

Sermon Transcript from June 19th, 2016 Overcoming Evil with Good Pastor Jamie Winship, Bridgetown Church

Alright, the most difficult topic in the Bible. Here we go. Overcoming evil with good. Wow. And here we go.

So, Father's Day. So, I'm a father and a grandfather. Yep. Thank you very much. And today, I was talking to my granddaughter and she said to her mom – my daughter in law – tell Pappy – they call me Pappy – "Happy Father's Day." And she says, "Happy Father's Day, because Pappy is your... what is he, Angie?"

My granddaughter goes, "My wife?"

So, that wasn't that moving of a story. Oh, thank you. Oh, okay. Wow, that was fast. That was like 44 seconds. Okay. So, Father's Day. Yeah. What I thought I would do – I think this topic of overcoming evil with good sounds complex. It's actually not that complex. So, I thought what I would do is I'm going to read from Romans 12, which is the passage where Paul writes that. And I thought, rather than all of us reading it together, I just want you to think about a couple of these thoughts as we go through them here. So, I'm just going to start at 9. Just listen to this and let's think of it in the context of this: so, Jesus comes, He dies, He's risen, gives the great commission – you know, the "go into all the world and make disciples, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them all the things I've commanded," and then He sends them out. Right? And tells them to wait for the Spirit to come.

And they do that. So, when you think of that command as you're going into the world – which is the command, present and continuous. As you're going into the world, make disciples. So, it's not just a "go," it's, "as you're going wherever it is you're going, make disciples." Which is a little bit different than how I was raised in it.

So, that's it. That's the commission and then now we have Paul writing to Romans, to believers in Rome, about 100 of them in this cosmopolitan city of Rome of a million people and there's about 100 believers, and this is the kind of stuff he's saying to this group of 100, who are already divided because there's Gentiles and Jewish believers trying to mix together and the Jews were kicked out and now they're back and it's complicated.

So, here's Paul in Romans 12 telling them what "as you're going into the world" means. Here we go. Here's what he says.

Romans 12:9: "[Let your] love be sincere [a real thing]; hate what is evil [loathe ungodliness, turn in horror from wickedness], but hold fast to that which is good."

So, this is sort of what you would be doing on a Monday. After you do that on Monday, then: "Love one another with brotherly affection [as members of one family], giving precedence and showing honor to one another."

That's for the commute.

Romans 12:11: "Never lag in zeal..."

Never lag in zeal. Not, "Try not to lag in zeal."

"Never lag in zeal."

"Never lag in zeal and in earnest endeavor; be aglow..." – on Monday – "...and burning with the Spirit serving the Lord. Rejoice and exult in hope; be steadfast and patient in suffering and tribulation;" – which we talked about last week – "be constant in prayer."

"Contribute to the needs of God's people [sharing in the necessities of the saints]; pursue the practice of hospitality. Bless those who persecute you..."

Now it's just getting ridiculous. While you're doing all this other stuff, "Bless those who

persecute you [who are cruel in their attitude toward you];" – in case you don't know who it is that's persecuting you, it's the ones who are cruel in their attitude towards you.

It's like, "Are you persecuting me? Oh, you're cruel. Yeah. Okay. Bless that one."

"Bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice [sharing others' joy], and weep with those who weep [sharing others' grief]."

Lots to do there.

"Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty (snobbish, high-minded, exclusive), but readily adjust yourself to [people, things] and give yourselves to humble tasks. Never overestimate yourself or be wise in your own conceits."

Ah, wow. Okay.

"Repay no evil for evil, but take thought for what is honest and proper and noble [aiming to be above reproach] in the sight of every person."

Wow.

"If possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave the way open for [God's] wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is Mine, I will repay (requite), says the Lord."

Deuteronomy 32.

"But if your enemy is hungry, feed him;" – what? – "if he is thirsty, give him drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head."

I don't see that.

"Do not let yourself be overcome by evil, but overcome (master) evil with good." – luck.

