

Missionary Meetings 01 Cries From the Cross

by William A. Deans

The Lord's commission to his followers is to make known his name to the world, discipling all nations and baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Duration: 59:03

Scripture: Exodus 33:12-15, Exodus 33:18, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 28:18-20, Luke 24:46-49, Acts 26:16-18, Romans 1:1-17

Topics: "Evangelism", "Holy Spirit"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares a story about a college student who wanted to witness for the Lord on his campus. The student tried various methods, including flying an airplane with one wing, but realized that effective witnessing required both words and a consistent life lived in obedience to God's word. The speaker then discusses the source, subject, and strength of the witness, emphasizing the importance of having a vision of Christ, focusing on Christ Himself, and relying on the Holy Spirit. The sermon also touches on the importance of being alert and using opportunities to share the gospel, such as distributing tracks or testaments.

Transcript

Perhaps you have had the experience that has been mine of being with a loved one who was called into the presence of the Lord. Perhaps you had the privilege of listening to the remarks of this loved one as long as he or she was conscious, and then he or she was taken into the presence of the Lord. I'm thinking particularly of my dear mother, who went to be with the Lord down here in Tampa some years ago, and it's with great joy that I go over those little remarks that she made in the last hours of consciousness before the Lord called her into his presence.

They are precious thoughts and precious remembrances. We've been singing about the Lord Jesus, who is precious to us, and I'm sure we all joy in thinking of those words he uttered before he dismissed his spirit and went into the presence of the Father, before the Lord went, left the earth, before he died, you remember, he said first of all, Father, forgive them for they know not what they do. As he was being crucified, and as the soldiers were there, and had parted his garment amongst them into four parts so that each soldier got a part, and then they were gambling for his coat, for his raiment, fulfilling the scriptures unconsciously, and the Lord said, Father, forgive them, thinking doubtless of those who were involved in this terrible act and responsibility, forgive them for they know not what they do.

And then his thoughts were for the thieves who were crucified at that time, and the one thief who repented and turned to him and asked that the Lord might remember him. When he had confessed that he was a sinner and confessed that the Lord was sinless, and he turned to the Lord and said, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And the Lord said, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.

And then turning to his mother, he said, Woman, behold thy son. And then to the beloved disciple, doubtless John, behold thy mother. And then in that dark hour, the hour of the evening oblation, the hour of the sacrifice at the end of the day, the ninth hour, those words from our Lord Jesus, our dear Lord Jesus, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? And then it is finished.

And then, Father, into thy hand I commend my spirit. In the wonder of it, the awfulness of it, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? As he there bore our sins in his own body on the tree, as he took our place there in the judgment of God, and as he hung there as a sacrifice for sin, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Taking our place, and God, who is of purer eyes than to behold evil, putting upon his blessed head the wrath that was due to us. And then it is finished.

Wonderful words. It is finished. The delight of the Lord was to do the will of his Father.

He said, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. It is finished. The work of our salvation done, and done adequately for eternity, nothing can be added to a finished, complete, adequate work.

It is finished. Father, into thy hand I commend my spirit. And then he dismissed his spirit.

No man took it from him. He had power to lay it down, and he had power to take it again. This command he'd received from his Father.

We think of these things, we ponder them many times, oftentimes when we come together on a Lord's Day to remember him, and to proclaim his death, to announce his death, to show his death, waiting for his coming. And then he rose, and there are the many conversations that we could follow during his post-resurrection ministry. But then there was another time when there were some last words of the Lord Jesus Christ, and I think that they are of tremendous importance.

The words that the Lord uttered just before his ascension, just before he left this world, the things that were important to him as he left his own. Let us read some of these things, because they are important, and they're given to us from Acts 1-8. I'm thinking of Acts 8, and then on down through 11, in view of the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We might read, first of all, in Luke 24. Luke 24, verse 46. He said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

And ye are witnesses of these things. And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you. But tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high.

