

Faith to Be Healed

by Paris Reidhead

The sermon highlights the critical role of faith in healing and the necessity of demonstrating the living power of Christ in the church today.

Duration: 44:47

Scripture: Mark 16:14-15, Mark 16:17-20, Acts 8:1-12

Topics: "Healing"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker acknowledges the ignorance that has been passed down through generations in the Church. He attributes this ignorance to the suppression of the true word of God by the Roman Catholic Church for thousands of years. However, he believes that there is now sufficient evidence to believe in the ministry of evangelists like Mr. Rosell, Hyman Appelman, and Dr. Billy Graham, who have successfully communicated the gospel to people around the world. The speaker emphasizes the importance of personal witness and believes that evangelism and healing should not solely rely on large campaigns, but rather on individual believers being God's method and witness in their everyday lives.

Transcript

Here's Acts chapter 14. I begin reading with the fifth verse, that we might have sufficient of the context to give us this testimony concerning the ministry of Paul at Lystra. And when there was an assault made, both the Gentiles and also the Jews, with their rulers to use them despitefully and to stone them, they, the disciples, were aware of it, and fled unto Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lyconia, and unto the region that lieth around about.

And there they preached the gospel. And there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked. The same heard Paul speak, who, steadfastly beholding him and perceiving that he had faith to be healed, said with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet.

And he leaped and walked. And when the people saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in the speech of Lyconia, The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men. We stop there.

We are aware of the fact that God intended the gospel to be accompanied by the demonstration and proof of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead. He established this as a principle, seen in Mark, if you please, the sixteenth chapter. You might turn to it, but you'll find that this is in absolute historical and

scriptural order.

Afterward, and I read from verse 14 of Mark 16, he, Christ, appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen. And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned.

And these signs shall follow them that believe. In my name shall they cast out devils, they shall speak with new tongues, they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them, and they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven and sat on the right hand of God.

And they went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. This, I say, was the divine order. The book of Acts is really to be viewed by us as the Acts of the Holy Spirit.

It's called properly the Acts of the Apostles. But we find a very strange and wonderful thing in the record. When poor Peter and John are asked how they healed the crippled man in the temple gate, they said, Do you think we did this? By some power or ability of ours? Oh, not so.

But by his name, through faith in his name, has this man been made whole among you. But when the Spirit of God is prompting Luke to write the Acts, here we find it, and when the people saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices. Here it is the Spirit of God saying Paul was essential for this ministry.

Peter and John, given credit for what was done, said, Oh no, this wasn't through us. This wasn't by our power or merit or ability. This was by his name, through faith in his name.

But the fact remains that God God's plan and purpose was that the gospel should be accompanied by the demonstration that Jesus Christ is alive from the dead. We're prepared to accept this as being the rule and the order in pioneer missionary work. We're quite prepared to accept the fact that in some distant tribe people have a right to believe that God is going to do the unusual, the miraculous, the wonderful.

Perhaps it's because they do expect that he will, and the missionaries are cast upon him, that the records of God's working continue to abound with illustrations of the demonstration of the resurrection life of Jesus Christ manifest in answer to prayer. It's strange, isn't it, how we are systematically educated to unbelief. I'll never forget my own personal experience as a pastor, and I think related to you some time ago, but not in this context, how that it was an unbelieving doctor in this town of Little Falls, Minnesota, that challenged me to consider my responsibility to pray for the sick.

I recall that I had been taught that James had no reference to the day it was dispensationally directed to the Jews in dispersion. One of the deacons had come saying, Mrs. So-and-so wanted to be anointed, and I spent 45 minutes proving to him that unless she was a dispersed Jew, and I were a dispersed Jew, there would be no possibility of my praying in confidence for her healing. But the fact was that a doctor in the hospital, meeting me in the hallway and telling me that this lady that I was going to see was given up by him and the medical science could do no more, and that if I knew anybody that knew how to pray, because he said, I've talked with the deacon that you spent some time with, and he's explained your feeling about it.