Wow. That's Monday. "As you're going into the world make disciples."

"How?"

"Like that."

That's how you do it right there. How in the world can you do that? How can you do verse 9? Not 10, 11, 12, 13 and all the way to 21. Just 9. But, is it possible to do all that? That seems impossible to me. So, every Mother's Day, Father's Day, those holidays, I think of this one incident because, when I was a young police officer, I was working a Sunday Mother's Day – I think it was Mother's Day or Father's Day. It was a day like that. It was day work and it was Sunday and, for the police people in here, Sunday day work is like just don't do anything.

It was pouring rain and it was 6am pouring rain in Washington D.C. And I was just like, "Oh, man. I'm just going to sit and wait in the rain and pray that nothing bad happens and just cruise through this day and get home." We had two little kids at the time. Two little sons. "And just get home."

And I'm sitting there and I'm thinking about my kids and I see, down the street from me, in the pouring rain, this little girl and this little boy in pajamas walking and holding hands. And I think, "Nothing about this can be good. This all has to be bad."

In the rain. And they're little. So, I get out of my car and I go over to them and they're walking down the side of the road. I get them over and I get them into my cruiser and I said, "What are you doing?"

They're in their pajamas. And the little boy, who turned out to be five, was holding a

teddy bear. And his sister, who was seven, was leading the way holding his hand. And she said, "We're trying to get away from the bad man."

And I thought, "Oh, wow. What bad man?"

"The one that hurt our brother."

"Where's your brother?"

"He's back where we came from."

"Where did you come from?"

"We don't know."

"What happened to your brother?"

"He's really hurt."

And this is the United States of America on Father's Day on a Sunday and it's already so bad I don't know what to do. So, I start talking to them and the little boy won't talk to me because he's so traumatized. But, the little girl will talk to me. And I'm asking her, "Okay, if I drive around can you just show me which way you came? Did you come down this way?"

So, I start driving around and she said, "Don't take us back there. Don't take us back there."

And I said, "Well, I just want to go check on your brother. I won't take you in. I've just got to go see your brother."

And I'm on the radio and I'm trying to get social services out on a Sunday morning in the rain and nobody's there and I'm driving around and I said, "Is it here? Do you think it's here?"

She says, "It's over there. We jumped off the deck of that apartment complex over there."

"Where did you learn how to do that?"

"We saw it on television. We've been planning this."

"You've been planning this?"

"Yes. It's so bad."

So, we got the building. She thinks it's the building and she says, "Go in and go up the stairs and on the left like on this side."

So, by the time I get there I'm so agitated and angry at whoever or whatever's happening in this apartment that I can't bear it and I get up there and I just start banging on the door. I leave them in the car and I start banging on the door like this. And the little girl tells me there's a man in there with their mother, but that their mother's asleep.

So, I'm banging on the door and I can hear this man in there and he thinks it's the little girl and the little boy and he starts cussing them out and calling them names as he's coming down the hallway or something to the door.

"I'm going to..."

He says what he's going to do to them and, when he opens the door and he's so mad and there I am standing there and he just looks at me and he just runs back into the apartment and I chase him and he goes and he locks himself in the back room and I come down the hall and, there on the floor, is the brother. And, there on the couch is

the mother passed out. And the brother is severely injured. He can't move. Broken bones. And he can't move, but he's alive and he's looking at me in horror. I don't think he can feel anything. So, my rage is going out of control. So, I just take out my gun. It's a Sunday morning. No one knows where I am. And I walk down the hall and I kick in the door and the guy is like cowering on the bed. And I'm just thinking of the horror that these little kids have already experienced in their life; the trauma. And this kid, whatever will happen to him, I don't even know. And I'm just holding my gun in my hand and I'm just looking at this guy thinking, "I can say anything happened in this room. Anything. Nobody will know. 'He went for my gun. It went off. It went off right between his eyes accidentally.'"

