

Boasting of Christ

by Major Ian Thomas

The sermon emphasizes the privilege of boasting in Jesus Christ and being a witness to His light, highlighting the role of the Holy Spirit and the exciting reality of divine invasion.

Duration: 42:57

Scripture: John 1:6, Romans 11:36

Topics: "Christ", "Boasting in Christ", "Witnessing"

Description

Major Ian Thomas emphasizes the importance of boasting about Jesus Christ, highlighting that our role as witnesses is to reflect His light rather than draw attention to ourselves. He illustrates this through the example of John the Baptist, who pointed others to Christ, and encourages believers to share their faith simply and authentically. Thomas shares personal anecdotes of how ordinary people can impact lives by being a voice for Christ, regardless of their background or abilities. He reminds us that the Holy Spirit works through our testimonies to bring transformation, urging us to remain available and obedient to God's calling. Ultimately, the sermon calls for a life dedicated to glorifying Jesus and sharing the good news of His salvation.

Transcript

Certainly happy to be with you here tonight, and it certainly is like coming home, not because it's like coming home, but because it is coming home. And I rejoice with you in the one whose home it is, and whose home we share, that of our Lord Jesus Christ. Bring you greetings too from all the folks in California, whom it was my joy to meet over the weekend, in our Torchbearer Correspondence, Torchbearer Conference, there in Fulbrook, where it took place this year.

Don't know where Fulbrook is, it's between San Diego and Los Angeles, a very beautiful spot. And we had a very lovely time on the Saturday, and then yesterday morning in the neighborhood church, where Bob Hobson is pastoring, and some very good friends of all of us meet to worship God on a Sunday morning, and a Sunday evening. Folks like Bob Burrows and their delightful family, and lots of other folks whose names I'm sure you would know.

So it's good to be here. I'm glad that some of the family here too. Just a few weeks back, there wasn't one single Thomas left in England at Cavenry, and we had hoped very sincerely that everything would collapse.

But from all reports, everything went on very much better in absence than in our present. That's always discouraging. But I'm happy to say that my wife is there holding the fort at the moment, all alone.

But Pete is on his way back. He is somewhere in the South Island in New Zealand at the moment, having spent many months sailing the high seas in Dayspring 2, mostly based for this part of the five-year journey upon which that boat is now embarked in the Tahitian Islands. Most of you probably know that the Dayspring is the boat that is used based in Fiji, and operating also out of New Zealand, with which it's our privilege to minister to the islands throughout the South Pacific.

They were on an island just a week or two back, where they were the third boat to visit them in 15 years. So if you're feeling lonely, just think of them. That should cheer you up.

Andy, my youngest son in air, as some of you may know, is at school, boarding school in Florida, learning how to suck oranges, and he'll be home for Christmas. So we're looking forward to having a little bit of a family reunion. I'm hoping that Pete, who is going to, my third boy from the South Pacific, I'm hoping that he'll, he's certainly going to swing by Colorado, from what I understand, and I'm hoping he'll be able to swing by His Hill, Texas too.

It's time he was introduced and became acquainted. But we have much indeed to look back upon, with profound gratitude to God, since last, a year ago, we met in this way at the Torchbearer Conference. And it's primarily to express our gratitude to Him that we meet in this way, to recognize that every good and perfect gift flows from above, that it's of Him, it's through Him, and it's to Him, all things.

And that's why in that last verse, the 36th of the 11th of the Epistle to the Romans, Paul adds at the end, to Him be the glory, because He's the only one who deserves it, our triune Savior, God, Father, and Holy Spirit, each of whom, by mutual agreement, the one between the other, have played their role in restoring the man whom they created to His true function, because that is what the gospel is all about. Don't look now, but I wonder if you could describe to me, don't look now, but I wonder if you could describe to me the shape and size and color of the lamps in this chapel. I wonder if I were to ask you, right, don't look now, I wonder if I were to ask you just to take a piece of paper and describe the lamps that provide light in this little chapel.

I wonder how far you'd get. The chances are you wouldn't have a clue, for a very good reason. You see, lamps, when they're discharging their responsibility, are anonymous.

