

# Obedience to Jesus' Final Command

by Erlo Stegen

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*Jesus' final command to the disciples is to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, and those who believe will experience signs such as casting out demons, speaking in new tongues, taking up serpents, and laying hands on the sick and recovering.*

**Duration:** 1:07:14

**Scripture:** Mark 16:14-17, John 14:26, Acts 1:8, Ephesians 5:18

**Topics:** "Obedience"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of spreading the gospel and carrying out the work that God has called us to do. He mentions how the disciples, despite their limitations, passed on the message of Jesus to others, who then continued to spread it further. The speaker also highlights the need for believers to be filled with the Holy Spirit in order to have the power to be witnesses for Christ. He encourages listeners to be mindful of their actions and words, as they never know who may be watching and how it can impact their testimony. The sermon concludes with a reminder of the significance of the day of Jesus' ascension and the importance of gathering together to worship.

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## Transcript

Thank you, Lord, that we can meet now, on this Ascension Day, where you ascended into heaven. Be with us, bless us through your word. Amen.

Amen. Mark chapter sixteen. And verse fourteen.

Mark chapter sixteen. Later he appeared to the eleven as they sat at the table, and he rebuked the unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who had seen him after he had risen. And he said to them, Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

He who believes and is baptized will be saved, but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe. In my name they will cast out demons, they will speak in new tongues.

They will take up serpents, and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them. They will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover. So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, he was received up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God.





about the fact that the others are being blessed.

But if you want that blessing, you first have to go through that difficulty before you get the blessing. There where Jesus suffered in the greatest way was the most difficult time for him. It was exactly there where he was uplifted.

They didn't know when he would appear. They were sitting there at the table eating, not knowing when he would come, but unexpectedly he was in their midst. When he appeared, they forgot about everything else, even about their food.

They must have sensed this is something important that he is telling us now. And when someone is dying, you listen very attentively to try and catch every last word that he's trying to say. You read his lips.

You don't want to miss out on a word. Because of time, I'll just touch on three things. The first point.

He rebuked them. And secondly, he instructed them. And the last point, his promises.

The three main points. The first thing he did when he was in their midst, he rebuked them strongly. It's interesting that when he's there for the last time, that he should actually rebuke them.

One would think, well, if you're speaking to people that you love for the last time, you must speak kindly to them, show them love. And it's like parents, who have like a monkey love for their children. They just say kind things and good things to them, even when the children do wrong things.

They just close an eye. It's a soft love. It's a monkey love.

They can't be hard on the children. They can't chastise the children. They can't find fault with them.

Oh, just speak nicely. I don't want the church, the child to run away, turn his or her back on me. You breeding a bunch of fighters.

So Jesus came to them. This was the last time he was with them. The first thing he did, he rebuked them.

He rebuked them, yet he was not cross with them, and shouting at them, and even cursing and swearing, and so we must learn as well, when one speaks to one's children, one must rebuke them, but not in anger and saying all the wrong things to them because one is angry with the child. But he rebuked them nevertheless in a very strong way, I don't think that they will have forgotten this rebuke quickly. It was because God is love, Jesus himself is love, and in his love he rebuked them.

Why did he rebuke them? Because of their lack of faith, their unbelief. Why did they not believe? He said because of their hardness of heart. Because they did not believe those who had seen him after he had risen.

I don't know whether there is a worse sin than that of hardening one's heart, it's a terrible thing. If you look at the different sins, murder, adultery and so many other sins, but I don't know whether there is a worse sin than hardening your heart. And Jesus rebuked them because they did not believe those that reported to them that he had risen.

When those women came and spoke to them, told them that they had seen him, that he had risen, they didn't believe them. They said, how must we believe it? We didn't see him, we didn't touch him, we didn't

experience it, we weren't there, why didn't he come to us? We can't believe it. It was difficult for them to accept what those other women had told them.

But they hadn't just heard it from those women, for Jesus himself had told them beforehand, saying that the Son of Man must be crucified and die, but he will rise again. He will rise again, he will rise again. The prophets, the scriptures had told them so clearly that he would die after three days, he would rise again.

But they said no, because he didn't come to me personally, and didn't appear to me, until I put my finger in his hands and my hand in his side, I will not believe beforehand. And God rebuked them severely, like he will rebuke you too, and is rebuking you, if you are one who does not believe. Then you need to go on your knees and say oh Lord, Soften this hard heart of mine, make it soft, that I will not be hard when you appear and when you speak to me through your word, or even when you reveal yourself to others.

