

# Apologetics

by Nigel Lee

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*In this sermon, Nigel Lee emphasizes the importance of being honest, relying on God's Word, and persevering in spiritual warfare during evangelism.*

**Duration:** 38:31

**Topics:** "Apologetics"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker encourages believers to build themselves up in their faith and pray in the Holy Spirit. He emphasizes the importance of knowing and feeding on the Word of God, and suggests that believers should help young believers in their spiritual growth by studying the Bible together. The speaker also mentions the significance of prayer in the believer's life and encourages believers to pray for opportunities to share the gospel with others. He shares a personal experience of facing opposition while preaching the gospel and highlights the need for spiritual warfare. The sermon concludes with a prayer for protection against the attacks of the evil one and a desire to see more people come to faith in Jesus.

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## Transcript

When you threw something that foxed him a bit, he said, Well, I don't know the answer to that, but have you read this verse? Yeah, it's true. Be honest. Be honest.

If you don't know the answer, say, Well, I don't know. You couldn't steer him away from God's Word, really. That's good, isn't it? It's important.

It was good to see, as I was walking around, that gradually, as the time went on, more and more of you began to get the Bible out, until, you know, a lot of you were getting them to read it. And actually, if you can get the other person to read the verse, not just you read it to them, but say, Can you read that out for us? And then the act of reading it aloud is fixing it in their mind, because sometimes people can hear you read something, but they're actually switched off. They're planning what they're going to say next.

They're not listening. If you get them to read, then at least they've got to concentrate on what the Word is saying. Yeah? Good, I saw you doing that.

Let's pray. Father, we are so thankful that you have loved us and chosen us, brought us, redeemed us. Even though we can go through these exercises, we're so pleased that we know you.

And we're so conscious that we have so much to learn. Lord, help us. The things that we ponder and think about and that we take interest in this conference may be of great benefit when we are out meeting folks who live around outside in the months and the years to come.

Help us, Lord. We are not confident in ourselves. Our trust is in you.

In Jesus' name, Amen. Did anybody get converted? We had some tremendous discussions. Some very rough non-Christians are loose amongst us.

The lies that some of these people were telling, you know. The stories they've been making up. It's also quite important to be very careful how you correct a non-Christian.

You know, to say, you're wrong. It doesn't do a great deal for people's, you know, feeling of being welcomed and that you're interested in them. Dale Rotom, for years, has been a man who very rarely says, you're wrong.

My own kids, I mean, I've got three, and they can imitate various OM leaders. There was a bunch of Peter Conlon's three girls and my two and son, and they were, I caught them in a conference room once, putting on a conference meeting. They did George Boer reviewing books.

Brilliant. One of them did Peter preaching with a special piece of white paper stuck to the top of her hair. Definitely a Bible message from you.

It was very, very... But Dale Rotom, he always says, uh-huh. He never disagrees with you. Never straight on, uh-huh.

Is that so? But what about, and then he'll put some other sort of idea. This is the commonest expression, uh-huh, and he's had it for 20 years. You watch it.

You watch it. You will see it dozens of times a day. A very serious look in his eyes.

His sort of grey hair flops up and down. How many of you Christians found it quite difficult? You didn't, you know, your person was being a bit tough with you. A few of you were finding it quite tough.

Now, let me take the whole thing to another dimension now. We are involved in spiritual warfare. We know that.

We listen to orientation tapes on it. The Bible even says it. It's true.

When you're involved in evangelism, all kinds of things are arrayed against you, not just the person in front of you, flesh and blood, that you see. If I go over in the Eastern European communist countries, they have sometimes these huge, big radio masts that they set up to try and jam, to screen out Western information services. And the West tries to find ways of beaming their signals in to get the information in.

Well, there's something of the same going on. Satan is anxious that truth, that light, God's word, does not get through. And we prevail in prayer.

Let's just think about spiritual warfare for a moment. I have occasionally had some quite unusually difficult experiences in meetings. It's not common at all.

I remember there was one university where we were taking a mission, three years ago now, and hundreds of people were coming to the meetings. We packed the room that we had the meetings in, about 400, 500 every night. This was more than the fire regulations allowed.

And yet very, very few people got converted during the week of the mission. I think 16, 20, something like that. Dozens and dozens were there, listening, drinking in every word.

But there just seemed to be something in the atmosphere and we found it very hard to break that. I think it was the Tuesday of that week. I woke in the night, sleeping in the little house a short distance away from the university.

I was being throttled. I could not breathe. There was a tight steel trap around my throat.

