

Discipleship

by Gerhard Du Toit

Gerhard Du Toit emphasizes the importance of true discipleship through personal salvation, obedience to the Holy Spirit, and sharing the gospel with others.

Duration: 56:43

Scripture: Romans 8:38

Topics: "Discipleship"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares a powerful story of a man who was running towards the border between Angola and South West Africa with a burning desire inside him. He arrived at a mission station and asked for help, and the missionary pointed him to Christ. The man was converted and became a prominent black evangelist. The speaker emphasizes the preciousness of every individual's life for Jesus and urges young people to accept Him as their personal savior. He also shares a personal experience of leading an engineer to Christ and witnessing a transformation in his life. The sermon concludes with a tragic incident where an African Christian was shot while reading from the Bible, highlighting the resistance against the love of God.

Transcript

I just would like to say it's tremendous to be with you guys this morning to share with you. We are out in British Columbia. Is there anyone from B.C. here? Great.

You know, we live in White Rock and just a little while ago I was asked to do four sessions with the students at Trinity Western University and they asked me to deal with the subject of discipleship. And those mornings when I was there, they had a chorus that they used to sing every morning, Shine Jesus Shine, and Good Night Boy, I got into that one. And I came home and for days I was singing it at home until my wife turned to me and said to me, do you think you know anything else than that one? So it's great to share with you this morning.

I would like to speak to you if I may on the subject of discipleship. Is there someone in charge of this thing? Could you turn it, you know, my wife says I've got a bulbing microphone behind my tonsils so I don't know how much I need this. So can you turn it down quite a bit? So, tremendous.

I would like to speak to you on the subject of discipleship. And we're going to turn to, or maybe just for the sake of time, we're going to look at a passage in the eighth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. But before

we do so, why don't we just bow and we spend a moment in prayer and ask the Lord to speak to us this morning.

Let's just pray, shall we? Our Father, we thank you so much this morning for the tremendous blessing for us to be in your presence at this conference. We thank you, Lord Jesus, that every one of our lives are precious to God. Thank you that you have saved us and that you can save us.

And thank you this morning that we are not just some little individual that is sitting in a session like this, maybe do not really want to be here. But we pray this morning, Father, that as we discuss this great subject with one another, we ask that the Holy Spirit of God will come and that you will speak to us and minister to us and that you will reveal yourself to us. We thank you, Lord Jesus, that you are able to do that.

Cover us under your precious blood, we pray, because we ask it in Jesus' precious name. Amen. You know, if you read the eighth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, you will discover that the Bible is speaking to us about a disciple of the Lord Jesus whose name was Philip.

And the Bible is saying to us that this man, Philip, was in the midst of a wonderful movement of God's Spirit in the land of Samaria. And while he was in the midst of that movement of God's Spirit in Samaria, suddenly the Holy Spirit of God spoke to him. And the Holy Spirit of God said to him, I want you to go to a certain road and share the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ with one man who was on his way back to the land of Ethiopia.

This man just came from Jerusalem where he worshipped God. He was not a Christian, but he came to worship God and he was on his way back to Ethiopia. And do you remember in Acts chapter 8 how the Bible says that Philip went to that road and he was coming alongside the chariot.

This guy was sitting in a chariot and this fellow was reading the prophecy of Isaiah and he was reading in chapter 53. Now, if you know anything about Old Testament history, you would recognize that in those days they didn't have books and chapters and verses. And he was sitting on this chariot reading what we would consider as the scroll of the prophecy of Isaiah.

And when Philip was coming towards his chariot, this guy was reading in what we would consider chapter 53. And chapter 53 is speaking to us about the life and the ministry of the Lord Jesus. And now the Lord Jesus died for us, excuse me, on the cross.

And you know, it's quite significant. I said to myself when I look at this some time ago, the Bible has got a great sense of humor, because the Bible says that Philip, the disciple of the Lord Jesus, was running towards this chariot. And just as he came alongside this chariot, this man was reading in the 53rd chapter, which speaks exactly about what the Lord Jesus did on the cross.

And I said to myself, now what would have happened if Philip did not run? This guy would have been in another chapter which maybe do not speak about the Lord Jesus, but God and His sovereignty just in a wonderful way brought them together. And Philip asked Estella when he said to him, do you understand what you read? And the guy turned to Philip and he said to me, he said, no, I don't. He said, and Philip jumped onto this chariot and he explained to him the passage and the gospel of the Lord Jesus.

And there on that chariot, Philip pointed this man to the Lord Jesus and the guy was wonderfully saved. In fact, this is where discipleship comes in. When this man got saved, Philip did not say to him, now listen,

the Spirit of God is working wonderfully in the land of Samaria.

And I think you should come with me because you are just a young believer. You've just given your heart to Jesus and you need to grow spiritually. Philip didn't say it to him.

