

A Responsibility That Must Be Realized

by Alan Redpath

Alan Redpath emphasizes the Christian's responsibility to reflect Christ's light through grace and submission to God's authority.

Duration: 56:24

Topics: "Responsibility"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of spreading the Gospel and fulfilling the commandment of the Lord to be a light to the Gentiles. He mentions the disciples' joy and being filled with the Holy Ghost, even though they were relatively new believers. The preacher also mentions the efforts of Paul and Barnabas in training and leading new converts. The sermon highlights the historical context of God's grace and government in the communication of faith, referencing various verses from the Bible.

Transcript

Would you turn to the word as it is found in the Acts of the Apostles and chapter 13, Acts chapter 13, and I will just read to you the last section of the chapter from verse 44. And the next Sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God. I can never read that verse without my mouth watering.

The next Sabbath day almost the whole city together to hear the word of God. But when the Jews saw the multitudes they were filled with envy. Spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming.

Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold and said it was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you. That seeing ye put it away, put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.

And when the Gentiles heard this they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord. And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region.

But the Jews stood up the devout and honorable women and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts. But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came unto Iconium. And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost.

Let us just bow for a word of prayer before we have the message. Again I ask you to echo in your heart the prayer which I offer on your behalf and mine. Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth.

Speak just now, some message to meet my need which thou only dost know. Speak now through thy holy word, and make me see some wonderful truth thou hast to show to me. For Jesus' sake, amen.

We commenced yesterday a consideration in these five mornings of the communication of our faith. The priority task of the Church in the context of the 1960s, the propagation of the gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the whole world. And we were considering yesterday morning a relationship which must be restored.

Today we tackle the theme again, and our subject today is a responsibility that must be realized. And we come to grips with it immediately as we read in the 47th verse of this chapter. So hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldst be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.

I believe that this is a word that is spoken by the Spirit of God to everybody, to every Christian. I believe that the only hope of the propagation of the gospel in our time, is that every Christian fulfills this responsibility, and realizes it in their own lives. I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles.

That's a phrase which the Apostle Paul often used. He spoke to the Philippian church about living in a midst of a and perverse nation among whom they shine as lights in the world. I think that he had in mind, as he used this phrase, the tremendous statement, the tremendous claims of our Lord, who said, I am the light of the world.

And almost in the next breath he says to a couple of nenentities, a crowd, a company of nenentities rather, ye are the light of the world. Mere nobodies, without any training or preparation, just you. The one thing that distinguished them from everybody else was their unreserved commitment to the Lordship of Christ.

And ye are the light of the world. How possibly could they be the light of the world, and at the same time Jesus said, I am the light of the world. And here in our text, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles.

Well I think that we'll find that by way of illustration. Supposing you are out one evening in Chicago, on a beautiful moonlight night, and the stars are shining, and the moon is at full, and it's a brilliant night. The sort of night that makes people who are in love want to hold hands.

Because the moon controls both the tide and the untide, I believe. Well you seem to know something about it. If you're out in Chicago on a night like that, and there are many nights like that here.

You might say, one to another, isn't the moon shining brightly tonight. But you'd be quite wrong. Because as far as we know, we may know more in a few years, but as far as we know at present, the moon is incapable of shining.

It's just a lump of black luster material. And the only reason why it shines, is because it's in orbit, in relationship to the sun. As it turns its face sunwards, it catches the glow, and reflects the light into the darkness of this world.

The moon is simply a reflector of light. It hasn't power to shine, or to give light. But it catches the glow of the sun.

Now this illustration, I think, will serve our purpose. Jesus said, I am the light of the world, ye are the light of the world. I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles.

And as the child of God learns, day by day, to turn his eyes upon Jesus, and look full in his wonderful face. He catches something of the glow, and the glory, and the thrill, and the reality, of the Saviour in his heart. And he begins to shine, with something of the glow and reality of heaven.

Forgive the clumsy phraseology, but here at Moody Abbell Institute, you'll understand it. A Christian is really an eschatological phenomenon. Which sounds very big, but it simply means, that he is a projection from heaven into time.

