



## Sermon Transcription • Matthew 28:18-20

### Multiply Vision Weekend

#### Pastor Greg Harris

**[Please Note: This transcript has been lightly edited for ease of reading. Also, some headings have been added in square brackets to aid the reader in locating portions of the sermon.]**

William Cary is the name of a pastor from the late 18th and early 19th century. He was consumed with the idea of seeing the good news of who Jesus is be spread to every single part of the world. He wrote in a book, he said these words, he said,

“Multitudes sit as ease and give themselves no concern about the far greater part of their fellow sinners who to this day are lost and ignorant and idolatry.”

But Cary’s obsession didn’t actually just stop with a book, he actually organized a missionary society and at the inaugural meeting of this missionary society, to try to see how are we going to get the gospel out to the world - he wrote a sermon and delivered a sermon by the title, *Expect Great Things from God and Attempt Great Things for God*. If you come to Northview regularly you’ll know that normally at this time in our service we have a sermon where someone will come up and have an illustration at the beginning and they’ll read a passage of Scripture and then they’ll talk about the passage of Scripture and they’ll apply it to our lives and then we’ll sing another few songs, right. This weekend’s a little different than other weekends. This weekend we’re actually devoting our time and energy to think about our vision as a church, as Northview Community Church, to make disciples through the multiplying of healthy local churches. We have a goal as a church - our goal is to raise at least 30 million dollars over the next 10 years. We think William Cary was right, we think the gospel needs to go forward, we think people need to hear the gospel, we think people need to respond to the gospel and because of that, we think we should be the kind of people who “expect great things from God and attempt great things for God”. So our goal over the next 10 years is to raise at least 30 million dollars so that we can see our vision come true that we would make disciples through the proactive multiplication of healthy local churches.

So this weekend we’re going to focus our time and answer the question what is our vision for multiplication and basically the question what are we raising the money for. You say 30 million dollars over 10 years, what are we actually going to use that money for. Right - that’s not just operating the church money, that’s above and beyond operating the church money to see people who don’t know the gospel hear the gospel - what’s that money going to be used for. So that’s what we’re going to talk about here this weekend. We’re going to look at how we as Northview can exist to glorify God by making disciples through the multiplying of healthy local churches. So our goal is to do at least three things. First of all, we want to see a new facility be built on the Downes Road Campus at Northview



Community Church. Secondly, we want to see local churches in our region be multiplied. And third, we want to see local churches be multiplied all throughout the globe. So we're going to look at each one of those areas over the course of this weekend. We're going to look at some plans to build on Downes Road campus, what would that look like, why would we do something like that with the money that we earn in our jobs and then give to the Lord. Why would we build another building - does that actually help us with multiplying churches? Then we're going to look at what it would like to do some church planting regionally and some church planting globally. I think we're going to have a good time this weekend. I pray we will.

So first let's talk about the building. A key part for a multiplication vision is to actually make sure that the Downes Road Campus is as healthy as possible. If we want to multiply healthy local churches, we want to not overlook the fact that there are ways in which at Downes Road Campus we could probably be healthier. Here's what I mean by that, we have an option right now in the life of our church because our mornings are at capacity at our church so we have an option, either we use every single room available at the Downes Road Campus to put people in with a worship team and the sermon and get every seat available for people to come to the worship services - or we could use some spaces for community space - to linger and connect with others, to talk about the sermon, to talk about our lives, to pray with one another, to pray for one another - to do Christian kinds of things like encourage one another, bear one another's burdens - do that on a Sunday morning in a place where there's actually some space to do that. Right now at the Downes Road Campus we have to pick one of those things. Do we want to have room for people or do we want to have room for people to actually hang around in between services. So we're going to watch a video where pastors Darcy and Jeff are going to have a conversation about how we think doing a new building on the Downes Road Campus will not help us just choose either or but to actually do both and - to have enough space to come to church on the weekend and also to have enough space for them to gather, and hang around here for a little bit of time in between those services. So here's the video of pastors Jeff and Darcy.

### **[Multiply Vision Video with Pastor Jeff Bucknam and Pastor Darcy Kuhn]**

Pastor Darcy: So Jeff we're talking about a new building as a part of this multiplication vision, but I got to ask you first - wouldn't it be easier just to do like more services rather than build a new building?

**Pastor Jeff: Easier?**

D: Yeah wouldn't it solve our problem?

