

Ambassador in Bonds

by Jamie Gordon

As ambassadors in bonds, we are called to be servants of God, submitted to His authority, and yielded to His power, bringing peace and reconciliation to others through the message of the Gospel.

Duration: 1:03:13

Scripture: Ephesians 6:19

Topics: "Ambassadors For Christ", "Spiritual Authority"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of being an ambassador for Jesus Christ. He highlights that ambassadors have a specific mission and message to deliver, and they are under God's authority. The speaker emphasizes that God takes care of his ambassadors and equips them with power and authority. He also emphasizes that the wisdom and eloquence of speech are not important, but rather the demonstration of the Spirit and power of God. The speaker encourages believers to live with all their might, to make the most of their time, and to spread the gospel with a fervent love for Jesus.

Transcript

For the word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. This message has been brought to you by Manichristian Fellowship, Ellensburg, Washington, area code 509-925-1167. Good morning.

Well, we're going to start a little series here. I hope to encourage you and challenge you this morning and in the coming months. The title of the message, Ambassadors for Christ, Ambassadors in Bonds.

And we're going to be focusing on what is the call of an ambassador. Paul was the one who said this, not only about himself, but he said this about those that are in Christ. He said it about those that are Christians.

And so, as a professing Christian, as a believer, as somebody who's been filled with the Spirit of God, we have been called as ambassadors in bonds. I'll be the focus of the message this morning. So let's pray and just thank God.

Father, we thank you, Lord, for what you've done this morning. We thank you for the ground in which you prepared our hearts, Father, for the Word. We thank you for the Word given this morning.

And we know that you are the one true God, the one that we can put all our faith and our trust and yield to, Father. So this morning, we pray that we would yield to you and to your Spirit. Father, we pray that you would help our feeble minds, our feeble words, Father.

You would fill us, Lord, and you would be our sufficiency this morning, Lord. And I can claim, as Paul did, my sufficiency is only in you, Jesus. And I pray that you would fill me, fill my heart with your words, Father.

Bless each one here. Bless your body, Father. Help us, Lord, to be a powerful force, Lord, in spreading the Gospel, in opposing the enemy here in this little valley.

We pray in Jesus' name. 2 Corinthians 5, verses 19 and 20. 2 Corinthians 5, verses 19 and 20.

To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespass unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us. We pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

And then in Ephesians 6, we see the same word. It's used three times in the New Testament, and that's it. Ephesians 6, at the end of the book of Ephesians, verses 19 and 20.

Ephesians 6, verses 19 and 20. And for me, that utterance may be given. Let's go to verse 18.

Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints. And for me, pray for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel for which I am an ambassador in bonds, that therein I may speak boldly as I ought to speak. So Paul said, I have a need for you to pray for me.

This is a prayer request. And I'm asking you to pray that I would be given words from God and the Spirit of God to proclaim the mysteries of the gospel. He says, for which I am an ambassador in bonds.

Presbuo is the Greek word. Presbuo. It simply means ambassador.

To be older is one of the inflections of the word. To be, in a sense, as we're ambassadors, we are the ones that are bringing about authority. We're bringing about the truths of God's Word to people who don't know these things, to people who are immature.

We are, in a sense, elder in that sense, but not better. What did an ambassador do? What is an ambassador? American ambassador? Ambassador to a country? Maybe even an ambassador back in the Old Testament times. What did an ambassador do? Well, number one, very first job is he communicated on behalf of an authority, a governing authority, or a ruler.

He was their communicator. He was the one who was bringing the message. Whether it was a message of saying, hey, here's the terms by which we will establish peace.

So when an ambassador comes, he comes with authority. And he says, look, you know, you guys need to submit to us. You need to give up trying to fight against us.

Here's the terms by which we'll make peace with you. Or else there's going to be some severe consequences. You see? So an ambassador often would come, or also an ambassador might come from a weaker ruling, government, king, whatever it is.

And he might beseech this more powerful government and say, we would like to make peace with you on these terms. So he might come from a couple of different perspectives, but he's representing and he's communicating on behalf of a ruler. So the ruler, the king, the government, the president, he doesn't show up himself all the time, unless he sees that there's a need to do that, but he'll send an ambassador out.

So what does it mean to be an ambassador? Well, that is one of the functions of an ambassador. Bringing a message, bringing a message of peace often was the occupation, the job. So what does it mean to be an ambassador in bonds? That's what I like to focus on this morning.

We are ambassadors in Christ. We should be ambassadors, the Bible says, for Christ, for him, for his sake. So what does it mean to us to be an ambassador in bonds? I believe for me, as I look at this, this is the first qualification.

You and I have to be, in a sense, looking and acknowledging and living out in our own selves the reality of being an ambassador in bonds. What does it mean? Well, the basis of the word needs to be a servant. That's the basis.

