

# The Word of God Spread

by James Hudson Taylor III

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of the Word of God spreading and the principles behind its growth, including the power of the resurrection, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and the centrality of the word.*

**Duration:** 53:46

**Scripture:** Isaiah 55:11, Matthew 6:33, Luke 1:37, Acts 6:1-7, Romans 10:17, Hebrews 4:12

**Topics:** "Word Of God"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. He highlights how the early church recognized the power of the resurrection and made it a central part of their testimony. The preacher also discusses the growth of the early church and attributes it to the spreading of the word of God. He encourages the listeners to learn from the principles outlined in the book of Acts and apply them to their own lives and churches. The sermon concludes with a call for every believer to commit to being a witness and sharing the word of God.

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## Transcript

It is a very real joy to be back at Knox Presbyterian Church. Leon and I remember with tremendous joy the opportunity we had back six years ago now to be with you and to share in the Bible ministry in connection with the annual mission conference. It's a joy to continue to see the continuing commitment to evangelism and world missions.

With David, I really rejoice in what God did 100 years ago and to stand here this evening with you. As Leon and I came to the church, I had the feeling that it was indeed an historic event. 100 years ago this month, well actually the end of last month, just a month ago to be exact, that group left Knox Presbyterian Church.

It's interesting and sobering to reflect on the cost of discipleship. Bonhoeffer once said, When Jesus Christ calls a man to be his disciple, he calls him to die. And of that party that went out, three within the first two years had given their lives for the Lord Jesus Christ.

It cost something. We will be thinking this weekend together about God's word. And our theme is taken from Isaiah chapter 55 verse 11.

This is a very precious chapter for our family. We weren't asked to sing it this afternoon. We might have done that at the Weishen concentration camp reunion because all four of the Taylor children along with our family were taught by our parents the 55th chapter of Isaiah.

And we used to sing it for morning worship. I shall not sing it for you this evening for fear there will be no congregation when I'm through. Verse 11, So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth.

It shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please. And it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I have sent it. For our scripture reading this evening, I would like to invite your attention to Acts chapter 6. Acts 6. Reading from verse 1 through verse 7. Hear the word of the Lord.

Now at this time while the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint arose on the part of the Hellenistic Jews against the native Hebrews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily serving of food. And the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said, It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables. But select from among you, brethren, seven men of good report, good reputation, full of the spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task.

But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word. And the statement found approval with the whole congregation, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Crocorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicholas, a proselyte from Antioch. These they brought before the apostles, and after praying they laid their hands on them.

And the word of God kept on spreading, and the number of disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem. And a great many of the priests were becoming obedient to the faith. Will you join with me in a word of prayer? Father, all through this week we have been thinking about your commission.

You have sent us as believers, as followers of Jesus, to make disciples of all nations. And we have thought of various parts of the world, of India and Latin America, of Asia and Africa, of the Muslim world. We ask this evening, dear Lord, as we turn to your word, that you will speak to our hearts.

We want to praise you together for what you did 100 years ago. We thank you for your hand of grace upon Jonathan and Rosalyn Goforth, and the way in which you used them in such a mighty way in China, not only among the Chinese, but also among the missionaries. We thank you, Lord, for that band of 14 young people that left Knox, left Toronto 100 years ago now, to go to China to give their lives for Christ, that the Chinese people might come to newness of life in Jesus.

Lord, we pray that tonight you will speak to our hearts as you spoke to Jonathan Goforth's heart, as you spoke to those young people 100 years ago. It may not be to China that you are calling us, but Lord, call us clearly that we may hear your voice and respond in obedience. In Christ's name we pray.

Amen. As we look at the growth of the early church, our attention this evening is on the words, the Word of God spread. That is found in Acts 6, verse 7. The Word of God spread.

In the book of Acts, Luke has given us at least five summations, and we come this evening to the first. It is a kind of summation that draws together, in a conclusion, what God was doing as a result of events just recorded. And from chapter 1 right up through to Acts 6, verse 7, you see this moving record of what God was doing through His chosen disciples.

The Word of God spread. The background of this summation can be seen in several important events and statements. First of all, it can be seen in the power of the resurrection.

Chapter 1 records that the Lord, the risen Lord, made Himself known in many ways and at many times to His disciples. The fact of the resurrection comes through in the preaching of the early church as a foundation for their pressing out in obedience to the Lord. Ten times in the first six chapters, reference is made to the resurrection.