**J: Ah, no. We tried it, is kind of the point there. We've actually over the last number of years tried to do a whole bunch of different things to try to create space at the church. I mean when I got here 10 years ago or something like when I became the lead pastor 10 years ago we started by expanding the Worship Center by cutting back the stage and adding some different seats that people could squeeze closer together because those pews they used to sit way far apart. And then we added Center Court which was really cool. A lot of people moved from the Worship Center to Center Court and then the Worship Center filled up again and then we were too full in**



both of those venues so we were like added West Court, so we did that and West Court, Center Court, then the Worship Center and then we were like, “Oh we are full again, do we expand the Worship Center?” Looked into that, but that was going to cost a ridiculous amount of money to remodel.

D: Yeah to remodel that and enlarge it was not ...

**J: And then eventually we realized that by doing - then we went to the three services in the Worship Center so the last couple of years actually and we realized that we were like just churning people out like they were some kind of widget: like here’s a couple songs, a sermon, a couple songs, get out. And it just didn’t really do much for the discipleship of the people. That’s one of the big things, you really do need, in the modern world, take advantage of the time that people are here. Because it’s hard for people to come out on a Tuesday night or a Wednesday night or something like that. Yeah in the mind, we could just keep increasing services and service times, but ultimately, ultimately it actually defeats the very thing you’re trying to do which is to make healthy disciples - it’s not feasible in the long run. We could have done it years ago, just built a building and not done the other venue stuff.**

D: Right

**J: We’re happy we did the venue stuff, it’s just that we did that as a means to saying, “Well we should put off doing a building until it’s very last thing.” And so that’s why we’re thinking about it now**

D: Well couldn’t we send people to other churches?

**J: Yes**

D: Wasn’t East Abbotsford kind of supposed to help take a bunch of people?

**J: No and it did, ah the goal of East Abbotsford though was to like reach people in East Abbotsford, less than it was to create space. But it did create space, so it’s like 600 people or something over there now.**

D: Yeah

**J: So which is great. I would love to be able to like treat every Christian in the city like it’s a little bean on a paper and just move them to different - you guys are going to that church, and this church and this church and this church**

D: And then a few more seats fill that up



**J: And in a perfect world right - you're training pastors and filling those churches with gospel focused guys to preach the gospel there and the people are going there to churches in their location. Unfortunately we don't live in that perfect world and so in the end you end up having to make decisions about this. We've never been a church that's ever wanted to turn people away at the doors. We actually do believe as the city continues to grow - like 200,000 and whatever people especially just immediately south of here - we actually think that there's going to be more people in our community who are going to want to hear the gospel and need to hear the gospel then there have in the past and the churches in our city are not growing as a whole, we tend to be shrinking back and so like we want to change that.**

D: And it seems like when we create space, we get more people. Like when we opened Mission, we had people from Downes Road Campus go there but all the sudden we were full again.

**J: So one of the things that after being at Northview for all these years, I have come to realize that there's nothing particularly important about me, because ...**

D: Amen!

**J: When you look at the history of the church, anytime you have a lead pastor in the seat, right, who's a permanent fixture there - this church grows. So I'm just saying that that tends to be part of the DNA of this church and so, and it is the case, I mean if somebody has an unbelieving friend and kind of want to get them involved in Christian things or learn about Jesus, we tend to be one of the places in town where people will come. And so we kind of feel like, well we always want to be available for that and make space for it going forward. Especially if we don't think about the right now, but we think about well what about 10 years from now, and 20 years from now, and 30 years from now. So that's really what the building's about, it's more it's more - yes, we could use it now, our percentages in the Worship Center stuff are growing and in the next two years we'll probably be too full to have any new seats and stuff, but it's more about 10 years and 20 years and 30 years, what's going to set Northview Community Church up as the best gospel outpost in the next 20, 30 years.**

D: So almost 20 years ago, something happened that is setting us up for a new building. Do you want to lead us through that?

**J: Well talk about providence, you know in our services in the last little while, we're talking about providence alot because of the end of Romans 11 - and what you end up finding is that when they applied, they actually applied to have a church building that had about 2,000 seats, or a little bit more.**

D: I think it was almost 3,000, it was big.

**J: So but the footprint was at a particular location on our campus and in order to do that they went to the Land Commission and they got permission for that, and then the church shot it**



down for a number of reasons - some of it had to do with the health of the lead pastor at the time, or some people not being sure that this is the right decision. And so it went quiet.