And I'm so filled with rage that I can't even think. I'm just shaking looking at this... I wouldn't even call it a person that did this to these kids. And I walk up to him and I'm looking at him and I'm just holding my weapon in my hand and it's like the Lord said, "Let it go. Let it go. This is not for you. This is not for you to do. I will take care of this. Do your job. Let it go."

"Like, forgive this guy?"

"Let it go. Just let it go."

So, I call an ambulance, arrest the guy. The ambulance comes and takes the kid out. I arrest the guy and take him out. Child Protective Services comes and I'm talking to the little girl and I said, "What is your name?"

She tells me her name – and I don't remember what it was – and I said, "Where were you walking to?"

And she said, "We were walking to my grandmother's house."

And I said, "Where is it?"

And she told me where it was. It was 50 miles away. 50 miles away and they were going to walk there. This was like early in my career and I thought, "This is a Sunday morning on Father's Day or something and it's this bad? What is it when it's really bad?"

And I came home after that shift and Donna, my wife, was asking me like, "How was work?"

And I said, "I need you to do something for me. I'm going to tell you something that happened and I need you to cry for me, because I couldn't cry. I was so mad."

I said, "I'm just going to tell you what happened, briefly, and I need you to cry."

And I told her what happened and she cried. And it just stuck in me. So then, what do you do with that? What do I do here? Love one another with brotherly affection. Never lag in zeal and in earnest... really? In this world? Really? So, that little girl, that last I saw of her was going with Child Protective Services. Who knows what'll happen to her and that little brother of hers. And off they go in this horrible beginning of a horrible life in a bad world.

And there's really nothing I can do for them to help them. Nothing. My gun and my badge and all that stuff is just powerless in this situation. What if I would've shot the guy? I would've been arrested and that would've been disastrous and the whole thing. There was just no good way out of it. And here's what God says to me in that moment: "Let it go."

"Really? Let it go?"

But, what can I do? I let it go. And then, five years after that, we get this job opportunity to go work among militant Muslims. Oh, good. I can really practice this then. "Live in harmony, don't be high-minded, repay no evil for evil. Would you like to go work among militant Muslims?"

"Sure. Yeah."

Here's what Jesus says: "As you're going into the world, make disciples."

Really? So, that job interests me. Pursue that. Don't go with that, but go into the militantly Muslim world. Ten years after, ten years after this Father's Day, we're working there in Indonesia, largest Muslim population. We live on an island with 2 and a half million Muslims. We're the only Americans there and there's 300 Saudi missionaries there working to promote fundamentalist Islam. 300 Saudi missionaries, 2 and a half million Muslims and us. "As you're going into the world, make disciples, love one another."

So, we start and we try to do this thing and it's difficult and it's hard to do because they're so mean and they don't like us and I get arrested and put on trial for insulting Muhammad and it's 10 years in prison there if you are convicted of it, which I wasn't, thank God. But, it still affected me. I was like, "Wow. We're trying to help you. We're trying to be nice to you and we're bring Jesus to you and this is what you're doing to us?"

And then I'm teaching classes, teaching in a graduate school in the university there and it's 99% Muslim students and the other ones that aren't are Hindu. And I'm trying to work with them and teach with them and I keep running into this radical student movement, which is really who's the cause of all the violence there. And I keep running into their leaders because they come into my classroom and keep interrupting me and calling me names while I'm trying to teach. Every day. All the time.

But, this one guy in there, wow. This one guy, he was a leader and he was the one. This guy was just non-stop in trying to provoke me and get me. He's the one that got me arrested and then the Lord intervened in that situation. Back into the classroom and he's at it again trying to stir up this uprising; this violence. And then he works it out so another one of the teachers, another American guy that came with us, his house gets broken into and they stab him multiple times in front of his kid and his kid doesn't speak for a year after that. They have to leave, MedEvac him out. And, back into the classroom and there's the guys that did it in there, proud, glad and waiting for the chance to do it to us.