They behave incognito. They do the job, but you don't look at the lamp, you enjoy the light. And that's your role and mine.

If we claim redemption through the shed blood of our once crucified, now risen and glorified Lord Jesus, and on the grounds of that redemptive transaction, have entered into that unique relationship with a risen living Lord who's taken up residence within our humanity, to be His witnesses. Our responsibility is to be numbered amongst those who discharge their responsibility in such a way that nobody, in point of fact, is inclined to look at us. They just enjoy the light.

That's the privilege of being a witness. Normally you only begin looking at the light when something it flickers, or goes out, or is too dim, or sometimes too bright. The only time that you begin to look at the light, which is, look at the lamp which is the source of the light, apparently in the room in which you engage, the only time you look at the lamp is when it's abnormal.

It's doing something that it shouldn't be doing. And the only time that you and I really attract attention to ourselves, as opposed to others in our presence, basking in that light that has its ultimate origin in Christ himself, is when there's something wrong. John's gospel in the first chapter tells us that there was a man sent from God, and he was sent to be a witness.

There was a man sent from God whose name was John. It's the sixth verse of the first chapter of John's gospel. And then he goes on to say, the same came for a witness, to bear witness of the light, that all men through him might believe.

He was not that light, of course. People were to enjoy the light, but he was not the light that they were to enjoy. They went to go away saying, wasn't John fabulous? Why? I must go and listen to that man again.

Uh-uh. He was not the light. He was there to be a witness to the light so that folks would enjoy the light and be totally unconscious of the one who bore the witness.

He was not that light. He was sent to bear witness of that light. And that's why, of course, it was his supreme delight of John to bow himself out and bow the Lord Jesus in, in such a way that folks would forget who bore testimony, but have a life-transforming encounter with the one of whom he testified.

And the marvelous thing about John as a witness was that his testimony was bearing fruit long after his head had been severed from his body. Folks normally can't say too much after their head has been severed from their bodies. But the marvelous thing that John was in the company of those who being dead yet speak.

Can you think of somebody else who being dead yet speak? Who's mentioned in the Bible? There are countless others, of course, who could stand with them shoulder to shoulder, not only in biblical times, but all down the history of the church of Jesus Christ. But you'll remember that in the fifth verse of the eleventh chapter of Paul, of the epistle to the Hebrews, I think Paul wrote it, but I have to be careful in case somebody doesn't. In the fifth chapter of that eleventh chapter of the, in the fifth verse of the eleventh chapter of that epistle to the Hebrews, it speaks of Abel who brought a better sacrifice than that of Cain, who being dead yet speaketh.

His ministry continues. This, of course, ultimately is the criterion of a man's true ministry. You can always detach a man from his ministry and his ministry will survive.

If a man's ministry depends upon the man and you remove the man and there's no ministry, then you know where the origin of the ministry may be placed. It's not in God, it's in the man. So we read that as they sought again to take the Lord Jesus in the 39th verse of the 10th chapter of John, but you needn't turn to it, he escaped out of their hand and went away again beyond Jordan into the place where John at first baptized and there he abode and many resorted unto him and they said John did no miracle, but all things that John spake of this man were true and it says many believed on him there because everything that John said rang true and of course because it was so gloriously vindicated in the person of the Lord Jesus himself.

Long after John had been murdered, his testimony was bearing fruit at others thankfully remembering John as the witness put their trust in Christ. He bore witness to the light. That's why in that first John, first chapter of John, if you're still there in the 19th verse, it said this is the record of John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, who are you? He confessed and denied not, he confessed

I am not the Christ and they asked him what then, are you Elijah? He said no I'm not.

They said are you that prophet or this prophet? He said no. So the mission wasn't all that productive. You see they'd been sent to get copy.

They were supposed to write him up in Christianity today or Moody Monthly or whatever they had in those days. They wanted to get some copy, they wanted a story. But no matter how they might question him, all that he would tell them was that he was not the Christ, he was not this prophet, he was not Elijah, he was not anybody else.

When they wanted to know who he was, all he was prepared to tell them was who he wasn't and then that didn't excite them too much. Finally they got quite irritated. They said who are you that we may give an answer to them that sent us? What sayest thou of thyself? Well he said if you must know I'll tell you.

