

# The Task of the Church

by Oswald J. Smith

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*The supreme task of the church is the evangelization of the world, and it is our responsibility to prioritize this task and reach the unreached.*

**Duration:** 22:09

**Scripture:** Genesis 4:9, Ezekiel 3:18, Matthew 28:19

**Topics:** "Evangelism"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of the Church's supreme task, which is the evangelization of the world. He distinguishes between evangelization and Christianization, stating that the Church's goal is not just to make people Christian, but to spread the message of Jesus Christ to the entire world. The speaker believes that many pastors, churches, and Christians do not fully grasp the significance of this task. He encourages the audience to have a world vision and to expand their outreach beyond their local communities, reaching out to the Christless masses and proclaiming the gospel to them.

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## Transcript

It's a real joy to be with you this morning, and I thank God for the opportunity of ministering in your wonderful church. Now the text that I want to take this morning is found in the prophecy of Ezekiel. It's the third chapter, and it's the 18th verse.

It's had a tremendous influence on my life, this verse has, and I want to leave it with you this morning. The third chapter of Ezekiel, verse 18. It reads like this, when I say unto the wicked, when I say unto the wicked, thou shalt surely die, and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life.

The same wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but, but, his blood will I require at thy hand. Now very often I read it like this, watch it again if you will, when I say unto the heathen, thou shalt surely die, and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the heathen from his heathenish way, to save his life. The same heathen man shall die in his iniquity, but, his blood will I require at thy hand.

His blood will I require at thy hand. I want to speak this morning for a little while on the supreme task of the church. What is the supreme task of the church? Let me announce it at the very beginning of my message, for I believe it with all my heart.

I believe that the supreme task of the church is the evangelization of the world. I did not say the Christianization of the world. Please differentiate if you will between evangelization and Christianization.

The supreme task of the church is not the Christianization of the world. The supreme task of the church is the evangelization of the world. Let me take just two words out of that statement and emphasize them this morning.

First of all, let me take the word world. The supreme task of the church is the evangelization of the world. When God loved, he loved the world.

When Christ died, he died for a world. God so loved the world. The vision that God wants you and me to have is a world vision.

And God will never be satisfied until we get a world vision. But so many of us are localized in our thinking. We have a vision that is purely local.

We think only of our own church. We think only of our own state. We're interested in the evangelization of our state.

But we never think beyond. Then there are those with a larger vision. There are those who think of an entire country.

And they're ready to give their money. And ready to do what they can for the evangelization of their country. But their vision also is a local vision.

They see their own country. And they never see beyond the limits of the country in which they live. Everywhere I go, I hear the expression, we're the people.

When I was holding nationwide campaigns in Great Britain, as I preached in the great churches of England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, everywhere I went, I heard the sentiment expressed, we're the people. What is the idea? The idea was we're the most important people on the face of the earth. The other nations, they just don't count.

We're the most important of all the nations in the world. We're the people. And when I got to Australia, where I have held campaigns on three different occasions, in the huge cities of Australia, everywhere I traveled in Australia, I likewise heard the same sentiment expressed, we're the people.

We're the people. Then when I got to South Africa, where I have been on two different occasions, holding campaigns in the great cities of South Africa, where there are more than three million white people, everywhere I went in South Africa, I likewise heard the expression, we're the people. We're the people.

Sometimes I wondered whether or not the people of South Africa realized that there are other nations in the world, that they are not the only nation on the face of the earth. Yet that's a sentiment I heard expressed everywhere in South Africa. And believe it or not, when I was on a little bit of an island, in the South Pacific, I actually heard the natives on that island likewise saying, we're the people.

Now why? Why do we think we're more important than any other peoples on the face of the earth? Why do we concentrate on ourselves? Why do we think that our nation is the only nation on the face of the earth? Where did we get the idea that we're the people? Is it because we're so numerous? There are so many of us? Listen to me. If God is interested in numbers, then he is more interested in the little island of Java,

where I preached again and again, than he is in my country, the Dominion of Canada. Because whereas we have 22 million people in Canada, they have no less than 60 million people in the island of Java.

Three times the population of the Dominion of Canada. But again, if my God is interested in numbers, then he must be more interested in the United States than he is in the island of Java. Because whereas they have 60 million people in the island of Java, you have 214 million people in the United States of America.

Therefore God must be more interested if he is concerned about numbers in your country than he is in the island of Java. But that doesn't end the story. If God is interested in numbers, then he must be more interested in Russia than he is in your country.

Because whereas you have 214 million people in America, they have today no less than 250 million people in Russia. The largest white nation on the face of the earth. 250 million.

But even that doesn't end it. For if my God is interested in numbers, he must be more interested by far in India than he is in Russia. Because whereas they have 250 million people in Russia, they have no less than 600 million people in India.

Twice the population of Russia. 600 million people. Last of all, if my God is interested in numbers, then he must be more interested in China than he is in India.

Because whereas they have 600 million people in India, they have no less than 800 million people in China. The largest nation on the face of the earth. Every fourth baby born into the world is born a Chinese.

Someone has said God must love the Chinese because he's made so many of them. 800 million. In my country, the dominion of Canada with its 22 million is only a little pinpoint on the map so far as numbers are concerned.

And as I've often said, if the waters of the Atlantic and the waters of the Pacific should rise up overnight and submerge Canada, I suppose next morning there would be a little report in the American newspapers about an inch deep. Last night, Canada disappeared from the face of the world. Think of it if you will.

22 million people as over against 800 million. Lift up your eyes. Look on the fields.

