

Calvary United Methodist Church  
March 1, 2020

**THANK—FULL & AVAILABLE**  
Rev. R. Jeffrey Fisher

**Children's Message:**

John 6:8-11

I invite our children to come forth. Please? Come on up! Glad to have you all here today. Are you enjoying the sunshine? Pretty great and next week you get a little more of it. That's even better, I think.

Well, I want to tell a story today about a miracle. Does anybody know what a miracle is? (Child speaks.) Something that's probably not likely to happen. It's something beyond our understanding. Sometimes we seek it in the world today and God still does miracles. Sometimes we pray for those miracles and we don't understand why sometimes it seems there are for others, but we just know God has a plan that we don't always understand.

But in the story I share with you today, Jesus was walking with his disciples and they come upon a crowd of people and they spent time listening to them and they were hungry and they didn't have enough food. Can you imagine having twenty or thirty people show up at your house and want to feed them? Most of us don't have that kind of food that is laying around all the time. So as it was, I hear this story so you understand more what's going on:

Another disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up. "Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish. How far will they go among so many?" And Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." There was plenty of grass in that place, and they sat down (about five thousand were there.) Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish.

Now, you could imagine, just two fish, five loaves of barley bread and they fed 5,000 people all they wanted. That's pretty amazing. Actually it said men and there were probably women and children there too, so that's a pretty amazing miracle that Jesus did.

Now, we don't always know when miracles are going to happen, but we know they happen. But I also see another kind of miracle: when God uses us in miraculous ways. Do you see people always working together well? I don't. I see it sometimes, but not always. It's like that, that's right. Sometimes we work well together and sometimes we don't, but when we work well together in the name of Jesus Christ to God's glory, there is very little we can't accomplish because God does miraculous things through the gifts you have, the skills you have, the resources you have. God just does great things.

I was trying to think of an example, so I thought of this: How many of you have ever seen a big pile of dirt? When I was a little kid I loved playing riding up and down over the hills and

doing all kinds of stuff. Now, let's say we're not going to play. Let's say I want to ask you to move that pile of dirt to somewhere else. Would you like that job on your own? Especially if you didn't have a bulldozer to push it. It wouldn't be something I'd necessarily want to do. (Child speaks.) How much would you get paid? Well, that's not in the formula, but I understand your thinking. My dad used to try that with me and it didn't always work.

Now, if I had this little toy truck and said would you fill that off that dirt pile, how many of you would be doing it? One quick and it's done, right? But the work could get much more difficult. What if I said, have you ever used one of these to help pick up leaves and grass and things around your house. You've used one. So if you one of them, that's not even too bad. But what if it kept getting bigger.

Now, if your family had one of these they wouldn't want dirt in it, but just say you could put dirt in the back, would you want to take, just you, a shovel and fill that whole truck with that dirt? No. I bet there are people in here who have done that.

What about a tri-axle? (Child speaks.) We are back to the pay, aren't we? (Yep.) It's not always pay. Sometimes it is the joy that we have. But you know what? I want to show you one picture that would make this very easy. What if all of our friends got together. How would that pile move? Probably pretty fast, wouldn't it? Pretty fast.

So, here was Jesus. (Child speaks.) Well, I don't know we are all going to get paid for all that. But here was Jesus telling his disciples: Look, we got to feed these people somehow and we are going to do a miraculous thing.

God does miracles. I don't understand all the miracles, but I do understand the earthly ones that we do because it is to his honor and his glory. When we work together, we are able to accomplish many wonderful things to God. For instance, I don't know about you, but I don't like to see trash. Do you like to see trash? Especially if I'm hiking in the woods and I see paper or candy wrappers and cans I think: now, why doesn't someone pick that up. And so I try to pick it up put it in my bag if it's only a piece or so. What happens if you don't pick up a piece of garbage somewhere? (Child speaks.) It becomes millions of pieces and it grows. (Child speaks.) It could intoxicate animals. There are all kinds of problems...yes? (Child speaks.) Landfills, incinerators, all those things are possible. What are the other things that happen when we start trash somewhere? It continues to grow. Did you ever see that?

