



# The Scrolls

Helping **CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH** Families Belong, Become and Go Beyond

V27 N21

May 25, 2025

## PSALMS: CELEBRATING CHRIST IN GOD'S HYMNBOOK

"Psalm 47"

### THIS WEEK'S CORE COMPETENCY

#### Worship

I worship God for who he is and what he has done for me.

"Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker; for he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care."

Psalm 95:6-7



Who is the great King who rules over all the earth?



The Bible implicitly links *worship* to *singing praise* to God. Psalm 100:2 reads, "Worship the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful songs" (cf. 66:4). In fact, nine times in the Psalms, the psalmists call on their readers to sing the LORD's praises. Examples are easy to cite. For example, "Sing the praises of the LORD, you his faithful people; praise his holy name" (30:4), and "Praise the LORD. How good it is to *sing praises* to our God, how pleasant and fitting to praise him! (147:1) — not to mention the five-fold call to sing praises in Psalm 47:6-7. "Sing praises to God, sing praises; sing praises to our King, sing praises. For God is the King of all the earth; sing to him a *psalm of praise*."

The New Testament also associates *worship* with *singing praise* to God. Again, examples are easy to cite. For example, to the Ephesians, Paul writes: "Be filled with the Holy Spirit, *singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs* among yourselves, and making music to the Lord in your hearts" (5:18b-19 NLT); likewise, to the Colossians, he writes: "*Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs* to God with thankful hearts" (3:16 NLT). He even quotes Psalm 18:49 when writing to the Romans about Christ: "Remember that Christ came as a servant to the Jews to show that God is true to the promises he made to their ancestors. He also came so that the Gentiles might give glory to God for his mercies to them. That is what the psalmist meant when he wrote: 'For this, I will *praise you* among the Gentiles; I will *sing praises* to your name'" (15:8-9 NLT). Last but not least, James writes: "Are any of you suffering hardships? You should pray. Are any of you happy? You should sing praises" (5:13 NLT).

God's people worship him for who he is and what he has done for them — the same

reasons why they sing. This observation is confirmed by the book of Psalms. Some praise psalms focus on who God is, extolling his attributes like his omnipotence, righteousness, faithfulness, etc.; others focus on what he has done, extolling his works of creation and of the salvation of his people. One writer, Sarah Morris, comments: "God's people have always responded with songs of praise whenever there has been a significant salvific event in the history of God's people. God saves, and his people rejoice in thankfulness and adoration through song. This is a biblical-theological pattern we see all throughout scripture. The Lord delivers the Israelites from the Egyptians, and Moses, along with the whole nation of Israel, sings in response (Exodus 15). Deborah and Barak rejoice and sing after the defeat of Sisera (Judges 5). Hannah sings with thankfulness for the gift of Samuel (I Samuel 2), David breaks into song after the Lord delivers him from Saul (II Samuel 22), Mary sings with sweet joy after Gabriel's tidings (Luke 1:46-55), and the whole heavenly host trumpets into mighty song after the message of the birth of Christ is proclaimed to the shepherds (Luke 2:13-14). How much more should God's people rejoice in song because of our salvation through Jesus! No other deliverance in the history of God's people compares to Jesus's dying work on the cross, and so the church has reason to sing like never before. 'Love's redeeming work is done, Alleluia!' Samuel Bolton wisely observed, 'The lack of mercy sends us to prayer; the enjoyment of mercy sends us to praises.' What great mercy we have received; revel in song!" (corechristianity.com/resources/articles/why-do-christians-sing-).

**Read Psalm 47:1-9**

For the director of music. Of the Sons of Korah. A psalm.