Just take that general information and you know what a servant is, you know what a servant should do. But I want to break it down. I want to look at it a little bit more clearly so that we can see that our commission, our calling, and we as ambassadors, we have a function, a purpose, and a way that we go about doing what we do.

Why are we on fire for the Lord? Why do we love Jesus? Why do we serve Him with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength? Why do we want to spread the Gospel? Why do we want to tell all these other people about Jesus and pray that they get saved? I think often many people wonder, why are we doing all these things? Well, let's look at the characteristics of an ambassador in bonds. I'm talking about not an ambassador now to a government, but ambassador to Jesus Christ. He should be a man, a woman, or a young person that is saved, number one, and the characteristics of being yielded to God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength.

Adonai of Judson, who was a missionary, he said this, I am not tired of my work, neither am I tired of the world, yet, when Christ calls me home, I shall go with the gladness of a boy bounding away from school. So, he's staying here. I am making all these efforts.

I am working. he exhausted his life out for the Lord Jesus Christ. He was content where he was at.

And yet, when God called him, and he had finished the race, he said, I'll bound to the kingdom. Like a little boy looking forward. And there's riches that was in his life that made him feel this way.

Jonathan Edwards, he said this, he made some resolves in his life. And we're going to look at that because a servant has had to make some resolves. Some servants are servants voluntarily.

Some servants have been forced. You are not forced to be a Christian. You have not been forced to be a Christian.

There's no power of God that He came and held you down and said, you'll be one of My servants. You'll be one of My servants to serve Me for the rest of your life. There wasn't a forcing on this.

Some people might disagree with that, but God did not force Christianity on you. You became a child of God. You were born again of the Spirit of God through faith.

You believed. You yielded yourself. You turned back and terminated all those things that were hindering your love.

The sin in your life, you turned your back on it. Jonathan Edwards said this. These were his resolves.

I resolve to live with all my might while I do live. With all my might while I do live. I resolve never to lose one moment of time to improve it in the most profitable way I can.

Let me read that again. I resolve never to lose one moment of time to improve it in the most profitable way I can. to improve His time in the most profitable way I can.

Sometimes we don't understand what it takes to make a profit. Maybe we're thinking, let's just think for example, in a business situation. Sometimes we go into a business situation and we don't know how to make it more profitable.

Well, sometimes God gives us wisdom as we seek Him and say, God, this thing is somewhat out of control. I see the evidences of we're losing money here. We're not doing very well.

And so He seeks wisdom, tries to figure this thing out. Well, God can help us if we're willing to go to Him and say, God, make every moment of my life profitable. What's the best way to run a business? Seek first the Kingdom of God and all these things shall be added unto you.

That's the best way to run it. Absolutely. So here are some exciting resolves this man made in his life.

And if you know anything about Jonathan Edwards, he left some tremendous fruit behind him. Tremendous fruit in his life. Maybe we wouldn't agree or eat the whole thing.

Maybe we'd have to throw out a few bones. But hey, there's a lot of good meat there in his life. There's a lot of good fruit in his life that we could respect and reverence.

Resolve never to do anything which I should despise or think meanly of in another. Resolve never to do anything out of revenge, jealousy. Resolve never to do anything which I should be afraid to do if it were the last hour of my life.

So here's resolves. He just got a burden and he made these commitments to God. He said this is the way I'm going to live my life.

As if this were the last day. So, an ambassador in bonds. Don't you think that Paul made some major resolves in his life? Don't you think that when he got the vision of God and God spoke to him directly and God ministered to him, he made some severe decisions in his life? One, never to turn back to the old ways.

Never to go back to the old law, to the old way of thinking, to the old reliance and trust on myself. He resolved to be crucified with Christ. He says it over and over again in his epistles.

I am crucified with Christ. He's my hope. So, the very first basis for evangelism starts in our own life.

The resolves, the determination in our own life and our walk with God. You see, like the brother said this morning, what is the difference? Well, one of the major differences, David Bernier, when he went amongst the Indian people, he was just a young man. He died as a young man.

He made some major resolves in his life. He went in there and he said, you know what? He began to pray and he did not know their language. He had no concept of what their language was.

And so he said, God, you're going to have to fill me so much with the Holy Spirit that they will see in me the Holy Spirit. They will see God in me because I can't speak their language. And then after that, he prayed and he fasted and he gave himself to being filled so much with the Holy Spirit that one of his messages that he gave, one of his very first messages he gave to these people through an interpreter, this interpreter was totally intoxicated, totally drunk.

And yet God used him to convert many, many during that message. And yet he was having to speak through this drunken Indian. God does miraculous things when we're filled with the Spirit of God.

