

Mid South Conference 1982-08 Luke 9:25

by Lew Clarkson

As Christians, we have a responsibility to use our skills and abilities to serve the Lord and others, and to be faithful stewards of what God has given us.

Duration: 41:29

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Matthew 7:2, Luke 5:20, Luke 6:38, Luke 9:62, Luke 14:28, Hebrews 2:3

Topics: "Time Management", "Giving Generously"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the shortness of time and the importance of using it wisely. He highlights the fact that the average lifespan is only two billion seconds, and urges young people to recognize their purpose in this world. The speaker also discusses the concept of giving, specifically in the context of Luke 6:38, where Jesus encourages believers to give and promises that it will be given back to them in abundance. He shares personal experiences of giving and encourages others to do the same, emphasizing the importance of committing to giving and serving the Lord.

Transcript

Full voice, but I'll condescend to wear the mic because I think that I probably should do that tonight. However, I'm pleased to be here, and our family always enjoys coming down here, and for some reason, if real estate business doesn't pick up, if you've got anything to sell down here, I may be here permanently. But I had to be in the office, yes, in the room studying tonight, and my phone did ring and found out we sold a couple homes today, so that kind of helps out too.

I just want to tell you, it's really a thrill to see so many people come from different vocations of life, different culture backgrounds, and we come here knowing the Lord Jesus Christ is our Savior. And I've been very concerned about certain things lately, and I really appreciate these men I work with. We pull each other's legs, but we really are serious about the fact that when you can take a Jew, and a Southerner, and a Yankee, and a Missourian, and you put them together, and you got something, that's a miracle within itself.

Isn't that right? And I tell you, I would say tonight that they've asked me to speak upon this subject as a subject that's very dear to my heart, and especially after what we heard last night in regard to that beautiful verse. One of the most beautiful passages, and one of the most beautiful verses that could ever be read, how shall we escape if we neglect so great of a salvation? And the gospel was applied to that person rightly so, and their souls were saved. I'll tell you man, they're getting tuned in and turned on, and

something's going to happen when Christians really get tuned in and turned on themselves, and souls get saved, it makes us all want to do something for the Lord.

And you know, I got thinking about that verse, that how shall we neglect, you know, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? And I got thinking, hey Carson, you profess to be a Christian, don't you? Yeah? Okay. How are you going to escape this responsibility as a Christian, you know? How are you going to escape it if you neglect this salvation that's been given to you? And so you see in a secondary sense it can be applied to Christians as well. There's a verse I've been wrestling with for quite some time, and I want to read that as our verse tonight, and it's found in Luke in the ninth chapter and the 23rd verse.

Luke 9 and 23, we sang last night, I'm yours Lord, everything I've got, everything I am, and everything I'm not. I'm yours Lord, try me now and see if I can be completely yours. And he said to them all, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

For whosoever would save his life shall lose it, but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it. For what is a man profited if he take the whole world and lose himself and be a castaway? Shall we pray? Father, in thy presence this evening, we'd ask thee at this particular time now to quiet each and every one of our hearts. We confess before thee how our mind has been wandering, our bodies are tired, and Father, it's so easy for us not to grasp that which would be said.

But we pray that this may be a night, our Father, when many of us who have come to know the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior will know more than ever that we're here to serve the Lord Jesus Christ and to manage his business. Help us that he may be glorified tonight, for we ask it in his name. Amen.

I've wrestled with this verse for a long, long time, but I want to tell you as I look out in the world today and I see the present conditions that things are happening more than ever, it seems to me that as we see upon the rise in the many conflicts and the problems, and you listen to all the news and everything else, I want to tell you, I don't know about you, but I feel like that guy was home, you know, and his grandfather was there, and he was reading the Bible all the time. And so the child comes in and says, you know, how come, Grandpa, every time I come in this house you seem to be reading the Bible? Well, he says, son, maybe I'm cramming for my final examination. And you know, it's time for some of us to really realize that more than ever.

