

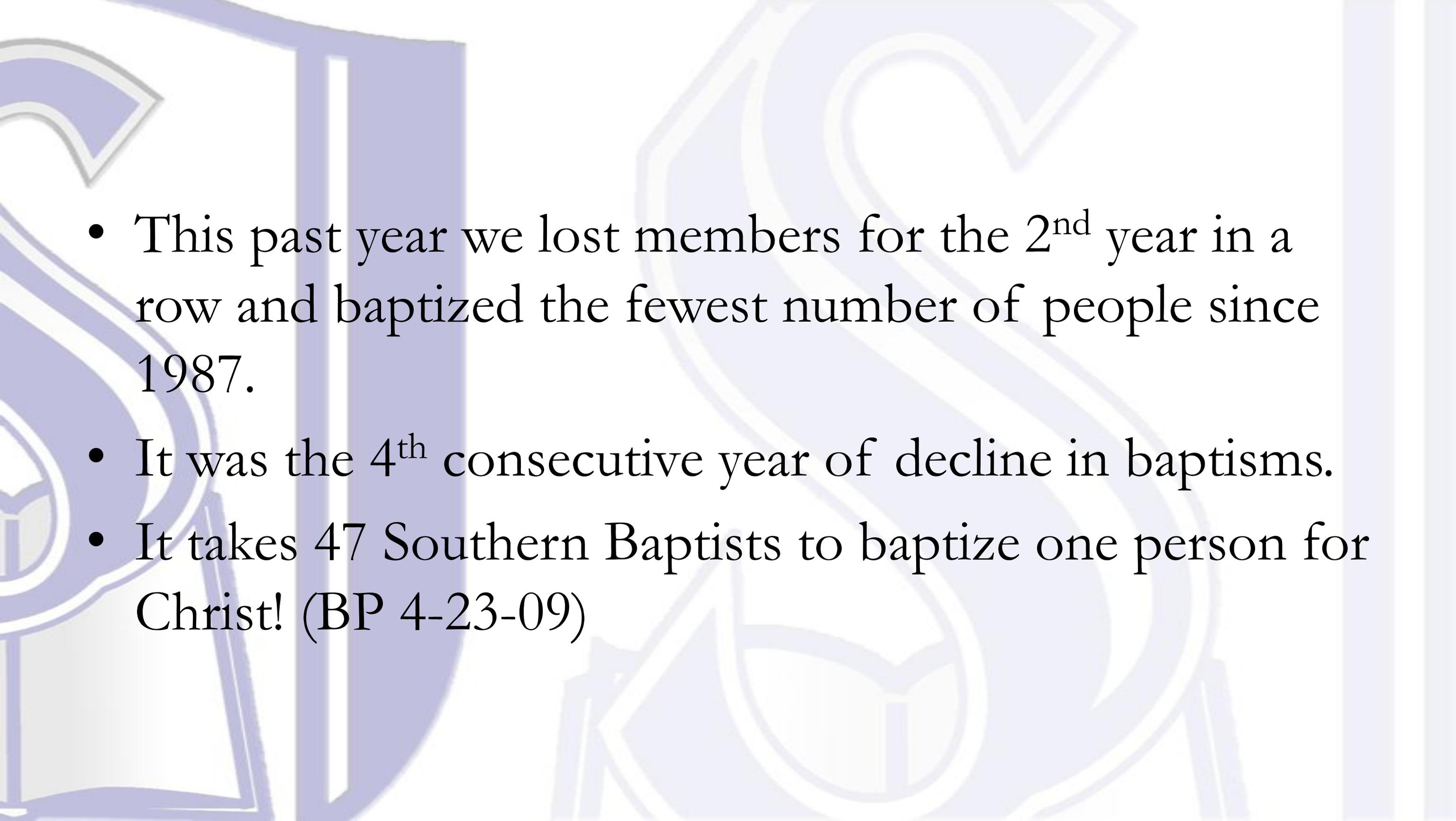
“Marks of a Great Commission People”

