[00:00:00] Time goes quickly. It was just only a couple of days ago, we all arrived with great expectation and perhaps joining with people of like mind. And it's been a wonderful time together, isn't it? When people dwell in unity, their God commands a blessing. And it's great when we are just not one mind in vision, but one mind in Christ.

[00:00:22] He is the cement to the bricks. Amen. He's the one that holds it all together and we bless him and praise him. And I just personally wanna thank you first of all Cameron and Guy for the invite to come here and to minister and, with the team, both, Helen, shell and George. We just really wanna say a big thank you for receiving us, for having us putting up with us, whatever you wanna say, but we've enjoyed our time of fellowship with you and, it's given us a lot to go away and pray for.

[00:00:57] Amen. Praying for you. when you just have a conversation over a meal or you just talk with people, whatever it is, it's amazing how much God just joins your hearts together very quickly and you start going, their vision is my vision. their vision is something of expanding the kingdom.

[00:01:14] Like my vision is expanding and that unity of desire and that unity of just going, Lord, may your will be done. Amen. May your kingdom come, may your will be done. It's just a prayer of our hearts. And, I'm gonna speak just for a few moments this morning. Then we're gonna lead into communion and share communion one with another, and I'll bring some instruction.

[00:01:36] If, wherever the worship guy's gone, I we'll need you up at the end of the sermon. Don't disappear on me please, but just where we can just just give thanks to God and give thanks for what he did on the cross. None of us would be here if it wasn't for the cross and the obedience of Christ. I don't think I was worth it.

[00:01:57] But he saw that I was. And he saw that you were. And when his father called on him to make the greatest sacrifice, he said yes to his father. But he was saying yes to you and me too. And as we share the bread and the wine together just a little bit later, it's really important that we just again say, Lord, you're the center of it all.

[00:02:19] Amen. You are the center of it all. And so we'll be doing that together. And yeah, just saying, Lord, thank you. And as we leave this place tomorrow, we take something with us more than we came with. Well, maybe we should leave some things behind too. Some of the burdens, some of the weight, some of the worry, some of the concern.

[00:02:43] And it's one of the hardest things is to leave the burdens at the cross. Come on, let's get real. in the Western world, we're brought up to be independent. And God created us for interdependence. There's a real bow there and I was brought up in a family that, good people, God loving people, but when I fell over, my dad used to say, get up.

[00:03:07] Now there's a strength in that, but what it can build into me is too much independence. And God created you and I that interdependence with him and one another. And the issue is I can take him, but I'm not sure I could take the one another just hear me because we're all imperfect. Sometimes it's easier to pray than to share with another person.

[00:03:32] We can trust God, but can we trust each other? But God made you and me for him relationship and for one another. And I think these, times together that we've been having over these last few days are really important. Yes, for building us into him, but building us into one another. I'm sure many of you have had some great conversations and you'll go away not just thinking about your own vision, but the one another visions that are going on in many people's hearts.

[00:04:01] And that's my prayer as we move on as well, and, into other things. But just wanna say a big thank you for the hospitality, the welcome you, the way you've received us. And I know for the team, we just really have been blessed by being in your presence. So, and we're excited. I love the diversity of God's vision in the kingdom.

[00:04:23] Wouldn't it be boring if everyone had a vision like me? It would, if just the only vision in the world was just the one you'd got. But the complementation of how God puts the tapestry together of his kingdom, I think is absolutely wonderful and we need to celebrate that. Well, before I get into the word wan, I just wanna pray.

[00:04:42] Can we pray?

[00:04:47] Lord is so good. As we just sang, Lord, you keep running after us. Your love, your grace, your mercy chases us when even we don't feel worth it. Even when, Lord, we have an argument with us, you still chase us when we're not in a good place. You still chase us because your love is everlasting and your mercy mercies are new every morning.

[00:05:12] And Lord, I wanna pray as we come around your word this morning, just pray, Lord, that you will, it won't be my words, but your words, that your Holy Spirit will light fires in people's hearts, will water seeds within them. And Lord, each of us will be moving on toward that which you've called us for if we were kneeling.

[00:05:31] Lord, get us up. If we were standing. Lord, get us walking and if we're walking, Lord, get us running. But let us never forget, it's your call, it's your vision. It's your kingdom. Lord, ours, bless your word this morning. Jesus name. Amen. Well, as you can see on the screened, keep in your passion alive. In other words, finishing.

[00:05:56] Well, the challenge is with so many visionary people, and I'm not, I'm on about all ministers, vision leaders of kingdom operation. There's not many that finish. Well, there's people that fall by the wayside. People who get disappointed, people who get disappointed with God, with others. And so many people, whether they be pastors, leaders of missions, leaders of organizations with the kingdom in their heart don't finish well.

[00:06:23] And as we've talked about, he's a God of preparation on the first day. And as we've talked about, the favor of God yesterday on the journey, we've also gotta have eyes set before us on finishing well, and the problem is problems and challenges come to us and they can distract us and the distraction is okay as long as it doesn't divert us.