A reminder to everybody else, that God is not dead, he's alive. And God is not at a distant, he is near. And actually so near, that every child of God carries him in his heart every day, and catches the glory.

Reflects the light. Now it is in this sphere, that the Christian is beyond competition. In one sense, to speak of comparative religions, is a false perception.

Everything else is by contrast. For the Christian faith is the only faith which claims that every member of it has the founder of it living in his heart. This makes the Christian faith unique.

And so a child of God is one who is a reflector of light. And as he is that, he becomes a missionary. Everyone who reflects that light is a missionary.

Everybody who doesn't is a mission field. And he is not in competition with anybody or any other organization to attract people to Christ. One would almost imagine these days in Christian circles, by the frenzied and frantic efforts that many churches make, to put over an attractive program, attractive program of modern methods of education, Christian education, approach to people, methods of reaching young people, Christian good music.

All of these things have their place. But you can have them all, and unless you have light, you've got nothing. You can have the best program, and the best education, and the best methods, and the best all grades Sunday school system, and the best singing in your church, and even the best preaching, and be absolutely useless unless you have light.

For though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not loved, I am a sounding brass and tinkling cymbal. But it's this realm which the Christian church has got to live on, if we're to reach this generation in which we live. In other words, everybody has got to step up into a new dimension of living, in order that we may be reflectors of light and shine for the Lord Jesus.

Well, how is it going to be done? I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles. I wouldn't compare the first century with the twentieth. Everything is in contrast.

But I'm quite sure that the forces which opposed the first century church were as great, if not greater, than those which oppose us today. Just a little handful of men and entities, that's all there were. They hadn't got much doctrine, they hadn't got much theology, hadn't got any systematic theology at all.

They just knew that their hearts were aflame, and they burnt, and they shone. And because of that they were able to cut through the power of an atheistic Roman empire with the authority and glow of their message. Now I admit again that the twentieth century is all by contrast.

But there are principles, principles of witness, principles of evangelism here, which if we ignore, we do so at our peril. And which I believe this morning, as I touch upon them, I'm exposing to my own heart and to yours, the basic cause of the futility, comparative futility, of the evangelical church in the twentieth century. What was it that these made, these men, these fellows, these ignorant men, these nonentities, what was it that made them blaze, and burn, and powerful, and victorious in all their witness for the Lord? Well, to look at this chapter is to find unmistakably the answer.

I want to ask you to look at three things. With me this morning in this portion. First, the message that they proclaimed.

You read the Acts of the Apostles again to yourself, quietly, thoughtfully, prayerfully. And you will find that when the early church preached the gospel, they were always preaching it, may I use the simile, they were always firing a double-barreled gun. Their message had a two-fold emphasis.

One, no more prominently than the other, but two sharp emphases that they preached. First, the emphasis of grace. And second, the emphasis of government.

Look at this in this portion of scripture with me just a minute. Verse 38. Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sin.

And by him all that believe are justified from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses. There you are, there's the emphasis of grace. Now we have no difficulty in this.

We preach it, even perhaps some of us are not so gracious as we should be in doing so. But we preach the message of grace, the undeserved kindness of God, that saves a sinner, on the basis of faith in a crucified, risen Lord. Free, unmerited favor, grace.

This is the emphasis that we delight in, and we preach it all the time. But I notice that in this sermon of Paul's here at Antioch, there was another emphasis. You look right through it and you find all the time it was grace right enough, but it was always based on government.

Just to read a few verses, we have no time for more. Verse 17. The God of this people of Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt.

And with a high arm brought he them out of it. And about the time of forty years suffered he their manors in the wilderness. And when he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, he divided their land to them by lot.

After that he gave unto them judges about the space of 450 years, until Samuel the prophet. Afterward they desired a king, and God gave unto them Saul, the son of Sis, the man of the tribe of Benjamin, for the space of forty years. And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king.

And so on. And then again go to verse 29. And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a sepulcher.

But God raised him from the dead. You see, all through this message there was being traced the sovereignty of God. And this message, and every other message which they preached, had always this double barrel to it.

This emphasis. First the government of God, then the grace of God. The undeserved grace of God, which led to the government of God in their lives.

