

John 4:35

"To the Ends of the Earth" (Lottie Moon Christmas Offering)

November 30, 2025

1. Intro

- a. In the early 1870's, right on the heels of the end of the Civil War here in America, a pastor at Cartersville Baptist Church in Cartersville, Georgia, preached a message that would literally change the world
 - i. His text was Jesus' words in John 4:35
 1. *³⁵Do you not say, 'There are yet four months, then comes the harvest'? Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest.*
 - a. Now, this pastor's sermon didn't spark a revival in the South
 - i. It didn't even start a revival in the little town of Cartersville
 - b. But what it did, through the power of the Holy Spirit, was that it impacted the life of one, thirty-two year old woman sitting there in the congregation
 2. This woman, a lady named Charlotte, had grown up on the estate of her extremely wealthy family in Virginia
 - a. She was very well educated, excelling in literature and in languages
 - i. By the time she graduated from college, she had become fluent in Greek, Latin, Italian, French, and Spanish
 - b. She would eventually become one of the first women in the South to earn her Master's Degree
 - i. And she would go on to become a teacher in Virginia, and then in Georgia
 1. By her own admission, Charlotte was an outspoken critic of the Christian religion
 - a. To anyone who tried to talk to her about Jesus, Charlotte would often reply that her middle initial of "D" stood for "devil"
 - ii. But in the year 1958, a pastor named John Broadus held a series of evangelistic meetings in Virginia,
 1. And it was at one of these meetings – surprisingly, at a sunrise prayer meeting – that Charlotte's heart was softened to the Gospel
 - a. That night, a barking dog kept her awake all throughout the night
 - b. And as she lay there, unable to go to sleep, she was confronted with her soul's condition before God
 - i. And so, on the very next day, Charlotte surrendered her heart to the Lord
 - ii. She was baptized on the following day
 - iii. And she would spend the next fifteen years in the service of Christ here in the United States
 - ii. But then, she heard the message preached on John 4:35, and everything changed for her
 1. Charlotte had already heard about the heathen lands of China, far away on the other side of the earth

- a. And as she heard her Savior say that the fields were “white for the harvest,” she knew that for her, that meant leaving EVERYTHING and heading into the mission field
- iii. In the following weeks, Charlotte, who we know by her more popular nickname of “Lottie,” would apply for missionary service in North China
 1. She was very quickly accepted as a missionary, but she wasn’t immediately sent overseas
 - a. So she would spend those intermittent weeks writing letters to various churches, encouraging them to begin looking to the harvest as well
 - i. In one of these letters, Lottie wrote these words...
 1. “Young brethren, can you, knowing the loud call for laborers in the foreign fields, settle down with your home pastorates? So many could be found to fill your places at home; so few volunteer for the foreign work. For women, too, foreign missions open a sphere of labor and furnish opportunities for good which angels might almost envy.”
- iv. Lottie would finally leave for China in September of 1873, where she would pour out the rest of her life in sacrifice to the Gospel of Jesus Christ
 1. She spent the first few years of her ministry there learning the Chinese language, as well as teaching English to the young women
 - a. But her true calling emerged as she went one day with one of her missionary friends into the interior lands of China
 - i. And she realized that the millions of people in these interior villages had never heard the Gospel, and had never even heard the name of Jesus Christ
 - b. In another of her letters, Lottie wrote...
 - i. “The needs of these people press upon my soul, and I cannot be silent. It is grievous to think of these human souls going down to death without even one opportunity of hearing the name of Jesus.”
 2. In 1885, Lottie would become the first female Southern Baptist missionary to open a new mission station in China, near the city of P’ingtu
 - a. This station would eventually become one of the most influential mission stations in the entire country
 - i. And for 27 more years, Lottie would minister from this station
 1. She would often take freshly baked cookies with her into the surrounding villages as she shared the Gospel
 - a. Eventually, as she began to win the people over with her kindness and her words, she affectionately became known as “the Cookie Lady”
 2. Lottie would also use her mission station as a place to train the new incoming missionaries to China
 3. And she would spend countless hours continuing to write letters back to the churches here in America
 - a. Rallying them to pray for the mission in China, to send resources to help her further the Gospel in China, and to send more laborers out into the harvest fields
 - b. Lottie passed away on Christmas Eve, in the year 1912
 - i. By this time, at the age of 72, she had literally given away all her possessions to the Chinese people