1 *Clap your hands, all you nations;  
shout to God with cries of joy.*

2 *For the LORD Most High is awesome,  
the great King over all the earth.*

3 *He subdued nations under us,  
peoples under our feet.*

4 *He chose our inheritance for us,  
the pride of Jacob, whom he loved.*

5 *God has ascended amid shouts of joy,  
the Lord amid the sounding of trumpets.*

6 *Sing praises to God, sing praises;  
sing praises to our King, sing praises.*

7 *For God is the King of all the earth;  
sing to him a psalm of praise.*

8 *God reigns over the nations;  
God is seated on his holy throne.*

9 *The nobles of the nations assemble  
as the people of the God of Abraham,  
for the kings of the earth belong to God;  
he is greatly exalted.*

**Read another translation****For the music director, by the Korahites; a psalm.**

1 *All you nations, clap your hands.*

*Shout out to God in celebration.*

2 *For the Lord Most High is awe-inspiring;  
he is the great king who rules the whole earth!*

3 *He subdued nations beneath us  
and countries under our feet.*

4 *He picked out for us a special land  
to be a source of pride for Jacob, whom he loves. (Selah)*

5 *God has ascended his throne amid loud shouts;  
the Lord has ascended amid the blaring of ram's horns.*

6 *Sing to God! Sing!*

*Sing to our king! Sing!*

7 *For God is king of the whole earth.*

*Sing a well-written song.*

8 *God reigns over the nations.*

*God sits on his holy throne.*

9 *The nobles of the nations assemble,  
along with the people of the God of Abraham,  
for God has authority over the rulers of the earth.  
He is highly exalted. (NET)*

After reading the text, practice your Observation skills by noting the following:

- Bracket "clap your hands . . . shout" in v. 1.
- Underline "LORD Most High" in v. 2.
- Circle "great King" in v. 2.
- Circle "subdued" in v. 3.
- Bracket "chose our inheritance" in v. 4.
- Bracket "the pride of Jacob" in v. 4.
- Circle "ascended" in v. 5.
- Circle "sing praises" (4x) in v. 6, and "sing" in v. 7.
- Circle "psalm" in v. 7.
- Circle "God reigns" in v. 8.
- Underline "as" in v. 9.

What one word would you use to describe the **TONE** of this passage? (i.e., stern, joyful, cautious, etc.)

What word or idea stands out to you in this passage?

What one thing do you not understand in this passage?

Try to summarize the **THEME** of this passage in one word. If you were going to describe these verses, you might say, "This text is about \_\_\_\_\_."



## DIG DEEPER

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Answer the questions to help you apply the passage and prepare for discussion

1. What is all the *clapping* and *shouting* (v. 1) about? *Who* is being celebrated and *why*?
  
  2. Describe what makes the LORD [Yahweh] so “awesome” and *the* “great King” (v. 2).
  
  3. To *what* nations is the psalmist referring (v. 3), and *when* did the LORD subdue them?
  
  4. Israel’s “inheritance” and “the pride of Jacob,” *what* is it?
  
  5. “God has ascended . . .” (v. 5). To what does this refer? (See note.)
  
  6. The psalmist calls on God’s people to praise their King (vv. 5-6). Explain *why*.
  
  7. God is *enthroned* and *reigns* over the nations (v. 8). *Now* or in the *future*? Explain.
  
  8. The “nobles of the nations” are numbered with the “people of the God of Abraham” (v. 9). *Now* or in the *future*? Explain.
  
  9. What *attribute* of God do you think is implied by the words, “the kings of the earth belong to God” (v. 9b)?
  
  10. **Discussion:** Describe the Christian response to Psalm 47, that is, *your* response to it.
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### Commentary On The Text

