The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches. And I know a bunch of you are like, this is why I don’t like the book of Revelation. Wait a minute. I’m getting a handle on it. The angel is the message of the Church. Okay, like I’m sort of there. Now you are telling me the stars are the angels, so what is it -- stars or angels? It’s two sides to the same picture, right? It’s two sides to the same idea. The stars and the angels and the message, they are all the same thing because what do stars do? They shine. They are up high and they shine for the whole world to see, right?

And it’s not just that. It’s actually, throughout this whole section of Revelation, he kind of really goes for the throat with this idea that the Church has a message for the world. Right before he began to dictate this, the Apostle John actually received a vision from Jesus. Jesus gave him a new vision of Jesus, and in the vision in chapter 1, he sees Jesus walking around with seven stars in his hand. He’s walking around among seven lamp stands, that’s the vision. Holding seven stars, walking around among seven lamp stands, and Jesus in chapter 1:20, if you want to back up just a little bit. He says this, hey, John, I want you to understand the mystery. So he says, the mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand? The mystery of the seven golden lamp stands I was walking around, here’s the mystery.

Here’s the thing, an angel is a messenger. That’s all it is. An angel is a messenger. We think about angel, wings, halos, harps -- whatever you think. The word literally means messenger. Angels were messengers. The Greek word aggelos literally means messenger, and so the spirits we think of when we think of angels, they were God’s messengers. They carried God’s message to the world. They went from Heaven to Earth with a message, and so by writing to the angel of the church, he’s kind of saying, hey, the Church has a message. The angel of the church is the message, or the messenger of the church to the what? To the world. So right he very beginning, by writing to the angel of the church, he focuses in on the message the Church has for the world, which is a really important clue about what God thinks about the mission and the purpose of the Church.

And it’s not just yet. It’s actually, throughout this whole section of Revelation, he kind of really goes for the throat with this idea that the Church has a message for the world. Right before he began to dictate this, the Apostle John actually received a vision from Jesus. Jesus gave him a vision. Jesus at this point, he’s left Earth. He’s ascended to heaven. He’s no longer physically with the 12 disciples, the 12 apostles, but John gets a new vision of Jesus, and in the vision in chapter 1, he sees Jesus walking around with seven stars in his hand. He’s walking around among seven lamp stands, that’s the vision. Holding seven stars, walking around among seven lamp stands, and Jesus in chapter 1:20, if you want to back up just a little bit. He says this, hey, John, I want you to understand the mystery. So he says, the mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand? The mystery of the seven golden lamp stands I was walking around, here’s the mystery.

The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches. And I know a bunch of you are like, this is why I don’t like the book of Revelation. Wait a minute, I’m getting a handle on it. The angel is the message of the Church. Okay, like I’m sort of there. Now you are telling me the stars are the angels, so what is it -- stars or angels? It’s two sides to the same picture, right? It’s two sides to the same idea. The stars and the angels and the message, they are all the same thing because what do stars do? They shine. They are up high and they shine for the whole world to see, right?
That’s what a star is. It’s another image of the message the Church has. The message of the Church is supposed to be up high shining bright for all of the world to see. The angel of the Church is like a personification for the message of the Church.

The angel is an interesting thing because it makes it living, right? It’s a living message. The star is great because it’s bright. It shines bright in the darkness, right? It shines bright in the darkness. So again, this is just two different images of the message the Church has for the world. Some people might go, the message the church has, what is that message? Do we get to decide the message? No, because the stars are in Jesus right hand. That’s a symbol that he owns them. It’s his message. He gets to decide what the message is, and that message is what we call the Gospel. That’s the message that Jesus has for the world. That’s the message the Church has for the world. It’s the good news that God loved us so much that in spite of our sin, He sent His own Son to die in our place.

On the cross, he purchased forgiveness for every sin. The ones we have committed. The ones we are living in right now – every one we’ll ever commit, he purchased forgiveness for all of those, and then he rose from the dead, and he offers not only forgiveness but new life with God that goes on for all of eternity. That’s the message in his right hand. That’s the message of the Church. It’s his message, but he gives it to the church to shine because he says the stars are the angels. The angels the personification of the message of the Church. Then he also says this, the mystery of the lamp stands, the seven lamp stands are the seven churches.

