

(Easter Convention 2008) the Public & Private Ministry of Christ - Part 1

by Gerhard Du Toit

Gerhard Du Toit emphasizes the importance of prayer, the role of the Holy Spirit, and the need for spiritual growth through literature and community in his sermon on the public and private ministry of Christ.

Duration: 1:06:46

Scripture: John 14:13, John 15:7, John 16:24, Romans 8:26, Romans 12:1, 1 Corinthians 12:7, Galatians 5:13

Topics: "Ministry Of Christ"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by encouraging the congregation to spend time in prayer and to pray for one another. He references the prophet Malachi in the Old Testament, who spoke about the importance of believers gathering together and testifying about God's faithfulness. The speaker then shares a personal story about a dangerous car ride during a conference, highlighting the miraculous fact that no one was harmed. He goes on to discuss the Gospel of John and the importance of understanding its message. He suggests that one way to approach the Gospel is to see Christ as the new testament tabernacle, emphasizing the verse where John states that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

Transcript

I would like to mention to you this morning that I saw at the back of this room that there are some wonderful Christian books that are available. I don't know if you are aware of this, but 75% of your growth as a Christian is going to be determined by what you read. You know, that's why the Apostle Paul when he said to us in Romans chapter 12, I beseech you by the mercies of God, and you know when you study the word beseech in the Greek New Testament, you will discover it's the fulfillment of the revelation of what he said in the first 11 chapters of the Epistle to the Romans.

By the way, the Epistle to the Romans in the New Testament is not the longest epistle. You know, those 7,957 verses in the New Testament, the longest epistle is the Epistle to the Corinthians, 437 verses. Romans has got 433.

My daughter said to me, it's a huge difference, you know. I mean, you count the words in Romans, it's 10,500 and something words, so you better be careful your back. My daughter said to me, Daddy, why are there more words and verses in 1 Corinthians than in Romans? Well, it's because there are so many problems at the church.

I often hear people saying to me, you know, I want to be part of the New Testament church, and I say to them, which one? I didn't want to be part of the Galatians because you'd be a seven-day Adventist a day, and I didn't want to be part of the church because it was an absolute phenomenal mess, you know. But when Paul said, I will teach you by the mercies of God, that's really the building up of the first 11 chapters. You know, it's like Romans chapter 8, when he said he spoke about the ministry of the Holy Spirit as it relates to prayer, and that wonderful exposition when he spoke about the Spirit of God and interceding, and intercession is a wonderful word in Latin.

It's the word *inter*. In fact, it's two words, the word *intra* and the word *sidra*. *Intra* means I step in between, and *sidra* in Latin really means that I face my full responsibility.

And so when the Apostle Paul said the Spirit of God helped our infirmities and our weaknesses because we do not know how to pray or what to pray, the Greek language is really saying to us, but he said the Spirit helped our infirmities and he intercedes for us. And people often come to him and say, can you explain to me Paul's understanding of infirmity and weaknesses? And all I always say to them, just study the first 25 verses of Romans chapter 8, and you discover every single one of those infirmities when the Spirit of God helps to intercede. Anyway, I want to encourage you.

I'm spending this year in 10 of Andrew Murray's classics. Andrew Murray wrote about 48 wonderful books, and I normally take one author a year, and then what I've been doing through the years is to read their books onto cassette. And then because we travel to 30 to 40 different countries, and I sit in planes 80-90 days a year, and in airports, and I don't like flying, but God gave me a promise one day, and he said, lo I'm with you.

So I was really glad for that promise, you know. But you just, we need to redeem the time, because brother and sister, you know, we only have one life to live. And to know some of us, we're getting on in years, and we become like the old man in his 80s when he sat under the tree, and here somewhere in Australia probably, and someone said to him, what do you do for a living? And he said, some days I just sit here, and some days I just sit here and think.

You know, we don't want to become like that. So we need to develop in our relationships with God. And I really trust that you have a hunger to grow spiritually.

One of the most tragic things that I find in different countries in the world, that you see people, and you speak to them, and you minister to them, and you pray with them, and you come back eight or nine years later, and there's been no difference in their relationships with God. And I often, when I meet those people, I say, so have you been growing the last five, ten years in your relationship with God? And there's no sense of the witness of the Spirit of God. I would say to them, you know, I think you really need to make sure if you are born of the Spirit of God.

Brother and sister, I meet people all over the world, and forgive me for this term, but you know, they've never been born of the Spirit of God. I mean, you're dealing with a spiritual abortion, and they are half-born. And so, if we grow in our relationships with God, it's a wonderful thing.

I want to encourage you to read Andrew Murray. You say, how will I read Andrew Murray? I often say to people, don't worry about the babies, it's the dream of what I'm saying to you. I often say to people, read the life story of someone before you read his books.

And Andrew Murray's life story is a wonderful one. I was born in the same country. I did research work on his life.

I've got in my library a thick life story of Andrew Murray. It's one of the oldest ones that is available. In fact, if you read it, you need to put a pin around your nose because of all of the dust, and you won't understand it because it's in dust.

But it's a wonderful life story of Andrew Murray. And people say, before I read someone's books, why do I have to read his life story? And I say, if you do that, that will help you to understand where that person is coming from. And this year, I'm spending time with Andrew Murray.

It's a little book that probably 25 years ago, I read onto cassette by Andrew Murray. It's the book that is next to my Bible. I carry that little book with me.

I've listened through it probably 150 times, if not more. You say, what is the title of that book? The Power of the Blood of Jesus Christ. And he explained to you the efficacy of the blood.