I've been enjoying Brother Woodhouse and Rick, and in fact, these are not my notes, my wife notes here, and the only reason I got these things here is because they spoke so much on this subject, I don't want to repeat anything they said. So when I look down here, I'll find out what they said, and I won't say it. I'll say something new.

There's a lot to speak on the subject I'm going to speak about tonight, believe me. And I will tell you one thing. Eddie really hit home in his message the other morning when he talked about meditation.

That's the lost art. That is something we're not doing today. And so in the wee hours of the morning, and that's where I get it, you get it whenever you want it, just so you'd get it.

The man that was in the morning, the old brethren says, yeah, but you know what happened to him if he didn't get it in the morning. But so you get it. But I want to tell you, to meditate upon a portion of the Word of God is great.

And I've taken this book of Luke recently, and I've been reading of all the incidents the Lord had as he began to make his last trip to Jerusalem and to the Garden of Gethsemane. And as he was coming in that direction, for the first time in my life, I saw the passages to the fact that he was doing something as far as the social work is concerned. He was doing something more than just healing souls, making the blind to see and the lame to walk.

He was preparing people for life here to fulfill his ministry after he was going to be gone. And I was thinking of some of these incidents, and they're all so more beautiful found here as he was in his public ministry. And in Luke 4 and 25, especially when he was on his way, he seemed to call the small, the tall, the young, the old, and all kinds.

But the beautiful thought that I find here is not only did the Lord want to do those things, but he wanted them so that they could be a part of it. Now, I know we know this truth that we were chosen in him for the foundation of the world, before the foundation of the world. Isn't that a beautiful thought? How many sermons I've heard of that? You know, when I think of he was the one who was chosen us before the foundation of the world, he was greater than all the galaxies of the stars that we heard last night.

And when we think about eternity, though, in the past and eternity in the future, this little span that you and I have, and here we come in here, just a one little span in all eternity, and yet he has you up on this scene at this particular time, in your particular vocation, in your particular location, in your particular church fellowship for a particular reason. And brother, one thing about it, it's not the warm deputy. It's hot enough.

It's hot enough. And when the Lord touched these hearts, they were different. You know, in Luke 6, it talks about giving.

And I was surprised when I looked up this word. And to me, it's a very important thing because it says, give, and it shall be given unto you, good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over. Men shall give unto you, for with the same measure that ye measure, it shall be measured to you again.

And that same word, give, can mean to commit. And that's what we're talking about tonight for just a little while. And I was thinking of some of these things as the Lord was going by, and he saw so many.

And as you take these little verses and you read these articles, historical events that took place, it is really something that turns you on. And I was just thinking about this widow named. And I picture it, you see, because here she was, just a widow.

And this son of hers, the son that she had, died. And you know what? Just this past week, I had the privilege of speaking at a funeral of a dear sister that passed away. Because a long time ago, she knew me as a kid.

And she said when she ever passed away, she wanted me to preach her funeral. And I preached the funeral. But I noticed the Lord came in contact with three.

You know, the little girl, Lazarus, and the widow's son here. But he never preached the funeral service. Not at all.

Now, here's how close it was. This man had died. This young man had died.

Now, he not only had died, but man, they were taking him out the city walls. Because it says, as the Lord was entering into the city of Mainz. And they were taking him out.

And if you've been over there and you see the walled cities, you can understand what I'm talking about. They were either going to bury him in a shallow grave, or they were just going to throw him out in the heat pile. That's all there was to it.

And he was coming so close. And the Lord stopped him. And you know what it says? It says here, if we had time to look up, it says that he sat up and he talked.

I want to tell you, some of us Christians, we haven't even sat up yet, let alone talked. There's some things that have to happen when you profess that you're a Christian and you tell me you know Jesus Christ your Savior, then you better sit up and talk. I want to tell you what, I can see that guy just raising up off that cot, you know, and sat up when the Lord touched him, and he began to talk.

And now I tell you some things he wasn't talking about. I know what he was talking about. I may not know what he was talking about, but I know what he wasn't talking about.

