

A True Witness #3

by Ernest C. Reisinger

The gospel is a divinely inspired message about God, sin, Christ, and redemption, and it must be communicated in power with a clear understanding of repentance and faith.

Duration: 1:25:30

Scripture: Matthew 28:19-20, 1 Thessalonians 2:3-7, 1 Thessalonians 2:9-10, 1 Thessalonians 2:13, 2 Timothy 2:24

Topics: "Christian Life"

Description

In this video, the discussion group focuses on ways to enhance their witness for Christ. One suggestion is for Christians to spend time in prayer and reflection, preparing themselves to effectively convey the gospel message. They also discuss the importance of presenting the gospel in a relevant and understandable way, especially in a society where words can lose their meaning. The group emphasizes the need for Christians to live out their faith beyond just Sundays, acknowledging the challenge of being a Christian in everyday life. The speaker emphasizes that the gospel must reach the whole person, including their intellect, and encourages the group to have a solid understanding of the gospel message in order to effectively communicate it.

Transcript

Before we have our closing question, may I just call your attention to two more books. The books I called your attention to this morning were certainly relevant to evangelism and our theme this week. And there are at least two more, and I'm sure Mr. Eckerman wants me to say something about this, and I think I will, of this book.

But Words to Winners of Souls by Charles Haddon Spurgeon is most helpful. You won't have to blink and apologize. I meant Soul Winner, excuse me.

I'm holding this one up and talking about this one. The Soul Winner by Spurgeon, not Words to Winners of Souls. This is a little book that I referred to a while ago that I took with me to the mountain that day.

This book, the Bible in a paper bag, and I highly commend it to you. I try to read it every year myself. It's very searching, and I'm sure if you're halfway on this with yourself, it will lead you to prayer.

It will lead you to prayer to God for help and assistance in your great, great work. And then another little book that Mr. Craig has published, the Presbyterian Reform Publishing Company. Several years ago now,

this is in its second printing, several years ago a preacher friend of mine in New Jersey called me on the phone and said, Ernie, somebody brought me the pages.

It's all falling apart of an old book by a great Presbyterian who was a minister at the same church I think for either 35 or 45 years. It's been a while since I read the introduction. But he said it's so great, he said it ought to be reprinted.

So I said, well, send it to me and we'll see what we can do. So I immediately read it, the phone, the pages, and the book is all falling apart. And it was by Dr. Gardner Spring, a priest at the Little Brick Church.

It has to do with the distinguishing traits, and I want to emphasize the word distinguishing. A man can be moral by the world's standards. There's a lot of people who do not commit adultery and do not steal and do not lie and don't even take the Lord's name in vain, and live what we consider by the best standards a good moral life.

He points out some of the things that a man can be moral and not be a Christian. And he points out the fact that man can have a certain amount of knowledge of holy things without being a Christian. He can have a form of religion, he can have eminent gifts, and there can even be convictions of sin.

And then he goes into those distinguishing marks of a Christian. Al and I wrote a little introduction to this and left it as it was, and Mr. Craig printed it. You may be here today and wonder about your own experience with the Lord, and it's a good book to read anyhow.

I commend it to you very highly. Now, if you have your Bible, I'd like you to turn in our closing time to 1 Thessalonians. Before we read the scripture, may I again, since this is my last session with you, may I again express my deep gratitude for this invitation to be entrusted with this holy task.

I take this seriously. I feel that when we open the word of God and think about holy things, that we are not on a fool's errand. And I'm not seeking your applause or approval, but seeking to be a friend to your soul, and also seeking to be honest to God and his word as I see those things revealed in the scriptures.

But may I again express my deep gratitude for your invitation, and secondly, I express my gratitude for such a title, because I believe it's one of the great weak links in the church, and that is laymen who are really witnessing. I heard a preacher not long ago who ministers to a lot of ministers, who was in Portland, Oregon, and he was speaking, it was accounts for his own evangelism, and he was speaking to some 400 ministers. And it was evangelism, and therefore they tried to be very honest with each other.

And at one point in that, they were taking an honest survey, and the question they were raising is, how many men in your church, that was the ministers, how many men actually engage in any sort of systematic witnessing, not something they did once 50 years ago and haven't done it since, but engage in a program or are conscious or are actively witnesses for Christ. 400 ministers, 5 ministers answered in the affirmative, that would be 395 that didn't have a man in their church who was a witness. And out of the 5 there were 9, they come up with 9. I figure if there were 100 to 200 in that represented by each minister, congregations of 100 to 200, that would be some 40,000 or 80,000 Christians with 9 witnessing.

Now, as clear as it is in the Bible, I think it's the clearest command of Christ in the New Testament. You can understand why I'm grateful for such a theme, and I hope it's not only the theme for this year, but I hope you pursue it in days to follow. Let's bow in a word of prayer and look to the God of the book before we look to the book.

Let us pray. O Holy Father, we are all men of like passions. Our need of thy wisdom is great, therefore we confess our ignorance.

We confess our impotence and plead for your power. And especially today as we think of all the lives and the churches represented here, we pray that you'd be pleased to grant for Jesus' sake a great measure of your spirit to not only speak, but to seal to hearts those eminent truths that we are considering these days together as men. Therefore, we plead for your help, for your spirit to come and do what we cannot do by tricks or gadgets or any other thing.

Come, O Holy Dove, and take us to the Lamb and to his teaching and to his commands. For his name's sake, amen. In 1 Thessalonians 2, I'd like to read 12 verses, but I want to take particularly as the speaking portion or probably commonly known as the text.

I want to take verse 4 particularly. For you yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain. But even after that we had suffered before and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention or amid much opposition.

For our exhortation was not of deceit. Every form of evangelism must bear this in mind. It cannot have any deceitful element in it whatsoever, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile.