Because think about it, what is a lamp stand? It’s a stand for a lamp. You didn’t know you were coming for like deep theology, right? That’s what a lamp stand is. It’s literally something that holds a lamp up high for everyone to see, right? It’s something you can put a light on up high so that it shines bright for everyone to see. He says, the lamp stands that I’m walking around among, that’s the Church. That’s what a church is. The Church is the thing that holds the light of the Gospel up high for the whole world to see. That’s the purpose of the Church. No matter what you might have thought about church, no matter what ideas are going around in your mind about what church is all about, the reality is that Jesus makes it incredibly simple.

The Church -- it’s just something that holds the light of the Gospel up high. Let’s make this really clear, the Church exists to hold the light of the Gospel up high for all of the world to see. That’s it. That’s the purpose of the Church. That’s the mission of the Church to hold the light of the Gospel up high for all of the world to see. Jesus doesn’t say the Church has a lamp stand. He says the Church -- what? It is -- that’s what the Church is. It holds the light of the Gospel up high for all of the world to see. So the question then becomes, is that what the Church is doing? And what we are going to see in this section of Revelation that Jesus continually evaluates each church, and he asks the question, is your message shining bright -- or, are you in danger of coming into what we call mission killers?

Things that suck the message of the Church out. Things that as individuals we prey to, that we fall into that suck our purpose -- out. He’s going to look at each church and say, are you holding up the light of the Gospel, and all of the people that make up the Church, are you holding up the light of the Gospel for the world to see, so let’s come back to Ephesians 2. He says, to the angel of the church of Ephesus write -- he’s focused in on the message of the Church. He says, don’t forget it. You exist to declare this message. He says, these are the words of him that holds the seven stars in his right hand, and who walks among the seven golden lamp stands. He pushes in again. He’s like, you understand, I have a message. You are what I’m going to put the message on so that it shines bright for the whole world to see. You are the lamp stand. My question is, are you doing it?

He’s walking around, and there’s this sense that he’s evaluating, right? It’s like if Bill Gates showed up at the Microsoft store at Park Meadows Mall, right? He just like, hey, I’m just going to walk around for a while. Everybody would be like, whoa, right? They know they are sort of on trial. They are being examined. They are being tested. He’s going to be looking around. Okay, is what this store is doing, does it match up with what the corporation is trying to do? Are you on mission the way you should be? That’s what’s happening. Jesus is walking around among the lamp stands. He’s looking. He’s going okay, you are doing it well here. Here is a thing you are allowing to kill your mission. We are going to see in this section of Revelation that Jesus continually evaluates each church, and he asks the question, is your message shining bright -- or, are you in danger of coming into what we call mission killers?

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At first he has some really good news. He has some attaboy. He says, I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. He says, I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. That’s an attaboy. He says, this is good. You have done this well. You are working really hard at some stuff. Okay, the question is, what’s the stuff? It’s actually kind of an interesting thing. He says, I know your deeds. The Greek word there is used consistently in the New Testament to talk about the work of evangelism. It’s specifically used to talk about the work of sharing the Gospel with the world, of shining the light of the good news of Jesus to the world. In fact, if you want to use one example, flip back to II Timothy 4:5. Paul is writing to a church. He says, but you keep your head in all situations, endure hardship and do the -- what is it? Do the deeds of an evangelist. Do the work, the same work, discharge the duties of your ministry.

So this world that Jesus uses to the church in Ephesus is consistently used in the work of sharing the Gospel, so he says to the church, hey, you have done a great job. You have a great history of shining the light of the Gospel for all of the world to see, well done. I’m proud of you. Then he goes on and he deals with another thing that could have killed their mission. It’s a potential mission killer, but they handled it well. He said, I know that you cannot tolerate wicked people. You have tested people that claim to be apostles but they are not and you found them false.

He says I know you can’t tolerate wicked people, and in the context specifically he’s talking about people who claim to be from God, they claim to have been sent by God. They come with a message from God, and they come with instruction about what it looks like to walk with God, but they
are not from God. They don’t have a message by God, and they are not speaking the truth about God, and that can kill a mission. That kind of false teaching, that is an easy way of being led off of the path of being on mission with God. This is a definite mission killer. But he says, you didn’t let it kill your mission. That didn’t happen.

Why not? How did they pull that off? One of the things we see consistently in scripture, there are three ways we do this. We keep from being led into false teaching, it’s really important we do this because who we listen to -- listen to me, who we listen to, who we listen to determines whose mission we are on. If you listen to someone who is truly speaking for God’s, who is truly speaking from God’s Word and delivering a message from God, if you listen to him, you will be on God’s mission. If you listen to that person, if you listen to her who is speaking from God, you are going to be on mission, but if you are listening to someone who is not from God, you are going to be on a different mission, ultimately. You are going to be following a different spirit. Who we listen to determines whose mission we are on.

