

# The Lordship of Christ

by Brother Andrew

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of Jesus being Lord in our lives, and the need for obedience and faith in following His will.*

**Duration:** 1:04:50

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, John 21:3-6, John 21:12-19, John 21:22, Acts 1:8

**Topics:** "Lordship"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the dilemma faced by the disciples after Jesus' resurrection. They were young and eager to fulfill their commission, but they lacked direction and power. Peter, in particular, was feeling discouraged and decided to go fishing. However, Jesus appeared to them and reminded them of their purpose. Despite their doubts and challenges, the disciples were called to follow Jesus and preach the gospel, even if it meant facing persecution and death.

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## Transcript

Now it's a long time since I first spoke in an O.M. conference. George was there at that time and it's not too long ago since I spoke the last time in an O.M. home that was in Nepal. And some of you, at least Johan van Damme is here, and we sure had a good time in Kathmandu.

So now we're back in London at last and it's just tremendous to have the privilege of being able to share with you from the word and from some of the experiences and the vision that we have for the world. Some of it I want to share. I think it's tremendous that I can be here.

Thank you for letting me come. Thank you for coming to this meeting. I want to speak this afternoon on the Lordship of Christ and we find our verses I can't say our text because I need a whole chapter.

Poor preachers always need a whole chapter. They never can preach for an hour on one verse. But we take a whole chapter.

That's John 21. One of the wonderful chapters in the word from which we can learn so much. If the Lord really opens our hearts and we open our hearts to him.

Now this is not going to be a proper Bible study. We wouldn't have time for that. I intend to speak for about an hour and then we have questions on the work that we do where we so often cooperate with OM and other similar groups, namely the so-called close countries.

So-called because we disbelieve it. We only believe in open doors. That's why our letter is called open doors.

There are no closed doors. There may be closed hearts. God will break them open.

Sometimes there are closed eyes. Sometimes we need closed eyes when we cross the border with a load of Bibles into Russia. We even pray for closed eyes.

But as far as doors are concerned, there are no closed doors and that's why I want to speak on the Lordship of Christ because if Jesus Christ is Lord in our own lives and if the message that we are going to take into the world is Jesus Christ is Lord then any concept of closed doors is denying the Lordship of Christ. I want you to know that and I say that very emphatically. If we believe in Jesus Christ is Lord then anything we think is impossible challenges his Lordship or denies it.

And that's why the Lord so wonderfully arranged in this chapter 21 for the disciples to have an experience prior to his last appearance to them when he was going to be taken away back into heaven and when he said those words but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria and unto the uttermost parts of the world. He gave them this experience and we may not read all the verses but in John 21 Jesus shows himself to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias and in this way he did it. They were together seven disciples and Simon Peter says to them, I go fishing and if I may paraphrase the verse they never wasted a moment in prayer but they all said we go with you.

Sounds a good plan Peter. Let's go. And they went into the ship at once and that night they caught nothing.

Now here is the problem that is a problem for many of us, maybe not directly for you, but you know for many Christians that they fill their life with good things, that nothing wrong in fishing and certainly when I imagined the situation at that time, they may not have seen Jesus for a week or longer. They were strong young men like most of you. They're not like some of the artists want us to believe that they were old people, Peter with a bald head and a long beard.

Well, they may have had a long beard, but not the bald head anyway. Forty-five years later Paul says that most of them are still alive in first Corinthians 15. So they must have been in the early 20s.

They must have been probably younger than Jesus was when he walked with them. They were young people, students full of fire, enthusiasm, health, strength. They wanted to get on with the job.

They knew that Jesus had already given them a world commission, but here they were. They hadn't seen Jesus for a while. They didn't have the power to start, didn't know what to do.

They didn't know where to start. They didn't know what to say. They knew somehow, somewhere they had to do it, but how? Can you imagine? You and I have been in the same position.

And that's one reason why God has brought you to O.M., to tell you the how. And where. And when.

But there they were. And as they were strong men with a good appetite, they were thinking no doubt about their stomach because their treasurer had just committed suicide a few weeks before. So they had no income.

And life of faith was still not known at that time. Not to them. So it's quite normal that Peter says, well I go fishing, I'm, I'm bored, I'm fed up with this waiting and just hanging around and thinking what shall we do.

I go fishing. Nothing wrong. Nothing wrong, young folks, with taking up secular job.

Unless God has given you something else to do. And that's exactly the situation. They had been given something else to do.

Jesus had already told them, I will make you fishers of men. Already of those seven, five were professional fishers men. Already had left their nets and their boats three years ago.

