

How to Do the Impossible

by Don Higgins

The sermon emphasizes the importance of trusting in Jesus for the impossible and living a life of dependence on the Father, highlighting the impact of Gideon scriptures around the world.

Duration: 29:09

Scripture: John 6:28

Topics: "Impossibilities"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker tells the story of a man named Boris who distributed 10,000 copies of the Word of God every year. One day, Boris encountered two men who appeared to be from the secret police. They questioned him about his actions, but Boris explained that he was giving the books to his friends as gifts. Despite his nervousness, Boris stood his ground. Eventually, he was invited to a town in northern Russia where he distributed 4,000 scriptures and helped establish a fellowship for those who had found Jesus through his efforts. The sermon emphasizes the power of the Word of God and the importance of trusting in Jesus to do the work that God requires.

Transcript

Tonight we have, we're pleased to have and fortunate to have Don Higgins with us. He's the National Treasurer of the Gideons. He lives in Kitchener, Ontario, and Mr. Higgins is involved in full-time ministry and counseling and the deeper life ministries.

He's here this evening with his wife. We're very pleased to have him come to the pulpit and speak to us from the Word of God. Please welcome with me Mr. Don Higgins.

I find that it is always somewhat of a miracle when two people don't talk to each other and during the course of a service they begin to talk about the same chapter and the same verses in the Word of God that my remarks want to be taken from this evening. So we're going to turn to the sixth chapter of John. My dear friend Peter Dick was asking me what the title of my message would be and I indicated to him it would be How to Do the Impossible.

And I find that the words of the Lord Jesus Christ in these important chapters of five, six, and seven of the book of John give to us some of the basic principles which we who call ourselves Christians need to observe the words of Jesus because these are the practical aspects of what really Christian living is all about. Before I look at a key verse in chapter six I would like to refer you to chapter five and verse 19 in

which some very profound words fall from the lips of our Savior. He says the Son can do nothing by himself.

He can only do what he sees the Father doing. Jesus lived by a divine principle that not too many Christians are aware of in our world today. The principle by which he lived was that he would not do anything except he would see his Father who lived in him do it.

Jesus never once in all of his life while here upon earth ever did anything of his own volition. His volition and his will was simply to respond to what the Father was doing in him. We find in many other verses that Jesus talks about he says things like the things that you see me do I do not do them it is the Father that lives in me that does them.

On another occasion he says if you have seen me you have seen the Father. And of course the disciples were keenly aware of the many miracles that Jesus had been doing but Jesus did not even give them much credit for believing that he was the Son of God just because they had seen him do these miraculous things but God was more or Jesus was more concerned about the disciples believing on Jesus as the Son of God because the Father had told them in their hearts given that he said to Peter Peter no man has told you that I am the Son but the Father has revealed it unto you. And the point I wish to make at the very beginning of my remarks tonight is that Jesus never did anything never expected anything to be done never raised his finger never made a remark never heaved a sigh never got angry except he saw his Father in him do it.

He lived a life of total dependence upon the Father dwelling in him and thus he became the perfect man. Thus he was the holy blameless Son of God. And then Jesus said as the Father has sent me so send I you.

And we who profess to be the children of God I believe we all know that Jesus Christ does live in us and whether that be loving my wife or disciplining my children or making a deposit at a bank or driving my car I need to be aware that it's Jesus Christ living in me that does the impossible. He ought to be the source of our love the source of our compassion the source of our patience the source of our wisdom and yes the source of our righteousness for he is our righteousness. If you are having difficulties in your life and you're finding that it's even impossible to do the practical it's likely that you are depending upon yourself rather than depending upon him.

Does that make sense? If you are having conflict in your life and disappointment and discouragement it's likely that the Holy Spirit is endeavoring to teach you that you're trusting in the wrong person and that he wants you to bring you to back to godly principles of depending upon the Lord Jesus Christ in him alone. In this precious chapter 6 of the book of John we find in the 11th verse that Jesus was faced with an impossible problem. He had more than 5,000 people around about him.