Neither did he say to him, now, if you go back to the land of Ethiopia, there somewhere around, if there was a city like Aras Ababa, he said there you will find another Christian and this Christian will be able to pray with you and spend some time with you and you will be able to grow in your relationship with God. He didn't say that to him because as far as we know, were there no other followers of the Lord Jesus in that specific time? Neither did he give him a New Testament because there was no New Testament. Neither did he give him any Christian literature, but he simply sent him back to the land of Ethiopia to become a disciple for the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, I want to say to you this morning, because I can speak of experience. I was born and brought up in South Africa. And because of the fact that I was a South African citizen, I had to do my national service in the South African Defense Forces.

And I was the only Christian amongst about eighteen hundred fellows as far as I could gather. And I had to be a disciple for the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, if you and I study the subject of discipleship this morning, the first thing that I need to say to you this morning is the fact that you can't be a disciple for the Lord Jesus Christ if you do not know that your sins has been forgiven.

You see, I think it's quite possible that there is someone sitting here in the session this morning. And if you are absolutely honest with yourself, is there a sense in you which you need to say to me, Gerard, I can't say without any reservation that I know the Lord Jesus Christ as my personal Savior. You see, I became a Christian when I was studying theology.

I found myself in a theological school. I threw myself into my studies. I studied the Word of God, and yet I never had the assurance in my heart that I was born of the Spirit of God.

And I want to say to you this morning, you can be in a Christian school and you can come from a Christian family. Sometimes people say to me when I say to them, are you a Christian? They say, yes. I said, well, are you saved? And they say, well, I'm a Christian.

And I said, why do you say that you are a Christian? And they would say, well, because my family is a Christian. And I would turn to these guys and say to them, you know, the Bible says you must be born again. And I said to them, if you were born in a garage, that doesn't make you a car.

You see, you need an encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ. And it's quite possible that you sit here this morning and you say, I'm in a Christian school, excuse me, and yet you can't say without any reservation that I know that my sense is forgiven. And I would like to warn you this morning.

You know, God spoke to me five times in my relationship with God before I got to the place where I gave my life to the Lord Jesus. And I want to say to you this morning, there is the possibility because the Bible is saying to us that my spirit shall not always strive with man. There is a possibility that you can sit here this morning and you not say.

And there is the possibility that you maybe never ever would be able to hear the voice of God again. You know, I was in a meeting a number of years ago in Africa and right in the middle of my sermon, a man

jumped up and he stopped me and I thought, what is this guy up to? And he said, just a moment. I said, what's wrong? He said, God spoke to me 13 years ago.

He said, I sat in a service like this. He said, God spoke to me and God said to me, you must give your life to me. And he said, I resisted the voice of the Holy Spirit of God.

And he said, for 13 years, I went to service after service. I went to listen to one person after the other. And he said, for 13 years, he said, I did not hear the voice of God.

And listen, young folks, I need to say to you this morning that the very same sun which is softening the butter is the sun that is hardening the clay. And you need to recognize today that there is a time, you know not when, a place, you know not where, it seals the destiny of men. You see, I believe that if I ever come to speak to you here again, I believe that we will never, ever be able to meet in exactly the same way that we will meet this morning.

I think there is a strong possibility that if we would say that we're going to meet in another year, that before 12 months is going to be over, that some of us who sit here this morning is going to be swept away into eternity and maybe you're not saved. And when you stand before the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord Jesus is going to bring this little gathering back to you. And so you remember that Saturday morning when you were at prairie and you sat in that session, you did not know Jesus Christ.

I spoke to you by my spirit. I wanted you to give your life to me and you didn't respond to Him. And somehow you missed your opportunity.

I preach in a place a number of years ago and it was an evangelistic meeting at the end of that service. I made an invitation right in the back of this auditorium. There was a girl and her boyfriend sitting right at the back and she was all broken up.

God spoke to her. She was not a Christian and she wanted to give her life to Christ. And when I made the invitation, I remember her hand went up and I asked people to stand up and she stood at the back while our heads were bowed and her boyfriend who sat next to her looked up.

He saw what happened. He grabbed her in her arm and he dragged her down and she sat next to him. Two days later, she was on the back of his motorbike with him.

This guy got involved in an accident. He survived the accident, but that girl was instantaneously being killed. You see, we don't know this morning and I'm not standing in this morning trying to put the fear of death in your heart.

I'm just saying to you this morning that you and I do not have a slightest sense of assurance that if we leave a session this morning, we don't have the assurance that we are going to be alive tonight. And listen, young folk, if you sit here and you do not know Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, in God's concept of our responsibility to Him is to know in fact that God's time is always today. He's saying to us in his word, he said, today, if you hear my voice, he said, harden not your heart.

But Lord Jesus said to us, or rather the Bible said to us in Revelation chapter three, he said, behold, I stand at the door, I knock. He said, if any man or any boy or girl hear my voice and open the door, he said, then I will come in. And he said, I will be there.

And my last chaplain's camp, because of the fact that I've been involved in ministry in Africa, I had to do chaplain's camp in my last chaplain's camp a number of years ago on the borders of South West Africa, and an amazing incident happened. There was a black African schoolteacher who came from a Bible study one night. He was a Christian fellow and he came back from this Bible study and he was on his way to his African crawl and on his way to his African crawl, he encountered about nine or ten African terrorists.