Romans 15:14-24

Dr. Danny Akin

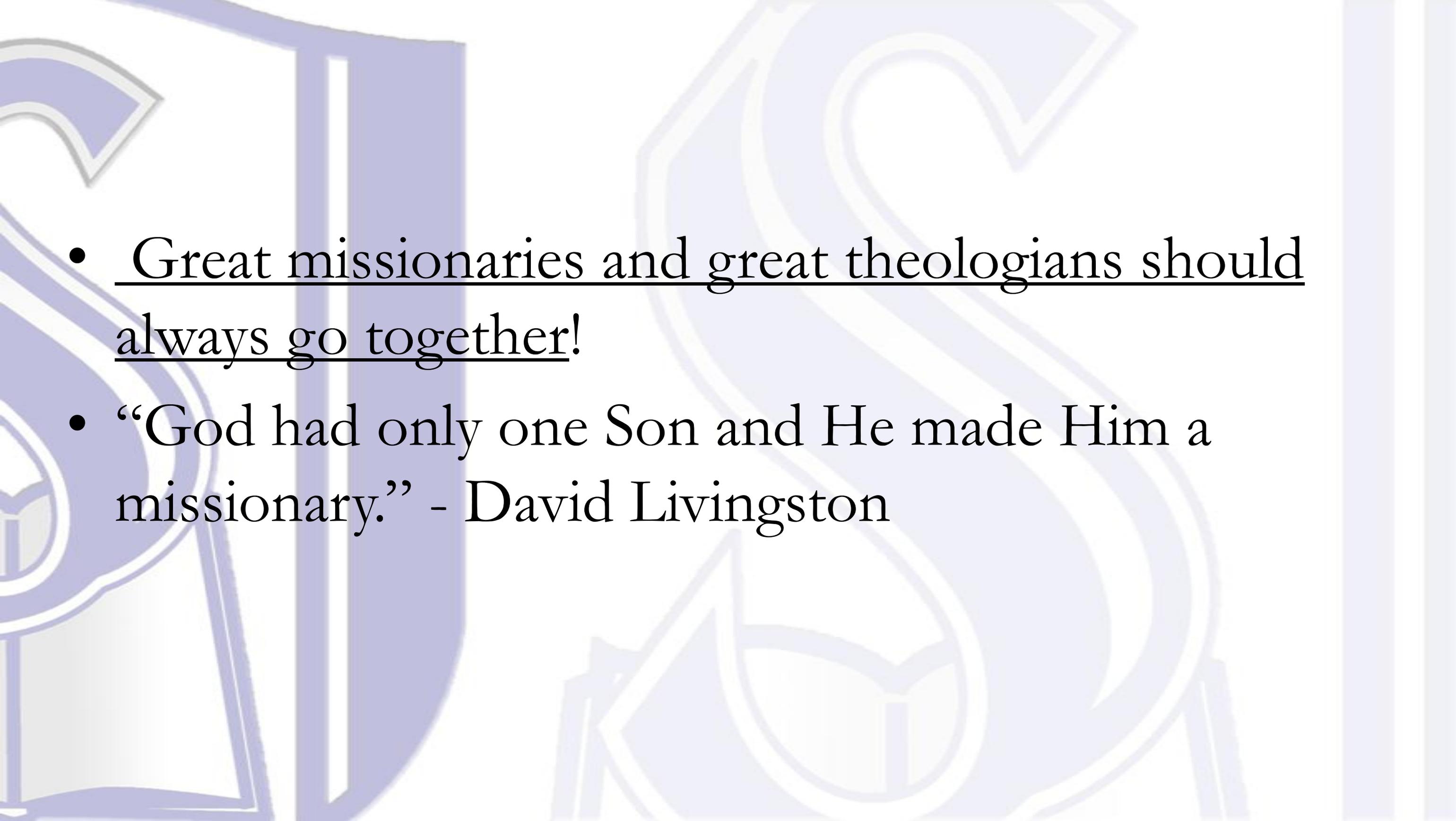
Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary

