

Topic	The Heart of Missions – The Glory of a Good God
Reference	Genesis 2:4-25
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We are now going into a period where this year we'll be focusing on missions. And I think, the most important aspect of missions is to go back to right in the beginning. What is the purpose of man? Who is God? What does he want? So, therefore we're going to do the first 12 chapters of Genesis.

When we're talking about missions. Missions and me, I don't know what your response is. Every time you have the word missions crop up, we all get a little bit uncomfortable. They beam pictures of whole mess of hundreds and millions of people who do not know Christ. And it says, what are you doing about it? And you feel a bit guilty. You know you have got a neighbors so you don't bother to talk to him. And is that the basis of missions? The fact that there are millions of people who do not know God and who are going to be perishing. Or perhaps mission is cast as something for which you build God's church. The early church, they'll tell you how it grew and how you can be part of the kingdom growth.

Or missions is your duty. Everybody has to share the gospel. I remember being a young Christian and the one to mentored me, said, you know, you should get share the gospel with one person a day, a week, every, day must be one. And at a week, not even seven, you know, and then you get guilty.

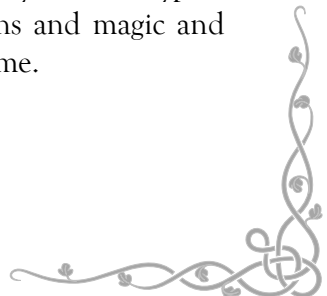
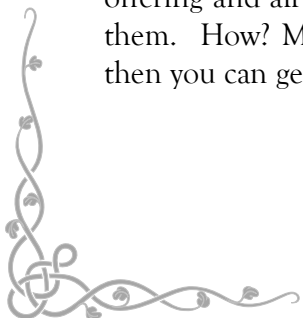
Do we do missions out of those motives?

I would like to propose to you based on Genesis chapter 1 that you don't. Missions start with the glory of a good God. If you look at Genesis chapter 1 and a bit of chapter two, you will see the basis of missions is actually God's glory in creation, in us and in the Sabbath. So unless we have a vision of what this universe and world is about, it is very hard for us to participate, because we don't understand.

So let's start it with **God's Glory in Creation.**

Genesis 1:1-2 (ESV) *In the **beginning**, God created the heavens and the earth. 2 The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.*

Here straight away as you can see, “in the beginning, God”. Immediately, you are confronted with a startling fact, which is actually not quite apparent to a lot of you here because if you look back in ancient times, the ancient near East, they believe that there is some sort of meta divine realm, -something hazy up in the sky and that spawn all sorts of gods, and then the gods produce all sorts of people and people used to worship these gods simply because they want to get something from them. And so they will give offering and all that. Sometimes the gods are quite nasty, never play along. So, what do you do is bypass them. How? Magic. Because they can tap into the meta divine realm, the incantations and magic and then you can get what you want as well. That's the situation where Moses wrote at that time.



Of course, today we have different influences in our society. We have people who believe that God is part of the entire universe. There people on the opposite side who say there's no God at all? But the important thing that Genesis comes out first is that there is a beginning. You know, it's very important. If there is a beginning, there must be a cause. Everything that begins, the experience in our lives, every single thing that happens in your life, in the world today, there's nothing that has, you know, beginning without a cause. Everything has a cause. So therefore if you extrapolate logically, if there is a beginning, there must be a cause. If the universe has a beginning, the universe has a cause. If there's a cause, it will be an uncaused cause. And we call the uncaused cause God.

If you look at science and cleverest people in the past today, they will tell you that there is a beginning. They call it the big bang, quite a establish theory that is brought up, that about 13 to 15 billion years ago there was a big bang and that's how the whole universe started. In fact, after this theory, the people who notice that the stars moving away from earth as you look into the telescope, they look a bit more redder, it is called a red shift because as you move further away, there is a shift in the wavelength as it appears to us. It's called a red shift. Using this red shift, people like Edwin Hubbel, who was responsible for that telescope up in the sky, showed us that there is ann expanding universe that's getting bigger and bigger, which then therefore means that there was an actual beginning.