Jesus Himself showed Himself alive by many convincing proofs, and these, His disciples, were to be witness of the resurrection. I wonder, friends, how often today we make the resurrection of Jesus part of our testimony. The fact that the Lord is risen, is that an important element in our witness today? That He is alive.

It was in the early church. Secondly, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Jesus had promised His disciples, I am leaving, but I will send My Spirit.

And in chapter 2, we read of the coming of the Holy Spirit. In chapter 1, verse 8, the Lord had said to His disciples, You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and then you will be My witnesses. That power was a cleansing power.

Cleansing their hearts by faith, as Peter said. Making no distinction between them and us, Gentile and Jew. It was a guiding power.

It was a powerful witness to stand boldly in the face of tremendous opposition. The Holy Spirit. Above all, it was the presence of the risen Lord.

So often we think of the other attributes and the other aspects of the Holy Spirit. But was it not He Himself present with them, that enabled them to stand? Jesus said, and I will be with you. My dear friend Dick Dowsett, who will be here before too long, as he preaches on Matthew chapter 28, the closing verses there, he constantly reminds young people, no go, no lo.

Do you know what he means? Go was the command. Go and make disciples. And the promise, lo, I am with you always.

And if we don't accept and obey the command, go, how can we appropriate, lo, the promise, lo, I am with you always? Well, the risen Lord, through the Holy Spirit, was to be with His servants. Thirdly, I think we see the way in which Jesus was presented in His uniqueness. And it's something we need to recapture today.

Not only in His risen life, through His Spirit, but in His uniqueness. There is no other name. You say that we cannot preach in His name? Should we obey man rather than God? Today, the very nerve of missions is being cut by those who are moving away from the recognition of the New Testament church that Jesus Christ alone is Savior.

There is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. Our Lord Himself said, I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by Me.

But today, the inroads of universalism in the church are cutting the nerve of missions as people feel, well, what right have we as Christians to superimpose our religious faith on others? Friends, those early

Christians knew that there was no other way. That Jesus Christ alone is the answer. There are other religions.

There are other great philosophies. But Jesus alone is the way, the truth, and the life. And they declared His uniqueness.

Man is lost, and Christ is the only answer. I hope that you will read Dick Dowsett's book, *God, That's Not Fair*. It's a bit like C.S. Lewis' book, *Screwtape Letters*, in format, because in it you have letters from Dick to his pal in university, and they're struggling over this very issue.

Read it, and let the word of God speak to your heart. The centrality of the word is also apparent all through these six chapters. The word of the Lord is so central here.

And so the summation comes. The word of the Lord spread. The word of God spread.

Now, what is the immediate circumstance of this spreading? Chapter six opens with the church in crisis. I'm sure this never happens at Knox. But the church in Jerusalem was about to split.

They were having a tough time. It was growing. And you know, when the church grows, Satan is very active, and he was on the attack.

There was complaining, there was murmuring, because the church was reaching out in love to orphans and widows. And some were being neglected in this ministry of compassion. You know, when work is going forward rapidly, and the numbers are growing, that can often happen, and happen easily.

And we read here that at a time of increase and growth, there was complaint that arose on the part of the Hellenistic Jews against the native Hebrews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily serving of food. I am impressed by the sensitivity of the early church. The sensitivity to the currents, the voices, the messages.

And the leaders of the church heard this complaint. Now, they could have responded in a number of ways. They might, first of all, have responded by just saying, this is an insignificant problem.

This small number of believers, furthermore, they are Hellenistic. These are the overseas, not overseas Chinese, but overseas Jews, who have come back to Jerusalem. We can afford to neglect them.

The major body of people here are being cared for. They didn't. They took decisive action.

Complaint in the church. Discrimination in the church demands decisive action. And Peter and the leaders of the church were prepared to bite the bullet.

And I read here that they called the whole body of believers together, the assembly together. They summoned the congregation of the disciples. You see, they took the matter really seriously.

And they took their own role seriously. Listen to what they said. It is not desirable for us to neglect the Word of God in order to serve tables.

Now, I have a friend in Singapore that doesn't like this verse of Scripture. He says to me that Peter, when he said that, was not expressing the Spirit of Christ. Christ had taken the towel and had girt himself, and then member by member he had washed his disciples' feet.

And here Peter is expressing a proud spirit. He wasn't prepared to serve the tables. And I think my friend in Singapore just doesn't get the point.