D: Yeah

**J: So when we've gone back to the Land Commission recently in a new era where we were like, there's no way that they're going to approve this is because we live in kind of a different day. We went to the Land Commission and it was a very short conversation, they were basically like, "You already got permission 20 years ago for this and we're not going to change our minds about that, you already have it." And what's crazy about it is that the footprint of the building that we want to build is about 100 square feet smaller than the footprint of the building that they got permission for <laughing> we had no idea! So there were guys on our development committee, you know like these development guys and the accountants and stuff and they're like "Aw <crying> this is so great!" So there seems anyway like there's a window available now and the prices of these things are only going to go up in the next number of years. So I don't love building stuff.**

D: You've said before, you don't want to build.

**J: <laughing> I don't.**

D: That's why we went to all these extra services and venues.

**J: But, but you know I feel like, I've said this to the few people that I feel like - so with my kids sometimes I look at what is needed for the next number of years and it's not what they want to do in the present moment, but as a good leader, good father, you say, "Right, we're doing this. You're going to that practice right, even though you don't feel like it right now, we need to bite the bullet, we need to pay our dues now so that in the days to come, we end up, it ends up bearing fruit that we really want to see in that life. I feel like as a leader, as one of the leaders in this church, I feel like I'm in a position where I, as much as I feel the same way that a lot of other people do - I'm not in ministry to build buildings or things like that, but I am looking at it and thinking 30 years from now what is the best case scenario for Northview and for it's outreach into the city and community, and I'm saying that this is a great window to do this.**

D: You have said that this campus is kind of the engine that drives the vision.

**J: Oh yeah.**

D: What does that mean?

**J: Well that means that, that means that if we want to see church planting locally and globally, the larger the RPM's of this campus - the more we can produce elsewhere. And so the goal, ultimately is not just to see a church building here and people coming to faith in our little local**



**region here, it's to see you know people in Vancouver and Maple Ridge and Calgary and Halifax and Salt Lake City and the Mekong River Valley and North India and Turkey coming to faith in Jesus and us being able to back that financially and the vision for the years to come.**

D: And having more people to hear, more people gathered helps us to do that.

**J: Absolutely, and catching the vision for this sort of thing and realizing that we could actually make a dent. So a lot of this is building the foundation for a structure that is going to be you know, a metaphorical structure that's going to end up, I pray, going to end up producing the kinds of things that we think the Lord's called us to. It starts with some sacrifice. I think that's my thing- early on all great visions starts with some early sacrifice so that it can bear longer term fruit.**

D: Yeah, so what about the what if's? What if Jeff leaves? What if interest rates go up? You know like - what do we do with all those what if's?

**J: Yeah, you know what's interesting, is those were some of the questions that were raised I think part of the reason they didn't build it back in the 20 years ago was those very things. The what if's kind of became really big things. And maybe they were legitimate, the pastor at the time, Vern Heidebrecht was here and he was getting a little older and I think he was in the early stages of some of his sickness that he has now, and so now those are often legitimate questions. I will say though, I think it's really cool how the Lord though has taken care of Northview - right - so even though Vern was at a point in his ministry where he was no longer going to be able to do it, well the Lord brought me here, right and I've said a long time, there are other people, better people than me who are going to come behind - I'm sure - and that we're raising them up now. We're trying to train them, and I believe that the Lord is going to take care of his church, regardless. I think the danger of not doing something is greater than the danger of doing something though and that often times we don't view it that way. The safe thing to do is just to sit on the talent. I don't think it's that safe in the end.**

D: We've talked about that a lot.

**J: Yeah but if we're going to just going to spin our wheels - okay. But I'm more interested and excited about us making a dent in the world and having some changes take place to our communities that only the gospel can bring. Now I've always believed, let's have a go right - the Lord's going to take care of us in the long run and take care of his church. I promise you he'll take care of his church.**

D: Yeah, Amen. So when we think of the specific building that we're looking at building just right out here. What excites you about that building in particular?

**J: Well it replaces the Bubble.**



D: <laughing>

**J: So that's the first. Actually what excites me about it is the community space that it'll free up for our church. One of the things that we've noticed in our East Abbotsford Church plant is that they have a half time between the services where everybody gets together in another room and they all mingle together and like genuine friendship and discipleship actually takes place. They talk about the sermon that happened and the one that you know some people are coming are talking about what it's going to be like, so there's this kind of wonderful mix. And a church our size, the way my wife and I got to know some people is we used to have a breakfast like during the Sunday mornings that was in the middle of our services, and that's how we got to know people in a large church like this. It's how we got connected to community groups, it's how we got connected to a lot of the staff they were mingling and walking around. It was an amazing spot. We would like this to be the kind of place you can linger, so it does set us up for the growth of the church in the future numerically, but it also sets us up probably more importantly, to do the kind of discipleship, community life ministries, that we think are instrumental to people loving Jesus more in the days ahead. Especially cause like we said before, it's hard to get people to come out midweek and stuff. And if you come out to Northview midweek - the place is packed all the rooms are filled. So this actually does provide some opportunities for us to do ministry. We love the fact that we have partnerships with MB Mission and with our church planting arm and we have vision actually to use this building for partnerships beyond that.**