Of course there are other scientists like Sir John Maddox, famous scientist. He says,

"The idea of a beginning is thoroughly unacceptable because it implies ultimate origin of our world and it gives those who believe in the biblical doctrine of creation ample justification for their belief"

He doesn't believe because we believe, very odd. No scientific basis, he just says I give intonation. Stephen Hawking's, he declares there's no God

"Because there is a law such as gravity, the universe can and will create itself from nothing," he writes. "Spontaneous creation is the reason there is something rather than nothing, why the universe exists, why we exist."

He says this in the face of the fact that in the known universe there is nothing that exists without a cause. And yet he says that. If fact, GK Chesterton writes,

"It is absurd to complain that it is unthinkable for an unthinkable God to make everything out of nothing and then to pretend that it is more thinkable that nothing should turn itself into everything"

Which is actually a contradiction of logic to say, nothing can turn itself into something. So Bible says,

Psalms 53:1 (ESV) he fool says in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, doing abominable iniquity; there is none who does good.

So God created the heavens and the earth. So, he materially, functionally created that. He separates his transcendent. He is the one God, he is sovereign. You look up in the sky at any one time, you will see only about 2,500 stars. And this is a tiny fraction of our Milky way, which is basically our galaxy. All right? This 2,500 is about a tiny fraction of the 200 to 400 billion stars and 50 billion planets in our Milky Way

itself. Guess how many galaxies there are in the entire universe, which is observable? There are about two trillion. There are more stars in the universe than the grains of sand in our world today, it is huge. They estimate that the size of the observable universe is now 96 billion light years, and there are still stars outside that which is traveling at a speed of light that the light cannot reach us in time.

So it is so huge and God made all of this. And how did he created it,

Genesis 1:3-5 (ESV) And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. 4 And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. 5 God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

People always argue about the day. So let's talk about the day. There are various ways in which you can take the word 'day'.

- ① God called the light **Day**, and the darkness he called Night (Genesis 1:5 ESV)...qualitative description of light and darkness.
- ② And there was evening and there was morning, the first **day** (Genesis 1:5B ESV) .. that is really 12 hours. Evening and morning.
- ③ And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh **day** from all his work that he had done (Genesis 2:2 ESV) ...Basically the seventh day is the day, which is the day never ending
- ④ These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the **day** that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens(Genesis 2:4 ESV) ...that means the whole 6-7 is all squished into one day.

So basically the Bible uses the word day in an analogical way. So it could be a period of time, for which the day denotes because it cannot be a real day because you created light on the first day. The sun and moon were created on the fourth day? How could you have a day without the sun and the moon? Right? So people point this out, Oh, your Bible, you know, not accurate, not scientifically true. You all are believing rubbish, but they don't understand that it is actually a Hebrew poetry or song.

Okay. It's a literal restructure. Genesis 1 is a song and Genesis 2-50 is a historical narrative and the evidence of the song there is the repetition of phrases like, and God said, let there be, God saw, there was good, there was evening and then there was morning and then the whatever day. This is literary evidence that this is a song and it's not very much different from another part of our Bible, which is Judges. We have got a historical narrative and you've got a song of the same event. If you look here about a woman killing a man Jael. This is like the New Straight Times, and this is the songbook.

Judges 4:21 (ESV) But Jael the wife of Heber took a tent peg, and took a hammer in her hand. Then she went softly to him and drove the peg into his temple until it went down into the ground while he was lying fast asleep from weariness. So he died.

Very simple. In the next chapter he describes the same event.

Judges 5:26 She sent her hand to the tent peg and her right hand to the workmen's mallet; she struck Sisera;

she crushed his head;

she shattered and pierced his temple.

27 Between her feet

he sank, he fell, he lay still; between her feet

he sank, he fell; where he sank, there he fell—dead.