And this is our text. But as we are allowed of God or approved of God to be put in trust with the gospel, that's our trust. Dear sir, that's your trust.

Even so we speak. That's our task, to communicate it. Our trust to gospel.

Our task to communicate it. Not as pleasing men, but God which trieth or proveth our hearts. Neither at any time used we flattery words, a good principle, a very good principle for witnessing and preaching.

Neither at any time used we flattery words, as ye know, nor cloak of covetedness God is witness, nor of men sought we glory, neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome as the apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, and here we have that principle we saw this morning in 2 Timothy, not to strive, but be gentle, not to teach patience and meekness. But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisher for children.

So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you not the gospel of God only, but our own soul. It costs a little of that to spend time with people and witness and preach. That's some of the cost, because ye were dear unto us.

For ye remember, brethren, our labor and travail, for laboring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God. Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holy, and he appeals to his conduct again, there's a strange mingling of our life and our labors in this gospel work, so peculiar that it's only peculiar to gospel work. A man's life in other areas may have not anything to do with his labors.

He may be a keen lawyer and a crooked and rotten at the core, but still may be a keen, prudent lawyer. Man may be a great surgeon, great in the medical profession, and be morally corrupt, and therefore his life does not necessarily have a great deal to do with his labors. Not so in this work, gentlemen.

Somehow that strange, almost mysterious mingling of our life and our labors, and here we have it again. That's why we talked about the power of a holy life, but the apostle appeals to it. This, he's talking about his conduct.

You're witnesses. You know how I lived among you. Justly, unblemishedly, we behaved ourselves among you to please.

As you know how we exalted and comforted and charged every one of you as a father, thus his children, that you would walk worthy of God who has called you into his kingdom and glory. A great apostle points out in verse 2, what courage and resolution he did this work. And it does take some God-given courage and boldness to do it.

You see it in verse 2. He reminds us also in the same verse that it was against opposition, suffering. Although it was against opposition, this kind of suffering only sharpens the edge of our holy resolutions. That's what opposition does to the man of God.

It sharpens that edge of holy resolutions. He could appeal to that. And then he said in verse 3, covetousness.

It was without that, against that. It was without, no deceit. Not to tell the hard side of some of the things of the gospel.

In other words, he's appealing to his honesty and his sincerity, not deceitful. Why was he honest and sincere? Well, I think we have it in this context here. He was a steward.

That's what he said in verse 4. And the gospel was his trust. It was not Paul's gospel. It was the gospel of God.

And he was entrusted with it. He reminds us two or three times, verse 8 and verse 9, that the reason he was honest and sincere is because he had a trust. And secondly, because of his design and desire to please God.

And then, of course, another reason for his honesty and sincerity was he was honest and sincere because his labor was under God's omniscience in the sight of him who tries our hearts, he said. We see the evidence of his sincerity in verse 5. That's why he avoids flattery. That's the evidence of his sincerity.

We see, secondly, in verse 5, that's why he avoided covetousness. He did not make religion a cloak nor a life like the prophets did in 2 Peter, chapter 2, verse 3, where it says, they so coveted us with sane words made merchandise of the people. Is there any water in this place? That's all right.

I'll make out. This is the evidence of his sincerity. Proved in avoiding flattery.

Proved in avoiding covetousness. And another reason, you'll see in verse 6, he avoided ambition and vain glory. That's the proof of sincerity.

Now today, I want to somehow try to bring this to a close. I said, I told you this morning, I was quite off schedule, and I'm not in any better shape today. Sometimes when I have these little missions, I feel like that bishop that's on the train who lost his ticket, and the conductor knew the bishop very well, and as he came by, he said to the bishop, he said, you know, the bishop was kind of going through his clothes about his ticket, and the conductor said, that's all right, bishop, I've got the rest of this car to do.

I'll be back. So he did that car and came back, and the bishop was quite a bit more exercised about it and was getting more extreme, and the conductor said, that's all right, bishop, I have another car to do. I'll go collect the tickets in the other car.

Finally came back, the poor bishop was all in sweat. He was really frantic. The conductor said to the bishop, he said, that's all right, if you don't find it, he said, we know you, and you'll pay.

The bishop said, that's not the problem. He said, I don't know where I'm going. I wonder if I know where I'm going, but I do, believe it or not.

I want to talk about our trust a little bit. We've talked about the man two sessions. It's important, the man in evangelism and the man, whether it's lay evangelism or other than lay evangelism, any kind of evangelism, the people doing the work are important.

We spent two sessions on that. Today I'd like to talk a little bit about the message of evangelism, and if we have time, the motives. The proper motives, too, principally, for evangelism.

First of all, our trust, the gospel. It's important that we're clear on what the gospel is. Now, it don't look so that I could make a statement like that in a meeting like this.

I had three women call on me some years ago. My secretary kept telling me to come down. There were three young women there who wanted to see me.

I said, well, they could see Mr. Coleman or somebody's office manager, somebody else. She said, no, they insist on seeing you. So finally she prevailed upon me, and I went down.

There were three women from the church, and they were selling a cookbook. Now, what a contractor wants with a cookbook, I don't know. But that's the point.

The point was, they heard that I was religious and I was a good touch for some money. So I soon realized that I was duty-bound to buy a cookbook. And since I'm going to have to buy the cookbook, I thought I might at least ask and inquire what they're going to do with the money, since they said they're from the church.

And when I asked, what are you going to do with the money, they didn't seem to be too sure about that. So I said to them, now, these were serious, young, married women beating the streets to collect money. And I said, well, it would be a good idea if you used it to propagate the gospel.

And that seemed to solve everything, and they all agreed, yes, that's right. And then I said, what is the gospel? And I asked the first one, and she said, that's the Ten Commandments. This is accurate.