D: Right

**J: So that's our goal, is to create community spaces that are in people's way so that they stick around, we get to know them, we can end up encouraging them to be involved in the life of the church - like full orb ed discipleship.**

D: Well thanks Jeff, it's been great hearing from you and we trust God's going to do amazing things here in the coming years.

**J: Yeah**

### **[Church Multiplication with Greg Harris]**

So we do have a desire to see the Downes Road Campus have a facility that could facilitate all kinds of ministry on the weekend. But the vision to make disciples through the proactive multiplication of healthy local churches doesn't just have to do with Downes Road Campus - it's a big part but it's not the only part. We also want to be proactive in seeing healthy churches be multiplied in the region. We've kind of - if you've been around Northview for the last few years - you probably know that we mostly fallen into these kinds of things in the past few years. We kind of fell into the Mission Campus opportunity, we kind of fell into Tri-City opportunity, we kind of fell into the East Abbotsford thing, and we're kind of getting tired of falling. And so we think that if we had some money dedicated to regional



church planting and we were willing to put some energy and time and strategizing and thinking - along with just seeing what the Lord brings up and provides - that we might be able to see all kinds of local churches that are healthy be planted regionally. And the reality is, is that there are all kinds of healthy churches in the Fraser Valley currently and also we need more. So our goal is not to replace the existing healthy churches, our goal is to actually reach people who don't know the gospel yet even though there's already healthy churches in their area.

And so we've kind of identified a sandbox that we want to play in. So the sandbox is the border - we won't go over the border because they won't maybe even let us cross. The border to the mountains, cause there's nothing really north of the mountains, and then from the bridge, the Port Mann Bridge, to Hope. We don't want to go over the Port Mann Bridge because everyone over the bridge thinks we're just a bunch of hicks anyways, which ah they're true. And we're not going to go beyond Hope, because it's beyond hope right? [Laughter] Ha, I'm joking. We've identified a sandbox that we think this is the area we'll be proactive in seeing if God wants to use us to multiply local healthy churches. But of course we're open to God bringing things up onto our plate that we didn't actually see coming right. So we might go beyond Hope, we might go, I don't know, somewhere else that isn't in the sandbox but we want to actually have some money available so that we could, along with some other friends of ours and churches that we like working with - and all kinds of stuff, denominational, all sorts of things - to be able to work together to see if we can see more healthy local churches multiplied in our region. But it's not just about the Downes Road Campus it's also not just about healthy churches being planted regionally, we also want to see, like William Cary did - we want to see healthy churches be multiplied globally.

Our missions committee has identified three areas that are some of the least reached areas in the world that we want to focus our attention on because we already have connections and relationships in those places. Those three areas are Northern India, Turkey, and the Mekong River Region in Southeast Asia. And I'm really excited about what's coming up next because we actually have Bob Davis, who is the regional director for MB Mission of Southeast Asia. He is here with us this weekend, ah we're going to watch a short introduction to who he is, what his ministry is like, and then Bob's going to share with us for a few minutes about what Northview's done in the past and what Northview could do in the future if we got behind a vision like this. So let's cue that video of Bob.

### **[Changed Life Center with Bob Davis]**

**[Video about Mekong River Ministry begins]** We're actually referring it now to kind of Mekong Ministry. If you think of all of the countries that the Mekong River touches as it flows from Tibet through Southern China, touches Myanmar, it's the border between Thailand and Laos, goes back, comes back and becomes the border again. Then it goes through Cambodia and Vietnam out into the South China Sea. That whole region's called the Mekong Basin. Something like 100 million people and less than one percent Christian.

So it goes back to PK is one of our missionaries in Northern Thailand, but he's originally from Laos, he belongs to a people group called the Khmu people, eventually ended up in California and eventually



became the pastor of the Asian congregation at Butler Mennonite Brethren Church. During that time, and this was the 80's, early 90's. PK, just could not get out of his mind the need to take the gospel back to the Laotian and particularly Khmu people and hill tribe people of Southeast Asia. So he began to make trips over there with the vision of actually trying to reignite a church that had almost been completely snuffed out. Pastors had been arrested, churches had been closed, but PK went there and began to find some of these scattered leaders and just train them, pour into them, resource them.

