

Outpouring in Papua New Guinea (Part 1)

by David Sitton

God's plan is to make His name great among all ethnic groups and cultures through the preaching of the gospel and the planting of churches.

Duration: 1:00:39

Scripture: Genesis 1:27, Malachi 1:11, Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 16:15, Acts 17:30, Acts 20:24, Revelation 7:9

Topics: "Revival"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the challenges of reaching remote and unreached people groups with the gospel. He describes the difficult journey of missionaries through the jungle, highlighting the geographical remoteness as one of the reasons for the lack of access to these groups. However, he encourages the audience to remember the incredible potential they have as believers, even with their advantages in education, technology, and resources. The speaker defines missions as taking light into darkness and emphasizes the importance of access to reach the billions of people living in unreached people groups around the world.

Transcript

A wonderful Savior and an awesome King, and this God of ours, this awesome God, He will be preached and He will be praised among all of the nations of the world. Listen to the Word of God through the prophet Malachi, chapter 1, 11, and as I read these words, I want you to realize that this is not something that God hopes will happen. God doesn't hope.

This is something that will happen. What I'm about to read to you this morning is a divinely inspired prophetic certainty. Malachi 1, 11.

God says, My name will be great among the nations. From the rising to the setting of the sun, in every place incense and pure offerings will be brought to My name because My name will be great among the nations, says the Lord God Almighty. God is making His name to be great among the nations.

And I guess I just need to stop right here because I don't know you. I don't know how much of this you know when I talk about missions, but when the Bible uses the word nations, do you know what it's talking about? Often we talk of nations and we equate it with countries and we talk about a nation of Japan or China or some other nation, Mexico, but in Scripture that's not the way the Bible uses the word nations. Most often, almost always, maybe always, but almost always at least, it's used in terms of ethnicities.

In fact, the Greek word is ethne. It means ethnicities. And this is the way in both the Old and the New Testaments that the word is used.

It's often like what we talk about when we talk about North American Indian tribes. We talk about the Choctaw Nation. We talk about the Apache Nation or the Cherokee Nation.

That's the way the Bible uses the word nations. Not countries, but ethnicities. And as just a further illustration of that in Revelation chapter 5 and Revelation chapter 7, you know when we get that little glance into that throne room scene around the throne and in heaven, who's going to be there? Who's going to be there in heaven? Representatives from every nation, but then the next few words describe the word nation.

From every tribe, every people, and every language group. That's what a biblical nation is. And so when we read passages like Malachi where it says that God is making His name to be great among the nations, that's what He's talking about.

Papua New Guinea, I'm going to be talking about that a little bit. One country, but 880 different nations within the one country of Papua New Guinea. 880 different tribes, 880 different languages.

Not dialects, but for the most part unrelated languages. And the gospel is intended for every one of them. Because every one of them are different ethnicities.

Some of these tribes can be as small as 30 people that have a language and culture all their own, but they're not outside of the text. The intent of the gospel, the intent of the death of Christ was for them as well. And there will be representatives in heaven from every nation, every tribe, every tongue, and every people.

So God is making His name to be great among the nations. He's making His name to be known among the nations. Other passages that I like a lot speak about God making His name to be famous among the nations.

Don't you like those passages? And then you read the testimony and you just see God's fame spreading across a region. And so God is doing this in a lot of different ways. He's making His name to be known and great and His fame to be spread.

And He's doing it primarily through the preaching of the gospel and through the planting of churches in places where the gospel has never, ever gone. And it's an exciting thing to be a part of. And that's what I want to talk to you about this morning.

I have a map here. Yes, sir. In New Guinea.

Well, the island of New Guinea would be directly north of the island of? Yes. Some of you kids remember from the class. There's Australia.

There's New Guinea. One half of the island of New Guinea is called Papua New Guinea. That's the orange half.

The other half is Irian Jaya, which is a province of Indonesia. That's a tough map there. It rolls up.

But that'll give you an idea of where we've spent most of the last 27 years or so. Now we're working in Mexico as well. We're continuing in Papua New Guinea.

But we have, you know, we lived actually in New Guinea for 17 years. And I'm going to tell you some of these stories. But before I do, I wanted to speak to you directly.

I was really encouraged by your worship this morning. And the one brother that couldn't even read, couldn't even read the text because the Spirit of God moved on him so heavy. I don't see that a lot in a lot of churches.

I appreciate that, brother. I appreciate, you know, the Spirit of God and His work in you and moving you and bringing you to tears to weep over the living water. You know, I don't know this church very well, but I'm suspecting that some of you are new believers.

Maybe a lot of you are new believers. And thank God that the newness of your conversion has not worn off yet. And you can still weep over that sweet grace.

You know, some of us old timers, it's gotten too old. It's gotten too familiar. It's like an old pair of shoes, you know.

They fit. They're just old and too familiar. And we just take it for granted.

And I was greatly impressed, not by you. You're nothing. Just like I'm nothing.

But impressed by the greatness of our God and what He's doing among you today. It was a great encouragement. And so as I look out among you, you may think, wow, you know, we're just a really small little old church and what can we do? We don't have very many people.