And our team leaves, one by one, until it's just me and Donna and our kids left. What are you supposed to do? Like, what can we do? And then this guy, this one student, he stands up in a class one day and he says to me, "Oh, I think I get what you're saying. Isn't what you're saying this? Isn't it that you say that God loves us? Isn't that it?"

And I'm like, "Yeah. Actually, that's right."

"And that He loves us so much that He sent Jesus to die for us?"

And I said, "Yeah. That's it."

And he said, "And don't you just want us to accept the love of Jesus?"

And I said, "Yeah. That's it."

And, in front of my class, 75 grad students, and he says, "Now, this is what I think of that," and he spit in my face in front of all of the grad students. He goes, "That's what I think of Jesus and you."

And, in that moment, I had a flashback of being in a bedroom on Father's Day or Mother's Day. Because, in my position in the university, when a student did that to a professor in that culture, it's capital punishment; death. They would never do that. So, I have this, and a couple of my students that had become my friends jumped up and they were like, "What are you going to do? Are you going to defend your honor here? You can't let that happen to you."

And I'm in this difficult situation like, "What do I do?"

I mean, I know what I could do to him physically. I could do that with no problem. But, what do I do? What's the real battle here? What's the real war here? And spit in my face and I felt the same rage that had been present in me for 10 years. The same rage. It never went away. It was right there and it was triggered like that. Bam. And I just was like, "Oh my gosh," and I just want to kill this person.

But, it's like in my head God says, "Let it go. Let it go."

And I just walk out of the room. The students that knew me that were friendly to me were embarrassed by it. Like, "You just walked away from that? Can we respect you

ever again? You didn't stand up for your rights and all that stuff."

And I walked out and I just went home and I was like, "Lord, what do You do? Do You do this? What is this? How do You do this?"

So, in my position in the university, it was really tenuous and I had already been in trouble and put on trial and now I'm in this situation and it's like I'm just losing respect and losing ground and I don't know what to do. What do you do?

This. This is impossible. Really? Come on. But, before Paul gets to 9, he starts over in chapter 11 and he says this in Romans 11:36: **"For from Him [God] and through Him and to Him are all things."**

"From Him and through Him and to Him are all things."

What does that mean? "For all things originate with Him and come from Him; all things live through Him, and all things center in and tend to consummate and to end in Him."

He is this beginning and ending of all things. To Him be the glory forever, amen.

"Therefore," Paul says, "brethren, I beg of you because of this..."

Because of what?

"Because in Him and through Him and from Him are all things. All things are in Him and from Him and back to Him. Because of that, I'm begging you," Paul says.

"In view of [all] the mercies of God, to make a decisive dedication of your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy (devoted, consecrated) and well pleasing to God, which is your reasonable (rational, intelligent) service and spiritual worship.

"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your [entire] mind [by its new ideals and its new attitudes], so that you may prove [for yourselves] what is good and acceptable and the perfect will of God, even the thing which is good and acceptable and perfect [in His sight for you]."

Wow. Now, in this mind that I'm thinking where I just want to shoot and fight and kill and take revenge for innocent kids and disrespectful, militant people, if I just want to do that, I cannot do 9 through 21. It's impossible. But, if I believe that in Him and from Him and through Him are all things and my mind can be transformed, it can be changed, it can be made to think and to do and to move in ways beyond what the patterns of the world say, then maybe 9 through 21 are possible.

But, how do you get there? By presenting yourself as a living sacrifice to God. How do you do that? Here's how you do it. It's really hard. "God, I present myself as a living sacrifice to you. Use me. Change my mind. Renew my mind."

