

Communication of Our Faith - Part 4

by Alan Redpath

Alan Redpath emphasizes the urgency and personal commitment required in communicating our faith in today's interconnected world.

Duration: 56:17

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Matthew 14:30-31, Hebrews 11:6

Topics: "Faith"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of recognizing the smallness of the world and the great task that lies before the church. He acknowledges the challenges and distractions that can hinder spiritual growth and commitment. The speaker also highlights the need to restore our relationship with God and make Him the Lord of our lives. He shares a personal experience and encourages the audience to reflect on their own relationship with God.

Transcript

Good morning, everybody. Good morning, everybody. Thank you very much.

I'd just like to know I'm on speaking terms with you so far, anyway. May I just say two things to you before I speak, if that isn't being very Irish. The first reason, there were two Scotsmen and two Welshmen, two Irishmen and two Englishmen who were cast up on a desert island and lost for six months.

At the end of the six months, when they were found, the two Welshmen were singing, the two Irishmen were fighting, the two Scotsmen were talking about home rules of Scotland, and the two Englishmen, well, they weren't speaking to each other because they hadn't been introduced. Now, we are in a time that what we think to be reserved, other people think being snooty. And the great help to me is you took the initiative and came up and said hi, when I'm having meals or see you from time to time, because I want in these two days to get to know you as much as possible.

And the other thing is that though I was in Chicago for nearly ten years, during that time my British accent got a bit liberated, but I'm conscious that it's been sharpened up again. And I hope you don't have too much problem with what I'm saying and understanding it. I hope it won't be more than half and half anyway, and that I'll try and make it quite simple.

Now then, let us turn to read a portion of the Word. In a very familiar portion, one of the, while you're looking it up, it's Matthew 14. Matthew 14.

One of the most amazing things to me about the Bible is that when you've read a portion of it, say, hundreds of times, you really think, well, you know it all. Then suddenly it begins to live and take life to you all over again. This happened to me just recently in regards to this particular portion, and it's from my experience of it that I want to speak to you today.

Matthew 14.22. And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship and to go before him unto the other side while he sent the multitude away. And when he had sent the multitude away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray. And when the evening was come, he was there alone, but the ship was now in the midst of the sea tossed with waves, for the wind was countering.

And in the fourth watch of the night, Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, it is the Spirit. And they cried out for fear.

But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer, it is I, be not afraid. And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come to thee on the water. And he said, Come.

And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid. And beginning to think, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.

And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand and caught him and said unto him, All thou little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased. Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Are the truth, thou art the Son of God. May we just bow our heads and hearts in a word of prayer.

And would you echo in your heart the prayer which I would offer on your behalf and mine. Speak, Lord, for thy servant here. Speak just now some message to meet my need which thou only dost know.

Speak now to thy Holy Word and make me see. Some wonderful truth thou hast to show to me. For Jesus' sake.

Amen. I just want to say a word to you about what I have in mind for this week. It is certainly not to be an hour when you are taught more doctrine There are others here far more able than I am to do that.

And you're in classroom all day and every day. But I want, if I may, these few mornings, just to speak to you heart to heart concerning the problem of communication. The communication of our faith.

The primary task of the whole church, of every Christian. And don't leave it all on the fact that every one of us here this morning, right now, is either a missionary or a mission team. You don't become a missionary because you get a degree and go abroad.

Right now, either a missionary or a mission team. If your life is rightly related to the Lord Jesus Christ, you're a missionary. If it isn't, you're a mission team.

And our whole theme will center around that focal point of our personal relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ. For this is the key to everything in our life. And as our thinking together on the subject of the priority task of the church, I want to say just four very simple but very important things that we should bear in mind.

First, the world is much smaller than we think. Actually, it is no more than just a neighborhood. I left Glasgow in Scotland in May.

One Saturday, had lunch with my wife at the airport. And rang her up from New York when she was just sitting down to her evening meal. You see, it has shrunk into a mere neighborhood.