And he led them out as far as Bethany, and he lifted up his hands and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them and carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the temple praising and blessing God.

No wonder they returned to Jerusalem with great joy. They had the commission, they had the task that the Lord had given them to do, and they had the promise of the enablement. Those last words of the Lord Jesus before he ascended to heaven are important.

They were in a measure reiterated to Saul when he saw the Lord there in heaven, saw him in the glory, and was blinded by the brightness of the sight. And the Lord said to him, you'll remember, when he was there in heaven, as Saul is recounting the meeting with the Lord, recounting it to a king Agrippa, the Lord Jesus said to him, Rise and stand upon thy feet, for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness, both of those things which thou hast seen, and of these things in the which I will appear unto thee, delivering thee from the people and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee to open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they might receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." And so we have the commission to witness, and we have the promise of enablement for the witness, and, as well, we have the extent of the witnessing. Now, let's go to the book of Matthew, well-known verses, the very end of the book, where we have the commission given in more detail.

Luke writes in his second treatise, he writes in more detail concerning the promise of the enablement, but let us look for a few moments at the commissioning in the last of the twentieth chapter of Matthew. Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.

And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen. All power.

And it's doubtless redundant, when so many of you are Bible scholars, to point out that the word power there is exousia, which means authority, a different power than we have in the first chapter of the book of the Acts. The Lord Jesus here is saying, All authority is given unto me in heaven and in earth. He is Lord, and he speaks now with a voice of authority to his own.

Go. And this is just previous to the Lord's ascension into heaven. This he gave to the disciples, to the followers, in his day, for their generation.

Their responsibility, as Mark gives it, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. Responsibility for the followers of the Lord Jesus in his day, for their generation, and for their world. And reiterated to Saul for his day and his world, and reiterated to each one of us, and all down through the centuries, generation after generation, a standing, recurrent commission to the followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, that in each generation his followers would accept the responsibility of making known his name to the world of their generation.

People sometimes ask me concerning the Congo. They say, you've been out in the Congo for nearly 40 years. Certainly that area in which you're working has been thoroughly evangelized.

Certainly there's no one in any of those villages around Niankundi who's never heard the gospel. And they say, is there any place in the Congo that hasn't been evangelized? I get this quite frequently. Well, the fact of the matter is, I think we have preached the gospel in every village around Niankundi.

And at the present time, they are preaching the gospel in many of those villages. But when I went out preaching the gospel in those villages, and spent my time in personal evangelism, walking about from

village to village, it was a different world than today. There's a new world there now.

And I go into some of those villages, and I hear the Africans, and particularly the children, saying, muzungu, muzungu, muzungu, which means a white man, a white man, a white man. And they don't call me by my name. They don't even know me, because I don't get back there personally for direct personal witness as I did when I was a much younger man, and I was spending my time out in the bush all the time preaching the gospel.

Others are coming with the gospel to the people there. And praise God, the Africans themselves are going with the gospel to many of the people in those villages. But it's been on my heart that when we speak about the world, we're not speaking about geography.

Frontiers are not geographical, but demographical. They have to do with populations. And the world has to do with the living people in the world.

And there's a new world every generation, and the Lord's commission is reiterated to each generation. The responsibility for this generation is ours. And this new generation that is coming up, praise God, there are some who are hearing God's call and who are answering God's call even in these days.

It's a great joy for me to be able to tell you that there are four who are going back to Congo with us when we're going to the field. Two of them will probably be waiting in Belgium to learn some French before they get there. But Jim and Shirley Deaver have heard God's call some years now since they heard, and they've been preparing ever since.

Jim Deaver is an offset lithographer. He's a printer trained at Good News Publishers there near Chicago. And God called him some years ago, and he had the confirmation of that call at the World Missions Congress when we were with them together a little over two years ago.

And he went on down to Nashville, Tennessee, and took a course in offset lithography plate making so that he's able to make the plates and he's able to do the photography involved. And he and his wife and now two children have been up in Quebec, up at Lennoxville at the Bethel Bible School up there learning French. And, God willing, they're going back to Africa when we return in late summer.