It's going a step back for them. No wonder that the verse ends with the two small, very sad words. Night.

Nothing. And I'm afraid that those two words will be written on the tombstones of millions of Christians. Night.

Nothing. Why? What was wrong with their lives? You look at them. Nice, pure, beautiful, moral lives they lived.

They went to church every Sunday. They carried the biggest Bible with them. So that everybody could see they went to church.

They had the festival of light bands on all the time, even after the festival. Great Christians. And yet, night and nothing.

Why? Because God had given them something to do and they didn't do it. And that was the problem here. Jesus was not Lord of their service.

They chose their own career. They decided what they were going to study. They decided where they were going to make money.

With which to support their family. They thought they were doing real well in sending the tithes to O.M. But it doesn't work. Night and nothing.

Jesus was not Lord of their life and service and he wanted to be Lord of their service. And I tell you today, you may choose any career or profession or any direction in your life. But if Jesus is not Lord of that, you're going to get stuck.

Maybe only at the end of your life when it is night and nothing. If God has called you into a wonderful movement like O.M. or any other mission work or God may even call you to something new. Something that nor George Furman or Brother Andrew has ever thought of.

You must do it. Because Jesus wants to be Lord of your service. Then, in the morning, Jesus stands there on the shore but it's not quite light, it's still dusk.

And the disciples don't recognize in that lone figure their Master. And as they are there sailing toward the shore, can you imagine how they felt? Irritable, grumbling, moody, cold, hungry. And let no one, please let no one mention anything about fish because they haven't got anything.

And if you mention fish, we're going to explode. So they just keep quiet, all of them. And then on the shore is that lone man and he puts his hands on his mouth and he shouts across the water, Have you caught

any fish? And that is the straw that breaks the camel's back.

And it's quite clear because they shout back, No. They even don't say, No, sir. Feel the difference? No.

That's too much, you see. Yet I'm glad. I'm glad with this honest answer.

Because if Jesus, this man, had asked that question to any of our Christian churches today, Have you made a catch? Have you won souls this year for Christ? Has your church membership increased greatly? They would say, well, in the language of the fishers, they would say, Lord, you should have seen the fish smelling at our nets. It's a wonderful sight when I looked at the fish. Great.

They all loved our ship. Well, Jesus didn't ask that. He said, Have you caught them? He doesn't say, How many came to your campaign? He said, How many came forward and accepted me? He doesn't want any pious talk.

He wants a concrete answer. What is the fruit of your labor? And I believe from the scripture and from our own experience, When God sends you out, He does it with a purpose. And you're going to know that purpose.

And you're going to know whether you have failed or you are successful. God wants to be practical with us. After all, if Jesus Christ is Lord, And when He says, I'll make you fishers of men, He's not going to let you play with fish, but let you catch them.

And the wonderful thing is here that the comparison is not too good, Because an ordinary fisher takes a fish out of the natural element, Into death, before you can eat them. It's only in Holland they eat raw herring. Nowhere else in the world, as far as I know.

But as a fisher of men, you catch them out of death, And you bring them into life. That's the wonderful thing. That's why to win souls is much better than to do any other job in the world.

So, no, they say to Jesus. There's nothing we have caught, and mind your own business. Well, He does.

That's why He says to them, Throw your net on the other side of the ship, and you will find. And they do what He told them. And now they couldn't draw the net in for the multitude of fishes.

Now, already we have the second miracle here. I have been told that this sea of Tiberias is so full of fish, It's impossible to catch nothing. Any child thrown out of line can catch fish in the sea of Tiberias.

So, they, professional fishermen, The good boat, nothing wrong with it. Good nets, nothing wrong with them. The fact that they caught nothing, Was only because the mighty hand of the creator of all the fish, Kept them out.

But the moment they did what He said, The same hands pushed them in. After all, we are dealing with the almighty God. And all the queries you may have had about the fruitlessness of your life and ministry, I tell you, it can change overnight.

If you simply obey what Jesus Christ tells you to do. Because He must be Lord of our need. And this is exactly what they need.

They need to make a good catch. Because Jesus is going to call them for good, Into full time service for Him. And Jesus does not want failures, To join His work, Because in secular work, They didn't make any headway.

Now, in case this hurts you, Then I want it to hurt. Because anyone who is going to be successful, I use the wrong word deliberately, But the word blessed is a bit too nebulous. We want success, But we really mean blessing of God.

