

The Urgency and Supremacy of the Great Commission

by Denny Kenaston

The sermon emphasizes the urgency and supremacy of the Great Commission, highlighting its importance in the Bible and its call to action for all believers to share the gospel with others.

Duration: 1:14:01

Scripture: Isaiah 42:1-4, Luke 24:45, Luke 24:48-49, Acts 1:8, Acts 2:1-4, Acts 2:38-39

Topics: "Great Commission"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of the Great Commission and how it should be lived out in our lives. He encourages the audience to not just view this as a missions conference that happens every two years, but to truly engage their hearts and lives in the conflict of the ages. The speaker highlights how Jesus exemplified the Great Commission in the four Gospels, where He sought to save the lost and give His life as a ransom for many. He challenges the audience to allow this message to convict and change their lifestyle, reminding them that they deceive themselves if they don't let it grip them.

Transcript

Hello, this is Brother Denny. Welcome to Charity Ministries. Our desire is that your life would be blessed and changed by this message.

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Thank you, Brother West, for your opening. I also didn't know what I was going to speak about this morning until 2 o'clock this morning. But it seems like the same Spirit of God that showed you what to say, showed me what to say.

This fits together very well. God bless you, Brother. What a joy to my heart to see you standing up here, sharing.

Just remembering back when you were a boy. God bless you. Well, I also tremble this morning.

I know I'm not a boy anymore, but I still tremble. May it ever be so. Let's pray.

Oh God, our Father, we bow down before you again in the name of your Son. Father, I just want to respond to my brother's message this morning. God, I do, Lord, I do.

I do abandon everything to you, God. You can do with me what you want, Lord. My life, my future, my ministry, God.

My money, my farm. God, I give that all to you, Lord. Over the brink and into the water, Lord.

Oh, go deep in our hearts this morning, God. All of us. For the sake of the call, Lord, go deep in all of our hearts, Father.

Open the eyes of our understanding, Father. Change us. Anoint your words, Lord, and change us.

In Jesus Christ's name, I pray. Amen. This morning, I want to give the title of my message.

And then have a bit of an introduction, an overflow as an introduction. And then get into the meat of the message. The burden on my heart this morning, that God placed on my heart, is this.

The urgency and supremacy of the Great Commission. The urgency and supremacy of the Great Commission. I don't know if I need to say anything else.

We know that, don't we? We've been sitting here for three days. We know that. But I'm very grateful this morning for the privilege that I have to address the congregation at the end, or toward the end, of this mission conference.

I don't know about you, but my heart has been flooded with light this weekend. Missionary light. Evangelical light.

Compassionate light. The light of responsibility has shined upon my heart as I have sat through these sessions. So I'm glad for a door of utterance to be able to vent some of my feelings on evangelical doctrine.

All weekend we have been flooded with the most powerful, the most far-reaching, the most life-changing, the highest commandment in the New Testament. God has flooded our souls with a revelation of the highest commandment in the New Testament. Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, the Word of God says.

Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. And He lifted up His hands and departed out of their presence. Went up through the clouds and He was gone.

We have been infused with Bible doctrine all weekend long. The doctrine of the Great Commission. And by the way, doctrine is more than teaching, it is also seeing, isn't it? And we've had a nice, beautiful balance of both.

We have heard and we have seen. And true Bible doctrine is heard and seen. I was reminded this morning of that account there in the Scriptures.

I think it's in the book of Mark where Jesus was in a synagogue and I guess maybe right in the middle of His sermon, an unclean spirit cried out in the middle of the meeting and He just stopped His preaching for a moment and rebuked that unclean spirit and told Him to come out and He did. And the Bible says that the people's response was this. What strange doctrine we have seen today.

What strange doctrine is this? So doctrine is not just the things that we've heard this week, but it's also the things that we have seen and how we thank God for a weekend of show-and-tell Christianity. Amen? Brothers and sisters, we are accountable. We have seen and we have heard and we are accountable.

We have been looking into God's mirror for three days now. What will we do with what we have seen and what we have heard? We've been gazing into God's mirror. And you know when you gaze into God's mirror, you don't only see what God is saying, you see your own heart and your own life.