Did you ever wonder how your bedroom got that way? Right? Sometimes you wonder how does that happened. Because no one thinks it is their responsibility, so no one picks it up. And then, have you ever travelled to places in the woods, on a hike, it's a beautiful place and all of a sudden and I think: Oh, that's disgusting. We can make a difference because what happens if we don't do anything? It indeed piles up and is pretty ugly. But when we join together, do any of you help road pick up? I know a lot of people who are in organizations and school classes and they do certain sections and areas to keep them clean. (Child speaks.) So,

one of your groups did it last year. Do you feel good when you see the place cleaned up? Yeah, I do too. Even my bedroom when it's cleaned up really looks a lot nicer.

Well, the point of this whole story what Jesus did and what you and I can do on behalf of Jesus and God is when we work together we can do miraculous things. We become stronger together. Sometimes there are things we don't think we can surmount, we can't get over this obstacle that's before us, but I want you to know when we work together it becomes a victory. God wants us to know we can do good things.

Mother Teresa said this: Together we can do great things. And Jesus showed that when all those people were together, we can help feed people who are hungry, we can help clothe people who are naked, we can help visit people who are lonely. We can do wonderful things when we work together.

I don't know what it is that God wants you to do, but I know God says: You will do something great. You will have to pray to say to God: What is it that you will have me do?

Thank you for coming up today. I pray you do something great this week and give God glory.

Have a wonderful week. Thanks so much.

**Message:**

Philippians 4:4-9

Putting what we have learned all along into practice is not always easy. I really believe most people that I encounter are pretty thankful. We realize all you have to do is don't look to other nations, look to your own history and realize where your parents and grandparents and other people have come, we realize we are blessed and we are thankful. But God asks something else...be available. Be available. At the moment with planning, in the future, in the present, be available as an instrument of God's peace.

When I was younger I loved to sing that song: He's Got the Whole World in His Hands. And I was already taught that even though I was thinking in preparation, I don't think I ever left the state of Pennsylvania until I was 17 or 18. Living in my little town had everything that I ever knew. Good heavens, if you have ever been there, you still don't need to go out of McVeytown. And yet, I was taught that the world was a little bit bigger and that I should be concerned and I was taught in Sunday School and by my family that we should love all the people in the world, red and yellow, black and white, whatever they look like, whoever we are, we are all God's children and yet the world seems so much bigger than what I could have ever imagined. To think that all of this was created by Almighty God and that I could have some part of it.

I was a little boy when I made a decision to follow Jesus Christ and through the years I really

loved...my family was involved in all stages of construction from heavy equipment to foundations and concrete and structures and roofing and plumbing and I just loved that and thought that was what I would do until God asked me to be available in a new way, to go on a mission one day. And it started here in America working locally in my county for the poor people who needed things done to their homes and extended to out west and to Native Americans and then finally when I was 21, a pastor asked me to go to Africa and something touched my heart and since then I have been blessed by congregations like yours and others and a conference who has enabled me to be a part of leading over forty years of ministry to various parts of Africa, most Sierra Leone. And in the midst of those times of being available, other people that I have met, some 350 to 450 people have built churches and many companies and schools and have done hospital programs and medical programs and teaching programs and water and sewage and septic and I want to say to you when I say that: It has very little to do with me and it has all to do with you. Because when all of us get involved and I'm allowed or other pastors are allowed and you are allowed and you send people and this congregation does it all the time, we touch others in the name of Jesus Christ. Because it's not one person, it's all of us, are involved in what we do, not only with our time and talents are our availability and our money, but with our prayers, our encouragement and support.

Where I have typically gone is to Sierra Leone. That's just a wee little place. And sometimes we get the idea of Africa being a lot smaller than it is and when we see that, I want to back up to that other map, when we see that it looks like Africa is maybe twice that size, but I want to give you a clue...on Africa, if you overlay, all of the United States, all of India, all of China, all of Europe, all of Argentina and there is leftover Africa. It's a big continent. From New York to Sierra Leone is only 600 miles more than Sierra Leone on the west coast is to Kenya and Niobe. It is a big continent. I am always amazed when someone says: Oh, we have a missionary there, maybe you will run into them. It's a land of several thousand languages. It is a land of many different cultures. All Africans don't speak the same language; all Africans don't get along like all Americans don't get along. It's a world of cultures and I have been blessed to go there.