He didn't say, boy, now I'm going to this latest movie tonight. Praise the Lord, I got more life to live. Boy, he didn't say, man, now I'm going to really settle down and get this economic condition straightened around in this world.

I've got high goals and going back to college, I'm going to turn things around. I know one thing, he didn't say that. But as you read these very carefully, you'll find out when the Lord came in contact with these people, they did something.

They did something. And it's time that we sat up. It's time that we talk.

I'll tell you what I think he talked about. I think the rest of his life he talked about that man that raised him from the dead. And all the psychiatrists that day want to lock him up.

But they didn't get the job done. Because something has happened to his life. And brothers and sisters, something happened to your life.

And it's happened to my life. And if it has happened to my life, things should be changed in our life. Also, he went on and he met a lady.

And she could have been in that same particular town. And we don't even know her name. But there was a Pharisee named Simon.

And man, he had it turned on. He was the businessman, the Pharisee of that day. He had everything.

And so he's going to ask the Lord to come to lunch. So the Lord came. You know what that guy did? In the east, the least you do is wash their feet.

Because that is the custom, the natural thing to do. Because of the dust that collects. And he didn't even start to wash the Lord's feet.

Wait. But I'll tell you one thing about it. When the Lord Jesus Christ comes into our hearts and our life, we should not have a hunt drum eight hours a day, God.

And so many of us, we've been hearing about it. You know, they get up in the morning and they go someplace they despise and work real hard at something they hate worse than everything else and call it life. They really do.

Why? And some of us as Christians, you know, we almost endure our salvation instead of enjoying our salvation because we almost get into that same rut, you know. And it's dangerous. I find myself, you know, very much in a problem like this.

But tonight, for a while, I want to talk to you and to my heart about being a good steward for Jesus Christ. Now, young folks, remember this. Stewardship is not akin to the love boat.

Stewardship is not akin to the love boat. It's altogether different. And it's not in relation to the doctor or leader.

Stewardship, the definition is, one who acts in custodian to care and to manage the affairs of another. That's what you are. You're a steward.

You're in charge. You're a custodian in charge of the affairs of another. And our Lord Jesus Christ has gone temporarily to a far country.

And you and I are the ones that he's left in charge. We're all stewards. And I could preach for hours upon the verses you find in Scripture that remind you what kind of a steward you're supposed to be.

But the thing that hit me is to say, hey, Lord, isn't it wonderful to know you not only saved me from a lost eternity. He could have done that the day before I'm going to go home to be with him or in the grave. You know, that's what he could have done.

But he wants us to be stewards, faithful stewards, not successful stewards. And so I have the word spelled out, S-T-E-W-A-R-G. And for a while tonight, I want to speak about the skills, your time, your energy, your wealth, your attitude, your responsibility, and your dedication.

That's what stewardship is all about. And when I was thinking in regards to your skills, we've heard sermon after sermon about the gifts that you have. We read books on books on gifts.

You turn to Corinthians, you read all about it. I'm not talking about the gift he gave to the church. I'm talking about the skill that you have given and you were given and you have got.

There's so much of cup out today of always feeling like that I'm inferior, there's nothing I can do. You know, we're down on ourselves. And the result is, we have skills.

You have a skill that can be developed and it should be used for the Lord Jesus Christ. And I have some. I haven't found them yet, but I got to have some.

You know, you don't live this long and weigh this much without having some kind of skill. But nevertheless, we all have these skills if we really realize how important it is. It's a wide range.

There's no question about it. I was talking about skills. I always loved to play baseball, as you know.

I don't have to tell you that. I don't do too good anymore. But there's a story about the two pitchers, you know.

I was talking to this guy the other night. He says, hey, Lou, do you think there'll be baseball in heaven? Well, I said, I don't know. But I said, if I get up there, I'm going to try to let you know.

And you get there first. He says, he's going to let me know. You know what happened? He got there first.