They were hungry and he didn't have any food except five loaves and two fishes. I don't see the expression of Jesus in these verses as being one of panic and distress nor do I see him trusting in himself to solve the problem but he simply turns to his father in verse 11 and Jesus took the loaves and gave thanks. He just gave thanks.

Now we might say that it was Jesus who multiplied the loaves and the fishes. In another rendition, in another gospel, we would find that Jesus lifted the loaves and the fishes up to the father and then he gave thanks. And you see this is an expression that Jesus gave of confidence in his father that his father would

solve the problem if he just gave the whole matter to him.

And he believed, so believed in his father and so was in tune with his father that he was in step in breath with an understanding of what the father was doing. And I want to suggest to you while it isn't written here that Jesus Christ knew in his man heart, if I can use that expression, that his trust in his heavenly father would solve and do the impossible. It says that Jesus took the loaves and he gave thanks and he distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted and he did the same with the fish.

A simple expression of thanks and confidence in his heavenly father knowing that the power that he needed to use was the power of the father dwelling within him. If Jesus would have exercised his own authority in this situation, he would have sinned. For the Bible says in Romans 14 and 23, whatever is not of faith is sin.

Are you trusting in Jesus, so living and abiding in you that it is no longer I that liveth but it's Christ that lives in me? Are you so trusting in Jesus that no matter what you undertake to do, Leighton, even to sing that beautiful solo that you would trust in Jesus, his spirit within you, to convey the message of the spirit to the spirit of those that are sitting here? You see, that's the way we're supposed to live. Look at some other words in this chapter 6 verses 28 and 29. Jesus was teaching by example to the disciples but they still could not understand and they said to him in verse 28 with a simple question, they asked him what must we do to do the work God requires? What must we do to do the work that God requires? And Jesus answered the work of God is this, to believe in the one he has sent.

Now I know that as Christians we've believed in the Lord Jesus Christ as our savior. We've believed in the Lord Jesus Christ to wash our sins away. We've believed in the Lord Jesus Christ for the hope of heaven and being with him for all of eternity.

But are we trusting in Jesus for the living today, tonight, tomorrow morning? Are we trusting in him that we might do the work of God? Because Jesus said the work of God is this, to believe in the one that he has sent. He has sent Jesus. You have received him.

You have accepted him into your heart. And that's where he lives. Now the work of God is to trust him to do it.

It's really that simple. And that's how the Christian does the impossible. Trusts in Jesus, abides in him, sits down, relaxes, not in passive rocking chair type of living and waiting for God to do it, but to be actively, take the songbook latent, say God I'm trusting in you, I can't do this, but here it is, and I'm experiencing the peace of Jesus Christ as I sing.

And that's the message that will touch the heart that's searching for peace. It's only Jesus that can do that. I cannot touch your spirit with the words that I speak, but it's only as the spirit of Christ that indwells the believer, as he communicates, that that will touch the broken spirit, the sinful spirit, the hungry spirit, that's what touches the spirit of another, is the spirit of Christ.

Looking further in this beautiful chapter of John chapter 6, verse 57, just as the living father sent me, and I live because of the father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. This is another way of Jesus expressing the fact that he is the bread of life, and that we as Christians, as we walk from day to day and doing our daily chores, and as we continue to eat moment by moment, as we continue to eat moment by moment of the bread of life, we will be able to feed others who are hungry and thirsty and lost.

Nothing else really counts, for as our brother read earlier, the flesh counts for nothing.

There is a plaque that hangs on many walls of Christian homes, and it says, there is only one life, it will soon be past. It's only what's done for Christ that will last. I would like to challenge that motto and suggest for a moment that there's only one word in that motto that's incorrect.

It's the word for. It's the word for. It's only what's done by Christ that will last, and you and I need to trust on the indwelling living Christ to do his work through us so that it will last for all of eternity.

That's the work that is gold and silver and precious stones. Everything else is but wood, hay, and stubble. And brother, sister, Christian tonight, thank God that you know Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, and you have started on a good foundation.

But I would say in the words of Paul that you should build on that foundation with stones of gold and silver and precious stones, the life of the Lord Jesus Christ in your daily living and trusting and abiding in him. Don't trust in yourself. Don't trust in yourself.

