

Wanted: Preachers With Passion & Power

by Alan Cairns

The sermon emphasizes the need for preachers with passion and power to carry on the work of the Protestant Reformation.

Duration: 1:29:00

Scripture: Joshua 1:1-7, Joshua 1:9

Topics: "Passion"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher, Martin Lloyd Jones, begins by acknowledging that he was initially hesitant to preach because he thought it might be too long for the audience. However, he emphasizes that if someone feels Christianity is too long and needs to get away, they do not truly understand what Christianity is. He then criticizes a minister's inability to communicate clearly and coherently, stating that a sermon should be a message that leaves an impact on the hearts of the listeners. Lloyd Jones then transitions to reading from the book of Joshua, chapter 1, emphasizing the importance of following God's commandments and dedicating one's life to Him. The sermon concludes with a call to salvation through Christ and the reminder that only He can truly fulfill our spiritual needs.

Transcript

As we come to the final message in the series of this year's Reformation Month messages, we turn to the book of Joshua, chapter 1. Joshua, chapter 1. We're going to commence reading in verse 1. We read the first nine verses of the chapter. Joshua, chapter 1, verse 1. Now after the death of Moses, the servant of the Lord, it came to pass that the Lord spake unto Joshua, the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying, Moses, my servant, is dead. Now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel.

Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses. From the wilderness and this Lebanon, even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, and all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun shall be your coast. There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life, as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee.

I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. Be strong and of a good courage, for unto this people shalt thou divine for an inheritance the land which I swear unto their fathers to give them. Only be thou strong and very courageous that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law which Moses my servant commanded thee.

Turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein. For then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage. Be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed. For the Lord thy God is with thee, whithersoever thou goest.

Amen. The Lord will add His own blessing to the reading of His precious Word for His namesake. Verse 2 of Joshua chapter 1 commences with words that should ring not only in the ears of Joshua, but in the ears of every man of God.

Moses my servant is dead, now therefore arise. Joshua was called to follow a great man. He was called to carry on a great work, to battle a great enemy, and to win a great victory.

His peculiar task was the task of bringing to a glorious fullness and completion the work which Moses, the man of God, had begun. When I read these words that concern Joshua following on from Moses, I'm struck with the fact that this is precisely where those of us who are heirs of the Protestant Reformation are called to stand. We follow in the train of great men.

When you read the history of the Protestant Reformation, you can only stand back in amazement and say, surely there were giants in the earth in those days. Has the world ever seen a day like the day of the Protestant Reformation when the greatest intellects on earth were combined with the greatest piety, the greatest devotion to Christ, the simplest, and I use that word advisedly, the simplest reliance on His Word, the purest presentation of His Gospel? Has the world ever seen such a day when so many giants of the faith trod the earth and did such great things for God? We follow great men. We are called to carry on a great work.

I understand that the Reformation was a multifaceted series of events. It had its political ramifications. It had its cultural, social, and economic sides.

But most of all, it was a spiritual work. The driving force was a desire for the preaching of Christ, the spreading of the Gospel, the saving of souls, and indeed the saving of nations. It is not too much to say that the single most potent ingredient in what went to building what we now call Western Civilization was the Protestant Reformation. We are called to carry on that work.

We are called in doing so to battle a great enemy. We have been singing of that enemy. This, for Martin Luther, was no mere little rhyming poem.

This was for Luther the statement of his experience. This was for him everyday life when he spoke of the prince of darkness grim and then triumphantly said, We tremble not for him. That was more than poetry.

That was reality. Luther came as did all the men of the Reformation face to face with the concentrated opposition of the powers of hell. As will every man in every generation who seeks to stand for Jesus Christ, for what our covenant-emptying forefathers used to call the crown rights of King Jesus.

We take our stand for those. Then certainly we will be called to battle a powerful enemy who will come at us from every side under every guise who will use friend and foe to attack us who will come from the outside as he did in the early church and then from the inside as he did much more successfully even in

the early church we battle a great enemy but we are called to win a great victory. I would to God that we could get back into the hearts and minds of the people of God in the day in which we live that the cause of Christ is a triumphant cause.

I would to God that we could get away from the defeatism that has so gripped the evangelical cause for such a long time. The notion that we are in the last days. Evil men will wax worse and worse.

So all we can do is sit back and wait for the coming of the Lord. Now let's understand something. These are the last days.

But then let me back that up and say these have been the last days for 2,000 years now. Let me say these are the last days. Let us not fall into the trap of putting an X by a year on a calendar and saying beyond this we expect nothing.

I don't know where we are in the prophetic plan of God. I do not know where the hands of the clock are on the clock of prophecy. We are in the last days.