President

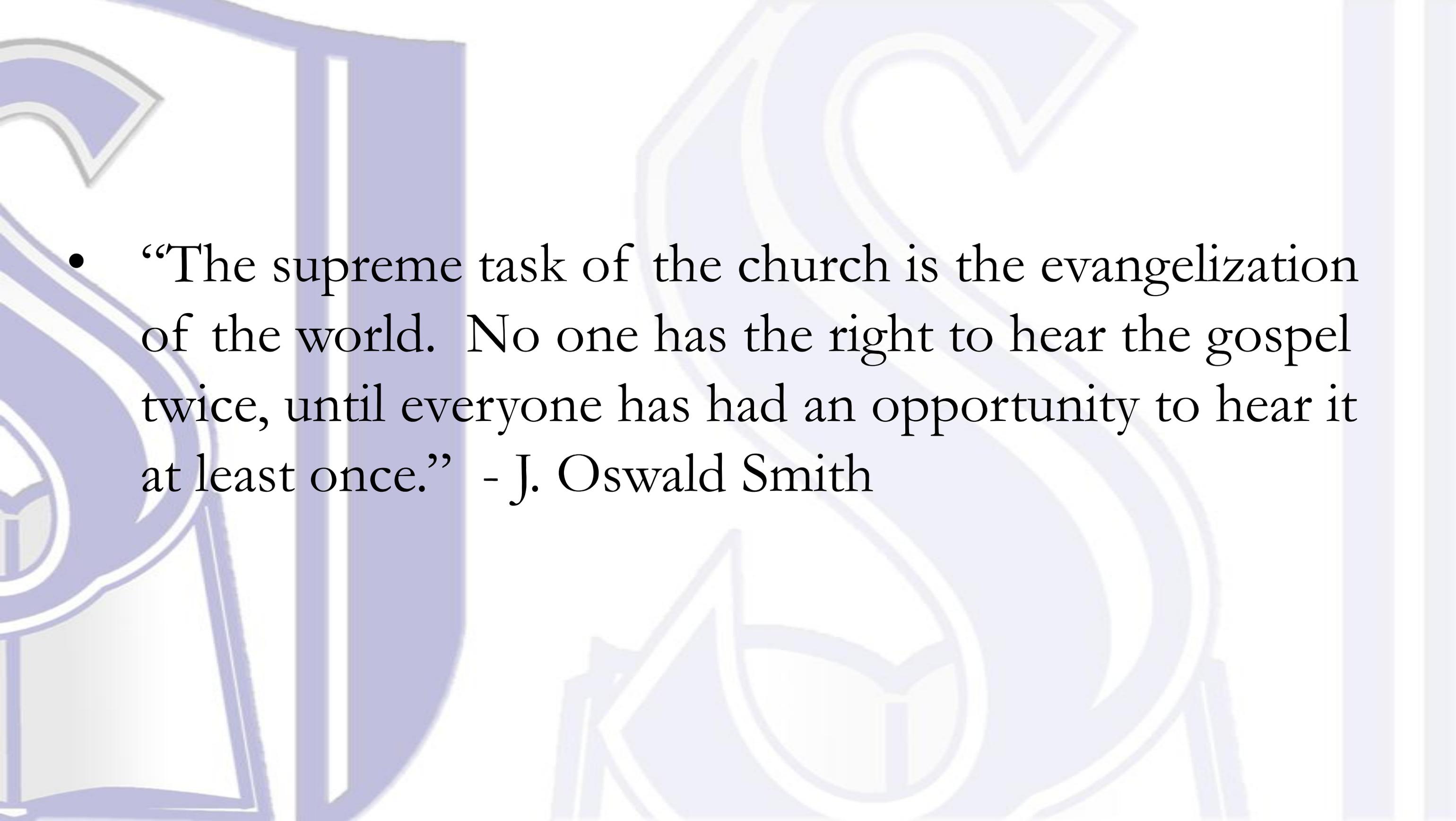
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- This past year we lost members for the 2nd year in a row and baptized the fewest number of people since 1987.
 - It was the 4th consecutive year of decline in baptisms.
 - It takes 47 Southern Baptists to baptize one person for Christ! (BP 4-23-09)