And then there are two young ladies whom God has called, Eleanor Graham, who has been called as a nurse to serve God on the mission field. And she has just been commended by the assemblies in St. Catharines, Ontario, four assemblies collaborating together in the commendation of Eleanor Graham. Seven years ago, at Lyloli Camp, she heard the voice of the Lord, and she recognized her responsibility as a believer to go forth with the word of life.

And she wanted to serve in the realm of medicine. And so from that time she went and took nurse's training, and we met her out at Mount Hermon in California. And she came and said, You remember when God called me seven years ago? Well, I've gone and I've done my nurse's training now, and there's my pin.

I'm an RN now, and I'm ready to go to the Congo, and I want to speak to the brethren of my assembly about commendation. And since that time, the brethren of her assembly and three collaborating assemblies in St. Catharines have commended her to serve the Lord on the mission field. And there's another sister, Gloria Davis, of Oklahoma City, one who was waiting for God to show her definitely where he wanted her to serve.

And I'm happy to say that she has recently been commended by the Christians of the assembly in Oklahoma City. So we're praising God that in this generation, some of these younger people are hearing God's call and recognizing that this is a valid commission for this generation and for the world of today. Oh, yes, I tell people when they say, Has Congo been evangelized? You've been out there a long time.

I say, Well, the world of yesterday in our area was pretty well evangelized. And praise God, much is being done in our immediate area for the world of today. But there's a new world every generation, and the commission is reiterated generation by generation.

The Lord speaks. All authority is given unto me in heaven and earth. Go ye therefore, because I have the authority, acknowledging the lordship of Christ, were to go and disciple all nations.

That word teach perhaps had better be translated disciple, or make followers in all nations. It isn't only to get people to put up their hands and say that they want to be Christians. It isn't that.

But it's to have people come to know the Lord Jesus in a way in which they are born again, and they become followers of the Lord Jesus to follow in his train day by day right on through their lives because they have the Holy Spirit of God to enable them to walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time for the days of. And so the commission is, Go ye therefore, because I am the Lord, because authority is mine, and disciple all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded. Yes.

It's a mistaken impression that is prevalent in many parts of the world today that the great commission is only evangelism. That's only part of it. The second part is very important indeed.

We sometimes call it follow-up. But what we really mean is seeking out the believers, those who have been born again and who know the Lord Jesus Christ, and ministering God's word to them, teaching them what the Lord has revealed in his word concerning their lives and conduct and responsibility, and bringing to them those things which concern the person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ, teaching them to observe, obedience. And this involves such things as gathering together as believers in fellowship, in remembrance of the Lord as he has commanded his disciples to gather to remember him in the breaking of the bread and in the drinking of the cup, that these things might be a testimony to angels, if you like, because it's by the church that those principalities and powers that look down are astonished by the demonstration of the wisdom of God.

It's by the church. And so we teach them these things. Part of our ministry as missionaries is this.

And when we see little companies of believers who are gathered together by the Holy Spirit of God and become a local church functioning in subjection to the word of God, we feel that truly the Holy Spirit is at work, and the gospel has been blessed in individuals being born again, turning from darkness to light from the power of Satan to God, turning to God from idols to serve a living and true God and to wait for his Son from heaven. And our hearts rejoice as we see them faithfully observing those things which the Lord has commanded. Go, he said.

And then he said, Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world. Yes, the Lord Jesus has proven his faithfulness in being with us as we've gone forth in difficult times and in times of great blessing. Lo, I am with you.

Go and lo. Someone said, If there's no go, there's no lo. I would hardly say that, but certainly when there is an obedience to the go, we find that the Lord is faithful as to the lo, and he is with us always, even all the days.

Did you notice the alls in this portion? In the 18th verse, All power is given unto me. 19th verse, Teach all nations, and teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you all the days, even to the end of the world. I'm reminded of Moses in the 33rd of Exodus.