When I first went there as a young man I went twice before the war and then the civil war broke out where everywhere we went we were investigated. Our cars, the mission vehicles. Tractor trailer loads of wood would come into the city and every two miles they would manually unload every piece of wood and look for arms coming into the city, load it, drive two miles, unload it, load it, drive two miles until they were into the capital. It was a ferocious time. It was a war where if you remember the blood diamond war and I have several books if you ever want to read them. It really wasn't a civil war, it was about these things: Diamonds. You know, a girl's best friend. They have fooled especially American women into thinking it's the most priceless thing out there and it's not even the most valuable jewels, but 85% of all diamonds are sold in this country. 85%. They have really done their good marketing.

What happened during that war is what's happening all around the world right now with

child soldiers. They would come into a village, they would shoot the father and give the children the gun to shoot the mother and then they would mold the children. This is going on right now all over the world. In the meantime they took machetes and I was in villages where they chopped off everyone's hands or perhaps their legs, all because of the money from diamonds could be used for so many things in war and you can't smell it like drugs and all kinds of bad things. Those men, by the way, who do that get about 20 cents an hour. Translate that into what diamonds are worth.

You talk about economy and wonder how the world works. I'll never understand it. When I first went there the exchange rate was 1:15. Now it is 1:10,000. It went up 2,000 last year alone. If I take \$20,000 for hotels and rooms and vehicles and the other people and food and for projects, \$1,000 now equals \$10 million in Leones. I have bagfuls of money that are pretty worthless and yet the economy continues for them to go down and down, they can't hardly fund one meal a day.

When I think of this I think of 2015, we are now dealing with Coronavirus, if you remember Ebola hit. There were cases all over the world and about five or six in America, but nearly 6,000 people died in Sierra Leone. They don't have health care available like we would have health care available. This was the treatment centers in the villages that I went to. We would spray ourselves with Clorox solution and I don't know, you just can't imagine that the whole country hardly has but one hospital that I still wouldn't want to be treated in. Many of their hospitals are like this: they are mission hospitals. Some of the beds we took from Villa Teresa here a few years ago and shipped over. Many of the hospitals just have mats on the floor, but they are trying to improve. I have shown this a couple of times here at the church where people here made items to give to babies, they are the only new things they have because there aren't stores like we know stores anywhere in the nation.

Dr. Karen and Tom Asher were here a couple of years ago. They were the only two doctors in this part of the country that served one-half a million people and there are no major major surgeries. It would be impossible. As you see, they don't even have a good sterile environment. They operate at night sometimes by holding flashlights in their teeth.

Last week I went through Ethiopia and on the way there I saw these men carrying someone on a cot, two sticks with a blanket over it. And I said: What are they doing? They said the nearest clinic was twenty miles. Now, folks, I know you love me, but I told them if that were me today and I collapsed here, they would be digging a hole at Calvary and that would be it. You would not be carrying me twenty miles. Can you even imagine that kind of healthcare?

But when I talk about not only be thankful, but being available, when I was at the hospital, I met a young girl from Australia who was an engineering student and she had been on missions and her family was of faith. She said: I have to do something. She designed small paddles and the one hospital only had one of these on the stick that enabled them to have light for like six or eight hours to do surgery. You don't have to leave the comforts of your

home and your community to do great things. Most of us aren't called beyond right here, right now. It's about being available to Almighty God, because through you, clinics like this that we built through one of our churches here in the Harrisburg area are able to serve men, women and children. Because of you and because of people like Dr. Gess, they go over and use their gifts and when he is not there as an eye surgeon, he makes sure others are there. People that take time to change people lives with simple things because you are available.

I want to talk about different components so you have some idea of it's like to go to Sierra Leone. When we land it's about two 8½ hour flights and to get to Sierra Leone we usually take this, sometimes a speedboat, but this is a ferry that is always overloaded. It takes hours to load and hours to unload and about fifty minutes to go across the water because there is no bridge to the mainland. If you are not fortunate enough to pay about thirty cents for that ride, you ride these boats. They don't look very safe to me. They are always overloaded. They do it morning and night to go from Loge area which is farming to take food into the city. You get to the city and all the back streets pretty much look like this, other than some of the main ones around the capital of the city.