And that's my testimony through this weekend. I've been gazing into God's mirror and I see my own life. Will we walk away after these days unchanged, gloating about the good time we had, the sermons we heard and the pictures that we saw and the workshops that were there? Is that what we will do? Is this just a missions conference, something that we do every two years and it's been nice to be here and hear these things and see them? Will we go our way and be unchanged? James chapter 1 and verse 22 says that we deceive our own selves if we don't allow all of this to grip us, to convict us and to change our lifestyle.

You know as I was standing on a chair, and you had to do that sometimes in some of the workshops, praise God, at least us Zacchaeuses need to do that. As I was standing on a chair watching Sam and Kate present their day in the life of a villager, I was in a different perspective up there and I looked down and I saw there must have been 60 children on the floor at that one and it was that way in all of them. I beheld these 60 children watching, listening, oh they were intently listening and watching everything that was happening.

And I praised God that they were sitting there, but I also thought these thoughts. Are we parents ready for this? These kind of things have effects upon children. Blessed are the children who get to see and hear the things that you children have seen and heard these last three days.

But oh mom and dad, don't you doubt it, they're having impressions made upon their hearts while they sit there and watch what the day in the life of a villager is like and while they sit and learn about a language learning class or while they sit and look into the faces of the African children and the Haitian children and all those things, they're being changed by those things. I didn't get to see those kind of things when I was a little boy. Many of you didn't either.

I thought about Proverbs chapter 22 and verse 6 in light of the weekend. Just to give you a little new insight into that verse. Train up a child in the way that he should go.

And when he is old he will not depart from it. Well if ever we saw the way he should go, we saw the way he should go this weekend. Train up a child in the way he should go.

And when he is old he will not depart from it. If ever we saw the way he should go, we saw it this weekend. I slipped into the back of the missionary mother's workshop.

Forgive me Helen, Jackie. Rick, where are you at? Did you do the same thing? I want to see what my wife is going to say. Yeah, it was all I could do to keep my mouth shut.

As I listened to those two seasoned missionary mothers speak. Oh bless God for the words that they had to say to all the younger mothers. They are very serious, I'll tell you that.

I know most of you men, you didn't get to hear that, but I snuck in the back and just kind of peeked around the corner and listened. Let me give you a warning in light of some of those things. What we do with what we have seen and heard, in light of our children, could be the salvation of the next generation.

What we've seen and heard this week is not a little thing. You know, not too long ago, just a few weeks back, we sat in a minister's meeting with about a hundred ministers, representing about fifty churches, and you know, we were just sitting there visiting, and questions were being given and discussed and all that, and one of the questions that came was this. How do you keep the youth from going worldly, having a fun and games mentality, buying expensive cars, etc., etc., etc.? And you know, there was a lot of things that were discussed about that subject.

But you know, as I look back through this weekend, I have to say, this is how you keep the youth from going worldly, and developing a fun and play mentality about life. This is one of the secrets. You have seen and heard it.

Oh, I encourage you to engage your young people's hearts and lives in the conflict of the ages. This has got to be the most powerful, far-reaching doctrine that is in the whole of the Bible. I don't know if you believe that, but I want to encourage you to go search out the Bible and see just how much God says about this subject that we have chosen to set aside three days and focus upon.

We see Christ living and teaching this doctrine of the Great Commission in the whole of the four Gospels. In fact, that's basically all He did in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. The Son of God has come.

For what? To seek and to save that which was lost, and to give His life a ransom for many. So we have those four books of the Bible filled with the example and the teachings of the greatest missionary that ever walked on the face of the earth, and the first missionary. He's the sent one.

Hallelujah! We see the disciples obeying His command, this doctrine of the Great Commission, in the whole of the book of Acts. And if you look into the epistles, you'll see that the epistles are written to establish the churches so that they can follow and do the same thing, preach the gospel to every creature that hasn't heard. And Antioch is a good example of that.

Preaching, praying, sending and supporting. Every New Testament church, once it grows up a bit, once it gets its feet on the ground, once it begins to grow into a mature man, Ephesians chapter 4 is going to be a church that has a burden for the world. I don't think you can be mature if you don't have a burden for the world.