It wasn't that Peter was proud. Read his epistle and see how he talks about being girt about with a towel of humility. He knows what he's talking about.

But what he meant here was that the Lord had entrusted to him a responsibility. Ah yes, he was concerned when widows hurt and when Lydia died. You see him going to the scene there, called to the scene in his response.

He hurt when people hurt. It wasn't that, as we say in Chinese, that he was a wooden person. He wasn't a wooden person without any feeling.

He hurt. He had compassion. But Peter said, God has entrusted to us the responsibility to open the word.

And he knew that as some faced a lack, a famine of bread, if he and the other disciples neglected their responsibility, a greater famine, a more serious famine, the famine of God's word would come upon the church. And therefore, he refused to stand back from his responsibility. Look what he did.

He didn't ask his wife to take over or members of his family. That might have been very comfortable. You know, you can keep a tight control on things.

Then nepotism happens in the church today. You know, I think it's beautiful to see the confidence that Peter expresses here in the body of believers. He quietly set out for them principles of selection.

And then he said, it's over to you. You make the selection. The tremendous sense of confidence that he had, not only in the believers, but in their ability to bring forward people of adequate qualification to meet the need.

They here were prepared. Peter and the other disciples were prepared to bring in new blood. And I long to see the church today reaching out to young people and bringing in new leaders and new blood to serve shoulder to shoulder with others who have borne the heat of battle.

There's a beautiful picture here to see the way in which these disciples said, we don't have to do everything. Indeed, they already were confronted with the realization that they couldn't do everything. They were in trouble, and the church was about to split because of it.

But they said, young people can help. Spirit filled young people. Young people that are full of wisdom and of faith.

And thank God that Peter recognized that new blood coming in had that kind of quality. It wasn't money or position, authority. These were the factors that were laid out by Peter.

And then he turned it over to the body of saints and said, you go on. We must give ourselves to preaching the word and prayer. And you see what happened.

The body of believers acted on the principles laid out, spiritual principles laid out here. And seven men were chosen. It's interesting to see that these seven all had Gentile names.

It speaks of the breadth of the spirit of the believers then. That they weren't still holding tightly to just bringing Jews into the picture or local Jews. But they were prepared to bring the overseas Jews into the picture.

Oh yes, it was all Jews still. That breakthrough hadn't yet come. We'll see that tomorrow.

But they brought this new blood in. And immediately Luke gives us the summation. As a result of that, the word of God kept on spreading.

And the number of disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem. Friends, if we're looking for church growth at home, as well as world evangelization beyond us, we need to see closely some of these principles that are outlined for us here. Discrimination is dealt with.

Murmuring is recognized and is also dealt with. We need to recognize that growth demands increased organization. But that organization must be carried forward on biblical principles.

And leaders need to have a clear sense of priority. Tonight, in a sense, is China night. We've been thinking about a hundred years ago.

About Jonathan Goforth and the way God used that great leader in China and in other parts of the world. David has shared with us about Henry Frost and the way in which the Lord led him. And how, as a result of God's hand on this young man, the China inland mission began to span the Atlantic and include Canadian missionaries and missionaries from the United States.

Those missionaries went out in 1888. They weren't the first from North America. You have some who have already gone, George McKay to Formosa for Taiwan in 1865.

Work had already begun in some other parts, in Fujian province as well as Taiwan. But these represented, at least for the China inland mission and for Goforth's, a new penetration of China. That was 1888.

The church was to face some tremendous testing. By 1900, the Boxer Uprising took place. Thousands of Chinese Christians gave their lives, not a few missionaries.

More than 56 missionaries of the China inland mission died during the Boxer Uprising. That year, 1900, there were 100,000 Christians in China. Many people thought with that uprising, with the Empress Dowager on the rampage as she was, stirring up the obscurantist boxers, that that marked the end of the church.

But friends, never forget that God is sovereign and that His word, properly proclaimed, will bear fruit in God's time. Missionaries continued. Chinese pastors continued.

By 1937, when Japan attacked China, there were already half a million Christians in China. Over that period of some 36, 37 years, the number of Christians had multiplied by five at least. And then through those war years, very difficult war years, it was amazing to see what God was doing.

Chinese, by the thousand, had to flee from the northeastern provinces, from the eastern seaboard. And they made their way into the interior, to areas, many of them, many areas where the gospel had never reached, where missionaries had not penetrated. And Christians were among these refugees from the eastern seaboard, carrying the gospel.

