

God's Call For All Nations



The Mandate

NOTES COMPILED BY CHRIS RAGG

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God's Call for All Nations

I. WE LIVE FOR THE GLORY OF GOD

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GOD'S CALL FOR ALL NATIONS

THE MANDATE

I. We Live for the Glory of God

THEME: Everything we do must be for God's glory.

Text: Matthew 22:10

"The servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests"

QUOTATIONS:

- 🌐 *"I have but one passion - it is He, it is He 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 Zinzendorf)
- 🌐 *It is my hearts desire that I must be NO more, that He be KNOWN more.*
(Saheed B. Olalekan)
- 🌐 *"Missions is the overflow of our delight in God because missions is the overflow of God's delight in being God."*
(John Piper)
- 🌐 *"All mission flows from God's sovereignty, not from God's love or compassion"* (Abraham Kuyper)

A. Introduction: Why Go to the Nations

In Course One we saw in Scripture, from Genesis to Revelation, how God's heart was for the nations. His desire is to bring the peoples of the nations unto himself. He showed His love for the nations by sending His Son to earth. Jesus became the first missionary sent by His Father. He opened the way to God by bringing redemption to the world through his death and resurrection. Prior to His returning to the Father He tells His followers that as He was sent by the Father, now He is sending them. They are to become missionaries bringing the gospel to the nations.

We now follow the footsteps of Jesus by showing the love of God and preaching the gospel to bring the peoples of the nations to the Father. This course explores the true calling of every Christian man or woman.

B. All for the glory of God

Jesus came to earth in obedience to the will of the Father. His primary purpose was to give God glory.

John 20:21

So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you."

John 17:4

"I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do."

Jesus gave God glory in everything He did by doing the will of God; by extending God's Kingdom, by healing the sick, casting out demons, etc.

Being God He actually lived in glory 'before the world was'. He, however, chose to divest himself of His glory to come to earth as a man, but he still sought to bring glory to God on earth. The purpose of his earthly life was to glorify God.

Likewise, the purpose of our lives is to give glory to God. We exist to give God glory. We would not exist unless God said 'let...Chris/Peter/Mary... be'. He made us for His glory, and He made us to glorify Him. Indeed, all our talents and abilities were given by God to glorify Him.

We can glorify Him by using our gifts and talents for His glory. We can not do shoddy work and glorify Him.

Jesus' primary purpose was to please His Father and to give Him the glory.

Pleasing God and giving Him the glory should be our number one concern.

We glorify God in worship. We glorify God in doing His will. We glorify God in reaching the nations. All this must be done for His glory. There are companies and businesses that desire that the name of their product should be known everywhere and be sold all over the nations. Everything they do is for that purpose. Our desire, however, should be that the name of the Lord be glorified in the nations, and everything we do should be for that reason.

C. We are to declare God's glory

The motive of our mission to the nations must be to give Him glory. It therefore begins with our praise and worship. It then extends to the nations.

John 17:1-5

I Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, 2 "as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him.3 "And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.4 "I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. 5 "And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was."

1 Corinthians 10:31

Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

Colossians 3:17

And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

John 8:29

"And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him."

2 Corinthians 5:15

and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.

1 Chronicles 29:11

*Yours, O LORD, is the greatness,
The power and the glory,
The victory and the majesty;
For all that is in heaven and in earth is Yours;
Yours is the kingdom, O LORD,
And You are exalted as head over all.*

Psalms 29:2

Give unto the LORD the glory due to His name; Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.

Our desire is that His glory covers the whole earth.

We begin to speak it out and declare it to all peoples, all nations – to Him be the glory

We declare the glory of God by taking his gospel to the nations. The gospel is the glory of Christ.

Our attitude should be one of ascribing to Him everything – all the glory

Psalm 72:19

And blessed be His glorious name forever! And let the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen and Amen.

Psalm 57:5

Be exalted, O God, above the heavens; Let Your glory be above all the earth.

1 Chronicles 16:23-25

²³Sing to the LORD, all the earth; Proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to day.

²⁴Declare His glory among the nations, His wonders among all peoples. ²⁵For the LORD is great and greatly to be praised; He is also to be feared above all gods.