Anyone who is going to be successful in the work of the Lord, Will have to have enough guts, Determination, And talents, To make a success of any job. And if you, in your secular work, are a failure, If you are a school dropout, If you've never really put your teeth in something and never let go, Then I don't think you'll make it in OM. Unless God so gets hold of you, That you are changed.

And that's one reason why we have this conference. For those who have not yet determined, Fully, fanatically if you want, To follow Christ and not to turn back, Then here is your chance. God doesn't want people that come at night and nothing, Well, then let's join the mission, Maybe we can do something there.

It doesn't work. And none of the leaders in OM that you know, Were dropouts, I can guarantee that, Although I do not know each of them personally. And none of the people that reached the moon in the Apollo flights were dropouts.

If you want to reach anything at all, Whether in the secular work or in the kingdom of God, You've got to give all you have, all you are, And make Him Lord of all. So here they were. The Lord let them have a real good catch.

And as they come closer to the shore, About 100 yards off, John, the apostle whom Jesus loved so much, Probably more than the others, He sees a little further, because love always sees further. And he suddenly shouts, It's the Lord! And Peter, good old Peter, I love him, When he hears it's the Lord, He just jumps into the sea. Peter is that spontaneous type, That first acts and then thinks.

Do you know some of those people? The Lord loves them. Ah, it's those people that always think and always calculate and get nowhere. Always see lions and bears on the road.

And of course you do some stupid things. Peter did. What do you think, just maybe a year or so before, When Jesus walked on the water, And they were very close to the shore anyway, And Peter sees that Jesus walks on the water, And he says, Lord, tell me that I can do it, and I'll come.

Well, what's the sense of it? They were safe and sound on a boat. Another five, ten minutes, they would have been there on the shore. Why should he take any risk? Now, Jesus didn't say that to Peter.

He said, Well, all right, Peter, you can do it. Come. And Peter comes.

And he walks on the water, the Bible says. And I tell you, Have you ever, You have seen those paintings, haven't you? With Peter, right down in the water, and Jesus stretching out his hand to pull him out. Well, how terrible, the Bible doesn't say that.

The Bible says that Peter walked on the water. He made it. And then the Bible says, he began to look at the waves.

Then he sank. He said, Lord, and the Lord was there. Pulled him out.

They both walked back to the ship. And a few minutes later, they were on the shore. But you see, people are so negative.

That when they think of that incident, they always think of Peter, deep down, gasping for air. Well, the Bible doesn't say that. The Bible says he walked on the water.

You see, the others, oh, the Bible does not say that, but they must have criticized him. Peter, you're crazy. Why didn't you just stay with us? Look, we are dry.

And you were wringing your clothes now and then on the beach. You should have stayed in the boat. We got here the same time anyway.

But I tell you this. If Peter had not stepped out on the waves there, and if he had not jumped into the water here, he probably would not have stood on the temple square on the first day of Pentecost to lead 3,000 souls to Christ either. Because it's linked.

If that is Peter, he first does it. Under the impulse of love or spontaneity, I don't know what to call it, but he did it. He didn't think first.

He wasn't such a rational-minded man. He did it. And God loves people who do it.

So Peter jumps into the water, swims toward the shore, and of course a few minutes later, the boat is there with the nets and the fishes. And there, oh wonder, there is a fire. There's Jesus.

Now they recognize, all of them recognize Him. And on the fire is fish and bread. Jesus doesn't need the fishes that they have just caught.

But there is everything they need. Those men that felt so lonely need His fellowship. Those men that felt cold, His fire.

Those men that felt hungry, His bread and fish. Everything. Because Jesus is Lord of their needs.

And this is what we're going to learn, that Jesus Christ will supply all our needs as we work for Him. He doesn't need what we can scrape together with our efforts. There are 153 big fishes in the net, but they're already baked.

They're on a fire. Jesus, their best friend, that morning has gotten up early to make breakfast ready for His friends. That's just Jesus.

He does for you what no one else can do. Lord of your need. You see, Jesus produces that what you need.

And it's not what we can do. We must begin to think spiritual. If we fail, if we act in the flesh, it will only produce problems.

And throughout the Bible you find people, men and women of God, particularly men of God, who acted in the flesh to help the Lord a little bit. Take one classic illustration in Abraham. God had promised him a son.

And out of this son would come a great nation. And they wouldn't be able to be counted for numbers. God compared them to the stars of heaven and the sand on the seashore.

But when Abraham and his wife grew old, Abraham began to think. Oh, that thinking of ours. And Abraham thought, I've got to help the Lord a little.