It is a poetic way of doing it. So, you never say, well, how many times did he fall and how many times did he die? You wouldn't say that because the New Strait Times is here, but the songbook is there. So it was understand how it is basically written. And you find Moses writes in such a way, he never mentions the sun God or, or the moon God. You know the ancients worship the sun, called Chammas and moon God is called sin. He never mentioned, always, especially the lesser light. And the great light because Genesis one is a polemic or defense against the pagan beliefs at the time.

There's purpose and design as you can see he arranges the creation. On one hand, day one, two and three is the location where there is light, sky and water, earth and vegetation. Four, five, and six talks about inhabitants of these locations, which were prior created. And then the apex of creation is animals and men. And then there's a rest on the seventh day.

Hawkins describes science. He says that,

"One can't prove that God doesn't exist but science makes God unnecessary"

I don't think that's true. I've been to university, studied science. I don't think science makes God unnecessary. In fact, science actually expands on the glory of God.

Creation shows us how God expresses himself.

How does he express himself? He shares his glory. How does he do that? The more science looks at our universe, we stand back and we're astounded. There is a weak atomic force that holds all the atoms together. Basically, is it so precise that if there's any variation of the strength that holds this atoms together, one 10 out of hundred then the earth, as we know it today, will not exist and we will not exist. If the constant that drives the acceleration of universe is changed by one part out of 10^{120} , the universe as we know it today, will not exist.

If you look here, there are about six dimensionless constant in the entire universe, of which you cannot change one little bit. If it changes the universe as we know it cannot exist. And that already tells you in breathtaking detail of what the glory of God is finely tuned for life on earth as it were.

Alexander Oparin, a Russian scientist said that, life began because you've got this atmosphere where you've got methane, you've got ammonia, water and carbon dioxide, you mix it together and suddenly lightning come, you got amino acids. That's why he thought. And then they did an experiment at the University of Chicago called the very famous Miller URI experiment where they put these chemicals in a bottle. And

they send a spark and they actually produced some amino acids to be fair, but this atmosphere is not what the earth has made of. So, it's an artificial atmosphere, so it doesn't really prove it until 1953 they discovered the DNA and DNA is the biggest marvel of human discovery ever. Watson and Crick deciphered what it was like and basically it's made every single multicellular organism has DNA.

DNA has three billion base pairs. Arranged with two chemicals on each side, adenine, thymine, cytosine, and guanine, and basically it is arranged as a code. All right, 3 billion base pairs alternating and different codes. And when you have a code, information always comes from intelligence, not a mindless process. When you have a code, you can throw it all together and have three billion base pairs accidentally come together and form one rat. It's impossible. It tells you when you've got code, it means you've got intelligence, it is not a mindless process. So therefore the more we look at it, the more we see the glory of God.

We look at the monkey, not very much different from us right. We only differ from the monkey with a DNA of only 2%. Can you imagine we were nearly monkeys, just 2% difference in the DNA and we would have been climbing trees. How do we respond to this? Well, revelation says

“Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created (Revelation 4:11 ESV)

The natural response of a human being and a creature is to worship, which is why the converse, if you don't worship, is a what Paul writes

Romans 1: 20-21

20 For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. 21 For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him,

It is fundamental to the human nature to be able to envisage, take in beauty, and actually respond appropriately and worship. John Piper writes this, which is quite interesting.

“Mind corresponds to the truth of God’s perfections. Love corresponds to the delight in the worth and beauty of those perfections. God is glorified by being both understood and delighted in.”

God’s passion for His glory

So, as science shows us more and more of the perfections and beauty of God's creation, our love or emotion arises from our appreciation of God's perfections. That is why God gave us the beauty of creation. In fact there was a seminar in Edinburgh some years ago, 2015, where a group of scientists gathered together, they are neurobiologists and they actually concluded that we all seek beauty almost 24 hours a day, whether it's in our homes, in our past times, or in our work. Ask the ladies, they make the house beautiful, who would like to go home and live in the dumpster? Who goes from rubbish dump to rubbish dump looking for stuff? Some of us do, but not most of us.

