

Early Ministry in India Missionary conf.1965

by J.M. Davies

J.M. Davies reflects on the early missionary efforts in India, emphasizing the need for continued support and involvement in the work of the Gospel.

Duration: 1:03:43

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, 1 Corinthians 4:8

Topics: "Evangelism Methods", "Spiritual Warfare"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by expressing his desire to serve the Lord and preach the Word of God. He refers to a passage in 1st Olympians chapter 4, where he compares the church in Corinth to the church in Laodicea, highlighting their similarities in being rich and self-sufficient. The speaker criticizes certain methods of evangelism, emphasizing the importance of living and laboring in a place until souls are saved and a church is established. He then shares a vivid illustration of a condemned criminal fighting for his life against a trained swordsman, comparing it to the challenges faced by believers in their spiritual journey. The speaker concludes by emphasizing the transformative power of the love of Christ and the privilege of being a prisoner of Jesus Christ.

Transcript

And then here for the conference in October of 1919. I think our brethren Hillis and Grierson were here on that occasion. Much water has gone under the bridge since then.

There are many new faces here. Some of you who will remember the Nelson family, they later moved out to California. The father died a few years ago.

One of the sons is in the meeting, one of the assemblies in California, in Los Angeles. While in Washington, D.C., in the month of August, I called upon the oldest son, Harold Nelson. I knew him when we were here.

He was just a lad then in his early teens and has very happy memories of staying there at home. A brother in California had given me his address, and so I phoned him, and he came along to the meeting for the family Bible hour on the Lord's Day morning and then invited us over to his home, and together we went along to the Arlington, Virginia, assembly for a meeting on the Wednesday night, I think it was, or the Thursday night. He and his wife have for some time been going to a Methodist place, but he gave me to understand that he would like to seek fellowship once again in the assembly there.

Now if there are any here who will remember them and know him, I would just like to say hello to them and speak to them a little bit at the end of the meeting. We might pray that God may graciously bring Harold and his family back into the assembly. Now India is the country we went to, and we have the honor of being the first married couple ever to go to India from assemblies, commended from American assemblies.

It's a very dubious honor. Since then, one married couple has been commended, and after that, the stream ceased altogether. Roland Hill followed us in 1922, and since then no missionary, no brother has gone from any assembly in the United States to India.

The work, as far as assembly testimony in India is concerned, has been dependent, as far as foreign help is concerned, entirely upon missionaries from the British Isles and from New Zealand and from Australia. There have been, over recent years, a few who have gone from Canada. Now there are four from Canada, Wilfred Bunnings, and then Taylor and Bone, and our son married a Canadian girl, so he's somewhat of an adopted Canadian.

That's why you'll find his name, Dr. Gilmore Davies, on the list. Of the 170, 180 missionaries in India, far too many are sisters, far too few are brethren. It's sad that there are so few brethren in the missionary work in India.

In the Godavari Delta, where the work of the Lord in India began, there was, on the day we first went out to India, quite a strong group of men serving the Lord. Today, there are only three or four brethren left in that field. Two, there are a large number of assemblies now, much more than there were in those early days, but the need of instruction, the need of brethren who will move about in the assemblies to give teaching is tremendous, and we value prayer that God might raise up men for the Godavari Delta area.

There is in that area, a little further south, a group of assemblies that have come into existence during the last 15 or more years, and amongst them there is no missionary laboring. It's an indigenous work, a work that sprang up amongst those who were converted, or amongst those who are the third generation of the people that were converted through the American and Canadian Baptists years ago. At that time, there was a wonderful work of grace.

I believe well over a thousand were baptized on one occasion in the town of Ongo, but as the time has passed, a good deal of nominal Christians have been associated with those, and it pleased God to come in and give a day of visitation, so that today there are some 70 to 80 assemblies in that area, and amongst them some men of very real ability, men who are prepared to sacrifice and go out and seek to serve the Lord. A letter from one of them two weeks ago, or was it last week, in which he tells me a little of how he first set out to serve the Lord. He went into a place where, as far as he knew, there was just the one sister.