No matter how many things you have right. I was meditating upon this one command as Christ's commission recorded in the gospel of Luke. And I'd like us just to turn there.

We'll be there just a little while. Luke chapter 24. And I was thrilled to see how Christ unfolded this doctrine to His disciples.

We can read it in Matthew 28, in Mark 16, Luke 24, and also John 20 or 21. He gave it to them clearly, specifically, five times. Let's read in Luke chapter 24 from verse 44.

And He said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses and in the prophets and in the Psalms concerning me. I like that. The law of Moses, the prophets, and in the Psalms.

Then the Scripture says in verse 45, Then opened He their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures. And said unto them, Thus it is written, thus it is written, and thus it behoove Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things.

And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you, but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high. I want us to notice here in verse 44 that all of what is written must be fulfilled. That's what Jesus is saying.

These are the words which I speak unto you. Which means Christ, and we know this, you know, Christ was giving them light all through the time that He was ministering to these disciples and making disciples out of them. He was giving them the light.

He was giving them the truth of the reality of what He was going to do and what was going to happen because of what He did. Going to the cross. But they didn't see it.

It's as if their eyes were blinded. I mean, I'm amazed many times as I read, you know, He says very specifically to them, I am going to die. I'm going to be given into the hands of the Pharisees and I'm going to be ill-treated.

They're going to spit on me and they're going to condemn me and they're going to crucify me. And it's just like they looked at Him and they didn't hear Him. But all that is written of Him must be fulfilled.

And brothers and sisters, it's not all fulfilled yet. All that was written of Him is not all fulfilled. But it will all be fulfilled.

Every bit of it. And bless God, we get to be a part of that. That's something to shout about.

All that is written of Him goes through the Old Testament, goes through the Law of Moses, goes through the Psalms, goes through the Prophets. All those beautiful things that are written in there. Walk out through the pages of Isaiah in your mind this morning.

All those things are going to be fulfilled. And we, for some reason, we get to be a part of that, brothers and sisters. Amen! Hallelujah! After He spoke these words to His disciples, then the Scripture says in verse 45, and look at this, Then opened He their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures.

Now, as I look at that verse, I remember what happened to the two of them, on the road to Emmaus. Remember they were just kind of discouraged and they were going out to Emmaus and Jesus joined Himself to them and finally made it to the place where they were going and He sat down with them and the Bible says it this way in the same chapter, chapter 24. He says these words to those two men.

Chapter 24 and verse 25. Then He said unto them, O fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken. It would be a good word of rebuke to us.

Amen! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory and beginning at Moses and all the prophets He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. And I

thought about that. My, what a Bible study that must have been.

The living Word taking the written Word and expounding it to those two men. Wow! In the volume of the book it is written of Me, Jesus said in Psalm 40. In the volume of the book it is written of Me.

And those two men saw that by the revelation of the Spirit of God. So much so that after He departed from them they said these words, Did not our hearts burn within us while He talked with us by the way and while He opened to us the Scriptures? Now we went back and read that because now that is exactly what is happening again to these that are there hiding behind closed doors afraid for their lives. He does the same thing to them.

He opens up unto them the Scriptures and He preaches to them and shows them how the Scriptures speak about Him. It must have been quite a Bible study. Imagine the things that are going on inside of their heart.

I see. I see. You are right.

There is that verse too. Look at that verse. How did we miss that? When you said those words.

How could this be? And Jesus just kept going. Moses, Psalms, the prophets. Look about this verse here.

Sure enough, there it is. And the lights were going on. And if ever they could say before Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Now they can really say Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. But I want us to notice the flow of the context here. Because Christ is not just giving them some wonderful Bible study so they can all walk away thrilled at the revelation of who He is, which is a temptation for us Americans.

But He goes on to say in verse 46, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day. Now that's beautiful. That's good, solid evangelical doctrine.

Amen? Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day. Thousands of pages of evangelical doctrine have been written based on that one fundamental truth, foundational truth of redemption. And amen! Praise God! Thousands of pages of theology have been written on that one.

And thousands more on other doctrines in the Bible. Amen? But I want us to notice here in the text here that there's something else that was thus it was written. That there have not been thousands of pages of theology written on the second part of what Jesus spoke to these two men, these twelve men, eleven men.