Remember how Moses came to the Lord and he said, Show me now thy way. He wanted to know for guidance. He wanted to know the way.

And the Lord said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest. And Moses said, If thy presence go not with us, carry us not up hence. And then he said, Show me thy glory.

This was more important than Moses hidden in the cleft of the rock, the flesh put out of sight, saw the glory of God. This is the commission. And now the enablement.

Let's turn to that wonderful verse in the first chapter of Acts, Acts 1.8. This is a precious verse, because this is the promise of enablement for the task, but ye shall receive power, Acts 1.8, but ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. To whom was this addressed? This was addressed to those who were followers of the Lord Jesus in his days. And as we had in the 24th chapter of Luke, he said that they should carry in Jerusalem until they should be endued with power from on high.

Well, we don't have that injunction today, because the Holy Spirit has been given, and every believer now has the great joy of being indwelt by the Holy Spirit of God. If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His. In John 7, you remember, the Lord spake about from your inner man shall flow rivers of living water.

And this He spake concerning the Holy Ghost, the Holy Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive, because the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his inner man shall flow rivers of living water. This spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive, for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

And then we have those wonderful promises in the 14th and the 16th chapter of John concerning the Holy Spirit, the coming of the Holy Spirit. And then we have the second chapter, of course, when those who went in obedience to the Lord through Jerusalem knew what it was to be endued with power from on high. But this eighth verse concerns witnessing, and you may say, well, these men who received this commission were those who accompanied with the Lord.

They were with Him when He sat down to eat, and when He traveled along the roads and the paths of Palestine, and they saw Him working miracles, and they saw Him raising the dead, and they saw Him heard His teaching and saw many things that He did. And they were witnesses of His death, and they were witnesses of His resurrection. And He showed Himself to them after His resurrection with many infallible proofs, and so they could go forth and witness.

Oh, yes, they were certainly qualified, because a witness is one who has seen something, has a personal knowledge of a person or an event, and who can recount this in witness. And this certainly applied to the disciples of that day, and they were, first of all, witnesses sent forth by the Lord. But, you know, I believe that those of us who have come to know the Lord Jesus Christ have come to know Him with the eyes of faith.

We have come to see Him in all the loveliness of His person, to see Him as Savior, to see Him as Lord. And I believe that the vision of faith is equally valid, and it is a qualifying vision which enables us to go forth as witnesses in His name. The source of the witness's message is a vision of the Lord Jesus Christ by faith, knowing Him as Savior.

The qualifying of the personal witness is that of knowing the Lord Jesus Christ by faith. I remember Hebrews chapter 11, verse 1. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Or do I have that backwards? Faith is the evidence of things not seen, the substance of things hoped for.

Let me read it, and I will get it right. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Yes, the vision of the Lord Jesus in glory to the man, to the woman, the boy or girl who puts his faith in Christ.

This vision is the source, the qualifying source of the witness's message. And then, what is the subject of the witness's message? Did you notice it says in verse 8, Ye shall be witnesses unto me. Now, there are many things we do on the mission field, but we recognize and realize that our message has as its subject the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

Ye shall be witnesses unto me. We're holy priests, and we should offer to God spiritual sacrifices acceptable to Him by Jesus Christ, but we're also royal priests, that we should show forth the excellencies of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. We have the privilege of displaying the excellencies of the person of the Lord Jesus Christ and extolling His finished work on Calvary's cross.

Our mission is that we should go forth with a vision of the Lord Jesus Christ. Our eyes, filled with the loveliness of His person, go forth and tell others of Him, filled with Christ. And this comes from a daily communion with Him.

This comes from a constant abiding in His presence. We've learned this on the mission field. Perhaps we have yet much to learn, but we've come to know that there's no substitute for daily communion with the Lord Jesus Christ.