I. We will be focused on the nations.

15:14-16

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- Great missionaries and great theologians should always go together!
 - “God had only one Son and He made Him a missionary.” - David Livingston

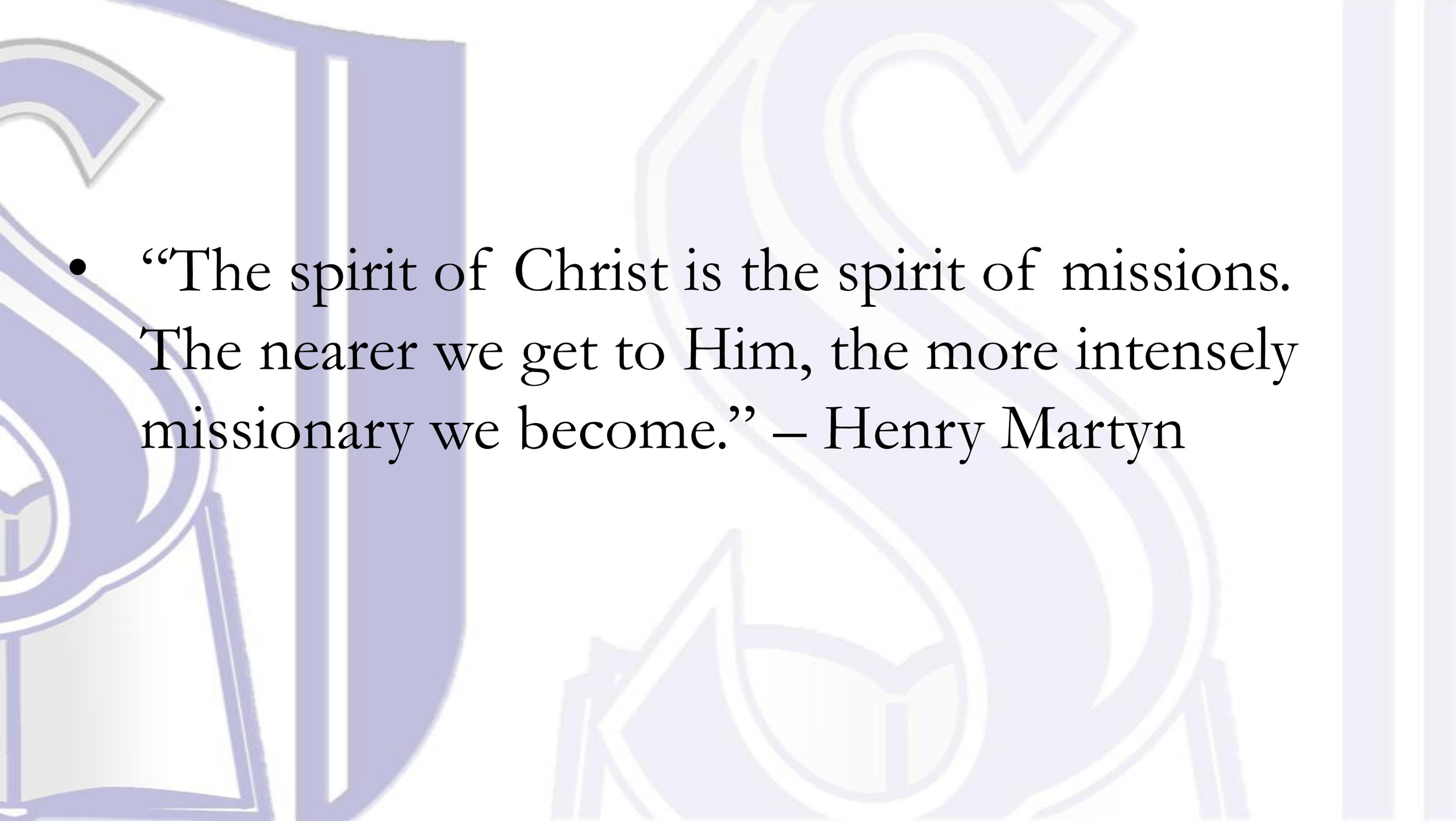
- Today there are at least 16,348 *ethne* that comprise the 6.7 billion people on the planet (Joshua Project: 11-28-09).
- Today there are at least 6,647 *ethne* who are unreached. Some missiologists would say there is, at present, 1.6 billion with no access to the gospel at all. That means there are 3.4 billion who have not heard the name of Jesus or have very limited access to the gospel. Add to that the reality that there are 255 million lost people in North America, 3 out of every 4 persons (*On Mission*, Special Issue, 2009, p.8).