And that's what he did. And the result was a son born out of his slave servant. And this son was called Ishmael.

Has God forgiven Abraham? Definitely. What a wonderful place in Hebrews 11, the chapter of faith. Abraham was great.

God counted that for righteousness when he wanted to, when he believed God in the end. And his son was born. And later he sacrificed that son on Moriah.

God forgave Abraham all right. But the problem is still there. And the only reason why Israel today is so scared of the Arabs.

Is because Abraham wanted to help God and produced Ishmael. And it has a terribly wide bearing on the whole world probably. When we act in the flesh.

When we are not spiritual. We as a church of Christ. And you and I are the church.

You and I are part of the church. So let us sit together around the fire. And then in verse 12.

It says that none of the disciples had the courage to say, ask Lord who are you? Because they knew it was the Lord. They were quiet. Now this morning you had a time of worship here.

And I love those old fashioned times of worship with lots of shouting and crying. And hallelujahs ringing. And yet I know as you know.

There are times when you are so close to the Lord. So intimate with the Lord that you just have no words at all. You can just quietly worship Him.

No one opened his mouth. They knew here was the Lord. The Lord of heaven and earth.

The Lord who had died on the cross of Calvary to take away the sin of the world. He was their Lord. And here were they.

All those wonderful moments of quiet worship. Tremendous. Then Jesus becomes the Lord of our worship.

We only worship Jesus. We only see Jesus. We only want to see Jesus.

And we can sing it. We often sing that chorus. All that thrills my soul is Jesus.

But then we know it's true. Not always do we sing it out of conviction. Probably we more often sing it like a prayer.

A wish. A desire. All that thrills my soul is Jesus.

He is more than life to me. But there are those moments in very very deep intimate union with Jesus. When you know it is so.

Then you are just quiet. The Lord of our worship. A wonderful thing.

Then Jesus comes and breaks the bread. Well, the whole story goes on as you can imagine. And then Jesus has a little get together with Peter.

Peter needs him. So do I at times. Oh, it's sometimes so utterly necessary to be drawn aside and to have a personal interview with Jesus.

Let him speak to me. Let him teach me. Let him rebuke me.

Let him comfort me. So that I get to know him better. And he knows my motives better.

Jesus says after they had eaten. Verse 15. Simon, Peter, do you love me more than these? Now you really would have to know a little of the Greek to understand this passage fully.

Because at the time when the New Testament was written. The Greek was at a time of development when they were extremely rich. There were a number of different words for the word love.

But we only have the word love. And here in this passage, John uses two different words with a totally different meaning. Here when Jesus says, Peter, do you love me more than these? Or in other translations, do you really love me? Or in the New English Bible, do you love me more than all else? Jesus here uses the word agape.

And that's the Greek word, you have come across it before. It can be defined by the words divine love. But then you still don't know what I mean.

Or what the Bible means. It means love for a person who in himself has nothing that can possibly arouse my love. The utter unlovable.

Now you and I know nothing of agape love. It's not human. You, boys and girls for instance, only love the other one because you find the other one attractive.

Or something that's appealing to you. Something that's nice. Something you like.

And that's not agape love. You love because there's something in that person that you can love. That's human love.

That's excellent love. That's the best love we have. But it's not divine love.

Agape means a love that originates in God and that loves a person that in himself has nothing that I can't possibly love. And shall I tell you, if you have a Greek New Testament, in John 3.16 it says, For God had such agape love for the world that he gave his only begotten Son. In other words, God saw nothing in the world that he could possibly love.

Nothing. Yet God loved so much that he gave his only begotten Son. And throughout the Bible in most cases you find the word agape.

Including in 1 Corinthians 13. If I had all the faith and all the knowledge and all the power and if I could speak with the tongues of men and angels and if I had not agape, I were nothing. Nothing.

Peter, do you have agape love for me? Will you love me when I am on a cross, all blood and sweat and tears and there's nothing that a man can possibly love? Will you love me, Peter, if I take you away where you do not understand anything of me? Where you may revolt and rebel and say, Lord, why, why, why?

Will you still love me, Peter? If there's nothing in me that you desire anymore, will you then still go on and follow me? What a question. Peter looks his Savior in the eyes and he says, Lord, you know that I love you and the word that he uses here is filio and it's not agape at all. He says, you know I have sympathy for you.

He says, you know I love you when I like you. I love you when you are kind to me. I love you when I can understand you, when I can follow you.

Then I love you. That is Peter's reply. Let us wait for a moment.