So it’s really important that we be able to discern and Jesus says, they did a good job. How did they do it? First thing, and we have to do the same thing, we watch for the fruit in their lives. Anybody who wants to teach and says they are speaking for God, one of the first things we do is watch for the fruit in their lives. Notice, the first thing he says is, I know you cannot tolerate wicked people, but you have tested them. He doesn’t say you have tested their teaching. That’s not first. He says, you have tested them. Because Jesus, Matthew 15, he says you will know a bad prophet, you will know a false prophet by the fruit of their lives. So we look at the fruit. Do we see humility, or do we see arrogance? Do we see peace or conflict? Do we see generosity or selfishness? We look for the fruit in somebody’s life. That’s the first test of whether or not they are coming from God.

A bad tree can’t produce good fruit. A good true can’t produce bad fruit, so we look for the fruit in their lives. Humility, gentleness, patience, peace, selfless and all kinds of thing. That’s what the Ephesians did. They tested their fruit. Secondly, we test everything against the Bible, against the Word of God. God’s Word is a standard that allows us to judge the truth or the falseness of anything else anybody claims comes from God, so we test everything against the Bible. The Ephesians listened to everything these people said and they said, hey, that doesn’t line up. That’s not consistent with everything else in God’s Word. No, no, no. The third thing, and this is really important, you check it with your community. You have a group of people that you share with. Here’s the problem. This is why this is so important, in the first century the only way that a false teacher could really take somebody on their mission, take them off God’s mission and on theirs, they had to come to town.

Like they literally had to physically show up and try to get an opportunity to teach in the church there. It was pretty limited. That’s not the way it works anymore, is it? There are so many opportunities for false teaching to take us off mission with God. We have podcasts. We have best seller books sitting at the airport or Wal-Mart. We have radio programs. We have YouTube. There are so many ways for all of this to come in. That’s why it’s so important that we have a group of people that we can go, hey, somebody sent me a podcast. I was listening to it. What do you think? You evaluate it as a group of followers of Jesus.

Because sometimes people will have an insight that you haven’t heard. Sometimes people say, hey, I don’t know about the teaching, but I do know something about the person teaching it. This is something that’s been in the news lately. You might want to pay attention to. We do that. It’s one of the reasons we push groups so hard at Mission Hills. Whether it’s a Life Group, a Men’s Group, a Women’s Group, a Hope Group. We want people in these small communities, because it’s in the those communities that we love each other, and that we can also make sure we are staying on track. We are not off mission by listening to false teaching. That’s what the Ephesians did. Jesus said, good job. That potential thing -- the thing that could have killed your mission? It didn’t. Well done. Great job. You avoided that mission killer.

Then he goes on, verse 3. He says, you have persevered. You have endured hardship for my name and you have not grown weary. That’s more attaboy stuff, right? This is good stuff. He says, you have persevered. You have kept going. You have endured hardships for my name, and that was literally true. To follow Jesus in the first century in the Roman Empire got increasingly difficult as time went on. Some Christians lost their lives for clinging to Jesus’ name and their faith in him. Some Christians didn’t get business licenses. You couldn’t buy or sell in the marketplace. You couldn’t get jobs. You couldn’t start a business if you didn’t have a certificate kind of approval which required that you worship the Roman Emperor, and Christians wouldn’t do it, so it got costly.

Following Jesus on mission is not an easy thing to do. I’m going to speak a hard but very true truth into your life right now. Here’s the thing. If you are finding that following Jesus is super easy, you are doing it wrong, okay? You might be clinging to Jesus, but you are not following him on mission. As we say over and over again, you can’t follow Jesus without following him on mission. He said come follow me, and I’ll make you fishers of men. Come follow me, and you are going to go on mission with me to the world because that’s what the Church is, right? It holds the light of the Gospel up high. It’s the people of God coming together to accomplish God’s purpose of shining the light of the Gospel to the world. If you are doing that, life is not going to be super, super easy for you. And the Ephesians were doing it, and it was costing, but he said, good job. You have endured hardships for my name, and he says, you have not grown weary. You have kept with it. You haven’t given up. You are charging ahead. That’s fantastic! You are sticking with me, and that’s awesome.