To be effective witnesses for Him, we must know Him, we must love Him, we must have our hearts filled with the loveliness of His person, and then we go forth to witness for Him. Dr. Tozer, a godly man who is with the Lord now, spoke of this vision of Christ as the gaze of the soul. And Mr. Squire and I were talking today about Samuel Rutherford, some of his writings, some of his letters, and I came across a paragraph from one of his letters the other day in a selection of letters compiled by Ellen Lister called The Loveliness of Christ from Samuel Rutherford.

And this is what he said, I am sure the saints at their best are but strangers to the weight and worth of the incomparable sweetness of Christ. He is so new, so fresh in excellency every day of new to those that search more and more in Him as if heaven could furnish as many new Christs, if I may speak so, as there are days betwixt Him and us, and yet He is one and the same. Now, I was rather astonished to hear his

expression, furnish as many new Christs, and yet as I pondered it, how true it is.

It's the same Jesus, He's the same yesterday and today and forever, and yet there are so many wonderful facets of His character that to the gaze of the soul the vision of Christ seems ever fresh and ever new, like the fresh manna that was gathered by the Israelites, every man according to his eating, fresh every day. I know what Samuel Rutherford was trying to say, perhaps we might have said it a little different, but there is, as we mentioned earlier, there is the sense of a deepened appreciation of the person of the Lord Jesus the more we spend in His presence, the more we value Him, the more our hearts are filled with Christ, the more we can go out as effective witnesses unto Him. And so the subject of the witness's message is the person of Christ, and one must admit that those who had a vision of the glory of God in days gone by, men like Moses and Job and Isaiah and Jeremiah, Ezekiel and John and so on, they fell down in a sense of utter unworthiness and they were conscious of their own lack of worthiness.

They were undone, and Job said he abhorred himself and repented in dust and ashes, and you remember Isaiah, and all of these men as they saw the vision of the glory of God, they realized how unworthy they were. It was a humiliating experience. It was an experience of humbling, and that's fine for the witness.

The witness needs that because the witness is not to witness in his own power or his own strength. If the source of the witness's message is a vision by faith of the Lord Jesus, and the subject of the witness's message is the person of Christ, the strength for the witness's message is the Holy Spirit of God. Oh, we don't have to tarry for the Holy Spirit of God.

We're born again. We're sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise. The injunction is given to us in our day as we have in Ephesians.

It says, Be filled with the Spirit. I wouldn't find it to be scriptural to ask the Lord to fill us with His Spirit because rather the Scripture would give us the command that we should be filled with the Spirit. And it is interesting that the word in Greek that is the same root as Spirit is the word for wind.

That word, that wind which can come in and fill any space that's made available to us. And so the Holy Spirit of God who is the possession of every believer longs to fill us that we might know what it is to know spiritual power in our witnessing. Sometimes people say, I can't witness.

I just don't seem to have the knack of speaking to people about the Lord Jesus Christ. I'm not able to do it. Does it depend on us? The power for witnessing is not ours.

Our cleverness or our ability or our outgoingness, if you like. The power for witnessing is the Holy Spirit of God. And you as a believer have the Holy Spirit of God.

But of course, He can't work if He's grieved by sin that is tolerated in the life. This is fatal to witnessing. If we allow sin in our lives to remain unconfessed, we needn't expect to go forth and witness effectively.

Grieve not the Spirit by whom you're sealed unto the day of redemption. And then sometimes we quench the Spirit. We're told in Thessalonians, quench not the Spirit.

Sometimes we interpose our own will and refuse the guidance of the Holy Spirit, particularly as to the revelation of the person of Christ, for this is the ministry of the Holy Spirit. We don't open our hearts to receive visions of the Lord Jesus. A grieved spirit certainly will prevent our effectiveness as witnesses, and this touches every one of us.

Because after all, this sort of division that's come in amongst us in which foreign missionaries are in a special category is really a rather artificial one. Because after all, our work as missionaries in a foreign field is only an extension, it's only a projection of the work of witnessing at home. And some of us are privileged to go farther afield with the same task that you have, the same opportunity that you have.