[00:06:47] Too many people get diverted by the challenges of life, itself. And as I've shared some of the stories of my life over the last years and even with our son and just different things that have happened, it would've been so easy to rest my life in the wrong valley and stop walking. And if I can encourage you this morning, one of my greatest encourages is, can you keep your, how you keep your passion alive to finish?

[00:07:14] Well, now some of you say, I'm only just getting started. That's fine. But don't get diverted by disappointment, hurt, sin, failure, because those things are not the end of the story. Praise God. They may be a milestone, they may be an experience that you have in your life. But I want to encourage each one of you this morning that it is so important to finish what God has started in each of your lives.

[00:07:43] I. finishing may not be the end of the vision, but it may be a passing on. Three years ago or just over. Yeah, about three years ago now. pastored along with Helen pastor, well, pastored two churches. We took on one church. When I said before I was 26 years old, hadn't got a clue what I'm doing.

[00:08:03] I'm not sure I know now, but I hadn't got a clue what to do. But God called us and called me and we led a church. And I remember one of the first things you know, you'll smile at this, but, my father actually was an elder in the church that I was now leading. That was interesting. He loved me and he loved the church.

[00:08:25] He loved God. And when I inherited this team of elders, I soon realized that they wanted to control me, not release me. You understand me? I was a young man that needed strong people around me, but I knew that God had called me to not just pastor, but to lead. I. And there's a difference. God's called you to lead a vision.

[00:08:47] Not sometimes just to pastor it. Pastor it is fine, but sometimes that's a maintenance view, not to coming forth. After six months, I, I remember going on a prayer retreat and just praying and God said to me quite clearly, he said, well, I said, God, am I doing okay? 'cause I didn't feel I was, am I doing what you called me to do?

[00:09:09] And I can remember not, sometimes you don't hear God back clearly. But I can remember on this moment, God speaking to me clearly. He said, Gary, you're not leading the church anymore. I thought, what you mean? I said, no, Lord, I know you are. No Gary, I put you in the place to lead and you're not leading that team around you is leading.

[00:09:28] And you are just saying, yes sir, no sir. Three bags full, sir, because many of us don't like battle. We don't like confrontation. But sometimes we have to confront that which is restricting us. Some of the team have talked about, raising volunteers, raising the right people, getting in the right seat on the boat or the bus.

[00:09:52] And so that day I remember going back and I called an elders meeting, a very strong businessman sitting there who gave a lot to the church. Other more experienced ministers than myself were sitting in the room and my dad was sitting there too. Now, I love my dad, respect my dad. My dad's now in heaven, but, and I said to the team, I said, I've just been on a project.

[00:10:16] I said, yeah, we know you have Gary. And there was one man in that room, not my father or the businessman, but he was a very strong, experienced minister. And I'll be honest with you, I was a little bit scared of him. I'll be real. I thought, what's he gonna say? Because he'd already caused me a little bit of a problem, shall just be honest.

[00:10:32] There's a 26-year-old. I'm thinking, I know. I dunno what I'm doing. So God, why did you put me here? And God said, I. I put you here 'cause I've chosen you. And in those moments I said to the team, I said, while I was away, God said to me, if I'm to move into the ministry, he called me to lead this church. If I'm to finish well, even though I'm just starting, I need to ask you all to resign.

[00:11:02] Well, like in this room, there was a lot of silence. Now the phone's ring, not anyone, and there was silence and I thought, Lord, I'm finished. I looked at their eyes and tried to read what they were thinking. I thought I'm finished. And I went round each one of them. I said, what do you think to what I'm saying?

[00:11:27] I went to the businessman first. He looked at me and he said, I know God's chosen you, and so I have to submit. I want to submit. I pray to God. I went to my father and he looked at me and there was tears in his eyes. And this is what he said to me. He said, son, I never ever wanted you to do this. 'cause I understand the pain of leadership, but you're being brave today and you've got my resignation.

[00:11:58] I went to a couple of other people, they said the same. Then I came to the man who I thought, he's gonna kill me. We've always got one, aren't we? We think's gonna kill us. And he looked at me and he said, Gary, I don't think you're capable. Thank you. But it's the best thing I've heard you say in the first six months, you've got my resignation.

[00:12:25] Now, God had to prepare that way. See, sometimes when God releases us, the first place we go into is a place of restriction, and then we have to trust God. And I brought these words and the businessman suddenly said, I've got one more thing to ask. sometimes people are too wise. And he said, we leave this room today.

[00:12:52] We are no longer elders. If to die, you go home and you die in a car crash. Beautiful. He said, who's leading the church? Now there's wisdom in that because they were taking what I said very seriously and I had to think very quickly. 'cause I'm thinking, I don't know. And I said, as soon as we walk out of this room, this is, God gave me this.

[00:13:19] It wasn't me. I said, I'll ring two godly men and I will ask them to cover me and cover this transition of this church and leadership for the next six months while we prayerfully consider who should be on the new team. That's what I said. Now, I'm gonna tell you now, as a 26-year-old that never came from me.

[00:13:42] And all of them said, that's a lot of wisdom. And I thought,

[00:13:49] excuse the pun. But we all sail near the wind sometimes, and that is what happened. And I named the two people. And because I didn't name strangers, I named men that was known to the church and respected. I didn't name people that would say yes to me all the time. I named strong godly men who knew what it was in experience to govern righteously a church or a ministry.