He was a tailor, and he took his single sewing machine with him, and along with his tailoring, he did gospel work, had prayer meetings, ministry meetings, and today there is an assembly of about 50 people in that place, and as the time has passed, I believe he is giving his entire time to the work of the Lord. I thought that that was a very admirable way for somebody to set out to serve the Lord. A single sewing machine doesn't take a lot of packing, and doesn't take a lot of moving from one place to another, but it was sufficient for him to maintain himself and maintain his family.

We have lived and labored in the part known as Kerala, that part where the Apostle Thomas is supposed to have landed when he went to the country, and he landed in a place about 20 miles from where we lived,

in a place called Kranganur, and from that day on, there has been a Christian community in Kerala, and one third of the population of our language area is Christian. They are Christian in name, of course there are a large number of Roman Catholics among them. In the days of the Portuguese, a bishop named Alexis de Menzies came, and he forcibly converted a large number of these Syrians, these Jacobite Syrians, to own allegiance to the Pope, giving them liberty to have their services read in Syriac rather than in Latin.

But amongst that Christian community, that nominal Christian community, God has graciously come in in the last 60 years. Sixty years ago, there was a tremendous time of awakening, and large numbers used to listen to the Gospel. In the dry season, months of December, February, January, the rivers are somewhat dry, and on the banks of the river, they used to gather some 10,000 strong to listen to the Word of God.

And there were evidently times when the Word of God was heard in living power, and undoubtedly hundreds were brought to a saving knowledge of Christ. They were not campaigns, but days of visitation. There's a big difference between a campaign and a day of visitation.

What we need, I feel sure, is not merely campaigns, as much as we thank God for the clear Gospel that is preached, but we need a day of visitation. We need a day when God will work upon the hearts of men, and there'll be a time of awakening. That's something very different from a tremendously well-organized campaign.

Today, there are something like 200 assemblies in that language area. The majority of these are in the central part of what was known as Travancore, the southernmost part of Kerala. Kerala is made up of what may be similar to Palestine.

You have Galilee and Samaria and Judea. We had Malabar, Cochin, and then in the south, we had Travancore. Now, in that Travancore area, in the center of it, there was a tremendous movement.

There are large assemblies, fairly large assemblies, and splendid opportunities for the ministry of the Word of God in that area. When we went out in 1920, I had not the slightest idea of what opportunities there would be, and opportunities such as I found when we got there. Opportunities for the preaching of the gospel.

At these conventions in January and February, in those days when they were largely centralized, it was not uncommon for us to be preaching to 2,000 and 3,000 people at the night meetings. And in the ministry meetings, they start in the morning at 7.30 for a Bible study, then 10 o'clock, and then in the afternoon again at night. And very often in these gatherings, there would be just three or four of us to bear the burden of the ministry.

It was quite normal for us to be speaking twice and three times a day at those annual gatherings. Indeed, in some places, one had to do more than that. And there were opportunities for the teaching of the Word of God.

We believe that those annual conventions were times for constructive, consecutive teaching. Not mere short messages here from here and there in the Word, but consecutive, constructive Bible teaching. And I believe more of that should characterize conferences in the homelands as well.

There are a large number of day schools. They used to be centers of great opportunity for evangelization. But now they've introduced the conscience clause, and no children are compelled to listen to the gospel or

to come to the Bible lessons.

And so they have ceased to be the channel of blessing that they once were. Nevertheless, there is a great deal of opportunity to teach the Word of God in these schools. We had one connected with the work where we live.

I was manager of it for the last seven years before we came away from there two years ago. And we had about 800 children, all in the first five standards. And we had 20 teachers, and all of them were believers, except one, I think, and all in assembly fellowship.

All of those Christians in assembly fellowship except one of them. There is the orphanage for girls there with about 40 girls. Two sisters are now looking after that orphanage.

Our son is a surgeon, and he is now the superintendent of the hospital in a place called Tiruvalla, a hospital that's fairly large with 300 beds and three branch hospitals. And along with it, of course, there is the daily preaching of the Word of God. Every morning for half an hour, there is, through the public address system, there is a message that goes into every ward of the hospital.