I'm the voice of one crying in the wilderness. Make straight the way of the Lord as said the prophet Isaiah. Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.

I baptize with water but there standeth one among you whom you know not. He it is who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoes latch it I'm not worthy to unloose. My sole responsibility is to be a voice that will ring out loud and clear and bear testimony to the person of the one whom God in heaven sent, his incarnate Son.

The Lamb slain before the foundation of the world that taketh away the sin of the world. And again the next day after in verse 35 John stood and two of his disciples and looking upon Jesus as he walked he said behold the Lamb of God and the two disciples heard him speak and they followed Jesus. And when John looked round he'd lost his congregation and nothing delighted John more than when he lost his congregation.

It was his supreme preoccupation to preach himself out of business. They heard John speak and they followed Jesus. There's a witness, there's a light, a lamp that's discharging its responsibilities.

Jesus turned as you'll remember saw them following and said who are you looking for? They said where do you live? Said the Lord Jesus come and see. So they came and saw where he dwelt and they abode with him that day. It's so sublime, it's so glorious in all its simplicity just a voice.

Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world and you can be absolutely certain that when you and I discharge that responsibility as those are who are his witnesses the Holy Spirit will be abroad whose sheer delight, whose peculiar joy it is to bear witness to the truth as we make it articulate. Glorify the Son and through the word convince men of their sin and of their needs so that they in true repentance toward God may put their trust in Christ not aware ultimately of those who testify but basking in the light of the one of whom they speak. And the story in the book of the Acts is the story just of that of those who were a voice matching the need of a hungry awakening soul.

Some not aware of what they were seeking knowing only that there was a vacuum on the inside waiting for one who would bear witness in the discharge of that office that God has given to you and to me the moment we claim redemption through the blood of Jesus. And so after a citywide crusade in the city of Samaria the Holy Spirit can motivate Philip to go into the desert just take a little donkey ride said God. No other instructions furthermore no questions asked because Philip was a man being full of the Holy Ghost and he knew that the office of one being full of the Holy Ghost was to be told what to do and simply do as

he was told.

And wherever he might find himself given the opportunity of Jesus Christ. He was of course a little bit curious as to what God might have in mind. As a citywide crusader he couldn't see too much prospect going into the desert unless he was to preach to the goats.

The seating accommodation wouldn't be all that comfortable they'd have to sit on a cactus bush. But he was a man who being full of the Holy Ghost went for a donkey ride into the desert for no better reason that God said go. And there was the heart prepared whom God long since had recognized and in the fulfillment of his own pledge that if a man seek he'll find.

Philip was able to boast, boast of Jesus Christ to a man in the desert who was marvelously converted because he was a voice. When he found this man reading in a chariot from Isaiah 53 what a magnificent passage to be reading. Philip didn't excuse himself and say well I'm quite sure that before there can be any blessing I've got to have an all-night prayer meeting.

He didn't start waving his arms and try to twist God's arm to help him. He recognized that if he was the right man in the right place at the right time, if he was in the place of obedience, blessing there is inevitable because God demands simply our availability. Restfully available, instantly obedient.

In the recognition that God is intelligent enough to run his own business. And let me only know that I'm in one place at any given moment in time where God put me and I don't have to know what he's at. But I can be unshatterably confident that it'll have timeless consequence to his eternal praise and to the unspeakable blessing of some boy, girl, man or woman whose path he has caused me to cross because he had seen deep down in the heart of that individual a cry for help.

For he satisfies the hungry soul. He fills the weary soul with fatness. This is the privilege that God has given to you and to me, boast of Jesus Christ.

In the following chapter you'll remember in the ninth the word of God comes to a man called Ananias and tells him to go into the street called straight to the house belonging to a man called Judas because he'd got a house guest. So as Philip was sent for a donkey ride, Ananias was sent to do a little house-to-house visitation. He wasn't all that enthusiastic about the assignment because God said you'll find there a man called Saul of Tarsus and you can imagine the look on his face.

