



Called To Lead

WEEK 5



We Serve **PUBLISHING**
A Tennessee Baptist Mission Board Ministry

Sermon Manuscripts

Sermon 5: Called to Lead – Matthew 28:26-30

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Introduction

I started in my current role for the Tennessee Baptist Mission Board on August 20, 2021. On August 21st, seventeen inches of rain fell across middle Tennessee in a six-hour period. All that rain in such a short amount of time created catastrophic flooding. One town was devastated by the flooding.

Waverly is a little town that sits about twenty minutes from the church I pastored. Flash floods swept through the middle of this little town and killed nineteen people. The entire town was devastated. Homes were gone. Schools were lost. Lives were upended.

So, on my first full day on the job for the Tennessee Baptist Mission Board, we had a major natural disaster in the region I serve. Because I still had a church, that evening, as soon as the flood waters subsided enough for us to could get in, we packed up all of our compassion ministry supplies, formed a little convoy, and went to Waverly to help. I'm not sure what I was expecting to see, but what I saw caught me off guard.

We went to First Baptist Church in Waverly. I walked into the fellowship hall, and I saw hundreds of people who had lost everything. They were spread out all over the place. They were huddled and lying in corners. There were children everywhere. And I'll never forget this. There was one mother sitting on the floor, holding her little girl in her arms. The little girl couldn't have been more than 2 or 3 years old, and the mother had this blank look on her face as she sat there staring off into space.

I went over to take her a bottle of water and to talk to her and see if she needed anything. She looked up at me, and she started sobbing. With tears running down her face, she said, "I've lost everything."

When the sun came up the next morning, and we could survey the damage, it was unimaginable. I've never seen anything like that. Entire sections of the town were completely washed away. It looked like a bomb went off. In an instant, people lost, not just their houses, but their homes. They lost the places they watched their kids take their first steps. They lost places where they sat around their dinner tables, laughing and talking. They lost the places that they had spent decades in making memories.

I also saw something else. There were hundreds of yellow shirts running around all over the place, helping people. It was a collection of believers from all over the state who volunteered to serve people in their most devastating moments through Tennessee Baptist Disaster Relief. You'll never know their names, but they were willing to help people at the point of their greatest need.

They were only there because, in 1902, two Tennessee Baptist Church members saw the needs around them and decided to do something. W.C. and Mildred Golden started what would become the Golden Offering for Tennessee Missions. Summertown Baptist Church is the number one giving church to the Golden Offering in the state. The offering meets needs through compassion ministries, disaster relief, prison ministry, Baptist Collegiate ministries, and so much more.

But I tell you the story to say that W.C. & Mildred Golden left a legacy. They saw a need, and they took the initiative to build something that has far outlived them. That's Christian leadership.

Series Review

We looked at Barnabas last week, and we saw the influence and impact that one person can have. He was not front and center. He held no authoritative position. He was not the most supremely gifted. But Barnabas loved people. He showed grace. And he went about the business of elevating the people around him. That's Christian leadership.

At its core, Christian leadership is influencing people for the glory of God. In practice, Christian leadership is simply the ministry of coming alongside someone and elevating them. The result is a legacy that outlives us.

We are all hardwired to want that. Something inside of us deeply desires to leave a mark on the world around us. We want our children to have happy memories of home and the loving and nurturing relationship they had with their parents. We want our values to be passed down to the next generation. We want to make a positive impact on the world around us.

In 2 Peter 1:15, Peter writes, "I will make every effort to see that after my departure *you will always be able to remember these things.*" Christian leadership, influencing people for the

glory of God, coming alongside someone, and elevating them, is the means by which we leave our mark on the world.

This entire series has been crafted to inspire you to do that. We saw that God designed you for this. Both men and women were created by God to lead. However, not only have we seen that we were created for it, but we've also seen that we can do it. Leadership is not about all of these accessory things the world thinks are necessary to be a great leader. Christian leadership is about character. It's about who you are at the core of your being. And who you are determines how you feel and what you do. Christian leadership is about becoming the person God designed you to be and doing the things God has called you to do. When we do that, we create a legacy that outlives us.

The Great Commission

So, this morning, we're going to look at one final passage, and my aim is to drive this idea home: We are not only designed to lead, not only can we lead, but we are called to lead.