In the pattern of my world, I would kill this guy and I would beat this guy up. I would do all this in my pattern; in my world. And in that world, I would die and I would be filled with hatred and rage and it would've accomplished nothing and it would just perpetuate the hatred and the violence and the fighting. That's what I would've done. And, in all of that process, internally, I would be destroying myself through hatred and bitterness and frustration and depression and post-traumatic stress syndrome, and I would die. It would be like I would go into a battle to defend something and the evil that I'm trying to kill, I can't kill and it actually infects me and, when I leave the place after the war is over, I come back to a place of peace, but there is no peace because the evil now owns me and I have to kill myself to stop the evil or drug myself or something to stop it; to quiet it.

But, I cannot live in relation to other people, especially people I don't like. Impossible. But, if my mind is renewed, if my mind and spirit is transformed, it can be done. How? Like this.

So, in that time after that guy spits on me and I've been on trial and all of this, I just keep presenting myself to God. "What do I do? I'm here to make disciples. I'm going into the world."

The worst thing you can do, the absolute worst thing you can do, is not to go into the world. Do you understand that? Of all the injustice out there, of all the terrible things out there, the worst thing you can do is not go. If you do not go, we lose. If our goal is to self-protect and self-defend, then we lose. We just hand evil the world and go, "Just don't come get me. You can have all of that, but don't come get me."

You lose. "Because I don't like those people out there. I'm not going out there to risk myself for them. Why would any normal person do it?"

A normal person wouldn't. A transformed person would and can. That's why, when we go into the world, we have to be filled with the Holy Spirit. We can't have a false view of the world and of ourselves and try and go out there. It has to be real. You are more than conquerors. Nothing can separate you from the love of God in Christ Jesus. Nothing can do that. Nothing out there can separate you from God. Nothing. Not death. Nothing. Not life. The demonic. Nothing can separate you. Do you not believe that? Do you not know that you are the temple of the living God? Go out there and vanquish evil. How? With good.

What does that mean? This guy, I'm praying, "God, I'm asking You to give us a sweeping, Holy Spirit movement among these militant Muslims and they spit in my face? Jesus, You must not know what this is like here. They're spitting on me. Do You not get that? They're abusing people down here. Do You not understand physical abuse? Do You not understand betrayal and abuse and abandonment and false accusation and murder? Do You not get that?"

And He's like, "Oh, I get it way more than you do. You have not yet shed blood in your standing against sin. I have. Present yourself a living sacrifice to me and I'll tell you a way to do this stuff that you'll never think of. And guess what? It'll be good and it'll win."

"Then what do I do?"

So, in that process of praying through that, we have to go from this little island where we are into Jakarta, which is like flying from Washington to California to get a visa process. So, I'm there and I don't even know if I want to stay in this place. It's so terrible and horrible and unfruitful. So, I was only in it if amazing, miraculous things happen. Not people spit on you and you get arrested and put on trial. I don't want those Bible stories. There's other Bible stories I like. Like Solomon and his palace. I love that story. The queen comes and gives him stuff.

So, we're in a different part of the Bible apparently. So, I'm in Jakarta, me and one of the other American guys, and it's terrible. And his wife is so sick that he eventually has to leave. So, we go to this hotel lobby in Jakarta and I'm sitting there and I'm thinking, "What? God, I just don't know what to do. Why would I stay in this? What is the point?"

I'm at this table and, across the lobby, I see this older woman and this young girl and they're Americans. I mean, they look Western and they're talking and the younger girl keeps pointing at me. I thought that was kind of weird. And eventually, while I'm telling God how terrible all of this is and none of it'll work, this young girl comes over to me, she's 18, and she says, "Did you used to be a police officer?"

And I was like, "I don't know. I don't know if I want to say yes or no to this."

Because I wasn't always a good one, you know?

She goes, "Yeah, yeah. Weren't you? Do you remember a rainy day? A Father's Day or a Mother's Day?"

"Yeah, yeah, yeah."

She goes, "You picked up me and my brother."

And I was like, "Oh my God. Really?"

She goes, "Yeah. This is the lady that took care of us. I'm here on a missions trip."

I said, "For what?"

She goes, "I don't know. I have this thing in my about reaching out to Muslims. I don't know where I got it from."

