner, light changes,  
761 she goes across the street, goes down to  
762 the bus stop, and hopefully gets on the  
763 right bus. And what Professor Barbour  
764 said was, What I did to that woman  
765 was an example of man's inhumanity  
766 to man. Because if she  
767 had asked me, why are you treating me  
768 this way, Sir? He could not have said with  
769 any credibility at all. What I do, I  
770 do to the honor and glory of my Lord and  
771 Savior, Jesus Christ.  
772 How many times are we caught in  
773 situations where we think back  
774 and we say, oh, you know what?  
775 I could have done something that gave  
776 glory to God, but instead, I  
777 made it all about me.  
778 We are to be ready to give an account of  
779 our faith in the season and out  
780 of season. This month, we're going to  
781 hear from a few missionaries, and they're  
782 going to tell you about how  
783 they and other people like them have  
784 given their lives to Christ. And they've  
785 given it in ways that we don't  
786 even think of. For example,  
787 we have we have missionaries  
788 out in the field  
789 who are women  
790 who have gone to lands,  
791 foreign lands, and dedicated their lives  
792 to being there. And in doing so,  
793 they have given up any hope of  
794 marriage or having a family. A family  
795 in the sense that we know a family with  
796 with a spouse and children.  
797 That's one of the things that our  
798 missionaries give up. Our missionaries  
799 give up things like  
800 some of them are extremely well educated,  
801 like medical doctors.  
802 They could be making a lot of money  
803 if they would just follow through with  
804 their medical practice, but they've  
805 chosen to give it up. and  
806 go to another country  
807 where, in some cases, they can't even get  
808 a license to practice. These are the  
809 things that our missionaries give  
810 up. And I wonder what is  
811 it that God calls us to give up  
812 in our lives. And we are  
813 we are to be ready to be ambassadors for  
814 Christ all the time.  
815 The Great Commission applies to  
816 everybody. Everywhere.  
817 And we are called to be ready to give an  
818 accounting of our faith in season  
819 and out of season. And that season  
820 is now. Let's pray.  
821 Dear Lord Jesus, we thank you that you  
822 call us not just into fellowship with  
823 you, but you call us into fellowship with  
824 other people. You call us into fellowship  
825 with people that, quite frankly.  
826 we would rather not be in fellowship  
827 with, people that we would rather avoid.  
828 But nevertheless, you put them in our

829 lives. And so we ask that this day you  
830 would give us courage, you would give us  
831 strength, you would give us  
832 your supernatural ability to  
833 go in, have fellowship with  
834 people that don't really  
835 want necessarily to have fellowship with  
836 us, and help us to always  
837 be readyTo give an accounting of our  
838 faith in season and out of  
839 season. And we pray this, Lord Jesus, in  
840 your precious name. We pray it in your  
841 name because it is by your  
842 strength and your strength alone that  
843 we can carry on the Great Commission. It  
844 is by your strength and your strength  
845 alone that we can live the lives that you  
846 call us to live. And we pray this, dear  
847 Jesus, in your name. In Jesus  
848 name we pray. In Jesus name,  
849 Amen. And now as we come to the  
850 time of communion.