99 references in the New Testament ministering to us about the blood of Christ. The revelation of the Old Testament when God said, without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sin. God coming unto us in the Old Testament, and He said the efficacy of what the blood is.

And then Andrew Murray comes in Hebrews 9, and he made this great statement out of Hebrews 9 when Hebrews said to us, how much more shall the blood of Christ, through the eternal spirit. You say, why do you say that? Why does the scripture say that? Because brother and sister, the blood witness to the spirit, and the spirit of God witness to the blood. And so, the epistle to the Hebrews said, how much more shall the blood of Christ, through the eternal spirit, cleanse or purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? You say, what is my conscience? Murray said, my conscience is not just a judge that bears down upon my actions, but in my conscience, it bears testimony with my relationship with God, and God's relationship with me.

Murray said, so when the conscience is cleansed, so is the heart. You study the word conscience in the New Testament. 32 times in the Greek text, you come across this word conscience.

You bring those places together, and you come across 12 different kinds of consciences within the realm of New Testament scripture. There's another little book by Andrew Murray. You say, what is it? It's the little book, Abiding Christ.

One of the most wonderful, wonderful little books. These aren't books, brother and sister, that are 3, 4, 500 pages, but I tell you what, the wealth of riches as far as developing intimacy with God is revealing to you that the only way you can come to grips with Him is when you read them on your knees. You know, they're like the old Puritans, men like Thomas Boston, and Thomas Brooks, and Robert Marimba Chain, who used to say, how can the Holy Spirit in you criticize the Holy Spirit in me? And people said, I can't understand the Puritans.

And I would say to them, I understand why you're saying that, because most of the times they were thinking in Latin while they were trying to write in English. And they said, how do I understand them? And I said, read them on your knees. And when you read them on your knees, they will search your heart.

They will grab you by the throat. They will advance upon your soul, and they want to become part of your relationship with God. *Abiding Christ*, a wonderful little book by Andrew Murray.

Marvelous little book on humility. Just a great work. Prayer, the ministry of intercession with Christ in the school of prayer.

And I've set myself this year, it's about 1,500 pages, and just allow that to become part. Oh, you say, what about the word of God? They are always the consequences of God's word. You can never allow Christian literature to take the place of the Scriptures.

You know what I do with my library? I love books, brother and sister. I've been collecting books on prayer for the last 31 years. So, we have about 800 wonderful classics on prayer, and then wonderful other books on the subject of revival, and sanctification, and the life of the church, and all those kind of books.

In fact, my wife, I love her so dearly, but every time when she has her birthday, I buy her all kinds of things for her birthday, because I'm drawn so much from Janice and Monica, our daughter, and I buy this and that for her birthday. And then, you know what I do? I buy her a set of commentaries for her birthday. I mean, I could be a fool, but I'm not stupid, you know.

And, you know, she's so smart. You know the thing about our wives, you know, their voices so often sound like the voice of the Holy Spirit. Oh, you can't win, you know.

And so, she would come into my library with these wonderful gifts that I bought for her for her birthday, and when I opened the first page, it said, stolen from me again, you know. And so, brother and sister, I mean, you know, it's so wonderful, but listen, let me tell you something. Don't let your libraries interpret the Scriptures.

Don't let it do that. God's Word needs to interpret your library. This is the wonderful thing for me when it comes to developing in our relationships with God.

My library, it confirms that which God is saying to me. You know the old lady in Delaware, which country she was, when the pastor went to her and said to her, I'm going to give you a Matthew Henry's commentary so that you can explore that, and went to visit her sometime, and she said to her, so how do you enjoy Matthew Henry? And she said, oh pastor, the Bible is throwing so much light on Matthew Henry. I really enjoy it, you know.

So, that's the way that you need to approach, but I would encourage you, brother and sister, because you need to develop. Now, some maybe you are here, and you say, I don't find it easy to read. I don't find it easy to read.

That's why for more than the last 30 years, you know what I've been doing? I've been writing out the Scriptures by hand, and it's tremendous when you do that, and sometimes when a book speaks to me, you know what I do with that book? I translate it in my native tongue, which is a combination between German and French, and when I translate that, and I write that down, it really becomes part of my relationship with God. So, we want to encourage you. Last night, when we came together, we mentioned to you that one of the things that we're going to do, is we're going to spend some time in prayer in all these sessions that we will be together.

Tomorrow morning and tomorrow evening, I want us to explore the Old Testament understanding of what prayer is all about. And Sunday, God willing, in our times together, I want us to explore the New Testament. You know, those 7,957 verses take you to a New Testament tabernacle as it relates to prayer.

And you say, on what basis do you say it's a tabernacle? Well, when you study the New Testament as it relates to prayer, you discover that in that New Testament tabernacle of prayer, you have six pillars. And you say, Gerard, what are those six pillars? Those six pillars are the words in the Greek language that is speaking to us the most about prayer in the New Testament. The 1,017 verses out of Matthew, the 678 out of Mark, 1,151 Luke, and the 879 verses in the Gospel of John.

You bring them all together. The Acts of the Apostles, the Epistles of Paul, General Epistles in the Book of Jerusalem. You bring them together and they gave you six pillars.

And those six words become the pillars in understanding prayer. But, brother and sister, when you study them, you will discover that that tabernacle, I discover, have a roof. That roof consists of 12 other words in the New Testament as it relates to prayer.