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- “The supreme task of the church is the evangelization of the world. No one has the right to hear the gospel twice, until everyone has had an opportunity to hear it at least once.” - J. Oswald Smith

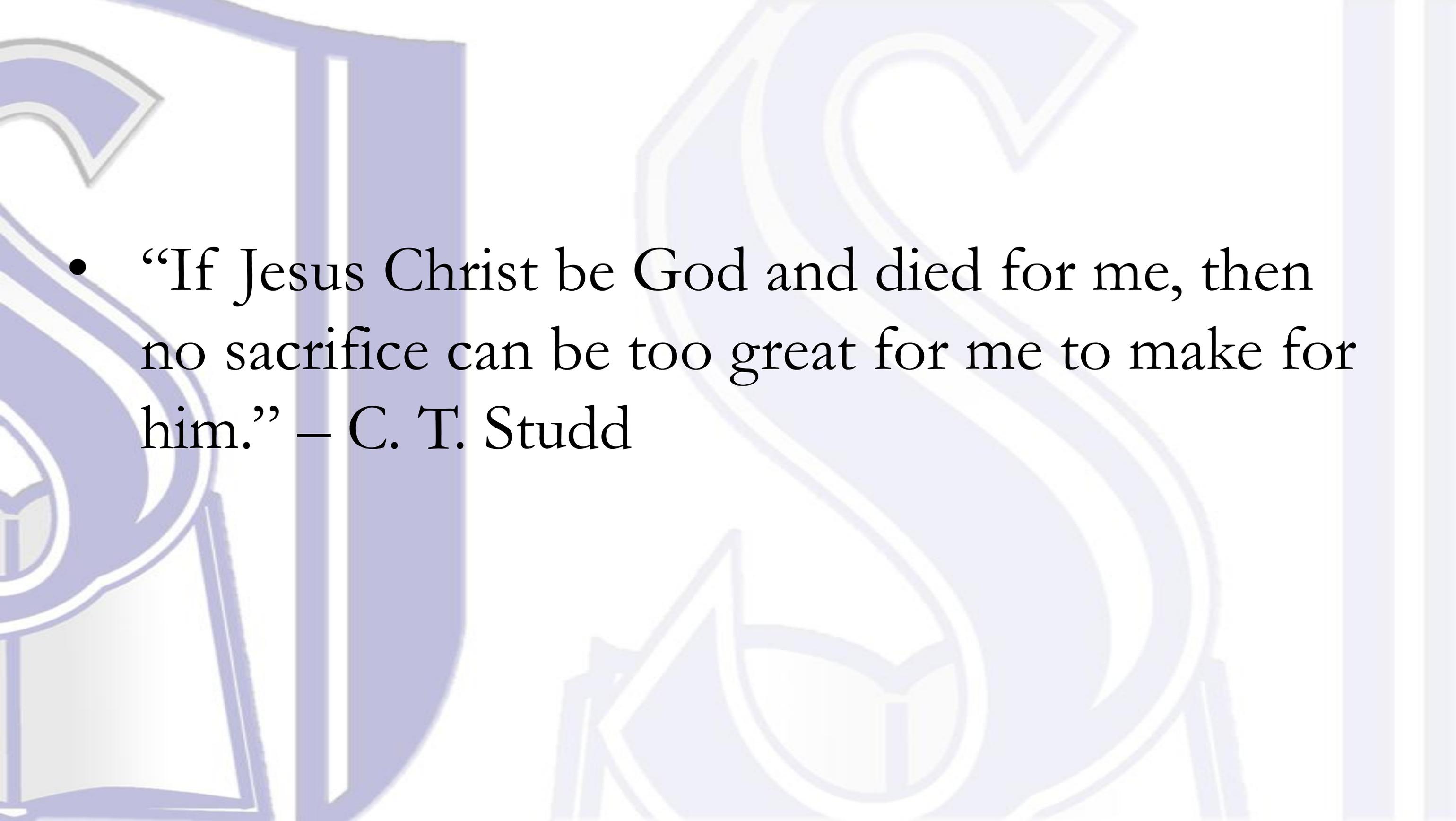
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- “The gospel is only good news if it gets there in time.” - Carl F. H. Henry

