

World Dominion

by William MacDonald

William MacDonald's sermon calls Christians to reclaim their God-given dominion through love and the gospel, emphasizing the nobility of their calling and the importance of dedicated discipleship.

Scripture: Genesis 1:26

Topics: "Evangelism", "Christian Calling"

Description

William MacDonald emphasizes that God has called us to world dominion, urging believers to recognize their high calling beyond mundane occupations. He reflects on humanity's original dominion over the earth, which was lost through sin, but can be regained through the gospel by claiming souls for Christ. MacDonald highlights the nobility of the Christian mission, encouraging believers to see themselves as ambassadors for Christ rather than merely pursuing secular careers. He stresses the importance of love as the driving force behind evangelism and the need for dedicated discipleship to reach the world with the gospel. Ultimately, he calls for a commitment to the Great Commission, urging Christians to live out their calling with passion and purpose.

Transcript

God has called us to world dominion. It was never His intention that we should be "born a man and die a grocer." It was not His purpose that we spend our lives as "minor officials in transient enterprises."

When He originally created man, the Lord gave him dominion over the earth. He crowned him with glory and honor and put all things in subjection under his feet. Man was clothed with dignity and sovereignty--just slightly lower than that of the angels.

When he sinned, Adam forfeited much of the dominion that had been his by divine decree. Instead of exercising undisputed sway, he ruled unsteadily over an uncertain realm.

In the gospel, there is a sense in which we can regain dominion. It is not now a matter of control over snarling dogs or poisonous snakes--rather, it is claiming the heathen for our possession. "True imperialism is empire by moral and spiritual sovereignty; allurements and dominion by the fascinating radiance of a pure and sanctified life"--J. H. Jowett.

Actually, this dignity of the Christian calling is something that Adam never knew. We are partners with God in the world's redemption. "This is our errand--to anoint men in the Name of the Lord to royalty of life, to

sovereignty over self, to service for the realm"--Dinsdale T. Young.

The tragedy of much of life today is the failure to appreciate our high calling. We are content to spend our years "hugging the subordinate," or "majoring in minors." We creep instead of fly. We are slaves instead of kings. Few have the vision of claiming countries for Christ.

Spurgeon was an exception. He wrote the following dynamic message to his son:

I should not like you, if meant by God to be a missionary, to die a millionaire.

I should not like it, were you fitted to be a missionary, that you should drivel down to a king.

What are all your kings, all your nobles, all your diadems, when you put them together, compared with the dignity of winning souls to Christ, with the special honor of building for Christ, not on another man's foundation, but preaching Christ's Gospel in regions far beyond?

Another exception was John Mott, well-known missionary statesman. When President Coolidge asked him to serve as ambassador to Japan, Mott replied, "Mr. President, since God called me to be an ambassador of His, my ears have been deaf to all other calls."

Billy Graham tells of a third exception. "When the Standard Oil Company was looking in the Far East for a man, they chose a missionary to be their representative. They offered him ten thousand, and he turned it down; twenty-five thousand, and he turned it down; fifty thousand, and he turned it down. They said, 'What's wrong?' He said, 'Your price is all right, but your job is too small. God has called me to be a missionary.'"

The Christian's calling is the noblest of all, and if we realize it, our lives will take on new loftiness. We will no longer speak of ourselves as "called to be a plumber" or "called to be a physicist" or "called to be a dentist." Rather, we will see ourselves as "called to be an apostle"--and all these other things as mere means of livelihood.

We will see ourselves called to preach the gospel to every creature, to make disciples of all nations, to evangelize the world.

An immense task, you say? Immense, yes--but not impossible. The enormity of the task is indicated by the following graphic view of the world in miniature:

If in our imagination we could compress the present population of the world--now in excess of three billion people--into a group of a thousand persons living in a single town, the following is the picture of contrasts we would then vividly see.

Sixty persons would represent the U.S. population; all others would be represented by 940. The 60 Americans would have 35% of the total income of the entire town; the 940 would share the other 65%.

Thirty-six of the Americans in the town would be (professing) Christian church members; and 24 would not. In the town as a whole, about 290 would be (professing) Christians and 710 would not. At least 80 persons in the whole town would be believing Communists and 370 would be under Communist domination. Possibly 70 in the whole town would be (professing) Protestant Christians.

Three hundred and three persons in the whole town would be white; 697 would be non-white. The 60 Americans would have an average life expectancy of 70 years; all the other 940 would average under 40.

The Americans would have 15 $\frac{1}{2}$ times as much per person as all the rest on an average. They would produce 16% of the town's total food supply, eat up all but 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ % of that total supply and keep most of it for their future use in expensive storage equipment. When it is remembered that most of the 940 non-Americans in the town would always be hungry and never know quite when they would get enough to eat, the situation created by this disparity in food supply and the existence of vast reserves becomes fairly apparent, particularly in view of the fact that the Americans already eat 72% above the optimum food requirements. They could actually save money by giving away excess food because of the cost of storing it, but they think that would be a dangerous "give-away program of soft-headed do gooders."

The 60 Americans would have, of the town's total supply, 12 times as much electric power as all the rest, 22 times as much coal, 21 times as much petroleum, 50 times as much steel and 50 times as much in general equipment.