So he started with 4 and then 4 became 12 and 12 became 20 and 20 became 40, so as this thing continued to grow a vision came as he got connected with MB Mission in the early 2000's - vision came to actually establish some sort of a training center, some sort of headquarters. And land was purchased and buildings were built. So now there's a whole training center that has a number of components. So the Changed Life Center has really, it really serves as kind of a hub, an administrative and discipleship training hub for ministry that's going to other places. But going back to PK's original vision, he's not content to just reach Northern Thailand and into Laos. He's desire is to actually reach the other surrounding nations that are difficult for missionaries to go to. In this way, by bringing by resourcing training local leaders, there's a multiplication that's been happening. So recently we've begun sending sort of exploratory teams of Laotian, Khmu church leaders and church planters across the borders into Cambodia, Vietnam, Southern China and we're already seeing opportunities for them to go and just to continue to bring good news to people that won't hear it unless somebody who lives there goes and tells them because many of these people are in very remote places.

So the vision is much bigger than a center, the center is actually the core, it's the hub, but the vision is actually to expand throughout that whole Mekong Region reaching people through the training of indigenous church leaders, church planters, evangelists. [singing] **[Video ends]**

Wow it is just a tremendous privilege and honour to be with you today, I want to start by saying a few things about multiplication before we actually look at this thing that's been happening in Southeast Asia and Northview's partnership and how that's actually been developing and also where we're going next. But before we talk about those things I want to say a bit about multiplication. Multiplication really did not begin with Northview and it didn't begin with MB Mission, even though we're soon changing our name to Multiply. Multiplication actually begins in the heart of God. If you go back to the book of Genesis and you read about the creation story, and how everything came into existence, you soon recognize that God is in the business of multiplication. Multiplication is right at the heart of God. When God begins to create, God actually doesn't just create a star, he throws galaxies out into space. God doesn't just create a planet, he creates many planets. God doesn't just create a bird, or a fish, he multiplies those things and then we he creates man and woman, the very first command that God gives to Adam and Eve is be fruitful and multiply, have dominion over all of the things that have been created. And then as you get over into the New Testament it's not surprising to find out that the multiplication idea or focus that's on the heart of God carries over in a spiritual realm to the kingdom of God. Jesus says just before he ascends back into heaven, "You'll be witnesses unto me in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." Jesus gives the great commission and says that, "I want you to go to *all* nations. I want you to make disciples in all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit and teaching them to observe all things I've commanded you, and lo I am with you to the



end of the age.” So what we recognize is that multiplication is something is that God’s business, it’s God’s heart, it’s God’s vision, and God’s passion. So I get excited when I come to this church and I hear about the vision for multiplication locally, regionally, and globally. And I’m very, very excited and thrilled to actually have the privilege to kind of represent that global piece. My particular focus for the last number of years has been Southeast Asia, but I’ve also spent years church planting in Europe, and there’s a need for this kind of vision regarding how do we bring multitudes - how do we plant thousands of churches that bring tens of thousands of people into relationship with Jesus; locally, regionally, and globally. Is that possible? Yes it is - it’s a vision, it’s a big vision, but it’s also something that’s on the heart of God so that we know that’s very possible.

I want to just spend some time talking about this Mekong thing as kind of an example of how things can happen. The Mekong mission, the Mekong ministry, is all about recruiting, sourcing, and releasing national leaders. Our focus for the last 10 years has been in Thailand and in Laos. But in the future, as I mentioned on the video we’re already reaching into places like China, Myanmar, Cambodia, Vietnam, where the exploration. So there’s a multiplication vision that’s coming out of what’s already happened and we recognize that we’ve discovered, you know it’s almost like a key to actually doing this and that is through the training of indigenous, national, evangelists, and church planters. That’s what we’ve been doing and that’s what we plan to continue to do. So let’s have the next slide.