What does it mean? Peter knows that in his heart is not the agape love. There is a natural human love relationship. Yes, he likes Jesus when he is feeding the multitude and pulling him out of the water and giving him breakfast when he is cold and hungry early in the morning.

But who knows what Jesus is after now? Because Peter is very well aware of the fact that he has to go out into all the world and what is that going to cost Peter? And he doesn't know whether he can make it. So he says, Lord, as long as I can understand you, yes, I love you. And Jesus says, then feed my lambs.

Don't think you have to attain to the highest, first of all, before God gives you any commission or before God can trust you. This is one of the lessons. The other lesson is the wonderful thing that God is so different to us people.

If in business life, let's say you work in a bank, and you've messed up finances in the bank, if they don't kick you out, they probably will, at least they degrade you, so you're back down at the bottom where you started, you will never get a chance anymore to handle finances in that bank. Because in the world you will not be given a second chance. That's a rule.

If you mess up things in business life, you will not get a second chance. And God is so different. Peter had messed up things, he had denied Jesus, the very moment when he needed Him most, Peter cursed and said, I don't know this man.

Have you never said that? And now Jesus gives him a new commission. He gives him a second chance. And that's so wonderful to see that throughout the Bible.

Take another illustration from the Old Testament. Jonah, the runaway prophet. The loose foot Jonah.

Well he got on a Mediterranean cruise, which he paid for with the money that was supposed to be in the Lord's work. So it got into the wrong hands. And he got into trouble, you know the story about Jonah? He's thrown into the sea, swallowed by a whale, and in the end finds himself again on the way to Nineveh, where he has to preach.

And then in the third chapter of Jonah it says, And the word of the Lord came a second time unto Jonah. It's a terrific thing that God gives us a second chance. If you have messed things up, if you've been disobedient in the past, if you've made a mess of your life, God starts all over again.

The moment when I say, Jesus Christ, I come back. I want you to be Lord of my life. And the second time, Jesus says, Peter, do you really love me or do you have agape love for me? And the second time Peter says, Yes Lord, you know that I have this filial for you.

This friendship feeling, sympathy. I only love you as long as I understand why you are doing this to me. And Jesus says, feed my sheep.

And then the third time, Jesus says, Simon, do you have filial for me? And it seems as if Jesus is lowering the standard. As if Jesus is saying, well Peter, all right, I see that you cannot work up divine love in your own heart, but then at least is your sympathy sincere? Can I really build on that? And don't forget it had not been the day of Pentecost yet. Only then became the love of God so liquid within them, that they knew the agape love.

And this more than anything else to me is the day of Pentecost. When the love of God was shed abroad in their hearts. Romans 5, 5. When they could go out, when they had the power, not physical power, not only spiritual power, but the love power to endure all things and go out into Jerusalem where they were going to be persecuted.

Peter, you have filial for me? And then the Bible says, Peter was grieved. Peter was hurt, the New English Bible says. Peter was hurt that he asked him the third time, do you have sympathy for me? Then he said, Lord, you know everything.

You know that I have sympathy for you. He never passed that point. He could not say yet truly that he had that love, that divine love that would overcome every barrier.

Even if it meant starvation, he would not go back to fishing. If it meant sleeping on a cement floor, he would not run home. If it meant preaching under most severe conditions, the scourging heat of India's sun, or the cold of the North Pole, he would not return.

Because he loved Jesus supremely. And he loved people so much that he would give his life for them. And Jesus says, feed my sheep.

Further, I tell you this in very truth, verse 18. When you were young, you fastened your belt and you walked where you chose. But when you are old, you will stretch out your arms and a stranger will handcuff you and carry you where you have no wish to go.

He said this to indicate the manner of death by which Peter was to glorify God. Then he added, follow me, Lord of our life. And I do not know how things will work out for you.

And I do not know how things will work out for me. But I know that God has called us to preach the gospel in the communist countries. And I know that God has called OAM to preach the gospel in countries that are equally hard.

Like Libya, where they are in prison right now. Like Turkey, where they are in prison right now. And other countries where it's not any easier.

Like Afghanistan, Iran, and other places. But if Jesus is Lord of our life, then we can be utterly relaxed. Because we know that in God's plan, nothing can go wrong.

You see, God has no problems, only plans. And it's about time that we only have plans and no problems. We shouldn't be so problem conscious.

We should be more power conscious. And Peter is listening to Jesus as he has never done before. When you are old, you will stretch out your hands.