And all I could do was call the name of the Lord Jesus in my mind and roll out of bed and begin on my knees to say the Lord's name and call on him. And gradually this thing lessened off and I was able then to pray out loud. And the sense of evil in the room dissipated.

I didn't know that just 100 metres down the road was the second largest spiritualist church in the UK and that we were up against strong opposition. And I take that physical attack to be related to that. In the nine months following that mission I think over 100 people professed faith in Christ in that university.

Every week people were converted. But actually during the week there was real battle on. God answered prayer.

And God's word did produce the fruit in the end. But it just took time. And there was some struggle because of the nature of the battle.

The Lord has won the victory but some things take longer. There was another meeting in another place and I can remember a couple came in every night sat side by side up at the back on the left hand side and just leaned forward and stared at me. And every time I... You know you catch people's eyes in a meeting.

Every time I locked eyes with them my mind... It was like a television going on the blink. You know you get that... And I would lose the train of my thought. I'd have to look down.

I couldn't concentrate. And there was obviously something going on there an attack on the preaching of the gospel. And so all one could do I mean they were going to come you couldn't keep them out.

They were not students. They lived locally in town. They were coming to oppose the mission.

All you could do all I did was to seal off that segment of the audience and just never look at them. Preach my heart out and just refused to look up in that top corner. And any poor believers or other folks up there just never got looked at.

And I looked at everyone else and preached and we came through it. There are some cults in Britain one particularly called Life Wave or Ishvara it used to be known as. One of its objectives its distinctives is to oppose Christian evangelism.

And they've taken coach loads of people to Louise Pallout campaigns and stood up and shouted and asked questions and heckled and come forward and everybody comes forward to ask more questions that sow seeds of doubt. I've had them although not vocal in meetings that I've taken. They've interrupted

campaigns that an evangelist called Eric Delve has tried to lead.

So we are in spiritual warfare friends. We must accept that and our prayer and our purity of life is very very much part of the battle. In campaigns I like to if I'm going to speak in the evening not to see anybody from four o'clock in the afternoon I mean apart from having some bit of food before the night meeting but to go, go back to my room to shut the door and to give myself then time for thinking and praying and praying for particular people allowing the message to settle again afresh with some fire on my heart.

Billy Graham is well known in his campaigns for very much prayer. I know the policeman who was assigned to be like his bodyguard at the Birmingham meetings and he would have to accompany him everywhere and he went up into the room where he was before the stadium meeting and to call for him and he opened the door and there was Billy Graham flat, full length on the floor. This is a regular occurrence and this dear Christian policeman just shut the door tipped her away.

Billy Graham is a man of prayer as well as being prayed for. Peter reminded you that in the course of any day the one spot on this planet that he's probably being more prayed for than any other is where Dr. Billy Graham is holding tonight's meeting. He just has such an overwhelming army of prayer partners.

Will you turn with me to the epistle of Jude. I just want to point out a few verses without preaching on them. Jude is a book about the way people will develop how evil will become more manifest in the latter days.

The call to persevere.

And then verse 20 But you dear friends do these things build yourselves up this is Jude, the last but one before Revelation build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life be merciful to those who doubt snatch others from the fire and save them to others show mercy mixed with fear hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh Do four things as you're involved in spiritual warfare you can read the earlier verses of Jude to see what he's talking about greater outbreak of the occult and so on build yourselves up in the faith that means go deeper into scripture be men and women who know God's word secondly, pray give extra time to pray for people when

you're having opportunities to witness share Christ with them pray for them because we are involved in battle thirdly, guard your own life keep yourselves in God's love turn to John chapter 15 John 15 verse 10 if you obey my commands you will remain in my love just as I have obeyed my father's commands and remain in his love verse 14, you are my friends if you do what I command live an obedient life pray grow in the knowledge of God's word and then verses 22 and 23 do your evangelism gently be merciful some people do doubt it's not easy for some folk to come to faith people have got experiences in their own life of suffering and it may be a very real hindrance to them be gentle snatch folk from the fire, save them show mercy mixed with fear do your evangelism gently now let's what shall

we do Peter shall we raise this question of praying for the sick and the does it follow on I think perhaps it does, naturally what about praying for the sick and casting out demons as a part of our evangelism very controversial people within the Christian church I mean we're talking now from California through Europe Africa right out Korea people take a wide variety of different views and I have to say that praying for the sick and casting out of demons is not a great part of my ministry thus far I do and have prayed with others for sick people and do not claim to be specially gifted in healing as an evangelist seen folk who have made

startling recovery in the last 12 months in our own church we prayed for one lady who had cancer that the doctor said was terminal she has made an amazing