Grab your Bibles and turn with me to Matthew 28. We're looking at the Great Commission this morning. Matthew 28:16-20:

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. ¹⁷ And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. ¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in^[b] 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. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

The Mandate

Now, the first thing I want you to see here is the mandate. We don't often think of the Great Commission as a leadership mandate, but it is. If Christian leadership is influencing people for the glory of God, then the great commission sits at the heart of leadership.

And it is a mandate, not a command. A command implies that we are simply told to do something. A mandate carries with it the idea that, we are not only sent, we also have all of the authority necessary to bring it about. That's the Great Commission.

I don't think it's hyperbole to say that, in its broadest sense, the Great Commission is the focal point of all of Scripture.¹ Jesus came on a mission to seek and save the lost. Then, he gives us a mandate to join him on his mission. The Great Commission, then, is legacy building at its

1. John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: Matthew 24-28* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 1989), 329.

peak. The Great Commission is a mandate to lead in leaving the single most important thing in the world behind us.

However, the tragic reality is that the vast majority of believers in the church are NPC's when it comes to the mission of the church. Do you know what an NPC is? Video games have playable characters and non-playable characters. The playable character is on a mission. An NPC is a non-playable character. They stand around in the background. They contribute to the environment. You can talk to some of them, but they are not directly involved in the mission. The idea of the NPC describes a huge chunk of the church, and it creates a massive problem.

First, if you're not engaged in the mission of the Church, then you are a disobedient Christian. We just read the text. This is very clearly a command from our Lord and Savior. So, there's really no other way to frame that. If we are not involved in the mission, then we are disobedient, which introduces another problem.

The second problem is that, in John 14:23, Jesus says, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments." So, if we're not engaged in the mission of the church, not only are we guilty of disobedience, but we're also guilty of a lack of love for Jesus, and we're giving evidence that we're not genuine followers of Christ.

I've often said that an unengaged Christian is an oxymoron. They are contradictory terms. Have you heard the phrase "only choice?" Someone might say, "Well, that was my only choice." That's an oxymoron. If you only have one choice, then you don't really have a choice. Someone gave me a document one day and said, "That's the original copy." Is it? A document can be the original and a copy. That can't be a thing that exists. Unengaged Christians, Christians who are engaged in the mission that Christ gives us, cannot exist. "If you love me, you'll keep my commandments." This is the chief business that we are to be about.

How many of you like Vienna sausages? I love them with a little hot sauce and crackers. The brand we always eat is Armour. I heard Adrian Rogers tell a story years ago about the company founder. He was a soul-winning Christian. One day, he met someone who didn't know him, and they asked him what he did for a living. He replied, "My chief business is to bring men to Jesus Christ. I pack meat on the side to make a living."

It does not matter whether you are a doctor, lawyer, banker, nurse, contractor, pastor, or factory worker. Our chief business is the business of bringing people to Jesus. Everything else is secondary.

We see this in the Great Commission. But I want you to understand that the great commission is more than a mandate to go. It is a mandate to lead. The Great Commission is a mandate to be a leader in Christ's work. But to accomplish that, you have to have three things.

We make things way more complicated than they have to be. We've already seen in this series that leadership isn't about all of the skills and positions. To carry out Christ's mandate, you only need 3 things.

Positional Availability

First, we have to have positional availability. Look at verse 16. "Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them." The disciples went where Jesus told them to go.

There is an old preacher line that says, "The greatest ability is availability." The smartest, the most charismatic, the most powerful, and the most gifted people in the world are absolutely useless to the Lord if they are not available. Availability is a superpower.

A few years ago, when we moved back to Waynesboro, we bought a project house. It was an older house that needed some work. I've done a lot. There's a lot that still needs to be done. Do you know what the most frustrating part of fixing up an old house has been? It's almost impossible to get a contractor to show up. It's mind-numbing to try and get a guy just to show up so I can give him money. I'm begging guys, "Please show up so I can give you money." They won't come. It's crazy.

In fact, it was so bad that Alisha and I started doing something. We've built a relationship with the few guys that show up, and we pay them extra. We've got a plumber, and we always pay him double. He'll give us a bill, and we'll write him a check for double what the bill was. Do you know why? It's because availability matters. It's worth something. So, if you want to be a leader, you have to be positionally available. You have to be where Jesus wants you to be.

