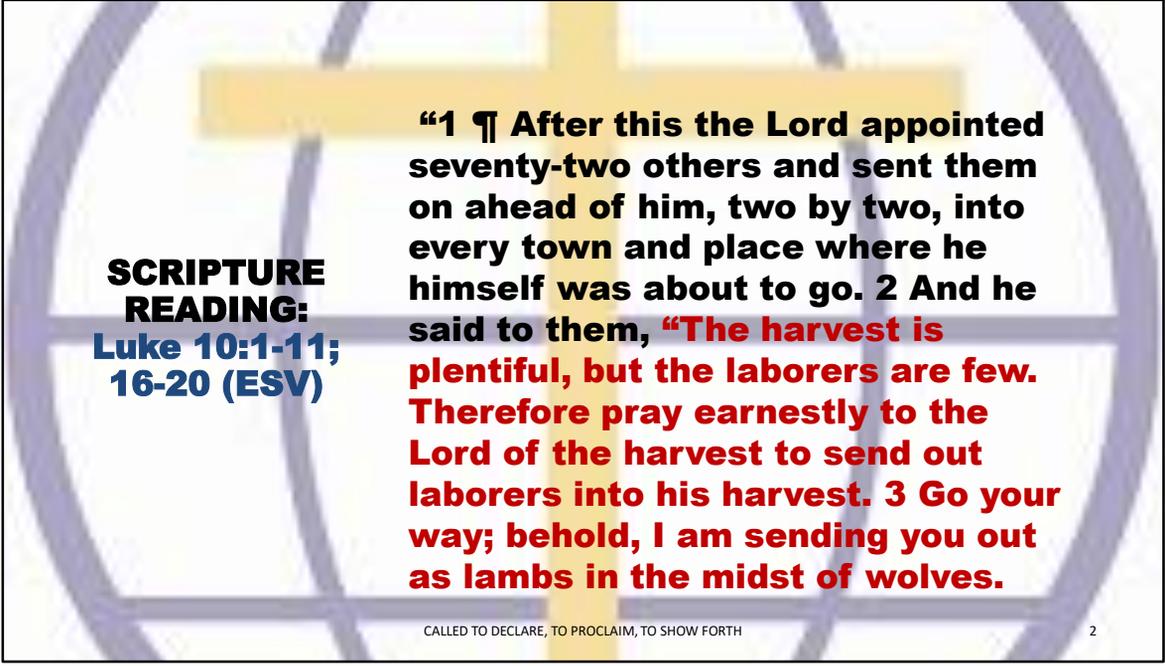


CALLED TO DECLARE, TO PROCLAIM, TO SHOW FORTH

**Grace Communion International
Minister: Eric Vautour**

Date: July 7, 2019



**SCRIPTURE
READING:
Luke 10:1-11;
16-20 (ESV)**

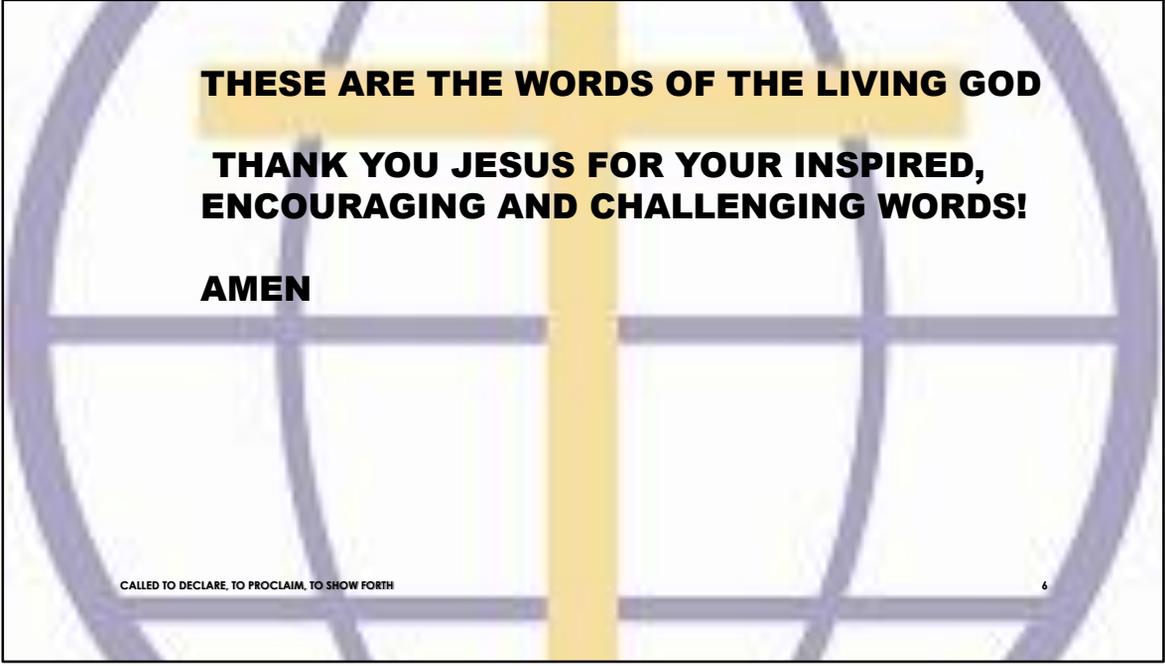
“1 ¶ After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them on ahead of him, two by two, into every town and place where he himself was about to go. 2 And he said to them, **“The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. 3 Go your way; behold, I am sending you out as lambs in the midst of wolves.**

4 Carry no moneybag, no knapsack, no sandals, and greet no one on the road. 5 Whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace be to this house!' 6 And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest upon him. But if not, it will return to you. 7 And remain in the same house, eating and drinking what they provide, for the laborer deserves his wages. Do not go from house to house. 8 Whenever you enter a town and they receive you, eat what is set before you.

9 Heal the sick in it and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.' 10 But whenever you enter a town and they do not receive you, go into its streets and say, 11 'Even the dust of your town that clings to our feet we wipe off against you. Nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near.'" (Lu 10:1-11 ESV)

Luke 10:16-20 "16 "The one who hears you hears me, and the one who rejects you rejects me, and the one who rejects me rejects him who sent me."