[00:14:20] We can't just have our friends who say yes to us. Bible says Faithful are the wounds of a friend. And what that means is good friends tell us the truth. Sometimes the truth hurts. I. But we know when they tell us the truth, they really have got a heart after us. And so we trust their strong statements.

[00:14:44] Even if they disagree with us, I don't mind people disagreeing with me, but I want to know they've got a heart for me. Yeah. And I want to challenge each of you this morning, when you put team together, don't just have people who say yes to you, but also don't have people who say no to you that haven't got your heart.

[00:15:07] You got me. We can make all sorts of mistakes. And I know some of the team have been talking about those words of wisdom over there. They had sessions together. So to keep our passion alive, we've gotta have the right people next to us. And though I inherited a good church, gotta give me a vision for the next season, I needed people that would walk with me and I had to face that, as you can imagine.

[00:15:35] That caused some real tension in my family home too. My father was a good man. He said yes, but he's still my father. And I respected him and still respect him to the moment he went to be with Jesus. And in that process of coming into full-time ministry and leading the church, and it was a whole process before I was in business with my father and grandfather.

[00:15:58] I wanna tell you the story. God was preparing me in the business. If you are today not full-time in ministry, you are full-time in ministry, temp making's, full-time ministry. If you've gotta raise some finance to push yourself along, it's okay. Paul did it. It's good for him, it's good for me. But one day I had to go to my father and say to him, dad, I'm not gonna be in the business anymore.

[00:16:25] Now remember, he is a godly man and my grandfather was a godly man. And he said, what do you mean? I said, I'm going to Lee Church and I'm gonna be in full-time ministry. I. I said, you know that the whole thing that's gone on, but it does mean I leave the business. It was amazing at that moment that I was now challenging his dream for me because his dream for me was my son is gonna run this business, my grandfather's dream.

[00:16:49] I love my grandson. He's gonna run the business. We're gonna carry it on for generations. It's amazing how many other people have a plan for your life. Remember, there's only one plan. You follow his plan. And so I said to him, this is what's gonna happen, dad. And he just said something really tough to me and I want to share that.

[00:17:13] The journey's not easy. He said something really tough to me, which nearly stopped me going on the dream. God had called me to, he said, son, I love you. Thank you, dad. What's coming next? I've only been married I think in a couple of years, and he said, I. I know you've got a partnership in this business 'cause you've worked for X amount of years, it's worth X amount of money.

[00:17:38] And that's what I'd worked out to. And he said, you've probably worked out, you can take that money with you and help you on your mortgage. I had, I knew I wasn't gonna get paid much as we don't in the ministry often. And he said, well I just need to tell you, if you leave, you forfeit your partnership.

[00:18:00] You don't get the money now. I thought that was harsh. To this day I thought it was harsh because I'd got a plan for that money to pay off part of my mortgage working in my mind so that we could live on less money. 'cause we were gonna get less. I'd worked it all out and suddenly curve ball came in. My dad says, you're not gonna get it.

[00:18:25] I looked at my grandfather. My grandfather was a wonderful man. That was my dad. He just looked at me and nearly felt acknowledged, really what my dad was saying. And I had to then go back, talk with Helen, pray and go, God, I don't think I can make it. And God said, my will or yours, quite simple. My will or yours.

[00:18:52] Yeah, but God, you, I need money to live. God said, my will or yours. I went back to him a few days later and I said, I'm leaving the business.

[00:19:05] And I left the business with no money. He didn't go back on what he said. He kept to his word, even though it was wrong. And I'll tell you why it was wrong, because five years later I'm in ministry. We've struggled. We've trusted God. Sometimes like you guys day to day, not just week to week or month to month, sometimes day to day.

[00:19:31] And my grandfather died

[00:19:35] and obviously that was a sad day. He was a good man, died. And in Britain then, not now. You go back sometimes to the family home, you have some food and celebrate the life. But for some reason my dad decided not only was he gonna do that, but he was gonna open the will and read it to the family. He didn't know what was in the will, so he said he was gonna do that.

[00:19:59] So we're standing around. He said, I just want to read the Will of Testament. What my father, his grandfather was left. So they read through and said, this goes to my son. There was two sons, my dad and his brother. This goes to the son. And then he said to my grandchildren, which I was one obviously of Dunno, about six.

[00:20:20] He said, I'll leave my stamp collection. Hallelujah. I'll leave my coin collection. Praise God worth nothing. My grandfather thought it was worth money. I know he did, but it was worth nothing. And he said, then I'll leave this sum of money, which was about 500 pounds each. Thank you for grandfather. And then my dad stopped and goes, oh my gosh.

[00:20:48] And what my grandfather put at the bottom of his will and what is rightfully my eldest grandson, I hear leaving the percentage of partnership that he gave up true. Five years later, he left it. Which actually was a new blessing, not an old one, because many of us in this room, we have to let things die so that they can live.

[00:21:11] We have to let things go so that we can move on. And I'm sure all of you sit in this room. If you've moved outta business, moved out of Korea and moved into ministry, you've had to leave something behind. Security and trust God, we had to do the same. I never knew that when he was coming back to me, but God did see God is no man's debtor and God keeps his word in there.

