

Mid South Conference 1978-02 Fellowship in the Gospel

by Aldy Fam Fanous

The sermon emphasizes the importance of living a life that reflects Christ, and the significance of the coming day of the Lord.

Duration: 32:20

Scripture: Genesis 30:1, Isaiah 19:18, Isaiah 19:21, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 24:30, Mark 16:15, Philippians 1:6

Topics: "Gospel"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the importance of fellowship in the gospel and how it is initiated by God Himself. He emphasizes the need for believers to actively share the message of Christ and make it freely available to all. The preacher also highlights the significance of the day of Jesus Christ mentioned in verse 6, explaining that it refers to the ultimate fulfillment of God's work in believers' lives. He concludes by urging listeners to examine their own commitment to spreading the gospel and warns that if the church fails to fulfill its mission, the world will infiltrate and corrupt it.

Transcript

Last night, in summary of the short epistle of joy, we said the first chapter depicts to us Christ as our life. Second chapter, Christ as our example. Third chapter, Christ as our object.

And the fourth chapter, Christ as our sense and supply. We said that because Christ is our life, we have fellowship one with another. And the apostle speaks of fellowship in the gospel.

There is a special verse that has a special meaning to each one of us. Verse six, being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. This good work, the fellowship in the gospel, that we enjoy one with another, and we wish the work of the gospel to go ahead, is actually started, initiated by God himself in us.

A common man does not worry too much about the work of the Lord. A man who is filled with the Spirit of God would like to see that the gospel is preached, and that many come to our saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. And this is a characteristic of a lively assembly.

You remember what Rachel said to Jacob, Give me children or I die. Give me children or I die. And as I said last night, an assembly that does not go into the world to do what it should do, the world will get into

that assembly to do what it should not do.

Right. It's time we asked ourselves, Are we alive in the spiritual sense, bringing many to Christ and preaching the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ? Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every nation. Now, what is the day of Jesus Christ that he speaks of in verse six? Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, that is the Lord himself, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

What is your great day? I can never forget, as many, many years ago, I'm not going to disclose the secret, when I was venturing on a very great project, the greatest in my life, after my choice of Jesus Christ as my Savior. And I received a letter with a present inside, a gift inside, this is for your great day. You know what I mean.

A great day in the life of a young lady is the day when she is going to be married. And a great day in my life is the day when I am going to choose my partner. It's a great day indeed, the day of Jesus Christ.

You know, the Lord Jesus Christ is our bridegroom. And you, as a church, are his bride. And Christ promised that he would come again.

I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there you may be also. He is coming again to receive his bride unto himself.

The great day. Please stay with me to John, chapter two. The gospel of John, and chapter two.

Now, as a man from the Middle East, I say that in our culture, numbers and names have prime importance. When you come across numbers in the Bible, and names, try to read something for you, a message from God. And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee.

Why is he so particular about mentioning the number of days? You know, John, I say it reverently, very particularly is fond of numbers. We read of the seven words of the cross, seven iambs, seven candlesticks, the seven churches, and the seven vials, seven angels, seven trumpets, seven, seven, seven, seven numbers all the time. The third day, the third day, the number three, speaks of resurrection.

The Lord Jesus Christ rose on the third day. And the third day here speaks of a very important message for you and for me. Turn to Hosea, chapter six, please.

Hosea, chapter six. Come, and let us return unto the Lord, for he hath torn, and he will heal us. He hath smitten, and he will bind us up.

After two days he will revive us. In the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight. Speaks of two days and three days.

He says, in the third day, of course, the apostle, the prophet is calling to the nation of Israel. Come, and let us return unto the Lord, as you have just heard from our beloved brother. Come, and let us return unto the Lord, for there is something coming.

He says, after two days he will revive us. In the third day he will raise us up. Now, Peter gives us the explanation, the answer to this question.

He says, one day in the sight of the Lord is as a thousand years. I'm not trying to be dogmatic friends. I'm not setting a date for the coming again of the Lord Jesus Christ, but I'm only giving suggestions.

The third day and the second day. If one day is like a thousand years in the sight of the Lord, and a thousand years like one day, then we are really at the very end of the second day. We are at the very end of the second day.

And the third day is almost dawning. I can see the sun rising in the eastern sky. The third day is almost dawning.

What happens in the third day? John says there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee. And I praise God there will be a marriage feast on the third day. Not at Cana of Galilee this time, but in the air.

In the air, when the bridegroom shall receive his bride. All right. Well, the Lord Jesus Christ told us he would come again.

I know some people have scoffed at the idea. Where is his coming? You've been saying this for a long time. You've been saying this for a long time.

And the preachers have not been preaching. I'm saying that the Jesus Christ is coming again soon. This soon has taken some time.