II. We will be a Christ-centered people.

15:16-18

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- “The spirit of Christ is the spirit of missions. The nearer we get to Him, the more intensely missionary we become.” – Henry Martyn

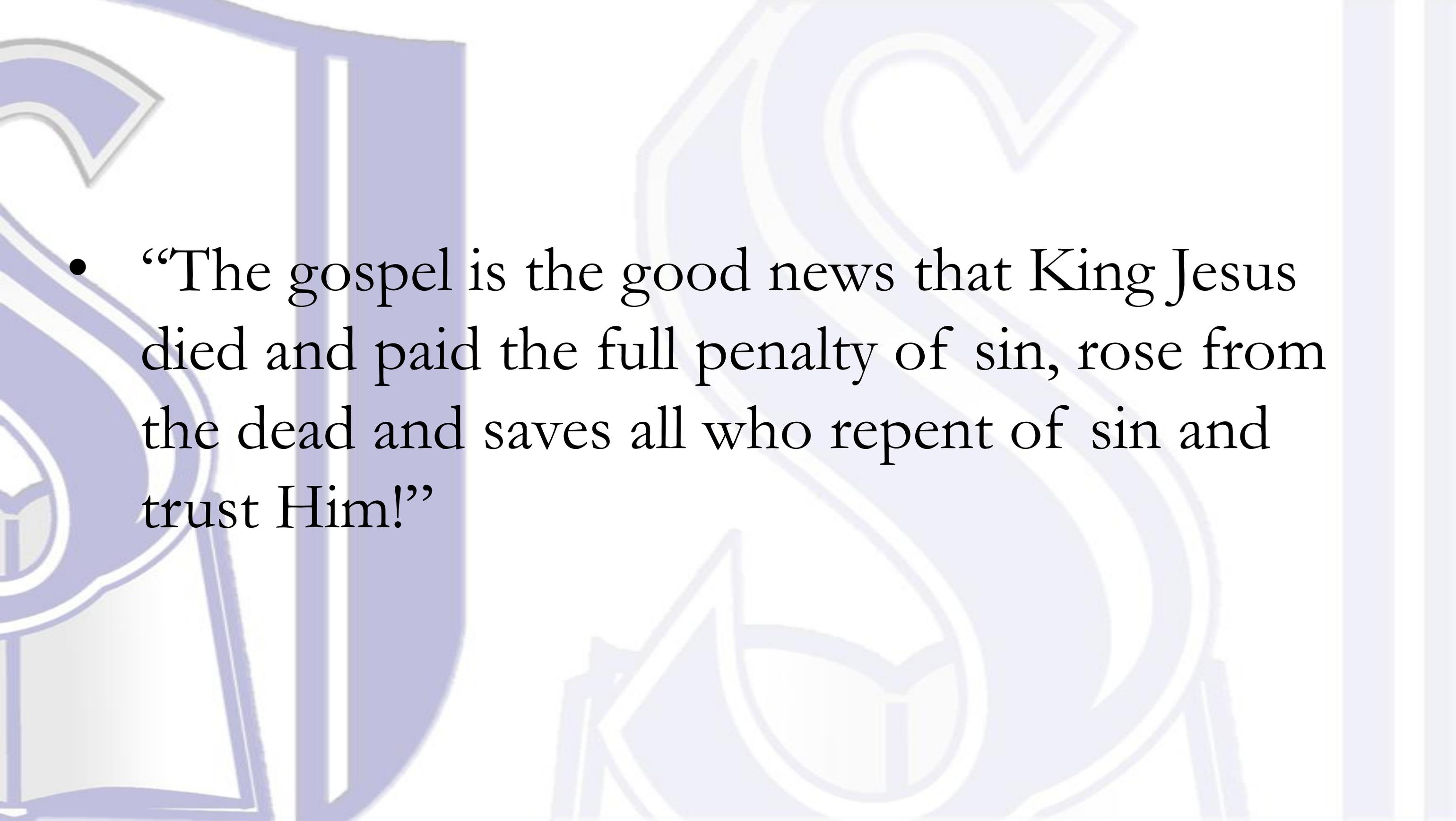
- “I don’t respect people who don’t proselytize. I don’t respect that at all. If you believe that there’s a heaven and hell and people could be going to hell or not getting eternal life or whatever, and you think that it’s not really worth telling them this because it would make it socially awkward, ... how much do you have to hate somebody to not proselytize? How much do you have to hate somebody to believe that everlasting life is possible and not tell them that? If I believed beyond a shadow of a doubt that a truck was coming at you and you didn’t believe it and that truck was bearing down on you there is a certain point where I tackle you and this is more important than that. And I’ve always thought that.” – Penn Jillette

