

CALL TO COMPLETE COMMITMENT TO CHRIST

by Victor Glenn

Glenn's practical Christian exhortation addressing the necessity of wholehearted spiritual dedication, with chapters examining the commitment of ears, eyes, hands, and other faculties to hearing and obeying God's call in every area of life.

11 Chapters

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00. Call to Complete Commitment to Christ

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FOREWORD

Just prior to Christ's return to the throne of His father in heaven, He placed the future of his work on earth in the hands of His disciples. These disciples, in turn, handed down the work to each succeeding generation until today the future of God's work is left with you and me. We hold the future of missions in our hands and its success or failure depends upon what we are willing to do to see the message of the Gospel spread to the ends of the earth. If we fail to share the message of Christ with a lost and perishing world it just will not be shared with them at all. I wonder if you fully understand what this means in terms of the feeding of orphans, the functioning of clinics, the establishing of churches, and the general work of evangelism among the lost in other lands? Yes, my friend, the future of missionary work is in your hands; what will you do to see that its future is bright with hope for a lost and perishing world? Your prayers and gifts for the missionary work is of vital importance if the great commission of Christ is fulfilled in our times.

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01. Are Your Ears Committed To Hear God's Call?

1 -- ARE YOUR EARS COMMITTED TO HEAR GOD'S CALL?

I wonder if you have given consideration to the need for a total commitment of your life to Christ? Have you thought much about the fact that the great commission will go on unfulfilled except as you yield yourself to such a complete commitment? Without it the lost heathen world will go on in their darkness with their souls unreached and their needs unmet. Our entire being must get involved in the work of world evangelism. Not only our hearts but our hands, our feet, our ears, and every other human faculty. Think with me of the total commitment that Christ gave to the task laid upon Him. The scriptures tell us that He gave His back to the smiters and they wounded His hands and His feet. Yes, Christ got totally involved in an effort to purchase man from the slavery of sin. I wonder just how much this has meant to you as an individual! What have you done to make Him known to others? Just how fully involved are you in the work of winning a lost world to Christ? Does God have complete charge of your human faculties -- your eyes, your voice, your hands, your ears? The question that comes to my mind just now is this, "Just what do you hear?" Do you hear things that remind you of your obligation to Jesus Christ? Do you hear things that help and bless and things that are of major importance in the promoting of the glorious Gospel of Christ? We need to hear God's voice if a heathen world is ever to hear God's message.

Certainly there are many voices. There is the voice of selfishness that beckons us to take care of our own interests to the exclusion of all other interests; there is the voice of worldliness that invites us to seek the joys and pleasures that it provides; there is the voice of carelessness and indifference. O! My friend, are you listening to these voices? Are you lending your ears to the voice that suggests that you make your own plans, and that you leave God out of them? I do not feel that I can overstress the need of proper hearing, for if you do not hear and heed God's voice, the heathen will never hear that voice.

I believe there are many needs unmet and unfulfilled on the fields simply because we as individuals have failed to hear the voice of God speaking to us. We are not distressed over the situation simply because our ears that should be hearing the distress signals are not hearing them. We must become distressed; we must get involved in some capacity, in some way. I believe every true child of God will have a part in the fulfilling of the great commission of Christ. I believe also that our love for Christ will be measured by our obedience to His command.

I wonder if you have been too preoccupied with your own plans that you have not listened nor heard the voice of God? I would ask you to do no more than to be honest with yourself in this regard. How many would hear the Gospel if it were left up to you? How many would be brought under the influence of the message of salvation as a result of your sacrifice, your prayers, your concern? Are you satisfied to go on uncommitted and unconcerned?

I am not speaking to you about some small incidental situation. I'm speaking to you concerning the life or death of precious perishing souls. Multitudes are waiting to hear while you are ignoring the

signals of distress. O! How I pray that God will help me to challenge your soul with this serious truth. Certainly it would not be my intention to overlook the tremendous sacrifices made by some of God's children for I am well aware of the involvement that individuals have entered into in regard to the work of world evangelism. Yet there is so much more that needs to be done. Yes, some have gone, but more need to go; some have given, but more must be given; some have prayed, but there must be more earnest prayer.

Certainly our efforts will not be overlooked by the one who placed this tremendous responsibility upon our shoulders. If you will give your total being into His hands, I'm sure He will grant to each individual a full reward. The rewards may not come in the usual way that individuals look for rewards, but they will come in trophies of grace to lay at the Master's feet.

I think of a young lady in the land of Ethiopia by the name of Jeanette. This young girl was taught by her grandfather. She had been trained to be rough and tough and unafraid, tier home had been broken up and her young heart torn apart by the tragic experience. She sought satisfaction by attending the Coptic church, but her heart need remained unmet. During her time of searching for something to satisfy, she was invited to one of our services and there she yielded her life to Jesus Christ. Her life took on new meaning and she began taking the message of salvation to the various villages. On Friday a group of women would come for prayer and she would witness to them of God's great plan of salvation, and many of them were saved. The next time they met two more were converted and tracts were asked for. Yes, this young lady was able to hear of Christ because some of you heard the voice of God and did something about it.

I think also of a man from Guatemala by the name of Felix. He was not acquainted with the Gospel, but the missionaries took the message to his village. The missionaries held services and he would come and listen outside the building, but would not go inside. Sometime later he was converted and became a faithful child of God. In order to meet the needs of his family, he did farming and had a team of oxen and a couple of mules and other farm animals. During a time when the one mule was left out to pasture, it was stolen and Felix went in search of his lost possession. As he journeyed, he was met by a drunken individual who pulled a gun and leveled it right at Felix. Felix bowed his head in prayer as he sat in the saddle and told the Lord that he wanted His will. The drunken individual lowered his gun and went on his way and Felix was unharmed. He was not able to find his lost mule and some people told him to go to a spiritualist medium and she would know how to find it for him. This Felix refused to do. He resolved to trust the Lord for his animal and the brethren prayed with him for its safe return. One day Felix came with rejoicing telling them that the animal had been found and that the Lord, not the devil, had helped him to find it. Today, two of this man's daughters are wives of preachers and the message of salvation is going forth. Here again are some of the results of someone hearing the voice of God. We need a complete commitment of our ears to hear if others, like Felix, are going to have an opportunity to hear.

If you will give your ears to hear the voice of God, I'm sure that voice will have something to say to you in regard to the work of reaching lost souls with the Gospel of Christ. There is so much that yet remains to be done. I trust that you will listen to God's voice and act upon what that voice tells you to do in helping us reach a lost and perishing world with the Gospel.

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02. Are Your Ears Committed To Hear The Heathen's Cry?

2 -- ARE YOUR EARS COMMITTED TO HEAR THE HEATHEN'S CRY?

It is not only necessary that our ears hear the voice of God, but they must also hear the cry of a lost heathen world. Certainly we must be tuned to hear the voice of God and then act upon what that voice has to say to us, but we must also be tuned to hear the voice that calls out of the darkness and despair of heathen night. The scriptures tell us that he that hath ears, let him hear and in Romans 10:1-21, we are told of the tremendous importance of hearing. In Romans 10:14, it says, "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent?" Surely this scripture makes it very clear that our hearing is tremendously important.