This was their authority. This was the message that had literally caught fire in the lives of all this, these disciples who preached it. Now you know my good friend, it's a great thing in your life, I hope you make the practice of it, of reading your Bible through every year.

Perhaps you read it more than that. But at least make it once a year. I've made that practice mine for many years now.

I'm sure many others of you do the same. But listen, it's one thing to go through the Bible every year. It's another thing when the Bible starts going through you.

One thing when you can read it objectively. Another thing when the Spirit of God begins to burn its authority into your life. And then it begins to get hold of you.

And it begins to take fire in your heart. And these disciples have found this. The word of God.

Look at it in verse 44. Almost the whole city came together to hear the word of God. Verse 46.

It was necessary that the word of God should first be spoken to you. Verse 48. They were glad and glorified the word of the Lord.

Verse 49. The word of the Lord was published throughout all the region. The word of the Lord.

They hadn't any message apart from that. This thing which had gripped their hearts, they were now relating to everybody to whom they spoke. The word of God.

The word of God. The word of God. The word of God.

And this was the word of God to them. It was their salvation by grace, but only for submission to government. Have you got that? Saved by the grace of God, for submission to the government of God.

Not one of them would have questioned that. Every one of them knew that they were sold out to Christ. That they weren't of their own.

That they were bought for a price. They were His. They belonged to Him.

Therefore they yielded the total commitment of their lives to Him. Oh yes, it was salvation by grace, but it was for submission to government. Now that message these days is not popular.

Listen. I can find no place in my New Testament, but I'm prepared to be enlightened. I can find no place in my New Testament where I may receive Jesus Christ as my Saviour, and then years later submit to Him as my Lord.

I find that nowhere in the Bible. A free salvation demands His full control. Sovereignty is an essential attribute of deity.

And it's a tragic divorce in the character of God, to suggest that you may receive the Saviourhood of Christ, and not His Lordship. You see, liberty in the Christian life is not license. Liberty is not being away out on left fields somewhere marked independent.

That's not liberty. Liberty is freedom to obey God. Freedom to do the will of God.

Power, by the power of an indwelling Christ, to fulfill the law of God. Law? Well, we are free from its condemnation. What a grand day it is in our experience, when we can say there is therefore now, no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.

That verse was given to me on the day of my confession, and I underlined the word now, so heavily that I went right through to the epistles of the Philippians, and ruined my Bible on the first day. But it was great, thrilling to know that there was now no condemnation. And I've never doubted that fact from that day to this.

There is therefore now no condemnation. We're free from the law's condemnation, but we're not free from the law's obligation. And the holiness and character of a Christian has got to be regulated by a law of the Ten Commandments.

The Christian life is not liberty, it's not license, it's freedom to do the will of God. And in doing the will of God, finding all the joy of obedience. Law in the Christian life is authority, which one intelligent being exercises over another intelligent being, by someone who has the right to the authority of his life.

May I repeat that? Law in the Christian life is the right to exercise authority imposed by one person over another. The one having the authority and the right to rule his life. If you say to me that's legalism, I say blessed legalism.

It's the kind of authority I know in my life I need seven days a week. The authority of Jesus Christ. And it was submission to this, and acknowledgement of it, that made them absolutely catch fire in the preaching of their word.

Of course, it's the whole theme of the New Testament. Romans 5 21, as sin hath reigned unto death, so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. There was a time in our lives when sin reigned, but now grace reigns, but one or the other must reign.

Know ye not to whom you yield yourselves servants to obey? His servants you are whom you obey, whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness. Romans 6 16. Every one of us has a perfect right to choose our master.

There are no conscripts in the Lord's army, no compulsion. Everyone is a volunteer. You have a perfect right to choose your own king, choose the one who'll run your life.

Absolutely a right. But what you haven't any right to do, is to wear the uniform of one master and do the bidding of another. There's only one who exercises supreme control of our lives.

And a mission field becomes a missionary. At the moment when I step off the throne of my heart, which I have occupied ever since I was born, and I kneel at the foot of it, and put Jesus Christ on it. That's the message they proclaimed.

And listen, I will never never know the wonder of the grace of God sufficient for every need, and every demand, and every emergency in my life. I'll never know it, unless I am willing to accept the government of his spirit in every area of my life. The experience of the grace of God depends upon submission to the government of God.