[00:21:38] And as we my father looked at me, I won't tell you what he said 'cause it might not translate either, but it was something like, you lucky boy.

[00:21:51] Now we don't believe in luck. We believe in the goodness of God and him release him. But I remember him looking at me and going, you lucky boy. And he didn't know it was there, but my grandfather obviously had seen wrong and wanted to put it right beyond his death. That money helped us incredibly at that time just to move forward in vision of our lives.

[00:22:15] It would've helped us when we, I went into full-time ministry, but God knew. That he would provide in another way and we had to trust him and then he gave back. Why do I say all that at the beginning? Because our visions have to be birthed out of the supernatural activity and confirmation of God. This is a difference between a good idea and a God idea.

[00:22:37] We need to have a story where God just turned up. He turns something completely around. Amen. And if you are sitting there, here today and say He hasn't yet done that, he will when, I dunno, but I know he will because God always honors his word and he keeps to his word. If God promises something, he will always keep to his promises.

[00:23:02] And that's why when we have vision and God gives us an idea and God gives us something, we've gotta trust him to keep us going. But it often starts when we start going with something that happens that we don't think's gonna happen. Just to end the story on this one before I move on. It was five years later, so now 10 years I've been in the ministry.

[00:23:27] My dad and my mom, they stayed in the church and I was their son and pastor. My dad was no longer in leadership, but I was his pastor. He was still running the business and we didn't keep an argument. I'd let it go. He now had seen his dad give me the money, so he had to let something go. There was a knock on my door in the church, in the vest, you know the office I had, and I said yes and heard my dad's voice and he said, your dad, who said that when he's not happy with me, he called me son.

[00:24:04] When he liked me, he called me Gary. Anyway, he walked in and he said, Gary, can I talk with you? I said, of course you can sit down and go. So he sat down and he started crying. I said, what's up dad? I'm so sorry son. I'm so sorry, Gary. What? I now get it. I said, what do you mean? What do you get dad? He said, I get the call of God.

[00:24:31] I've come to ask you today. He said, my dad was now 56 years of age. I've come to ask you today if you will bless me out. Me and your mom is a missionary. We're selling the business. I've now had a call like you had those years ago, Gary. I'm so sorry that I put those boundaries in the way, but now God has opened us up and my mom and dad, I had the privilege of praying them out of the church as their son and pastor before the church onto the mission field, and they traveled to Zambia and served God in Zambia for 12 years until my mother was ill.

[00:25:10] Do you know what? Forget money. That's richness. Yeah, we can die on the wrong mountain sometimes. And this is what I wanna say today. One of the things I'm gonna say, I know I'm mixing it around a bit this morning, but I want to share heart and spirit to you fully this morning. That when you think you're losing, you can just be winning.

[00:25:30] When you think all things are being taken from you, God is just preparing you for to give you more. So your reliance is never on yourself or others. It's on him. And that day, as I prayed my mom and dad out, I did as I prayed, I thought, God, you're so gracious. I could have died on that mountain and fell out with my dad big time and never repaired a relationship because it wasn't fair.

[00:25:58] But God is always just, yeah. And I pray we prayed them out and blessed them. They went and served. They saw thousands of people come to know the Lord in Zambia. I. I just thought I would not have received that blessing if I'd had died on the wrong mountain over money. There's injustices that happen in all of our hearts, and you probably carry on today.

[00:26:23] But don't die on the mountain of injustice. Don't die on the mountain of unfairness. Trust God. If you're wronged, God will put it right. You don't have to. The battle is the Lord. And myself, my kids family, we went out to Zambia many times. In fact, my kids, we send them out, two of the children 'cause we had a baby as well.

[00:26:47] But two of the children as like 13, 14 year olds would send out to Zambia for every summer holiday. And they had mission put in their hearts. And to this day, they've got mission in their hearts all starting. That could have been an argument and a mountain that we died on. And I wanna encourage you today, if you are carrying stuff that is.

[00:27:10] Injustice. Let it go and let God can be so close to you that it's family. This was with my dad, of course. We then shared vision together and I was able to pray him out. I could never have thought of that idea, but God had always had it in his mind. Amen. And some things that you sit with today, you can't even imagine the plans that God's got for you.

[00:27:38] But keep the, channel open. Don't clog it up with unforgiveness or injustice. 'cause God sometimes might seem not seem fair, but he's a just God. And he finishes what He starts and he wants to finish in you what he started in you. Amen. But we can be diverted by those sort of things. I wasn't gonna say that.

[00:28:07] But I just feel you know that sometimes we can sit here and think about the blockages rather than actually the opportunities. And that's my story. I stand here today by the grace of God, but I also stand here today

[00:28:25] because of the goodness of my father and the goodness of my grandfather. I'm not here to criticize him 'cause we all make mistakes, but God somehow put it all right. The money is nothing. The releasing of destiny, vision, and dreams that God puts in our hearts is far more important, but we can die on those things, which it can stop our dream coming to pass.