Psalm 47 has been classified at an *enthronement psalm*, i.e., a psalm celebrating the kingship of the LORD. Its author is not identified in the superscription. Instead, readers are told that it is “a psalm” written for the “Sons of Korah,” the Levitical choir made up of the descendants of Korah appointed by David to serve in the temple liturgy” (*The NIV Study Bible*, note on Ps 42 title). Since its author is unknown, so is the historical situation surrounding its writing. It has been interpreted in three somewhat different ways. Some interpret it *historically* as a song in honor of a recent victory over a neighboring enemy – some have suggested when he conquered the land and put his people in it (see *The NET Bible*, 12sn on Ps 47:5), others in the time of David (2Sa 8; 10), still others in the time of Hezekiah (2Ki 19:36; cf. 2Ch 32:21-22). Some interpret it *eschatologically* as a song celebrating the future establishment of the kingdom of God on earth. And finally, some interpret it *liturgically* as a song sung in remembrance of the ark’s relocation to Jerusalem (2Sa 6:12-19; cf. 1Ki 8:6-11). But these interpretations are not mutually exclusive. The *historical* interpretation stresses the occasion of the psalm’s writing (v. 3). The *eschatological* interpretation emphasizes the reign of God as “the King of all the earth” (v. 7). And the *liturgical* interpretation focuses on the use of the psalm in temple worship; in later Jewish usage Psalm 47 was utilized as part of the New Year’s service. The emphasis on ascension (v.5) gave rise to its use on Ascension Day in Christian liturgy” (Willem A. VanGemeren, *Psalms*, vol. 5, *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, 410). On the structure of the psalm, one commentator writes: “This psalm is a double hymn consisting of two introductions (verses 1 and 6) and two main sections (verses 2-5 and 7-10). Its contents link it with such Psalms as 93, 96-99” (A. A. Anderson, *Psalms* 1-72, NCB, 360).

In the first introduction, the Gentile nations are called to rejoice in the God of Israel (v. 1), and in the first main section, the reason is given (vv. 2-5). He is Yahweh Elyon, “the LORD Most High,” and there is no other Elyon than Yahweh! He is awe-inspiring, meaning that he fills his defeated foes with terror and his people with fearful respect (see *The NET Bible*, 4tn on Ps 47:2) and is “the great King over all the earth” (v. 3), not just the nation Israel. The psalmist goes on to consider God’s mighty acts. He defeated nations in the past to give Israel its inheritance, namely, the land once belonging to the Canaanites that became the pride of Jacob, he *continued* to defeat

nations that threatened Israel’s possession of its inheritance and *will continue* to do so until his reign over the nations is consummated (vv. 2-4). In verse 5, the psalmist pictures God ascending his throne accompanied by all the *pomp and circumstance* that is implied by the “sounding of trumpets.” If taken *historically*, the time of the LORD’s ascent – he “has ascended” – is left ambiguous (see above; also, Thomas L. Constable, “Notes on Psalms,” 2025 ed., 213, [sonlight.com/tcon/notes/pdf/psalms.pdf](http://sonlight.com/tcon/notes/pdf/psalms.pdf)). If taken *liturgically*, the time of his ascent refers to the time of the ark’s ascent to the temple. One who interprets the psalm *liturgically* writes: “Psalm 24 also sheds light on this ritual. Here Yahweh’s cherubim-throne ascends in victory procession and enters through the gates. And a new name is announced for ‘Yahweh of hosts,’ ‘mighty in battle’: he is also ‘the King of glory’” (Craig C. Broyles, *Psalms*, NIBC, 214). In any case, the psalmist pictures the LORD as enthroned.

In the second introduction, the Gentile nations are called to sing praises to “God . . . our King,” whom the psalmist has identified as “the LORD Most High” (v. 6), and in the second main section, the reason is given (vv. 7-10). According to one commentator, the repetition of “sing praises” in verse 6 “creates a poetic effect, stressing the urgency to respond . . . with earthly acclamation in celebration of his mighty acts and his standing as the only God over heaven and earth” (VanGemeren, 412). In verse 7, the nations are to sing a “well-written psalm” (cf. NET) to God, because he is the “King of all the earth.”

The present tense reference to God’s reign should probably be understood as prophetic; the present tense is sometimes used with this nuance. According to one commentator, “This expression, common to this type of psalm, most likely is a *prophetic statement of future certainty*. So the psalmist anticipated the sure rule of God in which all nobles and kings will gather before Him as their Sovereign. In his exalted position the Lord will someday reign over all the earth and every knee shall bow before Him (Phil. 2:9-11)” (Allen P. Ross, “Psalms,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: Old Testament*, 829, italics added). Verse 9 implies that the Gentile nations will one day assemble with the people of the God of Abraham under his rule; both will belong to him, so fulfilling the promise made to the patriarch (Ge 12:3).