See a world for which Jesus Christ gave his life on Calvary's cross. Get a world vision. Now there's another word in that statement that I want to emphasize.

Not only the word world but the word supreme. The supreme task of a church is the evangelization of the world. Now I believe it.

I have always believed it. Ever since God gave me the vision I've always kept it in mind. The most important work of the church of Jesus Christ is world evangelization.

But do you know there is only one pastor in a hundred who believes that? Do you know there is only one church in a thousand that believes it? There is only one Christian in ten thousand who believes it. You say, how do you know? All I have to do is to look at the financial statement and if I see that more money has been used on the local church than has been sent out to the regions beyond or has been used in other ways then I'll know at a glance that that church considers something local as of greater importance than anything else that it is doing. Home comes first.

The local work comes first with so many churches. Now there are some churches that believe in schools and colleges. There are some churches that believe in training students for the ministry.

There are some churches who have a vision beyond their own local confines. Your church has that vision. Your church has a vision of training young men for the ministry and for the mission field.

Your church has a vision beyond its own local work. Your church believes in training others in doing something for those beyond the local church in which you worship. Your church believes in schools and in colleges.

Your church has an outreach that shows that it has a vision the vision that God wants every church to have.

And then your church carries on a tremendous television and radio work again a work beyond its own local work a work outside its own four walls a work that reaches out to the regions beyond morning after morning at 830 I watch your program coming in from Buffalo I see your broadcast I watch your television morning after morning I watch it at 830 in the morning and I realize that your work is reaching out and expanding and going beyond your own confines and reaching to others in an effort to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ to those outside your own church and your own local work reaching out farther and farther afield then in the third place there's a great missionary outreach throughout the entire world reaching beyond our own country reaching beyond our own work reaching beyond our

own people way out to the regions beyond in an effort to evangelize the Christless masses and reach them for the Lord Jesus Christ now there's some churches that do not believe that Jesus Christ can come back until that job has been completed there's some churches that believe that before Christ can return in millennial splendor power and glory to establish his kingdom not to catch away his bride I'm not talking about that but before the establishment of his kingdom that this world of ours must be evangelized and therefore there are churches that are concentrating not on local evangelism alone but on world wide evangelism in an effort to reach the whole world with the gospel of Jesus Christ and thus bring back the king bring back the king if you and I want Jesus Christ to reign in

millennial splendor power and glory in this world of ours for a thousand years then perhaps we ought to do something toward world evangelization we ought to do what we can to bring back the king by evangelizing the world now there are businessmen here this morning where do you invest most of your surplus money as a businessman you invest your surplus money in the most important department of your business enterprise why? because you want to develop the most important department of your work now listen to me if world evangelization is in very deed the most important department of church work if it is if that's our vision then does it not follow is it not logical ought we not to be investing most of our money in the regions beyond years ago twenty years ago when we were just commencing our

great worldwide missionary work in the people's church in Toronto Canada I went to our treasurer one day and I said answer two questions if you will guess what are they? first how much did we spend ourselves here in Toronto locally last year how much in a little while I got the answer last year we spent sixty five thousand dollars on our work locally within the confines of our four walls in the people's church Toronto sixty five thousand dollars fine I said now my second question how much did we send to the four mission fields of the world last year and again I got the answer last year we sent to the regions beyond three hundred and twenty nine thousand dollars for world evangelization missions five times as much sixty five thousand dollars locally three hundred and twenty nine thousand

dollars on the regions beyond you say what about this year I was at the convention this year of course this year our missionary offering totaled nine hundred and fifty eight thousand dollars just a little bit short of a million dollars and everyone in the people's church in Toronto Canada everyone is praying and asking God to give us next year at our missionary convention at least one million dollars for world evangelization during the past ten, during the past years that the work has been carried on in the people's church in Toronto Canada we have invested to the glory of God a little over ten million dollars for missions for world evangelization beyond our own work beyond the four walls of the people's church outside the regions beyond a little over ten million dollars for the Lord

Jesus Christ and I'm praying and my people are praying and we're expecting over a million dollars next year for world evangelization and we have no wealth we have no rich people we have no people with money we have only working class ordinary men and women earning ordinary Canadian salaries which are nothing like as much as American salaries and yet out of those Canadian salaries our people plan upon giving a million dollars for world evangelization next year that's why God has blessed us that's why the church has been filled that's why the people have come that's why souls are saved every Sunday night that's why God has solved our financial problems that's why we have never known what it is to be in debt we have tried to put first things first world evangelization and any church anywhere

in the world that will put world things first will see the same results I've never known it to fail and I've held conventions in churches all over the United States of America I've never known it to fail there will come a day when countless thousands will stand before the throne of God in heaven and they'll cry out in the agony of their hearts as they see multitudes going to perdition but Lord Lord am I my brother's keeper am I my brother's keeper and God will answer the voice of thy brother's blood cryeth unto me from Africa from India from China from the islands of the seas the voice of thy brother's blood and you and I will go into heaven saved but with blood human blood on these hands of ours the blood of those we might have reached the blood of those we might have evangelized the

blood of those we failed to reach just because we didn't have a vision just because we did not realize what God wanted us to do we concentrated on ourselves we concentrated on our own local church we did nothing by way of radio or television we did nothing by way of world evangelization we did nothing by way of training young men and young women for God's work we were satisfied to spend our money locally on ourselves and then we'll cry out in the agony of our hearts am I my brother's keeper am I my brother's keeper I pray God that that question will ring and echo in your hearts for a long time to come am I my brother's keeper for I believe that the supreme task of the church is the evangelization of the world

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