May it be true of your life and mine that the work of the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ has taken effect and that you no longer live, but Christ liveth in you. I would like to tell you a story tonight of a young man by the name of Boris. It's a strange name for us here in Canada, but Boris lives in Moldova, one of those communist states that was formerly called Russia, was in the Soviet Union, and was separated and made independent because of the breakup of the Soviet Union late in the 80s and early 90s.

Boris is a Gideon. He is a man who learned to trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, to do through his life what he could not do. Boris was one of the first Gideons that were established in a Gideon camp in his country that had been starved for years from knowing the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The barriers around his country had been so solid and so secure that hardly a person had a New Testament or a portion of God's Word. Anything that was around was probably 40, 50, 60, even 80 years of age, a tattered old Bible perhaps that had been passed down from a mother or a father. But Boris was one of these young men who received a scripture, a shipment of scriptures made possible through the Gideons International here in North America.

And with fervor and excitement and now with freedom, a newfound freedom that he could give expression to his life in the Lord Jesus Christ, he began to distribute scriptures on the streets of his hometown called Kishnev. As he was distributing these scriptures, people were hungry for them and literally crowds of people were crowding around him. Gideons in former Russian republics individually have committed themselves personally to distribute 10,000 scriptures each per year.

Do you think you could find 10,000 people in your community to give a copy or a tract or piece of the Word of God? But Boris and others like him distribute 10,000 copies every single year. And Boris suddenly realized that there were two men looking over his shoulder, tall, astute, uniformed, well-dressed, and they looked like the KGB, the secret police. And his heart began to tremble and one of these men came up and said to him, Boris, what are you doing? He said, I'm just giving these books to my friends.

The man said, people don't give out books, they sell books. He said, no, my friends in America have given me these books and I'm giving them to everyone who wants one. This man quizzed him some more and Boris became more and more nervous.

And finally, Boris said, who are you? He said, I'm the mayor of a large town way up in northern Russia. And in this town where I live, there are universities and printing presses. And in my town, we develop much of the Russian propaganda, the communist propaganda that has been disseminated throughout the world and throughout our states.

He said, Boris, do you have any more of these books? He said, I'm just about out of them. He said, when will you get some more? He said, I expect a shipment every month. And that's what Gideons in Russia do, they expect a shipment every month.

500,000 scriptures Gideons send to Russia every month. And this man said to him, I want you Boris to come and bring as many Bibles as you can to my town. People in my town need your book.

Who was doing all of this work? You see, God had prepared a way and Boris was just trusting in Jesus to follow where Jesus was leading him. But Boris said, I don't have any money. I don't have the airfare.

He said, doesn't matter. He said, someone will deliver a ticket to your home. And so it was in a few days that Boris received the airfare and the air tickets to travel to this town.

He packed away 4,000 scriptures and took it to this far northern city. He was greeted at the friend, the mayor. He distributed his, his testaments in a very few days, all throughout the town in strategic places.

And he came home. About six weeks later, he received another telephone call from a person that he did not know. And they said, will you come back to meet us? He said, who is us? And they said, you will find out when you get here.

He said, I don't have the money for the airfare. They said, you go down to a certain travel agency in your town and you'll find that your ticket is already purchased. We want you to come.

As Boris took that airplane and landed in that airport once again, there were 40 people who met him on the tarmac, tears streaming down their face. They said, we have found Jesus Christ as our personal savior. Will you help us set up some kind of a fellowship in a place where we can worship together and experience Christ together? That's what the word of God does.

That's what the word of God, it does when we trust Jesus. So Boris had taken some more scriptures with him. And now there's a Gideon camp in the town that he went to that used to be the source of Russian propaganda.

And now there are Gideons there who distribute Gideon scriptures. That's how God works. You say, praise the Lord in his church.

That's the way Gideon testaments and scriptures work. We could go on and on and tell you many testimonies of how God is working through Gideon scriptures. Fellows, this may be a chance to hold your sweetheart's hand or something and husband, you reach over or whatever.