It's not just thus it is written, it behooved Christ to suffer, but thus it is written that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations beginning at Jerusalem. Here, Jesus doesn't stop with the glorious proclamation that it is written of His redemption. But He goes on bringing out and points out to them the ultimate purpose of this glorious redemption.

And sometimes I think we get so caught up in the glorious redemption that we lose sight of or we forget about the glorious purpose of this redemption. You know, it's easy to think about the glorious redemption. And it's easy to write books about the glorious redemption.

But it's another story totally to write about the glorious ultimate purpose of that redemption and how that needs to be lived out and worked out in our everyday theology in our everyday life. And there are not thousands of pages written on this second point that Christ brought out. Is there? Praise God, there is some written, but it's not much.

Where are those thousands of pages this morning, brothers and sisters? Let's just look at one quickly here. We read these verses already this weekend, but let's look at them again in Isaiah 42 just to show you that thus it is written, not just the glorious redemption that Christ gave to us, but the glorious end of that redemption, the glorious purpose for that redemption, that also is written in the volume of the book. Behold My servant, whom I uphold, Mine elect, in whom My soul delighteth.

This is the Father speaking about His Son. Hallelujah! I have put My Spirit upon Him, and He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry nor cause His voice to be heard in the street.

A bruised reed shall He not break, and a smoking flax shall He not quench. He shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged till He have set judgment in the earth, and the isles shall wait for His law.

For thus saith God the Lord, He that created the heavens and stretched them out, He that spread forth the earth and that which cometh out of it, He that giveth breath unto the people upon it and Spirit to them that walk therein. I the Lord have called thee in righteousness and will hold thine hand and will keep thee and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house. I am the Lord, that is My name, and My glory will I not give to another, neither My praise to graven images." That's far enough to read.

We see God's beautiful redemption plan in these verses. Not only the fact that Christ is going to redeem humanity, but that Christ is going to be actively involved in pursuing humanity's redemption. And my brother and sister this morning, just because Christ has went to the cross and He laid in the grave, and rose from the dead, and now He's seated at the right hand of the Father, that doesn't mean that He is no longer actively involved in the redemption of the people.

Christ is still living out this chapter. But He has no hands but our hands, and He has no eyes but our eyes, and He has no lips but our own lips, and He has no feet to go there but our own feet. But Christ is still living out the reality.

Thus it is written, and it shall all be fulfilled. Amen? It shall all be fulfilled. I believe He also opened their eyes to these portions of Scripture, not just the ones to explain to them.

See, I told you I'm going to go to the cross. See, I told you this. I told you that.

But also the many other Scriptures that all of a sudden they are being pulled in to this whole thing. And Christ begins to open the eyes of their understanding and they see who He is. And I'm sure their hearts were thrilled as they began to see just who He is.

But Christ didn't stop by just showing them who He is. He also began to show them what He wants them to do in light of who He is. And thus we have the Great Commission.

Yes, it behooved Christ. It was a terrible necessity. And that's what the word behoove means.

It was necessary that Christ would suffer and die and rise again. But just like it behooved Christ, it was a terrible necessity for that to take place, it also behooves us. And that is also a terrible necessity that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations.

There it is. But I'm afraid in this day and age, the Great Commission has become the great omission. And the Great Commission theology is also very much the great omission in evangelical theology.

And I'll tell you why it is the great omission in the theology as well as the reality. Because it is not in the reality. And if it's not in the reality, you're not going to be writing a thousand pages about it.

Let's go on and look at another verse here. Jesus then says in verse 48, and this will lead to grip the sense of what's happening here because He is unfolding to them, you know, before their very eyes, all the plan of God. And they're seeing all of this, and then He says to them, and ye are witnesses of these things.

See? Let's go where they are as you look at these Scriptures. You guys, He says, you guys are the witnesses of these things. All those things written.

All those things back there in the Prophets and in the Psalms and all of that. You guys are the witnesses of these things. And by the way, so are we.

So are we. I mean, we're more accountable than they were when you look at all that we have in the New Testament. The tremendous revelation of the plan and purpose of God and the eternal purpose of God and how it just goes way off into eternity and you can't even hardly catch up to it.