The world is smaller than we think. And because of that, the task is greater than we think. Because all cultures of every nation have been crowded together with the inevitable tensions and conflicts which arise out of that fact.

And also, of course, the cause of the tremendous population explosion which has taken place in the 20th century, about which I don't need to say anything, you know it all. But this all makes the task far greater than we think. And third, the time is shorter than we think.

I think one of the most thrilling spiritual exercises is to read your daily newspaper alongside your Bible. And if you see unfolding all that the Lord Jesus said would happen in these last days, it puts a sense of urgency into our feet, into our minds, and into our hearts. The time is shorter than we think.

We're not responsible for the evangelization of the generation that has gone, nor responsible for the evangelization of a generation yet to be. But we are responsible for this one. And the time is shorter than we think.

And fourthly, the terms are costlier than we think. It's going to cost us a great deal more than we ever imagined. This generation will never be won for Christ.

No city will be won for Christ through mass evangelism. Now please don't take your pencil and postcard and write to Billy Graham and say that I'm having a crack at him. And certainly not.

Because during his crusade in Chicago I was vice chairman of the committee, and backed him 100%. I would do the same again, at any place, at any time. But he actually said to me, in those days in Chicago, that if the church was doing its job, I would be out of work.

He was quite right. When I left Moody Church in 1962, I left behind about 40 people who were in the discipleship class, all of whom who had been converted at the Billy Graham crusade. I rejoiced in them.

Many other pastors in this city, just one individual for Christ. I'd have left behind 2,500 people in the discipleship class. You see the difference is as big as that.

To have an evangelistic crusade, a mass evangelistic crusade in a big city would cost half a million dollars. To have what the church really needs wouldn't cost a cent. But it would cost every one of us everything in terms of personal commitment to Christ.

And it's that that I'm concerned about in these days. The terms are costlier than we think. So here then you will bear in mind during these mornings, these simple propositions.

The world is smaller than we think. The task is greater than we think. The time is shorter than we think.

And the terms are costlier than we think. And I'm going to approach this theme from five different angles. And our first one this morning will be, a relationship which must be restored.

And that brings us straight to the message, to the portion of scripture which I read to you a few minutes ago. As I was reading this portion, the words of the 30th verse of Matthew 14, came home to me with tremendous personal force. Matthew 14, verse 30.

Let me read it to you. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid, and beginning to think, he cried saying, Lord save me. Just those three words went right home to my heart.

Because they spoke to my personal experience. Here they are. May the spirit of God ring an alarm bell in your soul this morning.

Beginning to think, how gratifying Those words, when they live to me afresh, spoke to my own personal spiritual experience. I wonder if they don't do exactly the same to you today. Somehow, there's been a loosening of our hold upon God.

A slackening in our devotion to him. A carelessness in the cultivation of our inner life. Whether that thinking is hardened due to some tragic moral breakdown, I wouldn't know.

Or whether it's just been gradual. But wherever I go, I find today that people of every age group are involved in a rat race. They're on a conveyor belt from dawn till night.

Seven days a week. Too tired to pray. Too weary to read the Bible.

Study. Examination. Higher academic standards.

The business, the family, the home. All these things tell up for us with tremendous force. The warning, beginning to think.

Old standards have been given up. Disciplines have been abandoned. So much easier to go along with the crowd.

We never thought it would happen to us. We were called into the ministry. We thought we'd be immune from it.

But we haven't been. We've been given places of spiritual leadership and responsibility, and we thought this itself would be an inoculation of this thinking process that we found was nothing easier than to lose the word of God in the work of God. Beginning to think.

The scholars who have come to this campus with all its associations and tremendous history which has been of worldwide blessing to millions of people. And you thought that coming to Moody Bible Institute would be preventive. But you found it accelerating the process.