Some of our roads, if you have to cross, there are no bridges, so they put you on a bit of a ferry and pull you across. You can't see it real well, but during the rainy season, and I want to explain the weather. We often say why can't these people farm? Why can't they care for themselves? Pennsylvania gets 60 to 85 inches of rain a year, counting our snowfall over 12 months. Six months of this equatorial area gets zero rain. Six months desert. The next six months they get 180 to 240 inches of rain, three times. It goes from dry to flood. Imagine twenty feet more of water, so that ferry is twenty feet higher, it's coming in at the bank at the top where those houses are. They pull us across, we go to do our work. Sometimes the bridges they do make aren't really sturdy. We fall through them and have to get out and move. Sometimes the roads are so dusty if we get there at the end of the season you can't hardly walk. But students and adults here walk miles for water, miles for firewood, miles for school every day, sometimes twice a day. You get a little idea of the dust on the trees. During the six months when it gets drier and drier and drier, that's what your home looks like. Some of the bridges are not really safe.

This is Melissa Packer from our church a couple of years ago. That is really not makeup, a bad job. That was the dust from the road, just to give you an idea of what it's like to travel.

What we do with your help and help of a lot of churches here is wells and sanitation. One of the greatest things in the world is water and if you don't believe it go a day or so without it. I've said many times I could do longer without electric than I can with water. We like to clean. We like to cook. We like to clean up our dishes. We like to shower. We like to do our laundry. But more than that we like healthy water. The biggest killer on the continent of Africa is the little mosquito and the second one is bad water. Because people don't have small things like outhouses, we don't want those, they go in the woods and in the fields and when that 240 inches of rain comes, it washes it into the water, they drink water and they get Ty-

phoid and they die.

We are here and one of my dreams before I pass is that we'll get four or five hundred thousand to buy well drilling machine like we use, but we hand dig wells down to 20 meters, 60 feet. This is probably 30 to 35 feet. Imagine going down in a hole 60 feet. That's a long way.

This is Lawrence who knows why we need water because he got childhood diseases that left him crippled and he has Polio. He works as our office manager for our water.

This is only down about 15 feet. Now imagine adding about forty to that. That's a real little hole. They do until they hit water, they wait until the driest part of the season and if there is water in it, they dig a little deeper to be sure. When they are finished they put concrete sides in it and seal it so that we end up having a well that is a little more healthy. This is what we do when we manage these projects, trying to make life better for others.

Can you imagine this is what we are spending our money on? You don't want this in your backyard, but this is life for people who don't have simple things like restrooms.

This is the good life in a city when you go into town. A bed actually a mattress which most people don't have and a mosquito net to keep us from getting malaria.

About ten years ago a group of us that started this, I was one of the first two people to go there in over fifty years when we started going in the early 80s. And we pulled together people saying: Look, there are churches from all over the world and all over the United States. Let us get together and have a meeting. And so we did over in Mechanicsburg or Camp Hill and they meet every other year now and we shared. Some people were into healthcare, some into education, some into agriculture, all these different places, how we can help each other move mission forward. Things like sitting on bicycles pedaling to grind corn. Someone invented, you know how much kids like to run merry-go-rounds and stuff, so they devised a pump that when the kids run the merry-go-round it pumps water up on top of a pool station. That's pretty ingenious. Right here, using your gift and you skill.

Sometimes we think that the poor of the world are poor because they don't work and I want to show you some photos to assure you, poor people in America and other places are not always lazy. This is an abandoned quarry from when they built roads years ago and it has become a business for a lot of families. Nowadays they set fire around the limestone and it takes a week and men typically break this into big chunks of limestone. It's now become a network where men, women and children, if this is your family business, make stones, from large down to small stones to be used in construction and roads and houses. They build these stones all different sizes. I always pictured this little child in our mission center who sits there all day and will probably be doing that for forty years or until he dies. No goggles, nothing else. Just sit and break stone that he might have a job and people come and buy the

various sizes of stone. Not lazy...hard work and lots of heat.

Children also like to play. They create a lot of their toys. They don't have money to go buy things like we would. The most common toy is anything that will roll and they use them as often as they can. Some of you are old enough to have made your own toys, a kind of creativity that gone.