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- “If Jesus Christ be God and died for me, then no sacrifice can be too great for me to make for him.” – C. T. Studd

III. We will be gospel saturated in all we do.

15:19-20

- “I would say that history is headed somewhere. The thousands of little ways in which you are tempted to believe that hope might actually be a legitimate response to the insanity of the world actually can be trusted. And the Christian story is that a tomb is empty, and a movement has actually begun that has been present in a sense all along in creation. And all those times when your cynicism was at odds with an impulse within you that said that this little thing might be about something bigger - those tiny little slivers may in fact be connected to something really, really big.” - Rob Bell, *Christianity Today* (4-22-09)

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- “The gospel is the good news that King Jesus died and paid the full penalty of sin, rose from the dead and saves all who repent of sin and trust Him!”

- Religion: I obey-therefore I'm accepted by Christ.
- The Gospel: I'm accepted in Christ-therefore I obey.
- Religion: I obey so that God will love me.
- The Gospel: God loves me and so I obey.
- Religion: Motivation is based on fear and insecurity.
- The Gospel: Motivation is based on grateful joy.
- Religion: I obey God in order to get things from God.
- The Gospel: I obey God to get God – to delight and resemble Him.

- Religion: My self-view swings between two poles. If and when I am living up to my standards, I feel confident, but then I am prone to be proud and unsympathetic to failing people. If and when I am not living up to standards, I feel insecure and inadequate. I'm not confident. I feel like a failure.
- The Gospel: My self-view is not based on a view of myself as a moral achiever. In Christ I am simultaneously sinful and yet accepted in Christ. I am so bad He had to die for me and I am so loved He was glad to die for me. So I can't look down on those who believe or practice something different from me. Only by grace I am what I am.

- “The gospel teaches us that the person who has Jesus plus nothing has everything! On the other hand, the person who has everything minus Jesus has nothing.”

**IV. We will be passionate for the unreached
peoples of the world.**

15:20-23

- “Paul’s strategy was apparently to plant churches in key cities and from there co-workers would fan out and evangelize smaller towns (cf. Epaphras in Colossians). He believed that his foundation work was completed in this region, and thus he planned to further the work in areas where Gentile churches were not planted.”