So much easier in all the rush just to abandon the one thing that really matters. And you know it's noticeable to yourself because when you begin to think you get irritable. Your boiling point gets low.

You're on the defensive, on edge. You keep people at a distance from you. You don't want them to know about it.

But they do know. They can see the tensions and the strains and the pressure. They watch you pressing the panic button every now and again.

And they wonder what's the matter. You don't know the reason for it. Beginning to think.

What did Peter do in such circumstances? He cried out to God, Lord save me. Now that's a very short prayer. But under the circumstances I don't think that it could have been much longer.

The water was probably up to his chin at the moment. He was desperate. So desperate indeed that he just had time to cry, Lord save me.

How I thank God for short prayers. We're not heard in heaven for our correct evangelical phraseology. We're heard because of our confessed sense of peril and danger.

Prayer that shoots like an arrow right to the heart of God from my heart. It goes straight to the throne in heaven, Lord save me. A confessed sense of need.

One great hindrance to the operation of miracles in life is the absence of any sense of need. Faith works best in the context of desperation. I never read in my Bible that God removes the man's hills.

But I do read that he removes the mountains. I don't read that he deals with a mild headache. But he does deal with impossibilities.

Faith works most convincingly when there's no other way out. Not much use believing God if all the time we leave just to wear this cape in case he doesn't work. But he'll either shut up for a miracle.

No, it's a horrendous thing when you get to that place in your Christian life. When you've got just no other way out. When you cry, Lord save me.

How often I've prayed like that. When pressures were overwhelming. When it was impossible to frame words.

When I was too tired to think. Oh Lord save me, keep me strained. Lord save me, don't let me make a wrong decision.

And when the enemy comes in like a flood and attacks me. Lord save me. Now what intrigues me about this type of description.

Is to notice how the Lord goes about answering the prayer of a man or a girl who's dead. The fellow, the girl who just knows they haven't got any other alternative. And they shut up to God and to him working miracles.

I trust that there are many in that category here this morning. It's a wonderful place to be in. Do you notice the divine pattern of deliverance.

First of all do you notice that Peter's doubts were abused. Verse 31. O thou of beautiful faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? The first thing the Lord Jesus did was to expose the real cause of his thinking.

And firmly but lovingly he goes and penetrates to the root of the whole cause of thinking. A breakdown in his basic relationships was brought. Wherefore didst thou doubt and believe? Without faith it's impossible to please God.

When you begin to doubt God's ability to save you in a particular situation. It isn't that you stop practicing the principle of faith. But rather that you put your faith in something of someone else than the only one who is worthy of it.

The only trustworthy object. And you begin to think. Everybody lives by faith.

Everybody. Life can't exist without faith. At any level.

A friend of mine who happens to be a minister in the Church of England. Was travelling recently from England to Australia. And he decided to go by ship.

Sensible man. He got some real excursions. He set about six weeks.

But when he got aboard the boat. He imagined that he had reserved a single cabin. But he found that there was someone else occupying it.

Another man. And he began to unpack his belongings with one eye on his luggage and another eye on his travelling companion. And the more he looked at him the less he felt he could trust him.

And just after a moment the other man went out of the room. The cabin. So my friend took the opportunity of his absence to wrap up all his personal belongings in a little case.

And presently the other man came back. So my friend went out with his valuables to find the postman of the ship. And he pondered and he said.

I'm sorry to bother you but. I imagined I had a single cabin reserved. On this boat.

But I find I haven't. There's another man in my cabin. And the more I look at him the less I feel I can trust him.

Would you mind looking after my valuables on the voyage? So the postman said certainly sir. I'd be glad to. And turned round with a smile in his good groom.

It may surprise you sir to know that your travelling companion has just been here and said exactly the same. You see. It is absolutely impossible in any situation to exist without faith.

It was unbelief which drove our first parent from God. Has God told that thou shalt not eat of the fruit of every tree? Was the question which Satan sowed into the mind of Eve. With disastrous results for the whole human family.