I asked the second one, she said, it's a symbol of Christ. I asked the third, and she said, it's a golden rule. I said, do you all go to the same church? And then I had a chance to tell them about the gospel.

But if I would ask you this afternoon, what is the gospel, would you tell me, well, that's about Christ dying on the cross. But suppose I went into a situation over in New York City, where the New York Bible Society is from, our friend from there, and I went into that area with a group of Jewish children, somebody that never heard the name Jesus Christ. And I say to them, old boys and girls, I want to tell you the good news, the glad tidings, the joyful announcements.

Let me tell you, once upon a time, some wicked man took an innocent man to the brow of the hill, and there they put nails in his hands, and a spear in his side, and he died. Isn't that wonderful? They would look at me as though I had something wrong with me. Now, it's true that that has something to do with the gospel, but those facts by themselves are not good news.

They've got to be related to some other facts. I suggest to you the little book that many of you bought, Packer's book on Authority of God and Evangelism, there's an outline of the gospel in there, and he says this, and I agree with him, that the gospel is a divinely inspired message about God as our creator, who has absolute claims upon us as creatures. When Paul was in certain synagogues, he didn't start with the law of God or the creation, because he was talking to people who were already theists.

They had a theistic base, and he started talking about the Messiah. But what did he do in what was probably the most unique gospel situation in the New Testament? On Mars Hill, did he start with the Messiah? No, he started with God, our creator. And the gospel is a message about God.

It's a message about sin. You can't talk about sin and just run up to somebody and say, Oh, I've sinned and come short of the glory of God. That doesn't tell them what sin is.

Everybody will agree with you mostly on that. What is sin? We learn from 1 John 3.4 that sin is the transgression of the law. So the law has something to do with the message too.

We learn from Romans 3.20 that by the law is the knowledge of sin. No law, no sin. That's why three great truths of the Bible stand or fall together.

And that's the law of God, the cross of Christ, and the righteous judgment of Almighty God. You touch one, and you've touched them all. Take away one, you've taken them all.

Take away the law of God, there is no such thing as sin. That's our great problem on our campus. And not only on our campus, the homes from which those people came from.

No sin. No fixed standards. No objective standard as to what's right and wrong.

And they don't care about Jesus because they don't know anything about God's law. So if you take away the law, you have no sin. If you take away the cross, you have no answer to sin's problem.

If you take away the righteous judgment of Almighty God, who cares about Jesus or the law? Who cares about Jesus or the law? So certainly when we talk about sin, we can't think of the divinely inspired message of the gospel without thinking about the creator-creature relationship. Then comes, and then comes sin automatically as soon as you establish that. And then you're ready to talk about the redeemer relationship.

The gospel is a message about God our creator, about sin, about Christ, who he was, what he did, why he did it, where he is now. There's something else, and I'll touch on this later. It's a message.

It's a summon. The gospel really is a summon to faith and repentance. Notice I said faith and repentance.

Now why did I say that? Because you cannot separate true saving faith from Bible repentance any more than you can separate evangelical repentance from true Bible faith. So you better check over your evangelistic program and see if it includes repentance. Because if it doesn't include repentance, it's not evangelistic.

You can't separate the two. I'm glad for the old shorter catechism. I hope you don't mind if I catechize you a little.

The catechism is very clear on this point. Very clear. Very clear.

Question 87. Thank you, Jim. Question 87 in the shorter catechism is this.

What is repentance? What is that? In the Confession it says repentance is something that's to be preached by every minister of the gospel as well as faith in Christ. That's almost a verbatim quote from the Westminster Confession. What is repentance? Listen to the answer.

Repentance unto life is a saving grace whereby a sinner out of the true sense of his sin... Now notice this. This is what I want you to see. ...and the apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ.

Without the apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ repentance is what Judas did. Remorse, despair, and destruction. True repentance always includes faith.

That's why the catechism was so concise, so biblically correct on that point. Repentance unto life is a saving grace whereby a sinner out of the true sense of his sin and the apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ doth with grief and hatred of his sin turn from it unto God with full purpose of and endeavor after new obedience. I say the gospel is a summons to faith and repentance.

I want to show you maybe later if I have time how Jesus preached it and Paul preached it, Peter preached it, the apostles preached it. I wonder if you know anything about it. I wonder if you know anything about it other than a definition.

I wonder if you've experienced that thing that the catechism called it's a grace, repentance is a grace. Well, we must be sure of our message. If we're thinking of lay evangelism now I don't suggest that you run up to everybody and go through these four or five points that I'm giving you.

But underneath all that you do on the foundation all that you do will stem from the right view of the gospel. The gospel is a message, not some nebulous spirit. The gospel is a message definable in words.

But it must be communicated in power. That's the unique thing about it. That's the difference between the gospel and other learning.

Other learning can be communicated to men's heads. Their intellect. Apart from power.

Other than the power of ability to preach and teach rather. But the gospel is a message definable in words but must be communicated in power. May I read it to you? Same epistle.

For our gospel came unto you in word Our gospel came not unto you in word only but also in power of the Holy Ghost and much assured As you know what manner of men we were among you for your sake. Paul is saying yes, it came to you in word but not word only. Came in power.

So it's bold, it's communicated. You know when we think about witnessing today and what we're trying to do what I hear a lot of time is boy you don't know where I work. You ought to work where I work.

Or some preacher wants to move out of this particular place because you ought to know where our church is located. Down among this people. Down among the royal Roman Catholics in our area.

And they give me all this word. You know what I think down inside of me when they say that? I think that Jerusalem was a pretty hard place to work in about the year 31 or 32 or 34. That's when it started.

The name Jesus was not very popular. Jerusalem was not very popular. And those people were pretty hard.

Your situation, don't tell me that. Your situation is no different. We don't have all the drunks and tough people on construction but we have our share.