He said, did you say Saul of Tarsus? God said, yes. Are you sure you've got the name right? And are you sure that it was me you had in mind when you wanted somebody to go? Wouldn't you like somebody else to go? I don't suppose he was all that enthusiastic about visiting that man who was the archenemy of the early church, who described himself later if you'll remember in the 13th verse of the first chapter of Paul's first epistle to Timothy as a blasphemer, a persecutor, an injurious man. People got hurt when Saul of Tarsus was around.

But Ananias went and he was a voice and God delighted to bear witness to the truth as it was made articulate from the lips of a man who had learned that his supreme preoccupation was to be the means of communication from God to the soul that he, God, recognized as awakened, waiting to receive the liberating word of life. So your privilege and mine is simply the boast of Jesus Christ. Peter, when by direction of the Holy Spirit, went into the house of a Gentile, Cornelius, and found it filled with people who were waiting not to hear a man preach whose reputation they had learned, but from his lips, as Cornelius

put it, warned of God to hear from God words whereby they might be saved.

It didn't take unusual skill. It wasn't Peter's personality. It was simply that he was ready to be a voice and boast about Jesus Christ.

This is what makes the Christian life so incredibly exciting. And I can't encourage you enough to engage in that particular privilege. Wherever you go, just boast about Jesus Christ.

Speak of his death, the precious blood he shed as God's incarnate son, that guilty sinners might be reconciled to a holy God, that in that moment of truth, known or unknown to their fellow men, when they mix the liberating word in their hearts with faith, it says, God, thank you. Thank you for the voice that told me that you love me enough to send your son to pay the price of my redemption. And I accept gladly what I don't deserve, but you're willing to give.

And a man is raised from the dead. A woman is raised from the dead. A little boy, a little girl is raised from the dead.

And they enjoy unknown, maybe to you even, as you speak, and they mix that word with faith, unknown to anybody else. Death is abolished when the Lord Jesus comes at their invitation in life to replace death and resurrection. Doesn't look too much at the time.

You may be unaware of the event, but you wait six months or six years or 50, and you'll find from that moment in time that life has taken a new direction. It's exciting, and it's always going on. It's happened all over the world today.

Since we got up this morning and before we sleep tonight, countless thousands of boys and girls and men and women out of every nation, kindred, tribe and tongue, and race, and creed, and class, and color will have been raised from the dead by divine invasion. Jesus Christ, in response to their faith, in his faithfulness, introducing them to the Father and saying, Father, here's a man, a woman, here's a little boy, here's a girl. And they've pleaded my name.

They've come accepting what I accomplished for them on the cross. And you've promised me, Father, every boy, girl, man, or woman, who'll come to you in my name. And of course, their salvation is as timelessly secure as is the faithfulness of the Father to the Son.

For any boy, girl, man, or woman pleading the name of Jesus that God would not receive, would be a rebuttal by the Father in heaven of the accomplished work of his Son on earth. He would betray Jesus Christ. That's how certain you and I can be that God has remembered our sins no more.

Boast of Jesus Christ, not only that he died to redeem guilty sinners and reconcile them to a holy God, but boast in the glorious fact that triumphantly he rose again from the dead, not just to go to heaven and stay there and peep through the clouds and watch us sweated out, but to come in the person of the Holy Ghost according to the promise of the Father, and presencing himself within the redeemed humanity of a forgiven sinner who had been added to that new body corporate presented by the Father to the Son on the day of Pentecost, to continue to clothe his saving work with their flesh and blood. He himself walking with their feet, his means of transportation. He himself seen through their eyes so that he through them may recognize the need.

What a marvelous privilege to boast of Jesus Christ and know that every moment of every day indwelt by his Holy Spirit we can share the illimitable resources of a timeless God who will never ever fail but to demonstrate the adequacy of his indwelling deity. If only you and I will learn in all childlike simplicity to place our needs, our problems, our opportunities, our responsibilities at his feet, look into his face and recognize that it's his opportunity. Boast of Jesus Christ.

I was thrilled to bits 45 years ago when God called me at the age of 19 to devote my whole life to proclaim Christ, simply to boast of Jesus Christ. I never ceased to marvel at the miracle of new birth when some boy, girl, man or woman was converted. There's an unusual sense of fulfillment and most of you I trust know exactly what I mean.