Psalm 96:2

²Sing to the LORD, bless His name; Proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to day. ³Declare His glory among the nations, His wonders among all peoples.

2 Corinthians 4:4

*whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, **lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ**, who is the image of God, should shine on them.*

Psalm 96:8

Give to the LORD the glory due His name; Bring an offering, and come into His courts.

1 Timothy 1:17

Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honour and glory forever and ever. Amen.

2 Timothy 4:18b

And the Lord will deliver me from every evil work and preserve me for His heavenly kingdom. To Him be glory forever and ever. Amen!

1 Peter 5:11

To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

D. Who gets the glory?

The question of who gets the glory is an important one in the Christian life and in Christian mission. The true servant of God understands that without God they are nothing. It is by grace that they have been saved and it is by grace that they live. No man can boast except in the grace and love of God. We are His workmanship called to do His works.

We know from scripture that God chose Israel and we speak of them as ‘God’s chosen people’. Yet did that give them cause to boast? Not at all, it was all of grace.

The Lord did not choose Israel because they were more special. The temptation of any people, or individual, chosen by God is to think of themselves more highly than they ought – to think of themselves as something special in and of themselves. This is not the case. Men often love applause and seek to build monuments to themselves.

Scripture often compares man desiring his glory with that of giving God glory as in the story of Gideon.

Man needs to understand His finiteness and that his ‘glory’ is not important and will not last.

The attitude of a true servant of God is to make sure that He does not get any glory, but that God gets all the glory.

Even Jesus, the Son of God, did not seek His own glory

Ephesians 2:8-10

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.

10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Deuteronomy 7:7-8

7 The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples; 8 but because the LORD loves you.

Judges 7:2

And the LORD said to Gideon, "The people who are with you are too many for Me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel claim glory for itself against Me, saying, "My own hand has saved me."

1 Peter 1:24

because "All flesh is as grass, And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, And its flower falls away.

Psalms 115:1-2

¹ Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us,

But to Your name give glory,

Because of Your mercy,

Because of Your truth.

² Why should the Gentiles say,

"So where is their God?"

John 8:50

And I do not seek My own glory; there is One who seeks and judges.

Ultimately God will not allow anything in place of His glory. We should be careful to make sure that we do not take His place.

Moses made the mistake in not bringing glory to God by not obeying Him in the incident of the rock – instead of speaking to it as required he struck the rock twice as he had done before. He sought to put himself before God. In so doing he did not hallow/give glory to God and suffered the consequences.

We need to make sure our lives are completely lived for His glory. We should be checking our motives. Am I doing this so that I can be happy? Am I doing this so I can be seen by men? Or am I doing this for the glory of God.

There are many ‘men ministries’ in the earth where the name of a person is highlighted reflecting the celebrity culture of the day rather than the God who owned and bought them. All in Christian ministry need to be aware of these subtle dangers.

The devil even tempted Jesus with seeking His own glory. The temptation was subtle. He offered Jesus what He longed for and came for – the nations. He also offered him their glory. If he accepted, He would have power and position in reaching the nations. This is what he desired in following the call of God. But in order to do so, he would have to compromise and make a pact with the devil. Jesus, however, refused. He rebuked satan and said He would only worship and serve God.

Isaiah 42:8

I am the LORD, that is My name; And My glory I will not give to another, Nor My praise to carved images.

Isaiah 48:10-11

¹⁰Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver; I have tested you in the furnace of affliction. ¹¹For My own sake, for My own sake, I will do it; For how should My name be profaned? And I will not give My glory to another.

Numbers 20:10

And Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly before the rock and said to them, “Hear now, you rebels! Must we bring water for you out of this rock?”

Numbers 20:12

Then the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, “Because you did not believe me to hallow me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them.”

Jeremiah 9:23-24

23 Thus says the LORD: “Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, Let not the mighty man glory in his might, Nor let the rich man glory in his riches; 24 But let him who glories glory in this, That he understands and knows Me, That I am the LORD, exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight,” says the LORD.

1 Corinthians 1:28-29

²⁸and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, ²⁹that no flesh should glory in His presence.