Jesus Christ heard the call of the father and came forth to give His life a ransom for many. He did not try to escape the cross. Surely He could have escaped it. He could have called ten thousand angels to destroy this world and set Him free, but He chose rather to die for you and me. He chose to die that we might have the blessings of salvation. Yes, there was a price that Christ had to pay and there is a price that you and I must pay also. Are we willing to pay the price as Christ was willing? Are we tuned to hear the voice that calls us to such kind of sacrifice? I somehow feel that if the church had obeyed that voice, the world would have been evangelized by this present hour. We would be in an entirely different situation than we are in. Yet though others have not heard, we must hear and we must heed what the voice suggests to us. How are you hearing just now as you read these lines? Can you hear as well as the earlier disciples heard who suffered all kinds of persecution for the cause of Christ? They rendered more than lip service. They went forth in spite of dungeon, fire, and sword. They moved forward regardless of the obstacles placed in their way by the enemy. In these pages I am not only asking that you hear the voice of God but that you hear the voice of multiplied millions who have never yet heard the name of Jesus one single time. What do you suppose you would hear if you heard the voice of a lost heathen world? Would it be a voice calling for pleasure or for worldly gain? Would it be a voice calling on us to bring them our culture or our environment? No, my friend, the voice of the lost is a voice that calls for something altogether different. I'm sure if you hear the voice of a perishing world, you will hear the pitiful cry of despair. The cry of the heathen is often a cry of hunger. It may be a beggar trying to gain a morsel of bread or it may be a child at the orphanage gate pleading for a place to call home. I think of an incident in the life of one of our missionaries. Miss Boyer was traveling in the jeep when she saw a woman on her hands and knees crawling along the ground. The woman seemed to be feeling the ground in search of something or other. Miss Boyer stopped the jeep and approached the woman only to discover that she was blind. The woman told the missionary that she had been feeling along the ground for grain that might have fallen from the sacks of the people who gathered it. She was so hungry that she would feel for grain until she would find a little handful to keep her from starvation. Yes, theirs is a tremendous cry of hunger.

Perhaps it is not this cry that you will hear. Perhaps it will be the cry of pain from someone entering our clinic with some physical suffering. It may be someone who has dragged themselves across the miles to the clinic in hopes of finding some relief for their pitiful situation.

Perhaps this would not be the cry that your ears would hear at all. Maybe your ears would be shattered by the cry of those who mourn the passing of loved ones. You would hear the wail of the mourners as they cry out in despair without a hope of seeing those loved ones again. O! What a sad and pitiful wail that often ascends from the hearts of those who have just experienced the departure of loved ones. I wonder if your ears are tuned to hear any of these despairing cries today? I'm sure if you will listen, you will hear the weepings and wailings of a lost world.

Surely their cry must be answered with positive action on our part. Yet I believe there is an even more serious cry that is more important than all of those that I have mentioned. I am well aware of the fact that hunger, pain, want, and death are cries that are extremely important, yet there is a spiritual hunger that goes beyond all of these. The pain of sin unforgiven and the living death of a life outside of Christ is far more serious than any physical suffering could ever be. I wonder if you can hear the awful wail of the lost as they plunge into a Christless eternity? What must the cry be like of those who sink into hell's darkness forever without a ray of hope and without the knowledge that we might have shared with them? Certainly there could be no cry more heart-rending than the wail of a lost soul perishing in the darkness forever. When you think of the fact that we have what they need, it leaves us without excuse. Their need refutes every argument we might have for our lethargy in regard to getting the Gospel message out to them. Certainly there is not a reason we can offer that will stand the test of the white light of God's judgment. Even while I am writing to you, there are those passing into eternal night. O! How long can we go on unheeding the voice of God and the voice of lost multitudes?

I think of a village in Guatemala. It took two or three years before we were able to answer the call to come to them with the Gospel message. They even built a road so that our missionaries could get through to the area, but it still took a couple of years to get there. Their call for the Gospel was responded to by our missionaries, but being short-handed, it took quite a long time. It was not because of any indifference on the part of the missionaries that the long delay was necessary. It was lack of laborers that deferred our going to them with the Gospel. We were told that one man literally leaned against the jeep when the first missionaries arrived and wept openly for the joy that flooded his heart. The missionaries had arrived at last and he was overjoyed at their coming.

I would remind you that there are many calls that we could fill if we had the means to fill them. There are pleas that come in regard to churches that need to be built. We must build in Cairo, Egypt, and this is an order of the government. Calls come to us from the other fields as well. There are needs in Korea, Eritrea, Guatemala, and other areas as well. Yes, the call comes ringing across the restless waves for us to send the light. I repeat again the fact that we must hear the voice of God and the voice of a lost perishing world if our obligations are to be realized. When you think of the fact that you would not have the Gospel if someone had not heard, I would not have it and multiplied thousands of our own people would not have it! I wonder if I can get you to realize this tremendous fact? Are you hearing and are you heeding as you read the message that you now have in your hands? Give your ears in total, complete commitment to Christ that He might fill them with His message, and that you, in turn, might share that message with a lost and perishing

world: I'm sure if you will do this, the work that needs to be done will get done and a giant step will have been taken toward the salvation of the lost in other lands.

After you have given your ears to hear, it is important that you take a similar step by giving your eyes in complete commitment so that you might see the whitened harvest fields. One of the problems that I have faced with my eyesight is nearsightedness. I must wear thick lenses so that my vision might be unimpaired and so that I can see clearly. I mention this to mention the fact that I do not want to be nearsighted when it comes to seeing the tragic needs of a lost world. I do not want to be physically handicapped when it comes to catching a clear vision of a world without the Saviour. I would ask you just how well do you see? Is the message that I am sharing with you getting through to your heart? I trust that you will not only see words on paper, but that you will catch a glimpse of a world for whom Christ died and a world that is still awaiting the feet of those who will bring the glad tidings to them. Yes, my friend, how well do you see?

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03. How Well Do You See?

3 -- HOW WELL DO YOU SEE? In an earlier message, I asked you some questions concerning your ears and just how well they hear the voice of God and the voice of a lost and perishing world. Not only do our ears need to be totally committed to Christ, but our eyes also need this total commitment. Just how well do you see?

I am not speaking to you concerning your natural vision for I am well aware of the fact that natural vision varies in each individual. My question is given to you in regard to your spiritual vision. How well do you see the whitened harvest field that Jesus spoke about? Certainly we need to see the fields. Jesus said to His disciples, "Say not ye, there are yet four months, and then cometh the harvest? behold, I say unto you, lift your eyes and look on the fields: for they are white already to harvest."

I believe Jesus is making it as clear as it can be made that we must see the need of the harvest. It is absolutely essential that our eyes are open and looking upon the ripening grain. If our eyes are open to this tremendous need, we will discover that we have a vision that alerts us. It awakens us and leaves us with no excuse for further delay. What right has any individual to quiet his conscience in this regard when multitudes are perishing without the light of the Gospel? Perishing multitudes need to be harvested now. I trust that God will help us not to push this need aside into some small corner of the church program. Certainly any deferment of God's plan is inexcusable.

Again I notice that this is a personal look. Each one of us have eyes that must see the need. There are so many that have a limited and narrow vision. Until your vision is world-wide in its scope, it is less than God intends it to be. Will you not lift up your eyes until you see clearly the fact that a perishing heathen world is entitled to have the same message of redemption that has been given to you and me. I believe we need to have our attention drawn away from the things around us. I do not say that we need to lose sight of our local responsibilities. No, not at all. But along with that local vision, you need a world-wide vision that takes in the needs of the lost everywhere. Look beyond your own doorstep; look beyond your own little circle. Look and see the staggering needs of men and women who are without opportunity to hear what you have heard. They have no way to receive what you have received. I have prayed in preparing these pages that God would anoint my heart and my efforts that your heart might be challenged to put forth more effort for His cause and kingdom. I want God to attract your attention and get your eyes fixed on the harvest that must be gathered in before the sun sets on this generation.

Notice that the lifting up of the eyes revealed the field. All the disciples had to do was look and the field was right before their eyes. There it was ripe and ready and waiting for reapers to gather it in. The laborers are needed when the fields are ready to be reaped. This is why we need your help on the mission field today. Our fields are white unto harvest, but the laborers are not too large in number. O! That God will grant that the vision of this will grip your heart. The storm clouds are gathering; can you see them? The clock on the wall is telling us that time is running out. Can you see that clock?

Again I would suggest that a real look at the need will be a costly look. There will be a price to pay if you see the need. The apostle Paul saw it and the price paid is catalogued for us in 2 Corinthians 11:1-33, where he tells us of the five beatings received from his adversaries; the three times that he was beaten with rods; the time he was stoned and the several times he had suffered shipwreck. He further says, "A night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of water, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren. In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and in thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things which are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches."