Now I'm not suggesting that this is something that is experienced in the flash of a moment. I recall the day of my conversion. Can't you do that? It doesn't matter really if you can, the thing is to be sure that you are now.

You may not remember the time or the place, but I do. The time, the place, the day, the moment, when I was confronted with the claims of a risen Lord. It's a long time ago now, about 40 years actually.

But I often look back upon that moment and ask myself, have I ever had such a spiritual moment as that in my life? Has there ever been a moment like it since, when every barrier was down? When I was so glad to welcome the Lord, when there was a heart that was tender to him, when there were no reservations at all, I knew I was in desperate need. I knew I needed him with all my heart, and I surrendered to him gladly, and he was Lord from that moment on. But I'm ashamed to think of the many, many times in my Christian life and service.

Times from which I've suffered, and times from which other people have suffered too. When God has said to me, not that. Don't you do that anymore.

That's not my friend for you. That's not my way for you. That's not my will for your life.

And I've stuck out my chin and said, so what? And from that moment, the Holy Spirit went out of business. Not out of my heart. He was there.

He's never left me. But he was greed. And all the witness and testimony was ineffective, and all the preaching was useless.

And the whole thing was sheer hypocrisy, as long as in my life I allowed a rival to the throne. For then the Holy Spirit of life and light had no liberty to work. The message I must proclaim.

The essence of sin is arrogance, and the essence of salvation is submission. When I get off the throne and Jesus gets on it, and he starts administering it for his glory and for his kingdom. The message that I must proclaim.

This is the thing that begins to burn, to shine. For you see, upon that life, the Holy Spirit has his way, and works, and begins to catch the glory and the glow of the reality of the Lord. Has that happened to you yet? Have you come to the Institute perhaps? You don't know anything about that, or very little.

And Jesus Christ isn't Lord today in your hearts. The Holy Spirit has no freedom to work. And we endeavor to substitute programs, and knowledge of truth, and theology, and doctrine, and understanding of the Bible.

And all the time he's pressing us into a corner, until this issue is settled once and for all in every area of my life. I ask you very lovingly, does he control your thought life, your sex life, your friendships, your books, your spare time, your recreation, your money, government? The message we must proclaim. For only then does the Holy Spirit begin to break through.

Secondly, will you notice here the movement that somehow we've got to precipitate. The movement we have to precipitate. For you see, this message will drive a wedge into every situation.

Verse 45, they were filled with envy, and spoke against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming. Verse 48, when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad. And glorified the

word of the Lord.

Now do you see this? Some were mad, and some were glad, but nobody was neutral. Everybody hopped off the fence. Nobody sat on it that couldn't.

In the presence of a company of men who preached grace and government, and not only preached it, but lived it, nobody could resist the authority of what they said. Some were mad at them. Some were glad they ever met them, but nobody was neutral.

Now perhaps one of the greatest tragedies of today is the number of people in our cities who couldn't care less about what we talk about. The things that are precious to us, the things that are real to us, the vast majority, don't live within a million miles of them. And the greatest tragedy in the history of the church, I think, is the moment when we began to put walls up around us.

And everybody said, now you've got to come inside our church on Sunday to hear the gospel preached. And the only evangelism that can be done is inside the walls of a church, not a bit of it. I would dare to say that if Jesus came to Chicago today, he'd be in Skid Row, in taverns, in pubs, in hotels, in dance halls.

He wouldn't be in our churches. He'd go outside where the people are, and he would yearn over them, and care for them, and preach to them, and have compassion on them, and love them. But we don't do that.

We don't! Because he is not so real to us as that. Because we've grown no testimony of the glow of his presence and the reality of his love. We'd be scared to go to these places, scared to meet people where they are, because somehow we know that this Christ hasn't really given us victory and deliverance in our own lives.

And if he isn't real to me, and he isn't real to you, we can't make him real to anybody else. But these disciples were so caught up into the reality, into the flame of the burning love of God, and the fire of the Spirit, that why they were irresistible. Not everybody got saved by no means.