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## Word Studies/Notes

v. 1 *clap your hands . . . shout* “The demonstrations which greeted a king when he ascended the throne (cf. 1 Sam. x. 24; 2 Kings xi. 12)” (A. Cohen, *The Psalms*, SBB, 147). “Applause is something most of us associate with a football stadium, not a church, but in this psalm we are directed to applaud God. This is not a quiet psalm—it also includes ‘shouting’ and trumpets (vv. 1, 5)—but for good reason: it celebrates the great King over all the earth (v. 2)” (Craig C. Broyles, *Psalms*, NIBC, 213).

v. 2 *LORD Most High* I.e., “Yahweh Elyon;” cf. “El Elyon,” i.e., “God Most High.” “Israel believed that only Yahweh is El Elyon (‘God Most High,’ cf. Ge 14:22). The psalmists, too, use the epithet ‘Elyon’ to refer to Yahweh . . . ‘For you, O LORD [Yahweh], are the Most High [Elyon] over all the earth; you are exalted far above all gods’ (97:9). He is Yahweh Elyon, and there is no other Elyon than Yahweh! Therefore the psalmist prays, ‘Let them know that you, whose name is the LORD [Yahweh]—that you alone are the Most High [Elyon] over all the earth’ (83:18)” (Willem A. VanGemeren, *Psalms*, vol. 5, *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, 152).

v. 2 *great King* “. . . ‘the great king’ was a well-known self-designation of the Assyrian kings in particular (cf. 2 Kg. 18:19), but Yahweh was thought of as the great king *par excellence*, because he alone is the ruler over *all* the earth (cf. 24:1; Mal. 1:14)” (A. A. Anderson, *Psalms* 1-72, NCBC, 362). “Kings in the ancient Near East loved to designate themselves by this title [‘the great King’] because with it were associated superiority, suzerainty, and the power to grant vassal treaties (cf. 2Ki 18:19; Isa 36:4). Any king assuming this title would not tolerate competition. So it is with Yahweh. He alone is the Great King over all the earth (cf. Mal 1:11, 14)!” (VanGemeren, 411).

v. 3 *subdued* Cf. “subdues” (NASB1995, HCSB, NLT); “will subdue” (NKJV). “The preterite form of the verb suggests this is an historical reference and the next verse, which mentions the gift of the land, indicates that the conquest under Joshua is in view” (*The NET Bible*, 6tn on Ps 47:3); cf. 2Sa 5:17-25; 8:1-14; 10. However, with regard to other translations, the *present* tense “subdues” alludes to God’s acts on behalf of Israel *throughout* history, while the *future* tense alludes to God’s establishment of his *eschatological* kingdom (see Anderson, 360-61). Some commentators mention all aspects: “This subjugation of foreign nations *was* experienced in a small measure in [throughout] Israel’s history, but *will be* especially true in the coming Millennial Age” (Allan P. Ross, “Psalms,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: Old Testament*, 829).

v. 4 *chose our inheritance* I.e., the land of Canaan. “The LORD Most High showed His sovereignty by subduing nations to give the Israelites their inheritance in Canaan. When Jesus Christ returns to the earth, He will again exercise authority over all the nations and exalt Israel among them (Matt. 21:43; Rom. 11:1-32)” (Thomas L. Constable, “Notes on Psalms,” 2025 ed., 214, [soniclight.com/tcon/notes/pdf/psalms.pdf](http://soniclight.com/tcon/notes/pdf/psalms.pdf)).

v. 4 *the pride of Jacob* “The pride of Jacob is parallel to ‘our heritage’ [cf. “our inheritance”], and therefore the reference must be to the land of Canaan which is the object of Jacob’s pride or ‘his proud possession’” (Anderson, 363).