Well, don't forget. One day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day. The idea should not be scoffed at.

It should be received with diligence, with care, with importance, with seriousness. Turn with me, please, to 2 Kings. You know what happened in chapter 1 and in chapter 2? Elijah was taken up to heaven, not through the gate of death.

That's 2 Kings, and chapter 2, please. Elijah was taken up in a whirlwind, and Elisha saw it. And he was filled up with the idea.

He couldn't contain himself. He was bubbling over. He was poking all the time.

My master has been taken away from me. My master went up to heaven. And he went to Jericho, and he met a number of young people there, and he was talking to them.

And they made fun of him. Look at verse 23, please. And he went up from thence unto Bethel.

And as he was going up by the way, there came forth little children, please, young men, out of the city, and mocked him, and said unto him, Go up, thou bald head. Go up, thou bald head. And he turned back, and looked on them, and cursed them in the name of the Lord.

And there came forth two she-bears out of the wood, and tore forty and two children, forty and two young men of them. He went from thence to Mount Carmel, and from thence returned to Samaria. Now, what was the idea that they mocked? Not the fact that he was bald-headed.

No, there's no shame in being bald-headed. No fun either. Some have been blessed with hair, others have been blessed with brains.

Well, the idea was not that they mocked him because he was bald-headed. Oh, no. Look what they said.

And they didn't say, Go away. They said, Go up. Go up, thou bald head.

You're telling us that someone has gone up in a whirlwind? Go up and show us. It's impossible for a person to go up. The law of gravity does not say so.

You cannot go up. It is impossible. And they mocked the idea of a person caught up in the skies, in the air, going into heaven.

They mocked the idea of the rapture, as a matter of fact. Now, Peter tells us that in the last days, the very same thing will happen. Knowing this, that in the last days there will come who? Scoffers.

Scoffers, who will laugh at the idea of the coming again of Jesus Christ and the rapture of the church. Today. Today.

We see it. We hear it. We know that this is a sign.

In the last days, there shall come scoffers. Friends, we are living actually literally in the last days, in the last lap of the history of the church on earth. And we people in the Middle East see things happening before our eyes.

And we cannot fail to know that these are very significant. I'm going to give you a few signs mentioned in the word of God to alert you and to alert me that we are living actually in the very last days before the coming again of Jesus Christ our Lord. Please turn with me to Isaiah chapter 19.

And if you have a pencil in your hand, I suggest that you mark these down. Isaiah chapter 19. Now there are three words repeated over and over and over again in this chapter that are pregnant with meaning, full of meaning.

The three words are in that day. You'll find them in verse 16. In that day.

Find them again in verse 18. In that day. Again in verse 19.

In that day. Again in verse 21, in the middle of the verse. In that day.

Verse 23. In that day. 24.

In that day. What is that day? Of which the Spirit of God is alerting us. That day.

It must be that day. It's an important message if your name is called out twice. What if it's called out a number of times in the same chapter? In that day.

This is a very important day, and there can be no more important day than the day of the coming again of Jesus Christ our Lord to receive us unto himself. Things will happen in that day. When that day is very near.

Look at verse 18. In that day shall five citizens in the land of Egypt speak the language of Canaan and swear to the Lord of hosts. One shall be called the City of Destruction.

I don't like this translation. In my Arabic Bible it's the City of the Sun, S-U-N. And maybe you have references in the margin that say so.

City, you do? Praise the Lord. Sun, S-U-N. City of the Sun.

And friends, that city is there today. I lived there for a number of years. Right? Some time ago, a company from Belgium came to Egypt to invest money in land.

And they bought vast, vast areas of desert land. In the desert which we call the Eastern Desert that borders Egypt and Palestine. And they built a very ultra-modern city.

I know the manager of the company was not a Bible authority on prophecy. But he chose a name for the city. What do you think the name was? Not Nashville.

Or Knoxville. Or Tennessee. He called it Heliopolis.

H-E-L-I-O-P-O-L-I-S H-E-L-I-O-P-O-L-I-S Heliopolis, which literally means City of the Sun. Helio, Sun, Opolis, City. City of the Sun.

Coincidence? No. There is no coincidence with the Lord. All is planned.

God is working his purpose out as year succeeds to year. God is working out his plan. And there is nothing coincidence with God.

As a matter of fact, in your life and in my life there is no accident. No accident. I don't like the word accident.

There are incidents. But no accidents. I know whom I have believed.

And I don't believe in fate. Or in luck. Or in fortune.

These words are not in my dictionary. They're not godly words. I believe that all things work together for good to them that love God.

Even to them that are called according to his purpose. Yes, they called it Heliopolis. And Heliopolis is there today.

It's just a sign. Just one of the signs that the Lord has given us. That he is coming again.