Every ward in the hospital is reached with a message of the gospel from 9 to 9.30 every morning. And besides that, every evening, one Indian brother will conduct a gospel message, give a gospel message in one or other of the many wards in the hospital. And there are brethren, of course, who give their time to visiting the sick.

And we would value prayer that God may continue his good hand of blessing upon the ministry there. Along with that, of course, is the opportunity that he has for the preaching of the gospel and the teaching of the Word of God. During the years that the work has gone on, one of the great complaints that was heard from Christians in other parts of India was, your Christians are well taught.

You've got Christians down there that should be evangelizing India. Your Christians down there are different to any other group of Christians in India, and I presume they're right in that. So many of the Christians in other parts are converts from the low caste, whereas the Christians with us in many of the assemblies are men from this Syrian group.

They're Indians, but they are very capable. They are supposed to be the descendants of people Thomas took with him from Syria. They're men of real ability.

They're ubiquitous as far as India is concerned. You'll never get anywhere in India without beating up against Syrians in some post or other. They're in the government, they're in education, in medical work, and you find them all over the Middle East.

They're all over in Tanganyika and up in Eritrea. In fact, the legal advisor of the emperor of Ethiopia is one of our people, a man whom I knew as a boy in the town where we first lived. His father was a true believer.

He and his wife are now living in Addis Ababa, and he is the legal advisor to Emperor Selassie. So these men, they go far afield in the pursuit of their employment, in educational work and in business, as well as in medical work and in government employment. And there was a tremendous complaint that none of these brethren stepped out into service for God in other parts of India.

And now for the last 25 years or so, that has been somewhat rectified. God has come in, and there are today some 30 brethren who are laboring in other parts of India. Brethren sent me a list of them the other day with a map of the one side, a map of India, and dots to show just where in India these brethren are laboring.

They've gone to all over India, right up to the north, to the east and the west. They go with their families across, and they learn the languages in these parts, and they settle down there, bring up their families there. And God has blessed their testimony.

Many of them are graduates, men who could have had a good employment and good positions in their own country. Many of them, what the world would consider a great sacrifice, have gone out in the work of the gospel. Besides these, of course, there will be, I presume I'm safe in saying, nearly a hundred brethren serving the Lord in the gospel in our own language area.

Now, there are parts in our language area that are still very little reached. The population, of course, of India is three times the population of Africa, even though Africa is five times the size of India. You can put India into Africa five times, but you can put the population of Africa into India three times.

And yet, in Africa today, there are parts of Africa, such as Katanga, where there were over 40 missionaries and a population of a million and a half. Natal, around Durban, a population of only 250,000 Zulus with eight or ten married couples. It's unfortunate that there's been such a lack of balance in connection with exercise and interest in missionary work.

You look at missionary magazines printed and published in this country, and somehow or other there are parts of Africa where the population is very sparse, and that part is brought before the needs and before the readers of these magazines in every issue. Yet, it is possibly enough to blame for their limitations as to what they can do in this way. But when I think of parts of India that are utterly forgotten, India today is the forgotten land, and we need to pray that God might come in and raise up men to serve the Lord in India.

I would very prefer guidance as to just how to bring the need of India and how to get Christians in American assemblies more definitely interested, and their interests more definitely focused upon the work of God in India. The poverty of the people is something we need to remember. We have in our area a population of a thousand per square mile, and if America was populated to that extent, I can hardly tell you, I couldn't.

I'd have to do a lot of thinking and calculating before we could say what the population of America would be if it was a thousand per square mile. So India today is a land of great need. There is liberty for the preaching of the gospel.

There is liberty for the teaching of the word of God. In the later years, and even from very early years, I didn't do very much of the work of baptizing. I always encouraged Indian brethren to do that.

But we did the preaching and the teaching. Of course our baptisms are always in the open. We always have a tank on the roadside where the people wash, and maybe where the bullocks are washed too.

But there we get the people baptized, and large companies gather together, and it's a wonderful opportunity for the preaching of the gospel and the teaching of the word of God. These are the opportunities we avail ourselves of in connection with the work of the Lord. A few years ago I was up in New Delhi, the capital, and the brethren there had done a wonderful job in getting what they call a

shamiana, a cloth tent.