By 1949, the war with Japan was over. The civil war was over. Mao Zedong stood in Tiananmen Square and proclaimed to the world, China has stood up.

At that point, there were between 700,000 and one million Christians in all of China. Surely we can acknowledge this evening that the word of God had spread. What a picture.

I see my dear colleague, Dr. McLeod, here this evening. He served in China. Some others here may also have served.

I don't know how you felt, Dr. McLeod, when the bamboo curtain came down. There was trembling in many hearts and wondering what would happen to the church. In 1976-77, that period, one of our CIM missionaries went back into China.

And when he came out, he described what he had seen. A spiritual desert. No evidence.

But friends, it is incredible to see what God has done in China. How the word has spread. I returned to China in 1980 for my first visit after an absence of 34 years.

And since that time, almost on an annual basis, Leon and I have had the privilege of traveling to different parts of China. To Beijing. To Shandong, where we went to the China Inland Mission School.

To Weixian, where we were imprisoned by the Japanese. To the northeastern provinces. To Xinjiang.

To Kunming. To Chongqing in Sichuan. To Hunan province.

Henan province, where I was born. And many other parts. Shanghai and Canton.

And as we've traveled, we've seen something of the mighty power of God's word. It is incredible to see what God has been doing. Yes, many people in 1949 and 50-51 were saying that's the end of the church in China.

No missionaries, no church. I submit to you that that is an inadequate understanding of the church. Jesus said, I will build my church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it.

When I visited Moore Memorial Church in Shanghai in my first visit, Dr. Billy Graham was speaking about his visit there just two nights ago. I arrived at the church at 6.30 in the morning. There were three services.

6.30, 8.30 and 10.30. And at 6.30 in the morning when I arrived, I discovered that there was already a crowd of people around the gate. I was a bit disturbed because I thought they haven't opened the gates yet to allow the Christians to go in. But when they saw the tourists coming, a little group of us, they opened a passage and we entered.

And to my amazement, I discovered the church was already full. 2,000 people were already crowding the church. The people standing outside at 6.25 that morning were waiting for the 8.30 service.

There was no room for them at 6.30. 2,000 of my Chinese brothers and sisters. It was an incredible experience. I wept as the piano began to play the prelude.

Oh yes, the piano had gone through the cultural revolution. There was no question about that. But the strains of Jesus, this is the very thought of thee with sweetness fills my breast.

And I thought of the way in which a political power had sought every means at its disposal to expunge the name of Jesus from the face of that nation. And that morning to have the privilege to join with my brothers and sisters in exalting His name. It was a tremendous experience.

How has that church grown? There are many factors. Many important factors. Factors that we find in these first six chapters.

The love factor. That kind of concern for widows and orphans. A doctor told me after he left China of the way in which they brought together two or three families.

Hurting families. Wobbly families that really hadn't stood as Christians during the heat of the persecution. Brought them into a little community of love.

And supported them, encouraged them. I saw a sister who had gone through 14 years of hard labor being sheltered by a brilliant neurosurgeon. He could have been discriminated against as a result of that.

Fearlessly, he brought her into his home and there protected this dear old sister. We heard last summer in Xinjiang, the far northwest, massive Muslim population there of a family that was forced to leave their home. Three days they were given to get out.

Christians in another commune heard what was happening. And they said, those are our brothers and sisters. We've got to do something about it.

They got materials, came with equipment and helped build a temporary shelter for this Christian family that was being discriminated against because of their faith. That kind of love. Our brothers and sisters in China have demonstrated that it's lay people that have got to carry the responsibility along with missionaries and pastors in preaching the Word.

And young people, if you haven't learned here in Toronto at Knox to serve the Lord, don't think that going across to China or any other part of the world is going to make a missionary out of you. It begins right here. That's where it begins for our Christians in China.

One brother told me he got out of hard labor, went back to his home area, couldn't find a single Christian. You know why he had been in hard labor for years and years? Because he was a Christian. When he got back to his home area, not finding a single Christian, he decided it was about time to start all over again.

There was a CIM church in that area. Nobody attending. No Christians in sight.

He began to witness. He said, you won't believe me, but in the last two years, we have seen 7,000 people turn to Jesus Christ. In two years' time.

He said the little house churches that have been established over these two years, they are so numerous that I've not been able to touch base with all of them once. Just a few of them. That brother that was evicted from his home and his family, they really loved the Lord.