Certainly Paul paid a tremendous price when he made a total commitment of himself to Jesus Christ. I'm sure history would reveal the fact that many of God's children paid a tremendous price to follow the Master and fulfill the great commission that He had left them. Yet with all that they have paid in the past, there is yet a price to pay today. I do not know just what that price might mean for you as an individual, but I do know it will involve your total being; it will involve all that there is of you in your time, your talents, your abilities, your material possessions; yes, it will involve everything. And yet when you have paid the full price of full surrender, you will discover that you have paid a price far less than that paid by Jesus Christ. No matter how much we may give, He has given more; no matter how much we have sacrificed, His sacrifice was greater. You and I may give our hands to the task of reaching others, but He gave His to the Roman spikes; we may give our heads to the task of thinking up ways in which to promote His interests, but He gave His head to be crowned in mockery with common thorns such as first sprung up in Adam's Eden. Yes, you can give, but remember He gave more; you can go, but remember that He went a little farther.

We just cannot outgive God. Certainly He will be no man's debtor. O! The debt of gratitude that is yet unpaid by those who have been the recipients of His matchless blessings. I ask you, are you satisfied to allow your debt to go unpaid? Are you satisfied to allow others to pay a tremendous price in giving themselves in total commitment when you do less than your best? I am not scolding; I am not accusing; I am only trying to challenge your hearts with the tremendous unfinished task that must be faced if we are to ever hear the "well done" of the Master. I wonder if the "well done" might be "undone" if we do not hasten and get on with the vital business of reaching the lost with the glorious Gospel of Christ? O! That God will help each individual to pay whatever price is necessary in fulfilling their obligation to the Master.

I would suggest to you that all is not cost and price in this work of reaching the lost. I'm glad that I can share with you the fact that this is also a rewarding work. You can lift up your eyes and see souls enjoying the bliss of heaven who might have been lost in Hell. The same God who fills your heart with concern and compassion will show you the fruits of that concern and compassion. I believe there are missionaries gone on to glory who are now enjoying the fellowship of those they had helped to win in the whitened harvest fields. I believe my parents are rejoicing on the banks of the river over souls they met along the Nile River in Egypt. They did not realize many earthly rewards down here, yet I believe they are realizing the rich heavenly rewards up there. I feel that if you could somehow see the rich rewards it would help you to join more earnestly in the battle. Certainly you would be asking more earnestly than ever before, "Lord, what would you have me to

do?"

Child of God, are you lifting up your eyes today? Are you looking toward the fields that are white unto harvest? The song writer encourages us to do this when he writes, "Lord, give me a vision, Oh, help me to see, The needs all around me; Souls dying for thee, Oh, make me a blessing, As onward I go. By telling the story; that others may know. Lord, give me a vision, Of fields that are white, Souls that we must gather; E'er cometh the night, Dark shadows are gathering, And some will be lost. Some neighbor or brother; How awful the cost. Lord give me a vision, Lest empty I stand, There at the great judgment; No sheaves in my hand, No labour of Love, To offer my King. With nothing but leaves then; The Master to bring. Lord, give me a vision, Oh, help me to see, Some neighbor today Lord, And bring him to thee, That on that glad morning, Some soul there may say. 'Twas your prayers that saved me; you showed me the way." Yes, Ross Minkler challenges our hearts with these words that suggest we get our eyes open and look upon the fields. I challenge you to look. I'm sure if you will look, you will never be the same again. If you will look, you will see their need and you will desire to do something about it. Dare we hug our blessings to our bosoms? Can we keep God's blessings without sharing them with others? I ask you to look with me and join with me in sharing the Gospel of Christ with a perishing world.

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04. Can You Be Moved With Compassion?

4 -- CAN YOU BE MOVED WITH COMPASSION?

I have been trying to impress upon your consciousness the need for a total commitment of your whole being to Christ for the express purpose of making Him known to a lost and perishing world. I have pointed out the fact that your ears must hear the voice of God and must also hear the cry of a world yet unreached with the saving message of the Gospel. I have also pointed out the need for lifting up your eyes and looking upon the fields that are white unto harvest. In this chapter, I would point out that not only do you need to hear and see, but you also must get emotionally involved in reaching others with the Gospel. Our ears must hear, our eyes must see, and our emotions must get stirred to action. If we see the need and hear the desperate cry, but fail to act upon what we see and hear, it will accomplish absolutely nothing. Our efforts to convince you of the need of your involvement count for naught if you fail to take the necessary action. Your vision must be sufficiently clarified until it imparts something to your soul concerning the personal part you have to play in the fulfillment of God's plan and purpose.

I could point you to no greater example in this regard than the example of our Lord during His earthly ministry. The scriptures tell us that the very feelings of Jesus were involved in the needs of humanity. In Matthew, chapter 9:36, we read, "But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd." At this time Israel was slave to Rome and in tremendous bondage and Jesus looked with compassion upon their situation. This word "compassion" has tremendous meaning. It is not speaking of a casual glance nor a casual interest. It is speaking of an interest that continues to be interested. It means to "suffer with or to have feeling for" someone or something. Jesus is saying that He suffers with the multitude who are scattered as sheep; He has deep feeling for a people who are held in bondage by a foreign power. You will notice that the disciples seem to lack this depth of compassion for the:~ would send the multitudes away in their fainting, half-starved condition. But the one who was moved with compassion just could not cast them aside that easily. The heart of Christ was too deeply wrought upon to make any such snap decision. Instead of sending them away, He instructs His disciples to see that they are given something to eat lest they faint in the way. What Christ is saying is this, "If you really care, share; if you are truly interested in doing the work that I have called you to do, get started right here and now." Here was a great opportunity for service and the disciples were seemingly uninterested in it. O! I feel that if Christ were present today in our generation, His words to us would differ very little from those uttered to His disciples so many generations ago. Jesus would look with compassion upon a lost heathen world held in fetters far more severe than those of the Romans; He would look with sympathetic concern upon a people held in sin's slavery, and He would charge you and me with the responsibility of seeing to it that their spiritual hunger is satisfied. How easy it is to say, "Send them away." How easy it is to place the responsibility upon the shoulders of someone else. The responsibility is yours and mine. We cannot shrug our shoulders and thereby escape the obligations that our own union with Christ places upon us. O! How we need to see this world

through the eyes of the Saviour! How we need to look as He looked and feel as He felt! Certainly your emotions will be stirred when you see as He sees. Not only in this instance, but in many others, Jesus reveals His compassionate concern for lost humanity. Look at Him as He enters into the garden and goes a little farther than the other disciples had gone. See Him as the tremendous burden of concern presses Him to the earth in an agony of prayer for others. Now look at the area occupied by the disciples and see them sleeping through the hours of His awful agony. Could they not watch with Him one hour? Could we say that their hearts were sufficiently stirred to action? Yet, I would not ask you to fault the disciples for their indifference until you have made full examination of your own. How well do you sleep through the agonizing realization that a world is lost in the darkness of sin? I wonder sometimes if we do not sleep all too well while a world wanders on without the light of the Gospel of Christ! Look at Christ as He moves from Gethsemane to the judgment hall and on to the Mount called Calvary. Watch Him suffer all the pains of death and hell in your behalf and mine. O! The depth of compassion revealed to us in the life and death of Jesus Christ. He had compassion, and it is this compassion that He seeks to impart to His followers. Do you have compassion on others? Is your heart moved to action as a result of Christ's concern?

I suppose next to the compassion of Christ there would be no greater example than that given to us in the life of the apostle Paul. It was Paul who made such an impassioned plea for his own brethren who were outside the ark of safety. Paul tells us that he is willing to be accursed for his kinsmen; he tells us that he is willing to be lost in their behalf. Yes, He is willing to go to Hell if need be, if it will result in their salvation. What total commitment this is! A willingness to forfeit his own place in Heaven to take another's place in Hell. When I search my own heart, I do not know that I could speak as the apostle has spoken; I do not know that I would have that depth of compassion that I would be willing to spend an eternity in Hell for the salvation of others. Certainly there is a depth of compassion suggested here that defies every means we might employ to measure it. It represents a compassion that cannot be measured.

