

The Great Commission - the Impossible / Possible Task

by Paul Washer

The sermon emphasizes the importance of the Great Commission and the need for believers to be obedient to God's call to preach the gospel to all nations, highlighting the anointing of the Holy Spirit, the proclamation of the word, and the power of the gospel.

Duration: 57:17

Scripture: Psalm 91:1, Ezekiel 2:7, Matthew 4:1-11, John 3:8, 2 Timothy 3:16, Hebrews 4:12, Revelation 22:18-19

Topics: "Great Commission"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of preaching God's word without mixing it with our own ideas or clever narrations. He emphasizes the need for preachers to spend more time with God than anyone else in order to deliver a stirring message. The cure for spiritual death, according to the preacher, is prophecy - the speaking forth of God's holy word. The preacher also highlights the deplorable condition of mankind, emphasizing that they are dead in their sins and in need of conversion. He concludes by emphasizing the need for commanding and compelling preaching that calls people to repentance and salvation.

Transcript

Please open up your Bibles to Ezekiel chapter 37. While you're opening your Bibles, I would like to, first of all, thank the people who have led the worship here tonight. It's.

It's been a real help to my tired soul, a real blessing. A real blessing. Also, I would like to tell you what a privilege it is for me to be here with you whenever I'm in a place like this, I kind of just feel like the field mouse that got in the building because someone left the door open too wide.

But it is a great privilege to be here. As I read this text and as I try to expound some things about it. I would appreciate it.

If you would not get overly excited. I would appreciate it if you would not say amen very much. Because I have found that sometimes that transfers.

It bounces the truth off of us and it doesn't allow the truth to come in to our own hearts and minds. You can say amen, things like that. But what I really want to encourage is.

I'm not here to talk about somebody else, I'm here to preach to you. And as I preach to you, I am also preaching to me. I want to take that with a high degree of seriousness, I want you, as I want me to change.

I want to be more than I am. I want to be a better instrument, and I know that's what is in this text and what I've studied all week. I have greatly needed it has troubled my soul.

It has made me at times happy, it has made me at times very afraid, so I want you to know this is for you. I'm not talking about contemporary evangelicalism or some monster out there that's not defined. This is for you.

So let's read this text, Ezekiel 37, verse one. The hand of the Lord was upon me and he brought me out by the spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of the valley and it was full of bones, he caused me to pass among them around about and behold. There were very many on the surface of the valley and low, they were very dry, he said to me, son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, oh, Lord God, you know.

Again, he said to me, prophesy over these bones and say to them, old dry bones, hear the word of the Lord that says the Lord God to these bones. Behold, I will cause breath to enter you that you may come to life. I will put sin you on you, make flesh grow back on you, cover you with skin and put breath in you that you may come alive and you will know that I am the Lord.

So I prophesied as I was commanded and as I prophesied, there was a noise and behold, a rattling and the bones came together, bone to its bone. And I looked and behold, sin you were on them and flesh grew and skin cover them, but there was no breath in them. Then he said to me, prophesy to the breath, prophesy, son of man, and say to the breath, thus says the Lord God come from the four winds, old breath and breathe on these slain that they may come to life.

So I prophesied as I was commanded and the breath came into them and they came to life and stood on their feet. An exceedingly great army, let's go to the Lord in prayer. Father, I come before you in the name of your son and I praise you.

And I worship you, you stirrer of men's souls, you magnificent God, holy, holy, holy, holy, there is nothing, nothing too difficult for the old God. Nothing, I praise you and I magnify your name. And.

For your grace and your mercy and your power, your royal and loyal love to your people, Lord, so many words. So little power, I long to see, oh God, the dead raised to life, I long to see your son vindicated. Lord, do it now.

Lord, do it now, bring a mighty awakening, oh God, a revival for your name. For your son. A revival, Lord, a demonstration of power in Jesus name.

Amen. Now, in the immediate context of the text we've just read, of course, is the restoration of the nation of Israel. But as you read this text, you see it goes far beyond bringing Israel simply out of exile and back into the land.

And it goes far beyond any idea of the creation of some nation state. What we see here is a magnificent spiritual awakening. We see a mighty work of God.