These men were communistically inspired and they stopped this guy, he had his Bible with him, and they turned to him and they said to him, now what is that? Well, he said, this is my Bible. Well, they said, you know that we don't believe in your Bible. And he recognized that he had about a minute or two or three minutes to live.

And he said to them, he said, listen, would you mind if I just read to you a passage from my Bible? So they said, go ahead and read. And he opened his Bible at Romans chapter eight and he began to read to them about the love of God. And as he was reading about the love of God, those men became so aggravated in their resistance against what he was reading about that they simply took their AK-47s and they cleared their magazines on this African Christian.

That fellow took his Bible and he was trying to block like that. And you can imagine how those bullets went through his body. In fact, if you go to the Bible Society in Cape Town and South Africa, you will find that Bible there because one of the bullets went through the words, nothing shall separate us from the love of Christ.

That guy dropped down, he was killed instantaneously. And those men just walked away. One of those terrorists came back and he picked up this Bible.

And that night they were about six miles into the land of Angola and they were sleeping around the fire. And this fellow who picked up the Bible couldn't sleep. So he took that Bible out and he was trying to find the place where this African Christian was reading from.

And he found the page because the page was covered with blood. And you know what happened? Suddenly a tremendous conviction fell upon him. He came under the conviction of sin.

He left his body right there. He left his kit and everything and he took this Bible and he began to run towards the borderline between Angola and South West Africa. Four o'clock the next morning, he ran into a mission station, knocked at the door of the mission station, missionary's house, missionary opened the door.

This man was standing with a Bible like this and he said, there is something that is burning inside, something that is burning inside. Can you help me? And the missionary brought him in, he pointed to Christ. The guy was converted and today he's one of the most outstanding black evangelists in the country.

You see, you need to recognize this morning, listen young folks, your life is absolutely precious for Jesus. You are not just someone who's in a Christian school. You are not just someone who came here from some little town out in the prairies or from Manitoba or from wherever you came from, from B.C. Your life is absolutely vital and the presence of God.

And if you want to be a disciple for the Lord Jesus Christ, the first thing that you need to recognize is the fact that God needs to save you. Well, he said, Gerard, if God wants to save me, then what does that mean? Well, first of all, the Bible is saying to us that we are sinners in the sight of God. You see, if we want to accept it or not, listen young folk, sin will not enter into the kingdom of God.

And if it is unconfessed sin in my life, if it's a habit in my life, if it's a sexual perversion habit or something about my mind or some friendship or any of those things. And I know if I'm a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, I know I can't do those things. What does that mean? Well, I tell you what it means this morning.

It simply means that if I'm a sinner this morning and saved just for the sake of what we are talking about, say, for instance, you are 15 or 16 years old here and you say, well, how do I know that I'm a sinner? Well, say from the time of accountability, say five or six years old or whatever, you have committed three sins every day and you are maybe 15 this morning. It's about 10,000 or about 1,000 sins every year. And it's about 10,000 sins that is standing between me and God.

I will never forget the night when I was saved in that theological school. I tell you, I saw my sin in a way that I've never seen it before. And I want to say to you this morning, listen, young folk, the Lord Jesus is saying to us, he said, the Son of Man has come to save and to seek those who are lost.

It's like a guy drowning in a river. You can't jump in and try and save that fellow as long as he can help himself because he's going to drag you down into the water. But you need to wait until you see the moment that he's just about going to go down.

That's the moment that you approach him because he has come to the place where he can't help himself anymore. Now, if I sit here today and you say, well, I know that I need to be saved. What does God's word say to me? Well, you know what the Bible is saying to us? The Bible is saying to us that God has made Jesus Christ to become sin for us.

You know what that means this morning, young folks, if every sin that you and I have ever committed in our relationships with God has been written in a book like this and the Bible says God has an account of everything that I've done. If every sin has been written in a book like this, you know what God is saying to us? God is saying to us in his word, Jesus Christ has been made sin for us. That means this Saturday morning, if you and I confess our sins before God, the moment when you confess your sins before God, the Lord Jesus Christ has come and he has come to take your sin away.

That means when you confess your sins before God and you ask Jesus to come into your heart and you ask him to cleanse you in his precious blood, the Lord Jesus Christ has come and he has taken your sins away. And I wonder if I may ask you, do you know that your sins has been forgiven? Well, you say, is that the only step? No. The second step is I must accept him as my personal savior, because the Bible is saying to us in John chapter 1 verse 12, he said, but as many as received him, to them gave thee the authority to become a child of God.

Let me use an illustration. If you sit here this morning and I say to you now, listen, young folks, you see my watch? I would like to give you my watch. What do you have to do? Well, you can sit there and say, oh, Gerard, that's very kind of you and I appreciate that.

But when is this watch going to become yours? You see, you can sit here all morning and say he wants to give me his watch. He's willing to part from his watch. When is this watch going to become yours? The

moment when you come and you accept it and that moment, this watch becomes your property.