He called down. He said, hey, I got some good news and bad news. I said, well, what is it? He said, the good news is they got baseball up here.

I said, what is the bad news? He says, your slate is pitched tomorrow. So you see, whatever skills that you have, you better use them now because you don't know how long you're going to have to use them. And so the thing is that so many of us do have these skills, but we're not using them, as it were, for the Lord.

And it's awfully important that we know these things. You know, we have an awful lot of efficiency experts today. Praise the Lord for them.

I get a little tired of them, the salesmen. I want some effectiveness in my life. And we got a lot of efficiency in our assemblies and our programs, but very little effectiveness.

And you know, we always want to learn how to witness. And we study the book about how to preach. And we go to school and everything else.

And hey, I get so sick of it, the salesmen. I've had hundreds of salesmen work for me, real estate salesmen. You school them, you do everything else, and they get knowledge, knowledge, knowledge.

But there's only one way you're going to sell a house is get out there and get it done. Okay? So if you're sitting here waiting to get more education and waiting for the elders to come around and pat you on the back, you're going to die in that queue. You know.

You have been educated. You have been called. You have the skill.

And it's up to us as individuals to use that skill for the honor and glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. And I think it's very important. I love that Paul says, I'm going to strive towards that mark.

He didn't say he was going to float. He didn't say he was going to dream. He said, I'm going to strive.

The skills that he had, he used as far as unto the Lord. And someone has said more than anything, if you only get turned on and realize what your skills have, that will turn your dreams into exciting achievements. Think of that.

These dreams that you dream about, if you really turn it over to the Lord, instead of waiting tomorrow, you know, it will turn your dreams into exciting achievements. It will turn your problems into profitable projects. It will turn your obstacles into rare opportunities.

It will turn your opportunities into rich enterprises. It will turn your tragedies into inspiring triumphs. God weighs our skills.

He doesn't count them. And we have them. And this is what can be done.

Oh my, I see what has to be done out there. And I see all the filigree and gifts and everything else we have. And oh, isn't it wonderful to know, just like right now.

If all of us go back to that church, that local church, assembly, whatever it is, and adapt this, what we've been talking about. Rick's going to remind us the old man is dead. You bet he's dead.

He's buried. Forget it. I want to not talk about the negative things tonight.

I want to accent the positive things. And the positive things is what God has really done for you and the gifts that he's really given to you. You know, not having a goal is more to be feared than not reaching that goal.

And as someone who says, I'd rather attend something great and fail than attempt nothing and succeed. And the secret of success is to find a need and then to fill it. And you know, there's such a need out there today.

And you have the skill. You have the ability to fulfill that need that no one else can. There is no way of these full-time service, quote, unquote, or anyone else is serving the Lord in more times than we are to reach those people that you're working with.

No way at all. And if we'd only realize that these are opportunities that the Lord gives to us, what a different chain that there would really be. You know, when I think of the psalmist who says, Why art thou cast down? Why art thou cast down? You know, we're not losers.

We are not losers. Now, if you look out in the world today, there's a vast majority of rulers. Do you know what the chances are of you being born with leadership? Do you know that only between 2 to 4 percent of the people that are born in this world are born with the gift of leadership? Do you know also that only 17 percent more with their education and ability and training and everything else, you put them all together, 17 percent more may be leaders, which is only 19 percent that's got a chance of being a leader in this world? That's real.

That's the human stats that you have. Let me tell you something. When you become a new creature in Christ Jesus, those stats go out the window.

You do have the ability. You have the skill. And God wants to use it.

That's why you're here. You're here for a purpose. Not to endure things, but to enjoy things.

And you know, that really got me. I think of Peter's mother-in-law, and when we were over in Israel with Eddie and Hurley, you know, we got out of Galilee, and if Peter's mother-in-law, you know, really lived where they said it was. Being a real steep man, I kind of made sure of that foundation.

I didn't tell you that. That was a big house, Eddie. That was a big house.

If she lived where they said it was, she lived in a big house, and besides, Peter was no poor guy. Now, I could be going night on mother-in-laws. Times be short.