You might want to just do it on your own, but can you find your pulse on your wrist or on your friend's wrist? Just reach over and find your pulse. Can you do that? Can you feel it thumping away there? Can you feel it thumping away? You found it? Do you know that every time that that thump occurs, another Gideon scripture is placed somewhere in the world. 42 million times a year, your heart beats and that thump goes in your wrist.

And 42 million scriptures every year are distributed somewhere in the world by Gideons. Africa, France, Germany, praise God in Russia. Yes, in places like Australia and Canada and United States, but all around the world.

Every time your heart beats, there's another Gideon scripture placed somewhere in the world. The word of God is quick and powerful and it's sharper than any two edged sword dividing asunder soul and spirit and of the joints and marrow. And we could go on and on and tell you many stories of how God has used Gideon scriptures around the world to bring men and women to Jesus Christ.

The stories that I could tell you tonight would only be samples of many that we hear of. And the many that we hear of are probably only indicative of a small, small portion of what God is doing. But you see, Boris was dependent upon Jesus Christ living in him to be at the right place at the right time and doing the right thing so that God could open up to him the miracle that the father was doing.

Boris didn't do that. You understand? He was just God's instrument at the right place in the right time. I would hope that a church like this would know enough about the Gideons, having the presence of the Gideons here in your church, my friend Peter Dick.

But the Gideons are organized in 172 countries around the world. 172 countries. There are literally on-premises native missionaries who regularly distribute the word of God.

Our responsibility here in North America is largely to supply the finances to pay for the scriptures that are sent all around the world, just to provide the scriptures for these missionaries in these foreign countries, foreign to us, but home country for them. We have stories where Gideons will travel on bicycles for tens and twenties of miles to take scriptures into schools, into hospitals, where young children are schooled and given scriptures so that they can learn the word of God and come to know the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal savior. Did you know that in Russia today the Gideons are considered to be an educational society? An educational society.

And the authorities invite them into the schools regularly to not only distribute scriptures but to teach the children the moral principles that are found in the word of God. What a contrast, what a contrast to here in Canada, where in some of our schools the authorities don't want anything to do with the Gideons, much less their scriptures, and we can't even get into them. But we thank God that where doors have been closed, God is opening some.

And there are still methods and means whereby the Gideons can place youth testaments in the hands of children all across Canada. I received my Gideon testament as a child in 1947. That was the second year that Gideon testaments were distributed in Canada.

In the back of that little Gideon testament is my signature, where I accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as my personal savior. In 1947. Since 1946, Gideons have placed over 12 million youth testaments in the hands of schoolchildren in Canada.

That's almost half the population of Canada. And so some of these undoubtedly have been lost or destroyed or worn out, but testimonies still come to us of young people who years ago accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as personal savior because of that little Gideon red testament. How many in this room have received or as a child received a Gideon testament in grade five? Look at that.

See that, Peter? That must be about 75% of the people that are here. We praise God for the witness of the word of God that has taken place in Canada through the work of the Gideons, and we just ask that you would do two or three things in respect to the Gideons. Number one, pray.

Pray. Pray for us as Gideons that we will have wisdom and understanding to strategically place scriptures where they need to be, and that God will empower us and enable us to do that. There are something like 3,200 Gideon members all across Canada, and they are, most of them, active in one way or another in endeavoring to place scriptures in strategic places where God can use his word to reach the lost.

Our motto and purpose in the Gideons is to win men and women to the Lord Jesus Christ, and we chiefly use the method of distribution of scriptures to do that. Secondly, you can remember the Gideons at special times in your life, financially, and we'd like to suggest to you that when someone in your family or a friend has passed away, that you can use the Gideon Memorial Bible Plan to place scriptures in memory of the departed one, and if you have a family situation where someone in your family passes away, you could consider designating the Gideons as the organization to which you'd like contributions to be made so that more scriptures can be placed. So we leave the Gideon ministry with you, but we also leave the word of God with you and ask that you consider trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ for all of life, and he will live his life through you so that you can truly demonstrate the life of the Lord Jesus Christ in your home, your community, your church, and your work.

God bless you.

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