Personal Attitude

Second, you have to have a personal attitude. Look at verse 17, "And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted." Not only does your availability matter, but your attitude matters. The disciples have an attitude of worship. This is the posture of their heart towards Jesus. When they saw him, they prostrated themselves in humble adoration before the Lord. This is a matter of surrender.

In verse 18, Jesus says, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me." Jesus has absolute and universal authority over all things. During his ministry, Jesus has demonstrated this authority. He has authority over disease. He's healed people. He has authority over demons. He's commanded and cast them out. He has authority over creation. He's walked on water and calmed the wind and waves. He has even demonstrated authority over sin and death. All authority has been given to Jesus. If we're going to serve him, then we must have a personal attitude of humility, adoration, and surrender to his authority. So, we must have a personal attitude.

Provisional Authority

Then, number three, we have to have provisional authority. In verse 18, Jesus says, “All authority has been given to me.” Then in verse 19, Jesus says, “Therefore go.” Now, you can view this in two different ways. You can view this through the lens of Jesus saying, “I have all the authority. Therefore, I have the right to command you, so I am commanding you to go.” You can see it that way, but I think there’s more to it than that.

Jesus isn’t saying, “I have authority, so I get to tell you what to do. I get to boss you around.” Jesus is saying, “I have authority. You’ve seen it. And I am delegating my authority to you.” And this would not have been the first time the disciples heard this.

Luke 9:1-2a says, “He called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases,² and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God.” He delegated his power and authority to the twelve. In Luke 10, the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them out. And he gave them the same authority and power that he gave the twelve. Provisional authority is wrapped up in the mandate of the Great Commission. We’ll see this in a second, but we have the same promise of power.

But the point is simple. Jesus has all authority, and he delegates that authority to us and sends us out on the same mission that he came to accomplish. He is inviting us to be leaders in his mission to seek and save the lost.

And this mandate to lead in his mission is universal in scope and individual in application.² It is universal in scope. Jesus is not referring to a special class of believers. He’s not referring to clergy. He’s not referring to missionaries. This mandate was probably given to the 500 brethren that are mentioned in 1 Cor. 15.³ This is given to both men and women. This is given to young and old. This mandate is given to every blood-bought born-again believer. It is universal in scope.

But it is individual in application. We’re not all commanded to go to the same place and do the same things. God has given you a job to do that is unique to you. I can’t do it for you. Your husband can’t do it. Your wife can’t do it. Your kids can’t do it. God gave you a special job to do, and that job is unique to you. If you don’t do it, it won’t get done.

We had a neighbor one time. He was a great guy, but he was a little rough-looking. In fact, the first day we moved in, he rolled up in our driveway on his Harley to introduce himself.

2. Adrian Rogers, “Adrian Rogers Legacy Collection: Matthew,” accessed August 12, 2024, https://www.lwf.org/pdfs/01_Matthew.pdf, 1962.

3. MacArthur, *Matthew 24-28*, 336.

He wore a leather vest with no sleeves. He was bald-headed and really muscled up. When Josiah was little, he used to call him Momma's motorcycle friend. He looked like a biker.

But he was far from Jesus. And everyone in town knew him. Most everyone in the church had been praying for him for years. Nobody could reach him. He wouldn't come...until he met Alisha.

We really invested in a friendship with him, loved him, and ministered to him. It took a couple of years, but eventually, Jesus broke through.

I truly believe this with my whole heart. Alisha was the only person in the world that God could have used to reach him. And if she didn't do her job, it would have gone undone.

Listen, you have a mandate from the sovereign Lord of the universe to lead in seeking and saving the lost. And God aims to use you right where you are. There are no special rewards for special jobs. The reward for the factory worker who leads someone to Jesus on the floor of their workplace is just as great as the reward for the evangelist who preaches to thousands. The point is that the Great Commission is individual in application. God has a job for you that's unique to you.

I know this with every fiber of my being. God has a call on some of you to go further than across the street or around the corner. God is calling out High School kids to pursue ministry as a vocation.

Parents, you better stay out of their way. I have seen this over and over and over again. God will have a calling on a young man or a young woman's life, and they'll bring seminary up to their parents, and their parents shut it down.