I'm not a Christian, said he, and I know nothing about the Bible, but I do know as a doctor that when people have been prayed for, they've gotten well. So if you know anyone that knows how to pray, I wish you'd go and see them and ask them, because we've done all we can do, and unless something happens for this woman, she's going to die. But I've seen cases as bad as hers get well when people have prayed for them.

I don't know why, but if you know anybody that knows how to pray, would you please get in touch with them? And here he is talking to me, and I was so smug in my complacency that I knew exactly what it meant. And this man was telling me of the fact that pragmatically, without any personal faith in Christ, he had observed people being prayed for getting well when medical science had done their very utmost for them. And so it was this man that drove me again to the Word, and drove me to restudy what the book has to say about the subject.

It was, I say, God's intention, God's plan, that where Jesus Christ was proclaimed as a living Lord, that there should be the demonstration of this. At the time of God, this metamorphosis in my own heart, this change from the devout skepticism that had said, well, this was for the early church, and would be for the church in the tribulation, but it had no relation to us, the Jews in the tribulation, rather, that had no relation to us now. I came across Herbert Cain's book, Twofold Growth.

Herbert Cain was an honored missionary of the China Inland Mission, and in it he has a chapter that has been striking, I've read it many times, telling of two missionaries from the China Inland Mission that came to a distant village, that is, two workers, not missionaries as such, but national preachers, evangelists, sent out, and as they were telling the people that had never encountered missionaries before, or representatives of the cross before, never heard, in its saving connection at least, the name of Christ, they were exclaiming to the people and proclaiming to the people that Jesus Christ is alive, he died and he's been raised from the dead, and he lives today. Dwelling on this fact of the resurrection is the reason why they should give up all the religion of the past and commit themselves to Christ. Unknown to him, a woman slipped away from the edge of the crowd, numbering several score, went to her home and brought her crippled from birth daughter in a wheelbarrow, a Chinese wooden wheelbarrow with wooden wheel, and came down and made way right into the very center where the missionaries were preaching.

And Mr. Cain, describing it, said that she stopped all the elders, all the people, insisted that she be heard where they knew her, and she had done something most unusual in bringing her very crippled and sick daughter right into the presence of the two speakers. And then she said, you have said that Jesus Christ is alive. You have told us what Jesus Christ did when he was here.

You have explained and proclaimed his name to us. And you say we should give up all the faith we've had through the generations and turn to your Christ. All right, if it's true that your Jesus is alive, then all he has to do is to heal my daughter and I'll believe him.

The two preachers had never been faced with anything quite like this. This was a test that had never come to them before. And yet, as they stood there, they felt, well, it was fair.

They hadn't sought it. They hadn't promoted it. It was a matter that had come without any choice of theirs.

So Mr. Herbert Cain relates that with great concern for the glory of Christ and for themselves, as well as for the people, they prayed. And to their amazement, there was the first evidence, as they were praying, of healing. And not sufficient, however, to satisfy the people, but sufficient to prove that something was

happening.

So they said, now you watch, this child is going to get better, for God had given them that confidence. And as they said, it was just a matter of days, really hours, if you remember it that way, until the child was well and was walking. In writing of it, he said that there were churches established there in months, because of this demonstration of the power and presence of the risen Christ, that outstripped the spiritual vigor and vitality and witnessing testimony of churches in other villages not too far distant that had been established for years.

We have been, dear friends, systematically educated to unbelief. Let us recognize that the air we breathe is saturated with a virus of unbelief. It is the sin that's in good standing.

It is the sin for which no one's going to be ostracized, no one's going to be criticized. We can detect, we have a spiritual antenna that will detect fanaticism across the whole city block, but we apparently are without any equipment to register unbelief. If we could get our needles of detection to work as quickly with unbelief as we do with fanaticism, there would be far greater sensitivity on the part of the church, but then we would deal with sin of unbelief as it is.

The Lord upbraided them because of their unbelief and the hardness of their hearts. We live in almost the total absence of the demonstration of the resurrection life and power of Christ. We live in a climate that rather looks askance upon it.

The alternative to it, in the most part in America at least, is an emphasis which has been in the past 80 years since a first was established on the American continent, a testimony that included Christ our healer here in this church. There has risen in the passing of these years a wave of enthusiastic devotion to the testimony of healing that has almost overbalanced all other emphases and proper of the scripture. And so we live in extremes.