We don't have very much money. We don't have very much of anything to be able to do anything. Well, I want to encourage you to remember what our Lord accomplished with eleven men.

Fishermen, at that, for the most part. And that when we consider our advantages in terms of excellent education and incredible theological and technological advance and just financial resources, even for the poorest among us, comparatively speaking to the rest of the world, what we have even represented in this room right here this morning, I'm just struck by the awesome potential that I see in your faces. God often has done a lot with a little.

In fact, I think He specializes in that. And so be encouraged by your small number. But you know, as I think about our technological advance and our financial resources and all of the advantages that we would have over generations that precede us, there's something more than all of that that is needed if we're to see Christ proclaim to the nations in our generation.

And I just want to just be really up front and blunt and just kind of throw it right out there to you. What's needed is a new generation, a new army of missionaries who are willing to die. For the cause of Christ among the nations, I don't see that very much.

In fact, I get real tired like John Piper. Some of you hear John Piper and read John Piper. Like John Piper, I'm real tired of American Christianity that the first question we always ask ourselves is, is it safe? Is it safe for us? Is it safe for our children? Jesus never promised that it would be safe.

Quite to the contrary, Jesus has said, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains alone. It's a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds or much fruit.

And He told His disciples that when you go out in My name... Here's a promise for you. You guys like to claim daily promises? Here's a promise for you. If you go out in My name, if they hated Me, they're going to hate you.

There's a good promise for you. If they kill the Master, what are they going to do to the slaves? And I just believe that one of the missing components in our day in the training of new missionaries is the preparation of these new missionaries for the very real possibility that they may be called upon to literally lay their lives down all the way, even to death, in the reaching of the nations for Christ. In the book of Revelation, again, you don't need to turn there, but there's a great little verse there that says that the crown of life is given to those who what? Who are faithful even to the point of death.

Remember that passage? It does not say, and it is not exhorting these believers to be faithful until you grow old and die. I mean, that's cool too. But the exhortation of the text is be faithful to the point of death and you will receive the crown of life.

And if you go back and look at the context of that, it's very clear that the context is persecution and martyrdom. And so as we're talking about a very difficult thing, you know, I can think of no better human example of this kind of commitment than Ed McCulley. I don't know if you've ever heard that name, Ed McCulley.

Ed McCulley was one of the five missionaries who were martyred by the Alca Indians. Remember that story? Some of you new believers, maybe you don't know that story. Five missionaries were speared to death by the Alca Indians on January 4th, 1956.

Jim Elliott was the best known of these missionaries. Their story is pretty well known. My point is not to retell that story, but I did want to read to you something that Ed McCulley wrote to Jim Elliott just a few years before that incident happened.

And keep in mind, these guys were college students when he wrote this in their early 20s. Listen to what he said. Here's what he wrote to Jim Elliott.

He said, I have just one desire now to live a life of reckless abandon for Christ. And I'm putting all of my strength and energy into it. And then he says, maybe the Lord will send me someplace where the name of Christ is unknown.

Four years later, just days after that final flight into Alca territory where they were just slaughtered horrifically by the spears of these Alca tribesmen, Ed scribbled a little note into the margin of his journal. And it simply said, I'm willing to give my life for a handful of Indians. And a few days later he did it.

I've already mentioned John Piper. A lot of us enjoy his writings and preaching and I'm certainly one of those. And I've noticed something in his preaching recently and if you don't know of John Piper, I encourage you to go out and get some books or tapes or something.

He's just a tremendous teacher in our day. But a reoccurring theme in his preaching is the idea that in his opinion, one of the divine strategies for breaking open the remaining unreached peoples of the world is missionary martyrdom. It's one of his strategies.

It's a divine strategy. And so I'm saying again this morning, as I've been saying for the last five years, you know, as I travel through the churches, I'm on a campaign to recruit martyr missionaries. I'm really, I have an agenda here this morning.

I'm here to recruit martyr missionaries for the least reached people groups of the nations. That's what I'm looking for. And you know, this idea of martyr missionaries didn't originate with John Piper.

I mean, he goes to Revelation 6 and some other places to talk about that. But really it goes back before that. It goes all the way back to Jesus himself.

It goes all the way back to Acts chapter one, maybe even before that. But I'm thinking in terms of Acts chapter one, where Jesus told his disciples, this is moments before the ascension, and he told his disciples, you know, you're going to go back into Jerusalem and you're going to wait. And when you receive the power of the spirit, then you are going to be my witnesses starting there in Jerusalem.

And then you're going to go to Judea and Samaria and to the uttermost parts of the earth. Do you know what the Greek word for witnesses is in Acts chapter one? It's the Greek word *martyria*. It's where we get the word martyrs.

And so here we have Jesus just moments before his ascension giving his last message to these disciples. And here he was recruiting martyr missionaries. And I think he took care to use that very word so that they would not misunderstand what he was calling them to.

And that reminds me of my second favorite missionary in the world, second to Jesus, the Apostle Paul. This is one of my favorite verses in all of the Bible. In fact, I love it so much I have it englossed on the nose deck of one of my surfboards.

So I see it quite often. But I love this verse, Acts 20, 24. You have plenty of chairs back there for everyone.