recovery she is absolutely clearly healed we prayed for another lady the wife of one of our elders who similarly was told that she had terminal cancer and I preached at her funeral just a month ago we prayed for both we anointed both with oil we gathered the elders together in both cases God is sovereign and but Jesus and the apostles obviously did pray for the sick and exercise an authoritative ejecting ministry when it came to demons we did it sometimes not all the time as you read through the New Testament you cannot help seeing that there was far more preaching, teaching than there was healing although healing was part of the ministry of Christ and the apostles but day in and day out Christ would teach the word of God preach the word of God charge his apostles to do that and when the

kingdom comes there is the power of the kingdom made manifest but I want to say this and this is only going to be a partial answer I want to be careful that we do not denigrate the work of salvation you know there are folk who will have campaigns who will try to lead the whole church into new areas of faith and ministry and one gets the impression that the work of redemption preaching God's word of seeing people come to faith is somehow being diminished denigrated made to look small in comparison with the great work of seeing people restored to full health or whatever now I want my gospel preaching to reflect the realities of this life in relationship to the next one I believe the next one is more important I have to say that as I sit you know with my friend Jonathan McCrosty who has not

been raised up from his road accident the next world is more important and we are not to allow in our preaching a sense that what most matters is that I be healthy, happy, bouncy rich, wealthy, carefree now God is concerned about my development of character for the real world to come so you see I belong to a church where there have been cases of great healing known we want to preach God's gospel in full balance the gospel is not just so that we may have a better time here and now but God's kingdom does include now a partial measure partial experience of that which is yet to come but we are still now in the body and kept there and will experience some of the the frailty of the flesh we are but dust my father preacher suffering now in his 70's of kidney stones it's part of being a man who's

who's growing to that age we're not you know calling on God to immediately remove the kidney stones he expects to you know to find himself weaker than when he used to be an international hockey player years ago so beware of getting God's gospel somehow bent out of shape while allowing for God to answer prayers thirdly I want to say we have to beware of a false diagnosis of people's conditions it's evident to me that Satan can interfere in people's lives and does possess people now I have got a great unclarity in my mind about possession of believers I don't myself lean that way but people can come to Christ and have areas of their life where they seem remarkably weak or open to attack been as some of the Greek experts would put it demonized in that area they've been damaged they've been

hurt they need prayer they need God's word they need the prayer of the church fellowship of Christians to see them brought into strength and wholeness in these areas of their life but we cause far more problems with false diagnosis some problems may be emotional psychological they don't necessarily have to be spiritual I've known folk with great depression and those depressions have been sorted out when the medical people have been able to restore some chemical imbalance perhaps it wasn't a spiritual thing at all and there are segments of the Christian church that would immediately rush in with a spiritual solution to what is in actual fact a spiritual problem a physical problem and the wrong diagnosis will produce even more heartache in the long run this is why in this area we have to be

very careful and work with others get the counsel of others and I would go on to say that probably the best place for dealing with any case where you suspect there is some sort of demonic activity is the local church where the follow up can be within the community where the man or woman actually lives where they are known where they can be continually ministered to now beyond that I don't want to go at this point looking at the clock Peter, do you have anything to add to that or any questions yeah possibly but in all this question there is an awful lot wrapped up if you go on to say look we would have more miracles if only we had more faith I have problems with that there was a man a year or two do you remember David Watson have you heard of the name David Watson and the Lord took him

home to glory and there were one or two Christian leaders within the months following his death who publicly stated look if only we as the body of Christ in Britain had had more faith united and prayed more David would have been healed I don't believe that for one moment because that is to make God's miraculous intervention a matter of our works if only we can like the prophets of Baal whip ourselves up to a little more unity a little more prayer then God might have his arm twisted enough to do it I don't believe there was a man prayed for as much as David in sickness in Britain probably since the war and God chose to take him home so I am uneasy about some aspect of your question I have no doubt that in some cultures God can do things that will capture the imagination of the culture or

can intervene short cutting medical science where perhaps medical science is hardly there because it is not born yet medical understanding where does it come from it comes from God and I believe God is the author of the medical skill that we have but he is well able to short cut it if he wishes in certain cultures yes but I wouldn't want that question to turn around and sort of condemn ourselves what a cynical lot we are and if only we did this and that then God might raise up Jonathan shall we say don't believe that nor does he I see what you mean but I am still going to be a little bit cautious with you about saying that God's miraculous intervention depends entirely on our faith there is some truth in that but I am not happy with it or the whole responsibility descending back on me yes