v. 5 *ascended* Cf. “God has ascended his throne amid loud shouts” (NET). “The writer viewed Yahweh as mounting His cosmic throne in order to rule over all the earth. Trumpets announced His ascent with a fanfare. The psalmist called all people to sing praises to God because He is the sovereign King” (Constable, 214). Some link this “ascending” to the *actual* bringing of the ark to Jerusalem [cf. 2Sa 6:1-19; 1Ki 8:1-21], others to its later *liturgical* commemoration. “These verses portray the *liturgical* ascension of God to the temple—perhaps represented by the processional bearing of the ark into the temple. The ark is symbolic of God’s throne; the temple is the earthly symbol of his heavenly palace (see Ps 24; 68)” (*The NIV Study Bible*, note on Ps 47:5-6). Still others link it to the conquest of the land. “When the Lord conquered the land and placed his people in it, he assumed a position of kingship, as predicted by Moses (see Exod 15:17-18, as well as Ps 114:1-2). That event is here described metaphorically in terms of a typical coronation ceremony for an earthly king (see 2 Sam 15:10; 2 Kgs 9:13)” (*The NET Bible*, 12sn on Ps 47:5).

v. 6 *sing praises* “Sing praises” is the translation of one Hebrew word. Hebrew has sixteen root words for praise. In Psalm 47:6-8, the psalmist repeatedly uses one of them (*zmr*). “Music, dancing, and the playing of instruments were incorporated in Israel’s worship. ‘Let them praise [*hill*] his name with dancing and make music [*zmr*] to him with tambourine and harp’” (VanGemeren, 506).

v. 8 *God reigns* “The psalmist looked ahead in time to see this enthronement. It had not yet taken place, but the psalmist was sure it would happen. The King of the Universe will inevitably rule one day over all, and every knee will bow before Him” (Constable, 214-15).

v. 9 *as* Or “with the people of God” (GNT, HCSB, NET); cf. Ge 12:3b. “The verse is in the prophetic mood, looking forward to a scene which is depicted as actually happening” (Cohen, 148).



## APPLY THE TEXT

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### CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THIS PASSAGE

Sing praises to the LORD, Yahweh the Most High, who rules over all the earth.

### CENTRAL MESSAGE FOR YOUR LIFE

(Rewrite the Central Message above to personally apply to your own life)



## 3 LIVING QUESTIONS

The “Living Questions” are simple questions we may ask of any text in order to apply the Bible to our life. Answer the questions below as personally as you can.

1. What does this passage teach me about God?

2. What does this passage teach me about myself?

3. What does this passage lead me to do?



## PARENT CONNECTION

When my kids were young, I had big dreams! Because each of them showed a proclivity for music on some level, I hoped they would form a worship band. Their job was to turn clothes outside in when we were folding laundry, and because it reflects the way God changes us so dramatically, I wanted the band name to be “The Outside Inners.” While this never came to fruition, I can say that each one of my children has a personal relationship with the Lord and worships Him in a unique and special way that reflects how He created them. Worship doesn’t always mean singing or playing instruments. Scripture reading and memorization tell God He is worth our time and attention. It’s fun to have kids run up to tell me their memory verse with such excitement each Sunday! We see expressions of worship when we marvel at God’s creation. I’m a beekeeper, and every time I open a hive or talk about bees, I’m overwhelmed at the tiny details that prove God to be creative, detail-oriented and nothing short of amazing. Both serving and demonstrating leadership are true reflections of God’s character that bring Him glory and show our high view of how God owns our time. Prayer is a very personal avenue to communicate reverence, thanksgiving and the deepest desires of our heart. We acknowledge God is all powerful, all good, all knowing and all loving. What does worship look like in your family? Don’t stop short at singing. Find ways to marvel at the Lord Almighty and draw close to Him. We’re praying for you!

### What Does The Bible Say?

Read Psalm 47.