And they had seats for about 200 brought in. And the meetings were done every night for about ten nights, or maybe more, twelve nights was it. Our brother Walker went on for four nights, and then I continued.

I was in Bombay during the first four nights, having meetings with the assembly in Bombay. And then we got up on the Monday. We continued right through to the following Sunday.

We had 180 or more every evening. They were all Hindus, all non-Christians, except a small sprinkling, hardly ten or fifteen Christians in the whole gathering. And they were there every night, starting at seven o'clock, no singing.

There was some public address system, and some radio music was put out over there. And there was a public address system, not for the people in the tent, but for the people in the apartments around. And the gospel reached some thousand people every night during that week.

In my forty-five years since we first went out, I've never had such an opportunity. To have people there, all Hindus, all non-Christians, sitting listening as every night I preached on the death and resurrection of Christ, preaching the cross of Christ every night. What an opportunity that those meetings offered us.

And we need to pray that God may bless the witness in these large centers of population in India. Millions of them in these big cities in the north, with little or no witness for God. Just what our future is to be, we don't know.

In the meantime, we seek to serve the Lord in the ministry of the Word of God. In this country, and in Canada, very seldom staying just one night. I prefer a week or more for some consecutive teaching than just one night.

But where it's not possible for that, I'm glad to be able to be with you here, especially having had the opportunity and privilege of being here forty-five years ago. It's nice to renew acquaintance and renew fellowship in this way. Now will you turn with me, please, to 1 Corinthians chapter four, in verse eight.

Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings. How similar those words are to the letter, to those found in the letter to the church at Laodicea. Ye are rich and increased with goods and of need of nothing.

Corinth and Laodicea were very similar. Now ye are full, now ye are rich, now ye have reigned as kings. In India, we have a lot of scorpions.

Virtually, we've never been bitten by one or stung by one. The scorpion sting is in its tail, and the sting of this verse is almost in its tail. Ye are full, ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings, and now comes the sting, and that without us.

At the expense of gospel work, at the expense of an interest in the gospel, prosperity brought its terrible penalty to this Christian, to this company of Christians. The apostle in these two verses that we're going to look at brings before us two of the great problems that any servant of God has. The first is the apathy of carnal Christians, and the second is the antipathy of a world that lies in the evil one.

Here is the apathy of a carnal Christian assembly. Ye are full, ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings. But at the expense of fellowship in the gospel.

These words are an echo of what you can find in Deuteronomy 6, Deuteronomy 8, Deuteronomy 12. God said to Israel, when you exchange the wilderness for the land, be careful when you get into houses that you never built, olive yards that you never planted, and vineyards that you never planted. Drink water out of wells that you never dig.

Beware, lest with that prosperity you forget God. You see, they were going to exchange the nomadic life of the wilderness for the settled life in the land. In the wilderness, the idea of amassing wealth, the idea of making money, of keeping a bank account was something that was an impossibility.

Increasing in wealth was not possible in the wilderness. There were pilgrims, there were strangers there. But once they got in the land, the whole picture changed.

He said when you've lived in the land for some time, and God will give you power to get wealth, and you live in houses like which you've never lived in yet, when you've improved your surroundings, when your economic situation will be very different to what it is today, then beware, lest prosperity will make you forget God, and forget the Levite, forget the widow, and forget the stranger. You see, prosperity carries with it an awful penalty. There are people in this country whom I knew as a young man who are today worth their hundreds of thousands, and some may be more than that.

And the question that comes to one's mind is, has their giving kept pace with their prosperity? Has our giving to the work of the Lord kept pace with the measure in which we have prospered financially and economically? Do we give today more than we did five years ago? What about the offerings of the assembly today in comparison to what they were ten years ago? Have they increased in comparison with the income of the assembly, and the income of the Christians in the assembly? Now, this is the charge he laid against this Christian company. It's called a rule in the assembly. It's very similar to what you have in the book of Judges.

There, in the days of Jotham, in the days when Gideon's children had been slain, Jotham gave occurrence to a fable, a riddle, if you like. More of a fable than anything else. Not a parable.