You say, what do you mean? They are not used as many times as those six, but they are interrelated to those six. They are connected with them and they form the roof. And when you put the roof on that New Testament tabernacle of prayer, you discover that there are six other words.

Some of them are hardly mentioned in the New Testament and yet they are there. They are related to prayer and they come down and give you the ropes that hold down this roof of this New Testament tabernacle of prayer. Now, when you come underneath that tabernacle, you know what you will discover? 248 prayer passages in the New Testament.

And if we were in a seminary this morning, which we are not because you would say I am in a cemetery, but if we were just in a school today of prayer, I would have been able on the board to put this all down and said to you, let's explore those 248 passages and you would find a basis passage that takes that understanding of one of those 12 aspects of prayer, given to you the foundation of that, and then go to the rest of the New Testament and allow this to fill itself into the structure. And you say, what do you discover? You discover 12 aspects of New Testament prayer. And Sunday, God willing, I'm so much looking forward for us to explore some of those.

And brother and sister, I need to tell you this morning, I know what is going to happen. I mean, we're just going to scratch the surface because, you know, the Scriptures are so deep. And I want to tell you this morning, God was only able to communicate unto us these concepts of biblical truths because you cannot go from experience to the exposition in the truth of Scripture.

You say, what needs to happen? We need to go from the exposition of Scripture to experience because God is building up Christian character. And so when His Word becomes part of my life, I learn the language of prayer. I cultivate the spirit of prayer.

I pray when I don't feel like it because it becomes a relationship with God. And you know what happens? It's not the times that you spend with God, brother and sister, it's the times that God is going to spend with you. And it will transform every aspect of your relationship with God.

And so just to give you an idea of what we are going to do, I want us to spend some time in prayer. And what I want you to do is just wherever you are, we've got chairs that we will be able to do this. I want you

to just turn around and find three or four or five people.

And I want you to ask them and say, is there anything I can pray for you about? And if it is something that you can pray, maybe a family member, maybe something that's heavy upon your heart, share it with them. And we're going to spend some time in prayer together. And then we will close our time in prayer and we're going to turn to the Scriptures.

So can we do that? Just wherever you are, find three or four or five people, turn around and we spend some time in prayer. Heavenly Father, we want to thank you this morning for this tremendous blessing that you have allowed us to be able to come together in these days. And Lord, I was so reminded this morning in my choir time that the prophet Malachi said in the Old Testament that those that fear the Lord, that somehow they came together in us.

They gathered together with one another and they shared with one another and they testified about the faithfulness and the goodness and the mercy of God. And as they shared with one another that somehow God in the greatness of His sovereignty brought a book of remembrance. And those things were written down because of the faithfulness of the One that has given His life to us.

Father, we thank you this morning that there is One that is thicker, closer than a brother. We thank you today that we can trust the One that has given His life to us and that He has said unto us that we can have life and abundance of life. And Father, here in this our country of Australia, are we so conscious that the rest of this country over this Easter period has no understanding and no perception and no concept of really what Easter is all about.

And the possibilities of redemption and the supremacy of the life of Christ and that which God is able to do. And Lord, it brought great brokenness into the inadequacy of my own life this Friday morning to realize that God has given unto us the wonders of the truth of your word and that you do not want us to have worldly friends. And yet, Father, you want us to have friends in the world.

And there are some of us in our gathering today, and Father, we have children and they do not live and they do not serve God. And we say to thee again this morning, Lord, you did not give us children to populate hell. But God, you have given us children so that they would live for you.

And we want to climb underneath the burden of God for those of us whose children at some point had an understanding of the light and the perception of what the gospel of Christ is all about. And yet, somehow they've lost their way. Or maybe they've never been born of the Spirit of God.

And we want to make a covenant with God these days. And we want to say to thee, our God and our Father, we do not want them to be lost because you have given unto us a covenant. You have promised unto us household salvation.

And for that simple reason, do we ask you that if we have lost the vision of a salvation, or if we have lost the vision for the restoration, God, we pray that somehow that the Spirit of God during the course of this weekend will bring upon our lives such a sense of the brokenness of God, and a sense of identification, and that we will be able to see them the way that God could see them. Father, we are reminded of the prodigal that went to the far country. And now the amazing understanding of the great New Testament is giving unto us the perception that the Father virtually, it seems to us, even with the understanding of the parable, went there day after day.

And now you brought the Son to the end of Himself. And now your Word said that when He came to Himself, He said to Himself, how many hired servants of my Father has got bread enough? And I perish with hunger. And I will arise and I will say to my Father, I sinned against heaven and in my sight, and I am no more worthy to be called by Son.

And your Word said that He arose, and He came to His Father, and His Father kissed Him, and His Father said, give unto my Son the best robe, and give unto my Son a ring for His hand, and give unto my Son shoes. And God, we are so thankful that you loved the backslider. And Father, we want to pray this morning that you will just break our hearts.

Oh God, that somehow that the freshness of the burden of God, as we climb underneath the burden of God for these men and women who have lost their way, we ask you, Father, in Jesus' name, that you will help us to dissect this burden of God. That you will help us to systematically persevere and pray and agonize this thing through to you until we would see the reality of the travel of your soul. Father, I pray this morning, we have come together this weekend, not because we have nothing else to do, but oh God, we have come together because we really want to meet with you.

And we long that there will be moments. And we confess this morning in thy presence, oh Father, we cannot manufacture the consciousness of God the Holy Spirit. We cannot work up the presence and the power of God.