Alright, a few weeks later, maybe 6 or 8 or 10 weeks later, I don't know exactly. Peter is in prison. In the beginning of Acts, the day before, King Herod has killed James.

Now he has arrested Peter, and tomorrow is the trial, and then Peter will be killed, because Herod saw that it pleased the Jews. So he was continuing to kill the leaders of this sect. The cell is guarded very carefully.

As for a very bad criminal, 16 soldiers standing guard. Peter is a very important prisoner. A real VIP.

And what does the Bible say? Yesterday, that night, Peter slept. And I've been wondering, how in the world could Peter sleep? When yesterday they had killed James, tomorrow they're going to kill him. By the way, would you be able to sleep? Ah, you've never been in a prison, have you? I have.

Before my conversion, by the way. And I've been arrested many times after my conversion, especially in communist countries. The first night that I was in prison, I wept, I cried, I said, oh, I hope my mother will never know about this.

It's a horrible experience in prison. They take your shoelaces out, and take your belt off, and you feel horrible. And those iron bars, and, oh, terrible experience.

And Peter slept. Why? Well, as I said before, he was, he's only in his early twenties. And Jesus had just said to him, Peter, when you are old.

Well, he wasn't old yet. So whether Herod wanted to kill him or not, it made no difference to Peter, because Jesus had spoken a word. He wasn't influenced by, by Herod, nor by any circumstances.

Jesus, Jesus had said, when you're old. Well, he wasn't old. So let come what may, I am going to sleep.

Herod can do nothing anyway. So he slept. It's so important to know in your life, what God has spoken.

God has called you. Nothing can stop you. And that's why we, in our open doors mission, we don't believe in iron curtains, and we don't believe in bamboo curtains.

And we don't believe in chicane curtains. And we don't believe in denominational curtains or in cultural curtains. We want to see the world as God sees the world.

And it's just one world, and it needs Jesus. And we want to listen to his voice. And he said, go ye into all the world.

Well, then we can do it. No problem. You name me any country today where you cannot go.

Providing you are willing to go in and not to come out. Name me any country. Well, let's stick to the Bible.

Did Jesus say anything about coming out? He only said, go in. Well, any place where you cannot go in? Shall I tell you something, where I have been tremendously challenged by the Roman Catholic Church. And you should know by now I am not a Roman Catholic, but I have in one field a tremendous admiration for them.

The Catholics have a special seminary near Rome where they train their priests in the Russian Orthodox Church rites. And they try to get the priests through the iron curtain, somehow, and they are so trained in the language and in the church rites that they can minister in the Russian churches without being noticed.

Well, we in Open Doors, we don't have that program yet.

How does it operate? I tell you, because one priest, who before the war, American priest from New York, Polish descent, he was in the seminary and he went with his colleagues into the war zone in Poland when Germany and Russia were fighting. And he got himself into a place where they expected the Russian armies to overtake. And he got himself imprisoned by the Russians.

If he had only said, I have an American passport, which of course he did not have in his pocket, purposely, they would have let him go. He didn't say that. He acted as if he were just a local clergyman, a priest.

So they took him as a prisoner right into Siberia. That's what he wanted. He never said a word that he was an American.

And he, wherever he came, in the labor camps, in concentration camps, under very, very extreme conditions, and in a lot of uproar and there was a lot of shooting and killing because it was a horrible life and the prisoners didn't always do what they were told, I tell you. There was a lot of revolt in the camps for many years after the war, this Second World War. Everywhere he went, he first built his little altar, he said mass, heard confession from his fellow prisoners.

Every day he acted as a priest. And only a few years ago, he was exchanged, he was old, for a Russian spy caught in New York. And then he came out after 21 years as a priest in Siberia.

How about that? That happened in our time. Not before the war, after the war. 21 years he spent as a priest, as a missionary in Siberia.

And then he wrote his book, biography, and I picked it up in Vietnam. Very challenging book. Oh, God spoke to me.

God challenged me with the dedication of those Jesuit priests. God said, what are you doing? You talk about agape, but are you willing to go in and never come out? Are you willing to lay down your life for them or are you just an opportunist? Just preaching whatever is possible. If not possible, we quit.

This man wrote in his biography, in those 21 years in the prison camps in Siberia, I have not been sick one day. I cannot say that, having lived in our affluent countries. I have been sick more than once.

I've been wounded. I broke my back last year in a plane accident. I've had all kinds of troubles come to me.

So had he, but he had not been sick one day. Walter Czizek is his name. His book is published in the United States.