He says the trees of the field went out to anointed king over. They decided they'd like to have a king, so they went to the olive tree. And they said to the olive tree, we want you to be king.

The olive tree says, what's the use of me being a king? I couldn't wear a crown and produce olives. And I'm here to produce olives. And if I take the position of being a king among the trees, and then produce no olives, why, that would be a poor kind of a kingship, wouldn't it? It would be power and prosperity and position at the expense of olive oil, at the expense of oil for the sanctuary.

And the sanctuary would be dark, and there would be no light in the sanctuary of God, if the olive tree took a crown, a position instead of doing its God-given, God-ordained function. So they went along to the fig tree, and the fig tree says, what's the use of me taking a crown? Why, if I took a crown, I wouldn't be able to bear figs. I've only got strength for one or the other.

I couldn't produce both. I couldn't produce figs and wear a crown. Power and prosperity can only be enjoyed fully at the expense of spiritual fruit.

Maybe you think that's rather strong. But I'm convinced that it's far too true. Fruit for God will diminish in the measure that there is a cardinal exercise and enjoyment of prosperity.

They went along to the vine, and they said to the vine, you be, you be king. I said, what's the use of me being a king? For either way, a crown would be to sacrifice the wine that were with the hearts of men and gods rejoiced. That which makes the hearts of men glad.

No, no, excuse me, said the vine. I'd rather produce grapes. I'd rather produce the wine than wear a crown.

Mere position, mere honor, amounts to nothing if it's going to be at the expense of a life of witness for God. Mere position would be nothing if it's going to be at the expense of fruit in the life. It means nothing and amounts to nothing if it's going to be at the expense of the joy of salvation.

You've reigned as kings and not without us. For it is, I think, that God has set forth us the apostles' love. What does he mean? What is the apostle thinking about? Paul draws attention, of course, to a great many metaphors and a great many illustrations he draws from.

And here the apostle is thinking of the gladiatorial games, many of which were carried on in Ephesus from where the apostle wrote this letter. I was in Ephesus in 1952 and stood on what was the platform of that old amphitheater and looked around on that hillside, that circular hillside, where the seats were carved out and where the hundreds would sit. And on that platform there were these gladiatorial games.

And the last item was a criminal condemned to death. A man who had the death sentence passed upon him was given the opportunity to fight for his life with a man who had a drawn sword in his hand. A trained swordsman, on the one hand, a defenseless, weaponless individual on the other hand.

That's the picture that Paul draws to us here. More graphic even than David going out to fight Goliath. How many have been thrilled with these? How many children get thrilled still with the story of David going out a lad with a sling and a stone and bringing Goliath down? The odds are all against him.

But not anything as bad as it was in the picture that I sought to draw before you. Here is the criminal. No weapon of defense, no weapon of offense, no shield to protect him.

He's there. Stand against a man with a sharp two-edged sword in his hand. Accustomed to the use of that sword.

What hope was there for this man? If he overcame the man with a sword, his life would be given him for a prey. That's what Paul says, that's our picture. God that sent forth us the apostles last, as if we were appointed to death.

As if we were criminals to fight through the man with a drawn sword. When you think of missionary work, when you think of service for God in distant lands, don't forget this picture, please. There's no glamour here.

I'm afraid there's a great deal of glamour about certain meddlers that are today flying for a few months to India to give out cracks and coming back Pardon me if I'm speaking a bit too bluntly and too openly. But flying out for a few months to give out cracks and come back is nothing like what we've got here. Here is something far different to them.

The New Testament has got something very different to them. The New Testament, here is the man going in and living and labouring and labouring there until he saw souls saved and gathered together in an

assembly capacity. No, he says, to this present hour we both hunger and thirst and are naked and are buffeted and have no certain dwelling place.

No glamour, no romance here. Nothing of that character. Then he says in the end of verse 9 we are as if we were criminals appointed to death.

But at the same time he says we are a spectacle, we are a theatre as the Martin puts it. We are the platform, we are a spectacle to the universe, to the universe of unseen angels and to the world of men. Not to the world and to angels and to men but to the universe, to the world, even to angels and to men.