"What's your brother do?"

"He's great. He's a believer. He's a follower of Christ. Amazing."

"How about the other brother?"

"He's alive. He's well. God healed him."

"Wow."

She goes, "I just really appreciate that you picked us up and the way you treated us. It just meant so much to us. I don't know if you knew how well this turned out. This stuff could have a negative affect on you."

I'm like, "Well, you know, you know."

So, here it is. And God's saying, "This is what I do with bad situations. This is what I do if you will overcome the evil that was in that apartment with God by listening to what I say in there instead of doing what you would do. This is what happens. It's called redemption."

And not only are they okay – and that other guy, wherever he is, I'm sure the Lord took care of him. They're okay, they're spreading the Gospel, they're transferring the Kingdom one hundred fold. On the day that I'm telling God was a terrible, horrible, terrible day. "And we lost that day, Lord. We didn't win that day."

He's like, "You didn't. I did."

But, looking at that girl is like, "What am I thinking? Oh my gosh. How much more can I conform to the patterns of the world?"

Just because I'm living in a Muslim country and trying to do the Kingdom work doesn't mean I'm well. It doesn't mean I'm thinking correctly. It's from down here. It's living in truth down here. Where can I do that? Anywhere.

I go back to the island where we lived and I'm thinking, "Okay, God. Explain this situation with this guy spitting on me from Your perspective so I can see it and so I can think highly of this situation so I can think less of myself and I can be joyful and I can weep when it's time to weep and rejoice when it's time to rejoice and don't repay evil for evil and don't curse those, but give them drinks of water. Show me how to do that in this situation I find myself in, because I don't like these people."

Paul says this to the Philippian church – the great Philippian church, the ones that were really experts in love. He says this to them: "As you imitate me when I'm there, so imitate me when I'm not there. Continue to work out your salvation with fear. With self-distrust and trembling continue to work it out. For God is energizing you both to will and then to do for His good pleasure."

"I don't even have the will."

"Oh, that's okay. God will take care of that."

"I'm trying to do with no will."

"It doesn't work. But, God is at work to energize. He's energizing you both to will and then to do, and it's so good because He is in and through and before and after all things."

In the whole situation, He's already in it. So, go I back there and I'm like, "God, what are you doing in this guy spitting on me? We're losing here. Guys are getting stabbed. What's going on?"

And during that next week, this guy that spit on me, he comes at night to our house and he knocks on the door and I'm stunned it's him. I figure, "Well, here we go. Martyrdom. Another chapter I didn't want to read. Where is the Queen of Sheba?"

And the guy says to me, "Can I talk to you?"

And I'm like, "Yeah. Okay."

And he said, "I have a chance to take a scholarship position in Singapore."

And I'm like, "Great. Yay."

And he said, "Here's the problem. I can't afford to get there."

And I'm thinking, "You're not... you're not... you're not going to ask me."

And he said, "Would you mind helping pay my way to get the scholarship?"

[Laughs]

That's exactly what I did. And I said, "Well, what about your Muslim friends? You know, the gang of..."

And he's like, "Yeah, they didn't really want to help me. They were jealous. But I thought you might be the only one that would help me."

This is how long it took me to answer this question. Because, if I could conform to the pattern of the world, I would've said, "No, man. You know what? This is God's vengeance on you. You're not going and I'm here to tell you happily that you'll never get out of here. And there'll probably be a huge earthquake later."

And you know what the Lord says? "Give him a drink of water. Give it to him. Give it to him. Because I would. Because a transformed mind would do it. A living sacrifice will do it."

And I knew, right in that moment, I knew that every time I had a knelt down and me and Donna had said, "God, give us these people. Help us. Show us how to win these people," the Lord would say to us, "They don't understand forgiveness. They don't know how to receive forgiveness. So, I'm going to use you to teach them how to forgive."

"How?"

"By them offending you and you showing them what forgiveness is."

