

You've got to go back to The Book

by Brother Andrew

This sermon by Brother Andrew emphasizes the importance of living out the Kingdom of God through a lifetime of service, preaching the good news, and setting the captives free. It highlights the power of prayer, unwavering faith in the face of persecution, and the need to boldly share the message of Jesus Christ, especially in challenging environments like Muslim-majority countries. Brother Andrew's experiences demonstrate the impact of a personal relationship with God, the significance of living out the teachings of Jesus, and the urgency of spreading the gospel to those who are lost and in need of hope.

Scripture: Isaiah 6:8, Acts 16:25, Matthew 28:19, John 14:6, 1 Peter 3:15, Romans 10:14, 1 Corinthians 1:18, 2 Timothy 1:7, Matthew 5:16, Philippians 2:15

Topics: "Kingdom Living", "Boldness in Faith"

Description

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Transcript

Brother Andrew, once again it's a privilege to have you here. We love having people here who've spent their lives living out the Kingdom of God, do we not? And we applaud you for that. We're going to pray for you, then we're going to watch a DVD, a short DVD of some of Brother Andrew's work over the years, just to give you the context of what he comes to speak out of, not just words but a lifetime of serving God, and then you just go for it.

Let's pray. Father, we thank you for this man. We thank you that as we listen to him, we know that we're listening to someone whose love has burnt inside, your love has burnt inside his soul over these years.

We thank you that he's someone who's accepted that call to preach the good news of the Kingdom of God, to set the prisoners free, to loose the bonds. And so now we pray for ourselves, first of all, as we listen to him. We pray for him as he speaks to us, that together we might hear and understand your voice and your truth.

In Jesus' name we pray this. Amen. We're going to watch the DVD and then Brother Andrew.

Oh Lord, you know that in this car I'm hiding Bibles to bring to your children across this border. Lord, when you were on this earth, you made blind eyes see. And now I pray to you, please make seeing eyes blind.

Passport. Show me your suitcase. With pleasure.

From the look of these clouds, do you think it's going to rain? Fifty years ago, half of the world was captured by communism, a lot of persecution, churches closed, Bibles burned, pastors killed, young people deported. But we didn't know anything about it. I was the first one to start working there.

And I've seen with my own eyes and preached it often with all the power I have in me, that you cannot pray for revival for half of the body of Christ while forgetting the other half that is suffering under restrictions. Andrew always prayed this wonderful prayer. Lord, when you were on earth, you made blind eyes see.

But now I ask you to make seeing eyes blind. And that has become a kind of a symbolic prayer, that Lord, may they not see the Bibles, may they look at things. And that prayer has been answered many, many times.

It was the Lord who brought you through. It all started in 1955. And I figured, I cannot preach a good sermon, but I can be there.

And being there is better than 10 good sermons. Why preach anyway? Just be there. Well, that I could do.

The love that binds us together. First of all, I realize I am overdressed. But I did it on purpose, because I just bought at the airport a new tie.

And I wanted to show you my new tie. Isn't that a beauty? And I also realized if I would only wear my tie tonight, you would not approve either. So I had to wear everything.

It takes us to the nations. And there are lots of flags on here. The Dutch flag, Israeli flag, lots of Muslim flags, but no English flag.

Oh. I want us tonight starting England back on the map again. Great Britain, the great Scottish missionaries, the British missionaries, William Carey, Livingston, Livingstones? May Livingstones.

Let's become Livingstones in the house that God is building today by his power. And that's what it will be about tonight. So I have to wear this to remind you to place a banner of Jesus Christ all over the world.

We will not rest until that flag of Christ, the cross is visible in the whole world. That's what we're here for. That's why I went to the communist countries 50 years ago as a very young missionary, just out of training college.

I'm a wacker. And I realized something came back to me as we were singing tonight. Every knee shall bow.

Gee, that needs some power. And I was watching in my first trip there the hundreds of thousands of young people all organized in the largest organization in the world, the Young Communist League, 96 million members. And they were parading and they were carrying the red banners and they were chanting, we

are ragged and we are poor, but we will conquer the world and we will change the world.

And I knew they meant business. And I stood there as a Christian all alone watching those intimidating parades and I pressed this little book to my heart and then God spoke. God said, Andrew, every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

And then I looked again at these chanting crowds and I looked at their knees and I said to myself, their knees too will bow before my Jesus. Their tongues now proudly proclaiming an atheistic communist revolution will one day cry out, Jesus Christ is Lord. And that moment God took away all fear from my heart.

On my very first trip so that now I could really go into these countries and do something to find the lonely believers, to encourage the young people and have fabulous experiences. Also on that very first trip as I was attending a church, one of the few churches still open, but it was crowded and there were many young people in this case. And I was, you know, full of enthusiasm, just came from Scotland and I said to them in the beginning when the pastor asked me to say a few words, I said, we will pray for you.