- ii. She had given away almost all of her food
 - 1. She died in a state of serious physical AND mental decline
- 3. The words of the Apostle Paul in 2 Timothy 4:6-8 are fitting when we think of the life of Lottie Moon,
 - a. *⁶For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. ⁷I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.*
- b. To remember Lottie's tremendous sacrifice for the Chinese people, and also to continue to spur on ongoing missions around the world,
 - i. The Southern Baptist Convention instituted the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering in the year 1918
 - 1. For the past 107 years, 100 percent of the money given to this special offering goes directly toward world missions
 - a. These funds go toward getting missionaries trained and equipped to go out into the mission field
 - b. And they are used to help keep them on the field and sustain their ministries
 - i. At the end of 2024, the International Mission Board has 3,577 missionaries on the field
 - 1. These missionaries have reported 2,409 churches planted in 2024,
 - a. Along with 84,430 new leaders being raised up and trained within the global church
 - 2. It is estimated that, through the work of IMB missionaries, over 1.6 MILLION people heard the Gospel of Jesus proclaimed in 2024...
 - a. All around the world
- c. In recent years, the IMB has also joined the push to take the Gospel to the unreached and unengaged people groups around the world as well
 - i. It's helpful for us to define some terms at this point...
 - 1. First off, what is a people group?
 - a. The simple definition of a people group is that they are a group of people that are defined by a shared language, shared cultural beliefs and practices, and a shared location
 - i. So, for example, one people group that exists right here in the United States are the Yemeni Arabs who live in Detroit, Michigan and Buffalo, New York
 - 1. Even though this population of around 105,000 Yemeni Arabs lives here in the United States, they are clustered within very specific locations in these two cities
 - a. Many of them still primarily only speak Arabic
 - b. And ALMOST ALL of them still remain devoutly Muslim
 - b. So we would say that the Yemeni Arabs in the US represent a DISTINCT people group because of a shared language, shared cultural beliefs, and a shared location
 - 2. We would ALSO say that the Yemeni Arab people group here in the US is an UNREACHED people group

- a. They are considered UNREACHED because less than 2% of the Yemeni Arabs here in the United States have surrendered their lives to Jesus Christ
 - i. In fact, for the Yemeni Arabs here in Detroit and Buffalo, there are ZERO Christians reported
 - 1. Just let that register for a moment
 - a. To put it into perspective, the population of the city of Sapulpa right now is about 22,000 people
 - b. The Yemeni Arab population here in the US is FIVE TIMES the amount of people here in Sapulpa
 - i. And there are ZERO Christians in this people group
- ii. So why should this matter to us as Christians?
 - 1. Well, in the Scriptures, we often hear the word “nations,” especially in the New Testament
 - a. The most well known use of this word would be in the Great Commission of Matthew 28:19, when Jesus says,
 - i. ¹⁹*Go therefore and make disciples of ALL NATIONS, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,* ²⁰*teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.*
 - b. This word that is used for “nations,” is the Greek word *ethne*, or *ethnos*
 - i. This isn’t referring to the geo-political nations that we know today, like the United States of America, or Mexico, or China
 - 1. But rather, the definition of *ethne* is,
 - a. “A people forming a custom or a culture; properly, a people joined by practicing similar customs or common culture”
 - 2. Strong’s lexicon goes on to say that, in the New Testament, the word *ethne*,
 - a. “... embraces every people group outside ethnic Israel and, by extension, any collective identity distinguished by language, culture, or territorial boundaries.”
 - ii. So really, the BETTER reading of Matthew 28:19 would be,
 - 1. ¹⁹*Go therefore and make disciples of all PEOPLE GROUPS, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,* ²⁰*teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.*
 - iii. So just think for a moment about what that means for us... and I’m going to take us on a bit of an intentional rabbit trail here
 - 1. There’s a LOT of talk about Muslims in America today, isn’t there?
 - a. We’re seeing more and more stories on the news about the growth of the Muslim population in our country,
 - i. And how they are here to take over our cities and institute Sharia law, and to end the United States as we know it
 - 1. I won’t argue against the validity of these claims
 - b. But think about what Paul said to the Athenians in Acts 17, verses 26-28
 - i. As he was speaking to them about the God who made the world and everything in it, he said to them,
 - 1. ²⁶*And he [God] made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted*