People work and carry large loads of wood and water everywhere. Children aren't always privileged to go to school, they are out in the street selling fish, selling wood, selling supplies. It's a necessity for the families to stay alive. Children when they are four or five start taking their own buckets either to a river or a water source where they can do their own laundry. They are carrying water that takes care of other children so the parent can do it. It's been a long time since most of us have used washing boards, but they are really helpful. If you don't have a washing board, you get your water, you take your baths. Everyday. It's not that the people are dirty, they go to a river, they go to a stream or they go to some water source to clean up and to do their laundry. They don't have to worry about twenty or thirty shirts or pants, they don't have that. It's usually one or two outfits.

This young lady, you might wonder what in the world she is doing. They clean out the compounds every day and they take the grass and use it as a broom. Not lazy. Not wanting to be dirty, but wanting to clean things as well as they can.

Many of the places I travelled the people are going through, this is a place up from the city. The people there aren't working. They are looking for food scraps. They are looking for things that they can use for the family or things to sell. It breaks my heart when I see people having to do this. The largest slum in the world there is Salol, Brazil. The second is in Kenya and this is just a small one here, because I have been to some that are literally hundreds and hundreds of people going through garbage.

I often wonder, do the children wake up in the morning and look like this, saying: what am I going to do today? What is my hope? What is my future? And so we go on behalf of you and all the churches here in this conference and work. This is Pastor Jake Waybright from his church a couple of years ago who went over, trying to help this school provide security for teachers that make anywhere from thirty to sixty dollars a month, trying to help with school supplies. Children don't have books. A teacher has a book. The children have notepads to take notes and they are so excited. This is a school before a village that another church in Red Lion built and we have shipped over these containers. This school was built with first, second and third grade and then each year for about \$2,000 more we added fourth grade and then fifth grade and then sixth grade. Some of the schools are really limited, but they are an opportunity that children love to have, just the privilege to go to school to learn. They are excited when we come because we represent possible hope that they too will become leaders, they too can help their families move forward. Some of the schools, the children line up, they are so excited because they know our team is here to make a difference.

I have been blessed to be a representative to open many schools, many replaced and other things such as wells which help each little village. If you don't have a school bus and you live on the wrong side of the water, you have to take a boat to school every day, so you have to make sure in flood pad you are in low season. I have never been there in the midst of the very highest season. I can't imagine how they get the boat across the water because it would be running so rapidly. If you are wealthy enough like one of our workers, he gets sixty dollars a month and one of our old computers. If you are a teacher today, I thank God for you.

Today a reader...tomorrow a leader.

The first place of teaching and learning is the home.

The influence of a good teacher is never to be erased.

There are probably five city blocks outside this school with these sayings on. Children know without reading and writing, without being articulate, without some sort of education you never will have any kind of a future. You have to have at least basics to be able to get along in life and we teach not only regular subjects, but sewing and metal working and woodworking and those kind of things.

Let's switch over to look at some food. We have dry closets, we have freezers, we have refrigerators. What do you do when you don't have anywhere to store your food? You have to go every day and buy a little bit. You know we buy a jar of jar of like bouillon cubes. They can afford to go today and buy one cube, one cup of rice, one whatever it is. They mostly have dried fish because they are near the ocean. Christmas, my dearest friend might get a chicken for Christmas. Some days we get Mexican and Vietnamese or Thai or Chinese or beef or pork or chicken or fish. Can you imagine taking your favorite meal and eating it every day all year long? One meal a day. Try that.

This is our cook at our Methodist compound. She cooks over charcoal. Most places don't have electric. Most places don't have gas. They have wood. Wood is harder on the forest industry than charcoal, although the governments around the world are trying to stop forestation. But people have to cook. She was making us peanut stew and chicken and fish. Most people are fortunate to have one a day. Someone from this congregation gave enough money to feed our sister church one meal once a Sunday for 200-250 people once a month. That's more meals than a lot of them see from week to week.

Clothing, we usually have much, but many don't have much at all. I've seen men laying cement blocks in women's dresses because it is the only piece of clothing they may have. This church made these cases a few years ago, thanks be to God and put them on a lot of the little girls and boys. We had others shorts made for them.

When it comes to work, these people pull in lines twice a day hoping to get some fish. What do you do with fish? Well, these fish I saw just two weeks ago in Ethiopia I thought was garbage. It is dried fish. And they can't afford them. They ship them to Uganda because that's where they can make more money. People are busy all day cutting wood with machetes. People are preparing wood.