On the one hand we have the extreme enthusiasm for the testimony of healing and that which has been associated with it with great campaigns and efforts and publications, which incidentally all trace their first inspiration back to the testimony of this church and the writings that came from Dr. Simpson, for there were very few before that that had anything to say on this subject. The literature is meager indeed. So we've seen that.

On the other hand we've seen the reaction of a rigid dispensationalistic, I'm not speaking against dispensations, I'm identifying a point of view, which said all of this ceased at the completion of the canon. All of this ceased at the completion of the witness to the Jews. And it isn't for today and it won't be revived until the church is raptured and be manifested by the Jews during the tribulation.

We've had that point of view. We've had two extremes. And consequently the extremes on the one hand of enthusiasm and of rejection have sort of neutralized each other.

Have you ever seen, perhaps you have, I remember when I was given a set of oil paints some years ago as a young man by a friend who thought I'd become another Churchill or something. I didn't, I just got paint on my fingers, but not on the board with any meaning. But I started to play with the palette and I took a little of this, mixed it, got a shade and then a tint, and I put some of every color in the box.

But do you know what it turned out to be? It just turned out to be a drab, unpleasant gray. And we've had the mixing of the colors to the point where so many times our thinking becomes somewhat gray. We don't

want to be associated with extremism on the one point of view.

We don't want to be associated with rejection on the other. And so the mixing of the two colors sort of grays or muddies our thinking. And this is grievous.

And I am confident that it's as grievous to the Lord as it is to us. And so in the Alliance Church, at least we've had and do continue to have a place for the ministry of healing to all who come. The elders are prepared and happy together in order that they might be anointed and together lay hold of the Lord for the health and strength of the one for whom we're praying.

Yes, this is true. But all of us long to see a release of the resurrection life of the Lord Jesus Christ in the midst of the Church, with naturalness and wholesomeness, avoiding the extreme on the one hand, avoiding the drab gray that comes from being so middle-of-the-road that one can't move in the direction of human need or divine truth, so well balanced that one can't reach to the right hand of the left to extend to those that are in need. I believe that it is the intent of the Spirit of God in these days to show us again that the Lord Jesus Christ is desirous of being presented to men and women as being alive.

He's alive from the dead. He's a living Lord. And this does not mean that we become absolutely involved with healing.

We're not teaching healing. We're preaching Christ. We're not dealing with a program.

We're presenting a person. There's a difference, you know. There's a difference between an emphasis that is a program of emphasis, an emphasis that is a focus on the physical needs of the people on the one hand and their healing on the other.

I believe that it is God's desire for this Church that we should recognize that the Lord Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. His power hasn't changed. His intent hasn't changed.

He is still as he was and always will be as he's ever been. It isn't, therefore, that we are being pressed. I feel, at least in my heart, no pressure whatever, or no inclination whatever, to identify with any effort that makes, focuses the attention around the sick and the ministry to the sick.

I stand exactly with Dr. Simpson on that. When Alexander Dowie said to him years ago, Simpson, let's you and I go on the road with healing campaigns. We have the two greatest healing ministries in the country.

And Dr. Simpson said, Brother Dowie, God put four wheels on my chariot, and I absolutely refuse to ride on any one of them. I'm not going to make a unicycle out of a wagon. I'm going to go on all four.

And so there grew up out of this a misunderstanding, which the Lord settled in his own way. But I concur with this completely. But I also feel, as the Spirit of God has been dealing with my heart, that we ought to come out with a new clarity of annunciation and say, Jesus Christ is alive from the dead.

He lives. He lives. And this is obviously going to involve the necessity of proving to certain ones that he lives, not for the sake of gaining their pleasure or something from them, coveting their silver or their gold, but that it is for the purpose of convincing them that of the absolute wisdom and sheer necessity of a total abandonment to Jesus Christ.

I believe that he is prepared to answer prayer far more often than we're prepared to pray. I believe that the Lord is prepared to demonstrate far more frequently than we see him do the fact that he is alive from

the dead. But I think the key, at least for us as a church or me as a pastor seeking to direct your thinking and your ministry, that we have in this portion, so seldom associated with the subject of bodily healing, a key that is to be recognized by us.