Unseen hosts, they look upon this uneven battle. Men look on. Here is the way Paul describes his service for God in that city of Ephesus.

He describes himself in the last word of verse 10 as despised, a man without citizenship. A man who had been robbed of his citizenship. I have read of a few incidents coming to Canada of men who land in Montreal and they are deported.

They are men without a citizenship. Somehow or other they manage to slip in and then they are caught and then they are sent away again. One man supposed to have been born in Egypt and no country seemingly wants him.

Where he was born and where, what country he is a citizen of, I don't know. But he gets on one boat and somehow or other tries to get into some other country and can't and there he is, a man without a country. Paul says we are despised, we are men without citizenship, citizenship anywhere.

But the last word he uses, time doesn't allow us to turn to them all, in verse 13, as the offscouring of all things unto this day. And the apostle is thinking here in terms of, possibly thinking in terms of the sacrifices in Old Testament days that had to be washed. You remember they washed the inwards, they washed the legs.

The water of coffee to be thrown away. In the Philippian epistle he compares himself to the drink offering. But here, it may be that he is thinking in terms of the washing, the water that was washing the inwards and the legs.

The offscouring of all things. Or it may be that the apostle is thinking in terms of what was quite common in Corinth. When a plague was there in the city, they would take a poor wretch for whom nobody cared, some poor beggar, and they would take him and throw him to the sea, abandon him to the waves, throw him out to percate the anger of the gods.

The offscouring of all things. Now, none of us have been called to pass through times like this. Most missionaries that I have known have passed through times of stringency and need.

It was quite common with us in our early years in India to know nothing more than having enough for a week. Seldom did we know much about having enough for a month. It was the odd little thing to know, to know that our needs were met just a week or more ahead.

We never were in the mercy of God or without food. But I've known some who were without food. One dear brother went for a month living on the tapioca of the country.

Tapioca, not as you see it, in little, small, when you make it up into pudding. The tapioca we have is the tapioca in the raw. It's the root.

Something like a sweet potato. Very nice when it's cooked nicely with a little bit of spice in it. But when a man has to, and his wife, had to live on that for a week, for a month, he'd go to the open air and preach.

No money to tie, no money to get his shoes half sold, tie some leather to the uppers with strings, and have Indian brethren pay for a cup of tea for him when he preached in the open air. He's gone to glory now. But nobody today that I know of in mission fields has had experience like this.

This is apostolic. When we talk about apostolic practice and apostolic experience, some or other, one feels very much ashamed to talk about anything like that when you read of what the apostle went through. But nevertheless, many a servant of God today, in distant lands, knows what it means to have been completely forgotten by those who commended them to the service of the Lord.

We were a year and a half in India before the assembly that commended us and remembers us in any way at all. God undertook for us. There were times, of course, when we were very much in need.

When our second child was born, by the night before my wife went to hospital, we couldn't have rubbed two pennies against each other. But the day the child arrived, God in grace came in and our need was supplied. During those years, we learned to know God.

We learned to know God as faithful to his word of promise. We learned to know the Lord as true to his word, that all the promises of God are yea and amen in Christ Jesus. Now turn to the second epistle, please, to the Corinthians, and you'll see another picture here.

Second Corinthians chapter two, verse fourteen. Now thanks be unto God, which always causes us to triumph in Christ. Now here is a very different note, isn't it? Written to the same people, to the same assembly, within twelve months of the first letter.

Written now to Macedonia. Just how many letters Paul wrote to Corinth is not very clear. It's quite clear that he wrote one, which he refers to in the fifth chapter of the first.

He says, I wrote to you in a letter not to company with fornicators. Now we haven't got that letter. And the contents of it, I presume, are given to us in first Corinthians chapter five.

And then we've got what we know as the first letter. But then in this second epistle, he says, I made you sorry with a letter. And I was really sorry I ever wrote it.

I repented for having written that letter. But mostly I find it very difficult to find anything in the first epistle to the Corinthians for which Paul had to be sorry, or had to, any occasion, to repent. And the conclusion I am coming to is that Paul must have sent another letter, which we haven't got.