And for this reason, this text has been used throughout the history of the church. As an example, and to describe the genuine work of God in conversion, whether it be of a single man or the conversion of a mass of people. And when you and I look at this text from that angle, there are many truths that we can glean, that we can apply to the laborer, his missionary work, his evangelistic work and even his pastoral work.

And that's what I want to do tonight, look at this text. Now, let's read verse one, the hand of the Lord was upon me and he brought me out by the spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of the valley and it was full of bones. Now, in this prophet's introductory statements, we can see much of the great need of our day.

First of all, look at the phrase, the hand of the Lord was upon me. It means many things, I'm going to point out only two of them. First of all, it denotes a man.

Who has been separated by God for a specific task. We do not need ministers. Who minister simply because they can do nothing else.

We do not need ministers who minister simply because they see the need. We do not need ministers who minister simply because they have come to some logical conclusion that this is the place they best fit in the economy of God. We need ministers who are called by God and therefore they have no choice.

They have no choice but to preach, but to prophesy. We need men who have an oracle. We need men who carry a burden that would break them if it were not for the spirit of God.

Strengthening them. That's the first thing we learn here. Another thing, the hand of the Lord was upon me, this denotes as the old preachers used to say, of whom I am quite fond, the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

There is an indwelling of the spirit. There is the regenerating work of the spirit. But if you are going to stand and preach, there must be an anointing.

There must be oil. There must be God. Giving you what you need to carry this task, we need men.

Anointed of the Holy Spirit. I want to read to you from William Greenhill. He was a contemporary and a friend of Jeremy Burroughs.

Listen to what he writes. It is it's noteworthy, it's it's it's to hang upon your door about the anointing of the Holy Spirit. He says this, it denotes the virtue and power of the spirit of God which came upon the prophet, not shaking, disturbing and throwing him down, but changing, comforting, elevating and exciting the spirit of the prophet to see divine mysteries.

It denotes also that efficacy and power which set the word upon the heart and conscience of the prophet, that power that subdued all opposition and carnal reasonings and removed all impediments whatsoever that stuck upon the heart of the prophet and hindered him in that work which God would have him to do. It is the spirit of God changing a man and making him able to do what he must do in the gospel ministry to confront hell itself. Now, look at the next phrase.

He brought me out by the spirit of the Lord. We need men who are led of the spirit of God through the scriptures, men who are led of the spirit, not just to be in a certain place or to do a certain thing, but we need men led by the spirit to correctly discern spiritual realities, especially in the context here that we have of Ezekiel. What are those realities? The deplorable, horrifying condition of man.

And the recognition, the solid recognition that there is no hope whatsoever for man in the strength of the arm, but only in the proclamation of the word of God, in the power of the Holy Spirit. That's all that we have. Also, I want you to look that it says finally the prophet.

What does it say about the prophet, it says that God set him down in a dreadful place. A valley that was filled with dead bones, you know what we need today, preachers who are actually out there where the dead are unclustered men who care nothing about religious accommodations or ivory towers, they may use libraries, but they do not love them. They would rather stand out in the midst of a depraved humanity and cry out, thus saith the Lord, hear the word of the Lord.

We need to take all this so-called good theology and get it out there where the dead are. I want us to go on, verse two. He caused me to pass among them round about the whole, there were very many on the surface of the valley, though they were very dry.

Look at the emphasis of the text. He caused me to pass among them round about them. Do you see what God's doing to this prophet? Do you see what God is doing to this prophet? God is going out of his way to do something to this prophet to show him a horrifying reality that we must all see if we're to be of any count to the work of God and the ministry of God.

First of all, he is showing this prophet the deplorable, impossible condition of mankind. He is showing them what he is showing this prophet, that they are dead in their trespasses and sins with no spark whatsoever in the intellect or in the soul. They are doubly dead.

They are true trees uprooted. There is no hope for them. I'd like to grab most of the evangelical preachers today by the back of the neck and do the same thing with them.

Take them on a full course around humanity so that they would see the depravity of man and in seeing the depravity of man, they would see the absolute impossibility of a spiritual awakening of a revival or the conversion even of a single soul. They would see that everything is absolutely impossible from a human perspective. Now, why is this necessary? Because only then will you be cured of using your human ingenuity and wisdom and cleverness.