But that's a tough place. So I'm talking about our message. Our task is to speak it.

Now we've got to have a motive for that. I want to be very careful here today. I don't want to be misunderstood on this.

There are two basic motives that I can find in the New Testament for witnessing. And I'd like to give them the order, and I believe the order is important. You know, most evangelism is stirred up with the motive of man's need.

Now that is the motive, and that's the second. But I don't believe that that's the first motive for evangelism. I remember when I was speaking at a missionary conference once and I was late on the program.

There was a lot of other speakers before me. I was like late in the weekend. And they were trying to drum up a trip to go to Haiti.

And it became almost the conference jargon to talk about broken hearts. Go and see these people and get a broken heart. And I thought if somebody didn't say something else to them we were going to start a broken hearts denomination.

You don't have to go to Haiti to get a broken heart. And I thought I was constrained to do something about it, but my problem was solved. Because before I spoke, immediately, there was a young missionary there, medical missionary, a doctor, a medical doctor, who had just gotten back from the jungles of South America on his first term.

And he was so tired and weary that he was recommended not to take any speaking engagements or do anything but to just rest. And right before I spoke, they did ask him if he would say a word. And I remembered very vividly.

He got up and he said he wished he could give some glowing reports of how many people were converted. But he said, I can't do that. I have no such glowing reports.

And then he went on to say how he still had a certain amount of joy in obeying Christ. And he said how, day after day, he would pray in the morning, Lord Jesus, you sent me here. Use me today.

And he would exercise his medical ability to help talk and tell the gospel. And he said at night, I could come back by that same bed and kneel down and say, Lord Jesus, the best I know how, I have obeyed you today. And he says I had a measure of joy in obedience.

I don't think you can separate these two motives too far, but I believe that your motives for witnessing are the first. God said you to do it. Stemming from the first table of the law.

When Jesus gave the summary of the first table of law, he said to the lawyer who asked him what's the great commandment of the law, he says, thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and so on, and thy neighbor as thyself. And then he summed up the second table of the law. Love to God.

That ought to be my first motive for witnessing. And I tell you, when people spit on you, and you're not successful, and you're discouraged, there's still a great deal of joy that comes from knowing that you have exercised your best efforts in obeying God. The first motive for witnessing is not the need of man.

That's the second. And it comes from the second table of law. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

And if you love him in that sense, you'll not only be interested for the clothes he wears and where he lives and his physical things. If you love him in that sense, you'll be interested in his soul as well. Our bonding company, they, I don't know, I haven't been in the office for four years, so I don't know what the status is now, but we used to, I used to talk to my bonding man for years.

And I'm sure he's a fan. I think our premiums, we paid him about \$75,000 or \$100,000 a year so he'd listen to anything I had to say. And we used to meet in the morning for breakfast.

And I would talk to him, not every time, about Christ. In fact, there's been maybe a couple times I would. I've given, I guess if he had everything beside his bed that I've given him to read, he probably couldn't get in bed.

But he always seemed to listen. But I remember this one morning, we were meeting in a hotel for breakfast, and I, something came up about, I don't remember the details, but I do remember that this is one of the mornings I was talking to him about the claims of Christ. And he looked across the breakfast table and he said to me, and I took my testament out of my pocket, and I said to him, Ken, I said, I could not believe what's in this book and claim to be your friend and not care about your soul.

That's impossible. I could not believe what's in this book and say I love my neighbor and not care about your soul. That's the second motive for witnessing.

Now, I think there's something else about the message that I want to get into today a little bit. I thought I'd better get into motive first. Our message is the gospel.

It has two keys in it, not only trust Christ, trust Christ, trust Christ, but turn from sin, take repentance. Not only that, our message must be addressed to the whole man. I hinted at this this morning when I said the gospel must reach the whole man or it hasn't reached you savingly.

If the gospel hasn't reached you in every area of your life, it has not efficaciously reached you and you're lost. And if it doesn't reach you in every area of your life, you'll go to hell playing church. It must reach a man's intellect because that's what he thinks with.

Christ must open the mind. Read it in Luke 24 where it said he opened in a few verses at the end of Luke 24 from about 45 on, it said he opened our understanding. He opened the scriptures.

You find it in Luke 16, Lydia. Her mind needed to be opened. So it must reach the intellect because that's what people think with.

It must reach their emotions because that's what they feel with. It must reach their will because that's what they discern with. Surely whatever else true religion is, it cannot be less than right thinking in relationship

to God, right feeling in relationship to God and right acting in relationship to God.

That's the least that true religion can be. That's the least. And that's why it must reach the whole man.

Not just one of these psychological upheavals. That's the reason I said this morning and emphasized the fact that Christ sent us out to teach. Now I don't want you to go away and think that I believe that God couldn't, somebody could come in this door locked and go outside.

I believe that's possible. I believe that's God's not His normal way of saving men. I believe that we have in the Scripture at least four ways, at least four ways vividly set forth in the Scripture that God calls men to himself.

So don't go away and say I'm talking about some kind of preparation doctrine. That you got to prepare yourself for grace. I'm not talking about that at all but I will say if grace doesn't prepare you, you'll never be saved.

I'm not talking about you preparing yourself for grace. I'm talking about something that grace does for men. God called some from the womb.

You have a vivid example in Luke chapter 1 with John the Baptist. He was filled with the Spirit from the womb. So I got to allow that at least I have a record in holy writ that he called one that way.

I learned in the same connection that Jeremiah was ordained of God from the womb. Jeremiah 1-5. So we have that record.

We have the record of God calling at least one man on his deathbed. So we have to allow for that. This day thou shalt be with me in paradise.