Not everybody got converted. Oh no, there were many situations when they were hounded out of the town. But at least they precipitate a movement.

Things happen. Listen. Somebody who is only born once will always persecute the man who's born twice.

That's a principle that is inescapable. And no child of God can have it comfortable down here if he's on right terms with heaven. He's bound to have friction at one end of the line than the other.

If he wants to keep friends with the world and worldly people, and sort of not cause them any offense, well, he can live like that. But he'll have no sense of liberty and no sense of joy in the Lord. If his relationship with heaven is right, there will immediately be conflict down here.

Now some of us create our own conflicts by being downright unpleasant. I'm not meaning that. I just mean that we live on such a level that nobody can be neutral.

May I be allowed to give you just a word of testimony? Some of you may have heard me give this, but it helps me and helps perhaps a lot of people here. I was converted the first day I heard the gospel. Not in a church.

You wouldn't have caught me inside a church. I was about 20 years old at the time, training to be a CPA in London, in the north of England. And you know what the man said to me? It was in a tavern.

It was called a hotel, but that's rather an exaggerated name for it. It was a tavern. One bedroom for guests, and he and I were sharing it.

Miles from anywhere out in the country, where we were accounting and doing somebody's books, the books of a paint firm actually, which was stuck out in the sticks because the factory smelt so badly. And we were there for three weeks, and I was living with this chap who I thought was a religious maniac. Do you know how he began the conversation? Do you want to be saved? That's the first step in five easy steps in soul winning and how to do it.

That's diplomacy. That's the tactful approach. That's approaching the subject graciously and gently.

Do you want to be saved? That's all. First time I ever heard the gospel. But it wasn't the first time I'd seen it.

Because I'd lived with that man for two years in an office in Newcastle, in England. And he'd made me mad already, because he was so consistent. When all the rest of us on the staff gathered round to tell stories that were questionable, when he came into the room, we all had to shut up.

Not because he said so, but because we felt we were out of place when he was around. The office hours were nine o'clock till five. He got there at quarter to nine and stayed till half past five.

That didn't suit any of us. We wanted to be there at ten and leave at four. When we went out at eleven for something stronger than coffee, he never did.

When we wanted to take two hours for lunch, he would only take one. When we stopped at three thirty, as every Englishman does for a cup of tea, he didn't. The thing was so desperately annoying to us that we were mad.

About a dozen of us gathered one day in the city of Newcastle round the glasses of beer, and we made a vow that in six months' time we'd drive the religion out of him. None of us were neutral, you see. We were all anti.

And within that period of six months, oh, we reported him to the boss for keeping office hours badly. That was right, because he kept them too well, actually. And the office, the boss said, well, if you all kept office hours as well as he does, I could do with half the staff.

That's what we were afraid of. And when I went out auditing some people's books and reported him for dishonesty, as we did, the client all said, well, if you all did it as well as he did, we, our books would be better kept. The whole plot fell apart.

There was nothing upon which we could fault him at all. And when he said to me, do you want to be saved, I knew there was something to be saved from and someone to be saved to. And there and then, in that little pub in the north of England, the very first time I heard the gospel at the age of about 20, I knelt down and received Christ into my heart.

But it didn't take me long. I went to a Brethren Hall to begin with. You see, I had a good beginning.

And every Wednesday I went to a Bible study. And every time I came away from that place, I became more and more convinced that this Christian life is discipleship. It involves something.

It's not fun and games. It's not a picnic. It's not a fire escape.

Not a life insurance policy. It's dynamic. It involves discipleship.

It involves a cross. And I saw this confronting me. On the other hand, I was in the running for an English cap.

That means playing for my country. I particularly wanted to do that, to beat fellows from Scotland. And I was very anxious to get on the English team.

Why, they didn't make it. But I played pretty hard. And because I was big and fat and hefty, I got on better than most.

And I was very near getting on that English team. But I didn't do it, because I couldn't see myself with these two lives going on together. On the one hand, the way of the cross.

On the other hand, the football match, the drink, the party, the night show. And I went up to my friend and I said to him, I don't want your religion. You can keep it.

All he said to me was, you'll never be happy till you're right with God. And I said, nonsense. I went to London, qualified as a CPA, and got a good job in business, and was beginning to go up the ladder.