periods AND THE BOUNDARIES of their dwelling place, ²⁷that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, ²⁸for 'In him we live and move and have our being...'"

- c. Friends, from the CHRISTIAN perspective, we must acknowledge that it is not random chance or coincidence that the Muslim world is moving into our nation
 - i. According to the Apostle Paul, it is GOD HIMSELF who moves man and establishes their dwelling places
 - d. Just think about the Yemeni Arabs in Detroit and Buffalo
 - i. The country of Yemen currently ranks NUMBER THREE on the World Watch List of countries where Christians experience the most persecution
 - 1. NUMBER THREE
 - a. If a missionary were to go to Yemen to share the Gospel with the Muslims there, and they were caught sharing the Gospel, or even giving away a Bible
 - i. AT BEST, they would be immediately kicked out of the country
 - ii. But more likely, they would be imprisoned and tortured
 - iii. And at worst they would be executed
 - ii. But look at what God has done!
 - 1. Over the past decades, God has brought over a HUNDRED THOUSAND Yemeni Arabs OUT OF a closed and oppressed country
 - a. And He has brought them to our very doorstep, where they COULD become a REACHED people group, if the Church would recognize what is going on here
 - iii. Church, this is why we must be VERY CAUTIOUS about getting caught up in all the anti-immigration, and especially anti-Muslim rhetoric of our day
 - 1. YES, they can represent a danger to our safety and our way of life
 - a. But since when has Jesus ever called his church to embrace SAFETY as one of our primary pursuits?
 - 2. If we are to be faithful to the Great Commission to make disciples of all PEOPLE GROUPS, then we must be willing to go the unreached across the world,
 - a. AND the unreached that God has placed right in our own cities
 - i. OK, back to our definitions...
- a. As I mentioned a few moments ago, in recent years, the IMB has also joined the push to take the Gospel to the unreached AND the UNENGAGED people groups all around the world
 - a. The UNREACHED people groups are those people groups where less than 2% of that group has become followers of Christ, even though there might be ACCESS to the Gospel nearby their communities
 - i. The UNENGAGED people groups are those people groups that HAVE NO ACCESS to the Gospel, and they have never heard the name of Jesus
 - 1. If you think back to Lottie Moon's story, these were the millions of Chinese people in the interior of China who she became zealous to reach

- a. No missionaries had established any mission stations near their villages
 - b. No churches had been planted
 - c. They had zero access to the Gospel
 - i. They had zero knowledge of the name of Jesus
 - 1. God gave Lottie Moon a heart for the UNENGAGED people groups in these villages
 - 2. And through her faithfulness, many of those tribes eventually heard the Gospel
 - a. And they eventually became both ENGAGED and REACHED people groups
- b. And now, today, when we give toward the IMB, and specifically toward the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering,
 - i. We are continuing the mission that Lottie began over a hundred years ago
 - 1. Through our giving, missionaries are sent out
 - a. The Gospel is being proclaimed among both the unreached and the unengaged
 - i. And slowly, methodically, all according to God's perfect plan, the Kingdom is advancing across the world
 - b. This doesn't happen without churches sending missionaries
 - i. And this doesn't happen without churches sending their financial resources
 - ii. So, in the month of December, we get the great joy of joining with thousands of other Southern Baptist Churches as we participate together in the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering
 - 1. This next week is the week of prayer for international missions, and we would encourage you to go online to the webpage of the International Mission Board to find resources for this week of prayer
 - a. But next week, on December 7, we will take up our collection for the Lottie Moon offering
 - i. So pray about what you would give to this special offering, and then plan on bringing it this Wednesday night, or on Next Sunday
 - 1. Just make sure you designate on your check or on the giving envelope that your gift is for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering
 - c. I love what Lottie herself had to say in one of her many letters that she wrote back to the churches in the US, when she wrote these words,
 - i. "Need it be said why the weeks before Christmas are chosen? Is not the festive season, when families and friends exchange gifts in memory of THE GIFT laid on the altar of the world for the redemption of the human race, the most appropriate time to consecrate a portion from abounding riches and scant poverty to send forth the good tidings of great joy into all the earth?"
 - 1. In this season, friends, where we so often focus on giving material gifts to those who really need nothing,
 - a. What if we ALSO chose to give of our financial blessings to take the Gospel to the ends of the earth?
 - i. There is no other cause more worthy to give to than the advancement of the Kingdom of Christ into all the nations