We have what I would call a sovereign gospel call and not in St. Paul. I don't think that represents a dramatic, it's a dramatic conversion but I don't think it represents one of those instantaneous conversions where he was walking on the road to Damascus and yes he was converted but you must remember he heard Stephen's sermon. I don't know how long that was before.

And you must remember that he was locking up Christians and putting them in jail and he surely knew why he was doing it. So I could allow for a period of conviction in St. Paul. I think the sovereign gospel call the best illustration is Zacchaeus up in that tree.

Jesus said to him, Today salvation has come to thy house. Now when I said all that I believe that these are God's unusual way of calling men. I believe God's most common way of calling men and women is by prior work of the law, convicting them of sin, showing them near the Savior and then revealing Christ by his Spirit to them.

But the gospel must reach the whole man and I say that if we would bear this in mind in all of our evangelism it would eliminate some of the awful curse that's come upon the church in at least a couple areas and this awful sentimental affection of the gospel. It's the sentimental affection, all sentimentalism. It would eliminate that if it had to reach the whole man, his mind, his emotions, and his will.

And it would eliminate as in only an abuse to the gospel if it reaches the will that has something to do with how a man acts. He won't be an antinomian. He won't be against the law of Christ and the rule of Christ.

It would eliminate that awful fruitless speculation about the gospel all in his intellect, his head. He knows all the facts. He knows the doctrine.

He can spit doctrine at you like a machine gun shooting bullets. All up here. All up here.

Stranger to heart religion. Stranger to the power of the gospel in his life if it just reaches his intellect. And let me tell you something.

That's the danger in our circle. That's the danger in reformed circles. The other danger is something just an appeal to the emotions.

That's the danger in other circles. The danger in our circles is that intellectual comprehension of certain facts but stranger to the power of religion. And that's why I say the least true religion can be is right thinking, right feeling, right acting in relationship to God.

It must reach the whole man, our message. Another thing, our message must be a whole Christ. It must be a whole Christ.

This idea that's so prevalent, not in our circles, but it's crept to some of your churches too. This wicked idea that you can trust Jesus as your personal savior, whatever that is. I don't know.

Not in the Bible. Not in any of the historical confessions. You won't find terminology like that in the Westminster Confession or the Heisenberg Catechism or the old London Confession.

You won't find language like that. You won't even find language where you trust Jesus as your savior in the Bible or any of those things. Now don't misunderstand me.

He's our savior. Want to know how the Westminster Confession does it? You won't find that language. It's a whole Christ.

Now don't go away and say, I object to that language. I don't. I sing about him as my savior.

We just did it. I don't have to turn some theological switch to do that. But who is the savior? Who is the savior? Jesus Christ the Lord.

When I say a whole Christ, I mean that kind of thing that's expressed in the catechism. May I catechize you again a little more? It must be a whole Christ. I can't just embrace, I can't just embrace one aspect of it and kind of use Jesus as a hell insurance policy.

No, no. Let me catechize you a little. This is question 23 in the shorter catechism.

What office does Christ execute as our redeemer? Christ as our redeemer executes the office of prophet, priest, and king, both in the estate of his humiliation and exaltation. How does Christ execute the office of a prophet? Christ executes the office of a prophet in revealing to us by his word and spirit the will of God for our salvation. How does he execute the office of a priest? Christ executes the office of a priest in his once offering up of himself the sacrifice to satisfy divine justice and to reconcile us to God in making continual intercessions for us.

Question 26. How does Christ execute the office of a king? Christ executes the office of a king in subduing us to himself. Get that.

In ruling and defending us and restraining and conquering all his enemies and ours. Prophet, priest, and king. That's the Christ of the Bible.

And this idea that you can have a say here without having a prophet to teach you and instruct you, without having a king to rule over you and subdue you and rule over you and reign over you. It's far into the Bible. There are more souls in evangelical circles self-deceived in that area.

And I'd want to count. Live like that please, but there's an order to Jesus back here sometimes. Live like a devil.

Not an ordinance of Christian enemies. For a man doesn't love what a Christian loves and hate what a Christian hates and cease to do what a Christian's meant to do Go where Christians go. Hunger for what Christians hunger for.

It's none of our business. Because he did something way back here. Gave a little nod to Jesus.

He's a self-deceived, hell-bound soul. Christ is our prophet. Oh, now I don't think that we have to run up to somebody and say, do you trust Jesus as your prophet, priest, and king? I'm not suggesting that.

But this undergirds all evangelism. A girl came to me in a meeting and she said to me, you know, I was raised in a climate where I never heard anything like that. All I heard is Jesus as your savior.

Well, I said, let me ask you a question or two. I said, did you... I'm not going to get caught today, Bob. Dr. Van Til taught me.

I said to this girl, honey, and I had a week with Dr. Van Til last when I said that. I won't do that today. I did say, honey, let me ask you a question.

I said, because I believe she was converted. I believe she was a true Christian. She was hungering after righteousness.

She was trying to please Christ. I said, when you came to Christ, forget about words and terminology now. I said, did you long to be taught of him and to know his will? I said, was not it your desire that he's your king to rule you, reign you, and protect you from his enemies and yours? She said, sure.

I said, well, I believe your experience was better than your understanding, and today your understanding caught up to your experience. So you must remember in these other areas, people who don't say it just like we do, they can have a genuine experience with Christ. They may never have heard those catechism questions, but their experience with Christ may be real.

If that doesn't give us license to keep on running around provoking and promoting the error and the wickedness that that's caused in the church, well, it must be a whole Christ, prophet, priest, and king. I want to take a couple minutes longer today and saying a little more about not only our method, but our method. I do want to say a little bit about method.

First of all, if you read the context that I read today and some of the things I was saying, you'll see that honesty, honesty with men takes a very prominent place in that context. Honesty with people, not flattering words. In all that context, you'll see that honesty takes a very prominent place.