Neither are we able to bring it down into our midst. But we confess in thy presence that there is no power without purity. And we want to humble ourselves before you, and we want to pray with the psalmist of old, Lord, are our hands clean and our hearts pure, because we want to stand in the greatness of the presence of God.

And Father, I ask and beseech you again this morning, because we only have three sessions today, and there are a few sessions tomorrow and Sunday and Monday morning, we are bringing this thing to a close. We ask that you help us to space ourselves out spiritually, physically, mentally and emotionally, that we will be able to comprehend the fullness of what God has in store for us over a weekend like this. And Lord, the great fear in my heart is always that there is the possibility that men and women will be able to sit in gatherings like this, and they are not ready and prepared in their hearts to receive the living word of God, which is able to bring life into their relationships with you.

And this morning I pray that you will give unto us a sensation of desperation, that you will create in us a hunger and a thirst after you, and that you will empty us of ourselves so that we might be able to be full of all the greatness of the fullness of God. And Father, I ask you today in Jesus' name, in this beautiful valley of Adelaide in Australia, that somehow that you will come upon this camp, and O God, that you will pour out upon us a spirit of prayer and a sense of purity and a sense of transparency and a consciousness of vulnerability, and that somehow that there will come a moment when God will open the heavens above, maybe not collectively upon us as a group or corporately, but O Father God, that there will be moments during this weekend when you will come to us individually, and that there will be places on this campground where we will be able to find ourselves sitting underneath a tree with a heart that has been crushed and broken, and a new sense of the vision and the supremacy and the priority and the centrality of the greatness of the life of Christ. We say to thee this morning, God our Father, we only have this one simple life to live.

None of us know if we're going to be alive next week. And so I pray with Robert Murray McShane of Old, that we will not just be informed with the reality of Scripture, but O God, that we will be enflamed, and that you will give us a consciousness of eternity, and that we will be able to live on the brink of eternity. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen. I want you to take your seat, and I want you to open your Bible if you will, and just for the sake of our time, turn with me. I really trust that you have the Scriptures with you this morning, but turn with me in your Bible to the Gospel of John.

I want us this morning and this afternoon to spend some time in this marvelous Gospel in the New Testament. And turn with me in your Bible to John chapter 14, and John chapter 15, and John chapter 16. We're not going to read those chapters, but we will read some passages from them.

And we've been sitting for quite some time, so why don't we change our positions and we stand for the reading of the Word of God. So, John chapter 14, John chapter 14 in your Bible, and let's read from verse number 13. Jesus said, In whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do that. If you love me, I want you to keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give unto you another Comforter, so that he may abide with you forever.

Even the Spirit of truth, which the world cannot receive, because he seeth him not, neither knoweth him, but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and he shall be in you. And then verse number 26, Jesus said, But the Comforter which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and he shall bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. Then if you turn over to the 15th chapter, verse number 26, Jesus said, But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth which proceeded from the Father, he shall testify of me, because you have been with me from the beginning.

Now chapter 16, verse number 7, Jesus said, Nevertheless, I tell you the truth, it is experienced to you that I go away, for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment, of sin, because they believe not on me, of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and you will see me no more, of judgment, because the Prince of this world is judged. I have yet many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now.

Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth, for he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak, and he will show you the things to come. He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and he shall show it unto you. We trust that God will bless to us the reading this word.

You may be seated. It is quite a fascinating reality for you and for me as a Christian when we begin to study the gospel of John, and we come to the realization in the New Testament that there were groups of people that became followers of Christ. 1 Corinthians 15, the Apostle Paul speaks of 500.

Then we find a smaller circle, and on the day of Pentecost, there were 120 of those early disciples that were together. And then you will discover in the 10th chapter of the Gospel of Luke that Jesus sent out 70

of those early disciples. And then within the circle of the 70, will you discover that after he spent a night in prayer in the Gospel of Luke, that he called those 12 disciples who became the apostles to him? And within the circle of the 12, do you discover that there was another little inner circle in the life of the Savior? Peter and James and John, they had unbelievable privileges in discovering intimacy with Christ when they were present on the Mount of Transfiguration, when they were with Christ in Gethsemane.

And yet my brother and my sister, within the circle of that little group of three, was there a closer circle, and that became the Apostle John in the Gospel of John. He was referred to as the disciple whom Jesus loved. He was referred to as that secret disciple.

He was the one that was probably more pleasant with the Lord Jesus than most of those early disciples. I somehow have come to the realization that when Jesus prayed in Luke 11 in a certain place, and one of those early disciples came to him, because they never came to Jesus and asked him that he would teach them how to preach. Neither did they ever come to him and said, can you help us to start or plant a church? Can you help us to raise support? Or any of those kind of things.

But there was one thing that dominated their understanding of the life of a Savior that demanded a supernatural explanation, and that was his prayer life. And when he prayed at a certain place in Luke chapter 11, and the Bible says that when he ceased to pray, one of those early disciples came to him, and he said to him, Lord will you teach us how to pray? Incidentally, I wonder if I can ask you this morning, as I want to ask myself the question, when last did someone come to you and ask you to teach them how to pray? And I often, as I think of that passage, say to myself it was probably the Apostle John that came to Christ, because he was so dear and near to the Savior. I don't know about you this morning, but you know when I find people that have an unbelievable intimacy with God, and people when I'm in their presence, that I feel that as I look into their eyes, and they look into my heart and into my life, and I become so vulnerable and so transparent, that I feel that they know everything about me, because of their intimacy with God.