God does incredible things and He can overcome any obstacle except for a lack of faith. So, an ambassador in bonds. Submission.

What does it mean? Submission. Number one. Submission is a primary characteristic of a servant.

We know that. We know that that's one of the things as somebody is going to serve or be a servant or be a slave. And that's what Paul said.

I'm not just a servant who can come and go as I please. I'm not just a servant who is expecting to be paid. There's five or six different Greek words for service or servant.

And he put himself on the lowest one. I'm a bond slave. I'm a slave.

I'm bound to do this. I don't have a choice is what he said. So, when we see the level of service and see the level of being a servant, there's some servants that come and you pay them and they vacuum the rug or clean the toilet.

And then some that are forced into service or maybe born into that service, but yet they still volunteer. Some volunteer for the military. The service of the military.

And they have to do extreme things, but they still get paid and they're still somewhat free, but they're really not. But there's different levels. Well, this level that Paul's talking about is down at the bottom.

Submission. Submission. I'm an ambassador in bonds.

An ambassador in bonds. I'm a messenger. I'm a constrained messenger.

I'm a slave to God. I'm a love slave. I'm a bond.

I'm in bondage to Jesus. You know, there's some people that are living in bondage to works. There's some people that are living in bondage to fear.

There's some people that are living in bondage to money. There's some people that are living in bondage to lusts and pleasures of this life. And they're bound up by those things.

Totally. They're controlling their lives. And there's some people that are bound by the Spirit, by Jesus Christ Himself, by the King of kings and the Lord of lords, the One who rules all things.

There are some that are bound by Him. That's what Paul said. I'm bound.

I'm submissive. What's the first sign of somebody who's submissive? They're humble. They're humble.

They don't see themselves as anything. They see God as everything. They see God as the One who is bringing the message.

God is the One who is sufficient. God is the One that gets the glory. God is the One who we want everybody to know His name.

You see, humble. Number two, aspect of submission. Being an ambassador in bonds.

You've got to be humble. It was to Micah, I believe. It was said this.

I can find my note. He hath showed thee, O man, what is good, and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God. What does God require of thee? To do justly, to walk righteously, honestly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.

What does it mean? Waiting on God. Waiting for His power. Waiting for His authority to come into our lives.

Waiting and trusting on Him during circumstances that seem to be out of control. Waiting, trusting. Number two, reverent.

What does submission mean? Reverent compliance. It doesn't just mean Christian submission. Worldly submission means I'm complying, I'm following Your rules because I have to do it.

I can be in the military. I can be working for a company and I can say I'm submissive because I comply. I do what I have to do.

But Christian submission is completely different. It is reverent submission that not only obeys, but supports, lifts up. Yes, let's do this.

Yes, let's go this direction. Yes, that's what I want to do. We had a little bit of a lesson this week of submission in our home.

My wife, she went into labor two weeks early. And so, I had to just trust God and say, God, okay, if this is Your time, I'll submit to that. But then you know what my wife had to do? When she was in the pain and she was feeling anxious, she had to submit to my commands.

And as she did that with support and saying I want to do it, I'm excited to do it, God blessed that. God blesses that. When I submit to my Father as a young child, and I obey Him with all my heart, and I say, yes, I want to do this, yes, I'll obey with all my heart, I want it.

I want it. You know what? God honors that kind of obedience. He blesses that.

There's reverent compliance. There's real, true Christian submission. And you know what? God does some amazing things.

I need some more water, please. Thank you. So, reverent compliance.

Supporting. Saying, okay, this is the way we'll go. Yes, Father.

Yes, Husband. Yes, Lord. See, that's number one.

He's number one. Yes, Lord, we'll go. If the Word says it, we won't let anybody distract us from it.

I am an ambassador in bonds. I'm constrained. I have to preach the Gospel.

I have to. You know what? The greatest fear that should be in our life is not worrying about this or worrying about that or worrying about being sick or worrying about not having money or worrying about what somebody will think about us. The greatest fear we should have is fearing how many people will partake of the second death.

How many people will go to hell in our community? That should be one of the greatest fears in our life. We should have a compassion, a longing for the souls of men. Reverently complying and supporting the heart of God.

And saying, yes, Lord, let's go. Let's do it. Let's lead back.

I believe in entire sanctification. I believe a man can be completely sanctified and set free from his sin through the power of the blood of Jesus Christ. And he can be made effective in the Kingdom of God in a powerful way.

This is a little project I'm working on. I thought, well, I'll just show you this. But I'm making up these pictures and I'm putting a little bit of a sign there.

Who is that? D.L. Moody. And so I just said, okay, I'm going to make some pictures of these preachers. I look at their face.

I look at their determination. I read their life story. I'm going to put it up in my boys' room and help them to see these are men that walked with God.