A letter by the hand of Titus. The first epistle went, and Timothy went along with it, according to the sixteenth chapter of the first epistle. But then after that, Titus went.

Titus went with a letter. And Paul was looking for a letter, a reply. He was looking for Titus to come back.

And he had arranged for Titus to meet him in Troas. You see what he says in verse thirteen, or verse twelve. Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened to me of the

Lord, I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother.

And so taking my leave of them, I went from Tent into Macedonia. When you turn on to chapter seven for a moment, will you? And verse five. For when we would come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest.

For we were troubled on every side, without your fighting, within your fears. Nevertheless, God that comforted those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus. For in between chapter two, verse thirteen, and seven verse five, here is an apparent setting of caution.

Here is what you may call a detour, a diversion. Paul forgets all about telling about Titus in chapter two, verse fourteen. He says, I found not Titus my brother, and I went to meet him in Macedonia.

And then, remembering the joy he had when Titus came back, he said, Thanks be unto God who gives us, who leads us in the triumph of Christ. And off he goes on a tangent, and he talks about his ministry, and his character, and his power, right up until verse five of chapter seven. And then he comes back to talk about the coming of Titus in chapter seven.

And he says, I was very happy when Titus came and told us how you received him. He said, I was very sorry I had written the letter, but he said, I'm not sorry anymore. Now, I personally am inclined to the view that there was a letter sent by Titus which we haven't got today.

And now we've got the second epistle to the Corinthians, sent after Titus returns. And here he says, he speaks about his service in a very different way to the way he speaks of it in the first epistle. In the first epistle, he looks upon the dark side of things, doesn't he? God has sent forth us the apostles last, as it were criminals appointed to death, abandoning us to fight a lonely battle, and a hopeless battle with powers that are far too great for us.

The powers of darkness here are such that we cannot stand up to them. But now he writes the second letter, and he says, God leads us in the triumph of Christ. He's thinking, of course, of the triumph, not only of the preaching of the gospel, but of the fact that Titus was enabled of God to be a help to the assembly in Corinth, and the trouble in Corinth, that he refers to in chapter two of this epistle, was settled seemingly.

And the anti-Pauline faction seemingly were brought to repentance. But now look at what he says in this verse. See how he speaks of himself.

He speaks of himself in three ways. First of all, he speaks of himself as a prisoner. The picture here is a very different one.

Here he's thinking in terms of a Roman general coming back home from the warfare. There has been a campaign in some distant land, and the enemy has been reduced, and now the general brings back with him a number of prisoners from that country. And the day for the procession through the streets of Rome has arrived.

And the general is there on his horse, and all his officers are there, and behind him there's a train of prisoners. Some of them are appointed to death. Some of them are going to be set at liberty.

There are the two groups of prisoners, but Paul is a prisoner. The picture here that Paul is drawing from is the Roman general coming back home triumphantly and victoriously. The war has been waged, and the country has been brought into subjection to the empire, and the borders of the empire have been

enlarged, and now the general is being honored.

Paul says, Christ is the triumphant general. Christ is the one, and I'm one of his prisoners. I'm one of the captives.

I'm one of those whom he has taken captive in that warfare. On that Damascus road, he made me a prisoner. On that Damascus road, I was made a captive of the love of Christ.

I was made a prisoner of the law of Jesus. That's the first picture. You know, conversion is a great miracle, isn't it? True conversion is a wonderful miracle.

I think of one in India, he's now a doctor, a professor up in Ludhiana Hospital. He comes from the highest caste in all South India. He's only the second man to have been converted from that high caste in a hundred years.

And he came to England for further study, and while there got converted. And then his relatives got terribly upset, of course. They sent for him.

His uncle and his brother-in-law went home to get him, brought him back to India, put him under the care of what they call psychiatrists. They weren't psychiatrists at all. They were two doctors who were in charge of mental patients.

And here they got this man, a doctor though he was, and a surgeon though he was, they got him to submit to this treatment. And then we came into the picture. We got a telegram, a cable from England about him.

So of course we immediately went to look him up. Without going into the whole story, we found him, and we asked him what treatment they were giving him. Well he said, they put me under anesthetic, and then they give me electrical shock treatment.