- b. Well, I want to spend the remainder of our time this morning talking about missions in general
 - a. We certainly cherish those of our brothers and sisters who leave everything behind and go out into the world to become missionaries to the nations
 - i. That is a high calling indeed
 - 1. And we need to recognize that it is a UNIQUE calling
 - a. Not all of us are called to GO
 - i. Not all of us are called to sell our homes and our stuff and head off to faraway lands
 - ii. Not all of us are called to go off and learn a new language so we can reach an unreached people group
 - iii. Not all of us are called to be MISSIONARIES
- b. But as followers of Jesus Christ, ALL OF US are called to be ON MISSION
 - i. If you are a Christian, then you have been commissioned to make disciples
 - ii. If you are a Christian, then you have been commissioned to teach others to follow the commands of Christ
 - iii. If you are a Christian, then you have been commissioned to be ON mission
 - 1. This mission flows out of our CALLING
 - 2. It flows out of our COMPASSION
 - 3. And it flows out of our CONFIDENCE

2. So first, our mission flows out of our CALLING

- a. We saw this a few months ago in Luke chapter 10, verses 1-3
 - i. In these verses, Luke wrote that,
 - 1. *¹After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them on ahead of him, two by two, into every town and place where he himself was about to go. ²And he said to them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. ³Go your way; behold, I am sending you out as lambs in the midst of wolves.*
 - ii. The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few
 - 1. According to current statistics, there are around 830 MILLION evangelical protestants around the world today
 - a. Now, that sounds like a LOT of laborers, doesn't it?
 - i. UNTIL you realize that the global population is now sitting at 8.2 BILLION people
 - 1. In light of THAT number, we're hit with the fact that the number of evangelical protestant Christians in the world is actually LESS THAN 10 percent of the entire world population
 - ii. And we have to be honest and say that those 830 million evangelical protestants represent the number of PROFESSING Christians
 - 1. In reality, the number of those who truly have a saving faith in Jesus Christ is likely a whole lot less than 830 million
 - a. My guess is that it would be generous to say that any more than 5% of the world's population is TRULY saved
- b. Friends, two thousand years after Jesus sent out the 72, this truth still remains...
 - i. The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few!
 - 1. But there is no way around it, this IS our CALLING
 - a. It seems like we've talked about this passage SO MUCH in the past few weeks, but in any talk of our CALLING, we'd fall short if we didn't once again mention Paul's words in 2 Corinthians 5:19-20, that