Tremendously challenging. Is he Lord of your life? He is a son that will go to the extreme in taking Christ Jesus to the lost, whether it is in East or in West, or to the Arab countries, or to the nationalistic countries. Whatever the cost.

And if they send me to prison, well, there are people that need Christ too. If you don't go, they'll never hear. And we must have the attitude of the Apostle Paul and of Peter.

Don't forget, when Jesus sends out his disciples here, he doesn't say that they must go to the nations where they will be welcome. And if you study Acts and the Epistles, you'll never read about any city that

put out a red carpet when they saw Paul come. It just never happened.

All that happened was that they threw the prison gates open. That didn't stop Paul. He went right in, into prison.

Why? Because in prison he could lead people to Christ. Paul had been baptized with that spirit of love, the agape, and his life didn't count anymore, not for himself. And your life will only count in as much as it is a blessing to other people.

Nothing more. And no less. Peter could sleep because Jesus had spoken a word and he remembered.

It's so good, so of utmost importance that you know exactly what Jesus has said and remember it. What word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against thee? Psalm 119. There is another explanation also for the fact that Peter could sleep.

Because you know the story. All of a sudden he's tapped on his shoulder. Peter, get up! Peter looks.

For a long time he thinks he's dreaming. There's an angel. Get out! Peter followed the angel.

All the doors open. The guards are sound asleep but they don't see it. And he goes out right into town.

And then the angel leaves him and all of a sudden he says, I'm not dreaming! And he begins to think. But only when you don't dream you can think. And he knows, I know where there is a prayer meeting.

All night prayer meeting for my release. And he goes right to that home and those people don't answer their prayers. Anyhow, after a while they have to believe it.

But there Peter joins the all night prayer group. And this is the other explanation. Why could Peter sleep in prison that night? Because the church was awake.

And somebody said, if Peter were in prison now he would have to stay awake because this church is asleep. It's either or. If the church is awake the prisoners can relax.

And do you know that there are many hundreds, indeed thousands that we know of in prison today of the Baptists several hundred in Russia alone. Christian leaders are in prison in Romania. Of the Pentecostals in Russia alone well over one thousand in prison.

Mostly young people like you. For their stand they take for Jesus Christ. And we know a little of the suffering that's going on in those countries.

In these open doors I have a little report on a friend of mine, a Baptist pastor in Romania. Back in prison again. And it was I don't know how many times he has been there.

But can they relax? Can they witness for Christ in prison? Yes. If we are awake. Awake that means not just prayer.

It means planning to reach them. Planning. Not anything political against communism.

The more you fight against communism the stronger it grows. It's like fighting with your little brother. You may win today.

You may win tomorrow. But after a few years you're going to lose. Because the more you fight with him the stronger he grows.

It's like fighting personally with the devil. Only makes the devil stronger. Let Jesus do the fighting.

He has conquered the devil on Calvary. And my advice is don't fight communism. Proclaim Christ.

Strengthen the church. And let the undercurrent of evangelical power go to the communist nations. And in due time it will just break up the evil system.

That's how the church did it under the Roman Empire. It never fought against the Roman army. But if you read history books you find out that most of them agree that the reason why the Roman Empire fell was partly because it was so decadent so polluted and the instrument was the power of the Christian church.

That's it. And only the power of Christianity the true followers of Jesus Christ today will be able to crush this evil system of atheism which is only another religion. That's why Peter could sleep.

There were others getting a hold of the throne of God. And I ask your prayers for the workers in the communist countries. We will have another two teams or so traveling into Russia this year.

It's already rather late. The campings are closed so we cannot go by car anymore. We'll have to fly in.

But we have something very wonderful. We have just printed just came ready this week the letter to the Romans from living letters paraphrased by Kenneth Taylor in modern Russian. And I've never seen anything like it in Russia.

This is the power that will break communism. Military power cannot do it. I hope we have learned our lesson now from Vietnam.

We cannot do it. Why not? Because it's not a matter of weapons. You all know about Mao's Red Book.

I don't agree with Mao except for one of his statements where he says it's not the weapons that decide the outcome of war but the people that carry the weapons. They've got the people. And I'll come to a close now so that we have our time of questions.

When I first arrived in Vietnam and I've been there every year since I didn't know anybody there and I had the address of the mission house in Saigon and I had the address and I landed on the airport and tried to get transportation. I got a lift from an American Air Force guy the big empty bus so he took me and I sat next to him and we talked and of course I was trying to listen and learn about Vietnam my first visit. I just came out of Red China and it was before the Marines landed in Da Nang by the way but Americans were already in.