I look at the loads these people carry, that is probably 70 pounds, with a smile on their face, carrying water to the side. Carrying the thatching for roofs. These are some of the houses I was at in Ethiopia. You think your house needs another addition, they are pretty...this older woman, this whole village is houses like this. It's 100 to 112 degrees with a tin roof on about a five foot ceiling. I can't imagine sleeping in there at night, on a dirt floor, nothing beside.

These are another kind of village. I went to six different tribes and they all live differently. This one is a little different. Two beds are on the side of the first floor and right inside was a cow. They have to keep the cow safe.

This is about as low as it [gets]. These are refugees. Those of you who have ever travelled to other countries, these people come in from other countries at war or they are expelled for political reasons. This is refugees from Yemen living at the edge of Ethiopia because as you know Yemen is a very difficult place. Another small house.

We always want more and I think there are only one or two of us in a lot of our houses, but we still need more room. We need to learn to be together a little more. This was fine until the cow stood up and I wasn't really fine with a cow in my bedroom.

When I look at work, I've seen people and I've helped when I was younger, pick stones out of farm fields. That's about as low on my want to do job list as it ever gets. For over two hours of driving in Ethiopia agriculture is their largest product. From the ground level to the top of every peak it is tiered. Those on the stones, every tier is filled with stones. I have no idea how they farm, but they farm a lot of agricultural products.

It is almost biblical proportion if you have seen in the news recently of the locusts. These aren't two inch grasshoppers, these are four or five inch grasshoppers. That road is covered with grasshoppers. They were swarming in front of us, eating the fields of crops. So many of these poor nations have so many things against them that can go wrong.

How could you afford things that you really need? I wonder what they were making out of old tires. These guys had their machetes cutting things and they continued to cut and nail together. That's where you go to get your shoes. You are going across the desert wearing Firestone. You probably get a lot of miles.

I remember running a chainsaw a lot and I remember for fun as a Boy Scout chopping small trees with a hatchet, but cutting big trees with machetes, you can just feel your hand vibrate

every time you would hit the tree.

This village they live close to the water, their job is hauling sand for housebuilding. They haul it all the time. You see little children all day long hauling sand, hauling wood. I am sure that load of wood has to be 100 pounds and these women do that every day. Every day because they not only use it, they sell it. That's their business, hauling farm food, hauling sacks of materials, making things like chairs out of cow leather because that's why you have. Separating the wheat from the chaff. Making a little porch to make things from iron. They make the machetes down at old car shops. Carrying your fishing net and your wife is carrying greens for supper and some firewood on the top.

When a village wants to do something they work together. So they dig up the dirt, this group here wanted to build a school. We try not to enable, but rather they say what can you do? We can make the bricks. Can you provide the zinc, which is the roof tin? And nail and cement. So they gather the sand, they gather the workers, they gather and make the bricks. They not only dig up the dirt, then you have to dig a pit and you add water. The ladies probably carry water a quarter of a mile to throw on it. They make it muddy. They don't have a wheelbarrow, they have that pot. They fill it with mud and take it over, put it in these molds that are probably 60 pounds each. They let them dry in the sun and they build their school.

Children every day can't go home from school empty handed in villages. They go for firewood and they go for water. They go for water in the streams, you go some places the dig holes in the river bottoms. They carry water in the city because there isn't water in your home typically, it is a couple of blocks away and everyone comes and carries water for everything you need water.

This is our Methodist orphanage. The children carry water for everything you need. Carrying things to sell. Walking miles with everything you have. Again, without a refrigerator you have to do things like salt your fish or smoke your fish. There are always markets once a week at every village area or many of these people walk six, eight, ten miles to bring their goods to sell. It is like a Roots Market with potatoes and leaves and all your food items.

This would be a typical home out in the village. This is a typical kitchen in many parts of the world. This was the restaurant I ate at down along the water. I don't think the state inspection had been there yet. They were making fish stew for us.

Forty years ago when I first went there, this was where we took our baths. It was also where we did our laundry. It was also our drinking water, we would boil it for 45 minutes and put it through filters. This photo was taken two weeks ago. They still use it for the same thing.