Certainly Paul occupies a position in this regard that would seldom be sought or envied by others. I am not asking you to join Paul in his total self-abandonment; I am not asking that you commit yourself to be lost that others might be saved. Certainly it would not be my intention to make such a demand upon any individual. My concern is not that you be willing to die for others, although that might be involved in it; but what I am asking is that which Jesus asked, and that is that you live for others. Jesus calls upon us to get involved by doing all that we can possibly do to reach them with the Gospel. He calls for a selfless service and an unselfish effort to share this Gospel message with the entire world. You will recall the fact that Christ fed the five thousand with just a boy's lunch. What a miracle was wrought in that feeding! I ask you, can He not do the same today if we will but do our part in supplying Him with the temporal necessities? I can assure you that the Lord has performed miracles in stretching your missionary dollar; He has reached out much farther than you or I could have reached, and I am convinced that He will continue to do so if we will make the funds available.

I wonder just what you would think of the feeding of the five thousand if Christ had only fed the first couple of rows, and then after feeding them would go back over those rows again and again taking no interest in the many rows behind them? I'm sure we would see the injustice of such a situation immediately; yet are we not doing much the same here at home today? Have we not fed the first

few rows over and over again with the Father's bread while the back rows occupied by a lost heathen world is left with needs unmet. How shall we account for such injustice when we stand before the bar of infinite justice? O! How we need a sense of compassion today.

I would invite you to go with me to a hut on the mission field. Witness with me an old man about to change worlds without the knowledge of Jesus Christ. Is it not to our shame and discredit that such an individual should be perishing without the light of the Gospel? Go with me also to another scene perhaps even more tragic than this one. Look with me as the heathen perform their burial ceremony in which a live baby is buried with the dead mother. What a picture of unutterable tragedy! Such a thing would seem unthinkable to the average civilized mind, yet such a thing has happened in lands unenlightened by the glorious Gospel of Christ. I do not suggest that we can change the entire situation, but I do suggest that we can try. We may not be able to win all men to Christ, but surely we can be effective in winning some of them. There is so much to do and so few to help get it done. The needs are staggering, yet we dare not fail in doing all that we can to meet them. Will you not listen to the voice of God and the cry of a perishing world? Will you not lift up your eyes to a harvest dead ripe unto harvest? And will you not ask God to grant you the compassionate concern that will help us to do something about their lost condition? Our efforts can only be effective as you join with us in making Christ known.

05. The Supreme Price For Your Redemption

5 -- THE SUPREME PRICE FOR YOUR REDEMPTION

Anything worthwhile usually has a price associated with it. It costs something if it is worth something. The price paid is usually indicative of its value to the one paying the price. The cost involved usually suggests to us something of the purchaser's expectations of the thing paid for. Certainly no greater cost has ever gone into anything such as was involved in your redemption and mine. God paid in coin that no stamping plant could manufacture; He paid the cost in a way that sinks all other costs into insignificance. God gave the very treasure of heaven to purchase a lost and perishing world.

I believe this is suggested to us in that great golden text of the Bible where it says, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Doubtless this verse is about as familiar to the average individual as any text in the Bible, yet I wonder if we haven't repeated it all too often without taking time to give full consideration to it. In fact, there is so much to be found in this text that I have been reluctant to even begin trying to fathom its depths. I feel my own limitations as I try to write to you concerning it. O! The depth of the riches of God's grace that is revealed to us in this tremendous text.

How much is involved in that word "so"? God "so" loved. I wonder if that little word "so" does not have a measureless meaning; I wonder if it does not express something that our language is too poverty-stricken to interpret? I would suggest to you that the word involves all that has been revealed concerning the selfless sacrifice of Christ in behalf of a world on its way to perdition. All the grief and the groanings of Gethsemane along with all the agonies of the cross are wrapped up in that one lone expression. Beside this I believe that all the wretchedness of man and all the darkness of heathenism is wrapped up in that little word "so."

God's love moved Him to do something about it; His love moved Him to give. And when He gave, He gave the very best that he had to give. I do not feel we would be overstating the case to say that God bankrupted heaven to provide a plan of salvation for lost and perishing souls. He took from heaven its fairest jewel and placed it in the mire of humanity; He took the richest treasure heaven could afford and robed it in garments of flesh and blood.

I notice here that the expressed love of God was not for any select few nor for a certain segment of society; He did not send forth His son to any predetermined country or people. The love expressed by God is a Universal love. It extends beyond the broad borders of our Atlantic or Pacific shores; it reaches deep into the heart of heathendom; it extends to all men everywhere. There is no race nor color excluded from the provisions of Calvary.

I am conscious of the fact that we think of Christ as paying one single price for our redemption, and I'm sure this is a proper concept of His sufferings, yet I believe there is a sense in which He paid a price over and over again while in the days of His flesh. He paid a price in regard to His own

people. He came unto His own and His own received Him not. He was an outcast in His own world. The world His hands had created was hostile to His presence in it. Think of the price paid in His rejection by His own disciples; think of how He was wounded in the house of His friends. Yes, the price is paid over and over again in many different ways. Time would fail us to tell of the mental sufferings, the emotional upheaval, the nervous strain, the temporal poverty, and the compound physical sufferings -- all of this and more also. Perhaps the climax of it all is the feeling of rejection as He hangs between heaven and earth crying out the sinner's prayer, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me." O! How it ought to shock us into a wide-awake condition; how it ought to break our hearts until we would never be the same again. The thing that ought to shock us most is the fact that the price He was paying was the price you and I deserved to pay; Jesus Christ was taking our place by paying a debt that you and I actually owed. My friend, let this truth grip your heart with a fresh consciousness of the debt of gratitude you owe to God for taking your place on the cross. We need to think of His Gethsemane as our Gethsemane; His cruel trial and mockery as ours; His crucifixion as our crucifixion. It was you and I who deserved to be spit upon, mocked, and rejected. O! The tremendous price that God has paid in giving heaven's brightest treasure to purchase earth's most degraded member of human society.

I wonder if you can envision with me the awful traumatic experience that was Christ's as He passed from one human crisis to another in His effort to purchase our redemption. Think of the fact that the one who made the world had no place to lay His head in that world. His own lips tell us that the foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the son of man hath no place to lay His head. What tragedy; what a pathetic situation! Think of Him as He presses His way into the garden feeling the awful pressure of man's guilt and sin. Think of Him as He sweats as it were great drops of blood on your behalf and mine. Now go with me to the judgment hall and witness the cruel mockings and the ugly lacerations laid open by the scourge of cords. With open and bleeding wounds on His back, there is a cross placed upon it to heighten the suffering that was even then practically unbearable. With the weight of man's sins upon His heart and the weight of the cross upon His back, He fell beneath the tremendous load until another had to be found to bear the cross up Calvary's rugged brow. Can you think of all this pain and suffering inflicted without one act of kindness being shown to the one suffering it? Can you imagine what agony must have been involved in the compounding of that suffering by driving spikes into His hands and feet? The thought of such sufferings seems totally intolerable to the human mind. We just naturally recoil from such barbarous cruelty regardless of the seriousness of the crime committed. Yet in this case it was no crime of His own. It was my crime and yours; it was my sin and your sin that caused heaven to pay so tremendous a price for redemption. O! How I pray that God shall use this truth to stir your heart afresh as you give consideration to the cost of your own redemption. The song writer tried to put his feelings into words when he stated, "From Calvary a cry was heard, A bitter and heart-rending cry; My Saviour's every mournful word, Bespeaks thy soul's deep agony. A horror of great darkness fell, On thee, thou spotless, holy one! And all the swarming hosts of hell, conspired to tempt God's only son. The scourge, the thorns, the deep disgrace, These thou couldst bear, nor once repine; But when Jehovah veiled His face, unutterable pangs were thine. Let the dumb world its silence break; Let pealing anthems rend the sky; Awake, my sluggish soul, awake! He died, that we might never die. Lord, on thy cross I fix mine eye: If e'er I lose its strong control, O let that dying, piercing cry, Melt and reclaim my wandering soul." Another tried to put feelings into words when he said, "'Tis finished! The Messiah dies, Cut off for sins, but not His

own; Accomplished is the sacrifice, The great redeeming work is done. 'Tis finished! All the debt is paid; Justice divine is satisfied; The grand and full atonement made; Christ for a guilty world hath died. Death, hell, and sin are now subdued; all grace is now to sinners given; And, Lo, I plead the atoning blood, And in thy right I claim my heaven."