I'll go back to Holland, we will pray for you. Then as we went through this service, I was so impressed by their dedication, their seriousness, their love, their life, I felt convicted. And at the very end of the service, I went back to the pastor, I said, please, can I say something else? He said, yes.

I said, will you please pray for us? I thought we need their prayer more than they need our prayer. And then the pastor looked at me and he stepped up next to me and he said, Andrew, your being here means more than 10 of the best sermons. Well, I couldn't preach a good sermon, but I could be there.

And if being there is more important than 10 of the best sermons, why bother to preach? Just be there. I could do that, but so can you. Every one of us now suddenly qualifies to encourage the suffering church and develop that relationship that we have with God, listen to his voice, and then just go, go.

You cannot even spell God or gospel before first spelling, go, go. That is the message from the New Testament. And that is also where the message that we heard tonight in such a dramatic way from Acts chapter 16, it really struck me.

There, these men were, Paul and Silas, because of their living relationship with Jesus, they found themselves in prison. And instead of grumbling and bemoaning their faith, they sang. They sang and they prayed.

And the whole prison could hear it because in prison, nobody sings. And they were still feeling the pain of the many stripes they had received the day before, probably the same evening, but through the night they were singing. Our testimony carries a lot more weight in places where there is less competition.

There's not much competition in prison and not much competition in the Muslim world. And that's where, because of our relationship with Jesus, we should be. And I want to ask you a very personal question.

We've been singing tonight. I loved it. I know it was loud.

My father would have loved it because he was deaf. But have you, personal question, have you, do you ever sing when you're alone? Or do you only sing when it is organized? Do you sing in your office, in your bedroom, on the work floor, in your garden, when you walk on the street? Do you sing? Do you express

your love to Jesus when you don't know who is listening? Do you ever dance in your room, in your office, alone, not when it is organized, not when you're told to? Do you pray for your city when you're alone? Do you make the prayer walk around your city without it being organized and others joining you? Do you really sing like Paul and Silas did? Now, my two daughters, they sing like nightingales, and I happen to sing like a gale in the night, but I sing. The Bible only tells you to make a joyful noise unto the Lord.

You don't have to be the great singers like we are here tonight. Let's sing anyway. And that's what Paul and Silas did in their situation.

It unleashed the power of God. God was so proud of them. He just shook the walls of that prison and out they came.

God was proud of them, as God was very proud of Daniel when he was there in the lion's den. God was so proud. He had full confidence because that guy was only backbone anyway.

No lion was going to eat him, and God just pulled him out again. That's the power of God in those impossible situations. What a tremendous thing.

I must also warn you, you can become too confrontational and too daring in your own flesh because as it is true, God protected Daniel in the lion's den. He did not go around and pull their tails, did he? No, no. Nor brush their teeth.

No, no. Count on God's protection, but act wisely and look at the opportunities that God gives us today. They are limitless.

They are absolutely unique. I wait for the moment that God begins to start a new mystery movement that will go all over the world and meet the challenge of Islam, which is far greater than the threat of communism has ever been. Communism was a stupid thing.

I keep telling you how stupid it is to say there is no God and then do everything in your power to fight the no God. That's stupid. That can never last long.

It didn't last long. That book was written ... How many of you have read God Smuggler? Oh boy, you came anyway. Good.

But I tell you, this book should never have been written because if 10,000 of us would have done what I did, nobody would write a book about you if everybody does it. It's the problem that I was the only one, the first one who did it. That's why ... This book should never have been written.

I'm against the book. The new book I have, that book, that book should have been written. The Light Force.

And I have good news, it's sold out in the shop. You can't get it anymore. Now I can advertise it.

If you really want it, of course, you can get hold of our Open Doors leaflet, where the prayer petition that has our address, you can order it and still get it. But it's not in the shop anymore. Light Force, it is the story of all the people I have met in the Middle East in the conflict.

Israel, Palestinians, church, Islam, terrorism. I'm very much involved in that field in our days. And this proves that the only solution to the conflict in the Middle East and therefore the conflict in the whole world

is the presence of the Church of Jesus Christ in that conflict, a Light Force in the darkness.

This is the book you should buy. Now, they don't have it anymore. What a shame.

Now, this is the last book they had. And I want to give it to Steve. Where is Steve? He's still there, man.

Come here. It's yours. Now, you probably say, well, why give it to Steve? He's got all the books he wants.

And the ones he doesn't have, he writes himself. But this is what the Bible says. Those that have shall be given.

You see what I mean? The Bible is true after all. And with that message, we go into a world where we can demonstrate that our faith is not organized religion. It's not liturgy.