But anyhow, there's one thing about it. She was sick of the fever, and there's one thing about it. The Lord took time out and touched her, and she was healed.

You know what it says? She rose up and ministered unto them. She rose up, and the first thing she did was minister unto them. And you see, this is the thing that just bugs me to the fact that, you know, you see a lot of them, and you wonder why they won't talk about the Lord.

Man, I've got people who'll talk about little things from here to the kingdom come. I've heard people tell you how to take out a motor and put a motor in. I can tell them all about electronics, and when it comes to mechanical things, don't talk to me.

You're wasting your time. But nevertheless, we have time and ability and knowledge, and we'd love to talk about that. But what we need to be talking about more than anything else is that one whom we love, that one whom we've known.

And it will change your attitude at everything else. And when I think of the gift and the skills that some of them had, and they were used in regards to that, we need to sharpen our gifts. There's no question about it, our skills.

And then, what about our time? And I've got to go quickly about this. Time. Redeem the time.

Time for everything. And there is a verse in Ecclesiastes that says, there's a time to embrace and a time to refrain. In case you young guys don't realize, when you're at Mid-South, the time is not to embrace, but the time is to refrain.

So, remember that. But there's a time under the sun for everything. Alec McKenzie, and he wrote the book on the time trap.

I want to tell you, if you don't read some of these books about time, you ought to, because it'll get you there. Here's what he calls it. He says, time is a unique resource.

It cannot be accumulated like money. It cannot be stockpiled like raw material. We are forced to use it, whether we choose to or not, at the fixed rate of 60 seconds every minute and 60 minutes every hour.

It cannot be turned on or off like a machine. It is irretrievable. But we can make a decision as to how we are going to spend it and how important that is.

You know, today we talk about billions like there's nothing, just absolutely nothing there. Do you know how much a billion really is? Well, I got some figures, and it's amazing. Do you realize it was only 2 billion minutes ago that Abraham was here upon this earth? Just 2 billion minutes ago.

Or she said, don't, you know, just talk about it. Do you realize it was only a billion minutes ago when the Lord himself was here upon earth? Now, here's the shocking thing when you get down to it. Do you know how long the average span of life is upon this earth? Not minutes.

Seconds. 2 billion seconds. And when that has happened 2 billion times, your life has come and your life has gone.

And this is the amazing thing that, as I mentioned, the fact that when we really grasp the thing that in this span the Lord has put us here, and man, we waste time doing so many things. All things are necessary. But when I think of the shortness of time, and you realize as young folks, you've got a lot cut out for you, because of the four and a half billion peoples in this world, there's over one and a half billion under the age of 15.

Two and a half billion under the age of 21. And when you think of figures such as that, you wonder just what's all going to happen. And these are figures that you and I can't comprehend, but we understand to some degree the responsibility that will be for you and me when we start to think of how we must handle

our time.

Walter Scott says, do not squander time, for that is what your life is made out of. And so there's a lot of persons talk about time. But nevertheless, how important it is for us to know that he has lauded ourselves a certain amount of time.

And no matter how short or how long that is, we should use our time for the Lord Jesus Christ. And then as we come to FTE, I was thinking that word energy. Oh boy, that's some of it, isn't it? Especially the last three years, how much energy some of us have spent and got no place.

And you know the economic conditions as well as anyone else. You know, I'm one of these freaks. I never had a paycheck in my life, especially the last three years.

But anyhow, when I was real young, I got in the grocery business. And so I always handled this. Mrs. Forbes, she had a tea room.

And boy, I handled her with gloves on. And she used to come in and she'd tell me every morning, Louis, you can't burn the candle both ends. Of course, they're still telling me that.

You can't burn the candle both ends. And I heard her for so long. One morning I said, Mrs. Forbes, I'm not interested in that.

I just want to know where do you get more wax? And you know what our trouble is, as far as Christians are concerned, is the fact that we get our priorities mixed up and we're all moonlighting out here. And if the husband don't have two jobs because the economic conditions ain't, well, someone has to work. But it's awful hard.