O! Can you not see in this the greatness of the price paid? Can you not see in some measure what it cost God to make redemption possible? I suppose if I could hear your answer just now, you would be agreeing with me stating that you do see God's cost, and you do see the tremendous price paid by Jesus Christ. Doubtless, you would be glad to tell me that you have accepted that price paid and have come into the knowledge of sins forgiven. You are a child of God; you are a Christian. Certainly that would be a wonderful testimony, yet I wonder if we are sharing this tremendous message with others as we ought to share it? Are you entering fully into the cost that yet needs to be paid by God's children in advancing the Gospel of Jesus Christ? Certainly God is not asking us to be crucified on a cross, but He is calling upon us to take up our cross. And I believe that cross is the obligation of telling others of the good news of redemption. God wants the price He paid to grip us until there will be a price we are willing to pay. Jesus paid the price of bringing salvation into the world, and we must pay the price of spreading it to the ends of the earth. Are you joining with us in this tremendous effort?

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06. Can We Make Christ's Sacrifice Meaningless?

6 -- CAN WE MAKE CHRIST'S SACRIFICE MEANINGLESS?

I have mentioned to you the tremendous price that Christ and God have paid for our redemption. It took heaven's treasure to reach to the deepest depth of man's spiritual need. The question I have for you now is this: "Can that tremendous price be rendered meaningless by our failure to share it with others?" I'm sure this is a thought-provoking question, and it ought to shock us to our very depths for I believe that the entire price paid for our salvation is meaningless if we fail to tell the world about it. Of what value would the discovery of a cure for cancer be if it were never applied to the sad and painful condition of those who suffer from cancer? Suppose Madam Curie had spent her long hours and tedious labor in discovering radium only to find that no one was interested in propagating her discovery? Of what importance would the discovery of the New World have been if Columbus had never returned to the Old World to declare his discovery? I believe that all of God's efforts to reach a perishing world would be without rhyme or reason if all of that cost were buried in the tomb outside Jerusalem. This message of Christ's sacrifice must be told if it is to accomplish the purpose that God intends it to accomplish.

I believe this is the reason that Christ stressed this to His disciples; this is why He insisted that they go and teach all nations. He knew that His efforts depended upon the cooperation of those to whom the message was given. Why go through the agonies of the cross? Why bleed and die if those for whom He was to die are never told of His death? There are countless thousands that are yet waiting to hear of the Saviour's great sacrifice paid upon Calvary. Even though we have had the Gospel for around twenty centuries we have somehow failed to proclaim its provisions to the ends of the earth as we should have.

Yes, Christ wanted the news of His death to be made known. He did not give them some local assignment; He did not tell them to go just to their own locality and tell their loved ones that the sacrificial lamb had been slain as an atonement for sin. Jesus Christ gave the most wide-sweeping and world-encore passing commission ever given to men. He wanted the price paid to be known in the remotest regions of the earth. Wherever man made his habitation, there the Gospel was to go. His commission and command was to begin in Jerusalem and from there they were to spread out into the regions of Judea and from there into Samaria and then they were to fan out into the entire world, even to the uttermost parts of the earth. No organization could have given a more world-encompassing assignment than this one given to Christ's followers. The world has developed and invented many gods, but none of their gods can meet the desperate needs of their hearts. We alone have the God the world needs to know about. We also have the knowledge of the God who meets the challenge of sin and the challenge of corrupt, fallen nature. In the early days of Egypt, they had many gods; they worshipped a number of different creatures such as bugs or animals; the Ammonites had Molech and the Romans had Venus and others, yet there is no hope offered in such worship. All these religions can do is deepen their darkness and multiply the grief they are already suffering. I think of people in Egypt going out to the tombs of the dead to

weep and wail, trying to make contact with the departed. O! The despair that fills their sorrowing cry! Somehow they felt that they could find peace through their contact with the world of departed spirits. When you look at the heathen, you get an object lesson of the devil's religion. One of the strongest impressions that the missionary receives is that of the look of woe and despair upon the faces of the unevangelized. You can watch them on their march from the cradle to the grave and witness their tragic condition as they go there without hope and without God. All of their false religions seem to bear some similar characteristics. They all promote the same kind of idolatry regardless of what name might be attached to it. In India, you have the caste system that holds the people in the chains of poverty and ignorance; you have Buddhism which tells them to comfort their hearts by ignoring their misery. Then again, there is Mohammedanism which is little more than a concentration of lust and lies offering nothing whatsoever to break the fetters of sin. There is not a god among the multiplied millions of heathen gods that can have an ounce of compassion upon them; all of their gods are totally destitute of providing the slightest ray of hope for the multitudes of their followers. I repeat again for emphasis, "We have the God that they need to know about."

Someone may ask, Brother Glenn, can they not be saved without our taking the Gospel to them? Is there not some means that could be employed to meet their tragic condition? Well, I would suggest to you that we might as well say that darkness is better than light; we might as well turn off the light in our own country, close our Bibles and cease singing our glorious Gospel songs. No, my friend, there is no way that they can be saved if we fail to take to them the Gospel. They must have the light taken to them in the same measure that it was taken to us. The same truth that was necessary to transform your life is needed to transform theirs.

I wonder just how we would feel if it were a question of the need of our own children! Would we question whether or not they need the Gospel taken to them? Would we be willing to allow them to stumble on in their darkness without a church service, a prayer meeting, or a Sunday School session? We somehow feel the tremendous importance of having our own churches, our own revivals, our own camp meetings, yet we wonder if the heathen can get along without the same glorious truth being shared with them. Certainly any thought of their being saved without the Gospel ought to be abandoned, and we ought to get on with the task of reaching them for Christ.

Think of the wonderful change the Gospel makes in the life of the individual. The same change that comes into a life in our country comes in the life of those saved in other countries. They experience the same relief of conscience and the same joy of salvation. Yes, and in some cases, they pass through strong persecutions. I think of one young man who had been beaten, poisoned, and cast out because he had turned his life over to Jesus Christ. This young man held steady and remained true through it all refusing to back down or turn back to a false, heathen religion that could do nothing for the need of his immortal soul. Each time that we are privileged to witness the transformation of a heathen individual to Christ, we are reminded of the fact that His sacrifice and the price He paid is not without meaning or purpose. Each soul converted gives fresh meaning to all the sufferings, agonies, and sacrifices of Jesus Christ. Thank God, we need not allow His sacrifice to pass into a condition of meaningless effort. We can share this glorious Gospel with the world He asked us to share it with.

Surely they should have at least one opportunity to hear what you and I have heard so often. Can we deny them the privilege of knowing of God's great plan of salvation? Can we withhold anything from the Lord that He might ask us to surrender to Him? If you are a child of God today, there is nothing you possess that you can rightfully withhold if the Master asks you to surrender it to His service. I suppose if God or Christ had withheld something we might be able to do the same; if Jesus hadn't given a one hundred-percent commitment to the task of paying the penalty for our transgressions, we might use that as an excuse to do a little less than our best, but such is not the case. God and Christ have done all that can be done and now it is up to you and all Christendom to do the part that is yours to do.

I ask you, can we afford to allow them to go on in their darkness? Can we quiet our conscience while they remain bound in the fetters and chains of heathen superstition? We dare not allow this to take place; we must shoulder our responsibility in this regard. I pray that God will challenge your heart in regard to your part in making Christ known to a lost and perishing world. Will you not ask God what He would have you to do, and I'm sure if you ask Him this, He will tell you something that you can do. I have prayed that God would speak to your heart as you read this message and I believe that He has spoken and awaits your response to His voice. Souls perish while you remain in a condition of indecision. Join us right now in a covenant of concern for a world that so desperately needs the light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Jesus paid the full price for our redemption; let us pay the full price in seeing that others have the story of redemption given to them.