Evil men, as we see every day, are waxing worse and worse. But you see the logic of the Holy Ghost in Scripture is the very opposite to defeatism. How did the psalmist pray? It is time, O Lord, for Thee to work.

Why? Because they have made void Thy law. Because evil men are waxing worse and worse. Because we are in an age of terrible apostasy from truth.

That is a reason to pray for God to work, to expect God to work, to see God work, and to live in victory, not in defeat. We are called to win a great victory. And I don't want to get into a survey of church history tonight.

But let me tell you if we do not see in our nations in the West a significant moving of the Holy Ghost with power, then ours will be the first generation, and what a shame it is, the first generation since the Protestant Reformation, not to see an outpouring of the Holy Ghost with power to make such an impact on our society as to change its course. The Reformers saw it. The Puritans saw it.

The Scottish Covenanters, who were called to dye the heather of Scotland red with their own blood, they saw it. The Pilgrim Fathers saw it. The Jonathan Edwards, George Whitfield, John Wesley era saw it with a mighty moving of the Evangelical Awakening.

The next century saw it again with multiple movements of the Holy Spirit of God. I have often said that it is a shameful thing that here in America God's people know next to nothing. Even preachers know next to nothing about the progress of one of the greatest revivals in the history of the world when for thirty or forty years there was a mighty constant movement of the Holy Ghost across these states.

And this state and North Carolina and then moving westwards and then moving northwards were all vitally involved and yet we live in such utter ignorance of what God has done. But we come to our generation. We have more Christian schools than ever.

We have more higher education than ever. We have more money than ever. We have more churches than ever.

We have more professing Evangelicals than ever. We have more of everything except the power of the Holy Ghost. May God forgive us Unless we see a movement soon our generation will go down in shame

as the greatest failure in the history of Protestantism.

I thank God that's not true in every part of the world for why we have fumbled and faltered and failed in other places men have been filled and used and blessed to the saving of hundreds and thousands and millions to the glory of our Savior's name. But we are called to victory. Oh, that that would again grip the hearts of the people of God.

Oh, that that would grip the hearts of men and young men in the church of Jesus Christ. That we would realize that we have a peculiar task and that is to see come to a glorious fullness a work that has begun has been begun by greater men than we. But you know we can do nothing until like Joshua we heed the call of God and as the Lord says arise rise up oh man of God have done with lesser things that's the call we will do nothing we will amount to nothing however successful we are in any other endeavor we will amount to nothing until we as a people rise with Joshua to meet the challenge and obey the call that God has set before us.

Last Sabbath evening I spoke to you from the words of the Lord Himself through Ezekiel in chapter 22 verse 30 I sought for a man.

And I want to continue the theme of that because we're still thinking of the subject wanted men of God men who will epitomize the best features of the reformation as I pointed out last week men of one book men of one book men who feel the power of the word of God in their own souls men who have a real grasp of the gospel of Jesus Christ wanted men of God I want to proceed with that this evening and I will show you that when we're talking about the need we're talking about the need for preachers with passion and with power because not only is God looking for men of one book and men who feel and experience the power of the word men who know the gospel but men with a passion to preach Christ this passion to preach was one of the outstanding hallmarks of the reformers I suppose Luther is the

prime example Luther was many things he was a musician of no mean ability he was a poet he was a philosopher he was a lawyer he was a theologian he was a pastor he was a controversialist he was a soldier in the army of Christ he was a leader of men he was also temperamental pig-headed, stubborn and all the rest of those things that make up the mix of very interesting people but most of all as a man of God Martin Luther was a preacher he was a preacher he wasn't alone I pointed out last week and this shows you just how sovereign the spirit of God is when the Lord Jesus said the wind bloweth where it listeth he was saying nothing but the truth the spirit of God moves as he will in utter and complete freedom and sovereignty before Luther had ever kneeled his theses to the door of the church

in Wittenberg before Luther had ever launched upon his public career as a preacher of the gospel and a reformer in the church Zwingli had started preaching the Seum Gospel in Switzerland Zwingli had sat at the feet of the famous scholar Erasmus Erasmus leaves a lot to be desired he's one of those characters in history who just makes you shake your head he knew so much he directed men so clearly and yet he seemed so small spirited in other ways so impoverished spiritually you have to stand back and simply leave him to God who is his judge but Erasmus taught Zwingli there is but one thing that we have to seek for in the holy scriptures and that is Jesus Christ Erasmus would do well if he could be resurrected to teach a whole lot of university professors and bible professors the simplicity

of the scriptures whatever else you learn of Hebrew or Greek or hermeneutics or this or that your whole method of bible study is gone awry if it blinds you to Jesus Christ I have books by learned men lining the shelves of my library and some of them I look at and I wonder how can so great a mind so brilliant an