I fear the day when someone is going to come and take my watch. That's why I've got such a cheap watch, you see. You see, you must accept him as your personal savior, because the Bible is saying to us, but as many as received him, to them God gave the power to become a child of God.

You know, just about two and a half weeks ago, I point engineer to Christ was involved in the army out in British Columbia. And this guy came to a meeting where I preach and I realized that he wasn't safe. It was a large alliance church.

And he came to the weekend retreat the following weekend. And one morning he came out of a tabernacle and the tears were streamed down his cheeks. And I said to him, Andy, what's wrong? He said, he said, Gerard, I want to be saved.

So we got back into the tabernacle and systematically I explained to him how we can give his life to the Lord Jesus Christ. And you know, the moment when he confessed his sins before God, that moment something happened in his life. And I said to him what he said.

He said, I know that my sins has been forgiven. What is the fact that because this wonderful concept of discipleship, you know what it is this morning? It's simple childlike faith. You see, the Bible is saying to us, by faith, you are saved.

When I was a pastor, I passed through the church a number of years ago and one of my elders came and he told me this incident. And because of the fact he was my elder, I guess I could believe this guy. But this is what he told me.

He said we were, my church was close to Niagara Falls. And he said many, many years ago, there was a man. And if I remember his name correctly, his name was Blondini.

And this man came to walk on a cable over the Niagara Falls. And this guy came and my elder told me, he said, pastor, you walk right over the falls on this cable. And he came to the other side and people were absolutely ecstatic and hysterical about this.

And he turned to them and he said to people, he said, listen, folks, on the American side, he said, listen, would do you believe that I could put a wheelbarrow on this cable and push this wheelbarrow right across the Niagara Falls? So the people were tremendously hysterical about this and they said, Blondini, we believe that you are able to do that. Do you know what this guy did? He took a wheelbarrow on that cable and he pushed it right across the Niagara Falls. He came to the Canadian side and the Canadians were tremendously taken aback by what he was doing.

And they thought, oh, that's wonderful. And they were they were so enthusiastic about this. And and then this guy turned to them and he said to the people on this on the Canadian side and he said, folks, do you believe that I can put someone in this wheelbarrow and push someone in this wheelbarrow right across the Niagara Falls? Everyone shouted and said, Blondini, we believe that you can do that.

He turned to the Canadians and he said, I'm looking for someone who's willing to get into the wheelbarrow. Well, thank God he was not in the States. I guess there would be many who wanted to jump in the wheelbarrow.

But the Canadians be more conservative. No one is willing to jump in. You see, that's what faith is.

If you trust the Lord Jesus in simple faith to come into your heart, into your life, you actually is getting, if I can say this with respect, listen, young folks, you are getting into the wheelbarrow of the Lord Jesus and he push you over the cliff of sin right into the kingdom of God. Secondly, if I want to be a disciple for the Lord Jesus Christ, you know what that means? That means a Saturday morning that I need to give my life totally to the Lord Jesus. You see, the Holy Spirit of God is a person.

And listen, young folks, when I receive God's person into my life, I receive the person of the Holy Spirit into my life. And you can't divide a personality. Now, the problem with so many of us this morning, the Holy Spirit of God is in my life as a young person, like a little bird in a cage.

Somehow God's spirit is resident. And yet you can't say this morning, I know that the spirit of God is present in my relationship with God. And I wonder what Saturday morning, if you would allow me to ask you, do you realize this morning as a young person that there must be a moment in your life where the Lord Jesus wants you to put your life on the altar for God, to put your ambitions on the altar for God, to put your future on the altar for God, to put your relationships on the altar for God.

In other words, every aspect of my life as a young follower of Jesus must go to the altar of God. Well, you said, Gerard, what does that mean? Well, that means my life and its relationships. That means my body and its instincts.

That means my heart and its affection. That means my will and its choices. That means every aspect of my life must be handed over to the control of God's spirit in my relationship with God.

You know, I would never forget my own relationship with God. God brought me to a place like this about three years after I went out into the ministry. I was a young fellow.

I went to theological school. I was about 18 years old and I came out and I was in my early 20s or so and I was preaching for three years. And one day I heard someone preach and that person made a statement and said, there must be a moment when you die.

And I thought, what do they mean? When you die to your own ideas, when you die to your own ambition, a moment when you surrender yourself to God. And I remember the Saturday night when God brought me to this place in my life. And listen, young folks, I want to tell you this morning, if God did not bring me to that place in my life, I would have never been able to stand here.

Because you know what that cost me? I was the youngest in a family. We had a large farm in South Africa of about 10,000 acres in the African bush out. My heart was in farming.

I was on my way to become a vet. I had great ideas about the future. Then God pulled me into ministry.

And I always said to myself, you know, I've sacrificed so much because the farm was waiting for me. Mother and father was getting on in years and I had sacrificed my studies. I've sacrificed this so that I can go into ministry.

One morning, Lord Jesus said to me, that doesn't mean a thing to me. Your life needs to be absolutely given over to God. And I remember that Saturday night when I gave my life totally to Christ as a Christian.