Paul has come into the city of Lystra, driven there, incidentally, not knowing to whom he hasn't come, holding a healing campaign. He is coming there to preach the gospel. He's coming there to present the claims of Christ and the fact that Jesus Christ is everything that the Bible says he is, that he is alive from the dead.

And because he is Lord, there's only one proper attitude toward him, one of utter abandonment before him, lying on one's face in submission and yieldedness to the person of Jesus Christ. He preached the gospel. But as he preached the gospel, there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet.

I see in this a statement that ought to be a key to us. Undoubtedly, Lystra was like every other Oriental city that I've seen. The sick were probably almost as numerous as the well, on every hand, all over.

And thus it is that Paul has not come in with any particular point of view or particular emphasis or rod to shake or word to say. He's preaching Christ. He's preaching the gospel.

And among all of the sick that are present, there is a certain man. This man has one thing that distinguishes him from all the other sick people that are there. Oh, not that he's impotent in his feet.

There may have been, and probably were, others similarly crippled. Not that he had never walked. There might have been others equally infirm.

But Paul describes here, the word describes here, a characteristic which we ought to recognize is essential to any ministry that we're going to have in presenting these particular claims of Christ and promises of Christ. The same, this man who'd been crippled from his mother's womb, who'd never walked, heard Paul speak. And Paul, steadfastly looking at him and perceiving that he had faith to be healed.

I am troubled. This trouble, this troubling of spirit has been shared with you in numerous times in the past. I am troubled by the fact that out of a hundred people that make first-time professions of faith, only one-half of one percent, so we are told by no less an authority than Mervyn Rosell, that only one-half of one percent in America that make first-time professions of faith give Bible evidence of regeneration a year later.

So it takes 200 professions of faith to get one continuing church member, one continuing Christian. I'm troubled by this. I'm troubled by the fact that in a healing campaign such as I've read about and with the leaders of which I've conversed, it's probably no more than two to three percent that I prayed for that received something vital and delivering from the Lord.

It seems to me, therefore, that it is imperative we recognize that God has given to the church to be exercised by the church and manifest in it a gift other than merely the proclamation of the truth and the praying for the sick. It is, as I see it here, a gift of discernment. It is a discerning.

The Spirit of God is able to give discernment of faith as well as to give healing power. If this is a gift of the Spirit and I hold it to be one of these kinds of equipment that God has given, then we would expect to find that it would be exercised in a local church and among God's people. Paul now is exercising a gift of the Spirit, prompted, of course, by some inner concern, some inner burden.

Here out of all the people that are there are the sick, and out of all the sick is this man at whom he looks steadfastly. And as he looks, he becomes aware of the fact that this man has faith to be healed, and so he takes an appropriate action. And he said to him with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet.

And he leaped, and he walked. Now, it isn't what Saul Paul said, necessarily. It was the fact that here he was so sensitive to the Spirit of God that he was aware of one in whose heart God had been able to quicken faith.

Now, I see in this a ministry essential for healing. I am convinced that God wants to do far more than he has done. I am convinced that it is essential, especially in a mission field, any mission field, and including New York, which is probably one of the most difficult mission fields, that we should have the attestation of the truth that Jesus Christ is alive from the dead.

I believe God wants to do this. I believe he wants to do it through the church and not through names. He wants to do it through individuals that are in the body of Christ and not through promotion.

I believe he wants to do it through members of this congregation. And therefore, it would seem to me that it would be appropriate for you to pray this way. Lord, teach me the word as it relates to the message that we should proclaim to sinners.

I mentioned to you and described to you the affirmation that Herbert Cain related by the preachers in China. They were preaching the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. It ought to be that in your personal witness for Christ, wherever that be--in home or living room or wherever you may have occasion to speak--you affirm the fact that Jesus Christ is raised from the dead.

You ought, therefore, to believe that God will so teach you in that affirmation and proclamation that people are going to be forced to think. They are going to be forced to ask questions. You ought also to believe that if God can teach you how to preach, he will give you the gift to discern those that are prepared to respond to the preaching.