yes but this is the complication because God sometimes does not appear to answer prayer so long as your theology can include God saying no even though you all wanted this person to live in the case of this elder's wife we prayed for her to live and the Lord gently said no so your theology must include that yes oh yes one more question and then we want to move on yes you were waiting yes I think that person is in extreme danger before God you know what right have I six feet of puny clay and I will return to dust to demand of God like some street magician that he do something to convince me God has already done everything necessary that we might hear him know him obey him I don't believe God does miracles to order the reason why I'm strong on that is because they came to Christ and said the

same thing the Pharisees do a miracle Jesus got got wroth wicked and adulterous generation that seeks for a sign there shall no sign be given to it except the sign of Jonah and in fact I mean that the events of which Jonah's life was a picture were then fulfilled in the resurrection of Christ and God has already done enough for anyone who who wants to know him to believe I'm I'm very cautious about encouraging somebody to believe that if God will do a little dance then then this creature will say alright that was good enough alright I'll believe in him that person hasn't begun to understand the God he's dealing and yet God in mercy obviously does do miraculous things to get people's attention to be a picture of the way he will satisfy their need just to meet their need but for a person

to demand it of him well Jesus himself said absolutely no way God doesn't dance like a monkey when when you know to our tune Peter do you want to you've probably got another question but I want to allow

you to move on a bit it's interesting isn't it alright well I think just two more about whether it's good to have goals in personal evangelism I think that's probably all we've got time for ok well some of you led somebody to Christ just a few minutes ago what do you do with such people obviously that's not the end of the job that's just the beginning you've just seen a babe in Christ born and the roaring lion Satan loves young lambs to devour and that young lamb that young babe in Christ is going to need care and attention if he's going to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord

Jesus I suppose the most marvellous example of follow-up in the Bible is dear old Barnabas you remember how he would go searching for Paul and introducing Paul to people who were very very fearful of him I always think Acts 9 26 and 27 is really lovely when he came to Jerusalem he tried to join the disciples this is Paul but they were all afraid of him not believing that he really was a disciple but Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles and he told them the story of Saul's conversion and then you get across to chapter 11 and verse 25 and you find that it's Barnabas who is going to pass us to seek out Saul to see how he's doing and help him further in his Christian life and the Bible does talk about believers needing different things at different times for example in 1 Peter 2

we're told at a certain stage in our development we need the sincere milk of the word Hebrews chapter 5 verse 11 right through to chapter 6 and verse 1 speaks about the necessity of progress in our learning progress in our taking of spiritual food and we want to help those who are new born in Christ to begin with the sincere milk of the word and to go on to maturity many of course sadly never do there's a dear old lady up in Carlisle who's constantly complaining about Christians who are saved but stuck that's how she puts it saved but stuck in other words they've come to know Christ but they never seem to go very much further than that they never seem to get into the word they never really seem to get busy in a local church and so on and very often early in their development if they can

just be given a little bit of encouragement a little bit of personal help and example it can make all the difference I think the best thing I can do is just draw on the board here something which many of you will be familiar with navigator principle for follow up what does a new believer need the wheel illustration we're trying to lead ourselves and others Christian life we want Christ in the center of our most believers need four chief strands to their life if you like first of all they need the word to help the young believer in feeding just as you've got to help the babe to begin to feed physically we need to help the young believer to feed upon the word and the person you fathered in the Lord Jesus Christ the person you've helped to come to know the Lord Jesus Christ maybe the most

helpful thing you can do with him in the first few days is to sit down and do some very simple practical bible studies with him help him to see how you feed from the word of God yourself and help to get that person the third thing which we require is fellowship to get those young believers early into a local church it seems the new testament knows very little if anything of a person being converted and not moving into a local fellowship of believers that seems to be part and parcel of the process of conversion isn't it repentance faith new life added to the local church and of course today in certain parts and you know it can be a problem in the end there are those who don't live within the discipline and the care of a local church those we lead to Christ let's try and get them wherever

possible under the discipline into the care of a local we need to get people to the reality of Jesus Christ if we confess with our mouths the Lord Jesus and believe in our hearts that God has raised him from the dead that's just something to aim at in those we have to move forward smoothly getting them into the word getting them into prayer getting them into the fellowship of a local church time has gone but let's just

consider for a few moments whether it's right to have goals it used to be a big thing in O.M. in every area of our evangelistic life I can remember when I was about 15 going on an O.M. team in England and we had to believe God for a certain number of books in every street which we were witnessing believe God to sell a certain number of books is it a good idea? we're not all

going to be the kind of people show the love of Christ Lord we do pray that you'll give us a burning desire in our hearts to see other people if there's anything you can probably get hold of a copy of the tape

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