And I said, Lord Jesus, you take my life. I listen, folks, I would have never stand here this morning. You know why? Because 14, 15 years ago, I couldn't talk to I couldn't speak this language.

The only dialect I knew was a combination between German and French out in the boondocks of Africa. So I had to learn the language. Suddenly, my mother died and I was the youngest child in the family.

I was responsible for dad. And the night when I God spoke to me to go to Britain, I spent eight years in Britain. The first time in my life I was holding on to the phone.

My father was on the other side and my father was pleading with me. He said, son, you can't leave me. I said, daddy, I said, God has called me to go to Britain.

He said, you can't leave me. You can't leave a farm. You can't leave all these things.

And for the first time in my life, and I say this with tremendous regret, I had to take the phone as my old father was sobbing and I had to put the phone right down in his ear just to get away from it. He said, what did that cost you? It cost me a night weeping before God. I could say goodbye to my country.

And listen, young folks, let me tell you something this morning. Your life is absolutely precious to God. You need to find out what is God's plan for your life.

You need to follow God's plan for your life. You need to feel God's plan for your life. Have you heard of John Paton, the man who became a missionary to the New Hebridee Islands? You know, the British government would not give him permission to go to those islands because those islands were full of cannibals.

There was a man and his wife and somehow they feel in their hearts that their lives has been given to Jesus. They want to work for God somewhere in the mission field. They want to serve the Lord Jesus.

Government said we can't let you go because we can't be responsible. John Paton pleaded with the government, he said, you dropped me on the New Hebridee Islands and you're not responsible for me. Oh, my friends, they said, no, I could see John Paton and his wife cycling down a little pathway in the island with their bicycles and the one cannibal would say to the other one, good night, look at this, we've got meals on wheels today.

And they let him go. They came to the island and they dropped him on the island and they left to the ship for the ship back to the mainland of Britain. That man and his wife began to minister on the New Hebridee Islands.

You know what happened? John Paton's wife died and for three days, the rifle, he had to lie on a grave with his rifle, chasing these cannibals away, who was trying to dig up the body of John Paton's wife. One day in heaven, I don't think I will see him in heaven. You know why? Because he'd be so close to the throne of God, I will not be able to see him.

But somehow, if I get a glimpse of this man and I would ask him and say, Paton, why is it that you wasted your life on those New Hebridee Islands? Why is it that you did what you did? Sacrifice yourself. You know what he's saying? It's because I love Jesus. And I listen, young folks here in our Canadian culture, we are so comfortable in our circumstances.

We don't know what it means to sacrifice before God. I wish I can take you this morning to a little village up in the Bundus of Africa where you get on a horseback and for miles you're up into the mountains and you come to a little hut somewhere and you don't know where your next meal is going to come from. And you sit around the fire and they are poor and they've got nothing, but they've got a hunger for the word of God.

Here in this beautiful land of Canada, you know what's happening? The average Canadian today, the average Canadian today, we are in a situation where 75 percent of the world is getting less than 6 percent of what the average Canadian is earning every month. It's so easy, you see. You sit here this morning and say, Gerard, I'm a Christian.

Is it costing you something to be a Christian? I preached in a church in Washington State some time ago, Baptist Church, and a guy came to me after the service and said to me, I must confess, I didn't agree with what you said. I spoke on what it means to be a Christian. I spoke in a little verse in John chapter 20 where the Lord Jesus said, As my father has sent me, so sent are you.

The first time when I saw that verse, it blew every circuit in my mind. It gave me a new lease on life. He came to me afterwards, he said to me, he said, I don't agree with that.

So I said, why? Well, he said, I'm a Christian. I said, that's wonderful. Well, he said, I go back to my old buddies, my old drinking friends.

He said, I said, well, that's fine. You need to relate the gospel. Oh, no.

He said, when I'm amongst them, he said, he said, I joke with them and I and I talk with them. And he said now and again, he said, I drink with them. And I turned to him and I said, now when you are with them, I said, are there times that you also swear an image? He said, yes, I do.

I said, answer this question to me, will you? I said, what is the difference between your life since you say you have become a Christian and when you back amongst your old friends? Just dropped, he said, and the tears began to stream down his cheek. He said to me, I guess I don't have the right article. I said, I think you could be right.

I said, maybe you've never been born of the Holy Spirit of God. Listen, young folks, and I know it's not easy to say this, I can tell you honestly, because I love young people. I shoved my heart out this morning just to think of come and stand here and speak to you guys in this society in which we are living, where there's so little responsibility, where everyone is doing what it seems right in his own eye.

It costs something to be a Christian. Is it costing you something? That's discipleship. Little Prussian soldier, many, many years ago, stood next to his commander.

There in the little hill, there was a little cabin or a little cottage, and his commander turned to him and he said to him, in the Prussian war, the guy was standing next to his cannon. He said, I want you to take your side, fix your sights on that little, that little cabin up there in the mountain on the hill. So he said, he set his sights, and the commander said, soldier, I want you to fire a shell in that cabin, because I believe in that cabin, there in that cabin are there some of the enemy and we must destroy it.