Jesus rebuked them. Soften this hard heart of mine, make it soft, that I will not be hard when you speak to me through your word, or even when you reveal yourself to others. Soften this hard heart of mine, make it soft, that I will not be hard when you speak to me through your word, or even when you reveal yourself to others.

He rebuked them for they had not believed what the others had told them, what they had experienced. They said no, we want to experience it first hand, and we won't believe it until then. He doesn't need to go to everyone.

Who are you in any way to demand that Jesus must come to you personally? He can send someone else to you. You are cheeky. If you say no, He must come to me personally.

He has the right to send someone else to you, and you can accept that as from God, and if you don't want to accept that, then obviously you are going to be on your way to hell, but you deserve to be. God has the right to use someone else, to speak through someone else, and you need to accept that when someone comes to you. Otherwise you are just bringing a curse upon yourself when you say no, because you are so super spiritual now.

You say no, I want God Himself to reveal Himself to me. I won't accept it if someone else talks to me. And the second point is where He instructed them to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

He who believes and is baptized will be saved, but he who does not believe will be condemned. He says he who does not believe will be condemned, because even if you are baptized, you will still be condemned if you do not believe. And when He had rebuked them and dealt with that hardness of heart, that unbelief in their hearts, then after that He could say to them, go now into all the world and preach to every creature.

This word is not only directed at the apostles. It is for all of us here. This word is just as relevant to us today as it was to the disciples on that day.

For we are now His disciples and He expects from us to carry out the gospel to every creature. Yes, we don't have all the same gifts and all the same talents. Not everyone is expected to preach, but everyone is expected to carry out the gospel in one way or the other.

Maybe you just need to be kind to somebody, speak friendly words to him, greet him in a nice way, help someone that is in need. There are many ways that we can carry out the gospel. Maybe you are not even involved in the passing on of the gospel.

Perhaps you are deliberately standing in the way of those who are spreading the gospel. You are standing in God's way. You are standing in God's way.

I cannot be everywhere where you are, but there where you are, you need to carry out the gospel. Pass it on with your family, your friends, your neighbors. I cannot be there, but you are there.

You need to spread the gospel. That is God's command to us. And woe to us if we don't do it.

Here is now the Lord's will which he had for his disciples and for us, for all of us. Woe to us if we don't carry out what he has said here in this last will of his. He first rebuked them for the hardness of their faith.

He first rebuked them for the hardness of their faith. You want a special revelation? You will never get it if you don't obey this, what you have been told. And then his instruction, his command, woe to us, woe to everyone, old or young, who disregards this last command of the Lord.

And then he says, he who believes will be saved. If you accept that which you are told, you will be saved. You accept.

You accept. You accept. You take to heart.

You believe what you are told. Not like those who say, well, I cannot accept it. This is just this person speaking to me.

You have to accept it because that is God speaking to you. But many people will end up in hell because they harden their hearts because they do not believe. They cannot accept what they are told.

Go into all the world. That is the command. But maybe you say, well, I cannot go.

I am too shy. That is not in my personality. I cannot do it.

Don't you realize that if a house is burning down and there is a child inside who is about to die, wouldn't you run in and save it? Now here are his promises. And these signs will follow those who believe. In my name they will cast out demons.

They will speak with new tongues. They will take up serpents. If they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them.

They will lay hands on the sick and they will recover. There is nothing of what the Lord Jesus promised here which the disciples did not experience. These are the signs which follow those who believe.

If there are no signs that are following you who believe, it shows that you do not believe. In my name they will cast out demons. Remember that demon-possessed girl who had that fortune-telling spirit.

When she met with Paul, he drove out that demon. She was set free. These are the signs which follow those who believe.

And there are people with different demons in them. It can be alcohol, it can be anger, it can be lust. But when they meet up with those who believe, these demons and evil spirits have to leave.

And then there are the demons of stubbornness, of hardness of heart. That person listens to no one and accepts nothing. But when someone comes who believes, can speak to that person, that person is touched, those demons have to leave.

And then there is the evil spirit of grudges, of unforgiveness and hatred. These are all these demons which have to leave when you come with the gospel. That kind of spirit cannot exist when the gospel comes.

And they will speak in new tongues. They will speak in tongues. And they will speak with new tongues.

That happened at Pentecost, where the disciples spoke not with tongues of angels, but with tongues of men. Languages which people could understand. In today's language, English, Afrikaans, Zulu, people could understand.