And I had money to spend. And I spent it on trying to forget God. And by the time I was twenty-five years old, I'd rejected the cross and all the principle of it, and refused Christ.

And living in London nightclubs and theatres and shows, making a hopeless mess of my life, so hopeless indeed that I lost any chance of playing football for my country. Deeper into sin, deeper into the mess than I ever was before I was converted. Well, you're almost ready to stand up and jump at me and say, hi, you couldn't be a Christian and live like that.

Yes, I was. How do I know I was? I'll tell you. I was miserable.

Absolutely miserable, and I wouldn't admit it. Before, I'd loved all that sort of thing. It was my life.

Now, I hated it. Arguing against God who had come into my heart. He having a battle with me.

If there's anybody here, God only knows, who's facing desperate temptation. Just, sir, throw it all up. Have a fling.

Enjoy yourself. Why should you? Just have kicks. I tell you, my friend, from bitter experience of a wasted life in my 20s, which, alas, I could never recover.

I tell you that that sort of life is a hell on earth. I tried it. And during that time, this friend of mine came down to see me in London, took me out to lunch.

Never talked about Christ to me. Never said a word. But at the end of our conversation, he shook hands and said goodbye, and he said, don't forget, it's possible to have a saved soul and a wasted life.

Nothing more. That was all. Saved soul and a wasted life.

The next Saturday, I was going up to the north of England to play in a county championship match in England, which would be state football here. During the whole of that game, this thing was going in my mind. Saved soul and wasted life.

Saved soul and wasted life. I went to the dinner party. I went to the dance and the nightclub.

Saved soul and wasted life. I wakened up the next morning with a terrific headache. Saved soul and wasted life.

There came a time, not long, when I couldn't stand it any more. And I said what Peter said, oh God, save me. And in his mercy, the blood of Jesus cleanses from all sin.

His mercy and patience with the Christian who was backslidden is even greater, I think, than his mercy with the unconverted. And with loving hands, he drew me back to himself, and my life became his. Sometime afterwards, a few months later, my friend came down to London again.

And this time, I did all the talking. He took me out to lunch, and I said to him, all the Christian work I was doing, and all the preaching, and all the opportunities I was having, and it went as flat as a pancake. Never said a thing.

Never opened his mouth. I thought, well, I can't get this over with. What's the matter with him? Surely he's glad that his young convert is on the ball.

Never said a word. So I gave up. And when we finished our lunch, he looked at me, and he said, well, that's very interesting.

But he said, you know, I think that that waiter who served our lunch needs to know about Jesus. And he got up from the table, and went across the floor of one of London's best hotels. He'd been paying the bill, incidentally.

And he went right across to the floor, and handed that waiter a Gideon New Testament. Spoke to him about the Lord Jesus. Came back.

Sat down. Left a very generous tip under the plate. We went our way, and I felt just like a little worm.

Why have I told you that? Listen. Oh, yes, I know you're listening. Get these phrases into your mind.

Do you want to be saved? You'll never be happy till you're right with God. It's possible to have a saved soul and a wasted life. That waiter needs to hear about Jesus.

All of these things came to me through the lips of a man who lived grace, and who submitted to government. And because of this, the authority of the Spirit of God spoke when he spoke. And the Holy Spirit confirmed the word with signs following.

And the same Spirit of God was alive today to do the very same thing through fellows and girls whom God has reduced to mere nobodies. Nonentity. And do you know that the Holy Ghost who came upon Elijah and John the Baptist, who made David a man after God's heart, Moses, a great statesman and leader of the people who came and flooded the Christian church at Pentecost, can come upon your life today.

If I'm prepared in my life to submit to grace and government, totalitarian government of a living Christ, he takes control and he begins to shine. Don't imagine that everybody's going to rush round and get saved. But I'm telling you this, that instead of you having to rush round looking for unconverted people who run away from us as fast as they possibly can, there's a new attraction about a Christian who is living this life, the new reality.