That young soldier began to tremble as he loaded the gun. He set the sights of his gun. There was a moment that he let go, and in a number of seconds, that shell came down and dropped upon the little cabin and wiped the cabin out in a split second.

That young soldier stood there and the tears began to stream down his cheeks and he was shaking. Commander turned to him and said to him, young man, what is wrong with you? He got your attention and he said, sir, he said, that cabin out there in the hill, in that cabin is my mother and my father and my brothers and my sister. He said, sir, you gave me a command.

He said, sir, I have obeyed your command. That's obedience. You see, I'm tremendously concerned about our young people today.

Because listen, young folks, in 10, 15, 20 years time of the Lord, Jesus started to come with that question. But in 10, 15, 20 years time, you are going to become the leaders in the church of the Lord Jesus. And I spent 85 percent of my time in British Columbia with pastors and with the leadership of churches.

And we are facing enormous problems. That means it's going to cost you something. My time, I guess it's virtually gone.

What is the result of being a disciple for the Lord Jesus? You know what's the result? Upon my life as a young disciple for Jesus Christ, there is a desire to spend time in the work of God. Can I share with you something? Fourteen, fifteen years ago, I had to learn this language. My wife is a graduate of Prairie Bible College, just here at the Tabernacle, and she studied here.

And she said to me yesterday, she said, Daddy, and I'm doing some of the speaking. And she said to me, Daddy, she said, you know, these guys are so polished. And she said she didn't want to say to me, you know, you're really kind of from Africa.

But she said, Daddy, and you're really kind of unique, you know. Oh, good night. I got the message all right.

But quite often when I preach my wife to me, you know, there are some things that you say and your use of the English language where you still need to pick some, because you know how I learned this language about 14, 15 years ago, someone gave me an old translation of the Bible. And then I bought myself the Old and the New Testament on cassette. And for seven years, the first 90 minutes of every morning, I sat with that Bible and the little cassette recorder and headphones, and I listened to the Old Testament and the last 45 minutes of every night, I listened to the New Testament.

And in that seven years, I went through the Old Testament 49 times and I think something like 96 times through the New Testament and God's Word. That's how I learned this wonderful language. I began to discover the value of God's Word.

Are you reading God's Word this morning? Do you know what the Bible says? He said, how shall a young man cleanse his way? He said, by taking heed according to thy word. But Solomon said, I have hid thy word in my heart so that I might not sin again. Listen, young folks, the Bible is like a computer.

If there is a problem, you press a button and on the screen, a verse of Scripture would come and say, this is the answer to your problem. There are many of us this morning, we don't know what it means to have a quiet time. We don't know what it means to spend time in the Word of God.

Are you reading the Bible? Are you studying the Bible? Is God, the Holy Spirit speaking? You ask my wife. There are times that I'm so taken up with this book that she finds me in our bed, in our bedroom, with my Bible sleeping like this, because it's so wonderful when God is speaking to us through His Word. I shared

the other morning, you know, I had the privilege of being in Britain for eight years, and I stayed with a lady and her brother for 14 days.

And she was an absolute perfectionist and a disciplinarian. And every morning at five o'clock, there was a knock at my door. And when I opened the door, there was a little woman.

She was a retired missionary from the land of Peru. She would stand there at the door with my early morning cup of coffee. And she would look at me and she'd say, now Gerard, it's time to seek God.

It's time to study His Word. And every morning at nine o'clock, when I came down to the breakfast table, that little woman would come, you know, and I was ready for it. You know, I was a young bachelor of those days.

And good night. I was ready. I used to do a lot of running in the mornings and that kind of stuff.

And I was ready for that breakfast. And as I approached the table, that little woman, you know, she gave a life out of you. Those two little ears would pierce through my heart and stand right in front of me.

And she said, now, young man, how did God speak to you this morning from His Word? Good night. Some of those mornings when I got on my knees around five o'clock or so, I closed my eyes and I said, Jesus, you better speak to me. That woman is waiting.

Is He speaking to us? Speaking to us. Have you read the life story of Richard Wurmbrand? You know how that guy got saved? A little man up in the mountains in Eastern Europe with a Jew prayed for years that God would send a Jew down to his village. Richard Wurmbrand, 17 years old, was an out and out communist.

He was a Jew. One day suddenly he had the desire to go to that little village. He said, I couldn't explain it.

He said, I came into the village and a little man came running down from the mountain and he saw me. He heard there was a Jew and he came running down to the Bible and he saw me. And he said, are you a Jew? And Wurmbrand said, yes.

He said, will you take this and read this, please? The little man ran back to his little cabin and he prayed. You know what happened? Wurmbrand said, I began to open the Bible and he said, I'm going to read the Bible. He said, as I read the Bible, he said, the words began to burn into my heart.

He said, I could not get away from it. It's God's Word. And listen, young folks, we are born of personality.

But listen, God is in the business of building up Christian character and He's using the Bible to build up my Christian character. He says, oh no, you know what he means? It means prayer. Do you know what it means to pray? Talking to Jesus? Do you still believe God answers prayer? Can I share it with you? The first time when I came to Canada, I did a series of, I did a conference in an associated gospel church in the province of Ontario, and I believe that God still instantaneously can answer prayer.

