

Funeral of Uncle Gerhard Rudert

by Erlo Stegen

The sermon celebrates Gerhard Rudert's life, highlighting his struggles, transformation through faith, and lasting impact on others.

Duration: 33:20

Scripture: Matthew 4:19, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 16:24, John 1:14, John 3:16, John 14:6, 1 Timothy 1:15-16

Topics: "Funeral"

Description

In this sermon, Dr. Andre shares a personal story about a man who sought his help in understanding a certain topic. Despite being initially hesitant, Dr. Andre patiently explained the concept to him until the early morning hours. The man then confidently demonstrated his understanding in front of three professors. Dr. Andre also highlights the importance of dedication, diligence, and discipline in one's life, which he had observed in the man's character. Additionally, Dr. Andre mentions the man's journey of finding faith in Jesus Christ and how it transformed his life.

Transcript

Shall we pray? We thank you, Lord, for this privilege of being together here today. We ask you that you would presence yourself and reveal yourself to us, and may not one of us regret that he has been here today. To your glory we ask it.

Amen. I was in Australia when I heard about Gerhard's sickness, and then it was quite a shock when I heard that the Lord had taken him home. Because we had made arrangements already, I said as soon as he can get out of hospital, bring him to Wasi Zabantu, he's got his house here, but I'd like to take him into my house.

And just a little while ago when we went for linakum, I said, Gerhard, don't you think it's time now that you come to Wasi Zabantu? You've learned enough about water, and you come. And we had a joyous time together, and then he told me that he was just busy with something in linakum area, and he thought he'd like to do that first. And Terry Smith as well.

I said, alright, as the Lord leads you. When I heard that he had passed away, my heart broke. I felt like crying and weeping.

And then I said, oh, now I'm not there, and I can't be here at this funeral. Well, I said to myself, never mind, God willing I'll be there on Sunday, and then I'll give the message I'm going to give now, on Sunday. And I would like to thank God for the privilege of being here today, having made that possible.

We cancelled Japan, otherwise most probably I wouldn't be here today. And so from Korea we went to Australia, we shortened the trip, not knowing that God would lead this way. Before I speak about Gerhard and what he experienced, I would like to read a word to you from 1 Timothy, chapter 1, verse 15 and 16.

Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance. Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the worst. But for that very reason I was shown mercy, so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display His unlimited patience.

As an example for those who would believe on Him and receive eternal life. When we left Australia, about half an hour after we had left, they opened the air conditioner in the plane and it was too cold, and it just blew in my face. And then I got sick on the way.

When we got to Singapore, we went to the hotel, and that room was still here. I would like to touch on this point, that Christ might display His unlimited patience, as an example for those who would still believe on Him. Gerhard has got a wonderful testimony.

Maybe many of you just know it in part, but I'd like to give it to you. We've spent an hour here already, more than an hour. I want to make it short.

Maybe another day I can carry on with some important things. I've brought his book along, his notebook. He had three points, dedication, diligence and discipline.

But we've got no time to speak about that. But those points were visible in his life. Many years ago, Tante Luise came here, and said, Eru, my nephew is sick, very sick.

Couldn't you, when you are in Pretoria or Johannesburg, make a point that you meet with him? I said, gladly, but I don't know when I'm going to Joburg. Couldn't he just come straight here? She says, no, he won't come. I said, do you think so? She says, I know he won't come.

But maybe, if you have met with him, and had a talk with him, you'll win his confidence, and then he'll come. I said, okay, we'll commit it to the Lord and see. So after a while, I went to Kriegerstorp, Waldemar's place, and notified him that I was there, and then he came.

I told Tante Luise, don't speak about spiritual things. Tell him that Natal is a garden province, we've got nice places here, we'll take him around, show him around. If he comes, I'll take him into my house, take special care of him.

But then it worked out that I was in Kriegerstorp, we notified him, and he said he'd come. So he came. So we chatted about wind and weather, and I invited him.

Not long after that, I received a phone call from his parents. Has Gerd arrived? I said, no. Oh my, they were worried.

They say it's four days already that he has left, and he hasn't arrived yet. Has something happened on the way? I said, don't worry, maybe everything will work out fine. And at the end of the fourth day, he arrived.

So he told me, afterwards, he got to Van Rienen's house, and he didn't have the nerve to come here straight away. So he went into a motel and had a couple of beers, quite a few, won't tell you how many. So the next day, he carried on, he got to Greytown, he went into the hotel, and had another couple of beers.

And he says he drank and drank and drank. When he got to the entrance here, he said, I didn't have the nerve to come in. So he went through to Stange, went into the hotel, and again, the beer story.

So it was good that he drank beer, not whiskey and vodka, the strong things, but he drank quite a bit of beer. Then he arrived, showed him his room, said, make yourself at home, you can do what you like, you're at home, make this your second home. He was very depressed, weak, went into bed, and stayed in his room for two weeks.