Luke 4:5-8

5 Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. ⁶ And the devil said to Him, “All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. ⁷ “Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours.” ⁸ And Jesus answered and said to him, “Get behind Me, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.’”

There have been many in Christian ministry who longed to serve God and see His kingdom extended, but fell to the subtle wiles of the devil. They may not have committed blatant fleshly sins, but nonetheless they compromised. The temptation is subtle – perhaps to see our name in print, to have our ministry exalted, to be seen and known, to be successful etc. The devil tempted Jesus with the glory of the kingdoms of the earth – “Glorify Your name in all the earth.” Likewise the temptation for many ministers and ministries is often subtle. It appears small, not seeming really to matter, but it is fleshly, and not built on truth and the ways of God.

The Lord’s prayer teaches us who it is who should receive the glory. It starts off with the Lord being glorified, and after man’s petitions, requests and penitence it finishes with God getting the glory.

E. Checking our motives and actions

The religious leaders of Jesus day were heavily criticised by Jesus because they loved to receive praise and honour. Jesus exposed the Pharisees for this attitude. Yet their position in the seat of Moses was to serve God and give Him the glory. Jesus warned his disciples to have a different spirit – to do righteous things in secret.

John 7:18

"He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who seeks the glory of the One who sent Him is true, and no unrighteousness is in Him.

1 Corinthians 1:31

that, as it is written, "He who glories, let him glory in the LORD."

Matthew 6:5

*Our Father in heaven Hallowed be Your name
Your Kingdom come Your will be done.*

Matthew 6:13b

For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Matthew 23:1-2, 5-7

1 Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples, 2 saying: "The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat.

5 "But all their works they do to be seen by men. They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the borders of their garments .6 "They love the best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues, 7 "greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, 'Rabbi, Rabbi.'

Matthew 6:1-2

Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven. Therefore when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and streets, that they may receive glory from men. Assuredly, I say to you they have received their reward.

Matthew 6:5

And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.

Matthew 6:16

Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.

In desiring to reach the nations we should check our motivation. Are we doing it to so that we can have a great ministry? If so, then it is not for God's glory. Are we doing it to help people? If so, then it is not for God's glory. It is true helping people can bring God glory, but the motivation is wrong. A desire to help fellow man, even in peril, is humanitarian in motive but it is not Godly. It is man-ward in direction not God-ward. Everything we do should be for His glory. The highest and greatest goal is to please God and give Him the glory. If our lives and thrust is God-ward, then it will not be difficult for us to be concerned about the needs of man. If we love God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength then it is easy to love our neighbour as ourselves. We receive His love to pass on. Ministry starts and always continues with loving God and giving Him the glory.

Like Jesus before us, our primary motive for reaching the nations is the glory of God. Like Jesus before us we desire to please Him before all things. The primary call upon every man is to give Him glory. Paul understood that to seek to 'please men' would take away his calling from God. Our prime motivation must not be to have a big ministry, even great success in winning souls. It must be to live for the glory of God. John Piper writes:

*"If the pursuit of God's glory is not ordered above the pursuit of man's good in the affections of the heart and the priorities of the church, man will not be well served and God will not be duly honoured. I am not pleading for a diminishing of missions but for a magnifying of God. When the flame of worship burns with the heat of God's true worth, the light of missions will shine to the most remote parts of the earth"*¹

F. He must increase, I must decrease

John the Baptist understood this. When others came to him stating that everyone was leaving him to go to a new ministry, you would think he might be despondent. People were coming to his meetings, and now they were leaving for another. But John understood his role and position in the light of Jesus Christ.

Galatians 1:10

For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ.

John 3:26

26 And they came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, He who was with you beyond the Jordan, to whom you have testified—behold, He is baptizing, and all are coming to Him!"