And I want to suggest two areas. Mr. Moderator, you know, I didn't look at what time it was when I started. What time did I begin? I don't know if I ought to go into this or not.

Well, these tapes are running out, so that means it must be an hour. I can't believe I've been talking an hour. I forgot to look.

Very important in personal evangelism, and one of them is this, honesty at the invitation. When we are dealing with men or women or boys and girls, in personal, we've got to be honest about the invitation. That is, honest in this respect.

And we can't tell them all the wonders, beauties of the Christian life. That's true. But that's only half true.

It's hard to be a Christian. And this idea that coming to Christ is going to solve all your problems, that's not true! Because you're going to get a new set of problems. And there isn't a man on any of these benches today that won't act.

If you haven't experienced, it's hard to be a Christian! There's some difficult places. I've got some fellow contractors here. And I know today that there's times in their life they have to say, I can't do that! Be very lucrative and all that goes with it, but I can't do it! It's hard to be a Christian.

It's difficult to be a Christian. This idea of painting all this rosy picture, that's true! I wouldn't crave being a Christian for all the money in the world! I'd sleep at night, and I'd hope for eternity, and hope when I die, and hope of heaven, and all those beautiful glories that we sing about and love. That's true, and I love it.

And I'm not complaining about being a Christian. But I'm going to tell you there's another side to it. And when you just paint all these rosy pictures and all that, you're not honest with people.

And you're not honest in your invitation. You know, some years ago, I went through the Bible, the best I could, the Gospels particularly, and I studied the invitations of Christ. And you know what? I came to the conclusion that He's more honest with people than we were.

He wasn't drunk after statistics! He was honest with people! Did you ever study His invitations? Let me just call your attention to a couple. Well, first let me make reference to Luke 14 because I won't get there. But if you go to Luke 14 and read from verse 25 to 33, you'll find that in His invitation to come after me, He does this.

You know, He says, like, come with this hand, but wait a minute. Count the cost. And He gives that illustration of a man building a tower.

He says He doesn't start to build until He sits down and sees if He has enough money to finish it. Less when He gets started, He's embarrassed. So He says, count the cost.

He gives another illustration of a man going to war. He said He doesn't go out with 10,000, with somebody coming with Him, 100,000, I forget the figures. And then in verse 33, He says, so likewise, everyone that cometh after Me.

So He's honest. But let me show it to you again in Luke 9 particularly. And I'm only saying this that our methods must be God-honoring! And they must be honest.

In Luke 9, in verse 23, He said unto them all, if any man will come after Me, let him deny himself. Any man! Not just a missionary. Any man come after Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily, follow Me.

Now the flesh doesn't like self-denial. My flesh doesn't like it. That's not a very good way to encourage people.

Ah, but let me show you where it brings this point out more vividly in the same chapter. Look over at the end of Luke 9, will you? Verse 57. And it came to pass as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I'll follow you whithersoever thou goest.

Boy, if that would happen in your church next Sunday night, if you'd be in a Baptist church, you'd baptize him that night and have him give his testimony right off the bat. I don't know what you'd do in some other church. But if that would happen, you'd come and make him an elder the next two weeks.

I'll follow you wherever you go. He said, hey buddy, I've been looking for you. Come on.

Man, we're looking for you. Come on. Get on the bandwagon.

Why? I'll follow you wherever you want me to go. Boy, he's saved. I know that.

He's on my statistics. Got another one last night. Said yes.

Put his name in John 3, 16. He's ready for heaven. I'll tell you something.

Jesus was more honest than that. What did Jesus say to that fellow? Oh, if he'd have been in a lot of churches. Especially if he'd have been one of these half-converted Hollywood stars that still have most of Hollywood in them.

They'd have to parade him all over the country giving their testimony. Or one of these great big Christian athletes who live in ultimate rebellion against God's holy day. Clear command.

Clear. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. And you can't bring that under acts of necessity.

See, just say a little, I trust in Jesus and parade him all over the country giving his testimony. I'll follow you wherever, wherever thou go. Jesus said unto him, The foxes have holes.

The birds have their nests. The son of man hath not where to lay his head. Not a very good way to get customers, is it? But it's honest.

It's honest. And all I'm saying about this, yes, tell them about the beauties of heaven. Tell them about the peace that Christ gives to our hearts.

But let's not kid these young people that they're in some battles. You talk, you men who have young people in high school and college, they know some battles. You know what I think about when I think of this? You know, I ran away from home when I was 16 to join the Navy.

I was always just gung-ho for the Navy. I thought I got to be in that Navy. And I'd see those movies on the Navy and every picture on the billboard would I see a sailor.

Something down in here would just go like that. So boy, when I was 16, I took off. And I went over to this I think he knew I was lying at my age.

I had to tell him I was 18. And I think he knew I was lying. But he didn't say, son, you're a liar.

He turned me down. He said I didn't have the proper bite, you know. That's what I said.

That's what I said to him. I've been chewing pretty well, but then I went back and I kind of got that out of my system a little. And that's years later.

And I thought, boy, I'll try again. So I went over. It wasn't the same fellow.

And he felt me back of the neck and he said, you're warm, you're in. You know, he's a petty officer. Old Chief Petty Officer.

I said, is it true, sir, that you get these clothes that you have free? He said, yes, sir. It's all free. This was when I was 16.

It's all free. I said, and the shoes too? Yeah. And do they furnish your meals? Yeah, sure do.

I said, is it likely that you'll see the world or a lot of it? He said, sure will. We pay you for it. You know something? He didn't tell me one lie.

Not one lie in all that time. I got in the Navy. Everything he said was true.

But he didn't tell me everything. He didn't tell me who had to peel the potatoes. He didn't tell me who mobbed the deck.