I've been working with one young guy for a couple of years. He's called into ministry. You can see it. When he was seventeen years old and about to graduate High School, he told his parents he wanted to pursue a career in ministry. His dad is a deacon in the church. But he told his parents, "I think God is calling me to go to seminary." And his parents said, "Get a real degree first. That way, you'll have something to fall back on. Then, go to seminary." So, he went on to be an education major.

I talked with him just the other day. He is about to graduate from college, and I asked him if he was going to go on to seminary now. Do you know what he said? He told me, "I want to, but I can't right now. It will be at least five years. The student loans my mom and dad got me will be forgiven in five years if I work for the public school system." Here's a guy who wanted to go into ministry, and his parents have absolutely wrecked it.

Listen to me, parents, if God's got a call on your child's life, stay out of the way. I'm finishing up my doctorate, and during my last seminar, I was sitting next to a guy from

Mississippi. He had been a very successful pastor for years. He's finishing his doctorate, too. But he told me that his dad, about 2 weeks before he came down to New Orleans for his final seminar, finally admitted that it was a good decision to go into ministry. He said his dad wanted him to "Get a real degree, just in case."

We need to understand that there is no difference between God calling nurses, contractors, and pastors. It's all the same. We talk about a ministry calling like it's some sort of ethereal thing. We think angels from heaven descend and bring a special word from the Lord to those he's calling into ministry.

That's not true. There is no distinction between the secular and the sacred. Everything is wrapped up in this single mandate. It is universal in scope. And it is individual in application. A career in ministry is just as viable as a career in medicine. They're both part of God's grand design. And I believe God's calling young people into ministry, just like I believe God's calling adults into ministry.

God is calling some of you adults to go further and do more. And that may mean a career in ministry like me. God called us out of one career and into another. I was older when I surrendered to a call to ministry. My pastor was older than me. He was a hotel manager for years, but when he was 37, God called him to be a pastor. God calls you to career changes.

He also calls you to do more where you are. When I first started preaching, I was a deacon. We had two other deacons called to preach at the same time as me. One works for Rogers Group paving roads. One is an autobody repair guy. There were 2 other young guys called at the same time. One is a bi-vocational pastor now who sells insurance on the side. The other one is a bi-vocation youth pastor who works for TVEC. The point is there were 5 of us from different backgrounds who would have different futures called to preach, and for years, we filled the pulpits of all of these small churches around Wayne County that didn't have pastors. God has a calling like that for some of you.

But, more than anything, I want you to understand the mandate is to go, not to stay. Jesus has spoken clearly and plainly, and he has told you to go. Therefore, unless he has plainly and clearly called you to be where you are, the expectation is for you to go somewhere else.

We think about a ministry and missions calling as a special calling. We tend to think of our default position as staying put, and if God wants us to go somewhere else, he has to speak to us miraculously and command us to go.

However, the truth is that going is the expectation, not the exception. We've got it backward. We want to stay and then get a special call to go. We've already been told to go. So you don't need a call to go. You need a special call to stay.

That's why I love what J.D. Greer does with the High School and college kids in his church. He challenges every single one of them to give the Lord two years on the mission field. When they graduate from High School or college, he challenges them to go through the IMB and give the Lord two years as missionaries. That's the expectation, not the exception.

We have a mandate. To be obedient, you have to be positionally available. Are you where God wants you to be? You have to have a personal attitude. Have you surrendered to him? And you have to have provisional authority, which he's already given. That's the mandate of the leader.

The Mission

Number 2, I want you to see the Mission. What are we called to do? We know we're called to go. What are we called to do when we get there? Look at verses 19 and 20. "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."

Here's our mission: We are to make disciples. That's the mission. Don't get confused. Don't make this more complex than it actually is. Go and make disciples. While it's simple, I'm afraid we've lost the concept of discipleship over the years.

How many of you have heard the term mission drift? Every organization, whether secular or sacred, has a mission. Their mission is why the organization exists. If the organization doesn't exist to achieve something, then the organization is pointless. So, organizations have to have a mission.