I believe that the times of miracles is gone. I said, what do you mean? He said, well, I just believe it. I said, well, don't you think the greatest miracle is when someone comes to Jesus and God's saving? I mean, of course, you have to accept that.

And I went to my room that night and it was the Holy Spirit of God said to me, just watch this, something is going to happen here. Next morning I came down to the kitchen, his wife turned to me, she said to me, Gerard, will you give me all your dirty shirts? So I gave her about eight or nine dirty shirts and she threw them in the washing machine. Do you know what happened? The washing machine broke.

Now, I don't think it was my shirt, but here this thing conked in and we tried to fix it. We did this, we did that, and somehow we couldn't fix it. And this old man turned to me and he was just about retiring age.

He turned to me and he said to me, he said, don't worry, he said, I know a Christian Dutch fellow who's going to come and fix the washing machine. No problem. So I said, well, that's fine with me.

The next morning I had my quiet time and God just broke my heart. And do you know what happened? I sensed God's presence and my heart is broken up and sobbing and the presence of God. And I came down to the kitchen.

He was sitting at the kitchen table studying his great New Testament. I said, good morning, George. And he said, good morning.

And I was on my way to the washroom and on my way to the washroom just before I get into the washroom, there was this washing machine standing that broke the previous day. So I opened it, my shirt was still in it, water was ice cold. I closed it and I did something that I never in my life done before.

And to be absolutely honest with you, I haven't done it since then. But I put my hand upon this washing machine and I said, Lord Jesus, if you met with me this morning, if you have answered prayer, if you are a prayer answering God, then I ask in Jesus name that you do something about this washing machine now. Amen.

Good night. What did I pray? I thought I'd better put God to the test and I pressed the button and to my utter amazement, the other thing got going and I tell you, it was broken. Ran to the kitchen and he sat there, I said, George, I said, the washing machine is working.

Oh no, he said, it's had it. I said, come and see. And you know, he was just about retiring.

I actually sort of come up to me like this, you know, got to the washing machine. I never told him what I did. You know what this man did? He switched it on and off.

I thought, this guy is going to break this thing again. He switched it on and off and on and off and off. I thought, well, if God had a miracle, boy, this is the test of it.

And then he turned to me because he don't believe in miracles. And he turned to me and he said to me, he said, what did you do? So I kind of dropped my head and said, well, I kind of, I prayed for it. He said, what? I said, I prayed for it.

You know what, you know what his first question, are you in a habit of doing this? I said, George, I've never done this before. I said, in fact, I don't know if I ever do it. You know what his second question, what shall I say to the Dutchman? His theology was in trouble, you see.

I spoke at a conference across the border to a group of pastors on the subject of prayer and their wives. Do you know what happened? I shared with this incident. But you know what happened at the end of that session? Four of their wives came to me and asked me to pray for the washing machine.

Listen, young folks, it's an exciting thing to be a Christian. I don't know about you, but I love it. God answers prayer.

He says, anything else? One last thing and then I let you go. Witnessing. Are you witnessing for Jesus? If your friend comes to you when you're back at school and say to you, hey, pal, can you tell me how I can give my life to Christ? Would you be able to sit down with him and systematically explain to him how he can give his life to Jesus Christ? And take him on and disciple him and see him growing in the Lord Jesus? I close to this, you know, at the end of my first year at theological school, I got saved, went back to our farm in Africa and on our farm in Africa where African pastors to spend days and nights in prayer and fasting.

And I began to spend nights in prayer with these guys. And then I went back to theological school. And in the beginning of my second year, I asked the faculty, our faculty permission to begin with Friday nights of prayer for the students.

And oh, my word, they gave me permission. And the first Friday night, it was only one fellow, myself. This guy fell asleep about nine o'clock in the evening, snored through the night while I was trying to pray.

And then God began to work. And at some point, we had about 85 percent of the men students coming to our Friday nights of prayer. And I don't know if you guys will appreciate me saying this, but you know what? The most wonderful times of prayer we ever had was between about 12 and 5 o'clock in the morning.

Because I used to say to the guys, listen, you stay as long as you want. If you're tired, go to bed. Don't feel that you should stay.

And I said, but we're just going to pray. And we pray. And by about 12 o'clock, there would be four or five of us left.

And we say, Lord Jesus, will you give us a fresh spirit of prayer? And God just comes to us. We come to us and we find ourselves just praying and supplicating before God. Saturday was our off day at the school.

And the guys went playing tennis and running and all kinds of stuff. We would go to bed about five and get up at about 10 or 11. And then four or five of our men students went down to the Cape Town Parade Ground about 15 miles away.

And we gave out little gospel tracts and we shared the gospel of the Lord Jesus with people. One morning, one afternoon, one of the fellows and myself were on our way back to school. We were about a mile and a half from the college or so.