And people begin to wonder, how is it that he doesn't blow his top? How does he react in that situation? How is he so patient? How does he face these problems with a smile? What is there about him that makes him a Christian gentleman? And a girl begins to see a fellow who loves the Lord deeply. And because he does, he respects her and treats her as a Christian lady. And that girl begins to sense that there's someone other than the man.

There's someone else who lives inside him and has control of him. And a boy sees a girl and sees her gentleness and sweetness and graciousness. And somehow he knows that, oh, she's not always going around looking for somebody.

He knows that she's committed first and foremost to the will of God and the government of the Spirit of God in her life. And the two of them who have the same goals and live in the same principle, and who seek first and foremost the government and control of the Spirit of God, they're drawn together in a love which is so different and so much more deep, because at the center of it all is the authority of the living Christ himself. The movement which we must precipitate.

And I'm just going to conclude with saying one word more from which I will lead in tomorrow. We may become lights because of the message that I proclaim, we proclaim. Because of movement which we must precipitate, one more thing, wonderful thing.

Oh God, may he just do this today, this week. A miracle for which we must prepare. Do you notice verse 52? The disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Ghost.

How old were they? 24 hours at the most, that's all. But they were filled with joy in the Holy Ghost. Well, of course, Paul and Barnabas, the great Christian statesmen, have been around, and they've formed training classes for new converts.

They've got them enrolled in classes for church membership and teaching courses in the Bible. And they've begun to train them and lead them and direct them. They haven't.

Verse 51 tells me that Paul and Barnabas had shaken the dust off their feet. And listen, listen, when every human prop had gone, the Spirit of God moved in. Now, I don't--I must be careful that in order to stress one point, I don't over-elaborate it and turn truth into an error.

I recognize the need for the shepherding and care of converts, and I recognize the need of Bible classes and Bible training. Of course I do. But I'm just going to ask you one simple question.

Can you carry your mind back to your home church? Where you come from? Listen. How much room is there in that church for the Holy Spirit? What's the smallest meeting in the week? Prayer meeting? How much room in that your own heart is there for the Holy Spirit? The movement, the miracle for which we must prepare. The disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

Any room in your timetable for God? Any room in your schedule today for we do to be alone with God and meet with him? Any room for the Lord to move in to your fellowship and do business and into your home? Is there? How many, many homes I've been to in recent months which are just held together for the sake of appearance because they're called Christian, but have no room for God. No family altar, no place of prayer. The miracle for which we must make room.

Listen. God wants to do a new thing at this school. You'll pardon me saying so, but over the nine years at Moody Church, which had many battles and many conflicts, but lots of blessing, ministry at this place, the Institute, became more precious to me than anything.

Since those days I've been out in the mission fields far and wide, and I've met fellows and girls from MBI out in Thailand, in Ethiopia, in Malaysia, Singapore, who will always thank God for this place. But there came a time in their lives when they realized that they had to make room for God to do something. So often the trouble on the mission field with many people is that they're trained in a Western culture, a Western education.

They get on all right here in the States or in Britain. They achieve a certain amount of success, and then they go out to a country like Thailand, which has been under the bondage of Buddhism for centuries, and they find themselves faced with a problem which they just haven't got what it takes. And many of them, I'm not speaking of MBI at this point essentially by itself, I'm speaking of all missionaries.

Many of them, oh how my heart was sad by it, withdraw before the end of one term, or at the end of one term come back to get a PhD degree. That isn't the answer. I'll tell you what the answer is, and on some mission fields they've found it.

The answer is to make room for the Spirit of God. Make room for him in the time, in the busyness, in the barrenness, in the emptiness, in the dryness, in the deadness. Make room for God.

Would you do that today? I was reading a hymn in my quiet time this morning. I just read one verse to you and close it. You know I've always thought of this as a gospel hymn, but it struck me in my own heart afresh.

Room and time now give to Jesus, to Jesus, not to Christian work, to Jesus. Soon will pass this day of grace. Soon thy heart left cold and silent, and thy saviors, thy saviors pleading to cease.

Room for Jesus, king of glory, hasten now his word obey. Swing the heart's door widely open. Bid him enter, while you may.

Let us pray. Just a moment of quiet prayer. Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me. Break me, melt me, mold me, fill me. Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

Lord, may I make room for you this day. For Jesus' sake.

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