We are programmed to appreciate beauty. It is intuitive for us to express joy and gratitude and thanksgiving. There is a creator for us to give thanks and be accountable to.

This is a handmade Fazioli piano, one of a kind. The other day, a young lady who owned it was really devastated. Angela Hewitt, who is a Canadian, she has been using this piano for years and then they were delivering it, moving in one place or another, and then they dropped it. The piano is unique, it's the only piano with four pedals. I didn't really know. You have three pedals and he got four pedals, and this is what she writes.

I adored this piano. This was my best friend, best companion, I loved how it felt when I was recording—giving me the possibility to do anything I wanted
 Angela Hewitt

So the piano's value is not in the wood that's there, or even in the outward beauty for which you can appreciate if you like piano. The beauty is the music in which it produces. The beauty points to something deeper. And for her, it was almost spiritual. But the beauty points to something, and as God creates his glory is shown. But the glory is a pointer, is a signpost, a signpost, signpost to the love that comes to behind that there is a God. There's the glory in the God. So God creates a beauty and extravagance in nature so that we could see it and be is a signpost of what a wonderful, marvelous al encompassing God that we have.

God's Glory in Us

Genesis 1:27-28 (ESV)

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. 28 And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

This is our mandate. And the image of God can basically define as three aspects. One, we are supposed to be a representative of God. We're supposed to be relating to him and we are also supposed to reflect who he is. The representative function is quite easily discerned. If you look at the ancient near East, you will find the rulers were set up images and statues of themselves in places where they exercise dominion or control. So you touch the image you're touching the ruler himself. So this is a way in which they represent the, the function. In fact, if you look here.

Genesis 1:26-28 (ESV) Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

So that is this word domain which means they rule. So therefore, there is a representative function where God, in partnership with the people who creates, they are supposed to have. Dominion. So therefore there's a representative function. So you see, the same thing happens in our offices. Every government

office you see, you will see the picture of all the prime ministers, okay? And if there's a particular prime minister you don't like, you cut off his nose. In those days, they did that. You could see that in all of these, uh, Egyptian paintings, carvings, you guys find that the noses cut off. Anybody know why? You've got the British museum, you see all we go, nose always cut off on. The statue is a representation of the God. The King is our representation of God, right? So therefore the statues where the gods and the statues coalesce where the supernatural meets the material. Right? So if you cut off his nose, he cannot breathe.

That is a symbolic. So they understand that being made in the image has some semblance where the supernatural will coalesce with the natural.

We are made to by God in order to relate. Ever found a bunch of dogs, sitting together, howling and worshipping God at a prayer meeting. Never see that. But everywhere you go you will see people gathering and finding some sort of supernatural power. I remember just speaking to a lady outside the church, the first service who for years had no inkling of who God is, but when trouble came, she started to look further than herself. And maybe there's a God, maybe I did something bad, maybe I do something good. And things were starting to come together or coming apart because of what she had done. So, we all are created with the ability to relate. And here Paul uses this when he talks to the people in Athens where it found a whole group of people had alters and alters were made to the unknown god. And he used this as you preach to them, he said to them

Acts 17:24 The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, 25 nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. 26 And he 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, 27 that 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, 28 for 'In him we live and move and have our being';

We are made to relate to God. Here we have a triune God. God is. Father, Son and Holy spirit, for which there is love. Love is a primary attribute of God. It's not a quiet attribute. He's loved from the beginning and from this love within the triune God comes out creation, right? A third one is basically made in the image as a reflective function. We reflect God. Some people used to think that the image God is rational capacity, we can think just like God can think, well that's the thoughts of Greek philosophers like Plato or Aristotle and it influenced early church fathers like Augustine, Aquinas and other philosophers, they all concluded that it means we are able to think, but you actually look at scripture you can find.

Genesis 1:26-27 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Genesis 5:3 When Adam had lived 130 years, he fathered a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth.

1 Corinthians 11:7 (ESV) For a man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God, but woman is the glory of man.