Only then will you stop doing what is right in your own eyes as a minister and a pastor. Only then will you lay aside Saul's armor and pick up the smooth stones of the gospel. Only then will the ministers in this country and world realize that we as men of God are given only two weapons, only to.

The proclamation of the word of God and the power of the Holy Spirit, an intercessory, enduring, heartbreaking, body killing prayer intercession, those are your weapons. If you choose to use other weapons. Then preaching and prayer, it's only because you're a little boy who wants to play soldier, you're not a soldier, this is what scars a man of God, this is what oftentimes makes his life short.

The proclamation of a heavy burden and nights in prayer, that's what kind of men. And. We need first three.

He said to me, son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, oh, God, you know, here again is a question is a question that must be answered before the prophet can be commissioned. Here is a question that you must answer before you can be commissioned and how you answer this question will determine everything about the rest of your ministry. Now, notice here, first of all, Ezekiel does not presume upon God and say, yes, they can live.

As though he knew the inner workings of the mind of God or all of his decrees before the foundation of the earth, he did not say, yes, they could live as though he had the power to manipulate God's hand and make him do something that was against his will. But notice also the prophet does not doubt God and say no. For he knows that God is a gracious God.

God is abundantly gracious and God is a saving God, a redeeming God, and nothing is too difficult for him. It's as though Ezekiel were saying this in answer to God. God, if they are to live, it will not be by some clever thought or scheme of my own, but oh, God, it will be by your power and your power alone.

It's as though he's saying my heart is not proud, nor are my eyes haughty, nor do I involve myself in great matters. It is not given to me, O Lord, to know the times or the seasons that you have fixed by your own authority. But.

Command it, Lord. Command it, and I will put my hand to the plow and I will prophesy and I will prophesy and I will prophesy to every one of them is converted or until I lay in the dust with them. I will preach.

Listen to what Spurgeon said. Lord, we will be content to leave the secret with the only tell us what thou would have us to do. We ask not food for speculation, but we ask for work that's hardy language from a hardy man.

Now, there are many places where I preach, where right now I would probably have to stop, especially among my wild and zealous street preachers. Where I would have to stop and I would have to warn them of presumption, but that's probably not the case here, is it? Rather than warning you against presumption, I should probably warn you against doubt. Dear brothers, let me tell you something.

There are enough covenants and commissions and promises in both the old and the new testament for us to preach with great confidence and to believe God for a mighty harvest. There is there is I'm so tired. It almost seems as though men are just giving up and running back to the fortress and piling up what they can at the door to keep the enemy from coming in.

That's not what we were made for. There is no place in this book that tells me there cannot be a mighty move of the spirit, even in this country, even at the throne of the very devil who destroys. There is nothing in this book that tells me God cannot convert a multitude in a day.

Under some little plowboy preacher. In a remote place of this country that no one even knows its name. God can turn nations, why don't we believe, why do we just quit? Sometimes I'm asked to answer the question, explain how the sovereignty of God does not diminish people's zeal to go out and reach the lost.

And sometimes I say I can't, because in fact, it does. Yes. Men who hold to great doctrines but fail to apply them as they ought to be applied, the sovereignty of God tells me the dead can live, the sovereignty of God tells me he can answer prayer, the sovereignty of God tells me prophesy, son of man.

Prophesy, son of man, do not allow the name it, claim it. Group to steal from you your rightful heritage. There are promises in the Bible to claim and to stand on with regard to spiritual awakening, with regard to evangelism and missions and the advancement of God's kingdom.

There are great promises that we should grab a hold of. Listen to this. Isaiah 62, just listen on your walls of Jerusalem.

I have appointed watchmen all day and all night. They will never keep silent, you who remind the Lord, take no rest for yourself, nor give him any rest until he establishes and makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth. Did you do you hear that, have you ever read of the widow? Who almost drove the judge mad, look what he's calling for, this sovereign God, he is calling for bold men and women to stand up and say, take me at my word when I say that what I've done through my son wasn't done in the corner of a little piece of land, but it's for the nations.

Stand up and believe God, kneel down and believe God, cry out to God. There are so many promises. Yes, he's decreed everything he's decreed before the foundation of the world.

And yet we have not because we ask not. It's not a time for apathy, narrow shoulders or tight spirits. It's a time for action.