It goes so far out into eternity, yet we have that revelation. It's in our hands. We read it in our Bibles.

We are witnesses of these things. Witnesses see, hear, and then tell. Well, that's what we've been doing this weekend, isn't it? Seeing and hearing.

God wants us to tell. Amen? But then let's look at the next verse. So beautiful how these flow together.

It's probably a bit overwhelming to these men, but I'm glad He didn't just leave them there at that point. Ye are witnesses of these things. And be gone.

But He goes on to say in verse 49, And behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you. But tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high. Thank you, Lord.

That does make the task look a little different. Tarry ye in Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high. By the power of the Holy Spirit you will do these things.

The Holy Ghost, He is the outflow of God's nature. Remember what brother Emanuel said the other evening? The outflowing of God? Well, the Holy Spirit is the outflowing of God. I appreciated those words.

I think I read them in Oswald Chambers, but it might have been in that missionary book that Emanuel had. But I think Oswald Chambers said something about that too. About... In his book, So Send I You, he talks about evangelism being the very nature of God.

The Holy Ghost. The outflowing of God. He is the outflowing of God's very nature in redemption.

The Holy Ghost is the outflowing of God's very nature in redemption. And I thought about what Emanuel was saying and you know, you take something like that, it's a nice gold nugget, I took that one home and

I've been going through this and going over it again and again. Consider it this way.

The Father outflows with redemptive love and sends His Son into the world. The Son, whose nature is the same as His Father, outflows in redemption. Philippians chapter 2. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation and took upon Himself the form of a servant.

And being found in fashion as a man, He became obedient. Obedient even unto death. That's the outflowing of the Lord Jesus in redemption.

That's redemptive love flowing out of the Lord Jesus. That He left His glorious place and came down to the earth and submitted Himself to all of those things. That's the outflowing of the Lord Jesus.

That's that abandonment that He went through. And by the way, if you think living on this earth is abandonment, what about casting yourself into the hands of evil men who take you and spike you to a cross and hang you up on that cross? That's abandonment! That's the outflowing of God in the Lord Jesus. The Father possesses His Son.

He comes to the earth. He realizes, I must be about my Father's business. The Father possesses His Son.

The man Christ Jesus. And the Father through the Son, again, is outflowing to mankind redemptively. The outflowing continues in His compassionate ministry and is consummated in the crucifixion.

That's the outflowing of God through the Son. But the outflowing is not done, brothers and sisters. Christ is laid in a grave.

He rises from the dead after He, through the eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot to God. That same Spirit raised Him up from the dead. And He walked for forty days upon the earth and shared all these things that we're looking at here today.

But after that, He ascends back into heaven. And the redemptive overflow continues. This has He, Jesus, shed on us abundantly.

The outflowing of God just continues. The Father outflows to the Son. The Son outflows to the world.

Then the Father gives the gift of the Holy Ghost to the Son. And the Son outflows the Holy Ghost down into the world. That outflow comes into the hearts and lives of those men and women that were there in the upper room.

And guess what? The outflowing just keeps on going. Think about it. It's the outflowing of God.

That's all it is. The disciples, they received, they yielded, they obeyed. And the redemptive outflow of God continues through His disciples.

So beautiful. But I want you to notice something, brothers and sisters. He gives and keeps on giving and keeps on giving and keeps on giving the Holy Ghost to them that obey Him.

And since He gave the Holy Ghost to redeem the world, if we're not willing to redeem the world, how much of the Holy Ghost can we have? Good question. In 2 Corinthians, if you want to turn there, just continue to look at this principle for a bit. 2 Corinthians 5, verse 18.

And all things are of God. Amen. All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself.

Hallelujah. He hath reconciled me to Himself. That's what salvation is.

By Jesus Christ. And hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation. Us? The apostle? Us? The preacher? Us? The leaders? No, brothers and sisters.

Us. The ecclesia. He has given to us the ministry of reconciliation.

The what? To continue this process of the outflowing of God. He has outflowed to us that He might use us to outflow to somebody else. Look at verse 19.

To wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. Wow, that's powerful stuff. Not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us. We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. You see how this thing just keeps on flowing? The responsibility? It flows from the Father to the Son.