Yeah, make yourself comfortable there, brother. Acts 20, 24, Paul said, I consider my life worth nothing to me. Boy, that's going against the grain of American Christianity, isn't it? If only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me, the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace.

Paul said, I consider my life worth nothing to me. Oh, yeah, my life's important. But compared to this, compared to the task of taking the gospel to places where it's never gone, compared to that, my life isn't worth anything.

It's one of the things I love about Paul. He didn't require self-preservation as a prerequisite for whether he would go or stay in a place. You know, you talked about Fallujah and Iraq and Iran and Afghanistan.

I hear a lot of talk. Oh, that's too dangerous, too dangerous to go to those places. Those are closed countries.

Well, there's no such thing as a closed country. Jesus said to go into all the world. Where's a closed country? Closed country to me, to me means just finding another way to get the job done.

It's closed maybe to one way of working, but it's open somehow, some way because Jesus told us to go. And I'm just real tired of people putting at the top of their priority list, well, it's too dangerous. Well, this is what Christ has called us to.

And, you know, and Paul, when he says, you know, I count not my life as being dear unto myself. I think that he's saying that my life is important and it's a precious gift from God. But if I can give my life for that, if I can exchange it for this, preaching the gospel in places where it's never gone before, that's OK, because the gospel is worth it.

Jesus is worth it. And so are a handful of Indians in Ecuador or Papua New Guinea or Mexico or some other places that I'm going to tell you about. And so now when young people contact me, as they frequently do, even this week, I got some emails from several young people and they're telling me about their excitement about, you know, they want to go to Mozambique or they want to go to Timbuktu or wherever it is they want to go.

I write them back now and I say, do you really? Are you willing to die there? That's one of the questions I now ask. And I'm not being, I don't think, overly dramatic when I ask that question, because the world is a dangerous place these days and missionaries are being killed by the tens of thousands annually. You don't hear that from Dan Rather because they're not largely Americans that are being killed, but tens of thousands of missionaries, Koreans and others from all around the world, they're being killed every year.

So it's not unreasonable to ask, are you willing to die there? Well, that's the kind of disciple I want to be, willing to be. I'm not saying I'm always that, but I want to be willing to be that. And that's the kind of young men and women we want to recruit and train and launch to the nations.

And we want to do it by the hundreds. We're going to talk about that too in just a moment. So much to talk about.

Let me, let me, I'm going to have to really talk fast. Let me see. What do I want to do here? I don't want to go there.

Here's a quick definition for you because I want to tell you a couple of stories about New Guinea this morning and then in the later session as well. But first, let me give you just a little definition for missions, because missions can get pretty complicated and complex sometimes. And I'm a simple guy.

I like to cut through the complexity and get it right down to the most basic thing. To me, here's missions. Taking light into darkness.

That's missions. When you boil it right down to the most basic thing, missions is not difficult to understand. It's simply this, that those of us who have received the light of the gospel, that living water, we are now to take that light and living water into the deepest darkness that we can find.

That's missions. And you can start doing that within blocks of where this church building sits. And then it's going to extend to the nations, but you can start right here.

That's what missions is when you get right down to the nut of it. That's what the church is called to do. The issue for me in missions really can be summed up in one word.

Access. Access. And what I mean by that is that right now today in our world, there are something like six billion people on the face of the earth.

Now, I don't know how you are with numbers, but a million, even trying to grapple with the enormity of a million just kind of short circuits my brain. But you start talking about a billion of anything, and then you

start talking about six billion individuals that inhabit our planet. And these six billion people are living within like 12,000 unreached people groups all over the face of the earth.

It becomes a staggering situation that we find in the world today. But there's six billion people alive and 2.4 billion of them, roughly a third of the world's population, they live in cultures that have no access to the gospel at all. Like I told the kids earlier in the earlier session, you know, the name of Jesus doesn't even exist in the vocabularies of a lot of the world's languages.

He's unknown. He doesn't exist. You can't even stumble accidentally upon the message of Christ because it doesn't exist within their culture.

That's the situation with one third of the world's population. And so often I talk about taking light into this kind of darkness and invariably, though, someone will come to me and they'll say, well, what about America? Do you have any darkness in America? How about it? Any darkness in America? Any darkness on Commerce Street? Yeah, there is. There's a lot of darkness in America.

America's dark and getting darker in a lot of ways. But yet, however, one big difference between America and Mozambique, one big difference between America and Timbuktu or the interior tribes of New Guinea or the interior tribes of Oaxaca, Mexico or hundreds of other places that I could let you know about, one big difference between America and all of these places and it's access. Because here in America we have, what do we have? Churches on every corner really.

Bibles in every home. I read somewhere recently that there are now more than 100 translations of the Bible in English. Easy access to Christian books.

Easy access to Christian music and videos and DVDs. And what about now with the Internet? What do we have? 24-7, right? And the point is that anyone here in America that wants to hear about Christ, they can do so because He's a part of the culture. They can find the message of Christ in America.

Not so in one third of the rest of the world. And so all of that to make this point. That I believe that the priority of new missionaries and new missionary giving, it should be directed to those places where the gospel has never gone.