It's not things that we learn with our head. It's a relationship with God. And to be very frank with you, I want to tell a joke, but I am against jokes.

I hate jokes. They're mostly religious or ethnic. And I don't like them.

The jokes you have about the Irish, we have about the Germans. And the Germans have them about the Poles. And the Americans have them about the Mexicans.

It's rubbish. I am against jokes. Besides, I can't even tell a joke.

I don't know how it works. I never get to the punchline. So in my recent journeys in a Muslim country, a kind of a joke developed between us that was so full of teaching that I had to change my mind a little about that.

And I thought, one day I've got to tell that joke, that story. It's a story. Or is it a joke? Well, that would be a joke, wouldn't it? But it's about that relationship that I'm trying to explain.

I thought, I will never tell that story unless I first try it out on a leading Muslim. Because it is about Muslims. Any Muslims here? Okay.

Let me tell you, I waited until I sat face to face with the Grand Mufti in Sarajevo. He is the leader, the absolute leader of all the Muslims in Bosnia. And he was the highest at that time I could reach.

And I thought, I'm going to try it out on him. If he doesn't kill me, then I will tell it in Skegnes. Now, did he kill me? No, he didn't.

So I will tell it. I said to him, which religion is the closest or brings people closest to God? Now you ask that to a Muslim, that is their sole concern of all the rituals and their faithfulness to prayer and the reverence for their holy book. They want to get closer to God.

I tell you from the depths of my heart, I see every Muslim as a God seeker. And they do more to find God than you do. They get up every morning at four o'clock for prayer.

You don't. Sorry, I don't. But they do.

They're so serious about seeking God. So when I asked the Grand Mufti, what religion would bring you closest to God? He says, well, you tell me. And so I told him, I said, that's us Christians.

Because we can call God Father. Now, I want you to notice that that is blasphemy in Islam. They kill you.

They kill a Muslim if he would call Allah his father. Of the 99 names that Allah has, the number 100 that is missing is father. He is not father.

People have been killed and fled the country because they dared to God, call God father. I said, it's so wonderful. And then I began to enlarge.

And now that I had this attention, I began to preach a little about the relationship. Anytime we can call upon him father. When we're in need or overjoyed and we don't know whom to thank, we can thank father.

He's always there. He's always with us. He always loves us.

He always guides us. He always protects us. Father, what a tremendous relationship we as Christians have with God as our father.

And I preached as long as I thought I had his attention before he became restless. And I paused a few seconds. He said, Andre, what is the second? Sure.

I said, that is the Jewish religion. Because that is a bit more complicated. Before they can really pray, they have to meet with 10 men together.

They have to dress up quite extensively. And they have to go to the wailing wall in Jerusalem in order to make a local call. And it's, you know, it, you need some organizational skill for that.

It is not easy. I don't belittle it. But it is not as spontaneous a relationship that we have with father all the time.

And he liked that because, you know, all Muslims hate the Jews anyway. So, but by that time, he was sitting at the edge of his chair and saying, Andre, what is the third one? I said, that's you. You need a loudspeaker.

And I watched. And, you know, he began to laugh. He said, Andre, I can't wait to hear you preach in my mosque.

That's what he said. Now, why do I tell this? We are so almost paralyzed by fear. We think we cannot reach the Muslims or they're against us.

But they're waiting for us to tell them the truth they love. Why don't we do it? Why don't we go there and share Jesus Christ and what Jesus has done for us on the cross and be open about it and say, we have, because our sins are forgiven, access to God as our father. We know when we die, we go to heaven because that's in this book.

Muslims don't know it. This fills me with fear and trembling. I've got to tell you, in the Muslim religion, there's no assurance of salvation, none whatsoever.

They live entirely by works and they all know, every Muslim knows, he will not do enough good works to put on the scale as compared to the bad things he's done that will make him plunge straight into hell when he dies. Every Muslim lives under that fear. You know that.

Please put it as a burden on your heart. There's only one way for the Muslim to know for sure that he goes to heaven, that is when he dies in the jihad. That is that from now on, since the resurgence, the revival of Islamic fundamentalism 20, 30 years ago, still picking up pace from that time on and now we'll have a lot more suicide bombing going around because they want to go to heaven.

Don't we want to go to heaven? But we know it is through the relationship with God through Jesus Christ our Lord. We know how to get there, but they do not know. That's why I, in a way, I fear for the future.

Unless, until we as God's children get the vision, shed our faith, our fear, and replace our fear with the faith that God gives us and that we will then be able to sing in this strange land under any circumstance because we have a relationship and that's what we live out. God is our father. Now what's wrong with us? In that book, I have written extensively about the Hezbollah and about the Hamas and Islamic jihad and the PLO and the more fanatical they are, the more I go after them because I'm in a hurry when I'm there and you should therefore read my book because I don't have time to tell the whole story.