Romans 1:21-23 (ESV) For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. 22 Claiming to be wise, they became fools, 23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

So rationality cannot be it. Because there are some chimpanzees more rational than human beings as shown in experiments. Human animals can be rational, angels are rational. Satan is very rational. He knows how to pick the right spots. All right? As well as people who don't believe in God. We have rationality as well. So the image of God is its reflective function we are made the first to our design and our destiny to basically reflect God. We talk about glory of God, God Kavod is weightiness, outward luminosity, fame, the need to matter to be significant. So in that sense, we are all glory deficient because we don't have glory intrinsic to us. We are made to reflect the glory of God. You either reflect the glory of God, but if you don't want to reflect the glory of God, who do you reflect? Man. There is no other ways. It is either God or man, unless you want to reflect animal. Oh, that's some people do.

So therefore, we've got this dilemma. Alex Smith said these words, I never felt so alive. You know, this guy, he's got muscular dystrophy and for the first time in his life, you know what he did. He can actually get up to the slope with the help of his friends, and actually ski down the slopes. For him being like other human beings and skiing is the best thing in his life because he's comparing his glory based on other people, and we do that, don't we? All of us. Whether it's Simon Cowell, whether we can sing or don't sing, it's up to whether he says we can or whether we are aiming for the spelling prize of a medal. Some of us seek for glory in the funniest ways. People take selfies everywhere we take your selfie. Why? Because we want to be seen as brave. Even the bull is chasing us, we are taking a selfie, everywhere we're going. And if we can't do that, you can't be Brad Pitt, at least you can buy his watch. You can't be Maria Sharapova, you can buy her shoe. Isn't that true? We're so glory deficient that we need all these things. So, we're filling our glory with activity, emotion, purpose, goals, values, motivations. It is right at our center, we need that.

Let me illustrate that to you, Susanna do me a favor. Come up here. Susanna is a good friend, brilliant young lawyer. All right? She's going to come up here and I want you to turn and look at them. Just look at them and you look at her. That's right. Why is it awkward? You go back. You are lucky she doesn't start to break into song or dance or do something. When you stand up here and you're staring at you, you're staring her, you want to do some things in it to justify your existence. Right. Because people are judging you and looking at you and we're so affected by what people see or think or do. And I make her stay here for 5 minutes and you look at her for 5 minutes then people start to look away. And when you look away, she'll feel so disappointed. They all hate me. That's right. And then some people fall asleep. Now you know what preachers feel like.

Your value is diminished because your value is determined by what people think or say or do. And so we are hopelessly trapped by this feeling that we are glory deficient because we are created to reflect God's glory, and we take other people's glory. It's not going to cut it. You're going to die a death of a thousand cuts. Look at Meryl Streep, fantastic actress and she says,

I say to myself, 'I don't know how to act—and why does anybody want to look at me on-screen anymore?' . . . Lots of actors feel that way. What gives you strength is also your weakness—your raging insecurity."

One of the best actresses in the world will tell you, she has got raging insecurity. Why? Because however, well people think of you, how many Oscars they give you, you still feel inadequate. Megan Fox says,

I'm very confident in how I project my personality. But in terms of how I look, I'm completely, hysterically insecure. I'm self-loathing, introverted and neurotic."

Most of us don't even look half like her. If she is neurotic, we are finished. What about singers? One of the best singers in the world, Taylor Smith says,

There is so much pressure going in to getting new music out. If I don't beat everything I have done prior , it will be deemed as like a colossal failure

She has reached to the top, nobody to compete with, now she is competing with herself. Deadly trap and a converse is that they're so glory deficient and glory hungry even at the top of their game. And the converse of this is that, you know, the strongest human emotion is not shame or anger or hatred, it's humiliation. They recently did a study where they put EEG rods onto a person to measure the brain's response to different situations, and they showed that the humiliation is a potent emotional experience, which is more negative demands more cortical activation than other negative emotions of similar valence, in this case, anger and shame.