The text that I was going to read that I didn't feel like I had time to read was from Romans 15-20. And it's the theme passage of our whole ministry. Where Paul said, it has always been my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ is already gone.

You know, because I don't want to be building on someone else's foundation. I want to take His name and His message to places where it has never gone. And so the priority of new missionaries should be directed to those places, I believe, where the gospel and where the church has never, ever penetrated.

So that's sort of my theme. And that's what we'll kind of work that out as we go through this message and the next. And hopefully you guys can stay for the session after lunch as well.

Let me just tell you a couple of quick stories about New Guinea. Pretty exciting stuff about what God is doing. And this is representative now of what we also want to do in Mexico and other places as God opens doors for us.

I already showed you where New Guinea is. It's a big island just north of Australia. But I'll tell you, New Guinea is one rough place still.

You know, I went for the first time one week after my 20th birthday in 1977. I went to New Guinea for two years. And it was a rough place then and it's a rough place still today.

Cannibals and headhunters were very prevalent in the 70s. They're less prevalent now, but they're still there. And even apart from that, just geographically, the country is a difficult place.

In many areas, to get to the unreached places, you'll have to walk four or five days. Maybe we'll charter a little airplane that will land us on a grass airstrip in the middle of the jungle. And then from there, we'll walk for four days.

And we'll have one of our national brothers in front of us with a machete and we pay him good money and he's cutting a path. And we're bent over double and we're making our way through the jungle and you'll go 12,000 feet up over a mountain and down across a river, up and down, four or five days. That's the kind of difficulty that we face in getting the gospel to the people.

There's a lot of reasons for people groups to be unreached 2,000 years after the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. And one of the reasons is just geographical remoteness. They're hard to get to.

If they were easy to get to, they would have been reached by now. They're hard to get to. And by the way, even in the last three months, we're discovering new tribes in New Guinea.

New tribes that previously were unknown to the world in Indonesia and other places. And if you ever had opportunity to get into some of those mountains and swamps and jungles, you could see how tribes could go undetected because it's quite thick, that jungle. Well, let me tell you a story that illustrates our tribal evangelistic ministry.

I consider myself to be a pioneer missionary. I want to go boldly where no missionary has gone before. In fact, people, nationals, New Guineans and Mexicans will come to me and they'll say, well, come to my village and come bring the gospel to my place, to my town or my village.

And the first question I always ask, well, who's already there? You know, because if some Baptist group is there, if Assemblies of God are there, some Pentecostal group is there, some Evangelical group, I'm not going. I'm not going to... When one-third of the world, fully one-third of the world has never heard the name of Christ, and with workers so few, as Jesus said, you think I'm going to go and duplicate efforts in places where some other brother is already working and go compete with souls in some limited, small geographical... No, I'm not going there. I want to go where His name has never gone.

Well, in 1977, when I arrived in New Guinea, I was 20 years old. I was learning the Melanesian language. I had an older missionary that was helping me out in these early days.

But it just so happens, by God's grace, that we had learned about a tribe called the Kuka Kuka tribe. They were a cannibalistic tribe. They were a very well-known tribe.

If you go even, I think, probably to a good-sized library here in San Antonio, if you pick up a book on Papa New Guinea, you probably would read something about the Kuka Kukas because they were well-known and much feared because they would go through their mountain range. They would kill men, women, and

children. They would rape women, burn villages.

Usually they would bring one or two warriors back, and they would put them on rotisseries, and they would cook them like pigs, and they would eat them, and it would be a part of a great tribal victory, but also a celebration and worship of the gods and spirits, particularly ancestral spirits. This is the way they were living in 1977. The very first person that ever went into this tribe was back in the 1940s.

He was a government official. He was trying to take a population census. Very unwise.

He escaped with one arrow in this leg, two arrows in the other, and barely got out with his life. As far as we know, we are the very next people to enter this tribe 30-something years later after that incident, and it was quite a story of what happened. The only way to get to the Kuka Kukas is, as I said, you would charter an airplane.

You would land on a grass airstrip, and in this situation, we had to walk three days to the Kuka Kukas. Now, the Kuka Kukas were cannibals, and you need to know something about what this means and what they believed about it so you will understand their story. They believed that if they ate a warrior from another tribe, that they would receive that person's strength and courage and wisdom and all of the positive attributes of that person.

You could get them from eating that person. That's what they believed about cannibalism. Now, how do you share the gospel? People ask me this all the time.

How do you start? Where do you begin to share the gospel with a cannibalistic tribe? I'll tell you where we don't start. We do not begin by asking them, do you believe in God? We say, oh no, there is a God. There is a true God, a supreme God.

And they go, oh yeah, we know that there's gods, all kinds of gods and spirits. And you know something that's really interesting, just as a sidebar, because I've written a book on tribal people all over the world, not just limited to New Guinea, and one of the things that I've found in my research is that every single tribe that has ever been studied or analyzed, they have within their mythologies a story. First of all, they all believe in a supreme God.

All tribes know that there's a supreme God out there somewhere. And there's also within their mythologies a story of how people became alienated or separated from this God. And they've got all these weird and crazy mythological stories of how it happened.