It's a time for believing God, but according to God's word. Verse four, again, he said to me, prophesy over these bones and say to them, oh, dry bones here, the word of the Lord. What is the cure for spiritual death? What do I mean by prophecy? Prophecy.

The speaking forth of God's holy word. Do you think that's strange? Just a word. Speak just a word, all these problems, social problems, governmental problems, economic problems, spiritual problems, and you preacher are going to speak just a word, doesn't that seem kind of unusual to you? Not at all.

Why? Why? If he made the universe with a word, can't he not recreate a man with the same word? It's absurd preaching. I'll give you that. It's absurd.

To the carnal mind, it is absurd. To prophesy to. Dead bones.

To command the deaf to listen, to command. The blind to see it's absurd. But it is the very thing that we have been commanded to do, and it is the very thing that throughout church history, when God's men have stopped fooling around with all their carnal means and returned to the word of God, that singular word of the gospel, it has always been then that the world has been set on its ear, totally turned around because we left all these all these foolish little endeavors and become once again men of the word, speaking forth the word, speaking forth the word.

Listen to me, preacher. Listen. This is.

Preaching, preaching is your great act of obedience. When everyone else tells you, no, it is absurd, it is absurd, you need other things, the plans, the programs. When you say no to all of that and say, I will prophesy, that is your great act of obedience.

And it is also, preacher, your great offering of faith. I will believe my God and with every breath I will preach and he will act. He will.

I want you to again to listen to Spurgeon on this matter. Preaching prophecy, proclaiming the word of God, this is the battering ram, which is to shake the gates of hell and break its iron bars. God has chosen the foolishness of preaching that by it he might save those who believe preaching is the blast of the ram's horn ordained to level Jericho and the sound of the silver trumpet appointed to usher in the jubilee.

It is God's chariot of fire for bearing souls to heaven and his two edged sword to smite the host of hell. His ordained servants are at once warriors and builders, and the word serves them both for spear and for trial.

Preach, then, from morning until night at every time and on all occasions, the unsearchable riches of Christ.

Let's go on. I want to pull three truths from the text that I've read thus far. First.

Notice in this verse for it must be God's word without mixture of ours here, the word of the Lord, not here, my quaint cliches, not here, my moralisms, not here, my clever narrations, not here, my five steps to a well-lived life. No, thus saith the Lord. But the man of God cannot speak that way.

He cannot unless he spends more time with God than he does anyone else. He must dwell in the shadow of the almighty so that when he comes forth, he not only comes forth with a word, but a stirring with a stirring to dwell there. And what is so bad? That we have so much trouble dwelling there, what is so attractive outside of his presence that it's so hard for us to be with him.

Hear the word of the Lord. And brothers, we have the word of prophecy made sure. Where? In the scriptures.

In the scriptures. To spend a life, can you imagine what a privilege is ours? Think about the privilege that belongs to the preacher. His life is to study God's word to make it known.

That's it. Trade that for the world and you'd be a fool. To study, to know God, to make him known, to proclaim him, to prophesy and never forget the crescendo, the apex, the end of all prophecy.

That is the gospel of our Lord and our savior, Jesus Christ, to spend a lifetime. Studying that, studying him. Just to make him known.

Secondly, I want you to realize that it must be truthful preaching about man's condition. Notice that God tells Ezekiel to call dry bones, dry bones. You listen to me carefully.

You downplay the radical depravity, the total depravity of man, you downplay that doctrine and you will downplay the glory of the gospel. You downplay the radical, total, pervasive depravity of man and you will diminish the power of the gospel. Christ did not die for sick people with sparks.

He died for dead people. And it is in the raising of that dead man that God demonstrates, I believe, the greatest power ever demonstrated. I have said this a million times.

The conversion of a man is a greater revelation of the power of God than the creation of the entire universe. He made the universe ex nihilo out of nothing, but to convert a man. To take a massive, radically corrupt.

Corruption, make it holy. Righteous. And new.

Thirdly and finally, it must be commanding and compelling preaching. He told him to live. Brother.

You have not preached the gospel of Jesus Christ, if you explain the way of salvation as clear as a bell and then march yourself off the pulpit and sit down. You have not preached the gospel. The gospel is a compelling message, it is a commanding message, so when you preach the gospel, you beg men, you plead with men, you cry out to men.