And then, he talks about the one mission killer here that he’s concerned about, that they seem to be falling prey to. He says this verse 4, he says, and yet, with all of that good stuff, I hold this against you. You have forsaken the love you had at first. You have forsaken the love you had at first. And I’m just going to tell you right now, I’m going to explain what that means, but what I’m going to explain is probably different than what many of you have heard. If you spent a lot of time in church growing up, you have probably heard this passage taught. One of the things you have
probably heard is that what Jesus is saying is, you have stopped loving me. You don't love me anymore. Not the way you used to. How many of you have heard that teaching? Okay. I disagree.

I think that's completely wrong, and I'm going to show you from scripture why I say that. There are basically two pieces to it. The first is, if what he's saying is, hey, you have done all of this good stuff but you don't love me anymore, it doesn't follow from what he just said. Remember what he said? You have endured hardship for my name. You have clung to me even though it has cost you. He says you have not grown weary. You have not slowed down. You are continuing to cling to me no matter how much persecution comes, no matter how much pressure comes. No matter how hard it gets, you are clinging to me. My question to you is does that make sense that they don't love Jesus anymore but they are clinging to his name in spite of how much it cost they will? That doesn't seem very likely.

Why would you cling to the name of somebody that you don't love, especially when it becomes incredibly costly to the point of even the cost of your own life? That doesn't flow from what God says here. The second thing is this. He doesn't say, you have abandoned your greatest love. You have forsaken your greatest love. What he literally says is you have forsaken the love you had at first. It's not a priority issue. We sometimes hear it that way. Some earlier translation, they translated, you have forsaken your first love. We go, oh, yeah, yeah. Your greatest love, your most important love, your highest priority love, but what he literally says, the N.I.V. is being word for word in this translation, he says, you have forsaken the love you had at first. It's a time thing, not a priority thing.

He says, you don't love something or someone that you did back in the beginning, back when you started as a church, you had this great love for something or someone, but I'm looking further in time, and you don't love that something or that someone in the way that you did back then. Now, that could be Jesus, but again, they are enduring hardships in his name and not grown weary, so it doesn't seem natural that it would be Jesus, so it's not Jesus, then what is the someone or something they used to love they don't love so much anymore? Let's read on. He says consider how far you have fallen. That's really interesting. We have already had a lot of language about things being up high, right? We have stars that are up high and shine bright. We have the angel, the message of the Church which goes on top of the lamp stand because the church holds the message of the Gospel up high, and now he says, hey, there's something that's not so high anymore. Something has fallen low. Interesting.

He says repent. He says repent and do the deeds you did at first. He says, repent. He says turn around, go back to what you were doing before. He doesn't say go back to loving more. He doesn't say you lost that loving feeling. You have to recapture. He says go back to doing things. Go back to activities, he says. Go back to the activities you did or the deeds you did, and interestingly enough, it's the same word that at the very beginning he said I know your works. As we said, it's that word used consistently in the New Testament for the works of sharing the good news with the lost, go back and do those things that you were doing at first.

By the way, that's really significant for the church in Ephesus because Ephesus was famous for their evangelism. If you want to read something interesting, read in Acts 19 sometime today. See when the Gospel first came to the city of Ephesus, when Paul brought the good news of Jesus and salvation through faith to Ephesus, the people who responded, the people who became Christians who became the church, they were so passionate about sharing that good news with their lost brother and sisters, that they literally changed the economy of the city. Literally changed the economy because Ephesus was known for the places where you could go to get amulets made, silver things -- you know, statues to worship the Greek gods, the place you could go to get amulets and possessions, like the Boulder of its day or Manitou Springs of its day. Like that was what their economy was based on.

When the Gospel came to Ephesus, they were so passionate about sharing the good news with the lost that people stopped buying the occult stuff. They stopped buying the idols. They stopped buying the amulets. They stopped buying them and the economy kind of crashed, and all of those occultist and idle makers kind of freaked out. They actually literally started a riot in the city because the Gospel was spreading so far and wide and changing so much that it changed the economy. Ephesus was famous for their work in sharing the good news to the lost. Now Jesus says, do the things you did at first. He says this, he says, if you do not repent, if you don't turn around, I will come to you, and I will remove your lamp stand from its place. Pay attention to what he says.