But never in any tribal situation that I've come across, and I've studied it extensively, there is no mythological story or tale or anything that would indicate how to get back into contact with that supreme God. And so they have within their stories how they were alienated from this one true supreme God, but there's no story about reconciliation. No story about how to get back in touch with this God.

Very interesting. You think God might have been a part of this whole thing? Well, and so I'm standing on a hillside with the kooka kookas and I'm saying, there is a God. You know that there's a God.

And they go, oh yeah, we know there's all kinds of gods and spirits. But then we begin to give them little snippets of Old Testament stories. And the reason we do that is because we've found that as you tell Old Testament stories, you're going to find that they have some of these stories also within their mythological stories.

I was in one tribe and I've never heard of this anywhere else, but they had within their tribal mythological creation story, their own creation story, the story of the Tower of Babel. And I said, oh, some missionaries have been here. And they said, we don't know.

We don't know anything about missionaries. This is our story. And it was incredibly close to the text of Genesis 6. They don't have books.

How did this story, how was the story preserved? How many years has it been since the Tower of Babel? We're talking 7,000 years, something like that, give or take 1,000. And yet through oral tradition, generation after generation, these tribes sitting around their campfires have passed all of their other mythological stories as well as this story of a tower. It has come through and God has preserved it.

And their first ancestor in this one tribe was Kayapon. We called him Adam. They called him Kayapon.

And they told me this crazy mythological story. It was just really interesting. But that Tower of Babel story was interwoven.

And so I was able to ask them, well, do you know why your people built the tower? Do you know why originally we all spoke one language and we all lived in one location and we all had one color of skin? Why is it now that we have red, black, yellow, all different colors of skin, all different kinds of languages and we live all over the world? They said, we don't know. But these are three of the most important questions that we've had as a people. And so this is the reason we tell those stories, because we find an entrance point, a place of agreement, something that they already know that is biblically accurate.

And then we can start right there. And so I was able to jump on Acts 17 with this other tribe and say from one man, this is a sermon of Paul. Remember that? He said from one man, Adam, God created all of the nations of men.

And it just goes on from there where God commanded all men everywhere to repent. I was able to take their own story. They thought it was their own story and start preaching Christ from that place rather than take, you know, my little preconceived sermon, you know, from America and translate.

No, you go and you learn where they're at, what they believe, what they already know about God. And you search for ways to begin. Well, with the Kuka Kuka tribe, as I was kind of telling some of these stories, I was telling the story of Noah and the flood and they began clicking their tongues.

A big show of emotion among the Kuka Kukas. And they're looking back and forth with each other and they said, this man is from God. They said, you are from God.

They had the story of the worldwide flood, which is pretty common among tribes all around the world. They had the story of the worldwide flood. But as I was able to give them the story, they're thinking, how can this outsider, this white man, how can he know our stories? He's from God.

He's a prophet. Sort of like the text you read this morning when Jesus was able to do. And the woman said, I perceive you're a prophet.

They looked at me and they said, you are from God. And God used that to give us credibility. Then they were very eager to hear everything else that we had to say.

Well, it's a long story, but let me just shorten it and just tell you how they came to Christ. Just an incredible story of God's grace. I was sitting in a hut and in this area of New Guinea, their huts are round, they're built right on the dirt and there's a fire in the middle and the men sit around the fire.

And that's where we do all of the talking and teaching and all that. And so I'm teaching them and talking to them and trying to explain to explain to them what it would mean for them and their culture to repent and turn to Christ. What would that look like? What does that involve as a cannibal chief out in the mountains of New Guinea? What does repentance mean in that kind of a context? And as I was speaking, one of the chiefs and it was his hut that we were in, he reached around behind him and he got his bow and his arrows and he began breaking them.

He didn't say a word, didn't wait till the message was over or anything. I didn't even know what he was doing, to be honest with you. But he started breaking his implements of war and he laid them in the fire.

He got his Tommy Hawk and he pulled the stone out of it and he laid it in the fire and all of his other implements of war and spears and all of that. The other two chiefs knew what he was doing. They got up and walked out and went to their huts, got their implements of war and brought them back.

They did the same thing. There were a lot of people that were listening in and looking and trying to hear what was the white man saying to their leaders. And when they saw what their leaders were doing and they understood the implications of it, they took off running.

And I can still hear these bare feet getting the mud paths, going off in every direction. They came back with their implements of war and we had a bonfire. It was like in the book of Acts.

You remember that when they burned the witchcraft books? It was an open show of repentance from the old way. I was teaching them about repentance, but I didn't say, sign a card, walk an aisle. But like Lydia in the New Testament, God granted to her repentance.

God opened her heart and she believed and repented. And that repentance had to come out in some way. And I didn't really tell them how.

And so this old chief just thought, well, I got to do something. And he started breaking his bows and arrows and spears and throwing them in the fire. Open demonstration of repentance from the old way to the new.

We had in a village of 350 people in about 10 days, we had 300 people who had come to Christ. Now, people in America, when they hear that story and they say, yeah, well, was it really? You know, we don't hear about mass conversions like that very often in America. How do we know it's really real? Well, their testimony continues.

I'll tell you a couple of things. A few weeks after this big conversion experience, two of their young men were down at a river. These are teenagers, 18, 19, 20 year olds.