[00:28:48] If you've got struggles today in your dream, I would ask you to just examine what is stopping you moving forward? Is it something inside you? Is it an offense? Get over it, hand it to God and let his blessing pour through you. Wanna read a scripture? Can you put the scripture up now?

[00:29:10] This is in Romans 8 31 to 32. Wanna, I'm just gonna speak around this morning, just a few moments.

[00:29:22] Verse 31, it says this, what then shall we say in response to these things, if God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own son, but gave him up for us all, how would he not? Also along with him graciously give us all things. Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen?

[00:29:49] It is God who justifies, who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died more than that, who was raised to life, is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger or soared as it is written for your sake?

[00:30:21] We face death all day long. We are considered a sheik to be slaughtered. No. In all these things, we are more than conquerors. Amen. Through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, neither life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

[00:30:56] God is bringing a promise to us here. What he started, he'll finish, but sometimes we quit out or get diverted, which slows things down. Just hit me. There's a pace God has for our lives and a pace for our vision, but I believe we can also delay it ourselves, either through lack of obedience, unforgiveness, things that come in our way.

[00:31:25] We give it too much focus. We've talked again over these days that sometimes that can be, people just hear me, the wrong people on the boat, the wrong people in our team. We're giving so much energy that stifles us and wears us out, and we have to deal with things like I had to deal with the team when I took the church on.

[00:31:46] It was so hard. You've gotta remember these were people who put me into the leadership. There weren't people who didn't want me there, but when I got there, they wanted to lead me. I believe totally in accountability. I believe totally in submission, but I also believe if God's put a, that mantle of leadership on us, I am wrong not to lead.

[00:32:12] So I'm just gonna read through very quickly. Well not read, but speak very quickly on how do we keep our passions alive? These are just practical lessons that I've learned on my journey and are still learning. Firstly, I've gotta, I've kept learning that the cloud keeps moving. When God takes me to a place, puts me in a place that's not the final destination, that's the start of the journey.

[00:32:43] Vision is not a destination, it's a journey to a better place. I. In your hearts and what you are involved in is really important to know that you're not just there for now. You're there to start the journey. I have to be honest, I do not like walking. Well, I know I walk, Helen loves walking and some of my family love walking and I say, look, I tell you what, you go for a walk and I'll meet you at the destination.

[00:33:11] I'll take the car. Now I do play sport and I do things, but just, it's just not my thing. But in the sense of vision, if there's one day I start a vision and I stop walking, I'm gonna miss the miracles on the journey. The testimonies that you can share today, they happen on the journey, not at the destination or even sometimes the start, there's a cloud that God has, with the children of Israel.

[00:33:42] he, it was a pillar of cloud in the day and a pillar of fire at night, and they were told to follow it. It kept moving. And I believe when God puts a vision in our hearts, if we are to finish well, we've gotta keep moving. We've gotta keep taking steps of faith and moving forward.

[00:34:05] In fact, when we keep walking, we go from success to failure to success, to failure to success. Now, you might be just so perfect in this room today. All you have is success. But I've gotta be honest with you, my journey's made up of both. Success, failure, success, failure. It's an up and down route.

[00:34:28] Sometimes I thought I heard God and I didn't. I have to go back to where I got it wrong. Now, God never quits out on us, but let's not be stubborn when we get it wrong. Success and failure, it teaches us how to hear God. I can tell you the first time I'm gonna be really vulnerable this morning, but first time I ever prophesied I was a very young man and felt God really put on me to prophesy.

[00:34:56] So I'd preach and as I preached, as God gave me the option, I would then speak other people's lives. And I was just starting out. It was the first time I probably prophesied outside of my own church and these people came forward. And I do believe if you operate in the gifts of the spirit, you know like word of knowledge goes hand in hand with a prophecy.

[00:35:16] Word of knowledge opens the door of something that people may be living or maybe at, and then you bring a word that proclamation over their lives. I always say to people when I do that to this day, did that word bring you clarity or confusion? Because I'm accountable to what I bring and I don't get it right all the time.

[00:35:36] For this one time I was praying I'd got another minister with me. Who actually was my uncle, who's older than me, my dad's brother. And we went out ministering together and I was prophesying and I saw this couple together and I just, I said, God's really got his hand on you as a couple. God's really got this going.

[00:35:53] And I started speaking over their lives and I said, as mother and son, God is gonna bless you. And the woman looked up to me, she said, as sorry as not as mother and son, but she said, as, husband and wife, I said, and then she turned to me and said, mother and son. Oh, got it completely wrong there.

[00:36:12] Now my uncle had to walk away because he was laughing. But my mistake, I was dying and he was laughing. Of course, I brought an apology and she was fine. I think, whoa, that's not good. Husband and wife and no mother and son. Do you know what that moment I, actually, I probably fell. I'm never gonna say anything again over someone's life.

[00:36:39] I'm never gonna prophesy again. Failure, success, failure in our failures. Can we just be a little bit more vulnerable and honest and not hide the failures? 'cause God loves us just as much in our failure as he does in our success. It's all about pride. We just don't want to lose our reputation. What did you?

[00:37:03] We are of no reputation. But yeah, the whole thing here is the cloud moves as the anointing of God moves in your life. You've gotta learn to live with success and failure, but not take it too personally and find every situation a learning opportunity. I've probably learned more through my failures than I have my successes.