Didn't tell me a lot of things. Didn't tell me about the horrors and the hell of war where you hear men thousands of miles away cry out for mothers. He didn't tell me that.

You know, I thought of it in connection with Christ in the paper. I believe it would be best if we'd be a little honest with people instead of being so swift to get them on our statistics to be a little more honest with them. Honesty.

I was going to talk about honesty and assurance and their assurance, but I don't think I will. I want to not discourage you from witnessing. I want to encourage you to be honest, but I do want to encourage you just as well.

I want to encourage you to be witnesses. I want to encourage you in this conference but at least to have some biblical substance to all that we try to do. Let the angels encourage you to witness.

When I read Luke 15, 10, it says, Joy in the presence of angels of God over one sinner of repentance. I said to you earlier in the week that the greatest service that's ever been rendered to me by one human being in this world or ever will be until I cross the river that has no bridge. This is a man that told me about Christ.

But let me tell you, I believe, I'm safe when I say to you the greatest joy I've ever experienced as a Christian is being the instrument or the means of bringing somebody to Christ. I don't know any greater joy than to see a home where you've worked with for a month, for a year, knew not God in the gospel and to see them come in and take a role in the church week after week and year after year and see their children

grow up under the instruction of a godly pastor. I don't know any greater joy.

My wife and I was reading that great Presbyterian missionary John Thayton. And this is what he said in this respect. I copied it down verbatim because I want to encourage you by the joy that it brings to you not as the cause of their salvation at the pastoral reach, but as one of the means that God uses.

Thayton said this. He saw the harvest of those sacrificial labors in the glorious and gracious work of conversion of some of the people on New Hebrides. He said this.

He tells of his first communion. His first communion, he said, when he put the bread and wine into those dark hands once stained with the blood of cannibalism, now reaching forth to receive the emblem of the blood of Christ. He said this.

He said, I had a foretaste of joy and of glory that well now I break my heart to pieces. I shall never taste a deeper bliss till I gaze upon the glorified Jesus. I wonder today, this weekend, if you've ever thought about why you don't witness.

I wonder if I've been speaking to men who have nothing to witness about. No experience. No experience with Christ to share with needy sinners.

Oh, this would be a great weekend to seek God. If you've come here unconverted to God, nothing to witness about. Oh, I pray that you become a diligent seeker after Christ and His salvation.

Oh, I know you can't get to Christ, but He can get to you. So you just fall where you are. He'll get to you.

You don't have the power or the strength or the ability, maybe not even the desire to get to Christ, but He can get to you if you fall where you are. Oh God, our Father, we've said a lot of words. We thank you that you've told us that the gospel must come not only in words, in word only, but in power.

Therefore we plead with you to do what we can't do for one another or for others. Send your Spirit and grant that power, the power of thy grace, the power of thy Spirit. Oh Father, take these men, our dear brethren, and many of them, servants of thine, and send us away from this weekend, making us more able, more willing, more anxious to obey your clear commands in taking the gospel to the ends of the earth, but even to begin at home.

Hear our prayer for the sake of Christ and for the good of His people. Yes, we've spent a lot of time on it. Not only this season, but in our own lives.

What has been presented by the general discussion? Larry? Larry Boot? Any questions? Mr. Van Til? Dave Garrison? I think that we are saying then. Do you have a specific question, Mr. Garrison, that you'd like to give? What about Monday morning? What about Monday morning? Anybody want to comment? I think that's the point of it. It is difficult on Monday morning.

Of course, what you've done is open the floor for the whole discussion. I think we want to make the questions pointed to a particular problem or what have you. I think there certainly is a relevancy here.

Yes, there's someone who'd like to respond. All right. Ernie, would you want to respond? You can't turn on buttons and divorce it on Monday morning.

It has a great powerful influence on every aspect of your life, whether you're a teacher or a doctor, what you do with your time, the kind of things you do with your people. I just don't know how you divorce. It's a little harder on Monday, but you don't take up a new code of ethics on Monday morning.

I question the validity of that kind of Christianity at all, period, whether it's heart religion at all. Well, we had a prayer meeting in our office. I suppose non-Christians wouldn't have that.

I don't know what you mean specific. It's just not certain areas. I mean, if you're going to go after a contract, you do it with a... First of all, I would say basically a whole motive for being in business, what you're going to do with the money.

And I don't know what you mean specific. You mean did I have any fights with the union? Well, to labor for Christ's church and put money in his church. And actually one of my specific motives was to be able to preach for free, to go to these little country places and spend the money on taking the gospel to places, which I've done for 20 years, to my own extent.

I've never taken one cent from any speaking engagement that I didn't turn 100% either back or to the thing, for my traveling and all. So I don't know what you mean. So in business was a means to an end.

Amen. You put it better than I could. Thank you.

You answered your own question. That's it. Means to an end.

And that's important. That's the heart of it right there. I'm sorry.

I just wasn't catching on to what you were saying. Prepare us to throw us back into the battle. We're not singing hymns down there when you're talking with some business agent about some aspect of the work.

It's quite a different thing. But the Sundays aren't saying means to do. Prepare us and encourage us.

I was trying to think of some other things that we did where we've had... We used to send out tracts. Not when we send bills, but every time we pay a bill we send out a gospel tract. We did that for 20 years.

That was a lot of gospel tracts going out every time we pay a bill. And over the years it did furnish some opportunities to talk to these people. I've been in other cities where somebody would talk to me about that.

Gene List? Maybe the word passion fits better to my outline than it does to... I'm not going to quibble with you about that concern. But if you have an abiding concern, if you want to call it that, it will manifest itself in the fact that he prayed for me, the fact that he stayed with me, the fact that he'd come and invite me to Sunday school every week. Passion may be a strong word, but I think that the abiding concern... I just don't have Webster right here and I'm not going to quibble about it.