They were attacked by an opposing tribe. Their heads were chopped off, left laying there by the river and their bodies were hauled off to the enemy village, presumably cannibalized. These chiefs came to me, these three men who had led their people into a worship of the true God.

They said, what do we do now? We know what we would have done, you know, in the old days, you know, just weeks ago. They'd kill two of ours. We'd kill four of theirs.

And we'd burn their villages and rape their women and we'd cannibalize them. But we're Christians now. What is the appropriate Christian response to this attack? Well, I'm 20 years old.

What do I know? You know, I'm a new missionary, you know, but I did something very wise, something that I've done many, many times over the years when I don't know the answers to questions. I say, you go to God, seek God, pray and ask Him. He'll tell you.

Well, these guys came back to me in two or three days and they said, you know, we just believe that God does not want us to retaliate. Now, I don't know what that does to you, to me, knowing these people and knowing that their natural inclination would be to just go wipe them out. But they said, no, we're going to live a new way.

We're going to follow Christ and we're not going to retaliate. Well, this is really cool. One day as I was teaching these new leaders and teaching the church, I don't know if you've ever read John chapter six to a cannibal before.

But John chapter six, one of the verses in there says, he that does not eat my flesh and drink my blood has no part with me. And I was explaining to them about communion and explaining to them, you know, about the significance of it. And as I was doing that, these people began to weep.

Some of them actually fell and put their faces in the dirt and they were rolling in the dirt, weeping, weeping because of their great sin, partly, but also weeping because now as believers, weeping because of the intimacy of relationship and fellowship that they could have with their God through communion and what they believed about communion, right? Everything that they could get from that old warrior. Now, everything that Christ has, they can receive that. They can become like him, not in some sort of a mystical, crazy, but we become like Christ and we can do it through communion.

Maybe these old cannibal chiefs in the mountains of New Guinea, maybe they understand communion a lot better than we do. It's just amazing what God has done among them. Well, another day, these chiefs, you know, you don't think maybe their conversion was real.

These chiefs took me out to the edge of their village and they said, look at that mountain range, you know, this huge ravine and days walk away, probably take five days to get to this mountain range. It's a different mountain range. They said, you know, our enemies, that's where they live.

And we want to take the gospel to our enemies. And we see the condition that you're in when you walk three days to get to us. We don't think that you can go another five days to get to them.

What we want to do is build an airstrip in our village and then you could fly right here to our village and then you can go with us to take the gospel to our enemies. I said, brothers, that is a tremendous idea. Unfortunately, you live on top of a mountain.

A mountain that is completely encased in jungle. It's steep. There's no place.

There's no room. No place for an airstrip. Well, I've got pictures of these people with grass skirts and headdresses and bones in their noses.

Going up, the women and children, first of all, with sharp sticks and stones, they would go up on top of this ridge and begin chipping away at this hard rock and cutting these tree stumps and cutting the jungle and

chopping away at this hard rock and dirt, loosening it up. And then the men had made this little human scoop kind of out of a piece of wood and they had vines connected to it. And they would take it up and put it on that loosened dirt and then they would haul it down.

They were leveling, trying to level this mountain. Every man, woman and child six days a week for a year and a half worked on this airstrip. Not for commerce, though eventually they did use it for that.

They did it because they wanted to take the gospel to their people. I've got pictures of them. I wish I had that PowerPoint.

I didn't have what I needed this morning to show it. But these guys with the bones and the grass skirts, here they are, they're leveling this thing because they want to take the gospel to their enemies. Well, what a tremendous success story.

Don't you wish every story of evangelism could be so successful as that one? I mean, 300 out of 300. This was one of my first experiences as a missionary and I'm thinking, boy, I'm going to love this missions. This is good stuff.

Well, I've never had another experience like it. I mean, we've had great things that have happened, but 300 out of 350 and such a marvelous, miraculous display of God's grace and repentance and a whole tribe coming in mass to Christ. We've never had that to that level again.

That's what we call in missions a people movement. Have you heard that phrase? A people movement. God really gave us one and that was an awesome thing.

But you know, just as a little P.S. and I don't know how late does this service go? How much time do I have? Ten minutes? Five? Okay. This tribe doesn't hardly exist anymore. And the reason is because they refused to fight their enemies.

Their enemies were trying to take advantage of it. And so they knew that the cuckoo cuckoos were not going to retaliate. And so they would come in and they were being attacked all the time.

And so these people gave up their land. Now, this is like American Indians giving up their land, right? Land to an American, North American Indian. It's related to his language, his culture, his religion.

Everything is connected to land. Same thing for New Guinea. These guys gave up their land, took upon themselves the shame of a people who have no land, a very proud tribe.

But they said, no, we're going to give it up. And they left the land of their ancestors and have now pretty much over the last 20 years have intermarried into other groups. And as a tribe, very few of them even exist anymore.

It's a tribe that essentially has become extinct. But it's one of those few situations where they became extinct willingly for the sake of the gospel rather than fight. They were willing to become extinct as a people.

Well, I think I can tell this other story in five minutes because I've got to tell you, you know, there's the success, but there's a failure. See, too often missionaries come through. You give them give them an hour.