To repent and be saved. See, so many men today exquisite in their preaching, but after giving the greatest message of message, it's almost as though they don't care whether or not anyone is converted and then they'll answer me saying, well, we just don't want to get in the way. And I say, how can you get in the way by doing something biblical? Every preacher worth his salt in the scriptures cried out for men to be saved.

Repent. Save yourself, run, flee. Come.

Come, Peter Masters has an absolutely incredible book called Physician of the Soul. Listen to what he says. Compelling, convicting, persuasive preaching, revealing God's mercy and redemption to dying souls is seldom heard today.

Now, listen to this. The noblest art ever granted to our fallen human race has almost disappeared. You think this man has high view preaching? The noblest art that has ever been granted to our fallen human race has almost disappeared.

Read verse five. Thus says the Lord God to these bones, behold, I will cause breath to enter you that you may come back to life. I will put sinews on you, make flesh grow back on you, cover you with skin and put breath in you that you may come alive and you will know that I am the Lord.

So I prophesied as I was commanded and as I prophesied, there was a noise and behold, a rattling and the bones came together bone to its bone. It is our task to preach as dying men to dying men, but only God can make men alive. And yet it's the very thing he promises to do through preaching, through preaching.

Now, here we see both sides of the coin. And listen to me very carefully. And I mean what I say.

Everything. Depends on preaching, everything depends on God, both sides of the coin, everything depends on preaching, everything depends upon God, and here. Is the office of the preacher exalted? Because it is indispensable.

And here is the office of the preacher humbled, it is worth nothing apart from the power of God, I could preach a sermon here on the idolatry of expository preaching. Men think because they've done a proper exegesis, because they have corrected themselves with regard to all the prepositions and everything is neat as a basket of eggs and they calmly get up and share all their great intellect with the community. It takes more than that.

That's not preaching. Preaching must be more than expository, it must be Christ centered, it must be Christ saturated, and the preacher must be filled with the spirit of the living God must hear in this text that we've read these verses. We also see the glorious doctrine of regeneration, the glorious doctrine of regeneration.

That has been reduced down to nothing more than decisionism. The glorious doctrine of regeneration that has been lost in the temple of contemporary evangelicalism, the doctrine that must be rediscovered to have in order to have revival preaching, evangelistic preaching or any kind of preaching at all. The doctrine of regeneration, men must repent.

Men must believe. Men must decide and men must choose this day whom they will serve, but the preacher knows it will not happen apart from a supernatural work of God that makes it possible. Notice in our text here, God knits bone to bone, it's God before there's ever a response by man.

God knits bone to bone and then God wraps the bone in flesh and then God breathes into the bone and it's then that the bone can respond. In the previous chapter in Ezekiel 36, it is God who takes out the heart of stone that cannot respond to divine stimuli because it will not respond to the divine stimuli and he replaces it with a heart of flesh recreated to respond to the voice of God. Let me put it as clearly as I possibly can, men.

Carnal, natural man loves unrighteousness, loves it, and therefore the more a man sees of God in that state, the more he will hate God. And the more he understands the law of God, the more he will kick against it. So you ask me, preacher, well, then how can anybody be saved? What must happen? I don't know, what do you think? Modern evangelicalism tells me this, we must show them Jesus.

The problem is we're just not showing them Jesus. Jesus showed them Jesus and they crucified him. We're just not showing them Jesus.

It doesn't matter if you show them Jesus, if they're blind. And you say, oh, preacher, I agree, therefore we must show them Jesus and God must give them sight. Surely that's enough.

No, it's not. Because if God opens up their eyes and their heart remains the same with a clearer view of Christ, they will hate him all the more. Then preacher, it's hopeless.

How can a man be saved? Why should we prophesy? We prophesy because God comes in his sovereign electing grace. And what does he do? He takes out that heart of stone. He replaces it with a heart of flesh, a new heart recreated with new and righteous affections.

And then when God opens up the eyes of that sinner to Christ, he must have Christ. This whole caricature of God dragging people against their will. I know no one who believes that.

What I know is this, God changes the heart of a man and fills it with new and righteous affections. And when those eyes open up and that heart sees the righteous Christ, it cannot resist him. You could put bulls, fires, hells in between that sinner that's been regenerated and God and he'd fight through all of them to get to Jesus.