intellect be so absolutely blind they can come to the scriptures and they find little or nothing of Christ they can give you the bare bones they can give you an analysis of words and grammar and syntax and usage but there is little or nothing Erasmus was right there is but one thing that we have to seek for in the holy scriptures and that is Jesus Christ that found its way into the heart of the young Oryx Wingly and it burned its way into his soul for he did seek Christ and he

found him and then he started to preach him it's an interesting story in his life that he was called by church authorities to the monastery in Ein Sidlen and there he was given the task of doing research and then preaching and teaching when he got there he found that much of his income was raised from the gifts of pilgrims who came on purpose to that place because it was a place where there was a revered image of the Virgin Mary the monastery carried above its gate this legend plenary remission of all sins is to be found here and people came and they paid lots of money to be able to see the Virgin to be able to get their sins forgiven when he got there and found this situation Zwingli began to preach the very opposite the monastery said here you will find remission Zwingli taught them you

can meet with God anywhere then he began to give them the heart of the gospel Christ who hath once doesn't sound very revolutionary to us but remember in the context of medieval Roman Catholicism reverting to the once or the once for all sacrifice of Christ was an invitation to draw down upon your head all the wrath of the papacy because that one little emphasis was a strike at the heart of the entire system upon which Rome had built her superstitions Christ who hath once suffered and offered himself on the cross is the sacrifice and the victim who makes satisfaction then he added even through all eternity he didn't mean that Christ kept on offering through eternity, he meant that that one offering is efficacious right throughout all eternity what then about Mary what then about

indulgences what then about the so called ability of the popes and the priests to forgive sins of those already in purgatory no no the young preacher was preaching he is saying he has made this satisfaction unto all eternity for the sins of all believers the message was pure and clear and simple Christ alone saves and he saves everywhere the result of course was predictable people believed it and people got saved and of course once they believed that message they stopped coming to pay into the coffers of the monastery to see a statue of the virgin Mary but of course once they stopped paying Zwingli's income went down, there was nothing to pay him with anymore a loss of income but the saving of souls you see the reformers were men who preached from conviction nothing could stop them

nothing could stop them when Patrick Hamilton returned to his native Scotland after studying for some time under Luther he knew that he was taking his life in his hands, royal blood flowed in his veins but he knew that even that could give him no protection but yet he went knowing that death stared him in the face yet he went to preach Christ and was murdered for his troubles George Wishart the man through whom most probably John Knox was saved certainly Knox's mentor knew when he set out on a particular day to go preaching he knew it would be his last Knox believed it too and he went to go with him and Wishart stopped him and he said no one is sufficient for a sacrifice and yet he went and sure enough he was done to death Dr.

Pinozzi and God willing will be here Wednesday evening in the persona of Hugh Latimer again it's a tragedy that his name is almost lost to evangelical Christians Hugh Latimer who is he?

Hugh Latimer was appointed a bishop of the church in England a simple man but a brilliant man a faithful man a preacher a preacher of great repute and great ability as I demonstrated last Sunday evening a

preacher of incomparable faithfulness and courage in standing preaching to Henry VIII when Bloody Mary took over the throne of England Latimer's days were numbered and he was burned at the stake burned at the stake because he preached Christ his words to Ridley Nicholas Ridley another bishop dying beside him in the flames have gone down as some of the greatest most defiant most triumphant words ever spoken in the English tongue they were a prophecy as well as a defiance speaking through the crackling flames speaking through the pain that wracked his dying frame Latimer cried fear not

Master Ridley we shall by God's grace light such a candle in England this day as I trust shall never be put out those were preachers of conviction that's what the church of Christ needs in America today do you notice when we were singing Martin Luther's great hymn the boundless confidence that he had in the word that he preached when he was speaking of Satan and all the satanic hosts against him he said one little word not an army not a prince one little word will fail him that's the confidence these men had in the word that they preached they believed what Paul said the gospel is the power of God when I lectured homiletics some of you may laugh at the thought of me lecturing homiletics you hear my homiletic lack of skill and you say how could he ever teach others well sometimes the more

prone you are to make mistakes the more you know the mistakes to miss and you can tell other people what they should do and you can say do what I say not what I do but anyway I used to give the students a list of ten things that Martin Luther laid down for every preacher some of them are very simple some of them are very profound he should be able to teach plainly and in order God save us from ramblers who haven't a clue what they're talking about and they have no idea how to talk about it you know I've gone to churches I remember going to one church when I was on vacation and I always like to try to get a fundamentalist church if I can get a fundamentalist church that's going to stand up for the Lord Jesus and preach Christ that's where I want to go there may be Baptist, there may be