Mission drift is when an organization loses focus on its foundational principles.⁴ Think about it like this. In 1969, AMF bought Harley-Davidson. Prior to the acquisition of Harley-Davidson, AMF was a manufacturing company of bowling equipment, tennis rackets, and other recreational items. It's no surprise, then, that the motorcycles they made were terrible. They weren't reliable. They would fall apart. That's mission drift. It would be like if Tractor Supply decided to get into the computer manufacturing business. Mission drift happens when a company exists for one reason and then drifts away from that in pursuit of other things. It never ends well.

I fear the church has drifted far away from its mission. And it's not because we haven't had good intentions. Southern Baptist Churches have historically been some of the most evangelistic churches in the world. The problem is that we've been measuring the wrong things.

4. Peter Greer and Chris Horst, *Mission Drift: The Unspoken Crisis Facing Leaders, Charities, and Churches* (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House Publishers, 2014), 15.

I say this all the time. “What gets measured gets done.” There are 3 numbers that are absolutely preeminent in Southern Baptist Churches: Baptisms, Attendance, and Budget. None of those things are the mission. But in our evangelistic zeal, we measure baptisms. As a result, we’ve gotten really good at getting people wet but not at making disciples.

A few years ago, during our VBS, I gave the gospel presentation on a Wednesday night. I had seventy-two kids respond to the gospel that night. I could have baptized all 72 of those kids. It would have been epic. They would have written articles about me. I would have been platformed at conferences and conventions. When you couple those numbers with our baptism numbers for the rest of the year, I could have really done some personal branding.

However, instead of baptizing all of those kids, we sat down and talked with them. Alisha and I divided the list of names up and interviewed every kid who said they wanted to give their life to Jesus. Of those 72, I only felt like 12 were genuine.

We celebrate baptisms, and we place emphasis on baptismal numbers. It’s the same thing with attendance. If you get in a room with pastors, in less than 30 seconds, you’ll know the lie they tell about their attendance numbers. Attendance numbers to pastors are like fish numbers to fishermen. They get embellished a little.

The truth is attendance numbers don’t have anything to do with making disciples. I can have baptisms without conversions, and a church can be full of people but empty of disciples.

I know we mean well with those numbers. The problem is we’ve measured the wrong things. The mission is to make disciples. But I’m afraid it’s been so long since we’ve actually been focused on making disciples that we’ve forgotten how.

Disciple-making is the process in which a mature believer invests themselves into another person or into a small group of people in order to help them grow in their faith.⁵ That’s it. That’s all it is. That’s the mission.

We think that to fulfill the Great Commission, we’ve got to go around the world and stand on some street corner and shout the Gospel at people. That’s not true. We have a mandate to invest our lives in the people around us and elevate them. That seems a lot less scary, doesn’t it?

Get this: Discipleship is the method of evangelism. It’s a common concept to think in terms of sharing the Gospel, receiving Christ, and then becoming a disciple. The problem is that Scripture never speaks of receiving salvation separately from surrender to Jesus’s lordship.

5. David Mathis, “Focus on a Few Good Men,” accessed August 2, 2024, <https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/focus-on-a-few-good-men>.

Evangelism and discipleship are not linear concepts. One does not “get saved” and then become a disciple. As people are being discipled, they are converted. They’re not linear events. Evangelism is a subheading in the chapter on discipleship. Evangelism is a part of the discipleship process.

We intuitively understand this with our children. We begin investing in our children long before they make a public profession of faith, don’t we? The moment my boys were born, we started reading them Bible stories at bedtime every night. We started teaching them how to think and act in godly ways. We brought them to church. We invested in them. We discipled them before they were saved. Then, during the discipleship process, God gave them new life, and they responded with faith and obedience to his effectual call, and they followed with believer’s baptism. After that, the discipleship process continued as we taught them to observe all that Jesus commanded us.

We instinctively do this with our kids, but when we think about it in terms outside of that parental relationship, we think they’ve got to be believers before they can become disciples. So, we try to thump people in the head with our hardback King James Bibles like we’re going to beat the gospel into their brain. That’s not how it works. People have to belong before they believe.

So, the mission is to invest your life in people. The mission is to come alongside someone, invest in them, and elevate them. God did not call us to make decisions. He called us to make disciples. The mission is to do exactly what Barnabas did.

We can all do that. Not everyone can be or will be a public speaker. Not everyone has the boldness to stand on the street corner and preach. The Great Commission has nothing to do with knocking on people’s doors and saying, “If you were to die tonight, do you know where you would spend eternity?” That’s not the mission.