○ **17 ¶ THE SEVENTY-TWO RETURNED WITH JOY, SAYING, “LORD, EVEN THE DEMONS ARE SUBJECT TO US IN YOUR NAME!” 18 AND HE SAID TO THEM, “I SAW SATAN FALL LIKE LIGHTNING FROM HEAVEN. 19 BEHOLD, I HAVE GIVEN YOU AUTHORITY TO TREAD ON SERPENTS AND SCORPIONS, AND OVER ALL THE POWER OF THE ENEMY, AND NOTHING SHALL HURT YOU. 20 NEVERTHELESS, DO NOT REJOICE IN THIS, THAT THE SPIRITS ARE SUBJECT TO YOU, BUT REJOICE THAT YOUR NAMES ARE WRITTEN IN HEAVEN.”” (Lu 10:16-20 ESV)**



THESE ARE THE WORDS OF THE LIVING GOD

**THANK YOU JESUS FOR YOUR INSPIRED,
ENCOURAGING AND CHALLENGING WORDS!**

AMEN

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Because God does not think like we do, his words are always encouraging but also challenging. Today, we are going to consider Jesus' instructions to his 72 disciples who were sent out to preach the good news of the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.

There's an interesting story in 2nd Kings 5. It is the story of a great man name Naaman. He was a commander in the Army of the King of Syria. The Bible tells us that he was a mighty man of valour but he suffered from leprosy.

During one of their conquests, they had captured the young girl from on the tribes of Israel. This young girl worked in the service of Naaman's wife. This young girl told Naaman's wife there was a prophet and Samaria who could heal him. Naaman went to the King and the Kings send the letter to the King of Israel to open the way for Naaman to see Elisha, the prophet of God.

What would have happened is the your girl would not have said anything? How could the queen have knows about God 's prophet Elisha unless told?