It wasn't that she stopped practicing faith. But she put her faith from the wrong object. Instead of believing God's truth she believed the devil's lies.

And unbelief led to rebellion. And that's the root of all sins. And therefore the path which God has decreed to the way to restore a broken relationship with him.

Is belief until the Lord Jesus Christ is born shall be saved. Wherefore didst thou doubt? Why has your confidence in God ceased? I suspect very strongly in Peter's case. It was because of winds and waves.

You remember when he left out of his ship to come to Christ. He had no problem with winds and waves. He forgot about them all.

But he became increasingly conscious. Of the waves and wind which had troubled him on the boat. You troubled him.

When he trusted the Saviour. And he began concentrating on winds and waves. And he began to think.

Now this isn't only Peter's trouble. My friend it's yours and mine. Why have you begun to think? Why did I begin to think? I know.

Because they gave our time and our concentration to battering with life's problems. And storms and pressures. Until our spiritual horizons grew so dim.

That we almost ceased to exist. Tragedy. That can happen to a Christian.

Or a Catholic. Absorption with storms and winds. Drove us off our true samples.

And removed us from the source of strength and power. Which Cologne could proper think. And we found ourselves living within the limited resources.

Of our own strength. And the battle was too much for us. And we began to think.

And we lost the sense of the presence of the ones. Who had power to control the storms. Wherefore did you dance? There's the Lord exposing the basic trouble.

The basic cause of thinking. Unbelief. But do you notice? In this rest.

Not only did the Lord rebuke his doubts. There came a moment when he reversed his defeat. Immediately.

Verse 31. That is immediately Peter cried Lord save me. Immediately Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up.

And the downward trend of thinking was reversed. A new power. Another person had taken over.

And Peter found himself in the hands. Of one who could lift him up and deliver him. From the storm Jesus had taken over.

Now that's exactly what you need and what I need. Today. Not just a visit to church.

Not just three years at NBR. Not a mild dose of religion. Not a correct understanding of doctrine merely.

But a God. A master. A Lord.

Who can take hold of me and lift me up above the storm. Enable me to cry. Forgive me using a very childish illustration.

But I hold in my hand a barrow. Interesting enough when I bought it. Here in Chicago.

Ah. The advertisement. Advertisement.

Said that. This pen will write on butter. Or will write in your butt.

Well now that was quite inventive. Because I don't usually write on butter. Certainly never in my butt.

But I was very grateful. I have been through the years. For the times when it's written on paper.

And. Look. I'm holding this pen in one hand.

And I want to make it stand upright. You want to do it? Now I'll try and make that pen stand upright. And I just can't do it.

One thing that I can do. It would fall. Collapse.

I can't do it. There's only one thing that can make that pen stand upright. It's when another hand.

Comes on it's palm above. And then holds it. And then it's upright.

That hand can't do it. And the more it tries the more it goes on falling. But there comes a moment when I acknowledge that that hand can't do it.

Therefore another hand comes and takes over. And the pen is now steady. It's upright.

Now that's exactly your trouble. And mine exactly your need. As long as I go on trying to stop myself thinking.

I go on going down. But when I acknowledge I'm beaten. And the total failure.

I never can be anything else. Then God comes in. And calls out Lord.

And then there he went away. Ten minutes later he came back. Looked over his shoulder.

The Bible had been stained with his tears. But the words non quo had been called out. And Jesus was Lord.

That moment her life had passed out of her own hands. She now recognized that she belonged to another. Not to herself.

Incidentally. That lady lived for thirty years to be a missionary. Incidentally also to her brother's husband.

I can't guarantee that. But we do know that the will of God is good and acceptable. And perfect.

But the slave never did take his turn to his master. Not to Lord. Sanctify Christ as Lord in your heart.

Said Peter. Why is it that Brom Christians live in victory. As you can tell by looking at them.