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07. How You Can Help Make Christ's Sacrifice Meaningful

7 -- HOW YOU CAN HELP MAKE CHRIST'S SACRIFICE MEANINGFUL

I have mentioned the fact that we have the God that the world needs to know about. They have many gods that have no power to meet their needs, and they lack the knowledge of the one who can meet their needs. We not only have the God they need to know about, but we also have the Gospel they need to hear. The false gods of heathendom have their message, but it is nothing like the message of the glorious Gospel of Christ. Our Gospel is good news; our message is one of hope and happiness. The heathen gods have no such message. Yes, we have the Gospel that they need to hear, and we have the love that they need to see. They are desperately in need of a demonstration of the kind of love and compassion that flows from the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on Calvary. O! How we need to share with them the light of the Gospel that they too might enjoy the blessings that you and I enjoy.

I have mentioned to you in a previous chapter that we can render the price paid for our redemption meaningless by failing to share it with others. Now I am turning to the positive side and suggesting to you the fact that we can help to make the sacrifice of Christ meaningful to a lost and perishing world.

I think of the American advertisers who advertise their products from one end of the world to the other. In some instances, their products are mentioned over the air waves and in other instances they are written upon the rocks along the highways or byways. Doubtless their motive is to spread the knowledge of their product just as far and as wide as they are capable of spreading it. They want the world to know that their particular product is in existence; they want everyone to try the product for themselves and thus become acquainted with its merits. Now all of this is done with the profit motive in mind. Companies want to use their product to make a sizable profit for themselves, yet God has no such intention in mind. God is not mercenary in any measure; His concern is not for the accumulation of dollars and cents, but of precious souls that will one day be laid as trophies at Jesus' pierced feet. God is not writing His message or advertising His product by using rocks along the highway; God is writing His message upon the fleshly tables of our hearts.

Certainly He could have written it among the stars to be illuminated at night, but instead He has chosen to use us. He has decreed that the glorious message of redemption shall spread from pole to pole through lips of converted clay. How well are we performing the task left to us? Can we say our efforts make Christ's sacrifice meaningful? O! Could I emphasize once again that we have the Gospel they need to hear, and we have the love they need to see. There is no way for them to come to the knowledge of God except as we make Christ known. We know what they need to know; we have experienced what they must experience; and we have the means available to us to get this knowledge to them. If we follow the example of the Master, we will exhibit a love for the unlovable. Think of how unlovable you were, or how unlovable I was. Yet, Jesus Christ had compassion upon us and met the cry of our needy hearts.

I believe we are to love them simply because they are so dear to Jesus Christ. He died for them as well as for us. I think of a tramp who came to a door of a home and was met with something less than a royal welcome. In fact, he was unwanted and undesired by those who occupied the house. If they had had their way, they would have sent him away immediately, but something happened to change their minds considerably. The tramp handed them a note regarding their departed loved one. On that note, it stated that the parents were to love the tramp for the sake of their departed son. It was made known that the tramp had given needed assistance to their dying boy as he departed this life. Immediately their attitude changed, and the tramp was given a royal welcome. They made available to him just about anything he desired all because he had shown kindness to their dying son. There is a poem about that tramp, and a part of it goes something like this, "Then for a moment from my view the stranger turned from his disguise, By the tokens in his hands I knew, It was my Saviour stood before my eyes; He spoke and my poor name He named, 'of me thou hast not been ashamed,' These deeds shall thy memorial be, fear not, thou did'st it unto me." Yes, the one representing the tramp is Jesus Christ and He indeed has assisted many a traveler as He has passed the line of worlds and entered into eternity. This one who has helped so many others deserves our help as He tries to reach a lost and perishing world with His saving message.

It was Christ who said those thought-provoking words, "For I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked and ye clothed me not: sick and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they say when? When saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall He answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me." Yes, Jesus looks at every lost and needy individual as though it were Himself. Our care for others is considered as care for Jesus Christ. If He were here, He would have fed the hungry, clothed the naked, and met the needs of individuals, and now He turns the task over to us. We must do today as He would do if He were actually walking with us in human form. We do it because Jesus Christ wants us to do it. Wherever there is a human need, there is an opportunity to share in the concern of Jesus Christ.

Someone may ask the question, "Brother Glenn, where are the needs you speak about? Where are the people hungry, naked and destitute? Most all that I see are pretty well cared for." Well, I could take you immediately to areas of our world where they do not fare as well as individuals do in our own country. I could take you to areas where the needs are staggering. You would witness just about every situation, in one form or another, that Jesus made mention of in His statements that I have just quoted. In some areas, there is very little for a young girl to be happy about; there are areas where womanhood is degraded and considered to be practically worthless. In other areas, clothing is in short supply and in still others there is the shortage of the needed food supplies. Doubtless, the greatest lack is the lack of the life-giving message of salvation. This in itself represents the most pressing need of men everywhere. I think of a man who had been seen crawling along the ground in search of something. When he was approached and asked just what he was in search of, he stated that he was looking for the door to peace. How tragic that he was searching for peace where it could not be found. You just do not find it that way.

Jesus said, I am the door. Yes, Jesus Christ is the door, and it is up to you and me to open that door to a lost and perishing world. Passing through that door is like passing through a door that leads from the cold, chilly blast of winter to a warm, comfortable room inside the house. The

individual who passes through such a door is ushered:from a place of cold and barrenness to a position of warmth and comfort, and so it is with the door represented by Jesus Christ. The lost are outside that door perishing without hope and without God, and the door will remain closed except you and I open it. I wonder just what you will do about it? Will you accept the challenge and help open the door or must we leave a lost heathen world to perish without the light? How can we do it and keep our conscience from smiting us? We just cannot allow ourselves the slightest measure of failure in this regard. We must get this message to the lost; we must spread the tidings of Good News to as many as possible while still we have time and opportunity.

Yes, we can make the sacrifice of Christ meaningful to others by explaining its meaning to them. Thousands do not even know that there is a Saviour named Jesus; multiplied thousands are yet unreached and unevangelized because of the slowness of the Christian response to the tremendous need. I confess to you today that the needs we face just now are staggering; we need your support now more desperately than ever before, If I knew a more effective way to bring the needs before you, I certainly would seek to implement that way, but I know of no other. If you will not respond to this appeal, I have no other way of getting your response and the many needs will just have to go unmet. I trust that such will not be the case; I trust that God will move upon your heart and that you will respond by praying and then writing telling us just what you will do to help us reach those who perish without the Gospel of Christ.

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08. Death Is The Price Paid For Spiritual Life

8 -- DEATH IS THE PRICE PAID FOR SPIRITUAL LIFE

Someone has well stated that "Christ alone can save the world, but Christ cannot save the world alone." The salvation of the lost requires both the divine and the human element. There is something that only God can do, and there is something that only man can do. The divine and the human elements must work together if the work of reaching the lost is to be accomplished.

One of the outstanding examples of the divine and human working together is seen in the crucifixion required of both Christ and Christ's followers. Just prior to His own crucifixion, Jesus made a very important statement to those who crowded about Him. Jerusalem was filled with visitors who had come primarily for the keeping of the passover, but also to see the man named Lazarus who had been raised from the dead. Among the many travelers were Greeks who had requested that they might see Jesus. Doubtless, their request voices the desire of many yet today who have the same desire to see Jesus. Christ's reply on this occasion seems a little strange at first for He speaks about wheat and the harvest that is produced by its planting. In John 12:24, Jesus says to them, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." What did wheat have to do with the question of dying and bearing fruit? I believe Jesus was conveying to them that an uncrucified Christ could mean nothing to men everywhere or anywhere. They must not see Jesus only in the form of fallen humanity, but in the light of the death to be accomplished on Calvary. The life of Christ would become most meaningful after His death by crucifixion. Jesus Christ must die, and they would see His redemptive work only through that death. In one sense, Jesus is saying that His own life would bear no lasting fruit until it passed through the agonies of the crucifixion. Yes, there had to be a crucifixion in Christ's case, and there must be a crucifixion in our case if we are to become fruitful in reaching a lost world with the Gospel. This is a part of our problem today: We do not bear much fruit simply because we are unwilling to die. I believe the purpose Christ had in mind when He stated that we should take up our cross was our dying upon that cross; it was His way of telling us that we are to die to all our own desires, our own plans and ambitions.