There ought to be on your part, just by nothing more than this that you are hearing tonight, a rising within your spirit, O God, teach me how to preach the gospel. I have been sent as a witness. I have been commissioned to do it.

There is someone to whom I can speak. Guide me to speak to those where I can profitably invest the seed of truth. Out of all to whom you speak, there may only come a few that will, during the time of your speaking, give evidence of an interest that could press them on expecting them to make commitment to Christ.

God hasn't called you to be a soul woman. He's called you to be a witness. He's called you to sow the truth.

He's called you to preach. But in this, sowing by many waters and in all seasons, there will be some where you sense there's a response and an openness. You ought to ask God, Loose my tongue, quicken my brain, enliven my spirit.

Help me to speak in such a way as to gain the attention and hold the attention of those to whom I speak. And grant to me, Lord, the discernment that is shown here. Paul has said, Be followers of me as I am of Christ.

And here he has discerned something. If God was willing to teach Paul, I believe he's willing to teach you and to teach me. He may not give to all of us this gift by any means.

He may not give to all of us this discernment. I believe that it ought to come, therefore, that as we are witnessing and as we are communicating the gospel and as we are sharing, we are quickened by the Spirit of God to believe that in this heart there is the root of faith. In this life there's response.

And here is one. And there ought to be a nurturing of what you see by prayer until you are prepared to cause this one to look at Christ in regard to the need of their body. We don't know a great deal.

I confess to you that there is in my own heart a great accumulation through the generations of the Church, all of which has been passed on to me, of ignorance. Ignorance that has been the result of the simple truths of the word of God being submerged under the rubbish of Rome for about 1500 years. But I believe that the evidence is sufficiently clear now by what God has done through individuals and agencies and organizations in the past that we can believe, for instance, the ministry of such evangelists in the last generation as Mr. Rosell and Hyman Appelman and, of course, Dr. Billy Graham and others around the world, that we can talk to people about the Lord, that this is a day and a generation when they'll talk.

Are you talking? Are you conversing? Are you sharing? We can. We've demonstrated again in my lifetime that it is possible to discuss with people the things of life through the ministry of such men as Billy Branham and Oral Roberts and many others that we might name. We have evidence of the fact that people are greatly concerned not only about Christ but about the subject of healing and the ability of Christ to meet the needs that others can't meet.

We see this. Now, my conviction is that evangelism ultimately is not going to be done by the great campaign. It's going to be taught many things by it, but it's going to come right back to the fact that you are God's method, you are God's servant, you are God's witness, and every other method and every other agency certainly we rejoice in.

And whenever there's that done, we are happy for that. But by the same token, it doesn't pass the fact that you are the significant unit in God's plan and purpose. It also, by the same token, would be that healing is not to be something of which there's a campaign.

I'm not opposed to it, except I personally don't wish to become involved in it. I believe that it is to be through the local church. It's to be the simple testimony, Jesus Christ is alive, and the response of the heart to that truth communicated by you, utterly unknown and anonymous, but simply that this is what you believe, that you're living constantly on the threshold of the supernatural because you worship the living Christ.

It belongs--the church is the center of his operation, it's his plan, it's the only thing that's set forth in the scripture as being divinely established. Two institutions of divine origin, the home and the church. And I believe all the gifts of the Spirit, all the operations of God, all the ministries ought to be there.

So it isn't that we're concerned so much about promoting healing. That isn't it. Don't mistake me.

It is that we should understand we serve a Christ, a wonderful Lord that's concerned about people, concerned about the needs, concerned about all that touches them. There's nothing beyond the scope of his care, nothing beyond the reach of his love, nothing beyond the embrace of his grace. He's concerned about people.

And as you proclaim a concerned Christ, an interested Christ, a loving Lord, a gracious Lord, you will undoubtedly have the experience that Paul had, discerning that here is someone that has faith to be healed, or faith to touch the Lord. Won't be everyone, nor will it probably be everyone in this company that will have such discernment, but it is available for you. And there is no reason at all why you cannot say, now Father, if this is in your word, there's a purpose for it.