[00:37:29] I probably have, it's just some things you do and they don't turn out right. But I really wanna encourage you today, don't be too hard on your soul. Be kind to yourself. I think sometimes leaders are very hard on themselves, if I'm honest. Should have got that right. You're a stupid boy.

[00:37:50] And now do say that to me. I know I shouldn't, but I have an argument with myself. Why did I not do it right? And I have a Heavenly Father that whispers in my ear through the Holy Spirit saying, Gary, it's okay. It's okay. Learn, move on, learn, move on. And I want encourage you today, that's the process you need to take,

[00:38:18] the cloud moves and we need to follow the cloud. It's also important, not only do we follow the cloud, but the second point up there is don't die on the wrong mountain. I've said some of this already. I've learned that I could stay in an argument for the rest of my life over some things. I could blame God, I could blame people.

[00:38:45] I could actually never see a person again, but I could carry an argument in my heart and in my spirit. I wanna encourage you that if you are to finish well, if you are to keep your passion alive, don't let a destruction of an argument drain you. Let it go even in the mystery of not understanding. in the Western world, we wanna understand everything.

[00:39:09] We wanna understand God, we wanna understand his ways. Now, there's nothing wrong in pursuing to understand him, but let me tell you, you'll never arrive. Every one of us that serves God carries mysteries, but let the mystery be legitimate. Don't let an argument be legitimate in what you carry. So important.

[00:39:31] I'll say it again. Okay. So don't let an argument that a disappointment rule your decisions, but also we do have to carry the mystery of God. We don't understand everything and sometimes we have to say, God, I don't understand that. I leave that with you, but don't carry an argument with a person 'cause that can restrict you.

[00:39:55] Is that helpful? Now, I don't even know what I'm saying. No, I'm joking.

[00:40:02] It's important we understand this. This is really important because there's too many visionary missionary people that every day I carried arguments in their spirit disappointment. The church didn't bless me, my pastor doesn't understand. Friends have just dis got rid of me. Really? I thought they'd support me and they don't just hear me all disappointments.

[00:40:29] But don't let them turn into arguments because Jesus says to us today, I'm Jehova Gyra, which means I'm your provider. And so whatever disappoints us, even in the giving side, don't let that be an argument that distracts you say, okay, Lord, we've just done a sponsored, no, I didn't do it, but these, George didn't do it either, let me tell you.

[00:40:58] But Helen and Shell did do it, the women rule. But this was 18 lakes in Great Britain over 48 hours. And they had to go in them and go up to their shoulders for two minutes. And we started at Lochness in Scotland. Okay. And then we moved down into, through Scotland, into England, into Wales, and it was all for raising money for.

[00:41:21] The Alive Kids camps. It was a stupid idea. My participation was I drove the van and watched and timed you. Yeah, you weren't getting less than two minutes. No one's getting out in 90 seconds. But they did it. And we got the last leg 15 minutes before it got dark. But the issue was why would you do such things?

[00:41:46] And as we looked at people sponsoring us, it was really interesting 'cause we did a just giving page. There were surprises. The people we thought would give didn't. Some of the people that did give, we were surprised. Now where are we gonna pitch our attitude? They didn't give even one person, and I'm not gonna name them, but one person who's very close to me when I did the invite unsubscribed.

[00:42:18] that's how I felt. Oh, I wanted to go across and kill 'em. I wanted to ring them and say, what on earth are you doing? I had to get over that disappointment and see where God was using people to give, not giving, I'm being really practical 'cause these are the kind of things that can get into our spirit and divert our affection and focus.

[00:42:47] When I started out in ministry, I had a, I won't name again, but I had a very well known international speaker, pastor, preacher who came to me. I was 26 years of age and said, Gary, you're gonna fail. He actually wrote me three pages of all that. I wasn't. God bless him. My father read it and my best friend read it, and they cried.

[00:43:18] And I remember looking at this, it was self destroying. I already was nervous and vulnerable, didn't think I could do what God said. And this came from a reputable man of God. What was I gonna do? I actually burnt it. I'm gonna tell you that I thought about keeping it in a file and then I thought, I'm not having that curse over my life.

[00:43:42] Just being honest. So I burnt it. I wish now I'd kept it, but that would've been pride. I burnt it because I didn't want something even though it was in my drawer. Me remembering and keep going back to something to say what I wasn't see finishing well is sometimes dealing with things callously. I burnt it.

[00:44:09] Some of you have gotta burn a few things. Some of you here have gotta banish. Some confessions over you. Seriously, you've gotta be vicious with it because it can remain as a dare, I say, a devil confession over your life. It can be self, it can be destroying, get rid of it. So I burnt it. I didn't want die on the wrong mounted.

[00:44:38] Another mistake I made, well, as well tell you my mistakes. I was starting out in ministry. I was youth pastor at this point, and you always get a couple of youth that just get you angry. But I said, Lord, you've given me grace. I'll keep dealing with it. But this one Friday, which was youth night, this particular person walked in and was just arrogant, terrible, bad behavior.