And we were walking in one of the suburbs of Cape Town on the sidewalk. And as we were walking, we just had a night of wonderful prayer. And you know, when you spend a night in prayer, your heart is so broken and you're so sensitive and you're so careful what you say.

We were talking about the things of God. And behind me was a man, behind us was a man walking. And this man was captivated by what we were talking about.

We didn't know that. We came to a little restaurant and I turned to my friend and said, let's pop in for a cup of coffee. We pop in and we sat down.

I still remember I look out of the window and this big man with his suit and briefcase was standing there. And I wonder why he was standing there. And we sat there for about five or 10 minutes.

And then he came and he came to me, I believe, because I was the closest to the passage. And he came to me and he said to me, would you mind if I see you for a sec? I said, sure. So I excused myself, jumped out.

We were walking on the sidewalk on the pavement. This guy turned to me and he said to me, I was walking behind you and your friend. He said, you are talking about God.

He said, something spoke to my heart. Can you tell me what it is? I knew it was the Holy Spirit of God. Now I began to share with him my testimony and I sensed how his heart opened up.

And I took him to a library about 300 yards away. And there in the corner of a library, this big, strong guy broke down. There was a pool of tears as he sawped his way through to God.

I never saw that man ever again. Three years later, I was out in ministry, back in Cape Town for about 14 days, did some stuff with these students. And one night about half past ten, I was driving to the school.

Out through one of the suburbs, it was raining. It was a dark African night. You know, in Africa, the nights get so dark, you virtually can't see your hand in front of your face.

And as I was driving down this road, I saw a man running from the one shop to the other because of the rain. Something in my heart said to me, stop and pick this guy up. And I very seldom do that, I must confess.

And I stopped and the guy jumped into my little car and I said to him, what's wrong? Well, he said, I'm on my way to help me about 12 miles away. And he said, I lost the bus. And he said, I just don't have enough money for a taxi.

And he said, I appreciate you giving me a lift. I said, sure, I'll take you. Do you know what happened? This fellow was in my little car for about three or four minutes when he began to speak to me about Jesus.

He was on fire, you know. And I sat there, I said to myself, I'm not going to tell this guy I'm a Christian. I'm not going to tell him I'm a minister.

I'm just going to sit here and let this guy have a go at me. Boy, did he do it. He said, if you don't come to Jesus tonight, you're on your way to hell.

Good night, I'm glad I'm saved, you know. He went on, on, on. Came to the place where I had to drop him off and I turned the engine of my little car.

It was a little Volkswagen that my dad gave me. Oh, the thing just about fell apart, but it was still going anyway. And he turned the engine off.

And I turned to this fellow and I said, thank you for speaking to me about Jesus. Thank you. I said, I am a Christian.

You know what? The guy was so disappointed. He thought he was going to point me to Christ. And I said, I'm a Christian.

I said, in fact, to be absolutely honest with you, I said, I'm a minister. Scared the life out of him, you know. I said, you did a marvellous job.

And I also kind of lectured and said, you know, there's some other things that you shouldn't have said. And I thought I'd better give them back, you know, a little bit. So I turned to him and I said to him, but while you were talking to me, I said to myself, I wonder if I haven't met you at a conference or somewhere.

I said, you know, somehow there's just something. I said, will you tell me how you got saved? And in the darkness of that night, this guy turned to me and he said to me, he said, well, it's actually very simple. He said, about three and a half years ago in the corner of a library, a young theological student pointed to Jesus Christ.

I thought, this is the same guy. He turned the light on. That's me! And oh, we had a tremendous time.

You know, forgive me for saying this, but he belonged at that point to some Pentecostal church. But goodnight, who cares, you know, in moments like that. And I turned to him and I said to him, I said, my brother, I said, what spoke to you that morning when you were walking behind my friend and myself? What was it? In fact, I turned to him and I said, what did I say that spoke to you? You know what he said? He said, I couldn't remember a word that you said.

And that put me right in my place. In fact, that's what my wife said to me all the time. She said, I couldn't remember a word that you said.

But I said, what spoke to you? You know what he said? He said, Gerard, you don't know this. He said, but I followed you and your friend for a mile and a half. He said, I came in behind you guys.

I cut a corner, came in behind you guys. You were talking about God. And it captivated me.

He said, it was not just what you said. But he said, there was a presence there that gripped my heart. He said, I followed you for a mile and a half.

He said, you didn't know it. He said, but the tears were streaming down my cheeks. He said, because what I sensed there was something that I deeply, deeply wanted.

And then he turned to me and he said, you know what it was? He said, it was the presence of God, the Holy Spirit. Do you realize that people are touching our lives every day? Every day. We prayed together and I left, drove to the school, and I was all broken up.

All broken up. Do you know why? Not because God used me that morning. Forget about that.

But do you know why I was weeping? Because I had to say to the Lord Jesus in my heart, I said, Lord Jesus, why is it that in my life I sense so little of the presence of God, the Holy Spirit? Young folks, if I can say to you something this morning, your life is very precious to Jesus. And it's not worth it to mess around with your life if you know that Jesus Christ does have a plan for your relationship with God.

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