If this was sent, as Paul said, be followers of me as I am of Christ, there's a reason for it. Jesus Christ is alive. He's still able to wonderfully heal, wonderfully answer prayer, not only for physical healing, but for any need that is presented to him that's right and proper, and for his glory as well as the good of his people.

Again, let me bring it so that I hope you won't miss it. The message that God has given us is the message he gave Paul. This is the good news.

Jesus Christ is God's Son, and he's alive from the dead. He lives. He's a living Lord, and all the grace he had in the past he has, and all the power he had in the past he has, all the love he's had in the past he has.

And he's willing to be today, to those who will trust him, what he was in the past. We're not preaching anything but Christ, but oh, let's our hearts take hold of this. Now, having said that, have you recognized that it's not only God's ability to heal, God's power to heal, God's power to answer prayer, whatever that prayer might be, but that faith too is a gift of the Spirit? This is a gift, and so should be in your need rather than say, Lord, heal me, quicken your word to my heart, teach me, and give me your faith.

It isn't how much faith, in a sense, you have in God, it's the kind of faith that you have. When Christ said, if you shall have the faith as a grain of mustard seed, he wasn't speaking about size of faith, he was speaking about kind, a kind of life. And so it ought to be, oh God, give me, for those whom I meet, for the needs of my life, for the ministry that's before me, give me your faith.

Just make me a vehicle to communicate the message of the good news concerning Christ, and quicken to my heart your faith. Now you see, there's only two ways of approaching a ministry. The one is to say, it's all going to be built around me, the inverted pyramid resting on the shoulders of a person.

And the other is to say, no, it's going to be built upon you. It's much slower, but if it ever catches fire, it's going to call. And when you come to the place that there is no privilege that any child of God has had that isn't yours, there's no gift that any child of God has experienced that's not available to you in the will of God, in the purpose of God, and that God has intended you to be a useful branch in the vine and a fruitful bough, he has plans for your life.

And that you are as important to him as anyone else in your place in God's plan. Then of course, I believe you can reach out to take from the Lord. And so rather than saying, why don't we see the miraculous and the supernatural, we ought to say, oh God, cause me to become to you that vehicle for communicating the truth of Christ, preaching Christ, that I ought to be.

Because the miraculous is not to be centered around a point, it's to be centered around a person, around a person whom you are to present and proclaim. We often want to see it centered around a point. No, it's got to be centered around the person.

We've got to get our eye off the point and onto the person. I went into a home in Charlotte, North Carolina, taken by a pastor. And the woman, very ill, looked at me and she said, oh brother, I'm so glad you've come, but I wish that you were Oral Roberts.

Because when he was here a few years ago, he prayed for me and I was healed. And I looked at her and my heart just ached. Because it wasn't Christ, it was a person.

And I'm grateful for what she received from Oral Roberts. And I have no criticism of him. But the point I'm trying to present to you is this, that we're not preaching a person.

We're not preaching a point. We're not preaching a human being, a minister. We're preaching Christ.

And it ought to be your experience in presenting Christ, to have the discernment given that in this heart, there is faith to be saved. There's faith for victory. There's faith for the fullness of Christ.

There's faith to be healed. Only as there can be a dispersion of testimony, only as you can become the unit of communication, getting out where people are through the contacts God gives you, can there come that which is here. Because if this is not an in-gathering, this is a projection from the church at Antioch.

And Paul, as one of the believers, is now in Lystra. And he is saying wonderful things about Christ that God's confirming, that you might be encouraged that this means you. I take you back again, though you needn't turn, to Mark 16.

And they went everywhere preaching the word. Do you know who they were? They were just the ordinary, pardon me for saying it that way, but that's the way you say it. I don't believe it, but that's the way you say it.

They were just the ordinary lay people of the church that went everywhere. Philip, the deacon, went up to Samaria. You know why? Because there was persecution in Jerusalem, and there was only room enough in the hiding place for the apostles.

The rest had to run. They went everywhere preaching the word, and the Lord went with them confirming the word. Oh, how my heart cries out.

Not that you'll have a particular ministry. I don't want to ever hear that you've become famous, but oh how I'd love to hear that because of your testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ, he has become loved and honored and worshiped. He's become famous.