The Son receives it. It's His very heart and nature. He overflows.

Lays His life down on a cross. Rises from the dead. Goes back to the Father.

The Father gives Him the gift of the Holy Ghost. It's the promise of the Father. And He pours it out on Pentecost.

And they receive that outflowing and take it and flow it out to somebody else. That's God's redemptive plan. And ye are witnesses of these things.

The whole of the book of Acts is a historical record of that continued outflow of God's redemptive plan. That's all it is. It is Christ fulfilling Isaiah 42.

He will not stop until He has brought judgment on this earth. You can be sure of it. All those things will be fulfilled.

He will not stop. I don't know what the timetable is. I don't know how long it's going to take.

I don't know all the reasons why it's hindered. But I know this. He will not stop.

Neither will He be discouraged until He has brought judgment upon this earth. And all the isles will hear His law. He will not stop.

It is a done deal, brothers and sisters. And Acts is just a little snapshot of how it all gets done. Talk about show and tell.

That's what the book of Acts is. It is the show side of the doctrine of the Great Commission. Praise God for those words.

Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, in the name of the Son, in the name of the Holy Ghost. Yes, that's the doctrine. Praise God for that doctrine.

But look at the show side of the doctrine of the Great Commission. Twenty-eight chapters in the book of Acts. To let us know this is how the doctrine gets lived out.

You know, I thought about it again. I've meditated quite a bit the last couple of days on that little history of charity, African Missions. I'm not sure if I did all that right or said it all right.

But I thought a lot about it. I'm not sure how you took that. You know, maybe you sat there and you thought, Oh my, this is impressive.

This is really something. Look what has happened here. Maybe you look at it as some wonderful thing that God does every now and then.

That's not how I see it. That is not a historical record of some wonderful thing that God does every now and then. It is an example of what God will do with any sincere group of men and women who feel keenly their responsibility and obey this supreme doctrine of the Great Commission.

Set their hearts to obey that which is written. It is simply an example of what God does with a group of men who fall on their knees and say, Okay God, we don't know how all this is going to get done, but we see what you say in your word and we're willing to move forward. That's what it's an example of.

God is no respecter of churches. He will do the same for any church. In fact, He must, or we will never get the task finished.

He will do the same for any church. Do you believe that? It's awful quiet. Think about it.

Ponder it a bit. Wouldn't He? Your little group, your seven men, your ten men, they fall on their face in sincerity before God and say, Okay God, here we are. We know, we see, we've read, we've heard.

We know we're responsible. We don't see our way through it all. It's a bit reckless.

Brother West, it's a bit reckless, but God, we see what your word says and we're willing to go forward. Lead us, guide us, direct us. And the years click on.

One after another after another. And you fail and you get up and keep on going. And the years keep clicking on and you just keep on going.

And the enemy fights and he resists and he does all he can to discourage you. But, you're not alone in this thing. He, who will never be discouraged until it's all done, just comes inside and picks you up again and again and again.

That's what He does. He just picks you up again and again. And the years just keep going by.

And yes, it's true. You fail and you do wrong and you think, Well, this is the right way to do it. And you find out two years later, That wasn't right.

We shouldn't have gone here. We should have done this. But you make your adjustments and you keep on going.

And the years keep on clicking by. I think that God would do the same thing with any church. In fact, if He doesn't, the task will never be finished.

It'll never be finished. One here. One there.

One over here. One over there. This has got to be the major focus of the church of Jesus Christ or it'll never be done.

And look at all the mistakes. Even all the mistakes is a testimony to all of us here. Amen? You can even go forward and make mistakes and God will still pick you up and keep on going with you.

Because your heart is in steer and you want the right things. I've been doing a little studying here lately. About the early history of the Christian Missionary Alliance.

And I don't know how many of you are familiar with them. They've lost quite a bit. If you go there, they're not what they used to be.

But as I studied the history of that group of people and churches, way back there in the beginning, in the foundation of that movement, was a foundation stone called World Evangelism. That was a foundation stone in that movement. It was seen to be the key to life and health and strength and vitality in a New Testament church.