.When the King of Israel heard the news, he became very discouraged. He saw the King of Syria's request as a challenge he could not meet. He had not way for responding to

the King of Syria in a way that would be satisfactory.

When Elisha heard of the King of Israel's discouragement, he told the king to let Naaman come to him.

When Naaman came to see Elisha, he was not prepared for Elisha's response. First of all, Elisha did not meet with him personally but sent a messenger.

Elisha gave him very peculiar instructions. He told him to go and wash in the Jordan seven times and that his flesh would be restored and he would be clean (verse 10).

Naaman was insulted by these instructions. The instructions appeared to him to be nonsensical, foolishness. He was in a rage. Why go wash in the Jordan River when the rivers where he lived were perceived to be better than the waters of the Jordan.

His servants were able to convince him not to act impulsively and just leave. Naaman let himself be influenced by the words of his servants and he listened to the words of Elisha. He went down to the Jordan River and dipped himself seven times. He was completely healed. His flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean (verse 14). What an act of grace by God.

Sometimes, as human beings, we can ask ourselves why God would give such instructions.

To walk with the Lord is to walk in faithfulness to God's faithfulness towards us. This is certainly what happened to Naaman when in humility he obeyed the prophet of the Lord, Elisha. Now let us go back two Luke 10 (next slide)



Let us imagine being in the shoes of those 72 disciples and the instructions given to them by Jesus.

Again, imagine being part of the 72. Imagine how we would think and feel if we were one of them. Imagine what would go through our minds.

We would have heard the story of the 12 apostles, as we read in Luke 9:1-6 how the 12 apostles had been sent on a mission to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal. They had taken nothing for their journey, no walking-stick, no bag, no food and no money. They were not to bring the second change of clothing. The apostles had gone off on the mission trip. They were empowered by God to preach the gospel and to heal everywhere.

Now we, who are now part of the 72, are told to go on a similar mission trip. Like the 12, we are told not to bring anything with us. For accompaniment, we are told to go in pairs. Being disciples of Jesus, we would have been knowledgeable of the tremendous miracles that Jesus had made. For example, we would have been aware that Jesus had fed a huge crowd of people with only five loaves of bread and two fish. We would have been very aware that from those five loaves and two fish that there was plenty left

over.

We would have seen Jesus healing people. We would have seen him having authority over demons. We would have heard his powerful preaching. We would have seen the crowds following him.

Given that situation, I imagine we would have been very excited to be able to participate in such a mission. This was a big mission. The mission was more than we could accomplish even if we are 72. Jesus tells us to pray for more labourers to go into the mission field because there are too few of us

. We would have been told to go to different houses until we found some people that would receive us and offer us hospitality following our work of preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing the sick

Jesus also tells us, as part of this group of 72, that not everybody would welcome us with open arms. In fact, some would be very upset with us for preparing the way of Jesus as he goes towards Jerusalem.