You know, they went through the fire for the Lord. They had seen the Lord's hand of healing on some of their children. Two of their boys had been desperately ill.

And in answer to prayer, God brought healing to those boys. You know, a little after they got that temporary shelter built for them by other Christians, they were forced out of that and sent to the city of

Urumqi. Do you know what their job assignment was? Cleaning the public toilets.

That was their job assignment. Cleaning their public toilets. And this brother said, praise God, everybody has to go to the toilet.

This is going to give us an opportunity to witness for Jesus that we've never had before. Hey, when some untoward thing happens to you, and you feel discriminated against, do you get uptight? Do you feel that you've got a raw deal? Or do you begin to look at it in terms of the Great Commission? And how the Great Commission is going to be worked out in this situation. This brother did.

He saw that new assignment through the grid of the Great Commission. Make disciples. Praise God for that kind of commitment to evangelism.

And friends, I long this evening that every one of us here would make a commitment before the Lord to be His witness. To share His Word. We get all warm inside thinking about world missions.

But friends, I just long today, it may not be an assignment to join the sanitation department and go where this brother had to go. But can you, will you, in the year ahead, determined by God's grace? It's not only those people that we're concerned about. It's every one of us having a part in fulfilling the Great Commission.

And being concerned right here in Toronto. Oh, there are some other important factors. The way our brothers and sisters have suffered for their faith.

You know, in China today, they don't talk about Christianity as Yangjiao, as foreign religion anymore. They haven't had any foreigners around. These foreign devils got kicked out 40 years ago.

No missionaries have been around for 40 years. But Chinese have seen Christians. Chinese Christians.

And they thought they're rice Christians. These missionaries are kicked out. The money is cut off.

There's no more help from Canada and America and other places. That will pretty soon wither the vine. But do you know what happened? Billy Graham told me personally this week that the director of the United Front Work Department told Dr. Graham when he visited China earlier this year that they have discovered when the Christians were persecuted, they grew.

He said, now we don't want to persecute them. And they stood and stood for their faith. Some of them suffered incredibly.

They learned the power of prayer. And friends, they discovered the power of God's Word. Bibles were burned.

Many were confiscated. I may have shown you six years ago hand-transcribed copies of the Scriptures that were made by our brothers and sisters in China when they lost their Bibles. Do you know, friends, that if you review the history of Christianity in China, there were basically four major periods when the Gospel was brought to China.

The Nestorian period, 1,300 years ago. The Franciscan period during the time of Marco Polo. The Jesuit period at the end of the Ming Dynasty and the beginning of the Qing Dynasty.

And then the fourth, when Robert Morrison, the first Protestant missionary, entered China. But I have discovered as I've studied these four periods a very, very important distinction that the fourth period has from the earlier three. Never once in the first, second or third period when the Gospel was carried to China, never once was the Bible in its entirety translated for the Chinese church.

But when Robert Morrison arrived, his first task was to master the Chinese language, compile the first Chinese-English dictionary and complete the translation of the entire Word of God in the Chinese language. The Word spread. You see, Peter said we cannot lightly hold the responsibility that the Lord has entrusted to us.

We cannot give up the preaching of the Word. And I believe that there is cause and effect in those two verses. We cannot give up the preaching of the Word and we read in this summation the Word of God kept on spreading.

Will we commit ourselves as Robert Morrison did, as our brothers and sisters in China have to the Word of God? May I, in closing, just say to you this evening that there are ways in which we can respond to China today in prayer. Praying for that great nation's leaders, for Deng Xiaoping, for Zhao Jiyang, for the Premier Li Peng and many others of the leaders. They need our prayers.

They are seeking to open that country in a new way. We should thank God for that and bear them up in prayer. We need to remember our brothers and sisters.

The religious sector in China does not enjoy the freedom, anything like the freedom that you and I enjoy. Billy Graham was not permitted any single citywide crusade. It was a controlled situation where in schools and churches a controlled congregation came to hear Billy Graham speak.

House churches do not have freedom. Many times the pressure is on and it's on pretty tough in a lot of the big cities to close them down and force them to merge into the official church. We need to pray for our brothers and sisters.

You and I need to stand with radio broadcast. Recently I've been informed that 50% of the converts in China have been brought to faith through radio ministry. Praise God for that.