It's awful hard for us to keep a happy medium here and to use these energies. And it isn't so much that we lack energy. It happens to be that we don't know how to use it.

Alan Lackner says how to get control of your time in your life. And he's not even a Christian. But he says planning conserves energy and brings it into the present so that you can do something about it now.

Now, I don't have any argument with senior citizens because I'm getting too near it. But I tell you what I see a lot of them do. They go walking.

And they walk, and they walk, and they walk, and they walk. And we need to walk, you know. But oh, they only had a track in their hand while they were walking.

And so many of them do these things nowadays. And all I'm saying is for us to be able to use this time that we're given while we're doing something, make it count for eternity. And we had lessons time and time again in regards to that.

And then, of course, we don't have to worry about that 12-hour day then when we realize that these things are going to happen. But I was thinking in regards to the energy and the time how things have changed. Do you know that up to two years ago that people 35 years of age and under changed jobs every one and a half years? And people over 35 years of age change jobs every three years? What a society we have.

It isn't settled. And I know the young folks says, well, I'm not going to get caught in the trap my dad did. He went to the same place for 25 years.

Don't get caught in that trap. Don't float around in that cloud either. Get your goal.

Make up your mind what you want to do. And the thing, Lord, that will close doors will open doors. And that's very important as far as what we do.

You know, as I said, I enjoy the stories of the Lord as he came near Jerusalem. And he came to the city of Jericho. It's one of the most beautiful stories, and there isn't anyone that has never heard it.

And when I think of that story of the kids, it really gets me turned on. And I'll tell you why. Yes, not only because the little kids know about it, like we saw them tonight, God bless them.

Weren't they beautiful? Sure was. The same ones are going to grow up to be bigger sinners and smaller sinners. And they're going to have to be disciplined.

Don't forget that, grandparents. But you know, this man, Zacchaeus, when the Lord came there, and I know they say there were two blind men there, and then the theologians argue for about three weeks as you read all the commentary, where the two blind men were this old Jericho or new Jericho, and I'm not interested in that, but the old blind Bartimaeus was sitting there one day. And you know, the most wonderful thing about old blind Bartimaeus, if there was a guy who had nothing to offer, it was blind Bartimaeus.

Would you argue that point? And they brought him out there, and he could have stayed home that day. He probably had a headache. You know, most people do on Wednesday night, you know.

But anyhow, he stayed home, and he could have stayed home. But they brought him out, and they put him there. And so what happened was that, what he said, cried out, you know.

And they tried to shut him up. He said, oh son of David, have mercy on me. And he made him to see.

I want to tell you, that would have been a sight to behold, wouldn't it? That guy in that old old rag, blind guy in the city of Jericho there, jumping up and running down and taking off. But there was another guy there, you see, Bartimaeus had to be brought up, but there was another guy there had to be brought down. His name was Zacchaeus.

He was the first jogger I read about in the Bible. He ran ahead. It says that he ran.

Every Sunday morning I see him running. They're not running to the Lord, they're running away from the Lord. And boy, you just see him jogging all the time.

And I can see this guy who really had a guilt complex, if anyone ever had, because he was a tax gatherer. But he knew the Lord was going to be there. And you know the story, you've heard it time and time again, just a few things you want to bring out about, never saw before, was the very fact that he ran ahead.

So therefore we know that he certainly had energy, right? And he had skills because he climbed that tree. I'll tell you, the tree I saw over there, Sycamore tree, was no small tree. I'd hate to get with my 230 pound six foot three frame up there.

But he got up there, he was a small guy, and he had a desire. And he was up in that tree, you see. I might ask you too, what tree are you in? What tree is it that you're in? And sometimes we got to be brought down out of that tree.

And the Lord was walking by, and he told Nicodemus to make haste. Oh, come down, come down, I must abide in your house. I can see old Nicodemus says, oh no, my wife hasn't got the beds made.