When I find people, I somehow attach myself to those people like a leash, and I want to sit at their feet, and I want to learn from those people. And somehow, it seems to me that the Apostle John was one of those individuals that we discover in the realm of Scripture. That's why when you study the Gospel of John, and the incredible depth of what this Gospel is all about, my brother and my sister, if you memorize these 879 verses, it will totally transform your life.

And you develop such a radical intoxication of a hunger and a thirst for God, that your Christian life will never be the same. Many, many years ago in my own country of Africa, we speak a different language, which is a combination between German and Dutch. And incidentally, you need to learn that language before you can go to heaven.

So, some of us are way off track here. But brother and sister, the Gospel of John became so vividly part of my life, and as I was writing it out, and said, God, I want to understand the heart of this man. And I began to try and memorize these verses in John's Gospel.

And as I was going through it for a period of five years, I discovered an amazing thing in the Gospel of John. I came to the realization that there are two possible ways for us to approach our understanding of analyzing and coming to grips with these 21 chapters. And the first thing that I discovered in the Gospel of John, is that it was possible to see in John's Gospel, Christ as our New Testament tabernacle.

You say, Gerard, why do you say that? I'm saying that to you because in the first chapter of the Gospel of John, he made this statement, and this is what he said. John said, the Apostle John said, the Word became flesh, and He dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and full of truth. And I somehow was captured by this understanding that what was John trying to say when he said, the Word became flesh, and He dwelt among us, and because of the interest of my heart for languages, I went to my Greek New Testament, and I discovered that that Word in the Greek language is the Word for tabernacle.

In fact, as I followed that Word in the New Testament, it took me into deeper aspects of the understanding of this Word, and I came into the book of Revelation, when the Apostle John made this statement, and he said, the tabernacle of God was amongst his people as he was referring to the life of Christ. And my brother and sister and I, I took the Gospel of John and studied the Old Testament tabernacle, and to my utter amazement, I discovered because of the fact that the Old Testament is revealed for us in the New Testament, and the New Testament lies hidden in the Old Testament, I discovered the massive revelation of the Old Testament tabernacle being manifested in these wonderful chapters in the Gospel of John. And now, somehow, when Christ was standing in the holiest of all in His high priestly prayer, when He said, Father, the hour has come, glorify the Son so that the Son may glorify Thee, and then He made this unbelievable statement, and He said, I have manifested Thy name, and when you study those Hebrew names of God in the Old Testament, and bring you into Christ as the New Testament tabernacle, you discover the manifestation of the life of God in the Son of God.

I discovered that there was another way for us to be able to perceive the Gospel of John, and you say, what way was it? As you study those chapters in John's Gospel, you come to the realization that there were different aspects of the ministry of the Lord Jesus. And I came to the realization that there was what we would refer to as the predestinate ministry of Christ. You say, what kind of ministry was it? It was in the opening verses of the Gospel of John, when He said, in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and He said, the Word was God, and all things were made by Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

And you discover as you would go into the Old Testament, that it will be utterly impossible, my brother and sister, to really understand the Christ of the New Testament if you have not discovered the Christ of the Old Testament. And I went to those marvelous Old Testament chapters, and came to the concept and the understanding of what we would refer to as the Christophanies of Christ and the Old Testament. Places within the Hebrew language where we came to the realization that this was not the first person of the Trinity, but somehow we had to do with a clear concept that this must have been the Son of God.

The One that found Himself in the fiery furnace were the friends of Daniel. The One that was standing in the book of Joshua when they entered into the promised land, and Joshua saw this man in a distance, and he went up to him and he said to him, are you for us, or are you against us? And he made a statement and he said, I am the captain of the Lord of Hosts, and he said, I have now come. The One that wrestled with Jacob us all, and brought him to the place where he said, I will not let thee go unless thou would bless me.

And one of the most marvelous examples of Christ and the Old Testament do we find in the prophecy of Isaiah. When the prophet Isaiah made this statement, and this is what he said, he said, the year when King Isaiah died, he said, I also saw the Lord. Why did he say that? Because he was the chaplain to the King.

And there was a moment when the King Isaiah died, and the carpet was pulled from underneath the life and the ministry of the prophet Isaiah, and he said, when the King died, he said, I also saw the Lord. And he said, he was high and he was lifted up, and then he made this amazing statement, he said, he prayed for the temple, and as he described this understanding of the Lord, he made this observation, and he said, I could hear those seraphims, and they were crying the beautiful word, and the Hebrew language, which is the word, and they were crying, holy, holy, holiest, the Lord God Almighty. And ah, my brother and my sister, when the prophet Isaiah saw the Lord, you remember what happened? He saw himself.

He said, why do you say that? Because five times in the first five chapters, he cried out, he swears, woe to the people, woe to the people. But suddenly there was a moment when the prophet Isaiah, when he saw the Lord, he saw himself, and he made this statement, and he said, woe to me. He said, I'm a man of unclean lips, and he said, I'm dwelling amongst the people of unclean lips.

And you remember what happened? One of those seraphims came from of the altar, and he took a call from of the altar, and he touched the lips of the prophet Isaiah, and the prophet Isaiah made this statement, and this is what he said. He said, also I heard the voice of the Lord saying, whom shall I send, and who will go for us? And he responded, and he said, here am I. You know what Oswald Chambers said in the understanding of the Hebrew concept of the Old Testament? Chambers said that this voice of God, whom shall I send, and who will go for us, was ringing century after century, day after day, hour after hour, but because the prophet couldn't hear that, because his lips and his heart was not cleansed. Who did the prophet Isaiah saw? Well, the gospel of John came to us in the twelfth chapter, and he said he saw the Lord Jesus.