They're not God. They're just men. That's what I want to show you.

They're just men. They're kind of ugly, but he had determination. He had a fire for God.

He saw what God was doing and he said, let's go. I want to be a part of that. I want to do it.

You know what? You wonder why sometimes God narrows down the numbers. It's because He wants to get all the glory. He wants the victory.

Why sometimes does it seem like our resources are narrowed down and narrowed down and narrowed down? Well, He wants to do a mighty work. Not a possible work. Not a humanly possible work.

He wants to do a mighty work through His people, through a few people praying, a few people seeking revival, a few people burdened for lost souls. An ambassador in Boston. Don't you think Paul was like a little army? Every time he went into a community, he literally would bomb these people.

Don't you think the church in Acts literally, when they got saved and they were filled with the Spirit, they blitzed their whole community? They completely affected the whole community around them. Just a few. Just a handful is all it takes.

God's proven that in His Word. Submission. Reverent compliance.

And surrender. Surrender. A servant, somebody who's submissive, an ambassador in bonds, is literally surrendered, yielded to God's authority in his life.

What does God say to us? He says so many things to us. And this yielded servant, this surrendered servant, is preparing. His feet are shod with the preparation of the Gospel.

He's putting on the helmet of salvation. He's taking up the sword of the Spirit and the shield of faith and the breastplate of righteousness. He's putting it on every day.

Isn't it exciting to see the incense burning? Burning in our prayers when God comes down and assists us and helps us to pray. So, a submissive, he's surrendered. Surrendered.

My rights don't come back. He says I'm crucified. My flesh is crucified.

I identify. I want to identify with the fellowship of His sufferings. The redemptive work of the cross.

I'm identifying with the cross of Jesus Christ. Not all the glories in the world. Not all these other things.

I'm identifying with the cross of Jesus Christ. The blood shed. Submission.

Surrender. It's a life of surrender. It's not a groaning and a moaning.

It's a surrender to victory. A surrender to the power of God. What does submission mean? Submission often requires waiting.

Abiding. I'm going to do a picture of Andrew Murray and put abiding under his picture of his face. He was a man who abided with God.

I'm going to put it up in my office so that every time I look at it, I remember that a servant of God should be abiding. He should be determined. He should be diligent.

See, we need to have the inspiration of the Word of God. Waiting on God. Sometimes I say, God, I'm seeking, I'm seeking, I'm seeking, but I'm not getting it.

I'm not getting it. Help me to get it. The words, they're just going by.

I need to get it. And sometimes God comes and I get it. You see, we need to be getting it.

We need to be understanding. Sometimes a student can go through a whole course and a teacher can acknowledge he never really got it. He never really got this.

Don't let that be our testimony. We have to walk with God. We have to be devoted to God.

We have to be submissive and surrender to God to get it. Don't let us go through years after years after years and say, I never got it. Don't wake up one day and say, I never got it.

There's no reason. Wisdom is at our feet. It's at our hands.

It's in our minds. Not on our own strength, but it is available through Jesus Christ. Wisdom.

Understand, if any man lacks wisdom, let him come to Me. Come on. Just ask.

Seek. You'll find. And then a submissive person allows this authority of God to begin to regulate his life.

See, many men, their vision, their lives were totally changed. Hudson Taylor, he had a vision to be in China. God kept bringing him back.

His body was weak. God kept bringing him back to America. I don't want to be here.

I want to be there. No, you come back. But as we submit to that authority, God then uses us.

Sometimes we go and things are going on in our daily walk, our daily life that we didn't want to happen. They weren't in the schedule. They weren't on the PDA.

They weren't in our notebook or our game timer that morning. But things get out of control. Why? Is it a coincidence? No.

It's not a coincidence. Always look and open your eyes and say, okay, Lord, what do You want me to do? I'm willing to do anything. I'm willing to be changed and flexible to Your schedule.

Okay. Surrender. Surrender your time.

Surrender those things. Surrender your schedule. I'm very schedule oriented.

And so, it's hard for me to say, alright, you know, one of the very first things when my wife went into labor was to say, I'm not going to have my quiet times at 4 o'clock this morning because my wife's having a baby. I'm not going to even get any sleep tonight. But we have to be willing to be a little flexible.

Especially in that situation. But let God kind of arrange the schedule how He wants to. Because often I've found that as I'm seeking what it is that God wants me to do, boom, He puts somebody right there.

Right there. To hear a word. To hear the Gospel.

You know, it was so funny this week, or maybe it was last week, I got a call. This lady called. A 93-year-old lady.

She called for the Billy Graham Crusade. She got the wrong 1-800 number. She called my 1-800 number.

I got a chance to witness. This lady had no assurance of salvation, and yet she had claimed to be saved two different times in life and all the stuff she did. And her father was a Baptist preacher and all this stuff.