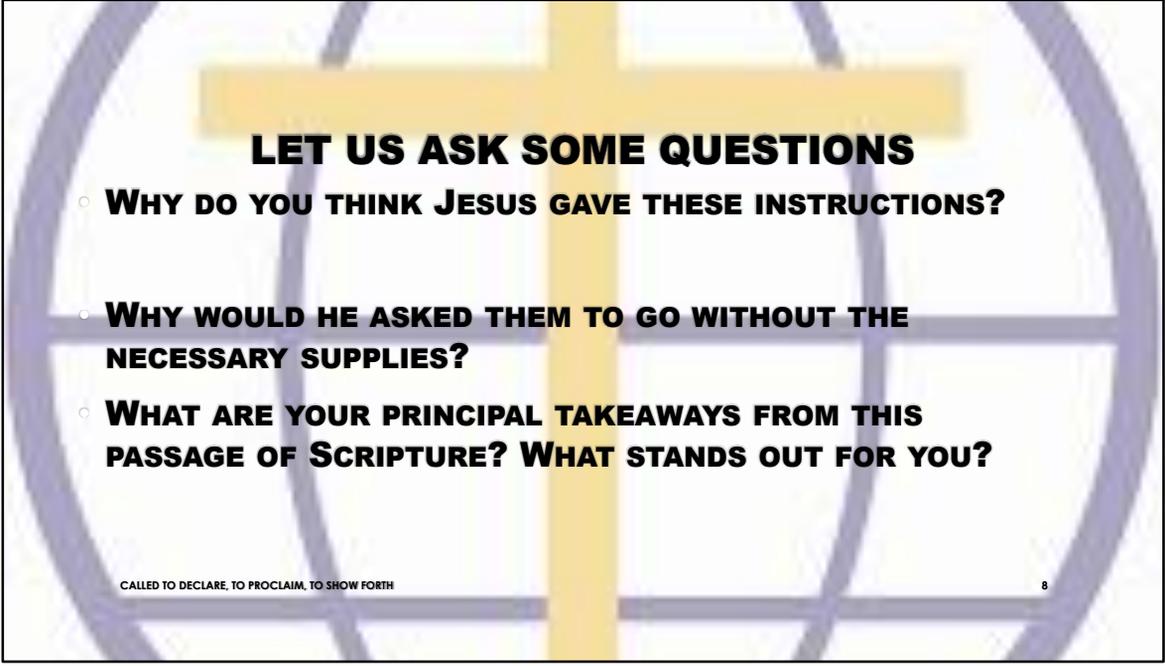
Luke does not go into great details about what these disciples would preach. He told them, as they heal the sick, to say that the kingdom of God has come near to you (verse 9)

Jesus was sending them into every town in place where he himself was about to go.

He also told him how big of a job this would be. Their mission would not be a piece of cake. They would be sent out as lambs in the midst of wolves. If we had lived in that time, this would have been a very vivid illustration because wolves eat lambs. We would be aware that lambs are a part of one of their favourite meals.

Imagine Jesus talking to you personally, talking to me personally about this mission.

I imagine I would have mixed emotions, excitement about going and yet a bit of anxiety about what I would have to face during my mission. All 72 of us would have nothing physical to fall back on—no money, no change of clothes and no reservations as to where we would stay. We would have to trust the words of Jesus that somebody in those cities would welcome us.



LET US ASK SOME QUESTIONS

- **WHY DO YOU THINK JESUS GAVE THESE INSTRUCTIONS?**
- **WHY WOULD HE ASKED THEM TO GO WITHOUT THE NECESSARY SUPPLIES?**
- **WHAT ARE YOUR PRINCIPAL TAKEAWAYS FROM THIS PASSAGE OF SCRIPTURE? WHAT STANDS OUT FOR YOU?**

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Certainly, a number of us have been rejected by family members or by people who were close to us. I remember after I was baptized, I came back home to my small home community. I had a very dear friend who is now deceased. From that day forward, our friendship ceased and never to be the same. The idea that I had left the village and I was brought into was very offensive to people. It changed other people's perception of me and still does to this day.

When we came to understand what Jesus had done on the cross for all of us taking on our very life within himself to give us a new life, it caused more distancing with some people. Being in the role of a pastor, I remember the acrimony of some and the contempt of others towards me.

On the other hand, united to Christ, God healed other relationships within and outside the church which became closer and so much more peaceful.

To Christianity is all about the relationship with the triune God in and through Christ by the Holy Spirit. When Jesus died on the cross, he took all of our life in himself. Remember when Jesus died he died for all of us because we were all dead in our sins. In our own life, there was nothing to redeem. We were doomed to perdition. The Bible

tells us that when Jesus died over 2000 years ago we died with him. It means that everything of us died what we perceive to be sinful and what we perceive to be good. Jesus took upon himself all our pain, all our sorrows within his own person. He became sin for us. He was incarnate in our flesh, he lived for us, he was baptized for us, he died for us, he was resurrected to give us a brand-new life, and he ascended to heaven where he is our mediator before the throne of God.

We always have to remember who Jesus is. Jesus is God come to us in our flesh. He is not just any man. He is God made flesh. He is the incarnate man. The perfect high priest. He is the perfect sacrifice, the Lamb of God. "He sacrifice himself in our place. He represents God to humanity and humanity to God in his own person as the one on behalf of the many" as James Torrence wrote in an article entitled **CHRIST IN OUR PLACE, as we read on page 44 of A PASSION FOR CHRIST, the Vision That Ignites Ministry.**

This helps us to better understand the next verses we are going to read.