The mission is to be positionally available, to be where God wants you to be, and to be personally surrendered, willing to do what God wants you to do. And what God wants you to do is invest your life into the people that he has put around you. As you’re doing that, as you are teaching them to be followers of Jesus through your words and actions, they’ll come to saving faith. That’s the mission.

The Method

The last thing I want you to see in our text is the method. Look at the last sentence of verse 20. “And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

As crucial as the mandate is and as important as the mission is, both would be utterly unimportant and useless without the right method. The method is simple. We have the promise of both the power and presence of Christ. We are not the ones who accomplish the mission. Jesus accomplishes his mission in us and through us.

Acts 1:8 says, “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” We have the promise of his power. And we have the promise of his presence. Jesus is with us even to the end of the age.

We don’t have to rely on our own personal giftedness, position, or personality, or any other methods of man. Jesus’s method is simple. “I will give you my power. And I will give you my presence.”

That’s both a comfort and a challenge. It’s comforting to know that Jesus is with me wherever I go. I don’t have to worry about failure. I don’t have to worry about messing up. I don’t have to worry about rejection or persecution. Jesus is with me and, as Romans 8 says, “Nothing can separate me from his love.”

Brothers and sisters, we can do this. You can do this. You can become the leader in your home, church, and community that God designed you to be. Jesus is with you. You have the promise of his presence and power. That’s tremendously comforting to me.

It’s also challenging. Jesus is with us, and he has given us a mandate to go. What are we waiting for?

John MacArthur tells a story about a female missionary who went to a primitive, pagan society.⁶ While she was there, she met a woman and began to invest in her and disciple her. Eventually, the woman gave her life to Jesus. Almost as soon as she surrendered to Christ, she said with great sorrow, “I wish you could have been her sooner. My little boy could have been saved.”

The missionary asked why it was too late. The mother replied, “A few weeks before you came, I offered him as a sacrifice to the gods of our tribe.” Brothers and sisters, what are we waiting for?

God designed you for this. We’ve spent five weeks talking about what it looks like to do this. You can do it. It’s time to get on with the business of building a legacy that outlives us.

So, your call to action is a simple one this morning. I’m going to ask you to make a commitment to become the leader that God designed you to be. There is a commitment card in your bulletin. If you’re willing to make a commitment to the Lord today to become what he designed you to be, I want you to sign that card. You can come to the altar and pray. There’s something special about coming to the altar and making a commitment before the Lord. But

6. John MacArthur, *Matthew 24-28*, 347.

check the appropriate boxes, sign that card, and bring it to the front as a commitment to your Lord.

We're going to follow up with you. We're going to offer a series of small group classes to help you become the leader in your home, in your church, and in your community that God designed you to be. Your commitment is the first step to unlocking the infinite possibilities of what God wants to do in you and with you.

Seventeen years ago, Alisha and I were engaged to be married. In preparation for our new life, we built a house. I drew the blueprints for it. I was the general contractor on it. I worked on the framing crew that I brought in. Eventually, after we got it dried in, I did all the plumbing, electrical, sheetrock, and everything else. I invested my time and gifts in building a house.

Then, we got married and Alisha made it a home. She picked out furniture and decorated it. The most important thing she brought to it was love and joy. We didn't think a lot about it then, but we were building something that was bigger than us.

A couple of years later, we assembled the first crib in the back bedroom and decorated a nursery. We brought a brand-new baby home and put him in that nursery. Not long after that, we did the same thing in the other bedroom. As the boys grew, we played with them on their little mat in the living room. We watched them learn to walk on those floors. We sat around the dining room table and talked and laughed.

The hardest thing I've ever had to do was to sell that house when God called us into the ministry. The blueprints for it are framed and hanging in our bedroom. They're a constant reminder to me that we were building something then, and we are building something now that's more than a house. We're building a legacy. We're building something that will outlive us.

God called us to go, so we went. That's the legacy I want to leave behind. After I'm gone, I want boys to be able to say, "My dad loved Jesus so much that he dedicated his entire life to becoming what Jesus wanted him to be."

Can you say that? What are you building? What are you leaving behind? What will your legacy be? Make a commitment to become what God has created you to be and build something that will be worthy of your legacy.