It is the most powerful emotion, which is why when they go to school and they actually bully you with cyber bullying or bullying it all. You can see the ones who are actually suicidal in their thinking are the ones bullied all the time because humiliation is part of the fact that it's like Susanna standing up here and being humiliated by this horrible fellow right. That is a very powerful emotion. She's going to be scarred forever.

Quaden Bayles is a young boy, 9 years old. A video came out a couple of days ago and he was crying to his mother. Why every day he goes to school, they ridicule him. They shout at him, they call him short and ugly, which he is. Short and ugly because he's a born a dwarf, where the cartilage in the hands and the legs don't grow, and because he's different from other people, he's considered ugly and horror. Everybody gives him a hard time. In fact, this went viral and people responded, and in fact, just two days ago, I think today, the National Rugby League had a big batch, Australia versus New Zealand, and you know what they did. These huge fellows took him on a stage and he got to kick the ball off. Isn't that wonderful? That is perfect picture of God and us and we are Quaden Bayles. We are that. Because you read it in Psalm 19,

Psalms 8 (ESV) O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens. 2 Out of the mouth of babies and infants, you have established strength because of your foes, to still the enemy and the avenger. 3 When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,

So basically he is talking about how God takes weakness, mouth of babies and infants, and then you look down

4 what is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care for him? 5 Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor. 6 You have given him dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under his feet, 7 all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field, 8 the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas. 9 O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

This picture is exactly like this picture. If you see this picture and it pictures passes your heart where big tall men lend their glory to small horrible ugly chap. That's how God deals with us, that he deems how ugly we are, how insignificant we are, and how majestic he is. He loves us. He created us in his expression of his glory.

GOD'S GLORY IS IN THE SABBATH.

Genesis 2:1-3 (ESV)

Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. 2 And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. 3 So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.

Now this idea of God resting, means God has finished working, doing the whole thing has been very tiring, he needs a break and he takes a rest. It's metaphorical. It describes a time where he has set up apart time as a memorial where he could celebrate with his creation. Because he's always working. If you look at John, Jesus answered,

John 5:17...“My Father is working until now, and I am working”

Job 33:4 (ESV) The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life.

Colossians 1:17 (ESV) And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

So basically God is always working. So what does it mean that God is at rest. It's a temple scene. Okay, what is happening is that what does God do in his resting place?

15 I will abundantly bless her provisions; I will satisfy her poor with bread. 16 Her priests I will clothe with salvation, and her saints will shout for joy. 17 There I will make a horn to sprout for David; I have prepared a lamp for my anointed. 18 His enemies I will clothe with shame, but on him his crown will shine.”

What it means, the rest is basically, it is where God rules. He creates the entire universe. He creates the world and he enters this world and he rules with all his creatures there, it is a climax of creation where we become part of God's universe as it were, and this is what we're working towards.

The challenge for us today in Genesis chapter one is the choices of the kind of world we want to be driven by. OS Guinness, a Christian philosopher said these words

Faith is not a thing which one "loses," we merely cease to shape our lives by it.

There's something subtle in our lives. We can profess to be Christian. We come here on Sunday. But it's actually what shapes our lives that actually determine what our faith is. Bottom line, who are we if we think like atheists,

We are just an advanced breed of monkeys on a minor planet of a very average star. But we can understand the Universe. That makes us something very special."

Isn't that sad? Or three rules to live by.

"One, remember to look up at the stars and not down at your feet. Two, never give up work. Work gives you meaning and purpose and life is empty without it. Three, if you are lucky enough to find love, remember it is there and don't throw it away."

Is that how you live? Well, if that is the case the greatest football player in the world, Pele three world cups right. Arguably the best ever footballer and recently he has become depressed, reclusive and he doesn't want to get out of the house. Why? Because he had hip surgery. The complication, the hip surgery made him unable to walk. He needs a wheelchair or walker and he doesn't want the world to see what has happened to the greatest player the planet has ever seen. Because that's his glory. And if you live all your life, and that's what you live for, and that's the end result, isn't that going to be a shame?