And you see, my brother and my sister, there is a concept this Thursday, Friday, Thursday morning, or Friday morning that we are in here, that if you don't understand the Christ of the Old Testament, there are a possibility that you will miss the fullness of the Christ of the New Testament. You can't separate the Christ of the Old Testament from the Christ of the New Testament. The beauty of it.

You say, what is it? It's His ministry, you see. That is not only what we would consider as the predestinate ministry of Christ. And if I may suggest a few, Dr. F.E. Meyer wrote a marvelous book that's out of print, but it's a marvelous book on the life of Christ.

And this is what he said, it's called, the title of the book is Christ in all the Scriptures. And he takes you systematically through the Old Testament and gives us this understanding of the Christ of the Old Testament. But brother and sister, there is another way for us in looking at the gospel of John.

It's not just His predestinate ministry. You say, Gerard, what is it? It is His public ministry in the gospel of John. You say, what do we discover within the realm of His public ministry? From the first chapter of the gospel of John, my brother and sister, up to the 12th chapter, the end of the 12th chapter, you will discover that Christ manifested Himself in public.

So how did He do that in those chapters? When you would study those chapters, you come across approximately eight personal conversations that Christ did during those chapters of the gospel of John. And when you study those personal conversations, you also come to the realization that it is not just those conversations, but there are approximately eight miracles that Jesus did during His public ministry. And you and I need to ask ourselves, why did He do that? Well, you see, when you come to the miracles that the Lord Jesus Christ did, you will discover an amazing thing.

Because the word in the Greek language for the word miracle in the gospel of John is a distinctive word from some of the other words for the word miracle within the Greek language. You say, why do you say that? You see, there are words that are speaking about miracles that the Lord Jesus did in the four gospels. And if I may say that with respect, they are miracles, wonderful as they were, but they were just miracles.

And yet, my brother and my sister, when we come to the gospel of John, you will discover that when Christ did a miracle, as you looked upon that word miracle, you discover that this word has a deeper meaning. You say, what is the meaning of this word? It is a word that is speaking to us about signposts towards spirituality. You say, what does it mean? It is a signpost.

He did a miracle. And why did He do this miracle? It is because He wanted to explain to them an aspect of a deity of His life, and the fact that He was the Son of God. This is why I can explain to you this morning is that, you know, I am not here from Australia, and to be honest, if you are driving yesterday down this way, I said to myself last night, I feel if I am somewhere in the boonies of Bokobogoland amongst the Sikhs, and my wife said to me this morning, so what is it like? And I said, well, very much like South Africa, but it is an amazing country.

And, you know, when we came here, this government is supposed to be what it is, which maybe it is probably not in any other country, but there is supposed to be road signs that said 50 kilometers towards the place. You say, what is that? That is a signpost towards that community. Now, if you go to the land of Peru, where I just spent three weeks, a number of months ago, and spoke at a conference for leadership in the city of Lima, and there were about 6,000 of these leaders that came together, and they couldn't find two churches large enough, so they split them up into two groups, and my translator will speak in one group one night to about 3,000 of these leaders and pastors, and then we have 10 minutes to get to this other church, and if you have ever driven in South America, don't you ever take a taxi, because it will deepen your prayer life to the degree that you have no concept of.

And my translator had this little scrap car. I said to him, Francisco, this car is running by the Holy Spirit in faith. I mean, this thing was just falling apart, and one night after the service, the first church I spoke to along, and he said, Brother Gerard, we have six minutes to get you in the next service, and I said, Francisco, I watch and pray, and you drive, and we were flying through the city, and you know, the last night of those meetings, he drove me back to my hotel room, and he turned to me, and he said, Brother Gerard, he said, I have one more question for you before I drop you off.

I said, what is it, Francisco? He said, what was the greatest miracle of this conference? And I look at him, and I said, Francisco, the greatest miracle is that we didn't kill anyone. There's no signpost, you know, Brother and Sister. I mean, you take your life in your hands.

And my wife often said, you know, you're really walking close to God when you come back from South America. Anyway, it's a signpost towards spirituality. That's what you discover in these miracles that Jesus did.

Eight wonderful miracles. He said, now, what about these private conversations on the Gospel of John? What do we discover in them? Brother and Sister, you know what they are? They are the means of revealing unto us an aspect of the life of the Father. You say, how do you know that? Let me take you to some of them.

They are amazing. Do you remember the third chapter of the Gospel of John? What did he say to us? There was a man with the name of Nicodemus, and he came to Jesus by night. And as he came to Jesus by night, in the greatness of the sovereignty of the fact that he was the Son of God, he was not asleep, he was waiting for Nicodemus to come.

And he came to him by night, and he said to him, Rabbi, we know that our teacher was come from God, because no man can do these things unless God be with him, and Christ just faced him right with the issue, because he was a Pharisee. And he said to Nicodemus, unless a man is born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God. And do you remember how Nicodemus turned to Christ, and he said to him, how can a man be born again? Can he go the second time into his mother's womb and be born? And Christ turned to him and he said, Nicodemus, that which is born out of the flesh is flesh, but that which is born out of the Spirit is spirit.

He said, marvel not that I say unto you, you must be born again. The wind bloweth no where, the sound is coming. He said, so is everyone that is born of the Spirit.