When you pray with some other person and they in all childlike simplicity convicted by the Holy Spirit of their need put their trust in Christ and they look up maybe through their tears and you know that a marvelous transaction has taken place that matches that which took place in your heart years or months or only perhaps weeks or days before. There's nothing quite so satisfying, nothing quite so fulfilling to know that some boy, girl, man or woman is going to share eternity with you in that place where Christ has gone to prepare it because we have the privilege of being the voice that ministered to their need that hearing us they might trust him. But you know if that was exciting to me at the outset of my ministry I've learned that it's a million million times more exciting now to look back even than to look forward and I look forward also.

I'm anticipating God's rich blessing next week in Indonesia or rather this week I'll be heading for Japan on Thursday and I'll be arriving in Indonesia on Saturday. I won't have a Friday this week because they don't have them sort of halfway between here and there and I'm excited about the people I'm going to meet in Indonesia and you know somebody's life some boy, some girl, some man or woman in Indonesia is never ever going to be the same again. That's a fact.

I know it's true because you see I've got 45 years to prove it. That's what makes it so exciting to me to look forward now because I can look back. I can look back 45 years and I know here, there, everywhere, all over the world there are those who came alive simply because I happen to be a voice.

You don't have to be smart. You just have to be able to talk a language that other people understand that's all. I wouldn't minister to Chinese and the English language if they didn't understand English.

I'd get somebody at least to turn to the language they taught. That's all you know and that's all you need. You see you don't have to be smart.

All you have to do is boast about Jesus Christ and because you can look back and see how the Holy Spirit delights to make real in their experience who listen to what you have to say and believe on him you can look in anticipation to the future. So I'm looking forward eagerly to Thursday and the coming weekend. I don't know who I'll meet in Japan.

I'm not there more than a few hours but I may meet somebody on the airport and somebody in Japan. May never ever be the same again. That's the exciting thing about it.

One of our Austrian kids hitchhiking through France, staying in a youth hostel, bumped into a Buddhist student and he was hitchhiking around in Europe you know just to gain some experience I suppose of the Western culture and this kid Ernst Thaler's younger brother Walter suggested that he should, if he was

traveling through England, visit Cape Henry and he did and it was just the time we were building our swimming pool and so he asked if he could join the team and do some work and you know put some food in his stomach in the meantime, say every other day and he got so interested and fascinated at what he was seeing and hearing that he said could I stay another three months and he did and he got converted in the process. His name was Tana. Mark would know him well possibly some of you have been to Cape Henry at that time would know him also.

He stayed in our Bible school. We then had the joy of supporting him through two years in Bible Training Institute in Glasgow. It was my privilege in our staff conference, general staff conference, five years ago, no six years ago now, to baptize him in the lake together with Pete who's on his way back now from New Zealand, my third boy, plus Gabriel Galatis, a kid whom I bumped into in Ethiopia, and a Swiss girl.

Stunk the lot. Japan, Ethiopia, Switzerland, and my own family. As a testimony to the fact that there was a hungry heart, just a Buddhist student hitchhiking through France, but an Austrian boy was a voice, just a voice, that's all.

Some body whom God could use to direct that young man to the place where he'd hear the truth, that God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believed in him should not perish but have everlasting life. That's why just a few weeks ago I heard that Tana has now been ordained into the ministry and is the pastor of a church there in the absence of the previous pastor, a torchbearer from Germany who went to Japan about 25 years ago and is back home now in Europe on vacation. And that Buddhist student from France is now pastor of that church.

His life was never ever the same again from the moment that somebody, just an Austrian kid hitchhiking across the continent, was the voice. Gabriel Galatis was much the same. I'm not quite sure where Gabriel is at the moment.

I'm just trusting that he may, if God so pleases, still be alive in the difficult times that Ethiopia has been passing. But you know, I bumped into him in a very curious way. I was there at the invitation in Ethiopia at that time, at the invitation of the Sudan Interior Mission.