And I said, woman, you need to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. You need to repent of your sins. And I got a chance to witness this 93-year-old lady.

She walked away. I said, wow! Are you sure this is the Billy Graham Crusade? No. This is a man of Christian fellowship.

It was funny. So anyway, I told her she got the wrong number. But maybe she got the right number.

So, let God just kind of regulate. Be willing to submit to His authority. Let Him control the traffic.

Let Him control the things that happen in your life. Surrender. That's what surrender is all about.

That's what being an ambassador involves. I'm here under God's authority. He's the King of Kings.

I'm His ambassador. I've been commissioned as an ambassador for Christ. And so, God's one purpose in my life is that I fulfill that commission that He's given to me.

Not that I have great properties and things of this world. Not that I'm successful and have a good reputation and all those things. But He's got a purpose, a plan, and a message for me to give to somebody.

And so, I have to be submissive. I'm an ambassador in bonds. Lord, okay, if He says now, I want you to go and I want you to try to make peace with these people.

Bring the ministry of reconciliation with these people. Wow! They're way different than I am. I can't identify with them.

I can't even speak their language maybe. God says, well, He says go anyway. Go anyway.

Why? Well, because you and I are just a vessel. Point two. We're just a vessel.

Literally, you're a can. You're a vessel. You're a clay pot.

Empty without Christ. Totally dead in trespasses and sins until Christ comes in and by faith saves us and fills us up. What does He say? Fills us with the Spirit of God.

Then, I'm still a vessel. A vessel unto honor. It says in Romans, saved by grace.

I'm a vessel filled. There are things that hinder that, but as I believe and as I exercise faith and as I turn from my wicked ways, I am a filled vessel, filled with a power, the authority of God to do what? To fulfill that which has been given to me. And you are also a vessel of God to fulfill that which has been given to you.

Susanna Wesley, she had that vision. She stayed. She submitted.

She was content. She didn't have good circumstances. She didn't have lots of money.

She didn't have all the reputation of this world and all the wonders of this world. But she had a simple faith in Jesus Christ and she just kept following that. And eventually, she got completely and entirely saved.

And her life was a sign of true submission to the Father. We're just vessels, brothers and sisters. We're just vessels.

That's really what it means to be humble. We say, I'm just a vessel. Lord, You're going to have to fill me up so that I can give it out.

Paul said, I'm weak. I don't come with very good speech. I don't have what it takes to bring the message.

Pray for me. Pray and help me. But he did it.

I came with much fear and much trembling, he said. So, we all have fear and trembling sometimes. Well, Christ came to overcome all that by faith.

When I exercise faith and say, I will proclaim the Gospel, God comes on the scene. But not until we make that determination. Not until we say, I am an ambassador of bonds.

I'm constrained. I can't do anything else. It's interesting that the Webster's Dictionary says this, a person into whom some quality as grace is infused.

A vessel. That's what it says. The dictionary definition of a vessel.

A person into whom some quality as grace is infused. Something should have been infused in us. Something should have been taken place at that day of salvation.

There should be a growing in grace. No, there shouldn't be necessarily a change in your talents and your abilities and your bank account. There should be a growing in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

There should be a more Christ-like spirit. A more abiding. There should be more waiting on God.

Not that you get it all at one time. Because you don't. I don't get it all at one time.

And I've never seen any man that gets it all at one time. But I've seen men that are getting it. You see what I'm saying? They're getting it.

They're on the road. And they're constantly surrendering their lives. A vessel.

A vessel, the very first characteristic that I thought is here's a vessel. It can't do nothing for itself. But, it's going to get filled up by somebody else.

Well, a vessel of honor gets filled up by the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, the One who's all-wise and all-knowing. And He fills us. But my God, what does He say in Philippians? My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

So, we're just a vessel. Paul was just a vessel. He literally identified himself.

This was the kind of vessel he was. He says, and I, brethren... I just said a little bit of it in 1 Corinthians 2, 1-5. I, brethren, when I came to you, I came not with excellency of speech.

So here's part of the outside shell. No excellency of speech. This is a bad tape recorder.

This is a speaker that doesn't work very good. But I came not to you with excellency of speech or of wisdom. You see, the wisdom that we have doesn't come from us.

So, I didn't come to you with excellency of speech or wisdom declaring unto you the testimony of God, for I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. So here's my vessel.

Weakness, fear, much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit in power. That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

So, all the intellectual eloquence, chuck it out. We want to see the demonstration of the Spirit of God and that's what the world needs to see an ambassador in bonds. I'm bound.

I'm constrained, sir. I have to tell you that if you do not repent, if you're not saved, if you're not washed in the blood and you don't have faith in Jesus Christ, you will not be saved. But, if you believe on Jesus Christ, you repent from your sins, you turn from your wicked ways and abandon your life to Jesus, you will be saved.