And coming again soon. Secondly. You remember there is a great, great river in the land of Egypt.

Called the River Nile. Today, we don't even, until today, we don't call the River Nile in Egypt, we call it the Sea Nile. Bahr al-Nil in Arabic.

I'm sure there are some here who are scholars in the Arabic language. Right. Bahr al-Nil.

The River Nile. The Sea Nile. Well, this River Nile runs from south to north.

From south to north. That's why the southern part of Egypt is called the Upper Egypt. And the northern part of Egypt is called the Upper Egypt.

Wait a minute. I'm mistaken. The southern part of Egypt is called the Upper Egypt.

That's very true. The southern part is called the Upper Egypt. And the northern part is called the Lower Egypt.

It's the second longest river in the world. The first longest river in the world is the Mississippi. Plus the Missouri, of course.

But if you take the Missouri away, don't take offense. The River Nile will be the first river in the world. Right.

It's a very long river. All right. During the months of August and September, it rises.

Torrential rains fall on the mountains of Ethiopia. And they run through the River Nile. And the River Nile rises.

This is very good for the land. But very bad also because it has caused many catastrophes. Because it overflows its banks and literally inundates and covers villages and houses.

And there are catastrophes every now and then. The government thought of using this water of the River Nile to irrigate desert land. Nine-tenths of the land of Egypt is desert land.

And one-tenth is cultivated land. The area of the land under cultivation in Egypt is 6.8 million acres. 6.8 million acres.

They figured out that if they build a great project, if they undertake a great project called the High Dam, the Aswan High Dam, they could use some of the flood water behind a huge wall built for this purpose and use this water to bring desert land under cultivation. And so they started this great project. All right.

What does it mean? It meant that they would build a great and high wall, very, very colossal wall, with openings in the wall to allow the water of the flood to pass through as needed to irrigate the desert land. But how and where will the water behind the wall be gathered, be collected, be stored as a big, huge reservoir? Oh, I said, all right. We will dig a man-made lake.

But that would cost a colossal amount of money. Why should we do that, they said. There is a natural depression called the Depression of Abyssinia which could very well do as a lake to store the water of the River Nile.

But there are many monuments there. They said, all right, we will transport the monuments. And the UNESCO came to the rescue.

That's a good rhyme. And with money from the UNESCO, they did actually transport the monuments from Abu Dhabi, somewhere else, and they used the Great Depression of Abu Dhabi to act as a great reservoir. But this was about 350 kilometers away from the course of the River Nile.

Three hundred and, wait a bit, how much? Kilometers, five-eighths of a mile. You work that out yourself. So five-eighths of a mile.

350 kilometers away from the course of the River Nile. So they actually diverted the course of the River Nile at that point from its natural course to the Depression, and then out of the Depression, out of the lake, to the Mediterranean Sea. Look at verse six, please.

Same chapter in verse six. And they shall turn the rivers far away. My, oh my.

Literally. Literally. They shall turn the river far away, and the brooks to defend shall be emptied, and dried up the reeds, and flags shall wither.

Did it happen? Literally. To the minutest detail. To the minutest detail.

And remember, when this prophecy was given, the River Nile was something very, very sacred to the ancient Egyptians. As a matter of fact, they worshipped the River Nile. At that time, they had about 4,000 deities.

They worshipped the Nile, the scarab, the crocodile, Pharaoh, the calf, or a number of things. The River Nile was sacred and deity to them, who, perhaps the people said to Isaiah, it could not possibly be who can touch the River Nile. But Isaiah was speaking by the Spirit of God.

Holy men spoke as they were moved by the Spirit of God. And Isaiah spoke with the eye of prophecy to the time that would come when they actually, literally, would turn the river far away. Something even more significant.

When the water of the flood came down on the mountains of Abyssinia, or Ethiopia, it brought along with it a lot of silt, s-i-l-t, which was an excellent fertilizer to the land. At the same time, an excellent seed for the sardines, so much so that the millions of tons of sardines caught each year during that time from the Mediterranean Sea and canned in two great giant factories in Damietta and Rosetta. But when the wall was built, the silt deposited, sedimented, and does not run anymore in the River Nile to the Mediterranean Sea, and no more sardines.

No more sardines. And they had to close the two factories. Look at verse 8. The fishers also shall moor, and all they that cast angle into the brooks shall lament, and they that spread nets upon the waters shall languish.

And they actually lament and languish today. They're out of work. Yes, they have to find something else.

How did Isaiah know all this? How did he know all this? He spoke as he was moved by the Spirit of God, and the Spirit of God taught him and told him what was going to happen. What is the importance to you today? Today, the great day is coming and draws near. As a matter of fact, it may be today.