And they didn't have a mission station in Diridawo of their own, so we borrowed that of the Mennonites for the conference meetings that we were having. And when I went in to speak there, and I was only there a couple of nights, I noticed a boy, it was Gabriel Galatis, sitting with a friend. Now I assume in that, you know, I was in Ethiopia, and this was a Christian gathering, that he was probably the son of some believing member of the congregation.

I was quite wrong. I went up to him afterwards and said, You a Christian? He said, No. I said, Would you like to become one? He said, Yes.

Well, that was nice. I mean, it wasn't very complicated. I didn't even have to twist his arm.

And within a matter of moments, he had accepted Christ as his Redeemer. You know, he had never ever, ever been on a mission compound before. He was walking down the street with his friend, and they heard hymns.

And he'd been brought up, actually, I think, as a Greek Orthodox. Because although his mother was Amharic, his father was a Greek Cypriot. And he was walking down with an Ethiopian friend, and they heard this singing.

And he said to his friend, What's that? And he said, Oh, missionaries or something. Oh, he said, I've never been to a meeting like that. Let's go for fun.

So they went for fun, just went for fun. But his life was never, ever the same again. He was now Bible school.

He did two years at Bible training entities. And the last I heard, he was the manager of the Christian bookshop in Addis Ababa. And I'm just trusting that God has kept his hand graciously upon him there in those difficult days.

But isn't, don't you call that exciting? Now, you could just stand up and say, Yeah, I can tell you this, that. I had a call last week. I was staying with Wayne in the Smugglers Motel.

I don't know why they put us there. But I had a call from a lady in Alabama. I don't know how she tracked me down, but she found the hotel I was staying in.

She said, I'm one year old today. Well, I said, That's exciting. She said, It's very exciting.

As matter of fact, a year ago, you were in the Cottage Hill Baptist Church in Mobile, Alabama. And I wandered into those meetings. I was Greek Orthodox.

She was a Greek Orthodox. And I didn't know God. I And she said, I just couldn't resist calling you today to celebrate my birthday.

Because my husband's a doctor, he's saved. My oldest daughter, 16, she's saved. My little boy, he's saved.

We're all baptized as believers. We're living 50 miles now in a city outside of Mobile. There's no church that we have found yet where we've discovered any real nourishment.

But in spite of that, the Bible in the family has just come alive. And we're all so excited about the Christian life. Well, that's great.

All that dear woman needed, you see, as a Greek Orthodox woman practicing her faith with considerable zeal, like as Paul described the Jews. They have a zeal of God, but hungry for the truth. That's all they need.

You don't have to be hanging around. God is working at all times when you and I are prepared to boast of Jesus Christ. That's all you need do.

Talk to people about his death and his resurrection. Get excited about all that he means to you and share it with them. And you don't have to hang around.

Just don't have to hang around. Don't even have to be there. Write a book or put it on tape and throw a few tapes and books around.

So long as in those books and tapes you'll boast about Jesus Christ. That's all that matters. While Wayne and I were there in the smugglers' inn having lunch one day, a young man came across who was having lunch with his wife.

He said, I was at the men's meeting this morning. It was in the First Baptist Church there in Fresno that we had had the series of meetings and they had a meeting for men at seven, for ladies at half-past ten, and another meeting at seven. They didn't squeeze any other meetings in because they couldn't find anybody else who'd come to them.

But at least we had those three meetings a day. And this young fellow says, I was at the men's meeting at seven. But he said, I had quite an interesting experience today, this morning.

He says, I bumped into a missionary of the Wycliffe Translators who's back on leave here in Fresno from Columbia, South America. Well that alerted my attention because I'm going to be there at the end of December, in the first week of January, for a conference of the staff of the Wycliffe Translators in that country. And this young fellow began to tell me the story.

He says, this missionary said to me when I told him that I was going to meetings at which a man called Ian Thomas was speaking, he says, well that's interesting because he probably doesn't know it, but Wycliffe Translators are in Columbia now only because of him. Well, I didn't know that. Don't know the first thing about it.

But the missionary called me that night on the phone. He came the next night to the meeting. And this is what he said.