Never came out. Tante Louisa was so kind and visited us. And she went to Gerhardt, I said, this is his room, she went in, and she came out and said, oh, Erdo, don't let this man go to Reckon Ruins.

I said, why? Well, you've got to force him to get up, force him to do something. Well, that's German, to act like that. It was natural.

I said, Tante Louisa, my father was a farmer, and just as a sideline, he had many pigs when we were small. And even some were grazing on the felt. I said, I think I know a pig.

The English speak of pig-headedness. I said, I know a pig. You take it by its tail and pull it and it goes forward.

You push it and it goes backward. Leave him. We are praying that God would help him.

If he feels like sleeping and being in the room, I want to grant him that liberty. Oh, she says, Erdo, no. I said, all right, thank you very much.

She left. But I didn't force him. He stayed in his room another week.

And after three weeks, as we were in the dining room, suddenly Gerhard came in, all smiles, happy. He says, have you got some work for me? And I thought, well, I'm not a psychologist, but I think these clever people, it's good to get their thoughts away from their mind and put it into their hands. I said, Gerhard, we're going in for trout down here.

Would you be interested to take a pick and a shovel and to dig pools for the trout? He said, gladly. But we won't give him any book work or things. Let his mind rest.

And then he told me what had happened. The last few days of those three days, he couldn't see at all, was blind. If he had to go to the bathroom, he'd feel with his hands, go to the bathroom.

Those three weeks were days of a great struggle, a spiritual struggle. He said, I can't believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He was a prophet, a good teacher, a good man, but he wasn't the Son of God.

So day and night, he was busy with this. He was a seeking man. You've heard that he went to Japan.

He studied Japanese. He taught them. I thought, well, if I go to Japan, I'll ask Gerhard to interpret for me because he studied it for quite a while.

At the same time, he went from one temple to the other. I think if you wouldn't be sick and you do that, you'll get sick because of that. So he was seeking.

He said he had no joy, no happiness, no peace. He had studied, but that vacuum couldn't be filled by studying. He tried so many things.

He got married, but that didn't fill this vacuum in his heart. He said, there must be something, but I don't know what it is. But he was seeking for it.

So he says, I'm going to the East. I'm going to delve into their religions. Maybe I will find what I am seeking.

So when he was here, he had this fight within himself. He said, I can't believe that Jesus is the Son of God. Yes, he was a prophet, I agree.

He was a good man. He was no less than Goethe was. You know who Goethe was.

Well, then after three weeks, he said, I can't anymore. He said, Jesus Christ, I accept you now as the Son of God. And his blindness fell like scales to the ground.

He could see. He was full of life. He felt as if he could work.

So he jumped out of the bed, got dressed, and says, have you got work for me? He said, all right. We went down there. And he did it very well.

Three years in succession, he broke the world record. Got fingerlings. Within ten months, those trout were table size.

The parks board came. He explained everything to them. And what he had done, they said, they moaned and groaned.

And they said, oh, what have you done? We've got to rewrite all our books and our theories. You've proved us wrong. We claim that no trout will grow and be alive below 1,500 meters, 4,500 feet.

And you're only 3,000 feet. And you're breaking the records. But then in summer, I must say, some were dying.

And he thought, why? And then he stopped feeding them during the day. He only fed them early morning and late at night. And the problem was solved.

And they didn't die. And he was diligent, dedicated, and disciplined in his work. He didn't break contact with his doctors and professors.

He used to write to them because he had a tough time. He told me how sometimes at night he'd escape from hospital and walk in his pajamas barefoot on the streets. He was seeking for something, but he couldn't find it.

Till he found the Lord Jesus Christ. And that, he became so real to him that it revolutionized his life. Changed his life completely.

That's why he couldn't stop facing people, asking them, Do you know the Lord Jesus Christ? Because he had met him as the Son of God. And Gerhard has been a person through whom the Lord Jesus could display his unlimited power, grace, patience. And from the fish, we went to water.

I said, Gerhard, we want to bottle water. It was about 25 years ago. I said, it's just a pity that we're in Africa.

If we'd be in Europe, it would be easier. Because the Africans, if you speak about water, they laugh. You don't drink water.

But I said, let's try it. He found a spring down there. He drilled into the side, put in plastic pipes.

They were busy with it for a long time. But above all, Christ. He was dedicated to Christ.

He says, Christ, from now on, is my life. I didn't know him, but now I know him. And I just want to follow him.

That's why he was so precious to us. And in his faithfulness and everything, it was marvelous. And then he says, look, Elo.

My knowledge about water is very small. As you've heard, you have to start from scratch. He said, shouldn't I go and study? If I know more, I'll be able to help you more.