Bible churches, there may be Presbyterian there's something more important than the label and I was on vacation in a particular place and I went to a little church knew very few people there I didn't hold that against them I hoped that we'd be an encouragement to them but when I got there I must confess I was totally underwhelmed I found no interest in a visitor being there I found the preacher even in such a small church had been so busy with a school I'm all for Christian schools but God help us when schools become the tail that wags the dog so busy in a school he hadn't the time to study to preach if we don't have time to study to preach we are not called to preach I have no right to be in this pulpit unless I come with a message from God I have no right to be here I found this

gentleman could not and I mean this literally this is not some overstatement he could not fashion even the first sentence of his message I found that as he rambled there was hardly a complete sentence anywhere I was at a loss as to what he was trying to say the greatest blessing I had was the reading of the scriptures a minister should be able to teach plainly and in order people should know what he's talking about where he's coming from where he's going to and when he's got there and when he's finished there should be something in the hearts of the people that says that was a message not a sermon not a sermon he said he should have a good head not a big head, a good head he should have a good power of language now here I get on to my hobby horse I'd better be careful preachers, and some

of you young fellas who are training to be preachers remember words are your craft the English language is and I suppose I'm being very very self-serving when I say this and more than a little prejudiced it's a unique language the greatest language in the world I tell people you think of the French language is about 300 to 330 thousand words in it's vocabulary that's true of most other European languages the English

language is approaching three quarters of a million words in it's vocabulary what does that tell you? there's a word for everything there used to be a program on the radio here when we came at first I'm very sorry they took it off where's Charlie?

I'm very sorry, I think it was in WMU there's a word for it a woman from the Greenville Library put these out over various stations and she had a strange way of speaking, a strange accent well more strange formation of words than accent but it was fascinating just to listen to her there's a word for it, and there is a word for it you get preachers that are so lazy their vocabulary is almost zero they don't know the meaning of the words they use they don't know the nuances of the words they use, they never bother to find out how they may construct sentences that will carry the flow of the message a good power of language he should have a good voice and pray to God that he doesn't have little things going across his vocal cords as I have at the moment that makes mine even more difficult to listen to than usual a good memory and then I took this one very much to heart he should know when to stop he should know when to stop Scott Heater gave me I thought he was giving me a whole sermon of Martin Lloyd Jones on a CD the rascal gave me just a little snippet I thought it was one hour and two minutes, it was one minute and two seconds but he gave me these seconds for a reason Lloyd Jones was preaching and he said I'm only going to give you my headings in other words I'm not going to preach, I'm only going to give you my headings he was an old man, you could tell that from the voice, he was an old man when he was preaching this and then he stopped and he said may God forgive me may God forgive me, shame on me I was going to tell you I wasn't going to preach because I was thinking that you would think it was too long and then he said this if you're thinking that it's too long and you need to get away, you do not know what Christianity is was that strong? why did he say that?

I'm talking to you about the things of eternity eternity and yet we have people and they're so interested in wrapping the church service up in 45 minutes or 60 minutes that they may go having paid their lip service like a bunch of idolaters having said to God this is the most important thing in the world but let me now get to the lesser things I'll give God 45 minutes or an hour and then I'll get to things that don't matter and I'll give them the rest of the week Lloyd Jones was right may God forgive us may God forgive us and shame on us too, I know when to stop, you may not think I know when to stop, I know when to stop may not be when you think I should stop I love Dr.

Paisley's statement for it's analytical skill, I don't like the fact that it happens but I've quoted this before sermonettes breed christianettes little sermons little christians he should know when to stop he should be sure of what he means to say then he gets to the real heart of it remember this is written in the reformation period, this was not rhetoric he should be ready to stake body and soul and goods and reputation on the truth of what he's preaching those were the preachers of the reformation here I'm standing with a message from God, I will stake my life on what I'm preaching, do you know many preachers like that?

I don't think so I don't think so he goes on about studying diligently and suffering himself to be vexed and criticized by everyone, when you look at all that Luther says, he's saying we need preachers who are men of ability we need preachers who are men of diligence we need preachers who are men of utter, absolute conviction wanted men of God when I think of preachers like that, I think of a man like William Farrell red headed, hot blooded quick tempered volcanic in his oratory but my absolutely intrepid in his stand for God a flaming zeal to preach, nothing could stop that man, he was so consumed, he was a priest of course of the Roman Catholic Church, very wisely he held on to that title for a while and when he would travel around, he would go to the local church and being a priest

he'd stand up and preach he'd walk in at times and the priest would be going through his mumbo jumbo, he'd walk up beside him, move him off to the side and he would take over and start to preach there were times when the whole congregation got saved including the priest and he'd just moved out of the way there were times of course when it put him in danger one occasion they took him out they cocked a gun, they put the gun to his head to blow his brains out, pulled the trigger and it wouldn't fire did it stop him? no sir a man of ability, a man of diligence, a man of conviction a man of fire a veritable Elijah if you want to see into the heart of a Reformation preacher, see this same Farrell on that fateful night and I don't mean that in a bad sense, I mean a night of destiny when the