- i. *¹⁹... in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting TO US the message of reconciliation. ²⁰Therefore, WE are ambassadors for Christ, God making HIS appeal THROUGH US.*
- b. I don't know if you've been following the latest news in the Christian music industry...
 - i. But the newest controversy is that a completely AI generated artist has topped the charts of Contemporary Christian Music
 - 1. The singer himself has been generated by AI... the lyrics of his songs have come from AI... even all the vocals are completely AI generated
 - a. And the audience for Contemporary Christian Music LOVES it!
 - ii. This has of course led into a bigger conversation, as some are raising concerns about AI's use in Christian ministry
 - 1. While many are asking, "What's the big deal?"
 - a. If artificial intelligence can be used to spread the name of Jesus more effectively around the world, then WHY NOT use it?
 - i. Why shouldn't Christian musicians use AI in their music and worship and song-writing?
 - ii. Why shouldn't pastors use AI to help them put together their sermons?
 - iii. Why shouldn't we use AI to spread the Gospel?
- 2. Friends, the answer is UNARGUABLY clear...
 - a. Because it is OUR calling to be ambassadors of reconciliation – NOT some sort of artificial intelligence
- ii. Jesus did not save us so we could sit in our comfy chairs and plug in a bunch of parameters into a computer, which will then spit out some grand marketing program for Jesus
 - 1. Just like the 72, Jesus has called us to go into every town and village, and prepare the way for his coming
 - a. He has called US to go into our neighborhoods and proclaim the peace that God has provided in Christ
 - b. He has called US to go into our jobs and proclaim the Kingdom that is being established all across the world, and even as we speak
 - i. The ONE Kingdom that will stand when all others fall
 - c. Jesus has called US to be ON MISSION, as he sends us out as lambs in the midst of wolves
 - i. Whether we WANT to live on mission or not IS NOT the question
 - 1. This is our CALLING
 - 2. And our King expects us to obey
- iii. In my own quiet times in the morning, I'm currently reading through the longest chapter in the Bible, Psalm 119
 - 1. One thing that has struck me in reading through this incredible Psalm again is how much the psalm writer emphasizes SIMPLE OBEDIENCE to God's commands
 - a. In verses 4 and 5, he says,
 - i. *⁴You have commanded your precepts to be kept diligently. ⁵Oh that my ways may be steadfast in keeping your statutes!*
 - b. In verse 10, he says,

- i. ¹⁰*With my whole heart I seek you; let me not wander from your commandments!*
 - c. In verses 20 and 21, he says,
 - i. ²⁰*My soul is consumed with longing for your rules at all times. ²¹You rebuke the insolent, accursed ones, who wander from your commandments.*
- 2. Verse after verse after verse, the writer of Psalm 119 shows us that we, as the children of God, are called to walk in obedience to God, simply because He IS God
 - a. And so, again, whether you FEEL like it or not, Christian...
 - i. Your CALLING is to live your life ON MISSION, as you obediently take the Gospel to your neighbors, to your place of work, and even to the ends of the earth
 - iv. But the Scriptures are clear, if we ONLY live on mission out of a sense of duty and obedience, we are in danger of eventually falling into a cold and heartless religion...
 - 1. Much like the Pharisees that Jesus so often condemned
 - a. And so we acknowledge that our mission flows out of our CALLING
- 3. But secondly, we must see that the Bible says that our mission should flow out of our COMPASSION
 - a. In Matthew 9, verses 36-38, Jesus is once again speaking about the huge harvest that is waiting out there for us, and the small number of laborers who are actually going out
 - i. But listen to how Matthew frames Jesus' words...
 - 1. ³⁶*When [Jesus] saw the crowds, HE HAD COMPASSION FOR THEM, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; ³⁸therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."*
 - ii. Friends, we are to live our lives in obedient submission to Christ, as we pursue our calling to be ON MISSION out in the world
 - 1. But if we are going to TRULY be followers of Jesus, then we must also pray to have COMPASSION for the world as well
 - a. Again, let's think back to the Yemeni Arabs in Detroit and Buffalo as an example
 - i. I'll be honest with you and say that, when I see images on the news of the more militant Muslims angrily protesting in the streets of the US, I'm not very moved to want to go share the Gospel with them
 - 1. I'd rather jump on the bandwagon and say with all the rest of the masses, "Get them out of here! Deport them back to their own countries before they ruin ours!"
 - b. Now, if I instead choose to remember my CALLING to be on mission toward the lost – especially toward the unreached people groups God has brought into our cities,
 - i. Then HOPEFULLY I would choose to OBEY the commands of my God and my King
 - 1. God certainly blesses obedience
 - a. And He desires obedience from His children, just as we desire it from OUR children
 - 2. But do you know what would REALLY bring glory to God? What would REALLY exalt the name of Jesus?
 - a. If I chose to pray that the Holy Spirit would fill me WITH COMPASSION towards them as well