That's why he went. He wasn't young anymore. He hadn't studied anymore for a long time.

His father came and visited us. And he said, you know, that the doctor had told me, his brain cells were dying at such a rate, that within six months, he could be a cabbage. And he says, look for some institution.

Book a place now already, because usually they're fully booked. That when the need is there, that you'll have a place where he can go. And then the doctor said his body would shrivel up.

And then the end. But the day when he said, I accept you, Lord Jesus, not only as a prophet, a teacher, but as the Son of God, the miracle happened. The studies aren't easy.

He told me, you know, we've got so much work. You must pray. I won't even finish all the books just by reading them.

Forget about studying. But the Lord assisted him. They were the false prophets, which always will be.

They said, give it up. You'll never make it. But it wasn't even necessary for me to tell him, persevere.

Carry on. He says, I'll try what I can do. Even if they are prophets of doom, I won't listen to them.

I'll carry on. Then a final test came. And he says there was something he didn't understand, how it worked.

And he had to write the next morning. So he phoned, I think he phoned Dr. Andre. He said, could you help me? I've got a problem.

I don't know how this works. He waited, he waited. He thought, well, he won't come.

He had told him, I'm very busy. I don't know whether I'll still make it today. He says, well, I've got to write tomorrow morning.

He says, I'll do my best. Around about 12 o'clock he arrived, or they met. And then he patiently explained to him how it worked.

He says he was busy with it till morning hours. No time to sleep anymore. So he went.

When he got there, they said he should go into a certain room. There were three professors. They gave him chalk.

Could you go to the blackboard? And explain to us how such and such a thing works. And that was the very thing Dr. Andre had taught him. And told him.

It was fresh in his mind. So, with perfect liberty, he took the chalk. He went to the blackboard and he wrote it.

He just wrote the whole thing down. When he was halfway, they said, wait a minute. Is that true? Is that correct? If you write it like that.

He said, yes, it is. And then he carried on. So that he passed with flying colors.

When they started, they were, I think, in their 40s. At the end, there were only a quarter of them that passed. And Geat was one of them.

When he had passed, he says, no, I didn't study to pass. I studied to understand. So he went to the professor and said, there are things I don't understand.

May I carry on studying? They said, well, it's the first time in our history, in our knowledge, that if a person has passed, that he wants to attend classes again. So he carried on for another six months. Till he felt, now I understand.

I'm satisfied. I see how it works. But he said, no, I'm not coming back yet.

I need some more experience. I want to carry on. That when I come back, I know what I'm doing.

And then he always added what we've heard already. I don't do it for men. I do it for him.

Who saved my life. Who has forgiven me my sins. Who made a new creation out of me.

So, Gerhard is a testimony of what the Son of God can do in a person's life. He never looked back. I don't know what thought that he has brought and said, I should deviate or change.

He says, I can only carry on. He came to me and said, just look how God has blessed me. Just read this.

Madame Gouillon was one of his first books that he read. And she was in jail, you know, for how many years. She went through hell for her faith.

But she never, never looked back. She never became unfaithful. She carried on to the end.

In prison with her nails. She dug into her stones. That a person has got to persevere, be faithful to the end.

And she was a good influence to him. And then over and over again, he'd come. He says, just listen to this.

John Fletcher was a great blessing to him and his commentaries. And it was a man of whom John Wesley says, of all the men of God that I know, there is none that, no one that I respect as John Fletcher. Because in these 32 years that I know him, I haven't heard one idle word coming out of his mouth.

Those are men whom we can respect. Who control even their tongue. God says, hello, whatever.

There's no thought of cost. I found the precious pearl. And I gladly turn away from everything.

So that I may have this pearl. And that is Jesus Christ. Just the other day I said, Gerhard, you know, it's not a sin if you accept money for what you're doing.

He says, but I do it for the Lord. I don't do it for money. I just want my Lord to be glorified through it.

Because he's done so much for me. And it's a privilege for me if I can deny myself and just serve him. That's short, in a nutshell, some of the things that he experienced.

He experienced the Lord Jesus as real, alive, and one who changed his life completely. Shall we pray? We thank you, Lord, that you chose Gerhard Trudet to show the world that you are not only the son of man, but the son of God, who came into this world to save sinners. To forgive them their sin, to cleanse their lives, and to set them free completely.

And then to fill their lives, fill that vacuum with life, peace, happiness, with everything that is good. And we thank you, Lord. Lord, you've taken him out of our midst unexpectedly.

We thank you for his dedication. We thank you for his diligence. We thank you for his faithfulness.

And that he kept the faith to the end. Amen. And not only the last days, but I just mentioned the last few months were joyous ones for him, where he rejoiced.

Whenever we met, he was full of praise and joy, as if he knew that soon he'd experience his greatest joy. Thank you.

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