He can't come to my house, no way at all. And after all, you know, we kept missionaries two days straight, get the fun there too. No one keeps them anymore, they send them to a hotel.

But I keep them anyhow, you see. And so he says, I'm sitting here. And he says, I can't take him home.

I can't take him home. He had all the reasons in the world not to do it, because after all, he hadn't had a chance to talk with his wife. But you know what? Didn't make any difference.

He was not only had the energy to run, the agility to climb, but he had the ability and the sense enough to open up his heart. And if anyone ever heard this verse and understood it, it was old Zacchaeus. If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

And that follow me is a continued action. Rick will tell you that. It's not something that you made a profession 20 years ago or 10 years ago.

I'm not asking you how you followed him. I'm asking you today, are you following him? Are you following him? Not in tradition, but with prayers and really living a life that's filled with vitality. And when I see Nicodemus, I don't know how much he understood when he came down from that tree.

But I know one thing. He was a disciple when he came out of the house. We'll never know what happened.

Now, what do you read about Zacchaeus? What do you read about Zacchaeus? Nothing more than I know of. But you know what he said? Hey, man, if I've taken something wrong, you know, I'm going to restore it for a fool. You need a greater testimony of that.

There's a lot of people who want to become Christians today that they've got a background that should be straightened around. And there may be some debts that they owe. And just because you think you become a new Christian today and all that stuff is forgetting, the creditors won't forget it.

I'll tell you that right now. Straighten out your affairs. Straighten out anything that's possible for you to do.

If you are a Christian, straighten out that affair. And it's amazing how the Lord can use you, because he can't use you until those things are straightened out. But he sure certainly had wealth.

There's no question about that at all. And hundreds upon hundreds, we find out, have been saved at camp. And we often wonder just how far have they gone on for the Lord.

Some of them turn back, and some of them go on for the Lord. And oh, how thankful we are for those who really were not only saved last night, but for those who were thrilled and gave their testimony, their experience last night. And young people, I just challenge you that 60 days from now, you remember those things.

Remember how precious Jesus Christ was for you. I've been coming to camp for years and years and years. And it's easy to have a high point here.

But I encourage you that as you go back, if you've never taken your stand for Jesus Christ in that school or that job, whatever you have, take that stand now. Never forget when I was in the army, man, the thing that

I hate the Lord about more than anything else is every time I found a couple Christians, he moved me on. And I think a lot of people are that way.

He moved you on. He had another job to do. You talk about wealth.

You talk about tithing. You talk about giving. That's what we're going to get to now for just a few minutes.

And then I'm going to close. Because I think it's the most important thing. If the Lord, someone says, if you're not good looking or 20 and strong at 30 and rich at 40, you're never going to be good looking, strong, or rich.

At 21 years of age when I was drafted in the army, people forget that. Left my job and everything else. You know what? \$21 a month.

\$21 a month. Well, I thank God that he laid it upon my heart that a good news publishing company, Clyde Dennis who started that was a fellow from Iowa. And I was able to send \$1 a month to the Good News for Tracks.

And there are those here that can tell you how they started out to serve the Lord and they didn't have much. And now there's men out here are blessed with thousands upon thousands. And they're going to be the stewards to be able to manifest and to handle that because our Lord is gone at this particular time.

And he has put that house. You think you own that house? Forget it. You don't.

Not only does the mortgage company own it, but the Lord even got a first name above that. A first name above that. And you think, oh, these cars.

I can remember when Christians bought cars to haul people to Sunday school. Now we find they have the fastest car. Do you use your car for yourself or do you use it for the Lord? It's nothing wrong with having a home, but how do you use it? And these are the things that are awful important when it comes to giving.

And I tell you, after babysitting with five kids for about 25 years, I don't want to babysit tomorrow. But anyhow, in closing, I just want to say this, and there's a lot more that I could say on stewardship. You can do something, and you will do something.