Jesus uses wheat which is the staff of life as His way of illustrating His meaning. I think of how one kernel was planted and when it was fully developed, it came up with several distinct stocks. These stocks were planted again and after two years, the harvest revealed over thirty-two thousand grains of wheat. The wheat had become abundant in its fruitfulness because of passing through the process of death. It has been stated that the wheat does not really die, but in what seems to be death, it begins to live on a different level. Certainly this is true also in the lives of those who die out to their own plans and ambitions. We begin to live a new life on a far different level than we lived the old. In the process of the wheat being planted, there are a number of changes that take place and some of these changes are typical of what takes place in the heart and life of the child of God. Some of these things are duplicated in the lives of those who die to themselves or who are crucified with Christ. The text that I have quoted applies equally to Christ's crucifixion and our

crucifixion. We must die if our lives are to become fruitful and useful in the work of His kingdom.

Someone may say, "Brother Glenn, I would like to be more effective for Christ." Well, my answer to you would be, "Have you been to the cross, is your life crucified with Christ?" I believe we could paraphrase Christ's words without doing any violence to the scriptures. We could read it this way and make it more personal, "Except an individual is willing to die to his own desires and ambitions, he remains unfruitful, but if he is willing to die to them all, he bringeth forth much fruit."

I would like to notice with you some similarities between the death of the wheat and the crucifixion of the individual. First of all, the hard grain must go through a softening process as it enters into its death. Certainly this would be a qualification of those who would be useful in the service of Jesus Christ. We must be softened. Our lives must be tender and our eyes filled with compassion. There are few with dry eyes who ever bear much fruit. O! How we need a tenderness of spirit; how we need God to fill our hearts with His presence until we will be softened, and tendered, and broken. I have gone through experiences in my own life that have brought about this process of brokenness. Things have happened that have helped me to see more clearly the tremendous need of a lost and perishing world. The needs have so possessed my soul until I have gone out many times when I should have remained in bed. I have gone out to fulfill commitments that I would have had good reason to cancel; I have traveled to the mission fields and other areas when I was in no condition to travel. Someone may ask just why did you do it, Brother Glenn? Well, I can give you no answer except that the need of others was so heavily impressed upon my consciousness. God's softening process was at work in my own heart and life. O! We need to be softened and broken if we are to spend our strength for the salvation of others.

Again I would point out that the dying wheat must be enlarged in its death. It is enlarged in death beyond what it was in life. We are narrow by nature and God calls upon us to reach out beyond our narrowness. In Isaiah 54:2, we are called upon to, "Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes." Isaiah 54:3 tells us, "For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make desolate cities to be inhabited." We are to reach out beyond our limited vision and go beyond the four walls of our immediate area. We are to build a canopy that will embrace the entire world population; we are to erect a tent large enough to include all of a lost and perishing world. This thought leads us directly into the next characteristic of the seed. It must burst open and break forth out of its limitations. It must mingle with the earth in order to produce its finished product. We must be more than a spiritual sponge soaking up truth and keeping it to ourselves. We must burst forth and mingle our message with the world about us; we must give out and we must break out of the boundaries we have placed about ourselves. The final process of the seed is its own death. It dies and we die also. We have several graves on the mission fields of those who actually paid the price of physical death. Yet from those deaths much fruit has come forth. A missionary in India desired to burn out for the Lord and within three years he had done just that. He burned out in three short years, yet the light of that flame still burns today.

Years ago one of my brothers died on the mission field and people passing the funeral site heard my parents singing as they buried my brother. One man walked several miles to ask my father how he could sing when he was burying his own offspring. This inquiry gave my father opportunity

to tell the person about the Christ who could comfort the heart in times of tremendous sorrow. Yes, they died that the Gospel might be carried to those in other lands; they gave themselves just as fully as it was possible to give in order that the light might shine in the darkness of heathen night.

I wonder just how complete our dedication is? I wonder if you have made such total commitment of yourself to the cause of reaching the lost with the Gospel? My prayer is that God will help each individual to see that the price of self-crucifixion must be paid if their lives are to be effective in reaching others. I believe it is only as we die to ourselves and our personal ambitions that we will be the fruitful vessels that Jesus died for us that we might be.

Even as I write to you today, the needs on the mission fields are staggering and cannot be met in our present situation. There are tremendous needs that can only be met as your own heart is challenged to help do something about them. I believe there is no need that cannot be met if God can get through to our hearts concerning our responsibility. We can advance the work, and we can expand our efforts as others join us in spreading the Gospel of Christ. Will you stand with us in these tremendous efforts? Will you join us in prayer that the redemptive work of Jesus Christ might be made known to the multitudes yet living in the darkness of heathen night?

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09. An Example Of Total Commitment

9 -- AN EXAMPLE OF TOTAL COMMITMENT Of what value is a well-prepared plan if there is no one to put that plan into action? History reveals to us that several of our present-day accomplishments were actually on the drawing board generations ago, but there was little interest taken in them at the time. The plan was the first step in tremendous developments, but there was no one to implement that plan. Certainly what is true on the level of human accomplishment is true also in the realm of spiritual accomplishment. God has given to us a plan for the regeneration of the world; He has set in motion the forces that are sufficient to meet the heart need of every individual, yet His plan falls short of success if we fail to put it into effect. When you look at the plan from God's standpoint, you recognize the fact that God has done all that a holy God could possibly do to make provision for humanity both in this world and the world to come. There can be no question at all concerning the completeness of the price paid for our redemption upon Calvary; the question is not whether God has done His best, but have we done our best? Why are there more lost souls in the world today than at the time of the crucifixion? Why have we been able to accomplish so little in relation to the tremendous need of this lost world? Can we point an accusing finger at God? Or must we look at our own failure in this regard? Certainly there would be no way to justify any finger pointing when it comes to the provision that God has made for us. If there is any spiritual delinquency to report, it is a delinquency on our part; we have failed to do all that we might have done for His cause and kingdom. Surely if we will do what we can, there will be no more required of us.

I think of the example given to us in Mark 14:1-72 where we read about the woman with the box of precious ointment. We have here a very outstanding example of sacrificial devotion to Jesus Christ. She came to anoint Jesus for His burial and the gift that she brought to Him was an expression of the deepest concern of her heart. She gave and the fragrance of her gift reaches down to our present generation. It is a memorial to her and a challenge to us. We must enter into the kind of devotion that costs us something. We dare not become negligent or careless in this regard. Certainly there is no price too great for any individual to pay in making Christ known to a lost and perishing world.

There are several things about this woman's devotion that I feel hold tremendous significance for each of God's children. First of all, I notice that she was greatly affected by the life of Christ. Jesus had a great impact upon her life. Certainly people do not go around pouring out costly ointment on individuals unless they have some concept of the value of that person. She so valued the life of Christ that her richest possession was not too good to be poured out in His behalf. It would appear that she cared not at all for the cost that she was putting into her devotion. It was so insignificant compared to the things Christ had accomplished in her life. I'm sure what is true of this individual is true of every individual who comes in contact with Christ. My friend, when you meet the Master, you are willing to do anything that is necessary to be done; there is no price too high but you are willing to pay it. Any service that He might enjoin upon your life is done with a sense of gratitude for all that He has done for you. This woman felt Jesus was entitled to her deepest devotion. How

unworthy she must have felt as she knelt before Him pouring out the costly ointment upon Him. Yet how worthy she must have felt Him to be. Even though an atmosphere of criticism prevailed about her, she did not allow it to dampen her desire for the outpouring of her deepest devotion. While she was worshipping Christ as though nothing else in life mattered, they were finding fault with her sacrifice as if everything else in life mattered. How blind they were to true values. How destitute they were of the rich blessings that result from doing something for Jesus Christ. Somehow they failed to realize the importance of Christ and the importance of our devotion to Him. What a tribute is paid to this woman. In the simplest terms possible, Jesus expresses His gratitude. It took no more than one sentence to epitomize the far-reaching effect of this act of devotion, and it stands out in bold relief as a challenge to you and me yet today. In those brief words, "She did what she could," Jesus gives expression to the feelings of the great heart of God in regard to our own devotion. I believe as God measures your life and mine, He seeks to find this same quality of service: He is interested in finding that we have done what we were able to do. Certainly He could ask no more, and we should expect Him to accept no less. He who has given to us His best, has every right to expect that we will render our best in behalf of His kingdom.