This, I mentioned this on the video as well, the Mekong River touches all of these nations, these are places where for the most part, with the exception of Thailand, it’s very difficult for missionaries to go openly into any of these countries. These are primarily communist countries. I go into Laos on a regular basis, I was just there three weeks ago, when I go into the country there and some of the places, if I’m going to go visit a pastor in his home, I have to keep my head down when I’m in the vehicle, we’ll drive around to the back of the house, they’ll throw a coat over me, I’ll go in through the back door, I’ll spend exactly 10 minutes in that house and then I’ll come back out the same way and move on down the road to the next place. Because it’s dangerous for *him* to be hosting me. I’m probably not going to get in to big of trouble but he could actually get in big trouble for having a western pastor in his home. So we’re very careful about how we do that. So these are places where it’s difficult, but through the training of indigenous church planters, we actually have seen multiplication happening in closed access, or restricted access countries to the glory of God.

Okay let’s look at another slide. This is PK, I mentioned him in the video as well. PK has been the catalyst for all of this - he’s Laotian, he escaped from Lao after spending 7 years and 11 months in a Laotian prison. He swam across the Mekong River, ended up in refugee camp, eventually ended up in California, and now he’s back living in Northern Thailand and for *years* has been reaching across the border there, through bringing leaders out into Thailand where it’s safer to our training center, but also going in and visiting and doing training there.

I want to talk a little bit about how we actually do it, our vision. So next slide, so what’s our strategy. Well first of all why does it matter. Why is it important? The people of that region are predominantly animistic people, animism or animistic Buddhism is sometimes blended together, Animism is this idea that you actually honour the spirits or that - I don’t really use the word worship when I talk about



Animism, because worship carries with it the idea of adoration and love and generosity and affection - that's not really the relationship that animistic people have to the spirits. It's more of a fear and a bondage. So you can imagine when evangelists take the good news into places where the people have been living in fear and bondage to the spirits for generations, that the message of the gospel really is good news to them. They're actually being told that they can be set free from that bondage, and so it's not surprising that we see this, this kind of response, where whole villages will actually decide to follow Jesus after the proclaiming of the gospel because it's sets them free. But millions of people are still in that bondage, and it's through the training of local evangelists that we can reach those millions who haven't yet heard the good news. Lack of training opportunities -there are very few Bible colleges, there are no seminaries, there are very few places where leaders that God has called can actually find a place where they can, where they can actually learn what they need to know in order to be effective in their ministry. So we bring the training to them as much as we can, we make it as accessible and as easy as we can for them to get training. It's a place missionaries can't go and it's desperately needy in terms of lifestyle and poverty. Most of the people grow; they're either farmers that grow just enough food to stave off starvation or their working in factories where they're practically slaves. Next slide.

This is our strategy, it really focuses on leadership training and that's one of the things I love to hear about the vision of Northview Church is that you also are interested in actually developing leaders for the churches because that's such a *critical* need. And that flows into evangelism and church planting, those leaders that are trained to become church planters. We also do some community development projects, we do social assistance that helps get into some of those villages that might be closed to the gospel and then we focus on strategic partnerships like this one. Northview Church has been a *strategic* partner in this ministry in Northern Laos and well across the region. I'll tell you more about that in just a moment. Okay, next slide.

So we do three kinds of training, informal training kind of looks like this. This is PK, he's in a hotel room, he's in Laos. He gathers together local leaders so he travels through the country. One time I asked PK, I said, "Where did you get your strategy?" This is years after he had begun to develop and had many hundreds of leaders that sort of called him their spiritual father, and he had this impactful ministry. And I said to him one time "Where did you get your strategy?" And he kind of looked at me like he didn't understand the question and so I asked again, "Where did you get your strategy?" And then he kind of looked at me, and he said something I'll never forget, he said, "Have you ever read the Bible?" [Laughter] Missionary fail right there, missionary fail. He's doing what Jesus did, he's doing what Paul did, he's choosing, his identifying people that God has called and he's saying, "Let me pour into you so that you can pour into others." It's the Jesus model of ministry. And it's interesting that it took us having to go to a country where we can't send missionaries, to actually figure out that this is what we should be doing, even the places where we can send missionaries, and that is pouring into the local leaders so that they can carry on and multiply the ministry. So we do informal training, which is this kind of more casual kind of thing. Okay, next slide.

We also do, what's called non-formal training which is conferences and seminars. So we'll actually bring them to our training center, that's a picture of our training center, one of the buildings that we have there, that you, Northview Church, helped us build in that place. So that we can actually bring leaders



out of a dangerous place to a safe place and we can actually teach them for three or four or five days at a time. We can't bring hundreds so we usually bring 30 or 40 or 50, we pour into them for a week, they go back to their home country in Lao and they gather together their local leaders, who are house church leaders, and church planters and evangelists, and they repeat the training - that's multiplication, that's multiplication happening right there. And then the third kind of training we do, next slide, all of this happens well much of this happens at the Changed Life Center in Northern Thailand, but we're also resourcing training that happens out in the country of Lao and beyond Lao as well. Okay next slide - regionally within Laos, it's actually reproducing itself in the way that I just described.