If there's one thing wrong in our church fellowship today, it's our brethren who give their full time to serve the Lord. And we sit there complacently in many places. And the elders, I'm speaking as one myself, is not as exercised as we should be.

We say they live on faith. Do you ever go down to the grocery store and try to buy a loaf of bread and tell them you're living on faith? Hell, terminologies are beautiful, brethren. Oh, they sound awful good in that little pew that we're warming on Sunday morning.

But we got men that are giving their life. What are we giving? There are young men today who are educated, filled by the Spirit of God, that are wanting to go out and to do something in the Lord's work, and we are not encouraging them. We have dozens in the family today, and we better wake up to the fact that if we don't use them, we're going to lose them.

What is my responsibility as an elder? What is my responsibility as one who is older? To pat them on the back and say, hey, go on, it's your work. If your assembly is not moving, you get someone young in there

that will move it, and they'll move it. They'll move it.

Now, you might have to change your ideas and your thoughts a few things like that, but don't move it. And anything I hate, I'm with Eddie, anything I hate is I listen to these radio stations, you know, and they're appealing for this and appealing for that, and I'm not appealing for anything. I'm just appealing that we will take a resource for the Lord.

It will take our skills. We'll take our time. We'll take our energy.

We'll take our attitude, our dedication, our resources, and use it unto the Lord. And you know, I think of those two brothers, and they said, hey, Lord, you know, they were together. Someone must have died because they hadn't inherited.

But anyhow, they said, hey, speak to my Lord. Speak to my brother. You know, how we're going to divide that inheritance, you know? Speak to my brother.

Hey, that was so simple. If they'd given it to Horton Haven, they wouldn't have to worry about dividing it. It's just that simple.

And you know, I say this in all seriousness. I have been executive of state of older sisters, and this, Eddie, I've got to say. Your good intention of where your money will go when the Lord calls you home is not enough.

You must have legal documents. You must know what you're going to do. There are too many 42nd cousins sitting down on the bar Saturday night that that money should have been used for the Lord's work on Sunday.

That happens. Am I speaking to an older person here today, and you've got good intentions about where you want your money to go to the Lord's service, to the Lord's work, or something like that? Is your house in order? The one who went to the far country is coming back. And you know what's so beautiful about it? Invest it now.

You don't have to wait, you know, until you're gone. He paid big dividends today. And because of the return of Jesus Christ, it's so near.

I think it behooves all of us. I think this economic condition that's happened has been good for all of us. And there's no one been hit any harder than I have being a Yankee up there where homes don't sell.

But as I say, I think it has taught us a lesson. But now it's going to come back someday. It's going to come back.

Are we going to remember these lessons, you know? Right now, we can get our house in order so that the money can be used for the furtherance of the gospel. Oh, there's so much to say. But isn't it wonderful to know that you and I are stewards.

We are the one that's managing the Lord's business as he's gone back home for just a short time. And I could tell you about the parables about the 10 pounds, the 5 pounds, and all this and that, and you know it as well as I do. I just want to ask you in closing that if we're Christians, and we really believe in some of these truths that we've been taught here this week, as we leave here, our life cannot be the same.

Our life cannot be the same. You can't go back to that old rut that you were in. You can't go back with all that theology and claim that you've got a lot of answers if you're not in touch with those around about you, and you don't really love the Lord's people.

So, I would encourage you. I would exhort you. You do have skills.

You do have possibility. You do have the energy. You do have time.

You have all these things. No matter how little or how much, let's use them for the Lord Jesus Christ. Father, we just want to thank you for what you've done in sending your son, the Lord Jesus Christ, and how much it means to us.

Oh, our Father, there are so many things that we realize that we've come short of. But our Father, there isn't anyone here tonight that cannot be used for your honor and your glory. We realize how little skills we have, how little energy and time and ability we have.

So, Father, we would ask thee tonight, whatever that is that we have, may we more than ever be willing to say, take me, Lord, and use me. Help us to take up the cross, to deny ourselves. And our Father, we'll be careful to give thee the praise and the glory, for we thank thee in his

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