He doesn't say if you don't turn around and love me more, I'm not taking you to heaven. If doesn't say if you don't recapture your greatest love, if you don't start loving me more, then I'm going to take your salvation away. No. He says if you don't do the things you did at first, I'm going to take away your lamp stand. What was the lamp stand? It's the Church. So what Jesus literally says is, hey, if you don't start acting like a church, guess what? You are not going to be a church anymore. You are not going to enjoy the blessings of a church anymore, so be the Church. You are smart people. You are putting this together, right? Jesus isn't saying, you have stopped loving me. Jesus is saying you have stopped loving the lost. Do you see it? He's not saying, you have stopped loving me. He's saying, you have stopped loving the lost.

And the problem is, if you don't love the lost, if you are not driven as a church to share the good news to the lost, guess what? You are not a church. You are not a church because that's what the Church is. Then he does what is always a good idea to do if you are giving bad news -- soften it a little with some good news. He says, but -- but, you have this in your favor. He has just delivered some pretty heavy news. He says, you are not, I think a church anymore, and you are in danger of not being a church, but you have this in your favor, you hate the practice of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

REAL. MESSY. NEW.
And honestly, we don’t know exactly who the Nicolaitans were. They are mentioned a couple of times in Scripture. We have a few mentions in some early church literature. All we can say with certainty is that they were compromisers. They had somehow worked out kind of a system in their own minds where they could say, yeah, we follow Jesus, but we don’t have to follow his instructions for how to live. We can do some things that the Bible says are sin and still follow Jesus. They worked out some kind of a compromise. Their purity -- was kind of questionable. It might have had a lot to do with sexuality, from some of the hints we get. It’s like they said, we can follow Jesus, but we don’t have to keep our sexuality inside the boundaries that God has given us by Scripture.

They were kind of impure as the church saw them, and that’s kind of interesting. That’s exactly the opposite of the church of Ephesus. They had managed to stay pure. They avoided false teachers. They had avoided these compromises, and so there an interesting thing happening, and I wonder if reading between the lines, there’s not something that God is actually saying that’s kind of a backhanded compliment. He’s saying, basically, hey, good job. You have protected your purity, but you have lost your purpose. That’s what had happened. They had protected their purity. Good job. That’s important, but you somehow lost your purpose.

You have done really well at avoided false teaching. You are not on anyone else’s mission because you haven’t been corrupted, you have managed to protect your purity, but you are not on my mission either, and that’s just as big a problem. And the reality is, we don’t really know how that happened. I can take some guesses. I can take some guesses from what I have seen in history, what I have seen in churches. One possibility is that they lost their purpose, maybe because they had become more afraid of losing their purity than their purpose. They were more concerned about losing their purity than their purpose as a church. I see this happen a lot. Churches, they get so caught up in making sure that their doctrine is just right, and they become almost -- they are consumers of proper theology. They spend a lot of time teaching and making sure that everyone is crossing their I’s and dotting their T’s and they get it theologically, and please understand, I love theology. I love doctrine. I genuinely do.

I used to teach something called systemic theology -- which is just fun to say. It sounds big and grand, and it is. You take all of the doctrines of Christianity and you search the whole scripture, and you put them all together to make sure their doctrine is right. I love that. I used to teach it. I enjoy teaching it. I love doctrine. Please understand me, I’m not saying that doctrine is not important. It is, but sometimes people can get so caught up in getting the doctrine right that they don’t understand what the doctrine accomplishes, which is it keeps us on mission with Jesus to the lost. And there are churches that man, they are doctrinal powerhouses -- but they are more like a seminary than a church, and I love seminaries. I teach at seminaries, but I don’t want to lead one.

We are the Church. We have a mission. Sometimes we can get so concerned about our doctrinal purity that we forget the very purpose that it drives us to, which is to shine the good news of the Gospel to the lost. That might have been what happened. Another possibility, honestly, is that maybe they just forgot why Jesus had left them in the world. It happens. I mean, I teach on this a fair amount. I say, hey, the purpose of the Church is to be a lamp stand. It’s to hold the light of the Gospel up high for all of the world to see, and people will push back and go, no, no, no. The Church is supposed to disciple people, help them to become like Jesus. And I go like yeah! But what do we say here? Become like Jesus so they can -- join him on mission in the world. We can’t follow Jesus without following him on mission. This is clear, consistent teaching from God’s Word. Become like Jesus so we can join him on mission. That’s discipleship.