And they were amazed because they heard these people speaking in languages which they hadn't learned, but which those people understood. It was their language. New tongues.

But then there are also the tongues of angels which need interpretation. But then there is also the tongues of demons which need interpretation. But then there is also the case where a person changes the way he speaks.

He has a new tongue. He used to swear and curse and be rude and impolite, unfriendly. Suddenly he meets up with the Lord Jesus, his life is changed, and the way he speaks is brand new.

He has a new tongue. And they will take up serpents. And they will take up snakes.

When Paul was shipwrecked on that island, it was very cold. They made a fire and they were putting logs on the fire. Paul put some on and a snake came out and tangled itself around his hand.

And the people said, well this must be a very bad sinner because he escaped the shipwreck, but now he has to die. But Paul just took the snake off into the fire and it died. And confirm everything with signs.

How wonderful that He now sits at the right hand of the Father. All power is given unto Him and every knee shall bow. Every tongue will confess that He is Lord.

And even if you don't want to admit that now, you will have to admit it one day. So this is a wonderful time, a wonderful day that we remember. He ascended into heaven, was given that power, and He said, and after ten days then, He sent the Holy Spirit.

That is Pentecost. And He went up there to sit there to be with those that believe and to help those. Had He not ascended, we would not have received the Holy Spirit, the Comforter.

He said, I must go first, I must go to the Father, and only then can I send the Holy Spirit. So it's a great thing that Jesus ascended into heaven. And I experienced that the Lord visited us here this morning.

I don't think the disciples could ever be the same again after that which they heard from the Lord. We heard how the Lord Jesus came and rebuked them. Often we pray and we say, Lord, please reveal Yourself to us.

But in Malachi we read that when He comes, who will be able to stand when He comes? And maybe the disciples as well, when they heard Jesus had appeared to some of the other disciples, they said, oh, we wish He would appear to us. But when He came and He did appear to them, it was to rebuke them. And that can be the same with us as well.

In Malachi we read that He will purify the Levites as silver and as gold. And that's what He'll do when He'll come to you and to me and reveals Himself to us. And we also heard how the Lord Jesus then sent the disciples to go out into all the world.

And we heard that pertains to you and it pertains to me as well. If a person has been sent, he cannot just do what he likes to do. If a person has been sent, he can't be busy with his own things.

He's got an obligation to complete that mission and that task for which he's been sent. And I was reminded also there where Jesus said to His disciples that I have food from which you know nothing, and that is to do the will of My Father who has sent Me, that when we do His will, at the same time we are strengthened. And that's my being.

And that's maybe why a person experiences leanness of soul and experiences his life not being fulfilled. Maybe you're not busy with the work for which you have been sent. And then we heard about the promises that the Lord gave His disciples, His will, that also doesn't only pertain to them, but is also His will for us.

And the Lord Jesus also said, when I go, I will send the Comforter and He said, wait for that promise that you will be filled with the Holy Spirit to receive the power to take My message. May that be our desire to be filled with the Holy Spirit. And in Thessalonians it even says, be filled with the Spirit as a command.

Uncle Ben, would you please close for us? Thank you. May I share something before we pray? I was asked the other day to go and collect some parts from a firm which I had never been to. And when I got to that firm, I said, I'm from Mseni Farming, I would like to collect that which I've been asked to collect.

And a black man said to me, one can recognize the people that are from Mseni. I said, how do you recognize them? He said, here. He pointed just to his lips and said, I can recognize you here.

I said, what difference is there? He said, there is a tremendous difference from the way you speak and the other people. And I realized what a tremendous challenge we face. We never know who is watching us and at what time.

But when I heard that they will speak in different tongues, I realized what the Lord has done for us. Therefore, let us carry on following the Lord. Wherever we are, we are proclaiming the gospel.

And I was collecting parts and I was recognized from where I come. And if I would have come in a different way, I could have spoiled the testimony of all those who had been to that firm before. Let us pray.

We thank you, Lord, that we were able to be together here today. Many people have forgotten that it's the day of your ascension today. In a way, we have made a statement by coming together here today.

And it's been a privilege, Lord, to listen to your word. In a new way, you have sent us out again today. Grant us that faith and that Spirit of God that will be on our lips, in our hearts, in our minds, in all our being.

So that we will carry out your gospel in a new way. And make use of the chances that you give us. And as we part now, we pray that you will part us with your blessing.

Give us all that we need to live lives that will bring honor and glory to your name. For your name's sake, we ask it. Amen.

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