And therefore, it was emphasized over and over and over again. That I don't agree with everything that they do. And they've lost a lot of what they used to have.

But you know, you can go there to this day and smell evangelism. And it's a hundred and twenty years later. You can still smell evangelism among them.

And world evangelism. They are missionary churches. I want to quickly read something to you and then I'll soon be done here.

Two years ago, it was my assignment to speak on the radical example of Moravian Missions. That was my assignment two years ago. I just want to give you the points real quick to refresh our memory about these Moravian people.

Number one. Missions was a church responsibility. And every pastor led his church into world missions.

Number two. The church was filled with evangelists. Not one here and one there.

They tithed their people and more than tithed their people to overseas missions. Ten percent of their monies went overseas to the missionary cause. And any expenses they had for local work was above that tithe.

The whole church was under the burden. Giving, praying, writing, listening, building a boat, filling it with goods, sailing it down there, bringing recruits when others have died. The whole church was under the burden.

Also, they believed everyone was called. Everyone was called. Everyone prepared to go.

There was none of this sitting back and taking it easy and, you know, being glad that he went and glad that she went. But, you know, my life's different and I'm doing something else. There was none of that.

They all felt like they were all called. Everyone prepared to go. Everyone.

Not everyone went, but everyone prepared to go. That means they studied the Word of God. That means they read whatever they can get their hands on about missions.

That means they were involved in the prayer meetings. That means all kinds of things. They all prepared to go.

You think about how that would change all of our lives, you know. We have a young man here, a young man over here, a young man here who says, I feel God calling me and he prepares and he changes his whole lifestyle because he wants to go. Everyone prepared to go.

They cast lots to determine who would go. So everybody had to prepare because you never knew when the lot was going to fall on you. Everyone prepared to go.

A good number of the youth didn't marry. All for the missionary cause. They knew there would be hard places to go where you couldn't take a wife.

They didn't marry just because of the missionary call. They raised their children for the mission fields. All of them.

Man, this is good, isn't it? They trained in many areas of skills so that they could use them on the field. You know, 15 years old, I already know how to do this. I want to learn this.

I want to learn this yet. I want to learn to lay concrete. I want to learn to use a computer.

I'm going to learn as many different things as I can so that if I get to go to the mission field, I'll be prepared. That was their mind. They were mostly self-supporting missionaries.

They could get away with that. There was no problem, this rich-poor distinction that we have and that we have grappled with in our missions because, and the dependency that it brings because they worked right alongside the natives and preached to them while they worked. They went to the hardest places, suffered tremendously.

They had a 24-hour-a-day prayer watch that lasted for a hundred years. Because of their burden for world missions, it sounds like they believed it was the most important thing on earth. Those at home worked and sacrificed and lived sacrificially so that they could give to the cause.

And every church was involved. Every church that was started was made and disciplined into a missionary church. Two more things.

It was a lay movement. They didn't go away to a Bible school somewhere to prepare before they went out into the mission field. It was a lay movement.

And lastly, they did not believe in missionary heroes. No missionary heroes. You're just doing your job.

You are an unprofitable servant. I'm only doing what I'm supposed to do. Why make a hero out of me? That's what they believed.

Ten what-ifs. In closing here, ten what-ifs. What if the Great Commission is the greatest and final commandment given to man? What if there are multiplied blessings hidden in this Great Commission for those who obey? Multiplied blessings.

What if there are multiplied curses lurking in the shadows of disobedience and neglect of this great command? What if the great omission of the Great Commission is the cause of the cold, anemic, Laodicean church in America? What if? What if God gave America a chance to win the world and she blew it? What if the power of the Holy Ghost was given to fulfill the Great Commission and not for our own blessing and enjoyment? What if He was given to be the outflowing of God through you and I to redeem a lost world? What if? What if the clearest expression of the body of Christ is the evangelization of the world? And if it is, we're still babes. Proud ones at that. What if the Great Commission is the salvation of the next generation? Think about it.

Every generation wonders, what about the next generation, you know? I mean, we fought the enemy for what we got. Some of us first generation Christians. We swept, we prayed, we labored.