They're going to talk, you know, for 45 minutes about the success. What about the failure? You need to know that missions is not all kooka kooka success stories. There's also failure.

Nineteen eighty one. And this actually the story I'm about to tell you is in the book. And I'll leave you a copy of this if I haven't sent you one already.

Actually, it's the kooka kooka tribe. It's the same tribe, but it's on the other side of that mountain range. These are the people that they were pointing to and said, these are our enemies over there.

OK, well, two or three years later, we're trying to get into these people by another way. We go up river a day and a half on a thirty six foot long dugout canoe. Went as far as we could.

The river got too shallow, too rocky. We tied it up. Walked five days.

They told us it would be three days. They lied. It was five of the hardest days you're ever going to walk.

We got to the village. These people had heard about the other kooka village and heard about this message of God coming. And they said, we want that.

We want to hear about that. They'd heard the story of what had happened in this success story. And they killed the people for us.

They were really excited about us being there. And we thought, wow, this is going to be a repeat, you know, just like in the other place. Well, on the second day, these people turned against us.

And to this day, we don't know why. These people are animist. Do you know that word? Spirit worshipers, ancestor worshipers, very superstitious.

There's all kinds of things that you can do to offend these people. I don't know what we did. We did something to offend them.

Maybe we accidentally walked over an ancestral burial ground. I don't know. Maybe, you know, it can be just this crude.

I mean, maybe we went to the bathroom. Who knows? I don't know what we did, but we did something to offend them. They turned against us.

And and, you know, these were also cannibalistic people. We were there 16 days trying to shorten the story. Several days, I was on a ravine up on a hill and there was a ravine and I would yell across that ravine to these huts where the men of the village were sleeping.

And I would yell to them, I said, please send someone to be our guide and show us the way out. And I'll pay a lot of money if you'll be our guide and show us show us the way out. They yelled back, find your own way out.

They were going to let us die there because we had offended the spirits in some some sort of a way. We were there for 16 days. Eventually, we had put a big S.O.S. out on top of this hill.

But the people came out and they mocked us. They didn't understand S.O.S. and all of that. They thought, oh, this is white man's magic and our magic is more powerful than this.

No helicopter is going to come get you. They mocked us and laughed at us. You're going to die here.

I had malaria, dysentery, two or three different kinds of worms. Really, really sick. The guy that wrote this book was the unsaved son of a missionary.

He was there because he wanted some adventure. And the Lord gave him gave him a gut load of adventure. And as he wrote the book from my journals, the Lord saved him, this unsaved journalist.

So here's the book. But anyway, on the 16th day, we would hear airplanes and helicopters, but they never came very close. And if they did, I mean, I didn't think that we would be able to see us because we were so high.

The cloud cover was just on us. There's just no way that they could see the S.O.S. On the 16th day, though, a helicopter came chop chopping into the village and it was a Wycliffe Bible translator helicopter. He jumped out of that helicopter.

He knew the reputation of these people. And he said, what are you guys doing here? You would never be rescued from this place. You're completely out of all of the air travel lanes.

He said, I'm only here. The reason I'm here is because the direction I was going, cloud cover popped up and forced me into your valley, your valley. You understand there's hundreds of valleys, your valley, at just the right time when cloud cover had dissipated enough to where he could see our S.O.S. And so our lives were saved.

But three months later, I was in my hometown, Corpus Christi, where I grew up. And I was telling my old good friend this story. He just died about a month ago.

Actually, he was in his early 70s. One of my mentors in the faith. And I was telling him about this failure and how we had to be rescued.

His eyes got about that big. He said, when was that? And he's the one that taught me to write journals, daily journals, and I keep journals and he keeps journals and we're flipping. You know, on the day of the rescue, three o'clock in the morning in Corpus Christi, Texas, this brother, this good friend of mine was sound asleep and God woke him up.

And he said, brother, he said, I just felt this spirit of fear and danger that came over me. And your name was on my mind. And he said, I got out of bed and I just began to pray.

And I said, Lord, there's trouble with Brother Dave over there in New Guinea. Help him, Lord. We know from the comparison of our journals that it was the same day, probably the same moment, because there's a time, a 16 hour time difference.

New Guinea is 16 hours ahead. Three o'clock in the morning or so in Corpus is afternoon in New Guinea. And that's when we were rescued.

You know, God had determined to save my life, but He had determined to do it through the prayers of God's people. And somebody will say, well, aren't you lucky? Aren't you lucky that that brother, you know, if you hadn't prayed, you would have died. No, if God prompts that brother to pray and he doesn't pray, he's going to wake you up.

And if you don't do it, he's going to wake you up. And if you won't, he will find the person. His purposes cannot be thwarted by man's disobedience.

He had determined to save me, but he also determined to do it through the prayers of his people. And if that first guy had not prayed, he'd find somebody else that would. And that guy would have been held accountable for disobedience.

Same thing in missions. People say, thank God you went to New Guinea. Thousands of people would have died and gone to hell.

No, they wouldn't have. Not one will be snatched from his hand. Not one of God's elect or a sheep or a person that is a part of the church.

