

Released Into the Full Purpose

by Jim Cymbala

Jim Cymbala emphasizes the importance of preparation, prayer, and surrender to fulfill God's purpose in our lives.

Duration: 14:38

Scripture: Matthew 28:19, Acts 13:2-3

Topics: "Purpose"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the power of prayer and the intervention of God in people's lives. He uses the example of Peter being freed from chains when the church prayed for him. The speaker also discusses the importance of preparation and surrendering to God's will. He encourages pastors to seek guidance from the Holy Spirit and to preach the word with wisdom and anointing. The sermon concludes with a call for believers to hunger for spiritual growth and to strive to be a greater blessing to the world.

Transcript

Remember now, those of you who have a loved one, a spouse, or a child of your own, older than the little children, God breaks the chains. God sends light where there's darkness. God wakes people up.

Peter was sleeping, the church prayed, something from heaven came and woke him up. Out of darkness there came a shaft of light, and the chains that were on him fell off. Those are all beautiful pictures of what God does in answer to prayer.

Do you believe it? Do we believe that? Lift your hand if you believe that. Light comes out of nowhere. For a minister wanting to minister, for somebody on methadone, whatever, prescription drugs, light comes, chains fall off.

As we go into this new year, whatever God wants us to do, there has to be a preparation for it. In athletics, people practice and they get prepared. They change their diet, they prepare.

They study and they prepare to do the thing that they have purpose to do. And there's preparation from God for his children. And the question is not just what does God want me to do this year and what he wants you to do, but are we willing to be prepared by God to do what he wants us to do.

A lot of us never move forward because we always want to do, we're not willing to be prepared to do the new thing, the greater thing. We always are hyperactive, and we don't take the time for God to shape and

work. You know, Christianity right now in America is a very hyperactivity.

Praise and worship can be just worked up into a frenzy and everything is going a hundred miles an hour and just the waiting on God and letting God deal with us is something that can escape us. The book of Acts turns and the rest of the New Testament turns when not only the apostle Paul is converted from Saul of Tarsus, the persecutor of the church to someone who's called Paul. But even when he's converted, he's just a new convert and he's so scary to the Christians that they don't fellowship with him because all they know is this is the guy who has done a lot of damage to the Christian church.

So Paul is in no man's land. The Jews, which he was a part of the establishment of the Pharisee persecuting the church movement, he's no longer that. But the church is like, is he for real? The conversion is so great the Christians can't believe it, which shows us sometimes how we struggle with faith.

The early church couldn't believe he was real. But nevertheless, with the help of people like Barnabas and others, he's received and he ends up in the new center of Christian activity, no longer Jerusalem in the book of Acts, but in Antioch in Syria. And now the rest of the book of Acts is going to be about Paul and his travels going back and forth to Antioch.

And he goes from a guy who travels with Barnabas as the younger Christian. He bypasses Barnabas and soon he's called, but the apostle Paul and Barnabas, Paul and Barnabas, and at first it's Barnabas and Paul. But God is the only one who can gift us and use us.

Promotion comes from the Lord. You don't ever have to push yourself forward. God is the one who gives us entree into ministry and the gifting that we need to accomplish his purpose.

So here's how it happens. It's just these couple of verses. Listen.

In the church in Antioch, there were prophets and teachers. Barnabas, named first. Simeon, called Niger, which means black.

He was a black man from Africa. Lucius of Cyrene. Mannan, who had been brought up with Herod, the Tetrarch, the king.

And Saul. Notice he's called Saul still. And he was one of the teachers and people there at the church.

What a church. And while they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul. Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I've called them.

So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and they sent them off. And they go off. And that is called by the theologians or the Bible teachers, the first missionary journey of the Apostle Paul.

And in the back of your Bible, you'll see a map sometimes. And they'll have the arrows of where Paul and Barnabas went. A younger guy named John Mark, who wrote the book of Mark, went with them.

But it got too scary for him and he turned back, which caused problems later on, whether Paul could trust him. This is how the first missionary journey. And now the focus is going to go on Saul of Tarsus, who becomes the Apostle Paul, no longer Barnabas and Saul, but Paul and Barnabas.

And it all changes because God said it changes. Whatever order God gives, that's what it is. Spiritual authority doesn't come by people voting.

It comes by something God does. So while they were worshiping. And fasting.

And spending time ministering to the Lord. See, we are aware of God ministering to us. But this portion of Scripture is sometimes translated this way.

But while they fasted and prayed and while they were ministering to the Lord, how were they ministering? In worship, in submission. Here we are. Suddenly, at some dramatic moment, the Holy Spirit said, how would the Holy Spirit talk in a meeting? Certainly not through an audible voice, but somehow through the gifts of the Spirit.

Can you imagine the drama in that meeting? The Holy Spirit said, take Barnabas and Saul and separate them from the church and send them out to do the work that I've called them to do. What work? Holy Spirit doesn't say what work. Just says send them out, I'll show them as they go.

The history of the Christian church changes in those two verses. The history of the Bible changes. Paul becomes the writer of most of the rest of the New Testament.

He becomes the chief, as we call it, of the apostles, the greatest Christian who's ever lived. And outside of Jesus, more books have been written about Paul, the apostle, than anyone else in the whole Bible. More than Abraham, Moses, more than David, more than anyone.

The apostle Paul revolutionized the church through the gifting God gave him. And it all began when the church was just ministering to the Lord and the leaders were taking time to just say, here we are, God. We love you, we praise you.