You've exalted him, not you. If just this company of people, no more than we are, many as there were in the upper room on the day of Pentecost perhaps, could go out where you're going to be in the week to come to testify to the risen Christ what miracles could be reported next Lord's Day. This is what we seek for.

This is what we press for. This is what we long for. This is what Paul was doing.

It isn't that he was having a healing campaign. He was just proclaiming a living Lord, and that's what your privilege is, to exalt the living Christ who's wonderfully able to meet every need and loves to be wanted and honors faith. Shall we bow together? Now our Father, having said all that we've said, we long for the demonstration of thy spirit in our midst sufficient to encourage the hearts of the people to understand exactly that of which we speak.

We would believe that everything is true. We're not throwing the responsibility onto them and saying, go now and do this because this is right, but we're seeking our Father to understand thy will and plan and purpose as a people, not to promote a project, not to become overbalanced with an emphasis, but to present to our day and to our generation the fact that thy son, the Lord Jesus Christ, has been exalted by thy right hand and has all authority in heaven and earth and all power and all love and all grace and mercy, and he loves to be sought, he loves to be longed for, and he's concerned about people. We think of Mrs. Barnes and her husband going to Brazil.

We think of our own responsibility here in this vast world mission field of New York. Our hearts cry out to thee for every missionary we've sent to every dark tribe and needy land. O God of grace, grant that again in the midst of the church may come this confidence, this certainty, this understanding that Jesus Christ is alive from the dead, that we serve a living Lord.

How thou wilt do it in the church here at this very place and point to encourage us to believe that it can be elsewhere, we do not know. We do believe, our Father, that the miracles are to be wrought not in a point to which people come out of curiosity, but in the situation where they are in their need. And so we ask thee that thou will instruct us and guide us, guide the eldership of this church, guide us as people that pray for the unfolding of thy will and purpose and the revelation of the risen Christ here in the midst of such colossal need.

So, Father, we commit ourselves to thee. We take the word as being instruction for our heart, not in a history book, but a textbook. And we believe that thou wilt so teach us to preach the gospel that the outgrowth of it will be the revelation and the demonstration that Jesus Christ is alive from the dead.

Bring it, therefore, we pray, back again to the place where every member of the company is a witness for thee, from the youngest to the oldest, each in our place, each with those whom we know and those whom we touch, affirming again that Jesus Christ is alive from the dead, unsealed, long-closed lips, afraid to speak to neighbors and friends about our wonderful Lord, trading with people who sold them goods for years and never breathing a word that they love Christ. O Father, save us, we pray thee, from this sinner silenced in the midst of death and desolation, and grant to us the release that comes from the confidence that thou art alive from the dead, that we may speak boldly wherever we ought to speak the gospel, and in so doing afford thee an opportunity by changed life and answered prayer to demonstrate that Jesus Christ is alive from the dead. We'll give thee praise for every victory wrought.

We thank thee for what thou art doing in our hearts, but we believe thou art leading to a point where each of us as witnesses for thee will find our lives used to exalt and magnify him who loved us and whom we love, even our Lord Jesus Christ. Press the word therefore upon us, and should there be those who have faith tonight for needs to be met, might they realize that he's here waiting to be touched, and speak to their heart the word that will release their faith to take hold of him who has made full provision for our every need. Glorify thy Son, O Father.

This was his prayer, and this is our prayer. In our lives, in the schools in which some of the students attend, places of work, and homes, and every circumstance where we're placed, grant our Father that there there may be captured the moment of witness for the Lord Jesus Christ. Release us again, we pray, and let us go as a people that have a witness for the sufficiency of Christ.

In his name, for his sake we ask it. Amen. Now if you've come with need, this same Lord Jesus is prepared to meet your need tonight.

He's here, and if you'd like to stay, we'll be so glad to counsel with you, and open the word to you, and pray with you. But oh, take hold of him, and take hold of the truth. Pray it to your heart.

Let us stand for the benediction. Now unto him who is able to do exceeding abundantly, above all we can ask or think according to the power that worketh in us. Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end.

Amen.

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