But I befriended the Hezbollah leader in Beirut, powerful organization, officially a terrorist organization. I befriended him and I went to exchange my life for that of a Christian hostage, the time of the hostage taking in Lebanon. He was so astonished.

He said, Andre, how can you do that? How can you say that? I said, that is the spirit of Jesus. There's no other spirit that will enable us to give our life for others because that's what Jesus did. When he died on the cross, it was to let us go free.

Free not to do our own will but free in his power to do his will. He did not release the hostage. I had to go home although I had come fully prepared.

I put my house in order. Have you ever done that, knowing that you would not come back? I came back but we became friends and every year I visit him. Last year I was with him and I feed him with lots of books and stories and testimonies.

I bring other friends into his place so that he has a constant witness there around him and one day we were having a very serious, very deep conversation and he said to me, Brother Andrew, you Christians have a problem. I know we have a problem. Gee, do I know.

But I was not going to make him any wiser so I said, what do you think our problem is? And at once I detected this sharp observation of us Christians. He said, you Christians are not following the life of Jesus Christ anymore. Boy, that hurt.

He was dead right. That's how they observe us. We, in their eyes, are not following the life of Jesus Christ and I want to tell you, they are not against Jesus.

I have not met a single Muslim who is against Jesus. I said to him after a few seconds of silence, what do you think we should do about it? And his reply came immediately, you've got to go back to the book. That would be a good sermon for next Sunday, any pre-treater moments.

You've got to go back to the book, he said. Then we had a little more Arab coffee that I so love and then he got even more serious and sad and he said, Andrew, we Muslims have a problem. Well, I know they have a problem and deep in my heart I'm happy they have a problem because if they had no problem, we would not have life.

So I'm not going to enlighten him and I said to him, what do you think your problem is? And he looked at me with his dark sad eyes, he said, Andrew, we Muslims are not following the life of the prophet Muhammad anymore. He was genuinely sad. I said to him, what do you think you should do about that? And at once came his reply, we've got to go back to the book.

But he meant another book than my book. Shall we let them go back to their book which teaches that in the end time, the Muslims will conquer the world and totally rule the world. Their eschatology is very well defined.

They believe that Allah has put a dirty oil under their sand to enslave ultimately the whole world because we with our greed paid for their enterprise and the printing of hundreds of millions of Qurans and the training of tens of thousands of Muslim missionaries every year. Can we match the dedication of people who will in that other revolution that we're facing, not the revolution of there is no God, but the revolution of who is God? Is he your father? Has he made perfect peace between him and you through Jesus Christ dying on the cross? Are we in a situation where we can match their dedication, where in their, in the desperate need, particularly in the Middle East that I write about in the book that now Steve has anyway, but I write about it. They have no reason for living.

So they have found a reason for dying, but it's in the cause of world conquest. Are we going to match their dedication and say, I want to give them a reason for living, even if it means I die. Because die, we do one day anyway.

I take it unless you're brought up with Tim LaHaye's books. But die, you will. Make sure that there is not half an hour quiet in heaven when you get there, but shouts of glory hallelujah when you arrive, because you've laid down your life for Jesus Christ.

I will go back there soon. I have either years that I baptized between 50 and 100 Muslims that they've put their guns away. And the rough people with the long beards, barefooted, they've come to accept Jesus Christ to save it, because we have the only answer to terrorism.

And we would sin terribly if we keep quiet and don't spread the message of God the Father. We have the answer, the church of Jesus Christ in the Middle East, in Britain, in Holland, we have the answer. And unless we get going, there is no hope for the world.

Will you say tonight, Lord use me, send me, even abuse me. I'm willing not just to go, but not come back. I'm willing to die for Jesus, because I found the reason for living is to die on the cross doing the will of God.

It's my prayer for all of you. Keep in touch. Pray for me as I return there very soon to make more contact with my Hamas friends and Islamic Jihad and witness there in ways that till now have been unthought of and never done.

Even lecturing about true Christianity in the most fanatical Islam university, the Hamas university in Gaza. They begged me to come. Please, Andrew, tell us what is real Christianity.

We don't know it. And they're filled with fear. And we can say it's a relationship.

And out of that relationship comes a still small voice. My son, my daughter, will you go? Go. Let's all stand in response to this.

Let's cry out to God. A song that just says, Hallelujah. The Lord God Almighty reigns over all this earth.

While we're singing the song, I'd like to dismiss the parents who need to leave and go pick up their children. Let's sing together. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. For the Lord God Almighty reigns over all this earth.

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