They're rejoicing in it. And some live in hopeless defeat for years. Why should that be? It isn't that some have the Holy Spirit.

And some have not. Because all have. Every Christian born again.

Has really. The difference is simply this. That some have recognized Jesus.

And some haven't. Some have a theoretical Christ. Some have a doctrinal Christ.

Some have an experimental Christ. And they know Christ as Lord in their heart. And they'll crown Him as their King.

Has it ever happened in your life? Some people have Jesus. But that's still their own must. Some people have Jesus and He is their must.

We're written for a very strange form of government. We call it a constitutional monarchy. I'll explain that in a minute.

In June it was, I think. Oh yes, June the 13th. It was my wedding anniversary.

1953. Our present Queen was crowned in Westminster Abbey in London. It was the day foretold by the weather prophet.

Likely to be the finest day of the year. At the port in dawn or dusk. Like it can ever do around there.

Stream down. But those of us who saw that very moment on television will never forget the moment. When the Archbishop of Canterbury, the head of the church in England.

With the crown in his hand turned to about 4,000 people in that ancient historical building. And said to them, my lord, ladies and gentlemen. I present to you your rightful sovereign Elizabeth.

Do you assent to pay her homage? In just one word. Ring out an echo to that vast building in London. At that moment.

The word. I. And 4,000 people representing every stage of life. In London.

Had acknowledged her to be their rightful sovereign. And he turned and placed the crown on her head. And that day.

She was our Queen. We all love her. She's a Christian.

Born again Christian. And we respect her. But listen.

Never from that day to this. Has she made one decision. Never once.

Harold Wilson and company do that. For better or worse. You see, we have a weird government system.

We have a Queen who is on the throne. Number one. But we have a government who make all the decisions.

And we strange Britishers. At least the English part of Britain. Sort of like it.

A Queen who is above every party. And who signs every document that the government presents to her. And puts a signature, a rubber stamp to it.

And then a government who make every decision. That's a constitutional monarchy. Very strange.

Very, very strange. But that has somehow or other. Infiltrated itself into 20th century Christianity.

In which, I mean. Supposing I asked you folks here in this auditorium. Is Jesus Christ your Lord? You would say yes.

Well, I come back at you. Very lovingly. Amen.

But I trust that Holy Spirit penetration. And I said to you. Who makes the decisions? Who chooses your life partner? Who chooses your career? Who chooses how you spend your money, if any? Who makes the decisions? Listen.

God refuses to be a rubber stamp to anybody. Thank the Lord Christ as Lord. Lord save me.

And immediately. The downward trend is reversed. And Peter experiences the thrill of the upward pull of a living Christ.

Who gave him power. In the moment of the peace. But he must be Lord.

A relationship which must be restored. Is that so with you? Why? Is that so essential? What happened? Forgive me if I use just another illustration, really, to show you what I mean. You all know my good friend, I'm sure, Stephen Alford.

Speaking at his spiritual life convention recently. And after one meeting, I was travelling back to Chicago. This was my home at the time.

It was a very foggy night. Snow was falling. Wintertime.

When I got to Kennedy Airport, all the planes had been cancelled. So I hung around for a couple of hours. And eventually, somebody said, one plane flying to Chicago.

And everybody made a diagnosis. So I managed to get in. On the last seat.

Right at the back. Right at the very back. I don't know, but I suppose there'd be about 160 others.

People, all swarming in. Setting down. And the snow was falling like it nobody's business.

And outside, as I looked out through my little window, there were four men on the wings, shooting it off. Defrosting them. And I suddenly remembered, just the sort of thing you would remember in a moment or so, that the weight of a jet plane, fully loaded with passengers and gas, was 250,000 pounds.

And I looked right away into the distance, and saw the back of the pilot's head. And I said, oh Lord bless it. I wasn't fearful, but certainly preoccupied.

Presently, the engines began to turn over. And we crumbled to the end of the runway. And we stopped.