You know, when Israelites were in the desert, they left Egypt and Moses had gone up to the mountain to receive the 10 commandments, and while he was away, they started to worship idolatry again. According to Aaron, we all took our rings and our jewelry, we throw it in the fire, and the golden calf came out. These are the exact words, you think you buy it, I don't buy it. And they started to worship and God punished them. People died, there were plagues and all that, and in the end God got a bit of fed up with them, you know what God said, You want the land, you want the glory, you want the prosperity, you want the food. Okay, I give you and this is what he said,

Exodus 33: 2 I will send an angel before you, and I will drive out the Canaanites, the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. 3 Go up to a land flowing with milk and honey; but I will not go up among you, lest I consume you on the way, for you are a stiff-necked people." 4 When the people heard this disastrous word, they mourned, and no one put on his ornaments.

It is like your parent say, you want, okay you go, I will lend you my car, take the BMW, take the \$20,000, go but I will not come with you. Most of us will say, hey better go. I will take the BMW or take the money and enjoy. But the Israelites are smarter than this. They said we could go up there and beat all those guys up. We could take the land of milk and honey. We could live rich in ease in the lap of luxury.

Yeah, but if you don't go with us, it's going to be not worth it. Right. Even they, the idolaters realized there is something deeper in their souls that they actually need. Isn't it shocking?

Which car brings more joy in driving? You will definitely want a high spec car. Because each thing in the universe provides a level of joy and satisfaction is bound up in his essential nature. Essential nature of this is beauty and speed, is wonderful until you crash. This is nice and slow and very safe. Each thing has essential nature and Israelites recognize that, yeah, you can go to the land of milk and honey and all that, you know, but, but the essential nature of God is so deep and so great. That's what I want. And then Moses, he stood up there, you know what he said to God. **Show me your glory.** He understood it is not the engagement ring, it is the love behind the engagement ring. He wanted the glory, and God said to him

Exodus 33:19 And he said, "I will make all my goodness pass before you and will proclaim before you my name 'The Lord.' And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy

Moses understood and you know what we need the glory of God and in the New Testament the glory of God is,

*John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and **we have seen his glory**, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. 15 John bore witness about him, and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.") 16 For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. 17 For the law was given through Moses; **grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.** 18 No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.*

The very thing which Moses thirsted to see, God's glory came in the shape of a man. The son of God. And if you look at the same in Genesis chapter 1, every time God creates He said, in fact, and God said. In fact God said is a creative word. God doesn't say, you know, switch on the lights Susanna, run and switch on the lights. No, that's a derivative action. When he says, let there be light, the light magically appears. It's a creative powerful way. He says this nine times and every time he said, it was good because it always comes to pass, and God's word now comes in the New Testament and John specifically tells us, in the beginning was the word, the word was with God, and the word was God. All things were made through him. The glory of God is in the power of his son, the word, and, and you look at Moses writing Genesis, chapter one, where were they? They were in the desert. What did they have to go all the way to Canaan? You know, when you drive to North Klang Valley expressway, you've got some rest stops. Test stops got 7-11, got police station and all sorts of thing. The Israelites got nothing, not a blade of grass. Walking with two million people towards hundreds of miles away, not a blade of grass, no water, the sun shining, or you're relentless. You know what they have? The only thing they have with them is, and God said, and God said. And so it tells us that when life is tough, when you see nothing in front of you, there doesn't seem to be any avenues in life. The only thing you hang onto is what? And God said.

You know, his son, Jesus Christ, after he was baptized, where did he go? In the wilderness. In the wilderness, there was no one blade of grass, and when Satan tempted him, what did he say, and God said. You know, brothers and sisters, the glory of God is affected by what God says. That's all that matters, it is not what you see or feel or touch. It's what God says and what God says come in a person of his son.