And we did speak a little bit yesterday of the matter of chain witnessing, the chain of witness, because we feel this is important. There's some who can witness in an oral way more effectively than others, and some can simply witness by giving out a tract, but letting their colors be shown for the Lord Jesus Christ. And this isn't something that is historic, this is something that's vital today for every one of us, and none of us has the right to say that we're not able to witness because the Holy Spirit of God is ours.

Each one of us. He can give the courage, and he can give the words to speak, or he can show the avenue of a little testimony for him. If we're alert, if we're desirous of obeying the Lord in these last words that he gave before he ascended to heaven, he shall be witnesses unto me.

He shall receive power after that the Holy Spirit is come upon. I fear that many times we don't know the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives because we allow our lives to become cluttered with things of this world, the mundane things of everyday life so fill our hearts and our lives that the Holy Spirit does not have access to our whole beings, and therefore we can't be fulfilled with the Spirit. It's our responsibility to see that those things which are in our lives and preventing the Holy Spirit from filling us, that these things might be confessed to the Lord and put away, that we might, among us as God's people and as individual witnesses, we might know what it is, know the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

I think we have much to learn along these lines. Then there is the sort of the witness. If you notice, I've made my little outline using S's.

The source of the witness, a vision of Christ. The subject of the witness, Christ Himself. Strength for the witness, witnessing the Holy Spirit of God.

Now the sort of the witness, that is, what is the witness going to be like? I was talking with Paul Little the other day. He's the son of Mr. Robert Little who is expected next week, I believe, here at Park of the Palms for that wonderful, profound ministry for which he is noted and with which God has given him great blessing. Paul Little was telling me of a forthcoming book that's coming out for college students called, in characteristic modern language, Ghoulie Learns to Fly.

And this is the story. The book isn't actually on sale, but it's going to be shortly. And this is the story about a college student who wants to witness for the Lord.

He wants to get out and witness for the Lord on the campus. Ghoulie. And he tries this and tries that.

I don't have all the details, but one feature was that he had an airplane and he tried flying this airplane with one wing and it didn't work at all. It needed two wings. And he found that if he was going to witness effectively on the campus, it took not only lip, it took life as well.

He had to back up that which he was saying with a life in the classroom, a life that was lived before those to whom he sought to witness in a consistent way in obedience to the Word of God. Ghoulie learns to fly. That consistent life whereby we are living epistles known and read of all men, whereby we can give forth the Word of Life and our own personal lives lived in the fear of God are an example to those who would be brought to know Him.

I've been impressed by that little incident in the life of Cornelius. You remember how Cornelius, who was a man of wonderful character and a man who was generous and a man who prayed, but the Scripture says he wasn't saved. We have this in the 10th and 11th chapters of Acts.

You remember how when the Lord sent an angel to speak to Cornelius, he brought him a message. And one would think that the message would be the message of salvation, the message of how to be saved because Cornelius, despite all his alms and his prayers, was not saved. But that wasn't the message of the angel.

The message of the angel was sent for Peter and he'll come and tell you words whereby you might be saved. You see, the Lord isn't giving the message of the gospel to angels to proclaim, but He's committed unto us the word of reconciliation, that we should in Christ's stead beseech men to be reconciled to God. We've been put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak, not as pleasing men, but as pleasing God, which trieth the hearts.

The responsibility for reaching souls for Christ is yours, is mine, in our day and to our generation. I could say much more, but it's perhaps unnecessary to say further as to our lives which back up our oral witness for Him. And so there is the start of the witness, the life that goes with the testimony for Him.

And then the scope of the witness. Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost has come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and in Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth. Yes, I believe that witnessing on the mission field is just an extension of witnessing in the homeland.

Really, our ministry in Africa is not one bit different to witnessing in this land. Perhaps we have some problems that you don't have, but then we have some advantages you don't have in this country. For example, in this country, when you speak to someone and you say, now, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, the person says, now, wait a minute.