- Tom Schreiner

- The International Mission Board has 331 journeygirls serving King Jesus but only 126 men. That means there are more than 2.5 times the number of women to men serving our Savior around the world as journeymen. In West Africa we had 50 journeymen. 48 females and 2 males.” (June 2009)

- “I am trying honestly to do the work that could fill the hands of 3 or 4 women, and in addition must do much work that ought to be done by young men ... I must add that the work is suffering and will continue to suffer ... for want of a man living on the spot.” – Lottie Moon

- “I have but one candle of life to burn, and I would rather burn it out in a land filled with darkness than in a land flooded with light.” - John Falconer
- “I have but one passion: It is Christ, it is Christ alone. The world is the field and the field is the world; and henceforth that country shall be my home where I can be most used in winning souls for Christ.”
- Count Nicolaus Ludwig van Zinzendorf

**V. We will help those whom God sends to
the hard places.**

15:24

“A Christian organization that tracks giving to religious groups says other denominations will be watching this year’s Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, which funds overseas missionaries of the Southern Baptist Convention ... Empty Tomb, inc., a research-and-service organization based in Champaign, Ill., says the nation’s second largest religious body is approaching “a critical choice point” in December 2009 ... The book cites the SBC as a case study, describing a denomination with a “clearly stated goal” for achieving the 2,000-year-old mission of preaching the Christian gospel to all people groups, but lacking an adequate funding plan for meeting that goal. The research calculates that by increasing their donations to the SBC International Mission Board’s upcoming Lottie Moon . . .

... Christmas Offering by an average of \$7 per member, the denomination would raise enough money to field an additional 2,800 missionaries the IMB says it needs to engage every global people group in evangelism ... Researchers say the difference between the SBC and many other denominations and multi-denominational groups is that Southern Baptists have a large, at-scale, clearly stated goal around which congregations can rally. The question, they say, is, “Will Southern Baptists put their donations where their stated goal is?” “Will they seize the present opportunity to put feet on the gospel, and set a standard for other denominations to follow?” The article concludes, “The eyes of the nation are on the Southern Baptists.”

- More than one in four American Protestants give nothing to the work of the church.
- The median annual giving for a Christian is 2.6% of their annual income.
- Only 27 percent of evangelicals give away 10% or more of their income.
- About 5 percent of Christians provide 60% of the money to churches and religious groups.
- 20% of all Christians account for 86% of all giving.
- 10% of evangelicals and 33% of fundamentalists give nothing.

What Could happen If Committed Christians Gave 10% of Their Income to the Work of the Lord?

- 150,000 new indigenous missionaries and pastors in nations most closed to foreign religious workers.
- Triple the resources being spent by all Christians on Bible translating, printing, and distribution to provide Bibles in the native languages of the 2,737 remaining people groups currently without Bible translations.
- Quadruple the total resources being spent by all Christians globally on missions to evangelize the unevangelized world.
- Eradicate polio worldwide.

What Could happen If Committed Christians Gave 10% of Their Income to the Work of the Lord?

- 1,000,000 new clear water, well-drilling projects per year in the poorest nations (25 percent of the world's population drinks unsafe water).
- Prevent and treat malaria worldwide.
- Provide food, clothing, and shelter to all 6,500,000 current refugees in all of Africa, Asia, and the Middle East.
- Sponsor 20 million needy children worldwide, providing them food, education, and healthcare.
- Quadruple global Christian medial missions work.

- “A command has been given: ‘Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.’ It has not been obeyed. More than half the people in the world have never yet heard the Gospel. What are we to say to this? Surely it concerns us Christians very seriously. For we are the people who are responsible ...”
- “If our Master returned today to find millions of people unevangelized, and looked as of course He would look, to us for an explanation, I cannot imagine what explanation we should have to give ... Of one thing I am certain – that most of the excuses we are accustomed to make with such good conscience now, we should be wholly ashamed of then.” (*Do Not Say*).

- Lost people matter to God. They must also matter to us.
- “We talk of the Second Coming when half the world has never heard of the first.” - Oswald J. Smith
- “This generation of Christians is responsible for this generation of souls on the earth!” - Keith Green