Moses came down, his face was shining as they received the word of God. And Paul picks this up and it says,

2 Corinthians 3:18 (ESV) And we all, with unveiled face,

Moses face was so bright, he had to put on a veil so that people won't get their eyes blind blinded. But we don't need a veil because our glory of God is not exactly luminosity, not light. It's something else. It is character, it says,

beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

What is the glory of the Lord? The glory of God is grace, forgiveness and truth and mercy. The glory of God is in his attributes, is not necessarily in his luminosity, although that can be, but here it is. Let me give you a nicer translation by Eugene Peterson. He translated the same verse,

(MSG) All of us! Nothing between us and God, our faces shining with the brightness of his face. And so we are transfigured much like the Messiah, our lives gradually becoming brighter and more beautiful as God enters our lives and we become like him.

Isn't that great. The glory that we so hunger and desire and covet that we are desperately in need of, comes into our lives through our Messiah, our lives becoming brighter and more beautiful as God enters our lives.

Let me ask you, young people, who is the greatest tennis player who ever lived? Any names? Roger Federer. I knew you'd say that. But it is Margaret Court. She is famous because she's got 24 grand slams. She has one more than Serena Williams. And on top of that, they don't realize that she's got grand slams in mixed doubles and ladies doubles. You know, how many grand slams she has got. 64. Roger Federer cannot touch her. This is what she says. For two years after she got married, she didn't even touch a tennis racket. In between, she popped out four children, a pastor of a church in Perth, for which one of our members Rita attends in Perth, and a woman who speaks her mind. An article came out,

Margaret Court: astounding champion who found God and lost the respect of a nation.

The nation named a stadium after her, Margaret Court and recently in the last Australian open, that stupid American fellow called McEnroe and Serena Williams rubbished her and they say, you should change the name of the stadium. Why? Because she spoke out against gay marriage. She actually look for the glory of God rather than the respect of a nation. Because that is what her life is about. If a life is all about the medals, then they take the stadium name away. I think she'd be devastated and hide the house or depression for five years, just like Pele but she didn't. She stood tall and you know these are the words that she once wrote,

. "I believe implicitly in what the Bible tells me," "I do not cherry pick to be popular. God has made his feelings clear, and they are my feelings, too."

Brothers and sisters we need to so hunger for the right kind of glory that we will be unshakeable, that we could lose the respect of a nation and yet stand tall. As we are designed to be, to reflect the glory of our glorious God. You know, there is a prophecy given by Habakkuk. This is going to come true. He writes,

Hab 2:14 (ESV) 14 For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

You know, you look at the tsunami in Japan, the waters just came and covered the land. One day the waters are going to cover the entire earth. That's a metaphor. The glory of God is going to rule over every nation. There'll be not a single nation left standing without the glory of God. So that everybody can see. In fact, in Philippians Paul says, one day every knee shall bow, every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ love. That is God's mission. That is what is happening, and we can be like Margaret Court with 64 grand slams, or we could be the blind man who lived his whole life, in John chapter 9, he is only called to fame when he was healed by God and he went and tell his friends about Jesus. That's all. Maybe he died after that.

Or we could be like another Australian Nick Vujicic, born without legs and hands. I don't know who you are and where you are, what, how you've spent your life, but I know that every single one of us has a part to play because the glory, God is going to come anyway with or without you. And the challenge for missions is right at the heart of missions, is that we are so totally immersed in God's glory and so convicted of it that we can't help but tell our friends. Look at the Samaritan woman, John chapter 4, after one interaction by the water and well, he, she wanted living waters. She received it and straight away she went to a friend's house, she went to the whole town.

God never forced her to evangelize but she went by herself and told everybody the biggest gospel gossip in the world. And that's what we're supposed to be. We are so enthralled with the glory of God that we can't help ourselves. We are going to get out from this church and we are going to tell the world, that's what mission is about. If that is not what you've experienced, don't do missions because you go out and you say, I want to tell you about God, Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

I hope to God that you never see a reluctant missionary, God does not want it. God wants people who are filled, enthused with the power of God, their lives have been transformed, shining brighter and brighter. What do you see the bright. It is not the light, it is grace, it is mercy, it is love and it is being transformed and these are the people whom God wants to join him. His word always achieves is. Whenever God said, let there be, and it was so. The knowledge of the knowledge of God will fill the earth, will we join him or will we not.