[00:45:02] So I thought I'd have a word with him in the Gary way. I took him outside the church, went round the corner, picked him up, pushed him against the wall. And I didn't say hallelujah. I looked at him with strong eyes and I said, you dare do that again. I frightened him. I felt so good. We went back in, thought, I've dealt with him now.

[00:45:28] Everything was fine in the youth that night. That was Friday. Sunday morning came and one of the elders came up to me. The businessman said, how you doing? I said, great. How's a youth ministry? Fine. He said, he's just foot. I was driving down the road on Friday night, just drove into the car park. Now my heart is sinking, right?

[00:45:54] Caught the only one time, God I've ever done anything wrong, and you caught me and he said, I saw you having this person and it didn't seem like you were praying for him,

[00:46:08] but you definitely were laying hands on him.

[00:46:15] I remember thinking, God, that's not fair. What about all the times I did it right?

[00:46:24] God disciplines us. He gets hold of our character, and I'm grateful for God now, but at the time, that's not fair. What about God? You've never brought someone to me. When I did good things, just when I got caught out, pinned that young guy to the war. See from that it was a failure. It was a character challenge, but God, by his grace, use the elder to be nice, but to warn me and for me to warn myself about perhaps an area in my character that was flawed and I need you to work on.

[00:47:06] There's better ways of dealing with it than laying hands on him.

[00:47:13] Three. Another lesson I've learned, I did mention this the other day, that I have to keep myself full of faith and faithful. Some people are faithful but not full of faith. Some others are full of faith, but they keep moving around in their dreams and their missions. I know what God's called me to and I need to be faithful to that.

[00:47:39] How many of us know it always takes longer a dream to fulfill than we ever thought. Okay, you guys just get it all together, don't you? But it always takes longer. God doesn't seem to work in our times, girls, but he works in his, and I've gotta be faithful to his time scales, not mine, but I've gotta continue to be full of faith.

[00:48:02] What God has said he will do. We cannot let disappointment. Or arguments. Again, rob, us of faith. There are things where God has answered my prayer. There are areas where he's not answered my prayer yet. There's areas that he's answered my prayer, but I don't understand. Yeah, and in all that, I've gotta be full of faith.

[00:48:29] I, he's my God, he's my deliverer. And I want to encourage you today, mother Theresa said this, be faithful in small things because it's in them that your strength lies.

[00:48:45] Life does mess our theology up, doesn't it? But greater intimacy. We, God gives us peace beyond understanding.

[00:48:55] Don't just talk to him, walk with him. It keeps us going.

[00:49:02] Steve ick. May have heard of him, said this. Faith is believing before what? We only make sense after. Say that again. Faith is believing before that will only make sense after. Yeah, it's a great statement. Well, God, when I understand, I'll believe you. Oh, come on. You've gotta have faith to believe before you understand, not understand then have faith.

[00:49:33] And so if you are sitting here today and you say, God hasn't answered this yet, have faith, I've got faith before, and then it will make sense afterwards. And I want to encourage you in that it's a great statement. We can be an abundant thinker or a scarcity thinker, but I wanna believe that our God who's abundant will provide, will turn up.

[00:49:58] Proverbs 23, 7 says, as a man think is. so he hears. He is. In other words, how we think matters. That's why the Bible says about renewing our mind daily so that we will know God's good and perfect will his good and perfect will's up to him. My responsibility is to renew my mind daily. I wonder why he says daily.

[00:50:22] I think it's quite simple to say there is so much pollution in this world. I'm not about physical pollution. I'm not about media pollution, confession, stories, news that pollutes and drills us down right at this moment with the whole fake news of woke. What's the truth? I think there's the greatest challenge upon us who are Christ follows today to say, I know what is truth, and if something comes to me that doesn't align with his truth, I'm throwing it away.

[00:50:53] We, today more than ever, have gotta be vicious with what we hear through media, and I'm what I mean by vicious. Don't accept it. I'm not a cynic. I belong to the truth. Don't let it dilute your faith in what you hear. We've already talked yesterday about the silent revival or the soft revival that's going on.

[00:51:14] I think, Lord, why is it silent and soft? Well, it's gonna increase. It's gonna become loud and God's doing his work and as was prayed this morning, I don't think we've gotta pray for revival to start. We've gotta actually allow revival to come into us that no longer do we live survival. We live revival. We believe what lives transform.

[00:51:36] We know that the Gen Zs more than anything else are turning to God. Church, we are living in days of not post Christianity, but pre I think that's a great day of opportunity. I am tired of defending the church. I'm tired of just hearing people's arguments of disappointment with the church. No one should join a church.

[00:51:57] They come to Christ. Church is God's idea and it's imperfect. But we come to Jesus if we just introduce 'em to a philosophy or a church style that will not keep them. And more than ever, Jesus has to become central. And in your missions and how you present the gospel, it is really important. Don't water it down.

[00:52:23] We can still use the word sin. We can still use the word cross. Redemption, forgiveness, eternal life. Heaven, PC and wokes has come into the church that's compromised preaching. Compromise the way we talk with people. It's time to get back to the truth and the whole truth and don't be embarrassed by it.