And do you remember when the Pharisee Nicodemus was familiar with the law and the prophets and the writings, turned to Christ in the middle of the night, and he said, how can this be? Ah, you know what Jesus said, he took him right to the Old Testament that he was so familiar. And he said, Nicodemus, just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so shall the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Why did Christ use that illustration, brother and sister? He used it for a simple reason.

Nicodemus knew what happened in the wilderness. Nicodemus was conscious that the people of Israel sinned against God, and in their sins of rebellion, those serpents came amongst them, and they were bitten by those serpents. Now, Nicodemus knew that how Moses cried to God for mercy, and God said to Moses, Moses, I want you to make a brazen serpent, and I want you to lift it up amongst the people.

And as the people who are dying because of their sin of rebellion and the poison of those serpents, as they will look upon the serpent they will love. And he brought Nicodemus to his own life, and he said, Nicodemus, just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so shall the Son of Man be lifted up. And in the death of their consciousness of their sin and their lusts for the sin, when they look at the Son, and they confess their sin, and they put their trust in the efficacy of a shed blood, and in redemption, and in the sacrifice that we see, he said as they will look, he said, suddenly they will love.

He said, why is it? Because he became the divine teacher. What about the fourth chapter of John's Gospel? Ah, he became the divine soul winner, you know. You say, why do you say that? He had to go through Samaria.

Why did he went through Samaria? You know, some theologians comment the stupidity of the few brain cells that they've got left that's not been burned. And they say to us, it was just a shortcut. It's absolutely rubbish.

You know why? He was preparing Samaria for the coming of the Holy Spirit in the eighth chapter of the book of Acts. And so he had to go through Samaria. And as he went through Samaria, brother and sister, what happened? There was a woman of Samaria who sat at the well.

And here comes the revelation of the divine soul winner. What did he do? He came to identify for the reason of her coming. Why did she come to the well? She came to fetch water.

Christ came, it was in the middle of the day. She came on her own because of the lifestyle that he was living. And Christ in his humanity revealed to us that there were times that he was tired.

There were times that he was thirsty. He was a perfect man. He was tempted in all points, just like us we are.

And yet without sin. And so he turned to the woman of Samaria. And he said to her, give me water to drink.

He came and he made contact with the reason for her coming. And you remember how she turned to him? And she said to him, how is it that you are a Jew? Ask of me who is a woman of Samaria water drink. That's obstacle number one.

Prejudice. You see, people aren't saved this morning on the land of Australia, brother and sister. Because they are prejudiced.

They've heard things. They've seen things in the Christian church. They've seen the degradation of the testimonies of men and women who confess the life of Christ.

And they are so prejudiced when it comes to this understanding. And she said, who is it you that you are a Jew? We have no dealings with the Jews, the Samaritans. And ah, you know what the Lord Jesus did? He turned to her and he said to her, if you know who is speaking to you, you are asking.

And he will give unto you a living water. And he laid the basis for winning her soul. You know what he said? He said, if you know who is speaking to you, you are asking the soul.

And he laid the basis of his whole understanding. And he went on with his conversation. And she threw one obstacle after the other.

He said, you are going to call your husband. She said, I don't have a husband. And he knew her so well.

He said, you're absolutely right. You know, you don't have a husband. You've had five husbands.

And one you know of is not your husband. And now she suddenly became religious. And she said, I perceive that you are a prophet.

She said, I've always worshipped upon this mountain. And the places you say that we should worship is Jerusalem. And Christ went on and on.

And you know what happened, brother and sister? There was a moment when he turned to her. And he said to her, I am the Messiah. I was in Australia about four years ago speaking to pastors and churches in the Sydney area.

And you know, I trust that you've got this burden in your heart. That God has given us a testimony, brother and sister. And we are going to stand before God one day.

And we don't want to stand and say, must I go empty handed? Must I sow my Saviour's need? And so wherever I go, I ask God and say, give me people that I can witness to. 99% of my time, I spend it with

Christians in different countries of the world. And sometimes I'm inundated by Christians.

And I mean, I love them. But sometimes I just want to get out there and spend time with people that don't know Christ. God don't want you to have worldly friends.

But I tell you, if you don't have friends in the world, you're dead in the water. And so we need to live a Christian life that demands a supernatural explanation. And you know, my wife in our office out there in Western Canada came to me.

And Janice said to me, we need to book your flight to go to Sydney. And because you know, I struggle with long flights and this kind of thing. She said, Daddy, why don't the office help me? And we book you and we fly you into Honolulu.

And then you can stay over there one night and then came out the next night to Sydney. Because the moment when I arrived at Sydney, a few hours later, I had to be involved in the first session with these 200 pastors and their wives at this conference. And so I said to them, that's OK.

Let's do that. And so they booked a flight and everything. And I got onto this flight from Vancouver to the Hawaiian Islands and onto Honolulu.

And you know, I was kind of dressed like this. And my wife often say, you know, you go fishing with a tie if you can. Anyway, I was dressed like this.

And as I got onto the plane, all these people. I mean, typical Canadians, you know. All these people, they had as little clothes on as possible because they were going to Hawaii.

And here I came, you know, like a bishop of Canterbury with my briefcase and my tie. And I was the most unwelcome passenger in that plane. I mean, I could smell it from them, you know.

And so I plunged myself down here at this place where I was sitting. And a young woman, probably in her late 30s or so, came and she sat next to me. And she looked at me and she said, so what are you up to? And I said, what do you mean? She said, where are you going to? I said, I'm on my way to Australia.