And I thank God that you are supporting the World Radio Missionary Fellowship here at Knox. Literature is important. The preparation of literature.

Bibles. Pastors' library. Apologetic literature for intellectuals who have been steeped in atheism, in evolution.

Helping them to see the relation of science and faith. Literature is important. Friends, there are two other ways that you and I can respond to China.

Some can go. Many do go as tourists. Quietly, in a loving spirit, travel through China and let the fragrance of our Lord Jesus Christ be shed abroad.

Some can go because the paramount leader Deng Xiaoping has established a policy of four modernizations. And that policy recognizes that China needs to move forward. Many of them are Christians.

And in a quiet, low-key way, they let their lives flesh out the love of Christ and the power of God's Word. Oh, they don't speak as I do this evening to large congregations. That isn't their task.

They've gone as medical personnel or as scientists, as engineers, people in computer and technology, in agriculture, teaching English as a second language. And what an opportunity they have just quietly as Jesus with the Samaritan woman or Jesus and Nicodemus. Some of them are people who have taken early retirement and are using their skills, long honed, to bring China into a modernization that it has never known.

And China is eager for that. And in many cases, the leaders in China have recognized that there is something different about the lifestyle of Christians and non-Christians, and they say, we like it. They don't drink.

They don't smoke. There isn't a kind of loose, moral standard. And they try to abide by the contracts in contrast to some who break their contracts.

So, friends, these are ways we can respond. The final way is right here in Toronto. I've been informed that in Toronto there are between five and six hundred scholars from China.

We can make friends with them and extend Christian hospitality to them. Last year, a friend went to Pittsburgh where my daughter and son-in-law serve in pastoral work. They became a host family.

And this professor from a city in China came to their home on many occasions. My daughter baked a birthday cake for him. He was absolutely delighted.

You know, when Leon and I visited him in China this year, he looked, and with a lovely smile on his face, he said, did your daughter tell you what happened? He wasn't talking about the birthday cake. He was talking about his opening his heart to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. He said, yes, we know about it.

He said, I'm telling my son and my wife about it too. We can't send missionaries, but these scholars, when they return, what an opportunity. Perhaps I can close with an illustration that I used last night at the banquet and I've used in other parts of Canada.

My friend John Bechtel was at a great banquet in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing. Sitting beside him was a leading Chinese official. And John Bechtel turned to this Chinese official and said, Sir, yesterday I went to your famous palace museum and I saw your national treasures.

You know, vases and bronzes and all of that. I saw your national treasure. And like a flash, the Chinese official turned to him and he said, Sir, you didn't see our national treasure.

They're all in your country. And he wasn't talking about the way Bishop White got precious things from China and brought them to the museum in Toronto. He was talking about scholars who have come to this country and are studying and to the United States and are studying.

That's the way a leader in China regards these. 30,000 in Canada and the United States. 10,000 in Japan.

Thousands in Europe. In England. In Australia.

New Zealand. All around the world seeking further training. What an opportunity we have to reach China's treasure.

We can't send missionaries to China today. But China's treasure has come to Canada. Do we treasure that opportunity to share Jesus with them? These are some ways we can respond.

Yes, it may be that there are 50 million Christians in China today. But don't forget, friends, there are 950 million who do not know Christ. The Jerusalem church saw a beginning.

But they didn't stop there. And tomorrow we're going to see the way they move forward. And we need to move forward in world evangelization because as the Word spreads, we want it to spread to every people, every nation, every tongue, and every tribe that Jesus' name may be exalted.

What role does the Lord want you to play in this final period of world evangelization? Would you bow with me, please, in prayer? Lord, we ask that Your Word will speak to our hearts as we reflect on Your power displayed in the church in Jerusalem, the way in which they addressed prejudice, the way in which they avoided ingrown power. They reached out with new blood coming in. And they saw the importance of Your Word and prayer.

And as a result, the problem was resolved and the church moved forward in amazing growth. Lord, we remember a hundred years ago the way in which You were working in Toronto and right here at Knox. And we long, our Heavenly Father, that You will do it again.

That Your power may come and be demonstrated through the Holy Spirit in our daily lives. Set our hearts afire as David has shared with us that zeal to send out young people and evangelize Toronto. Lord, grant that this city may be shaken by the power of the Gospel as it was a hundred years ago.

Give us tonight, dear Lord, a new commitment to Your Word and the proclamation of that Word and world evangelization. In Christ's name we pray.

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