"Really? That's the plan?"

And Jesus is like, "That's what I did to you. You were my enemy when I died for you."

Be transformed in the way you think. So, I said to him, "Alright. Yeah. Okay."

But, I said, "I just want you to know, honestly, that the only reason I'm going to do this for you is because of the Christ that not only you spit on, I spit on him too. He's the only reason I can do this for you."

And the guy said, "I know. I know that. I know it's because of Jesus."

And I said, "If I give you this money, will you receive it in His name, because I will never let you pay this back to me. You have to receive it in His name."

And he did. And when he took that money and he left and he went to Singapore and he came back, it was the beginning like the wind in that dark place of the Spirit of God moving like this. And he came back and other people came in, other workers came in and that dark place, 500 Muslim families come to faith suddenly and Imams start coming from the east side of the island – which is the militant side – into little tiny Javanese churches on the

west side, going, "We're dreaming of Jesus. We don't know what this is. We're dreaming of Jesus."

And this movement begins. Over years it spreads out. And then we jump over into another people group, 30 million Muslims, and the wind starts faster there. Do you know why? Because we rejoiced quicker there. We forgave faster there when we were insulted or hurt or our people were killed or whatever. Faster. Quicker. Overcoming evil with good. Rejoicing with them. Mourning and then rejoicing with them like that. Overcoming evil with good. Today, Indonesia, the largest Muslim country in the world, is one of the fastest growing Muslim populations coming to faith of anywhere in the world. Jakarta just elected their first Christian mayor. A Muslim city as big as New York City elected a Christian mayor. How does that happen with no war? How does that happen with no bloodshed except the blood of the believers?

Because good is stronger than evil. Here's our challenge: pain and suffering, although God I don't think causes it, He uses it to strengthen us, to teach us, to mature us like we talked about last week. And when we're mature and when we're ready and when we know our true identity and when we're not afraid of evil out there, here's what we need to go do: we need to run out there against any injustice that you can think of. Refugees being kicked out of their countries, human trafficking, drugs, violence, all of it. We need to run out there as we're going into the world making disciples, transforming this out there. Why not go? Why not go be a part of that incredible thing?

Two reasons. One: we don't understand forgiveness. If you don't know how to receive forgiveness from the Lord for anything in your life and you don't know how to extend forgiveness outward into a lost world, you are stuck forever. You are trapped forever. Tonight, we have the opportunity to just open our arms to God and say, "I accept the flood of Your forgiveness for any part of my life where I fear guilt and shame. I take it. I receive it. And then, anyone out there, Lord, that I refuse to forgive, I release."

You don't have to agree with them or like them, it's just: let go. Let it go. It's poisoning you. Let them go. Forgiveness, receiving and extending. Because, you're living in this room in false identities that are steeped in fear and unforgiveness. That's how the enemy holds us back. But, if we receive forgiveness and extend forgiveness, fear goes away and then, suddenly, I think, "Wow, I can go out and impact. Oh my gosh. It can be done."

And you start telling these kinds of stories like that was that horrible situation and, a year later, "No, it's this. God was using it for this."

And you're parts of it and you're moving with it like the wind; the wind into the darkness blowing in the light and the power of the Spirit. We can do that. We can do that. I'm asking you, I'm inviting you to be a part of this. Just, as you're going out those doors, there it is. There's an enemy that's terrified of people who have been forgiven and know how to forgive and are transformed. He's afraid of you. Go get 'em. Go get 'em.

Father, thank You for these people. Thank You, Lord, for Abdulrahman and what You did in his life. Thank You for that girl and her brothers that You saved. Lord, thank You for withholding my hand in vengeance that wasn't mine and hatred that wasn't mine. Lord, thank You for these things.

Father, would You just move now? We ask, Father, that You would, move in the power of Your Holy Spirit, through this room in whatever way You want to, Lord. Right now. We're just going to move with You, Lord, as You move. I just pray these things in Jesus' name, amen.