- i. If, when I saw the Yemeni Arabs here in Detroit, my heart was truly broken over their condition
 - ii. If, when I saw their Mullahs and Imams calling for Sharia law to be implemented in place of our own laws, my heart was truly grieved to see that they were a harassed and helpless people,
 - 1. Like sheep without a shepherd
 - iii. Brothers and sisters in Christ, this is the real evidence of a heart that has been truly transformed by the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit
 - 1. It is only a supernaturally transformed heart that would choose to love your enemy, and pray for those who persecute you
 - 2. It is only a supernaturally transformed heart that would look upon everyone the world says we ought to despise, and choose to embrace and welcome them instead
 - 3. It is only a supernaturally transformed heart that would see all of the harassed and helpless in our society and CHOOSE to have compassion on them
 - a. Regardless of whether they are black or white
 - b. Regardless of whether they are rich or poor
 - c. Regardless of whether they are republican or democrat
 - d. Regardless of whether they are legal or illegal immigrants
 - iv. A heart that longs to be like Jesus first and foremost looks upon the lost WITH COMPASSION, for they are ALL sheep without a shepherd
 - 1. And then we choose to live ON MISSION toward them
 - a. By loving them
 - b. By serving them
 - c. By sharing the words of eternal life with them
 - 2. Initially, we may only go to them out of obedience to our CALLING,
 - a. But at some point, we must pray that our hearts will be filled with COMPASSION toward them as well
 - i. For that was the heart of the One who looked at each one of us, and while we were his enemy, he chose to have compassion on us
 - b. Our mission flows out of our CALLING as ambassadors for Jesus
 - c. Our mission flows out of our COMPASSION as we truly seek the heart of Jesus
4. And third, our mission flows out of our CONFIDENCE, as we realize that Jesus has already GUARANTEED the harvest
 - a. Back in Cartersville, Georgia, in 1872, Lottie Moon heard the sermon on John 4:35 that would completely change the trajectory of her entire life
 - i. In verses 34-38, Jesus said to his disciples,
 - 1. *³⁴“My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work. ³⁵Do you not say, ‘There are yet four months, then comes the harvest’? Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest. ³⁶Already the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. ³⁷For here the saying holds true, ‘One sows and another reaps.’ ³⁸I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor.”*
 - b. Friends, this is the incredible reality that the Scriptures lay before us
 - i. Jesus was FULLY successful in the mission that he was sent to accomplish
 - 1. He said to his disciples that his food was to do the will of the One who sent him, his Father, and to ACCOMPLISH his work
 - a. In light of that statement, listen to what the angels and the elders said to Jesus in Revelation, chapter 5, starting in verse 9...

- i. *⁹"Worthy are you [Jesus] to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, ¹⁰and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth."*
- 2. On the cross, Jesus FULLY accomplished the work that he had been sent to do
 - a. On the cross, Jesus ransomed people for God from EVERY tribe and EVERY language and EVERY people
 - i. On the cross, Jesus ransomed people from EVERY *ethne*
- 3. So now WE are called to go and reap that for which we did not labor
 - a. As we choose to live our lives ON MISSION because of our CALLING...
 - b. As we choose to live our lives ON MISSION out of COMPASSION for the lost...
 - i. We can now go out WITH CONFIDENCE, knowing that Jesus has already ransomed those who are his
 - 1. So lift up your eyes, friends, and see that the fields are WHITE for harvest
- c. As Lottie Moon said in another of her letters,
 - i. "Should we not press it home upon our consciences that the sole object of our conversion WAS NOT the salvation of our own souls, but that we might become co-workers with our Lord and Master in the conversion of the world?"
 - 1. What a great and awesome calling we have been given, friends
 - a. May we CHOOSE to walk in a manner worthy of this great calling!