The lowest income groups among the 60 Americans would be better off than the average in much of the rest of the town. Literally most of the non-American people in the town would be poor, hungry, sick and ignorant. Almost half would not be able to read or write. More than half would never have heard of Christ or what he stood for. But very soon more than half would be hearing about Karl Marx. (Words in parentheses have been added).

--Harry Smith Leiper

How then is the world going to be reached for Christ with the gospel in our generation? The answer--only by men and women who love God with all their hearts and who love their neighbors as themselves. It is only the devotion and dedication that spring from an undying love that will ever accomplish the task.

Those who are constrained by the love of Christ will count no sacrifice too great to make for Him. They will do because of love to Him what they would never do for worldly gain. They will not count their lives dear unto themselves. They will spend and be spent if only men might not perish for want of the gospel.

Lord Crucified, give me a heart like Thine!

Teach me to love the dying souls of men--

And keep my heart in closest touch with Thee;

And give me love--pure Calvary's Love

To bring the lost to Thee.

--James A. Stewart

Unless love is the motive, the cause is hopeless. It profits nothing. The ministry then becomes nothing more than sounding brass or clanging cymbals. But when love is the guiding star, when men go forth aflame with devotion to Christ, no power on earth can stop the onward sweep of the gospel.

Picture then a band of disciples, utterly sold out to Jesus Christ, driven by the love of Christ, traversing land and sea as heralds of a glorious message, tirelessly pressing on to new areas, finding in every life

they meet a soul for whom Christ died, and coveting each one as a worshipper of the Savior throughout eternity. What method do these otherworldly men adopt in making Christ known?

The New Testament seems to present two principal methods of reaching the world with the gospel. The first is by public proclamation; the second is by private discipling.

As for the first, it was used commonly by the Lord Jesus and by His disciples. Wherever people were gathered together, there was an opportunity for preaching the good news. Thus we find gospel meetings in the market places, in prisons, in the synagogues, on the beaches, and by the banks of rivers. The urgency and superlative character of the message made it unthinkable to limit it to conventional meeting places.

The second method of propagating the Christian faith is by private discipling of individuals. This is the method which the Lord Jesus used in the training of the twelve. He called this little band of men that they might be with Him and that He might send them forth. Day after day, He instructed them in the truth of God. He set before them the task to which they were appointed. He forewarned them in detail of the dangers and difficulties they would encounter. He took them into the private counsels of God and made them partners with Him in the glorious, yet arduous, divine plan. Then he sent them forth as sheep in the midst of wolves. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, they launched forth to tell the world of a risen, ascended, glorified Savior. The effectiveness of this method is seen in the fact that the band of disciples, reduced to eleven by the defection of the traitor, turned the world upside down for the Lord Jesus Christ.

The apostle Paul not only practiced this method himself but urged it on Timothy as well. "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Timothy 2:2). The first step is the careful and prayerful selection of faithful men. The second is the imparting to them of the glorious vision. The third is the sending forth of these men to make disciples of others (Matthew 28:19, ASV).

To those who lust for numbers and crave huge crowds, this method will seem dull and tedious. But God knows what He is doing, and His methods are the best methods. More can be accomplished for God by a few dedicated disciples than by a great army of self-satisfied religionists.

As these disciples go forth in the Name of Christ, they follow certain basic principles which are outlined in God's Word. First of all, they are as wise as serpents, yet as harmless as doves. They draw on the resources of the Godhead for wisdom in the difficult path they have to tread. At the same time, they are meek and lowly in their contacts with their fellow men. None need fear physical violence from them; men need only to fear their prayers and their unquenchable witness.

These disciples keep themselves free from the politics of this world. They do not consider themselves as called to battle against any form of government or political ideology. They can operate under any form of government and be loyal to that government up to the point where they are required to compromise their testimony or deny their Lord. Then they refuse to obey and submit to the consequences. But they never conspire against a human government or engage in revolutionary tactics. Did not the Lord say, "If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight?" These men are ambassadors of a heavenly country and thus pass through this world as pilgrims and strangers.

They are absolutely honest in all their dealings. They avoid subterfuge of all kinds. Their "yes" means yes, and their "no" means no. They refuse to adopt the popular lie that the end justifies the means. Under no

circumstances will they do evil that good may come. Each one is an embodied conscience who would rather die than sin.

Another principle invariably followed by these men is that they anchor their work to the local church. They go out into the harvest field of the world to win converts to the Lord Jesus, but then they lead these converts into the fellowship of a local church where they can be strengthened and built up in their most holy faith. True disciples realize that the local church is God's unit on earth for propagating the faith and that the best and most enduring work is built along these lines.

Disciples are wise to avoid entangling alliances of every kind. They steadfastly refuse to allow their movements to be dictated by any human organization. They receive their marching orders directly from headquarters in heaven. This does not mean that they operate without the confidence and commendation of Christians in their local church. On the contrary, they look upon such commendation as a confirmation of God's call to service. But they insist on the necessity of serving Christ in obedience to His Word and to His guidance for them.

Finally, these disciples avoid publicity. They try to keep themselves in the background. Their purpose is to glorify Christ and to make Him known. They are not seeking great things for themselves. Neither do they want to reveal their strategy to the enemy. So they work on quietly and unostentatiously, oblivious of man's praise or blame. They know that "heaven will be the best and safest place to learn the results of their labor."

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