And when we'd stopped, I looked out of the window and wondered why. Here were the four men back. With the lad on the wings, sweeping away the snow.

Defrosting them. The whole situation was most unpromising. But suddenly, there was a tremendous roar.

And if you travel economy class in a jet, you know what it's like. It was a roar. And that plane gradually took speed.

And with a flurry of snow, went along that runway. And when it had reached a speed of about 150 knots, the pilot pulled a stick. The nose went up in the air.

And it began to soar, and soar, and soar, and climb. Until it reached 35,000 feet. In a brilliant moonlight, starlight night.

And in less than two hours, I was back in O'Hare Field. Was that just something that happened by chance? Oh no. Is it something that might happen or might not happen? Oh no, it must happen.

Why? Well you see, this reason. At a speed of 150 knots, another law came into operation. Until that moment, the law of gravity had held that plane on the runway.

But at 150 knots, the law of aerodynamics began to take over. And the sheer thrust of four jet engines inside the plane was so tremendous, that it overcame the law of gravity and kept it in projection. And the plane soared through the storm.

Recognize this verse? The law of the spirit of light in Christ Jesus hath set me free from the... Hallelujah. When I say Lord save me, and I know that it's desperate, and I know there's no other way out except He takes over. Lord save me.

At that moment, at that very moment, He stretches out His hand and lifts me up. And I experience the upward pull. Do you know that in your life? Or are you defeated? You're still your own master.

Managing your own business. Trying to run your own life. Trying to do your own stuff.

He is in you. Every one of us knew that, not of the theory, not of the doctrine, but as an experience that each one of us has God in our heart. Heaven goes a week, 24 hours a day.

It would revolutionize Christianity. Every one of our lives would be absolutely revolutionized. If we believe, not theoretically, but experimentally in our heart, that we carry God inside us.

And all He wants is to be God in us. For you and I to get out of the way, and let Him get into business, and into control, and take over. Glory.

And until I get to the point of desperation, until I, as long as I think there's some other alternative, that after all I'm not so bad as the Bible says I am, and I'm prepared to give Him 95% of the commission, but I want 5% for myself, as long as I go on talking about it like that, just a word in conclusion. Which isn't easy to say from this platform. But which I want to say to be honest.

You notice, Peter's doubts were rebuked. His defeat was reversed. And then, his dilemma was removed.

Verse 32. Immediately, when they got into the ship, the wind ceased. Now you notice the order of this.

Doubts rebuked. Defeat reversed. Dilemma removed.

The last in order of treatment, was the first in order of desire. May I repeat that? The last in order of treatment, was the first in order of desire. Lord save me, get me out of this mess.

Lord deliver me from this situation. Lord save me, I can't take it anymore. Panic button.

And the Lord ignores that. The first in order of treatment, was to rebuke his doubts. And then reverse his defeat.

And finally, to remove the dilemma. Because you see, the Lord is concerned about dealing with the man, first of all. As long as we're in defeat, the dilemma remains.

Situations get worse. The pressures increase. The hopelessness of it all, seems to become increasingly powerful and real.

But when we come to the point of trusting Christ completely, the dilemma moves. Moses knew the secret. When he took three million people through a wilderness, he didn't say, Lord deal with these awkward people.

Lord get rid of them. Lord send them away, I don't want them. I don't want them either.

No, they're always grumbling, complaining. He didn't talk about it. The problems were far too big for him, he just said one thing, Lord, I beseech you, show me your glory.

That's all that Moses needed. That's all that you and I need. Just a touch.

And you see, what I want to say, in conclusion, is that the circumstances in which you are thinking are brought about by your heavenly Father in order that you come to the place of saying, Lord. Just four years ago, I was preparing my message for a Sunday, it was a Saturday afternoon, in my study in Edinburgh. As I was writing it out, I suddenly lost control of my hand and it wandered all over the paper.