young John Calvin was merely travelling through Geneva spending a night as anonymously as he possibly could in the inn of course to this day when you go to Europe, it's not easy to be anonymous, I remember when we went to Geneva in the getting back now the 1960's, 1970's when the Pope went the first time from the Reformation to Calvin's Geneva we went there to witness against him took our lives and our hands to do it, but God brought us through it anyway when you registered, the police came round every hotel, they got all the registration cards, they knew who was there why they were there, how long they were there where they were going, they knew all about them and that's the way it was when Calvin went the word got around John Calvin is in Geneva and Farrell went and he said I want you

to stay here he said no, I can't do that I have my plans Calvin was a scholar, he was an academic he was a student, he could do more good for the Reformation, writing and disseminating his writings back into his native France he was sickly he had a host of illnesses weaknesses of body pains and aches and he said that he was going for rest to work in the quietude of rest and the flaming red head stood before him and said God curse your rest, I want to tell you that got his attention God curse your rest and Calvin admitted he put such a fear of God in him that night that he gladly stayed and so changed the history of Europe we need preachers, we have had enough of PR men in the pulpit we have had enough managers in the pulpit we have enough business men who know how to run an operation I'm

not saying preachers are going to build the biggest churches they may or they may not I have to face this before God if God is glorified in my preaching to a dozen then my only reason to exist is to glorify Him I have no other reason no better reason but certainly no other reason we were singing tonight the words of Charles Wesley I only breathe to breathe thy love if God is glorified then so be it that's enough, I don't know that being a preacher will give you the biggest church or give you what the world calls the greatest success but I will say this our churches are dying under the hands of cold meticulous managers give us preachers give us preachers perhaps at least one of the greatest sustained demonstrations of the power and success of preachers standing for the central truths of

the Protestant Reformation is to be found in the history of the Methodists, Whitfield and Wesley, the founders of Methodism were many things but above all they were preachers did any English man ever preach like George Whitfield he was Spurgeon's ideal as the greatest of preachers we call Spurgeon and I tend to agree to be quite honest the prince of preachers I don't think the world in any language has ever seen quite the equal of the great Baptist preacher but if you would ask Spurgeon who is the prince of preachers he would have told you unhesitatingly George Whitfield a man who moved both Britain and America though America was yet in its infancy but moved both Britain and America with the power of gospel preaching and though Wesley was not the preacher that Whitfield was he lacked much

of his friends warmth and charm and preaching skill yet John Wesley was a powerful and effective preacher.

It may come as a surprise to some that I put Wesley and the Methodists right there in the Reformation tradition but that's where he should be let me tell you what John Wesley said the sooner we get preachers like this back in our pulpits and I say this as one who strongly disagrees with many of the outstanding features of Wesleyan theology but oh I would to God we had Wesley's heart listen to what he said I desire to have both heaven and hell ever before my eye while I stand on this isthmus of life between these two boundless oceans think of that that's where I stand as a preacher my life is but an isthmus on the one side the boundless eternity of heaven on the other side the boundless eternity of hell and every man and woman and child I ever address is going to live forever in God's heaven or in God's hell is it any wonder a preacher like that shook England he set it ablaze with controversy when there weren't clergymen to preach he sent out unordained preachers and he knew the kind of men that he needed as I look at America today as I look at the work of fundamental and reformed and evangelical churches today as I look at the work of the free Presbyterian church today I echo these words of John Wesley he said give me one hundred preachers who fear nothing but sin and desire nothing but God will you emphasize that do you say you're called to preach or have you ever come to say you're called to preach here's the mark of a genuine preacher give us men who fear nothing but sin who desire nothing but God and said Wesley I care not a straw whether they be clergymen or laymen such alone will shake the gates of hell and set up the kingdom of heaven upon the earth these are men to shake the gates of hell and in Wesley's day and Whitfield's day they did cause that's the kind of man God gave him although there were failures among the Methodist ministers but he described his own first assistants as poor ignorant men now let's stop for a minute that may convey something to us that it wouldn't convey to him they were not university educated some of them could use the Greek and the Hebrew some of them many of them were men of considerable intelligence but they did not have access to the universities of Oxford and Cambridge which were really the domain of the Church of England of which Wesley was still a member and a minister but these he said were poor ignorant men without experience learning or art but simple of heart devoted to God full of faith and zeal listen to this seeking no honour no profit no pleasure no ease but merely to save souls fearing neither want pain persecution nor whatever man could do unto them that's the spirit of a Reformation preacher that's the need of the Free Presbyterian Church in North America and I tell you unless and until God raises us up men of this spiritual calibre we may multiply numbers we may add churches, we may send out men and ordain them, they will be what I talked about last week quoting C.T.