Okay next slide - and then formal training. We realized after a while that one of the pieces that we were missing was actually giving higher quality, more intensive, Bible college level content to some of the leaders so that they could actually become sort of key trainers of trainers, so we partner with a Bible college in Chiang Mai, who sends their professors up to our training center, up in Chiang Khong, up on the Mekong River. And they actually teach Bible college courses to students that we select and send to them and we've had several groups go through that now. And so the formal training piece has become an important component. So non-formal, informal, and formal training is all happening. Okay next slide.

This is a partnership with Lanna Bible College in Chiang Mai, that's one of their professors teaching at the Changed Life Center, a group of students that we provide for them. They do 10 Bible college courses in a year, two at a time, five times through the course of the year, a week at a time - very intensive and then they're able to actually finish with a certificate in Biblical studies which is good for them when they get back home because it gives them some credibility in the eyes of the local government. Okay next slide.

The other thing that we resource and finance and that you help us with is evangelism that happens out in the rural areas. There's a lot of evangelism that happens in places that missionaries could never get to and that are actually very difficult for some of the local people to get to, but they hop on motorcycles and go out to these places and share the gospel in places that we would never reach unless we were able to resource them in that way. Next slide. Yeah we purchased motorcycles for some of the evangelistic teams, that's an example of the kind of roads that they have to drive over during rainy season to get to some of those villages - but they're willing to do it because they're actually passionate to see people come to know Jesus and to become followers of Jesus. Next slide.

We also help to resource conferences that happen throughout the country throughout the year. Youth conferences, ladies conferences, so that we're not just resourcing church leaders, but were actually resourcing another generation of church leaders coming up as out of these youth conferences we recognize that there are some people that God is calling to become church planters and evangelists themselves. The women's meetings are often pastors wives who actually gather together and are encouraged and resourced as well. Okay, next slide. And then we also do some sort of more practical projects, we want these people to be able to sustain themselves and so we do what's called ABCD - assets based community development projects that include agriculture and business. We do some social ministries, next slide, that actually - this is, this is an example, the pastor, the fellow in the yellow shirt in this - I don't know if you can see it - but the fellow in the yellow shirt there actually has 37 orphan



children that live with him and his wife in the town so that these kids that are from hill tribe villages, up in the mountains in Luang Prabang in Laos, can't actually go to school unless they live near the town. So he actually is taken these kids in and this is like, he's been doing this for years - so there's actually quite a few more than this. So we help with that, we want to actually help to encourage that, all of these kids are taught about Jesus, they become disciples of Jesus through his, living in his home. Okay next slide.

Every year we help to buy school supplies for kids. Again this, these kinds of things open doors for us in communities that are normally resistant to the gospel - when we're able to go in and do some practical things for the community. We don't do it on behalf of MB Mission, we actually do it on behalf of the local churches because then the churches and the pastors become the hero of the story. And they actually become the ones who earn favour with the local community and with the community leaders so that all of the sudden these people that were once the enemies now become friends. And so we assist with social projects like that as well. Okay next slide.

Back in Thailand where we've got that training center, it's actually a home to 25 or 30, I think the number is now - kids who live up in the hill tribes who can't go to the local high schools because they live too far away - they come and live there. Many of them are disciplined while they are there, they become Christians, they become the worship leaders and Sunday School teachers in their little village churches back when they go home on the weekends. And some of them have actually gone on to Bible college and come back and joined our staff. So again, it's a proven model of multiplication - it brings people back into ministry. Okay next slide.

Since 2010, the Changed Life Center land was purchased and those buildings were constructed. That *significantly* came from donations from this church. Most of you don't know this - you don't know these stories because these are restricted access countries, we have to be careful how we sort of share the stories and broadcast it, but we want you to know now, that you've been part of a multiplication story in Southeast Asia because of your generosity. We just want you to know that, and on behalf of all of the people involved there I want to say thank you. And the last 10 years over a 100 churches have been planted in Laos. That's a very conservative estimate. I just got a report from PK recently and for the last year, and he was apologizing, that in the last 12 months we only saw 1300 people saved and about 550 baptized and 15 new churches planted - and he said, "I'm sorry Bob, we had a down year <laughing>." So you take that 15 churches in the last year and you go back 10 years, I would say a conservative estimate would be 150 churches, probably closer to 200. Many of them are house churches, they can't get permission to build buildings, but some of those house churches actually have hundreds of people that attend them. They're called house churches because they don't have a building, so they meet a lot of times under a covered area in front of the pastors' house. So they're called a house church but that doesn't mean that they're necessarily small. There are some small ones, there are some families in villages where there's only one family, maybe it's the only Christian family in that whole village - there are some small house churches, but there are some quite significantly large ones too. Over 5,000 salvations and baptisms in the last 10 years in Laos. Currently around 400 churches and about 35,000 believers in a network of churches, and Northview Church has been a significant partner in helping to make all of that happen - I just want you to hear that. About half of them house churches.