John 3:30

*He must increase, but I must decrease. (NKJV)
He must become greater; I must become less. (NIV)*²

*He must increase, but I must decrease. [He must grow more prominent; I must grow less so.] (Amplified)*³

*This is the assigned moment for him to move into the centre, while I slip off to the sidelines. (Message)*⁴

¹ John Piper, Let the Nations Be Glad (Baker Academic 2003) p. 18

² New International Version, Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society

³ Amplified Bible, Copyright © 1954, 1958, 1962, 1964, 1965, 1987 by The Lockman Foundation

⁴ The Message, Copyright © 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 2000, 2001, 2002 by Eugene H Peterson

John the Baptist's role was not to bring attention to Himself but to prepare the Way. Likewise we are not 'The Way', we are to prepare for The Way. Many Christian ministries may have good motives but are named after themselves – Pedro Smith International Ministries etc - and often they make sure there is great highlight on themselves. They have magazines full of their photos; others laud them and their ministry. God judges the heart of each person, but there is much 'flesh' in Christian ministry. Where man gets the glory, God does not get the glory. We have to be careful not to allow ourselves to get the glory that is due to God alone. Our attitude and ministry should be like that of John the Baptist.

Matthew 3:1-3

¹ *In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea,* ² *and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!"* ³ *For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying:*

"The voice of one crying in the wilderness:

*"Prepare the way of the LORD;
Make His paths straight."*

John 3:31

"He who comes from above is above all; he who is of the earth is earthly and speaks of the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all.

Isaiah 40:3-4

³ *The voice of one crying in the wilderness:*

"Prepare the way of the LORD;

Make straight in the desert

A highway for our God.

⁴ *Every valley shall be exalted*

And every mountain and hill brought low;

The crooked places shall be made straight

And the rough places smooth.

Malachi 3:1

¹ *"Behold, I send My messenger,*

And he will prepare the way before Me.

And the Lord, whom you seek,

Will suddenly come to His temple,

Even the Messenger of the covenant,

In whom you delight.

Behold, He is coming,"

Says the LORD of hosts.

Isaiah 57:14

¹⁴ *And one shall say, "Heap it up! Heap it up!*

Prepare the way, Take the stumbling block out of the way of My people."

Isaiah 62:10

¹⁰ *Go through, Go through the gates! Prepare the way for the people; Build up, Build up the highway! Take out the stones, Lift up a banner for the peoples!*

G. The result of living for God's glory

It has rightly been said that, "*there is no way of knowing what a person can achieve if he doesn't mind who gets the glory*"

Flesh gets in the way of God's glory and God's work. While we may not be like Jesus having the 'spirit without limit', living for God alone opposes the carnal ways of the flesh, and allows us to be far more effective and to achieve great things for Him. What are the results of living for God's glory?

- If we live for God's glory we don't mind the sacrifice or cost. We don't even count it for we do not live for ourselves. *'I no longer live, but Christ lives in me'*.
- We have courage in the face of danger or the enemy. Our life is in his hands, and we have chosen to follow Him no matter what. If we die, so be it. We don't love our lives unto death.
- If we live for God's glory the pleasures and treasures of this earth become dim.
- If we live for God's glory, we do not seek to please men. We find out what pleases the Lord.
- If we live for God's glory we follow His directions and orders.

H. The glory of the Lord shall be revealed.

Heaven is filled with God's glory and truly all the earth will be filled with it.

Let us live for His glory. Let us reach the nations for His glory.

Galatians 2:20

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Revelation 12:11

And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.

Ephesians 5:10

finding out what is acceptable to the Lord.

1 Corinthians 10:31

Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

1 Peter 4:11

*If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, **that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ**, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.*

Isaiah 6:2-4

²*Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew.* ³*And one cried to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; **The whole earth is full of His glory!**"* ⁴*And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke.*

Numbers 14:21

but truly, as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD.

Isaiah 40:5

The glory of the LORD shall be revealed, And all flesh shall see it together; For the mouth of the LORD has spoken

Jude 1:25

²⁵*To God our Saviour,
Who alone is wise,
Be glory and majesty,
Dominion and power,
Both now and forever.
Amen.*

STUDY QUESTIONS:

Section One:

a) What can we learn from John the Baptist through his attitude and practice of making a way for the Lord? How can we make a way for the Lord today?

b) Without mentioning names, are you able to give examples of how in some Christian ministries the personality or ministry is so highlighted that it gets the glory rather than God? How would you seek to avoid this in your life and ministry?

PRAYER:

That God's glory would be our primary motivation in life and ministry.
That all false motivations would be removed.