1. What does verse 1 tell all nations to do?
2. What repeated word do you see in verses 6 and 7, and how many times is it listed?
3. Why should we praise God? (Look for the word “for.”)

### What Do You Think?

Why is God worthy of worship?

### What Do You Do?

Have a family worship night. Have each person in your family pick a song for the playlist and worship God together. Go for a walk and marvel at the created world. Pray or serve together.

## CORE COMPETENCY: Worship

I celebrate God for who He is and what He has done for me.

## MEMORY VERSE: Galatians 6:9

*“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.”*

## KidPIX COUPON

Earn 1 KidPIX Token by completing the CENTRAL Kids Bible Study on this page and another token by memorizing and reciting the memory verse for this week.

Questions: [kids@wearecentral.org](mailto:kids@wearecentral.org)

- \_\_\_\_\_ I completed my Bible Study
- \_\_\_\_\_ I memorized this week’s verse
- \_\_\_\_\_ I brought my Bible to church
- \_\_\_\_\_ I brought a friend



CHILD’S NAME

GRADE

PARENT SIGNATURE

# OUR CORE COMPETENCIES

## CENTRAL BELIEFS

**Authority of the Bible** (2 Timothy 3:16-17)  
*I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.*

**Church** (Ephesians 4:15-16)

*I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.*

**Eternity** (John 14:1-4)

*I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.*

**The Holy Spirit** (Romans 8:9)

*I believe the Holy Spirit convicts, calls, converts and changes me as a child of God.*

**Humanity** (John 3:16)

*I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.*

**Identity in Christ** (John 1:12)

*I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.*

**Jesus Christ** (Hebrews 1:1-4)

*I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners and rose from the dead.*

**Life Purpose** (Acts 20:24)

*I believe I am a steward of God's resources and have been redeemed to participate in His Kingdom purposes for His glory.*

**Personal God** (Psalm 121:1-2)

*I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.*

**Salvation by Grace** (Ephesians 2:8-9)

*I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.*



## CENTRAL VIRTUES

**Love** (1 John 4:10-12)

*I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.*

**Joy** (John 15:11)

*I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.*

**Peace** (Philippians 4:6-7)

*I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself and others.*

**Patience** (Proverbs 14:29)

*I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.*

**Kindness/Goodness** (1 Thessalonians 5:15)

*I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others*

**Faithfulness** (Proverbs 3:3-4)

*I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.*

**Gentleness** (Philippians 4:5)

*I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.*

**Self-Control** (Titus 2:11-13)

*I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.*

**Grace** (Colossians 3:13)

*I demonstrate forgiveness, mercy and generosity to others, even when they have offended me.*

**Hope** (1 Peter 1:3-5)

*I have a growing anticipation of God's promises and my secure eternity with Him.*

**Humility** (Philippians 2:3-4)

*I choose to esteem others above myself.*



## CENTRAL PRACTICES

**Bible Study** (Hebrews 4:12)

*I study the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.*

**Biblical Community** (Acts 2:44-47)

*I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.*

**Compassion** (Psalm 82:3-4)

*I seek to serve the last, the least and the lost in my community.*

**Disciple-Making** (2 Timothy 2:2)

*I multiply godly beliefs, virtues and practices in others to encourage their spiritual growth in Christ.*

**Evangelism** (Acts 1:8)

*I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gospel.*

**Generosity** (2 Corinthians 9:6-11)

*I gladly give my resources to fulfill God's purposes.*

**Prayer** (Psalm 66:16-20)

*I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.*

**Single-Mindedness** (Matthew 6:33)

*I focus on God and His priorities for my life.*

**Spiritual Gifts** (Romans 12:4-6)

*I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.*

**Worship** (Psalm 95:1-7)

*I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.*

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The Scrolls Bible Study is a spiritual growth resource of Central Bible Church, Fort Worth, Texas.

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### OUR MISSION

Making God known by making disciples who are changed by God to change their world.