They do have fun. Soccer. They call it soccer, we call it football. It's not a big stadium, there are not a lot of bleachers and there is not a lot of green, but they love to be enthralled

by that.

Where there is water in the lowlands they try to grow sweet potato leaves and things that are their meat diet. They still grow a lot of crops, but they do the old fashioned burn and release which isn't good for the environment but they don't have fertilizers, so they have to keep rotating the crops this way. They make charcoal, which burns better than the wood.

I wanted to show you a couple of our projects. This is the one we have been working on the last couple of years. We have green houses, we have a tractor building. We've gone from one hundred acres to one thousand acres, which is wonderful, providing jobs for many, many people. We have a drying floor for the grains. We continue to expand even in this clay soil. All rice isn't swampy rice like you see in Asia. It has to have the rains and it's called an upland rice. They started a chicken farm with a couple of thousand chickens. The chickens you have to have them six month old before they start laying. They only lay for a year and a half or so, you have to get new, so they are trying to get several stages to provide money.

This is a rice warehouse so it doesn't get eaten by birds and insects and the people who work for them get new seed rice to have their own little village thing. Rice amazes me. You are talking about a miracle. You plant one seed and you can get 150 to 250 grains per stalk. That is good multiplication and it feeds so many people. They are so happy to have jobs, so happy to have food. They also have this maize which is used, they grind it for cornmeal and things. They also have casaba. It takes 13 months for a crop and we've made all kinds of means, they have acreage with casaba and other vegetables around it. They rotate the crops.

This is the new building I checked this year. We are starting a casaba processing. They take it, they take the roots, they chop them up, it's like a sweet potato, you pare it, you grind it and then you have to dry it, so it is marketable. And you put it on the cycle and take it to town.

These are the chickens again, the eggs. Some of the buildings we got started a little at a time. This church we started, it's not finished inside, but they can worship because it has a roof on. I met with our sister church who is looking forward to getting their roof on. We've sent Bibles, we've sent teachers. We have instructed pastors. We have built churches. All of this because of the things you are helping up do by allowing me, firstly, to go, but also because of the funds each church does.

This church was built by Crosspoint Methodist Church over here behind the mall. They have also built this school for the teachers. It is four rooms for the teachers and then this is the school. They have built the left school five years ago and this year they built the four additional classrooms.

And this is our sister church and this is again Melissa Packer about five years ago. The church is no longer usable, so they are beginning a new congregational building. And they are counting on us if we are so willing to take the try in our Mission Committee to find ways to raise funds. They need \$16,000 to put a roof on their facility because they are growing, they are into college, they have hundreds of people and they really need to be able to work. I met with their leaders there. They thank God for what you were able to do through your Mission Committee you have already given them \$4,000 and that's a big plus. All the different groups are just thrilled for the possibility. They sent me these photos this week to let us know that they are doing something. They hope to have it up to the square where you put on the roof in the next couple of weeks. It is a fairly large church for the size of their congregation.

We do all of these things including this. We just made the shipment in December and it arrived Thursday this drove off the truck. We just shipped that. We have shipped three tractors in the last three years and are doing the farming.

I'm not going to read this, I know I'm going overtime again, but we are here to rejoice, we are here to give thanks. We are to remember what we are doing on behalf of God. And I represented by this little boy, if you can see him. I got to this village out beyond Lafore in Bombay. He had never seen a white man before. His parents brought him over to me and he screamed and cried, he was running away and they took him away and for about an hour and a half we worked there with a translator because no one speaks English and he kept crying and crying and I would wink at him and wave at him and try to get his attention. Within an hour and a half he finally would come to me to the phone, but I gave him my cell phone and he would reach as far as he could. Until I left he sat on my lap. Doesn't get any better. When I see this mother embracing her child, I see that little boy and I know while we are not all called to Africa or to anywhere outside Harrisburg, we are not only thankful but we need to be available. Maybe you will have a cure for Malaria. Maybe you will engineer something else that grinds food. Maybe you will do more with solar. I don't know what it is. I want you to know I am so thankful that you let me be a part of this and I'm so thankful that you are a part of it because we are called of God. God is counting on you because God says you can do great things. You've been gifted and we are doing it to God's glory.

Amen.