Life is a follower of Jesus is challenging but it is also filled with good news as we shall see in the next verses.

“17 ¶ The seventy-two returned with joy, saying, “Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!” 18 And he said to them, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. 19 Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you. 20 Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.”” (Lu 10:17-20 ESV)

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As they went out in obedience to Jesus, what they experienced exceeded all their expectations. In spite of the trouble they faced, the rejection by some, they returned with joy!

Amazing things that happened. They had power over the forces of evil, over demons.

Jesus identified who he was. He saw the fall of Satan from heaven. It was like lightning. Instantaneous!

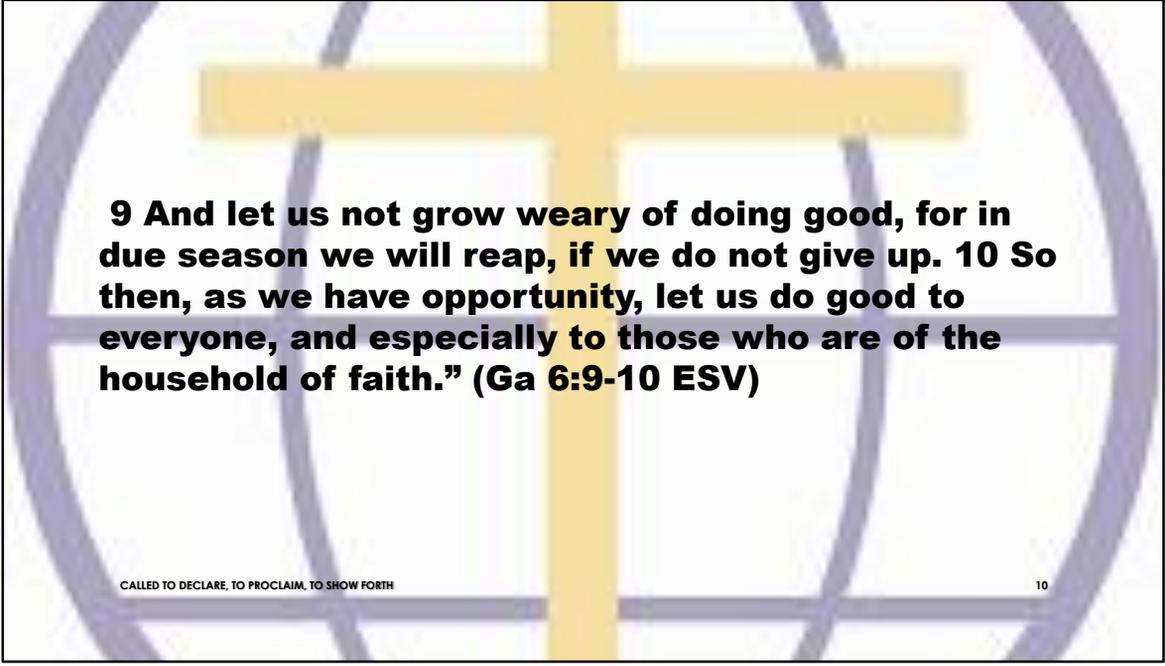
Some have taken in a few verses literally and many have suffered the consequences. Some charismatics think that they can handle snakes and that their venom becomes innocuous or harmless for them for them. Of course we know that this is not true. This is not what it means.

Jesus is making a point that as we go forth in our journey in his name that the violence, the injustices of life, evil will not be able to destroy us as our names are already written in heaven.