What about the next generation? It's all given to them. What if the evangelization of the world is the salvation of the next generation and we're neglecting it? What if the Great Commission is really and truly the only reason why we are still on this earth? And lastly, what if the Great Commission is the only reason why God gave us children? What will we do when we stand before the all-seeing, all-knowing eyes of God Almighty if these ten ifs are true? And another generation comes and passes off the scene and goes their way into eternity. And up comes another generation.

That generation comes and passes on through life and off the scene and into eternity. The generations just keep on going one after another. Just reading a few words from L.E. Maxwell, his book on world missions, Total War.

Listen to what he says. Oh yes, we believe in being dedicated, committed and consecrated to a lovely Jesus, to a beautiful, well-behaved life. But to war? Never.

We are men of peace at any price. And what a price! The men of Ephraim being armed and carrying bows, armed to the teeth, turned back in the day of battle. Psalm 78, verse 9. How like them we are.

Never had we a better armed, a better trained, a better equipped number of Christian young people and never less militancy. Ours is an anemic faith. Ours is the fatal inertia on the eve of battle.

The crucial moment when most wars are won or lost. He said this about a general. You'll like this one, Brother Moses.

Brigadier General Anthony Wayne in the Civil War. With the British encamped at Germantown, George Washington held one of his inevitable councils of war. General Wayne was all for attacking without delay.

But most of the other officers sat around the table offering innumerable excuses for holding back. Sound familiar? When all the dissenting votes were in, Washington turned to General Wayne, sitting quietly in a corner reading a book. What would you say, General? Wayne slammed the book shut, then rose slowly to his feet, glaring defiance at the group of distinguished officers.

He said these words. I'd say nothing, sir. I'd fight.

I think it's time we get in the battle. And last. Years ago, 1957, I believe, these words were written by a communist desiring to shame the Christians.

He saw, because of his deep commitment to communism, he saw right through anemic Christianity in his day. He saw right through it. He knew they were just a bunch of paper soldiers.

This is what he wrote. There is one thing about which I am in dead earnest. That is the communist cause.

Imagine a cause that is absolutely gone now. How much more we? But he was in dead earnest. It is my life, my business, my religion, my hobby, my sweetheart, my wife.

Sorry, Jackie. And mistress, my bread, my meat. I work at it in the daytime, and I dream of it at nighttime.

It holds on me. Its hold on me grows, not lessens as time goes on. I'll be in it the rest of my life.

When you think of me, it is necessary to think of communism as well, because I am inseparably bound to it. Therefore, I can't carry on friendship, a love affair, or even a conversation without relation to this force, which both drives and guides my life. I evaluate people, books, ideas, actions, according to how they affect the communist cause, and by their attitude toward it.

I have already been in jail because of my ideas. And if necessary, I am ready to go before a firing squad. Even those who escape the harsher ends of life, like a firing squad.

It is not a bed of roses. A genuine communist lives in virtual poverty. He turns back to the communist party every penny that he makes, above that which is absolutely necessary to keep him alive.

We communists constantly look for places where the class struggle is the sharpest, and exploit the situation to the limit of its possibilities. We have strikes, we organize demonstrations, we speak on the street corners, we fight the police. We go through trying experiences many times a year, which the ordinary worker has to face only once or maybe twice.

And when we are not doing the more exciting things, all our spare time is taken up with the dull routine chores, the endless legwork, the errands which are inescapably connected with running a live organization. Communists don't have the time or money for many movies or concerts or T-bone steaks or decent homes or new cars. We have been described as fanatics.

We are. Our lives are dominated by our great overshadowing factor. That is the struggle for communism to take over the whole world.

Sounds like that man believes in his cause. What do you think? I think it's time we quit playing games on the battlefield, brothers and sisters. Playing games on the battlefield.

You know, I thought about it some time ago. And I'm not sure if you can even do this, but if you can, if you can do this, it's absurd. But imagine being a basketball star in this world.

Bouncing a ball around all of your days. Just bouncing a ball around, just bouncing a ball all your days. I mean, from sunup to sundown, you know, that's all you do.

Just keep bouncing that ball around, throwing it in the hoop. Bouncing the ball, throwing it in the hoop. And when it's all said and done, you stand before God and all you've done is bounce the rubber ball around on the floor and threw it in through a hoop.

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