Studd, they will be no better than chocolate soldiers and they will fail in the day of battle these are the men, Reformation men preachers of the calibre of Joshua who will stand in the gap to carry on the work of the gospel we need preachers wanted men of God to preach it is said that Spurgeon advised his students that if God has called you to be a preacher do not stoop to be a king is there is there can there be a more honourable calling this side of heaven than to be given the task of being an ambassador for Jesus Christ wanted preachers who are men of God but if they are going to preach listen to me they must be men of prayer men of prayer men of the secret place I have often said and many a time when I say it I feel I condemn my own heart but it is true nonetheless no preacher can

ever be greater than his prayer life I found it interesting that John Bradford one of the English martyrs of the reformation period in his writings the very first thing I think it is the first thing that appears in the writings of Bradford is the preface that he wrote to a translation of Melanchthon on prayer that was Luther's assistant on prayer Melanchthon was one of the world's great theologians his common places represented the first attempt of the reformation to put out a systematic theology but theology is one thing a very important thing unless there is a praying minister with a praying people the work will go nowhere some of you may remember that over a number of Wednesday evenings I took as the text of what I was

teaching on prayer the work of John Knox the great Scottish

reformer despite the antiquated English and all the rest of it Knox's teaching on prayer to this day throbs with a vitality a reality a spiritual power that very few modern preachers can even approach if you want to know why John Knox single handedly almost single handedly saw Scotland become from the most barbarous nation on earth, the cradle of the Christianity that ultimately forged this nation if you want to know the reason for it you'll find it in John Knox on prayer and you'll understand then why Mary Queen of Scots feared she said the prayers of John Knox more than ten thousand soldiers men of prayer men who can get alone with God John Wesley told his preachers and of course days were different then they rode around in horseback and all the rest of it, they had hours of solitude

but he gave his preachers this advice without sticking to the figures I think he has something that preachers nowadays need to get a grip of he said you should be men of reading if you can't afford books I'll supply them to the tune of five pounds that was five months salary so it was a lot of money I'll supply you with the books, you read them then he said read a little and meditate and pray much he advised that every one of his preachers would make sure that every day he spent at least five hours alone, away from the company of people we have reached the stage where ministers get up in the morning blearily they make their way to the coffee percolator they grab a cup of coffee they flip on the television that's their day begun they have a few minutes quotes devotions and then they're

into administering churches and schools and programs which no doubt are all very good but you talk about a minister today getting hours away from the company of people and it's laughable but I'm going to tell you this until we get ministers who can get alone with God we will never have ministers who will amount to anything in the work of God they must be men of prayer they must be men who are set for the defense of the gospel that means they're able to discern the dangers of today not living in the past not fighting the ghosts of battles already won men who can discern what's facing the church of Christ today men who are dedicated to oppose every threat to the gospel both effectively and courageously whatever the cost men who are equipped to teach and to establish God's truth we need men

like that there's only one way that preachers can become such men you may be called of God but that in itself is but the beginning we've read in Joshua as to how he was to walk how this book of the law was not to be out of his mouth or out of his mind that's the pathway of the preacher set for the defense of the gospel we need that we need preachers who are men of prayer who are set for the defense of the gospel who are not going to work things out in terms of the cost of their stand in dollars and cents who are not going to work things out in terms of who is going to like or dislike their stand sometimes you've got to take your stand and say whatever it costs us wherever it leads us whatever it entails this is where I stand I well remember when our Toronto church was in its very very

early stages it had had a very rough baptism the government of Ontario decided that if they could possibly manipulate the law to keep Frank McClelland out of Scotland or out of Toronto they would do it the Attorney General himself broke the law in an attempt to do so and Frank went in anyway the newspapers were in turmoil they were depicting these Irish bigots Frank McClelland is everything from the devil downwards I well remember a picture they showed of him you know you can get in close with a certain kind of lens this was almost a fisheye lens don't tell Frank I said this I don't think he's going to qualify for the world's most handsome man to start with he and I can get along like we would say in Ireland you could lick thumbs to the elbows that means we're in total agreement he and I

would not win any beauty contests but this made him look positively scary that was deliberately done this is the monster the church was born in a baptism of fire it was meeting in the rented premises of a school then it was announced Billy Graham was coming to town Graham is going to compromise with Roman Catholics with liberals he's going to preach a pseudo gospel and by the way I don't want to get into this tonight but there you have the real problem not just his associations but what has mostly been preached as the gospel is only a pseudo gospel and that little church had a decision to make do we take a stand or do we not if we take a stand we are going to be in worse shape than we've ever been before if people were against us before they're going to be against us more now they said