You can have assurance of that salvation. So, submission, a vessel. An ambassador of bonds is a vessel, literally a vessel, under control of the Holy Spirit, under control of the Word of God, under control of Jesus.

Number three, this ambassador in bonds has no sufficiency of himself. Herself, himself, whoever's self it is. But that Christian, that believer that is an ambassador, can never say, I'm sufficient to do this, I'm sufficient to do that.

Some people say, I've been called to do that and therefore they believe that they're sufficient to do that. Just because they have the calling, they say, well, I must be sufficient. And so they go out and they try to work the thing out on their own works.

And it doesn't work. And they try to get men saved and they try to preach the Word and they try to do all these things on their own effort and in their own strength and under their own authority. It doesn't work that way.

So, Paul said this, "...and such trust have we through Christ to God, not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves." We're not sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves. But, our sufficiency is of God. Our sufficiency is of God.

What does that word mean? To be sufficient that God is our sufficiency? That we are not sufficient of ourselves. That means this, ability. Ability to be sufficient of ourselves.

Our ability. Some of you, you can memorize Scripture way better than I can. Some of you know all the details of Scripture way better than I do.

God can't use that until that ability has been completely surrendered to Him to use. But then, you know what, brethren? If you'll surrender that to God, He will use it and He will take you way further than I will ever go. You see what I'm saying? If you'll surrender that sufficiency, that ability to God.

Some of you are way smarter. Most of you have more brain capacity than I do. You're way up there in the gigahertz compared to what I am.

I'm back in the old days. And I've learned some bad things that messed up my mind. God is my sufficiency.

I had no discipline as a child. No, you don't have to have discipline. Nobody disciplined.

And so, we go our own way when there's no discipline. But some of you young people have been raised up in a godly home. In a home where there's a vision for God.

In a home where there's godly disciplines. But you can't say that's my ability. You've got to surrender that ability and then God will use that in a powerful way.

What does it mean? Our sufficiency to meet your needs is not of us. That's what Paul said. My sufficiency to meet your needs, to preach the Gospel, to come with the power and demonstration of the Spirit, to heal, to do whatever, he said my sufficiency is not, my ability is not of me.

It's of God. That's what it means. Ability to meet needs.

My adequacy. Sometimes I say, I am not adequate for the job. I long for plurality of eldership.

I long for plurality of leadership in this church. Why? Because I'm not adequate for the job. But, my adequacy, your adequacy is in God.

You see, you're going to face the same thing when you go out there and you say, and you determine in your mind, I will witness. I prayed this week, Lord, give me somebody to witness to every day of the week. Every day of the week.

Give me somebody to spread the Gospel to. I don't care how. Just do it.

So one of the nights was this lady calling me. Well, God does some amazing things. But, never can I say, well, because I've been studying and because I'm this and because I'm that, I'm adequate.

Never can I say that. You'll never say that. I'm telling you no matter how smart and how talented and how knowledgeable of the Word of God you'll get, you'll never say, I'm adequate for this job.

And as soon as you do, you'll stumble and fall because your adequacy is not of you. It's of God. So I say, God, I'm not adequate to meet the needs of this person.

This person I know evident that they are going to hell. They've rejected You. I'm not adequate to meet that need.

Only You are. But God has said, You're my vessel. You're my ambassador.

I want You to go. Some people don't believe that. Some theology says, no, God will take care of it all and you don't have to do anything.

That's a lie. That's wrong. We're ambassadors in bonds.

We're ambassadors for Christ. He said, you have some people, you have some children, you have some that you need to go to. I'm sending you.

With the ministry of reconciliation, with the glad tidings of the Gospel, I'm sending you. But my ability, my adequacy, or the sufficiency for the need is not of me. But our sufficiency is of God.

So I'm recognizing. I'm an ambassador of bonds and I'm recognizing the sufficiency is in here. The capability to be sufficient means to be capable.

To be sufficient means to be adequate. Well, does God say, I never want you to be adequate. I never want you to be capable.

I never want you to be sufficient. No, He's not saying that. He's saying you're not going to be, but He's saying you are going to be in Me, capable.

Sometimes, this is one of the areas where Satan tries to attack me the most often. Say, you guys are not able. You're not capable.

You don't have the ability to go and witness and affect this community. You don't have the capability in your prayer life. You don't have the ability in your faith to overcome and to witness effectively to these people that I've given to you.

And Satan will come and he'll try to say that. Well, I just have to say, no, exercise faith. Put away those evil thoughts.

Get behind me, Satan, because our sufficiency is of God. Our capability is of God. Is God capable to do it? Has He proven it in history over and over again? Yes and yes.