Again I notice that this woman was putting forth an effort to preserve the body of Christ. This was the purpose of the outpouring of the ointment. Jesus mentions the fact that it was done in preparation for His burial. Certainly we have here an outstanding type of Christian responsibility. Just as this woman had done what she could in preserving the physical body of Christ, so we are to do what we can to preserve the spiritual body of Christ which is the church. The church is the body of Christ, and we must pour out our very lives to preserve it. This individual had reached the extremity of her ability and Jesus crowned it with the divine approval by stating that it was all that she could possibly get done. O! How welcome those words will be to each child of God who has striven to do the Master's bidding! Certainly I would ask for no greater tribute from the lips of Christ than for Him to say that I have done all that it was possible for me to do. I wonder if this could be said of us?

I believe we see in this expression of Christ the natural demands of the Christian conscience. Surely our conscience would demand that we do our best. Anything less than your best is less than you ought to be doing . . .

Again I would notice that by preserving the body of Christ, she was, in effect, preserving herself. By pouring out her own life, she was preserving it. It is only as we give to others that we derive benefits. As we help to preserve the work of missions, we are helping to preserve our own best interests. God will be no man's debtor and all that we do in His behalf will be abundantly repaid. There is not a tear you shed, nor a gift you give, that ever escapes the notice of God. He sees your interest and concern and rewards every effort we put forth. This woman who had shared with Him her alabaster box was privileged to share in His glory. O! The needs of the work are so pressing and the things needing to be done so many. Are you doing what you can? Will you not pray with us that others will read these lines and join with us by doing what they can to help get Christ's message to a lost and perishing world?

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10. Our Task Requires Our Total Commitment

10 -- OUR TASK REQUIRES OUR TOTAL COMMITMENT

There is no way that the task of world evangelism can be accomplished without a total commitment on our part to it. A half-hearted concern just will not find place in the work that is so important to the advance of the kingdom of God. The reason why the Gospel reached through to your own heart was because of the total commitment of individuals to its propagation, and if its vital message is to reach beyond you, it is needful that you be totally committed to its progress. As you look back across the years, you must conclude that Christ has not died in vain for countless thousands of individuals have been saved through His shed blood, but is that shed blood in vain as far as future generations are concerned? Can Christ see the lost of future generations without having the use of human eyes to see them with? Can He reach out to them without some human arm to use as an instrument to His purpose? If the Gospel of Christ is to be effective in the lives of those you come in contact with, you are the one who must make it effective. Thank God for the countless numbers who have been redeemed in days past and gone. Certainly we rejoice in the knowledge that Christ's sacrifice has not been without meaning or merit, yet what about those living in our present day who have never heard the message one single time? Can we ignore their need or turn our backs on their desperate condition? We need the same total, all-out, commitment in our generation that the apostle Paul had in his generation. In 2 Corinthians 5:14, Paul states the burden and concern of his heart when he says, "For the love of Christ constraineth us." Here he is giving expression to the motives behind his own efforts. The great force that motivates the apostle is the love expressed through, and exemplified in, Jesus Christ. There are many motives that prod men into action. There is the humanitarian interest or the desire to live in some foreign country, yet these do not produce the complete commitment that the work of the Lord requires. It has been wrong motives that have been responsible for drop-outs when the pathway gets a little rugged or steep. Our work calls for individuals who are willing to drop out of society as they have known it and to go out into a world altogether different than the one they have been accustomed to.

Another translation of this word "constraineth" is "overmastered." Paul is saying that the love of Christ has overmastered me. I am overcome with love and by love. The song writer tried to express this thought when he stated, "He drew me and I followed on, Charmed to confess the voice divine." Another stated, "Since I fixed mine eyes on Jesus, I lost sight of all beside; So enchained my spirit's vision, looking at the crucified."

I think of the illustration of a slave girl being purchased by a kind master at the slave market. It was the slave master's intention to buy the girl and then set her at liberty. After making the transaction, he offered her her freedom, but she refused to accept it. According to the story the slave girl said that she would remain his slave girl forever. It was his desire to give her her freedom that caused her to desire to become his slave forever. It was money that purchased her freedom, but it was love that obtained her service.

Certainly it is a love service such as this that Christ is looking for from each of His children. We are His servants, and we will never be able to pay the debt of love that we owe, especially in the light of what it cost Him to purchase us. That slave girl was purchased with silver and gold, but you and I were bought with a price far above it. Peter emphasizes the fact that we were bought with the precious blood of Christ. Surely if a slave girl would be moved to surrender her life in a total commitment to serve a human master, how much more should we surrender ours to serve the Master divine? The word translated "constrain" can also be thought of in the sense of "restrain." The love of Christ restraineth me. It restrains me from self-seeking and selfish interests. One individual put it this way, "Lord, keep me employed; keep me filled with a holy zeal for the souls of men." In other words, "Restrain me from anything less than a total commitment to the advancement of the kingdom." Again I notice that this word can be thought of in the light of the word "compress" -- or putting all talents to one cause. We are to be totally yoked to Christ and willing to render whatever service He might call upon us to render. Surely there is no greater service that we could commit our lives to do. Think of the value of one soul. Think of the value of your own soul! By helping to save others, we also help to save ourselves.

After Paul mentioned the motive of his own heart, he moves on to tell us some of the demands that Christ's constraining love makes upon each individual. In 2 Corinthians 5:17, we are told that we must begin a new life if we are to render the kind of service that the Gospel requires. There must be a new life, a new creation, and a new purpose. It is not for us to pray, "Lord use me," but "Lord, make me usable." We must be made usable before we can be used of God.

It is this new life and new creation that will give us right motives in propagating the message of redemption. What motive underlies our praying, our giving, our fasting? Is all this done to be seen of men as in the case of the Pharisees? Paul mentions wrong motives as making the difference between a life of service that will not stand the test of fire and the service that will stand such a test. In 1 Corinthians 3:1-23, he tells us we can build upon the foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble. Every man's works will be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's works of what sort it is. The fire will burn up the wood, hay, and stubble, but the gold, silver, and precious stones will endure. Only right motives will determine the outcome of our work. I wonder, will we stand before God empty-handed because our works were perishable or will we witness the fruits of our labors in immortal souls won for the Master? It is not enough that we look at the needy and say be ye warmed and fed; it is not enough that we pity the poor heathen because they are in such unfortunate circumstances. Our pity without appropriate action amounts to wood, hay, and stubble. The only pity they seem to be able to understand is the kind that does something to relieve their wretched condition. James says, "If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?" God expects that our expressions of sympathy be translated into positive action. We must do something about the situation.

C. T. Stud gave up a fortune to take the Gospel to a lost, perishing world and did it willingly. The love of Christ constrained him to do so. It was this individual who is credited with having said, "Some want to live within the sound of the chapel bell, but I want to live within a yard of Hell." In other words, he was saying he wanted to be as near the gates of Hell as possible snatching

precious souls as brands from the eternal burnings. O! That God would get such commitment from an army of individuals today! I believe the world could be reached with this Gospel message if such total, full surrender could be achieved among God's children.

I wonder if God has gotten through to your heart as you read these lines? Do you not feel that there is a greater part for you to play in the Lord's work than you are presently realizing? Is there more that you could do if you would? Can God depend upon you to do all that you possibly can for the furtherance of His Gospel? The needs of the work are tremendous at this time. The possibilities of expanding the work are staggering. Can we pass up our opportunities, and can we pass by our responsibilities in this regard? I ask no more of you than that you pray and make a total commitment to the Lord of all that you are and all that you possess. Certainly it would not be my intention to ask that you do as the apostle did for that would be asking more than you would be able to perform. Yet, it is only reasonable that each individual be asked to make a total commitment of himself to the service of the Lord. This is the only way that we are going to get the job accomplished. Anything less than our all is going to prove to be too little, too late.

* * * * * THE END

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