I called out to my wife, I found I couldn't stand up. I had some idea of what might have happened and before long I was sure. In five minutes I couldn't speak, I couldn't walk, I knew that I'd had a cerebral hemorrhage which is a stroke, might well have been fatal.

I was helpless and in a few minutes reduced to childhood. Spiritually, I couldn't pray, read my Bible for months. Mentally, couldn't think, couldn't concentrate.

Physically, I was weak as a child. This situation lasted for about seven or eight months. One time I suddenly found that the devil was hurling everything at me.

I thought just like him to take advantage of a situation like this and he began to put into my mind simple thoughts. Temptations that I thought I'd got rid of for twenty years came back with overwhelming force and I had no power to resist. Temptations of impurity, temptations of bad language, temptation to blow my top with my wife and children and the experience of a father who had reverted to childhood in the midst of all this.

When I was absolutely desperate I cried out to God and said, Oh God, get me out of this mess. Lord, take me on to heaven. I can't stand anymore this attack of the devil.

I can't lie here like this. I don't want the last memory my wife and family have of me to be a man who lives like a cabbage and helpless for all his life. Lord, save me from it.

Get me out of it. Take me right away. Let me die right now.

And it seemed to me as though I had no vision, no dramatic sense of God's presence. A conviction came to my heart, born of the Spirit, who said to me, You've got all this wrong. Satan hasn't got the slightest thing to do with it.

You've been blaming the devil. This isn't from the devil. It's from me.

I had to bring you to this point in order that you might understand that this is the kind of man with all the temptations to impurity and sinfulness and bad language and blowing your top. This is the kind of man you always will be but for the grace of God. And I knew in theory that now I knew in experience that God is not in the self-improvement business but is in the Christ-replacement business.

He's never been attempting to make me a better person. But he's always been wanting me to get out of the way and make room for him. And then he said to me, Just take a look and a long big think into the past thirty years.

And I went back to the time when I started the ministry in London. Fourteen years over there. Ten years here at Moody Church.

Two or three years in Edinburgh. And I saw a building up of a situation which was pressure, problem, work. Oh I thought it was so spiritual.

For I was working like any slave for the sake of God's dear. Seven days a week. Fourteen hours a day, sometimes more.

No time for home, no time for family, no time for anything but work, work, work. And I had substituted work for worship. Service for heart surrender.

And I recall how I had spoken to congregations many times and demanded from them an obedience to truth which literally I wasn't prepared to give myself. I had substituted orthodoxy for obedience. So proud of being a fundamentalist.

But literally in my life there were points in which I was not obeying God. And I had substituted the Bible for God. So proud of my neat outline.

Three points, introduction and conclusion. All points beginning with the same letter. So proud of it all.

Built up over twenty years all this. So proud of it. I substituted my knowledge of truth for my knowledge of God.

You remember Paul's great life ambition that I might know him. Not that I might know truth. The one is important, of course.

But it's only, it's only the gateway to the other that I might know him. And I saw it all. And I tell you, I could do nothing but weep.

I wet my heart out. And I knew that I was at the end of my rope. And when I knew that, from sinking sands he lifted me.

With tender hands he lifted me. From shades of night to planes of light. Oh praise his name.

He lifted me. And here I stand before you one hundred percent well. Restored.

But he brought me to the place when I was absolutely finished in my soul. I'm not suggesting that God is going to do that sort of thing with you. But I am suggesting that he will insist on the principle of a relationship which must be restored.

And will use anything and go to any means until you're prepared to say, Lord, no good. Save me. Cleanse me from my sin, Lord.

Take me as I am, Lord. And make me all thine own. Keep me day by day, Lord.

Underneath thy sway, Lord. Make my heart thy palace and thy royal throne. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God.

The fellowship of the Holy Spirit. Cleanse us all, now and always.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/3/SID3231.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/alan-redpath/communication-of-our-faith-part-4/>

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