well whatever it costs this is where we stand we're going to take a stand for Jesus Christ and they did humanly speaking it should have been the death of them they came under attack from the Christadelphians because they also were standing against Graham only they were standing against him because they thought if he preaches what the Protestants call the gospel they're against that and so the little church was in another controversy and any military man will tell you it's not a good idea when you're stretched on the ground and you're small in numbers to fight on two fronts simultaneously but they did that anyway and they were battling the cultists in the one hand and the compromisers in the other hand it should have been the death of them but God that was the beginning of the years of

blessing and of growth and of proving God in our Toronto church and God has seen fit to take that witness across Canada for the glory of his name this is what we need but I would have to say with this I'll close for I do know when to finish we must not be blind when we study the reformation and what we need today as men will epitomize the best features of the reformation that means we need men of large heart and vision who will practice the widest charity toward differing brethren but never yield an inch to the enemies of the gospel if the reformation has a failure this is where it is there are shameful scenes that one must admit with grief in the reformation that Luther would not even shake the hand of Zwingli because of a difference of opinion on the meaning of this is my body is a

shame to the name of Christ that the Anabaptist preachers of good repute allowed themselves to stand side by side with zealots who were willing to shed blood was a shame that the reformers were unwilling or unable to distinguish between the two and stained the protestant reformation with the blood of Anabaptist preachers is a shame before God and I make no excuse I do not by the way include in that what most ignorant people do and even most non-ignorant people do and that is the execution of Michael Servetus in Calvin's Geneva Servetus knew the law he was a vile blasphemer Calvin allowed Unitarians to come and go from Geneva unmolested but when Servetus came particularly and deliberately to overthrow the order of the city to be the mouthpiece of the libertines he became a political pawn

he broke what he knew the law to be and he knew the punishment for doing so I do not include him though I think it would have been better to deal with him otherwise but there are shameful failures because you see the best of men at best are only men have we got any better than our forefathers listen to me and I'm going to be very blunt here when Bill Jones the man who runs the New York gospel mission with an opportunity to do a magnificent work for God when Bill Jones could have premises that are now going to go to waste and rack and ruin but could have premises from which to launch a mission with impact this great city and throughout the world the opportunities withdrawn because says the preacher you don't agree with me on the timing of the rapture that's where we've come to in

fundamentalism we've got to the place and this is a shame to us as fundamentalists we've got to the place we are the heirs of the men who fought the battles for the faith in the 1920's in the 1930's and through the

40's and the 50's men who took a great stand for God men who knew how to train the big guns on the big enemies in the early days of the fundamentalist movement you had Baptists and Presbyterians standing together and men of other denominations standing together they didn't agree on every little detail but they agreed on the person and work of Jesus Christ they agreed on the great truths of the gospel, they agreed on the infallibility of scripture they agreed on what really mattered they stood together that was a good day and a victorious day when across America you had apostasy

going into reverse gear but what has happened we've become so inward looking that you find fundamentalists fighting fundamentalists over some opinion while the world goes on to hell God give us men of heart men of vision I like what Rod Bell chairman of the fundamental Baptist fellowship president of the FPF I like what Rod Bell said when he went up to Canada was preaching in our church there at a fundamental conference and some Baptist brethren up there got in touch with him and they said that's a Presbyterian church and if you go there you will never, never be invited back to our churches I like what Rod said he said I am first a Christian I am second a fundamentalist and I am third a Baptist in that order these are my people Christians and fundamentalists these are my people and if you

don't want me back then I'll not be back I like that attitude it's the attitude of a leader and a gracious man of God and I say publicly a man I greatly admire that's the kind of man we need I lay before you the need tonight and I say this to all of us to pray about but I address this particularly to young men in this church young men saved by grace with as the Lord wills your lives before you the Lord says I sought for a man not a machine but a man the work of God is never going to be won by computers we can use them but it's man in the front line man not apologies for man not cardboard cut outs man that's the need when you look at that need you can only throw up your hands and say with Paul who is sufficient for these things I remember when God began to speak to me about the ministry I

wanted nothing to do with that not because I was afraid of the battle though I never found myself particularly courageous I was not holding back for fear of the battle it was not because of the cost and to be a free Presbyterian minister when I came in meant you were coming in to abject poverty without the thought or the hope of ever getting beyond well to be poor actually had a huge increase in income just to reach the level of poverty that's where we were that didn't bother me what bothered me how can I ever do this work I'm afraid of people believe it or not afraid of people especially females I remember going into a hospital to visit a friend my own family almost passing out possibly the heat the smells dealing with people was never easy who is sufficient but then Paul answers in the