That's a degrading thing to say about me. That's not what happens out in Africa. In Africa, when you say, now, we're all sinners in God's sight, the African bows his head and accepts that, that he's a sinner in God's sight.

So we have advantages, you see, in preaching the gospel out there in Africa. But after all, it's all the same. The commission is to every one of us.

Some are privileged to go to the distant parts of the earth, but we're to begin at Jerusalem. And, of course, many times this point has been made that Jerusalem is our own immediate environment. Has it ever occurred to you that your immediate mission field is your immediate environment and those with whom you are personally in contact represent the challenge to you by the Lord for testimony and witness in his name? Perhaps it's in the office.

Perhaps it's your employees in your plant. Or it may be in your home those who come with various materials for your home, your household tasks. Or it may be the man at the gas station.

Dr. Wilson, you know, was one who was so active. He's an old gentleman now, but he has written some of his experiences, how very alert he was to find experiences that would have to do, give him an opportunity for testifying to the Lord. He goes to a Shell gas station and he says to the man, he said, you must be very conscious of eternity and death, surrounded as you are by all these emblems of death.

The man said, what do you mean all these emblems of death? Well, all these shells, each one of these shells represents the death of an animal. And the man thinks about this. You can be sure that the next time that man looked at the Shell, he was thinking about eternity and about being ready to meet God.

And Dr. Wilson spoke to him in that way. I remember another time he tells a story as he was going in an elevator with a boy running the elevator in the old days when they didn't have push buttons but you had to run it with a handle, you know. And he said to the boy, well, boy, your life certainly has its ups and downs, doesn't it? And the elevator said, yes, sir, it certainly does.

And he said, well, I hope that your last journey will be up. And then he gave him the gospel. Well, perhaps we're not as clever as Dr. Wilson in some of those things, but at the same time we can be alert and we can see that those with whom we're coming in contact do have tracts and do have a little time of witness.

And as we're driving along that there is a tract available to pass out or perhaps a testament. I was amazed the other day. Dr. Heatdierks and I were in Michigan and we were coming home from a meeting in Muskegon and I had to stop and get gas.

And Dr. Heatdierks had left his Bible on the ledge of the windshield. And as we got gas, the man said, you people are Christians, aren't you? We said, yes. And I immediately thought, well, how does he know that? But there was the Bible.

He said, well, I saw your Bible. I thought you must be Christian. I'm a Christian, too.

And this was a fellowship immediately there by a man at the gas station who saw the Bible. And this meant a lot to him. People that show their Bibles are usually real Christians.

And I wanted to go on, but our time is finished. I wanted to go on and say something about witnessing plus. The gospel is all that's needed for the salvation of men and women.

Maybe someone in the company tonight has never trusted the Lord. All you need to know eternal salvation is to come as a sinner to the Lord Jesus Christ and put your faith in Him, and you'll receive eternal life. He that believeth on the Son hath life.

He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on Him. He that hath the Son hath life. He that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

I am come that they might have life, that they might have it more abundantly. The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. This is witnessing.

And if you don't know this, if you're still dead in trespasses and sins, you need the Lord Jesus Christ because receiving Him, you receive life. He came to His own, and His own received Him not, but as many as received Him, to them gave He the power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you're saved.

This is for all, and we can tell others roundabouts. And I would just say as the years go on and as we perhaps are not as active as we have been in years gone by, we still have the opportunity of witnessing to those who are in our Jerusalem. Jerusalem, all Judea, Samaria, unto the uttermost part of the earth.