[00:52:46] 'cause Jesus is about transforming lives today like he's always been. And he wants us to carry the ation power of his life. Amen. Fourthly, there's only 24 of you. Okay. Jacket. I've learned to keep my passion alive, that I was not born for safety or security, but for adventure, a risk I will die. A pioneer, it's not for a season.

[00:53:17] It's in me. It's my calling. I am not a good maintainer. Ask anybody around me. I need people around that maintain, but I ain't it. I know who I am, and if I try to squeeze into a mold of who I'm not, things go terribly wrong.

[00:53:38] I was born, not born for safety or security, but for adventure and risks. If that's what you were born for, keeping your lane, don't move out of your lane. Keeping it.

[00:53:53] Fifthly, passion. Keeps you in position of our calling. That's why it's so important to keep our relationship alive through intimacy with Christ. Don't ever let your purpose overtake your relationship with Jesus. Don't ever get swallowed up by the vision and un and lose the relationship with a vision giver.

[00:54:20] I'm more alive when I'm closer to Jesus than I'm work, than I'm just working for him. And I wanna encourage you in that. A great leader's courage is to fully fulfill his vision. But his vision comes from passion, not position. I'm gonna say something now that is just personal. I hate titles. I think I've been introduced to you ever these days as Gary Spice.

[00:54:48] That's fine. Of course, been a pastor leader. Someone would say I'm an apostle. I don't care what people say I am. I'm an individual that Jesus has called and I'm trying my best. It's as simple as that. The only time I believe in titles is for organization, not power. When people come to me and say, I want this title, why?

[00:55:13] I believe in titles for organizational purposes, but most people want a title for power authority. I can now tell people what to do. Hallelujah. Well, they've, I don't want those kind of people on my boat or on my bus. I want people to go, I know who I am in him and I'm doing my best, and then they get fitted into a jigsaw.

[00:55:35] There's too many power struggles in church. Hear me a ministry. I am not one of them. The greatest thing I can be as a servant, not a powerful leader, let others decide what I am. But I hope more than anything, they see a heart for God. And a heart for people. 'cause that's what I wanna be about. Amen.

[00:55:58] Whatever he leads me into, he'll make his way. Others may put titles on me, that's okay, but I am not chasing titles. I wanna be obedient to God. So don't die on that mountain either.

[00:56:15] Passion, never demands position. It can fly by itself and achieve all that God's put in you. Well, I'm in this organization right now if they could just put this title on me. Make my life so much easier. No authority from within, not from a title put on. And the sort of authority we need to have is God authority, not man's authority.

[00:56:37] Sixth,

[00:56:42] I need to seek a God perspective in every situation. I've learned that this is important to keep me going, to keep my passion alive so that I finish well. Mystery in your life is here to stay. Colossians three, two says this, set your mind on things above, not on the things that are on earth. You've gotta learn to look upwards, not just downwards.

[00:57:11] Seven, remind yourself there's seven old there. Well, I'm giving you an extra one. Okay? This is coming for free. God must have spoke to me since I did these notes. Remind yourself of the miracles that got you this far. Revelation 1211 says, I overcame by the blood of the lamb and the word of my testimony.

[00:57:37] So that just says, never forget him. But also remember to confess over your mind and your spirit. You've taken me this far. Remember that miracle? Remember how you got me through that? That's good. You say, well, that's looking back. No, That's showing how much he's with you. I reminding you of the good things that God has done for you.

[00:58:00] Got a stable there. Oh, it's come up there now. Next one. Thanks. I wanna end with this. Eternity is our destination, so don't get lost on earth.

[00:58:14] Eternity is our destination. Don't get lost on earth. I think that's so important. Look how we start's. Important. How we finish is perhaps more important. There aren't many people that finish. Well, I told you the story. I did Y the day before about my mom praising the way into heaven. I had that close example.

[00:58:39] I was feeling sorry for her. I was feeling the suffering and the pain. She was seeing glory and seeing her maker. Her view was different to mine. I. All I could see was a suffering. And all she could see was heaven. And I want to tell you today, we've gotta have a view. Eternity is our destination. Amen.

[00:59:02] Don't get lost on earth. If you get lost. Eternity in heaven might not be your destination, whatever your theology is. But I want to keep walking until he calls me home. Whatever God's called you to, he prepares you. He does. He gives you favor on the journey. He will. But also it's up to us to keep our passion alive in Him so we finish well, this is a life call, not a moment or just a season.

[00:59:33] His amen. And I wanna encourage you, the time we've spent with you has been wonderful. But if you can take things home, remember this, eternity is your destination. Don't get lost on earth. Can we pray? Let's pray. Musicians could come. That'd be fantastic. Lord, we love you in Psalms. You know there's a little word that says Selah.

[00:59:58] Take note, think upon. I just want you to think upon some of the words that have been spoken perhaps over these few days through worship, through the guys that have been doing the seminars. I'm sure there's words have been sewn into your spirit, and in a moment we're gonna share communion together because what a way to make him center of it all.

[01:00:24] Jesus is center of it all. Amen Lord, this morning we thank you, Lord because you said you'd never leave us or forsake us, that you will always be with us. And Lord, I pray for each person here right now, that Lord, you will never leave us or forsake us, but help us finish well in you. In Jesus name, amen.