He's capable. He's sufficient. And lastly, this word sufficient means to attain to the responsibility.

To attain to the responsibility. Some will say, they'll put off responsibility and say, well, I'm not responsible for that. Am I my brother's keeper? I'm not responsible for that.

You know, I'm not responsible for that person. That can be a big mistake when God does give us some authority. Oh, well, you know what? My ministry is just in the church.

No, it's not. It's not. To attain to the responsibility.

Our sufficiency is of God. So it's there. It's of God.

We're an ambassador in bonds. We should be constrained. We should be not able to do anything, but to preach.

To share the love of Jesus. To share. Now what does it mean to be an ambassador in bonds? It means to be completely constrained.

Surrendered in my character. Surrendered in my attitude. Surrendered in my words.

Surrendered in my thoughts. You know, the Bible says, don't think on anything that doesn't have a good report, that's not pure, that's not lovely. You know, God convicted me and said, you know what? You can't find nothing in the newspaper or in the news that fits this Scripture, my friend.

You can't find it. I said, you're right. Boom.

Changed my life. Changed my life. If you will dwell on those things that are pure and lovely of good report, and you'll put away all the little controversies and criticisms and all the negatives.

Even in religion it happens. Even in Christianity it happens. People get so focused on what other people are not doing or what they don't believe or what they don't think.

If you'll think on those things that are pure and lovely, undefiled, it'll change your life. Absolutely change your life. It'll change your love relationship for the Lord Jesus Christ.

It'll change your devotion to Him. You'll be getting through more often in your prayer life. I guarantee it.

I promise you. And I'm not supposed to make any promises. But in Jesus' name, I believe that if you'll abide in the Scriptures and let them abide in you, God, you will ask anything and God will give it to you.

You can ask anything, but they have to abide. Often we think on things that are unlovely, unpure, and ambassador in bonds. He's got one mission.

He's got one vision. He's not told to go and, you know, hey, when you get there, have some fun. Go, you know, drink with them and go carouse with them.

No, He says, you have a mission. You have a message. Give that mission.

Give that message. And then get back here because I have another place for you to go. You're under My authority.

You'll do what I say. And God has our greatest interests. God, He is thinking His ambassadors, He's taking care of them.

He's not jeopardizing their lives. But He's sending them with power. He's sending them with authority.

He's sending them with the glad tidings. He's sending them with the ministry of reconciliation. He's sending them with the authority and His power of His words.

Sufficiency. Ability to meet needs. Our ability to meet needs.

We think, oh, somebody called me for counseling. I must be sufficient for this job because God led this person into my life and now I'm going to counsel him. Well, God taught me that a long time ago.

There's no way to approach that situation, friend. No way. And often I'll have to say, I don't know.

I'll have to say, I need to pray about this situation because my sufficiency is not of myself, but of God. My sufficiency to meet the needs, to answer the questions, to preach the Gospel, not of me. It's of God.

My adequacy to do it. My capability. And even the heart to attain to the responsibility, stepping up to the responsibility, fulfilling that commission, is not in me.

It's in God. Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves. But you know what? That didn't change his determination.

Paul's determination. He went and he was as an army in those cities. He was just shattering the theology.

He was shattering the gods and the idols and every way that man was thinking. He was putting their reasoning to naught, to nothing. He was putting their reasoning to nothing.

Because he had faith in God. He was exercising that faith daily. Letting it grow.

As a brother said this morning, determination. We just have a few minutes left. Determination.

An ambassador in bonds is somebody that's determined to fulfill the mission. He will bring the message. There's a determination to do that.

You know what determination means? It means when you get determined to follow Jesus, what will you do? You will terminate everything that is hindering you from doing that. Determination literally means to

terminate. And so, those things that hinder my life from taking up my cross and following Jesus, I terminate them.

No, that doesn't mean to terminate people that are in my way or anything. You know, you start thinking worldly and carnal and you can just take that thing right out of context. No, it means to terminate anything in my life that is causing me to fear, to tremble, and to retreat.

What is that? It's a lack of faith. It's unconfessed sin. It's a lack of terminating those things.

Saying, you know, I can control them. You know what? We can't. Our sufficiency is not in ourselves to control those things.

Some men will say, well, I can control, I can read these things, I can control, I can watch the TV or whatever and I can control this. No way. No way.

You can't do it. Our sufficiency is only of God. So the minute we start thinking that and we're not willing to determinate those things, then we've lost the vision.

We've lost the vision to be ambassadors. We've lost the vision. That's why we've come out from the world and the different churches and the carnality and the worldliness and said, as for me and my family, we'll serve the Lord.

We're coming across this place, this river, and you can all stay behind, but we'll serve the Lord. And that's what you've said. That's the commitment you made.