What does it really matter? The Lord has a place for you and the Lord has a place for me. The important thing is to know where the Lord wants each one of us to be, and in that place, in the power of the Holy

Spirit, let us be effective witnesses for the glory of our Lord Jesus. Shall we pray? We are thankful to Thee, gracious God, for Thy great love to us, that Thou didst send Thy well-beloved Son, that He should, in obedience to Thy will, present Himself there as the sacrifice for our sins, made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

We thank Thee, too, for His perfect sacrifice as our burnt offering, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to Thee. And so now we have become accepted in the Beloved, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of Thy grace. Give us, Lord, in the days that remain before the coming of our Lord Jesus, or until others call us into Thy presence, that we may witness effectively, not because of any cleverness we have, any skill that is ours, but because of the power of the Holy Spirit of God, giving the enablement, using Thy Word.

As we are in Thy presence, blessed Lord Jesus, day by day, reading the Holy Scriptures, we can go forth with the Word of the Lord on our lips and the loveliness of the person of our Lord Jesus in our hearts to witness effectively for Him. We pray that Thou wilt help us each one for the glory of our Lord Jesus. Part us now with Thy blessing, receive from our hearts our worship, praise, and adoration in the precious, the worthy name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen. To learn that Mr. and Mrs. H.C. Hopgood are in the congregation, I wonder if you would just stand so we could identify you. I'd like to... There they are.

We'd like you to know them. They are old-time missionaries from the Congo. Good to see you here.

Our brother Mr. Hopgood is a co-translator of the Lumongo Bible, and his son Ben Hopgood is the rector of the Protestant University in the Congo, and they have been dear friends of ours for many years. They visited us at Nyamkundi. It's just a joy to see them here in Florida.

We thank the Lord, too, for the establishment of that Protestant University out in the Congo, and brother Ben Hopgood has mentioned to me the need of personnel in connection with the university there. We're happy that there are three universities in the Congo. There's the Catholic University, a branch of Levenham in the Kinshasa area, and of course our students are welcome there, too, but it's a Catholic university.

And then there's a government university in Elizabethville, which is now called Lubumbashi, and there they may go, but our hearts are not too happy because of the very liberal and almost atheistic outlook there is oftentimes in that university. So we're very happy in the establishment of the university at Stanleyville in the Oriental Province, which is our province. Stanleyville is now called Kisangani, and there's a need for evangelical faculty, those who can go and give help in that work, particularly in the science departments, I believe, of the faculty.

I'm happy for the occasion of mentioning this, and especially in connection with prayer for those who have the oversight, and particularly Mr. Ben Hopgood, who has the oversight of the university there. Now, this is the missionary week in the conference, and you'll notice that remarks have been made definitely along a missionary line, and a number of people have come to me and asked various questions about our going to the field, and the questions have included questions concerning my parents, and the Lord has laid on my heart, in connection with the ministry this morning, to give you something of a background in connection with our going to the field, and something of a testimony as to how God led us out into His work in the Congo. May we read together from the first chapter of Romans, Romans chapter 1, beginning at verse 1

and reading through verse 17.

Romans 1 and verse 1. Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures. Concerning his son Jesus Christ, our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead, by whom we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for his name, among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ. To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints, grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world. For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers, making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you. For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift to the end that you may be established, that is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.

And I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, but was let hitherto, that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles. I am better both to the Greeks and to the barbarians, both to the wise and to the unwise, so as much as in the ears. I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith, as it is written, The just shall live by faith." What wonderful verses these are! The gospel of God concerning His Son, Jesus Christ. Verse 3. Concerning His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

And then in verse 9, I serve with my spirit in the gospel of His Son. Wonderful subject that is ours in the gospel. The Lord Jesus Christ, God's beloved Son, whom He sent to redeem us, to purify us from all iniquity, to separate unto Himself a people, to call out from among the nations a people for His name, to reconcile us to Himself.

God was then Christ reconciling the world to Himself. And we have this wondrous message to proclaim. The gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, or in a larger sense, perhaps, the gospel of God concerning His Son, Jesus Christ.

The gospel of His Son. And we were mentioning last night, in connection with witnessing, which is the privilege and responsibility for every believer, that the subject of the witness's message is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. You shall obtain power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and you shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and in other places.

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