Then what happened? Well he said, it takes me a little while to reorientate myself when I get out from under the anesthetic. And he said, otherwise I'm all right. We pleaded with him of course, and the brother who was with me was a doctor, and he of course warned him against such a thing.

And then after a long conversation, we had prayer together. Doctor prayed, and then I prayed, and then this brother prayed. And you'll listen to him pray, and quoting the verses of Ephesians, Ephesians chapter 1 in his thanksgiving, ten months out of the darkness of Hinduism, ten months out of idolatry, ten months out of all, out of the prison house of Hinduism.

And here he is, thanking God for the redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins. A week later, this doctor gave him some money and sent him away. He said, you don't need treatment.

The people who sent you need treatment, not you. He said, Jesus Christ has done wonderful things for you. The evidence he tried sorcery, and found that God preserved his child.

He went to the Velo of Christian Hospital to take up neurosurgery, and there in the overruling providence of God, I found myself in a matter of a month or six weeks. And so for three weeks he was in our room every evening, talking over the word of God and praying together. And he hadn't learned, he hadn't begun reading the Old Testament even.

I said, well now only you must read the Old Testament. So he started, and in those three weeks, he read nearly the whole of the books of Moses. Nearly all the first five books of the Bible in three weeks, along with his medical work and his studies.

Today his wife is converted and baptized, his oldest girl baptized, and I don't know how many others in the family. He's got three boys. We value prayer for these lads.

They make tremendous effort to get them back into the lap of the family, a wealthy family. It's a marvelous thing to see a man like that converted. A man like that standing up, telling us, and standing there with people who are among the lowest caste, people with whom he'd never have had any fellowship before he was converted.

To be a prisoner of Jesus Christ, to be made captive by the love of Christ, is a marvelous, a marvelous miracle today. To see the change in the life of a man was a marvelous thing. Jesus Paul says, thanks be unto God I've been led in the triumphant march of Christ.

I'm one of his prisoners. I've been made captive by the love of Calvary's conqueror. That's what we have here.

Then he says, and he makes benefit by us the flavor of his knowledge in every place. And here he changes the simile. He changes the metaphor immediately.

Paul now is not a prisoner. Paul now, he takes the place of the priest. All along the highway in Rome, there were priests along the little altars waving the incense in honor of the deity to whom was ascribed the honor of this wonderful victory that the general had achieved.

And he answers Paul, I'm not only a prisoner, I'm one of the priests. I'm privileged to wave the incense of the knowledge of Christ in every place. What a privilege it is.

There's no privilege on earth like the privilege of preaching Christ. Or waving the incense of the knowledge of Christ. The flavor of his knowledge by us in every place.

What a privilege it is. There's a joy in the preaching that comes through the preaching of the gospel that comes through nothing else. Then he changes the metaphor again.

And he says in the next verse, so we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ. Paul says, I'm not only the prisoner, I'm not only the priest, but I'm the perfect witness Now here is the marvelous grace of God. It's grace that saved a man like Paul.

Marvelous grace that saved a man who was a bitter enemy of the gospel. And we would have said, well grace is marvelous, could save a man like that and take him straight to heaven. But the grace of God did more than that.

The grace of God made that enemy to be the preacher of the gospel and the greatest preacher the world has ever known. But the grace of God did even more than that. It transformed his life until he could speak of his life under the inspiration of the Spirit of God as a sweet savor of Christ.

The savor which characterized Christ and his ministry. That which characterized the law of Jesus and his service here, says Paul, characterizes us in our turn. Here is the highest mark, I think, in all Paul's letters.

We are under God's sweet savor of Christ. But what God found in Christ when he was here, when he could say, behold my servant whom I uphold, my elect in whom my soul delighted. God could say the same about Paul as he could say about his son.

Here is the transforming power of the grace of God. Lord God, we may know something of it. Shall we pray? Our God and Father, we pray thee now thy blessing upon thy holy word.

Remember the assembly again. Remember them in India in thy mercy. Look upon them graciously with deceit.

Undertake, O God. Remember the coming conference again. Remember us in view of the conference at Waterloo.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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