But I will take your... I accept your thought on that. I don't care if we call it passion. I think that it was evidence and I called it passion.

He didn't call it passion. I called it passion because it was manifest in all these ways, which means that it's not just some passion thing that he has a feeling for me today when he sees me in need or sees me drunk, but it's a feeling for me on Monday and a feeling for me on Tuesday and a feeling... enough that his wife, as I said, testified how he would go and pray for me. And that's more than just a passion concern.

I like your phrase, abiding concern. Does that help you? Do you have any comment on that? No. I think if you remember, I said I wish I had more of it that I don't think I had experientially or what he seems to manifest, you know.

Well, that's why we ought to pray. That's why we're together now to help each other. Well, I say if it comes from a devotional life to Christ, certainly Christ manifests.

We wouldn't be too strong in saying He has passion for men and drawing to earth in the first place. So, I think it all comes out of a closer devotional life to Him which certainly includes the prayer and the Scriptures. I think that's correct.

I'd say amen to that. I'd say it wouldn't be real. Any other comments on this question? We talked about this question a little bit in my group and I just wonder if there are maybe others who would like to express themselves.

Why is it that we are reluctant to express an abiding concern? That's the point, an abiding. What is it about an abiding concern for a person that makes us reluctant to get involved? Some people say we don't want to get involved. Some people say we're afraid.

Well, why? Why don't we want to get involved? Why are we afraid of this kind of a relationship? Fear or fear of something that's not there. The point of the relationship is that we're afraid that the other person might take a stick of that. You remember I'm talking about one phase of his life that I saw.

I suppose if he could testify and all of us here, that it wouldn't be so consistently abiding. That's why we come to meetings like this. That's why we go to church.

And I suppose that his life would be that there were times when he cooled off too. I'm talking about that which was obvious and I think it's a pertinent and important aspect of witnessing. But I think that that's a wrong... That's the trouble with biographies.

You know, you never always hear the bad side of the fellow that the best of men had other problems. And I suppose that Elmer cooled off too. Well, why did Elmer cool off? Anybody that would like to express themselves on why are reluctant to express this sort of thing.

Peter? I believe our problem is selfish. It's true we don't trust God enough. We don't have enough faith.

We need to be specific. We're selfish. We're unwilling to give up our time.

We're unwilling to give up our money. We're unwilling to give up the things that we have for others. When we get involved with people in this kind of a way it's going to cost.

It's going to cost you to follow Jesus Christ but it'll cost less if you just follow Christ and never get involved with anybody else, you see. When you begin getting involved with others then it's going to cost you there. If you get involved with you it's going to cost you there.

And I think that's what we have to face up to. We have to be willing to pay because this is what God wants us to do first of all and because they're so needy. Men are so needy for the gospel of Christ.

But we have to face up to that. That it's our selfishness that blocks, you see. We can have what Elmer had.

And we can have what we have had at times that can grow in our lives and facing it and looking at it and then going to God for the help. But I think we need to be specific about what the sin is. About what the problem is in our life that prevents us from doing what God wants us to do.

If we are God then we ought to have God's power. And there are sins in our lives that keep us from having it. And selfishness I think at this point.

Unwillingness to allow people a part of your life or a part of your money is one thing that keeps us from growing in this area of loving others because loving is costly. Jesus taught us through the words of Paul that it is more blessed to give than to receive but we don't believe it. We don't believe it.

We think it's more blessed to get than it is to give. And that stops us from loving people. That's one of the points that's really heavy on my heart because I have a problem with this too.

And I think that as I've analyzed it here this weekend this is what I've come to see. It's an unwillingness to share what I have with others. Okay, well we've heard now from Gene, Gary.

So, did you have anything that your group would like to add to this? Well, I think that the problem is greater for women than for us men. Especially women who are home with a family and don't see many people. But I do believe that we all have enough contact outside.

We buy gas and bread and we have business associates and I think wisdom should be natural as well as maybe sometimes discipline ourselves into it. But even like women find opportunities. Now, you've got a fellow sitting there right beside you not too far.

He's got a wife that I think is a true witness. They're not in our town anymore. Not beside you.

He's one chair over from you. But I remember when Anna Munson was in our church. Now, she had a family of her own.

She was busy and ours was a tough taskmaster. But you know, we've got people in our church today because of her witness. Now, do you know what she did? A woman up the street who could hardly speak English from Poland had, how many children are there? How many children? Nichols.

About five children. That woman wasn't well and she used to go up there. Now, her whole motive was to witness.

She'd go up there and help that woman scrub the floors and do menial tasks and when she, and the lady was a Catholic too, and when she asked him out to church you'd see there was some blood mixed with it and it cost her time and who wants to scrub floors even your own? But that's an example. I believe that if we sharpen our, sharpen our sight, we won't, you know, like a fellow says, well, I had an opportunity today. Well, that's kind of like a lot of baloney.

You have a thousand opportunities every day. You mean I seized upon one of the opportunities that had come my way. I do understand the question but I don't think it's as acute as you would, I think that I'm on all these boards and committees but I still, I still buy concrete and I still buy steel and I still buy Evan the shirts man.

Hold on, let me tell you how I do it. You can say, Rita, I want to talk to you about it some day. That's the first step and then you make the time when there's not three cars there but you've had the contact.

I have a wonderful illustration of it in a fellow that called on me on license shirts. He sell license shirts. When he was done on the premise that I'm going to die he was worried about what's going to happen to my marbles and my shotgun and my golf clubs and a few other things I just said to him, now Bill, I've given you my undivided attention for an hour which you asked for.

I said, let me talk to you for a minute on the same premise but not what's going to happen to your golf clubs but what's going to happen to you when you die. That led him to a witness. He's calling me on the phone and coming around to my house.

Today he's a witnessing Christian.

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