If you are just becoming like Jesus and not joining him on mission, that’s not discipleship. Something’s gone wrong, and the reality is, if the goal was just to become like Jesus, there’s a much easier way to do it. Take us to heaven, right? Take us away from the temptations of the world. Take us out of our broken, physical bodies, which struggle with our spirituality. Take us right into the presence of Jesus. It’s instantaneous. We are like Jesus now. If that was his only purpose to make us like him, why hasn’t he taken us to heaven? Why hasn’t he taken us out of the world? Because we are supposed to be making a difference in it.

It’s amazing to me how easy it is for the Church to forget that. Listen to me, if God has not taken me out of the world, it’s because we are supposed to be making a difference in it. We are supposed to be shining the light of the Gospel to our lost brothers and sisters. That’s what we do. We hold the light of the Gospel up high. It’s such a powerful message we have. He ends with this. He says whoever has ears; let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.

This is the message we have that to the one that is victorious, we’ll spend eternity with God, and by the way, what gives us victory? What is our message? It’s not, you have to try harder so you can earn God’s love. Our message is not you have to work really, really hard at getting everything right and avoiding the wrong stuff so that God will love you, so that God will accept you so that maybe you will be -- no, that’s not the message. The message is that Jesus has accomplished the victory. By his death on the cross and our faith in him, we are victorious -- over sin, over death, over darkness, over hopelessness, over purposelessness, over missionlessness. That’s the message that we have that you can be victorious and have all of these blessings simply by trusting in what Jesus has done for you. That is an incredible message. Is it right? Can I get an amen on that?

That’s our message. That’s the message we have. And the biggest threat Jesus is dealing with here, and I think it’s no coincidence he begins all seven of these letters by focusing in on Ephesus where the big problem seems to be they have forgotten why they were called to be a church in the first place is that the biggest threat to our mission as a Church is just forgetting that our mission is the only thing that makes us a Church. Do you see the simplicity of that? The biggest threat to our mission as a church is just forgetting that our mission shining the good news of the Gospel, is the only thing that makes Church us a Church. It’s the only reason we exist. It’s amazing to me how simple that is and how slippery it is.
How easy it is for people to almost get it and then it just slips from their grasp. I was teaching on this back East at a conference a couple of years ago and a guy came up to me and he said, I agreed with everything you said. That’s always a red flag for me. He said I agreed with everything you said. You are so right, if the church isn’t doing mission, if the church isn’t doing outreach, if the church isn’t sharing the good news to the lost, the church will die. If we don’t bring new people in, the church will die. If we don’t bring new people in, the church will have to close its doors. He said you are so right. If we don’t do mission, the church will die. I had to say gently as possible, that’s not what I’m saying. What I’m saying is if the church isn’t doing mission, it’s already dead because it’s not a Church.

It might be a nice social organization. It might be a nice club. It might be a nice group of people to get together with, but it ain’t a Church. That’s our biggest threat. Our biggest threat to the mission of our church is just forgetting that our mission is the one thing that makes us a church. But here’s the thing, a church can never be more passionate about its mission than the people who make up the Church. It’s not something we can do as an organization, as a body if it’s not true of all of us that make the body up, right? Because what is a church? It’s God’s people coming together to accomplish God’s purpose. We know what the purpose is now, He’s very clear, but the passion of a church for being the Church can never be greater than the people.

So here’s my question to you today, whose salvation is weighing on you? Whose salvation is weighing on you? Who has God put in your life in your sphere of influence that does not know the good news of Jesus Christ, and it’s weighing on you? Whose salvation is weighing on you today? Question number two, what are you going to do about it?

[Video]

Your challenge, share the love. Choose someone or an organization, and show them that you love them somehow. Bring cookies, write a letter, etc. Weekly challenges are available on the Mission Hills Church app or at the Welcome Center.

[Video ends]

Craig // Jesus, we receive your Word today and it’s very clear. It’s not confusing, but it is challenging. You have called us to you by your love, and we are grateful. You have made us a Church because we have a mission. We are to hold the light of the Gospel up high for all of the world to see. It’s not something we do as a church, it is what makes us a Church. We receive that Word Lord, and we ask for your forgiveness for the ways that as a church and as individuals in the church, we have not been on mission with you. Holy Spirit, we invite you to come and to stir our hearts to a new passion for the lost, to a deep concern for those in our spheres of influence in our lives that do not know you, do not know the truth, the good news that we have for them.

Lord, stir in us a new passion, and give us courage to act on that compassion as you lead, to act on that love for those who do not know you yet. In Jesus’ name. Amen.