The eternal church of God is going to be lost. No way. But if God calls me to go and I don't go, he's going to send you.

See, God's purposes are not thwarted by man's disobedience. Let me close, please. I got to say this because this pulls it all together and I'll bring it right back to the Kuka Kuka tribe.

This is an exhortation to you guys. Remember sitting around that fire, you know, with these guys? That was some of the greatest times of my life, sitting with these chiefs around. And we talk about all kinds of things.

We joke and they tell me stories about their history and I tell them stories about my people in history. I told them one time I took them outside and I said, look at the moon. I said, we in America, we have built an airplane so strong and powerful that it actually has gone to the moon.

And we have men from America who have walked on the moon. And that first chief, you know, that had pulled the stone out of his tommyhawk, he looked at me and he rubbed his head and I kind of winked at him like that. And he started laughing.

He slapped his leg and he said, oh, brother. He said, brother Dave, we here in Papua New Guinea, we have our mythologies and legends and you in America, you have yours too. To this day, they don't believe that Americans have walked on the moon.

Of course not. That's impossible. That's just a crazy mythology.

But one night things got real serious and this is what I wanted to close with. And it often got serious. But this first chief who had come to Christ, he asked me a question.

He said, how long have you and your people in America, how long have you known about Jesus? And so I had to tell him the history of America and how America was established by people who believed in God. Many of them were believers in Christ. And just tell him that whole story of two hundred and forty something years now of of basically a Christian tradition in history.

And as I'm telling him this story, these big tears are just beginning to roll down his face. I mean, falling into a puddle and making a mud puddle. And after I tell him, you know, the story of America and Christianity and how long it's been here, he began to tell me his story.

And he said, you know, my father and my grandfather and my great grandfather and my great, great grandfather, all of my Tumbuna, that's what they call their ancestors, all of my Tumbuna. He said they lived and they died and they never heard of Christ. And he just bowed his head and he was just weeping.

And then he raised his head up and he asked me this question, and it was and it wasn't in anger. It was it was just an honest question from a broken heart. He said, why did it take you so long? Why did it take you so long to come to us with the gospel? I don't know an answer to that.

The only answer I know for me is to continue to go back again and again and again and again and again for all of the rest of my life to keep going back. And there's no longer any tribe anywhere who hasn't heard the name of Christ. And so a final question, and it goes right with what Tim had asked you guys earlier already.

What are we here for? That's a question, brother, I have right here in my notes. I'm asking the same question you ask. What are we here for as the church? You as an individual, but also collectively as the body of Christ, what are we here for? Have you ever wondered why Jesus didn't just save us, kill us, and take us to heaven? Sometimes I wish he'd done that.

It would have been easier. But he didn't do that. He saved us and he left us here for a reason.

And that reason, is it not, that reason is to see to it that the knowledge of the glory of God goes and covers the earth as the waters cover the sea. That's what we are to be about as the people of God. And if we're not about that, then I believe we should just sell our buildings and, you know, get into another line of work.

Because we've missed it. This is why we're here. And you know, just a final thing, I promise, you know, any good preacher has to close three times before he's really closed.

But, but I promise this is the end. You know, this is so, I heard some of you guys even go 70 and 80 minutes. I don't know if he was talking about you or himself, but I haven't gone that long.

But isn't this great? That scripture says that when we go to the nations, that we go as ambassadors of Christ. You know, I've been thinking, I mean, that's just so incredible to me. I think Colin Powell and what's the other guy, Rumsfeld and these guys, when they go to Iraq or Iran or Afghanistan in the name of George Bush, they're going in the name of the United States, they are going with all of the power and authority of the United States behind them.

And what Rumsfeld says, or Colin Powell, what he says in Iraq goes. He's speaking for America. In the same way as Christ sends us to the nations, the Bible says that we are going as his ambassadors.

And when we go, we go with all of the authority and power of heaven behind us. There's no reason to fear. I don't fear Iraq.

You can't scare me with heaven. That's what we tell these guys in New Guinea that have tried to kill us. You can't scare me with heaven.

What is there to be afraid of? And the last thing that I wanted to say, it's not a burden. We don't have to be afraid and it's not a burden, this great commission to go into all of the world. It's not a burden.

It's a privilege. My co-worker, Steve Henry, often when he prays, and I love this prayer of his, and he does it with tears, but he'll pray and he'll say, Lord, thank you for allowing us to have a little piece of the action in

what you are doing among the nations. That's it.

That's exactly what God, except it's not a little piece of the action, God is giving us a big piece of the action as He is drawing the nations to Himself. He could have evangelized the world in an instant with the angels. He could just say, Michael, Gabriel, go get them.

But no, He gave that privilege to us. He's put that earthen treasure, that treasure of the gospel into earthen vessels, and He's given us the privilege to go in His name, to carry His name. That is absolutely amazing to me.

We'll just end where I started. Malachi 1:11. My name, God says.

My name will be great among the nations from the rising to the setting of the sun. My name will be great among the nations, says the Lord God Almighty. We'll continue it after lunch.

The same kind of idea. Blessed be the name of our great God. Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/14/SID14829.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/david-sitton/outpouring-in-papua-new-guinea-part-1/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net