next chapter 2nd Corinthians chapter 3 verses 5 and 6 and he says our sufficiency is of Christ He it is who makes us able ministers or sufficient as ministers and I learned a great lesson I am no intellectual and I don't say that with mock humility I am no intellectual I realized I had a very very limited area of talent if that but I knew I had the call of God I quickly came to this well maybe not so quickly because I remember times of turmoil of feeling the how can I continue how can I ever do the work of God feeling a failure and then having to come to realize if God calls me if God is with me if He gives me a message then I need nothing more and I can go with the authority of heaven fearing not the face of man who is sufficient the work of the Christian ministry is the greatest work on

earth but in many ways it's the loneliest and the hardest the most trying you go from great highs to terrible lows you rejoice with those who rejoice and immediately you're in the valley to weep with those who weep you do your best and as Luther said you've got to suffer yourself to be vexed and criticized by everybody and anybody your best is never good enough but you have a savior who is all sufficient I have a Christ

who is able to save anybody and I can preach unto everybody and when I look back over these years and forgive the personal reminiscence but I'm speaking to young men to whom God has been speaking and the struggle is in your heart can I ever be sufficient as a minister of the gospel I look back over those years when I wondered could I ever preach could I ever amount to

anything and feeling the answer must be no and I ought to be honest tonight when I look back I still would answer no and yet my mind goes to one scene after another seeing little children come and put their faith in Christ and go on with God seeing drunkards converted and made sober filthy harlots washed and made clean religious pharisees humbled brought to Christ husbands brought in and answered a prayer and saved churches built up to send out missionaries of the cross is it worth it to serve Jesus when Martin Luther came to the end of the way was it worth it all when John Calvin or John Knox died and I look back was it worth it all it's worth it all and yet the best has yet to be for one of these days we're going to stand before the Lord and I think of the words of the old hymn it will

be worth it all when we see Jesus you'll never be sad that you gave your life to the service of Christ when you stand before the Lord America's dying tonight for the want of men of God, men who know Him, men who love Him, men who will burn out for Him America's dying tonight for preachers consumed with the message of redemption through Christ's blood justification through His merits received by faith alone that my friend is the need of the hour I sought for a man as the Lord looks over this meeting tonight can He find one are there those to whom God has spoken on whose heart has been placed the nail pierced hand of the Saviour I sought for a man do not waste that life in the follies of this world on things that will not matter in eternity remember to stand where John Wesley stood on the

isthmus of life between the oceans of eternal heaven and eternal hell and as you stand there that's the time to cry out by Thy grace O God I will arise Thy will will be my command here am I here am I body soul and spirit redeemed by precious blood I give my life away take and let it be consecrated Lord let us bow our heads in prayer let us all pray in just a moment this meeting will be over we have a great gospel and we have a great Saviour we have the only gospel we have the only Saviour if tonight you are not saved it's Christ you need if you've got a religion it's just a surface thing it's Christ you need we invite you to Him flee from wrath to come and I want to tell you if there's a desire in your heart to be saved then there's a desire in Christ to save you come and welcome to Jesus

and if you are saved some of you perhaps to whom God has spoken tonight or in other times about His service wanted men of God I sought for a man is there in Isaiah to say here am I Lord here am I I want to do Thy perfect will if God calls you to preach don't stoop to be anything else if He doesn't be what He tells you to be wherever He sends you to be it but oh wherever you go whatever you do be a man of God if you'd like to talk with Dr.

Barrett Mr. Braham or with me would be happy to help you to Christ come and let's talk it over with the Word of God God before us it is time to seek the Lord Father in Heaven bless Thy Word to every heart and after the feeble faltering voice of man is silent Lord speak on God speak on to every soul we confess that we do stand on this narrow isthmus that we call life we stand between Heaven and Hell two boundless oceans of eternity God have mercy on sinners tonight Lord save them for Jesus sake God have mercy on America tonight by raising up a race of preachers whose hearts the Lord has touched send out men not just in this denomination but Lord as you see the cause of Christ the Bible believing cause, the Christ exalting cause, the cause that preaches a free justification by faith alone in the merits of Christ alone Lord we pray for the cause that exalts the blood and the book and we ask in Jesus name raise up

men after thine own heart who will go forth to preach Christ answer prayer visit this generation with a mighty reviving Lord let us not have this shameful testimony we alone have failed to prove God in our day and generation Lord let us see thee work visit us soon with revival pour out thy spirit with power and turn many, many to seek the Lord, part us with thy blessing and keep us in thy fear be our portion tonight and evermore we pray in Jesus name Amen

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/2/SID2764.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/alan-cairns/wanted-preachers-with-passion-power/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net