Maybe you forgot it, but that's the commitment you made to God. We will serve the Lord and that's why we're going the way we're going. Determination.

Pilgrim was determined to leave his family and to leave behind all the temptations and all the reasoning and all the thoughts, and he said, I'm going to go on this road. I'm going to follow it no matter what and I'll follow this path that God leads me on. Because there's something there at the end of it.

There's something that I want to attain to. What are those things that keep us from determination? The things that we haven't terminated. Right? The things that we haven't terminated.

It's those things that keep us from... Sometimes, I've come to a point in my life and I say, why, God, am I not getting past this point? Well, you haven't yet terminated the thing that's hindering you from going beyond this point. I believe in entire sanctification and yet, I believe that God is sanctifying us this very day and bringing us to a greater understanding of that sanctification. We're working on our salvation with fear and trembling.

But sometimes, there's something and it doesn't have to necessarily be blatant sin. Hopefully, those things are all left behind. It can just be a lack of terminating.

Terminating what? My attitude. Sometimes I have attitudes that are hindering me from going beyond. You've got to terminate them.

This Uncle John Vassar, he was a soul winner way back when. And I'll just tell you a little story about him. He's a man that had a heart for revival.

He prayed. He was just kind of a little bit of a nobody. He was under some great ministers, great preachers of the Word of God, and they said of him, he was a man of prayer.

He prayed and prayed and prayed. He was determined. And here, he was out soul winning and handing out tracts, going from house to house in the city.

And there were some women that had talked about him and said, Uncle John Vassar, he'd come to my house and give me these tracts and give me this message and all this stuff. And so he just kept going. This one lady determined she had heard about him.

She said, if he comes to my house, I'm going to slam the door in his face. So, Uncle John Vassar made it to her house, handed out a tract, and as soon as she opened the door, she saw who it was and she slammed the door in his face. And he sang the song, But Drops of Grief.

He fell onto the ground and just was thanking the Lord. He said, But Drops of Grief can ne'er repay the debt of love I owe. Here, Lord, I give myself away.

Tis all that I can do. And at that song that he sang in front of that step, that woman opened that door back up. God broke her heart and he led her to the Lord.

Changed. He was a determined man. Those preachers would say of him, he was determined in the place of prayer.

He was determined to win souls. He was determined. He was determined to win souls.

He was determined to win souls. He was determined. D.L. Moody, the same way.

Determined. Never to let a day go by without witnessing, without sharing the Gospel with one person. But it takes termination, is what determination takes.

It takes termination. You and I know there are some things, I know today there are some things God said you've got to terminate those things. Well, my capability to do that is only of God.

And so I need to be seeking God's face to terminate those things that keep me from being an ambassador in bonds. To do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God. An ambassador in bonds.

It's not just this picture of a slave. It's a picture of a life. It's walking with God.

Every time it comes to cross the obstacle, terminates the obstacle. Every time it's been given the commission, this soul goes ahead and gets on track and says, I'll go. I'll go.

You know, God's looking for men that will just say to Him simply, I'll go. I'll go. Because there's no lack of places and people right here.

There's no lack of a mission field. But God's just looking for men that will say, I'll go. I've got much weakness.

I've got fear and trembling, God. I'm not sufficient. I can't even say the right words, but I'll go.

And when we get the determination, we terminate all the other things and say, I'll go. God will do amazing things. God will do amazing things.

Ambassador in bonds. Ambassadors for Christ. Let's pray.

Father, I know that my words sometimes stumble and not make things very clear, but Father, I pray that You would make these things very clear to our hearts, Lord. That You would help us, Lord, not to have a carnal jealousy or pride about what we do, but to be constrained by the love of God. To be burdened for the loss.

To be wise and win souls, Lord. And we pray, God, that this would encourage our life and our love for You. Our determination to be burning the incense in our quiet times.

Our determination to be showing mercy and love. Our determination to care for one another, to love one another. Father, to pray and to uphold one another in the place of prayer, Father.

And there's so many needs in our lives. And Father, we pray that You would just, by the Spirit of God, come and establish Yourself amongst us today. That You would allow, Lord, the words from the first message and this message, Father, to just stir in our hearts this morning.

To bless us, Lord. To encourage us. To convict us, Lord.

And yet we know our sufficiency is of God. Nothing that we've done is of ourselves. The place that You've brought us to, it's not of ourselves.

But Lord, we want to go further this morning. We want to go higher this morning. Lord, we want to fly, Lord.

And we want to see You in Your glory. Father, just give us, Lord, wisdom. Give us might and power.

Give us the authority that we need. In the name of Jesus, we pray, Amen. Okay, one last song, please.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/4/SID4134.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/jamie-gordon/ambassador-in-bonds/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net