Then he said Sir, you see that Vietnamese man standing on the side of the road? I said yes, I see that. He said well I'm scared stiff. I said why? He said well do you see that basket on his back? I said yes, what about it? He said well maybe there's a bomb in the basket and when we get close enough with our bus he will throw himself down in the air and he'll be killed.

He said well so will he but he doesn't care but I do. And I thought well that's just a problem. We do care about our lives and the commies don't.

And this is a whole power struggle in the world today. Do you know that there are more communist literature distributors in Asia alone than there are Christian missionaries in the whole world? Yes. That's why we're going to lose Asia.

We will lose Asia. We will lose Vietnam. I've said it ever since I've been there I've said we're going to lose Vietnam.

Americans didn't like that they were practically closed. Laos, two thirds under the Patek Lao. Cambodia, there's only one missionary left when they began fighting there last year and I don't know where that one missionary is now but what's one missionary in the whole country? Over against 8,000 Roman Catholic priests and the rest Buddhists.

I don't know their names unless millions will lay down their lives in order to achieve it. And when Khrushchev who was just buried last week or two weeks ago and Khrushchev was still in power and he took that big parade there on the Red Square in Moscow. There were hundreds of thousands of Red soldiers standing in front of him and he was standing on top of the mausoleum on top of that dead body of Lenin.

I've seen him a number of times, I've even seen Stalin before he fell from grace long after his death. And Khrushchev there spoke to the soldiers he said you are all dead men. He said you have lost your life to the Communist Party.

No questions. Now go. They had a lord in communism, in atheism in the devil himself and they served their master well.

Who is your lord? Lord of your life? Or is he only lord on Sunday? Is he lord of everything? Your purse and your wallet? Is he lord of your service? Are you going to serve NOM determined to make it by the grace of God determined to give all you have and all you are and all you will ever be? Is he lord of your needs? Do you trust him to supply your needs and do you trust him to supply your neighbors needs through you? Is he lord of your worship? Or do you somewhere in your heart have a little corner for your girlfriend that you've closed for the sharp eyes of Jesus? Is he lord of your life? We'll never make it in this clash of isms which is fiercer today than it has ever been in history before. We'll never make it until we believe in total mobilization not just in operation mobilization total mobilization for the church of Christ worldwide. But it's going to cost lives.

It's going to cost thousands of lives. Now do not exaggerate. I cannot see that we can win anything at all in this struggle unless we just throw away our lives in total abandonment to Jesus Christ.

There are two very important verses in the scripture that I want to bring out now. The first one everyone knows by heart John 3, 16 For God so loved the world that he gave. You know that verse by heart.

No one has to quote it. And the only logical sequence to that verse is a very unknown verse. It's one John 3, 16 And hardly anybody of you knows what it says there.

But then it says And hereby perceive we the love of God that he laid down his life for us So far it's identical to John 3, 16 comma And we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. Lost truth. Very few people do it.

Some Catholics do it. The first Catholic missionary to enter China in the 1600s at a time when China was as closed as it is today. He sold himself as a slave to a Chinese slave owner.

It may be the only way of getting in today. Sell yourself. Are you going to do it? To get into the other countries? In Africa? In Cuba? In Russia? In Siberia? In Mongolia? In Afghanistan? In Central Asia? In Burma? In Laos? Any of those countries? Zanzibar? The Cuba of Africa? Tanzania? Zambia? With thousands upon thousands of red Chinese there? Flooding the countries? Are you going to give yourself never to be heard of anymore? Because Jesus called? Because he says I want to be your Lord? Then you can leave it to me.

How I work it out. You've got to go to heaven anyway. If you really believe in heaven and you want to go to tomorrow.

It's your choice. Let's follow Christ. Let's bow in a word of prayer.

The Lord as I have spoken those big words I realize that I've spoken to myself. Because I've seen those prisons and I had my friends in those camps and I have been arrested and I didn't like it. But Lord Jesus I pray that you'll be more and more my Lord.

Even now that I have a wife and five children. That my life is still on your altar and I don't want to run away. Whether or not you raise that knife to use me as a sacrifice.

Jesus I am worthy. And I pray for and with all my dear friends here that we'll see the task of world evangelism in the light of personal involvement and sacrifice. Not in giving a few months of our time as we can easily catch up with but in giving our whole life ourselves without any reserves without any argument to accept authority from the team leaders from the mission and to accept authority from you through them so that you can use us to win many for you wherever you send us.

I pray in the name of Jesus Christ my Lord. Amen.

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