It may be before we end this meeting. Behold, I come. How? Quickly.

Quickly. At the fifth of the night, the day will come when you don't expect it, and it may happen today. Something else in the same chapter.

Verse 21. And the Lord shall be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the Lord in their days, and shall do sacrifice and oblation. Yea, they shall vow, vow unto the Lord and perform it.

At that time I said to you that the Egyptians would not worship the only true God. They worshiped idols. Proof of this? Go to Upper Egypt and to various places in Egypt and see the idols they used to worship and fall down before.

But it says in that day, there shall be a knowledge of the Lord in the land of Egypt. The Egyptians shall know the Lord. And friends, I tell you today, it is true.

It is true that the majority are not Christians, but there are among them those who know Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and in truth, I don't know how many, but it has been said there are at least three million born-again Christians in the land of Egypt. Three million born-again Christians in the land of Egypt. I quote this figure as I heard it from an authority.

They know the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior. Recently there has been a great revival in the land of Egypt. I heard of it when I was in Lebanon.

And when my wife and I arrived there in 1975, I wanted to see it firsthand. I went to the place where it started in Heliopolis, if you please. It was a midweek meeting on Thursday evening, not Sunday morning.

It's the largest or one of the largest churches in Egypt. How many do you think were there on a prayer meeting day? This has no reflection on any assembly here. No.

But no less than 2,000 people filled that cathedral, the four galleries of the church and the main auditorium, and they could see the speaker through a closed TV circuit. They could see him and not see him, you know what I mean. Right.

I couldn't believe my eyes, but seeing is believing. And the service lasted for at least two hours. At least two hours.

And many of them had to stand all the time because of lack of seats. Yes, the Egyptians shall know the Lord, and the Lord shall be known of the Egyptians. In our broadcast, we preach the Lord Jesus Christ.

And in the 28-week programs, each single program, simply without exception, ends up with a gospel appeal. My policy is, if a man tunes in just for one time, he will hear the gospel of Christ. It may be a Bible study, or an Emmaus course, or some kind of a topic, but without exception, invariably, without exception, I say it, and emphasize it, and endorse it most emphatically.

Each program ends up with a gospel appeal, urging the listener, the hearer, to come to accept the Lord Jesus Christ. Right. The main response is very, very encouraging.

Yesterday morning, in the chapel in Nashville, I read just one excerpt from one letter. I'm going to read it here, and I take permission to do that. This letter came from Egypt, and the man says, I am a university student, 21 years old, and I live at home with my family.

He means with my parents. I have been searching for spiritual truth for a long time, through radio broadcasts, TV programs, newspapers, books and magazines, but my long search has not been rewarded. I must tell you that I am not of the Christian faith, but I admit that I do not know much about my own religion.

One day I was turning the knob of my radio set, and suddenly I heard your Arabic broadcast. It was speaking about science and scripture. Before God, I tell you, that for the first time in my life, I found a measure of rest.

For the first time in my life, I found the spiritual truth, after which I have been searching. To be frank with you, I must say that I know nothing about the Bible of which you spoke. Thus I most solemnly ask you to show me the way of salvation.

I do not wish to perish. Please answer my letter. Please, for God's sake, write and tell me what I must do.

I do now open my heart to the Lord Jesus Christ. I wish to know more about Him. Please send me a Bible.

Please pray. Please also send me a Christian literature and publication that you may have. Help me.

I need your spiritual help. I also know that there are many such people as I who need your spiritual help. Such letters really bring tears to our eyes, and there are many of them.

In that day, shall the Egyptians know the Lord, and the Lord shall be known of the Egyptians. My time is almost gone, but I will just give you one more sign. More signs will be taken up tomorrow, Lord willing.

But look at verse 23. In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrians shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptians into Assyria, and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians. The highway is not Highway 65.

No. But a highway of this nature was not known at that time, but the highway that he speaks of here actually is there, and I traveled through it. Some time ago, there was a great war, the First World War, and the Allies wanted to defeat the German Empire, or rather the Germans wanted to defeat the Allies in the East.

The plan was to link Egypt with Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, and Iraq, and beat the Ottoman Empire in that direction. And so General Limbe ordered a railway line to be built and constructed to link Egypt with Iraq, passing through Lebanon, Syria, Palestine, Lebanon, and Syria. And actually they did it.

And it was functioning until 1948. It stopped for political reasons because of Israel and so on, but you can easily fly by a really literally highway from Egypt to Iraq today a number of times a week. This prophecy has literally come true and been fulfilled.

In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrians shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptians into Assyria, and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians. Friends, Jesus Christ is coming again, and coming again soon, and we praise God that the signs of the times indicate this way, and we expect Him any moment. More about this topic in the next series, God willing.

Thank you.

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