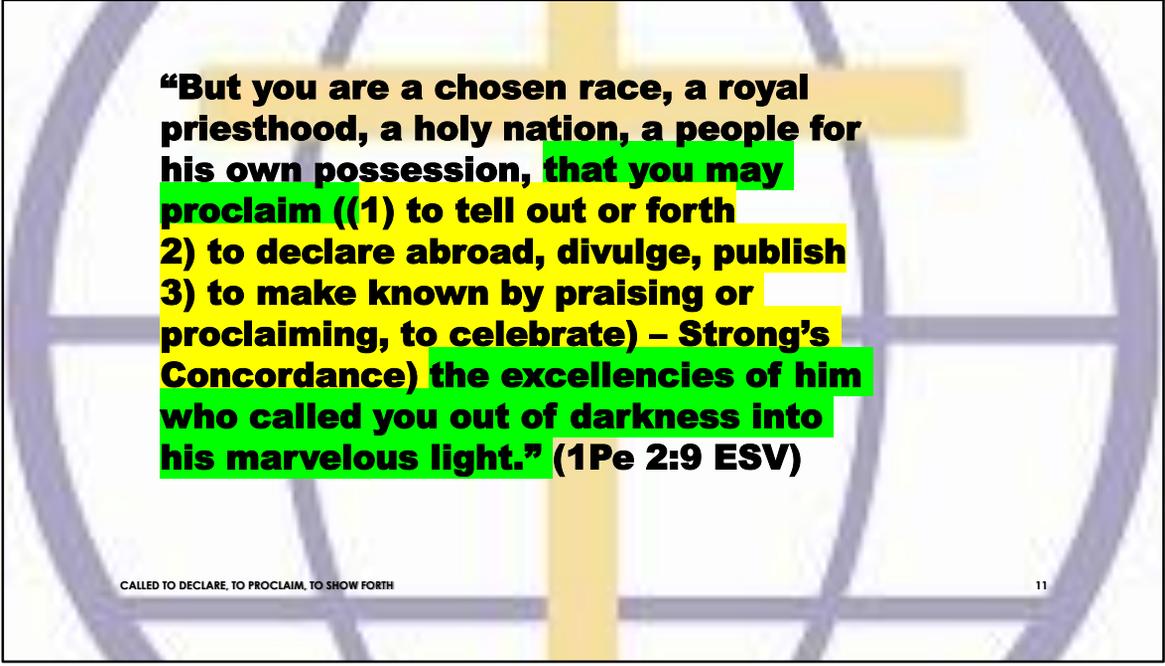
This is exceptional news. Our names are written in heaven. God promised in his word that as we abide in him, he abides in us. We are told that just as the Father loves he so loves us

. We are told in John chapter 6 that Jesus is the bread that came down from heaven. In John 6:50-51 Jesus identifies himself as the bread of life and he says **"This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that comes down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread he will live forever. And the bread of life that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh!**

God has called us to be in relationship with him through our mediator who is Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit and to love our neighbours as ourselves. This is our walk with him. We are to be in relationship with him, and to be in relationship with both people in the church and outside the church. (Next slide)



9 And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. 10 So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.” (Ga 6:9-10 ESV)



“But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim ((1) to tell out or forth 2) to declare abroad, divulge, publish 3) to make known by praising or proclaiming, to celebrate) – Strong’s Concordance) the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.” (1Pe 2:9 ESV)

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The word proclaim is translated also as **show forth** (KJV, NAS), **declare** (NIV, RSV), **show others** (NLT), **make known** ([Weymouth New Testament](#)).

As God’s people, like the young girl, like the 72, we are to proclaim with our mouth, Jesus. We ought to do this, Jesus being our Wisdom, as we do good. The name of Jesus and the good news of the Gospel, I confess, ought to be on our lips more often than it is.

“Do not give dogs what is holy, and do not throw your pearls before pigs, lest they trample them underfoot and turn to attack you.” (Mt 7:6 ESV).

Some people will not appreciate what we say. We are not to force ourselves on anyone who doesn’t want to hear about or appreciate Jesus. We are to move on. This ought not be an excuse of any of us not to mention Jesus and the good news of the Kingdom more often than we do.

Jesus came to proclaim the Kingdom of God. We have been called to participate in Him to continue to so.

As we do, we are to trust God to provide the means and the inspired words to do so.

Let us ask God to give us his wisdom, his faith, his strength to live who we are, 'a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession'.

Let us pray. **But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession.**