But the deepest worship is not saying hallelujah. The deepest worship is when you submit your life to God and say, God, I'll do what you want me to do. I'll go where you want me to go.

I'll say what you want me to say. That's the highest worship. You can train a child to go hallelujah, hallelujah.

But you can't train anyone to surrender. Only God can give us the grace of surrender. And as they were ministering to the Lord, there's moments of extreme noise in the Bible and praising.

And then there's these moments that they were just ministering to the Lord. Somehow through the gifts of the Spirit, the Lord said, separate me, Barnabas and Saul, to the work that I've called them to do. Notice the Holy Spirit has his own will and speaks and is co-equal with the Father and the Son to the work that I, the Holy Spirit, have called them to do.

It seems like for a year, Barnabas and Saul had been at that church and Saul was accepted into leadership in some capacity. We don't know what he was. Seemed to be like one of the lesser ministers, associates or whatever.

I don't know who was in charge there and how they did that, but he didn't found that church. He was brought to that church by Barnabas. And that year that they were working and doing whatever, God had been preparing him.

And now that came the moment of release when God was going to send them out. And I believe there's a lot of people in this church who want to be released into the full purpose of God for their life. I know I do.

One day I'll tell you about it. I don't want to bore you with my personal stuff. But a prayer that I've had for two years, God has just now started opening doors so that I can still be here and minister, but doors open from very trustworthy and well-known ministries saying, would you go around the world and just train pastors and encourage pastors and help them? Well, this was something privately that I had been talking with the Lord about and I felt the Lord had laid on my heart.

So now World Challenge and Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, Samaritan's Purse, another ministry, plus some things the church is going to do. We want to encourage pastors. And with all the mistakes I've made and all the things I've learned and all the experiences I've had, trust me, I love to talk to pastors.

I love to talk to you and pray for you. But pastors who are ready to quit, I want to give the devil a kick in the behind and say, no, they're not going to quit. They're going to keep going.

They're going to do what God wants them to do. Amen? Can we all clap and say amen to that? But the question becomes this. What in the world am I going to say? Pastor Simba, you've preached what? Thousands of sermons.

You don't have some sermons? I know I could rehash some old stuff, but is that what God wants me to say? And am I ready spiritually? Because pastors are the hardest. Because when you speak to pastors, they're analyzing what you're saying and they're saying, I can do that better than him. What's he up there for? Not the easiest audience sometimes.

But what am I going to say? Well, preach the word. I know, but what part of the word? And with what unction from the Holy Spirit? And with what wisdom? And with what anointing? Where am I going to get it? In a store? I can only get that from God preparing me to do what he wants me to do. So when I stand in front of you, I want to feed you better.

I want to be a better pastor. I haven't been doing so good over all these years in so many ways, but I want to do better. We all do, all of us pastors.

But that won't happen overnight. You can only do something better that you're prepared to do something better. Doesn't happen in a second.

They that wait upon the Lord shall not only renew their strength, they're going to have deposited in them. God said through Jeremiah the prophet, these false prophets are telling the people what they want to hear. But if they would have only stood in my counsel, I would have showed them what to say.

If they would have only stood and let me prepare them, they would have been my spokesperson. They would have been used by God. If they would have only stood in my counsel, if they would have only waited and listened, I would have spoken to them.

But no, they had no time for me. They wanted to run and do and talk. And now they're making up their own stuff.

They're telling the people what the people want to hear. That's not a man of God. A man or a woman of God tells people what God wants them to say, not what the people want to hear.

So I need heavy duty preparation. I need heavy duty direction from the Lord. How about you? How many of you here are hungry for in 2012 that you go to another level? I'm not talking about now.

Let's stop talking for just a second about what you need from God. Okay, enough of that for a while. We've had that.

We pray that. We'll continue to pray. I'm on another level now, a little higher, a little deeper.

How many of you want to be a greater blessing to the world and to glorify Christ more with your life? Just lift up your hand. I'm talking about what you need, what you have. I am in one way, but not in the typical way of I need this and I need that.

I'm talking about God. What can a man give somebody unless he first received it? What in the world can I do for you or anybody else if I haven't got something from God myself? Unless the Lord makes a verse alive to me, how can I speak it with authority to you and see it be a blessing? How many are following me and see this, what I'm talking about? That's the preparation part. Those of you who say, Pastor, I'm like you.

I want the new thing that God wants to do in my life, but I'm willing to be led by Him and prepared by Him. I want to do the new... I don't want the 2011 model. That was fine for 2011.

God's got something bigger and better for 2012. I'm willing for Him to break me. I want to be prepared.

I want Him to speak to me, empower me. I need His direction just like He led Paul, Barnabas and Saul. I want to take time to just minister to Him and tell Him, I love you, Jesus.

I am here and I'm available to you. So Spirit of God, breathe on me. Fall fresh on me.

If you're here tonight, want to come and just pray with me for a season, if you want to pray in your chair, don't rush anywhere. Pastor, 2012, I want what God wants for me. I don't want to just repeat the way I was in 2011.

I want Him to show me the new thing that He has for me in this year. But I know it's going to mean preparation. It's going to mean impartation of something more than what I am now.

I need more of the Holy Spirit. I need more of His Word. I need more wisdom.

I need more sensitivity to the Holy Spirit. More, new, fresh.

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