And she said, so what do you do? I said, I teach theology and speak at conferences and speak a view of missionaries. And she said, so what are you going to do in Sydney? I said, I've got a conference of ministers that I need to be at. So I said, where are you going to? Well, she said, my mother and father has got a condominium in Waikiki.

And she said, I'm going to go there for two weeks to be in the condominium. I said, OK, that's interesting. And so I said, so what do you do for a living? Well, she said, I studied a business degree.

And she said, I didn't satisfy me. And now I'm studying medicine. I mean, she was smart.

It's obvious, you know. And so I just said, great. I said, what's your name? She said, Adrian.

I said, my name is Gerard. And I said, we're on the flight. And I took out my Greek New Testament, and I was beginning to do some work.

And so she looked at it, and she said, what's that? I said, that's the Greek New Testament. And she said, do you understand that? I said, you never understand it. She said, so why do you read it? I said, I don't

have an option.

I mean, that's what I'm doing. And she said, you must understand some of it. Yeah, I said, sometimes it depends how you wake up in the morning, you know.

I said, I mean, it's like prayer, you know. You never get to the place where you know how to do it. And so she said, now, how did you come about what you were doing? Now, she didn't know.

Four o'clock that morning, I was on my knees, saying, Lord, I'm getting on this flight, and I don't want to sit this first hour just working. If there is someone next to me that I can talk to you about, just give me an opportunity. And the other question came, how did you come about doing what you're doing? Oh, brother.

I said, you really want to know? She said, yeah. I said, well, let me tell you how it started. How God spoke to me as a young boy of 11 years old in a church in my homeland in South Africa.

When our minister who was an alcoholic, didn't know Christ, but God allowed him to quote the verses of Scripture. He says, my son, give me your heart. I didn't tell her about the minister.

My son, give me your heart. And I see God began to speak to me. I said, 17 years old, I was thrown by a horse, because we were in a cattle ranch.

And as I was flying through the air, my head hitting a rock. We were in the hospital for two and a half months. As I was flying through the air, God spoke to me and said, if you die today, you're going to go straight to hell.

She said, was it the voice? I said, no, it was a clear impression. I knew. So she said, what happened? I said, well, I went to study theology.

And at the end of my first year, I was challenged by a fellow student and said to me, do you know that you are born of the Spirit of God? Do you have a witness of the Holy Spirit? And I said, I had no idea what he was speaking about. And I said, three o'clock that next morning, Christ came into my life and He saved me. And as I was sharing with her my testimony, you know what? Brother and sister, don't build a doctrine on this.

But 39,000 feet up in the air, there's always a greater consciousness of God. I don't know if it's fear because of height or a receptivity because of... But I sat in that plane and I became so conscious of the presence of God. And I'm not one of these people that push people, you know.

I mean, you can't do the work of the Holy Spirit. And I was sitting like this and she sat next to me and I looked at her and the tears were just streaming down her cheeks. I said, are you okay? She said, no.

I said, what's wrong? She said, my mother and father are Christians. My dad is a lawyer and they've been praying for 19 years that someone like this would sit next to me and talk to me about this. And I said, you really want to know? And she said, absolutely.

I said, it's going to take the next three hours of this flight, you know. She said, what do you mean? I said, I'm going to stand before God one day for you. And I said, in the next three hours, Adrian, I'm going to explain to you God's plan of salvation.

We're going to look at man's condition that is lost. We're going to look at God's provision that Christ came. We're going to look at your responsibility, which is repentance.

And we're going to look at the promise of God. And I said, Adrian, I'm going to take you through about 150 passages of Scripture. Are you ready? And you know, it's fascinating where you are on the plane.

You've got a captive audience. You don't need to raise your voice. There's a man and his wife that sat behind us.

And you know, if you've ever seen Canadians taking off their ears and put them in the front seat, that's what happened. And she said, yes, I want to know this. She said, this is obvious, something that's supernatural, that we sit next to each other.

And for the next three hours, I could go systematically through God's plan of salvation. And you know what happened that plane? She got saved. Couldn't wait to get home to phone her mom and dad and tell them what happened.

I came back from Australia 10 days later. I got onto this flight from Sydney back to Honolulu, came into the airport and Honolulu plane went down and we were allowed to get out and got our seats again. And when I got my seat again, guess who was on the flight? Adrian.

She came down and she just, she said, I can't believe it. And I said, you see nothing yet, you know. She found Christ.

Let me ask you this morning. You know, we are in Australia. I've never lost the burden for this country.

You've got neighbours this morning and they don't know Christ. You've got family members and they're lost in the presence of God. We've got a country that is so far from, I've been reading the history of Australia.

I don't think we've ever seen a coast to coast outpouring of the Spirit of God in this country. We haven't seen it. Little drops here and there, but nothing.

And you know how dry it's been the last number of months? Spiritually speaking, brother and sister, it's a lot worse. So what is it? It's Christ the Divine. Our time is gone.

I was in a place some time ago and my watch broke and it was glory. I bought a simple thing in Budapest in Romania and it's all been gone, you know. Our time is gone.

But I want us to spend some time in prayer together. And maybe it's not possible for you to do that. Maybe you're on in years and you say, you know, I can't really kneel anymore.

But if you can, I want us to close this little gathering in prayer. And we gather again this afternoon at 2 or 2.30, 2.30. And you've got some time here. But why don't you try, if you can, just turn around and find a place where you could kneel.

And why don't we take some time and you just say, God, I want you to search my heart. I didn't come to this place because I have nothing else to do. But I want to meet with you.

And I just want you to search my heart and I want you to work on my relationship with you.

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