He said, I went out to South America and I was responsible for their environmental program. You know, encouraging the folks there to develop the country, so they can support themselves and thereby be more fully equipped themselves to propagate the gospel. And I discovered they had more quarter horses than they needed.

And you'd wonder whatever quarter horses got to do with the gospel and the Bible and heaven or hell. Well, he said, having more quarter horses than they needed, I'd put them up for sale. And we had an inquiry from a couple who were extremely wealthy ranchers with vast holdings of country.

And the lady, a Mrs. Kirby, came to see the horses. And so we witnessed to her. She came a long, long way to see them.

But she was a virulent atheist. She had no time for God, absolutely none. And the books and other literature that we gave her, so that she might, you know, read it, she threw across the room, totally unimpressed.

But then he said, curiously enough, the only books that she would read and the only tapes that she would listen to, were The Saving Life of Christ, The Mystery of Godness, and If I Perish, I Perish. And some of your tapes. I didn't know anything about that.

But I do know this, that I have sought, as God has enabled me, in those books, to boast about Jesus Christ. And I trust that it would be true, that in almost every tape that has been recorded, I'll boast about Jesus Christ, as the one who died for us, and not only died for us that our sins might be forgiven, but who rose again from the dead to share his life with us, and as God, provide all the illimitable resources of the deity for any boy, girl, man, or woman who'll make themselves available. Well, this good lady became very, very sick with hepatitis, nearly died.

But with an awakened soul, these good folk there in Wycliffe Translators ministered to her need, and she came alive in Christ, got gloriously saved. And this missionary said she has asked special permission, although not on the staff of Wycliffe Translators, to participate in the conference in January, where you'll be speaking. I've just written to her, welcoming her to the conference, and looking forward eagerly to seeing her.

But in 1976, when the Colombian government was going to follow the example set by the government in Brazil, who've already expelled Wycliffe Translators from that country, were going to do the same in Colombia. It was this rancher and his wife, who, because of their large land holdings, and their wealth, and their past social life, which had given them contact with government officials, they intervened, and Colombia allowed Wycliffe to remain, and they're still in the country today. And that's why I'll be able to go there in the beginning of January.

Now, the exciting thing is that you don't have to hang around, you don't have to know that's going on. All that it is, is this, that if you boast about the Lord Jesus, the Holy Spirit will bear witness to his person, and somebody's interest is going to be aroused. They may be hostile, they may be cynical, but if only their interest has been aroused, and will get near enough, God the Holy Spirit will bear witness to the truth that you have had the privilege to proclaim, and he'll bring it to fruition in the heart of the recipient.

Now, any boy, any girl, any man, any woman, however simple, no matter what their background, no matter what their culture, no matter what the color of their skin, no matter what their mother tongue, any boy, girl, man, or woman, who's had a personal encounter with Jesus Christ, has enjoyed a spiritual new birth, knows that for his dear sake who died for them, they've been reconciled to God, and that the one who died for them rose again from the dead to come and live within them, they are in a position from that time on, to boast about Jesus Christ. And they don't have to hang around. They can go to bed at night, and before they lay their head upon their pillow, they can say, thank you God, for that boy, girl, man, or woman to whom you're going to bear witness, who heard what I had to say about Jesus Christ, and what you're going to do in their lives.

Thank you, that there are going to be some people, dear Lord, of whom I know absolutely nothing, who'll never ever be the same again, simply because I passed that way, because I've learned that you don't have to be smart, you just have to be a voice, that's all, just a witness, because you've chosen the weak, and the base, and the nothing, and the things that are not. Isn't it marvelous to know that you'll never be too weak, only too strong? Isn't it marvelous to know that you'll never be too poor, only too rich? Isn't it nice to know, if you're in some lonely place, that you'll never be too few, only too many, from God's point of view, because he's chosen the weak, and the base, and the nothing, and the things that are not, to confound the things that are. If only we were recognized that his strength is made perfect in our weakness, we would boast, as Paul did, not only in Christ, but in his own weakness, because he recognizes that his own impotence, his own powerlessness, his own weakness, his own infirmity, gives to the Lord Jesus, whose life he shares as God in the man, a fantastic opportunity to demonstrate that God is big enough for the job.

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