Now moving forward, what's been happening is our Laotian leaders have been identifying the unreached people groups that live around them and strategizing how to reach them. At the same time, we're sending teams across borders to figure out ways to actually reach beyond - because a lot of these are the indigenous people that live in that region, those borders didn't exist 100, 150 years ago - so they actually speak the same language and have the same culture as some of the people in other countries. Okay, final slide.

Partnership opportunities - please continue to pray for us. Pray for boldness in the face of hostility, pray for unity of vision for our leaders, pray for PK and the key leaders that we've identified in each region. We have about 15 key leaders there, pray for wisdom and resources, for expansion into these new places, and praise God for partners like Northview Church. I just can't say it enough, on behalf of those leaders in Laos, behalf of MB Mission, behalf of PK, I just want to say thank you, thank you, thank you for your partnership with us and we're looking forward to many days in the future when we can just come back and report to you how God is reaching throughout that entire region. Thank you so much for your partnership with us. [Clapping]

### **[Closing with Greg Harris]**

The Apostle Paul in Romans 1 said that the good news of Jesus is the power of God for salvation. I love hearing from Bob, I've heard him a few times now and every time I hear him speak, I love how his affection for Jesus just oozes out of him. It's about Jesus. We could misunderstand our time this weekend by thinking that the multiplication vision's about our church - it's about a little 'n' logo plastered all over the place. This multiplication vision is not about a brand, it's about a person and his name is Jesus. We think that God has called us to a time such as this to actually give of ourselves sacrificially, joyfully of our days, of our time, of our energy and of our skills and of our money. Cause right now there are people who don't know the fame of Jesus and God is jealous for them. So why wouldn't we give - for the fame of our Lord.

Now you might be expecting at this time for me to call for a second offering, but I won't. Instead I want to draw our attentions to this little card, it's a pledge card where we want to ask anyone who's connected with Northview - if you're a guest here and you came into this weekend and you came into this weekend, we want to welcome you here, we hope you felt welcomed and invited and warmed and all of that kind of stuff, but I'm going to talk to the Northview people for a minute here. If you call Northview your home church, I seriously want you to take one of these cards and prayerfully figure out what it's going to look like for you to be a joyful, sacrificial giver, so that Jesus could be made famous. This pledge card is about raising money over and above the operations budget of Northview Community Church, so that when you give to the multiplication vision, you're giving to the Downes Road building you're giving to church multiplication regionally, and you're to giving to places like the Mekong River where thousands are hearing the gospel.

A few months ago at our pastor's elder's retreat which happens in August - we all gather together. We are talking about this vision, we are excited about bringing it forward to the congregation, we felt



strongly that this is what the Lord has put on us for this season. And we took one of those little cards back to our cabins and we as families over the next few days, prayerfully discern, each one of us, what would it look like for us to give joyfully, sacrificially, and generously so that Jesus would be famous. And I'm asking you as a brother in the Lord to consider doing the same. Take one of those cards, fill it out - think about what it would look like for your family in your situation in your state of life; to give joyfully, sacrificially, and generously so that Jesus can be made famous.

In the life of William Cary, he expected great things from God and he attempted great things for God. It's my prayer, that looking back people will say of Northview Community Church in this time, that we expected great things from God and we attempted them for him. Let me pray for us.

Father, I'm thankful for the gospel because it's the power of salvation for all who believe. You look out in the scope of the globe and you see rebels who are cursing you and living against your purposes and yet you pursue us and chase us down and make us your children, so that we can have a future and a hope, and an eternal joy. Lord would you motivate us by the goodness of the gospel and the greatness of our Savior to be the kind of people who give generously - not so that we can throw it on Christian resume of how great we are as Christians, but we can point to you the great Savior of your people, and say would you get the glory, the honor, the praise. We pray all of this, for your fame and in Christ's name, Amen.