Because God has done a work, God has done a resurrection, God has done a miracle, God has done a recreation, do you not understand why John begins his gospel within the beginning? Because Christ's coming represents the new creation, new creation. Now, I want you to also notice that it's not only God's work, but it's a sure work. Look for a moment at verse five, thus says the Lord God to these bones, behold.

I will cause breath to enter you that you may come to life, I will put sin you on you, I will make flesh grow back on you, I will cover you with skin, I will put breath in you that you may come alive and you will know that I'm the Lord. Now, look over for a moment in Ezekiel 36, look at verse twenty four, for I will take you from the nations, I will gather you from all the lands and I will bring you into your own land, then I will sprinkle clean water on you and you will be clean. I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols.

Moreover, I will give you a new heart and I will put a new spirit within you and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and I will give you a heart of flesh and I will put my spirit within you and I will cause you to walk in my statutes and you will be careful to observe my ordinances, not because he grabbed them by the arm and twisted it behind their back and shoved their face into it. He changed their heart and they now love him in his son and they love every word his son has said. Do you see that brothers want us

to go on? This is the basis of the preacher's hope it is.

It is such a mighty strengthening in the dark night of the soul when the preacher no longer wants to preach. God says, I'll do this and I'll do this and I'll do this. And so the discouraged preacher stands up and goes.

Then I will prophesy. I. I will prophesy, not only does he prophesy, but look at our text, brothers. Look at verse seven, I prophesied as I was commanded.

He not only prophesies, he prophesies as he was commanded, he adds nothing to the word of God, he takes nothing away from the word of God. Brother Paul, if you could have. A dream come true.

What would it be that on my gravestone? It was written. He prophesied as he was commanded. Think about it, what an honor to a preacher.

What greater honor, because the the gift and the calling to prophecy is the greatest honor. And to be able to say. I finished, I prophesied as I was commanded, come hell or high water, I prophesied as I was commanded.

Did. Look at verse eight, and I looked and behold, sinew were on them and flesh grew and skin covered them, but there was no breath in them or brothers. Brothers.

What do we see here? We see a discerning preacher. We see an honest and true position of souls. You see, the outward movement, it didn't fool this preacher.

Yeah, there was a rattling. There was a noise. There was a commotion, but this man had been trained by the spirit, he'd been trained by the word of God, he knew there was no breath.

Oh, do we need preachers like that today? He knew there was no breath, full of commotion, full of rattling, but he knew there was no breath. He looked for more than an outward appearance. He looked for more than a raising of the hand.

He looked for more than walking down an aisle. He looked for more than the repetition of a sinner's prayer. He looked for more than someone signing a decision card.

He looked for true spiritual life and inward reality. He looked for the fruits of animation. The fruit of being alive.

Because it says so clearly in verse six, two things about those that God resurrects, he will make them alive and they will know that he is the Lord as religious authorities. Whether you're a pastor, evangelist, Sunday school teacher, mom or dad. As religious authorities.

We cannot. Continue confirming the salvation of people simply based upon their own interpretation of how sincere they were when they made a decision. We can't keep doing this within preacher, what must we do? Using the word of God, teaching God's word.

We help men, women and children discern if there is true repentance through the word of God. We help them discern if there is soul saving faith through the word of God. We help them discern is their perseverance.

What would our forefathers say about all our foolishness in dealing with the souls of men? Now, verse nine, then he said to me, prophesy to the breath, prophesy, son of man, and say to the breath, thus says the Lord God. Come from the four winds, oh, breath and breathe on these slain that they may come to life. There are two kinds of prophecy.

There are two kinds of prophecy. Prophecy. Speaking forth the word of God to men.

That they might obey. And speaking forth the word of God to God that he might fulfill it, I know that sounds bold, I know that that could even smack of arrogance, but again, I want you to think about scripture itself on your walls. Oh, Jerusalem, I have appointed watchmen all day and all night.

They will never keep silent. You who remind the Lord, remind the Lord of what his word, his covenants, his promises, you who remind the Lord, take for yourselves no rest and give him no rest until he is established and makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth. Think about it.

Now, the preacher is not just a proclaimer. He's an intercessor. He's a wrestler, the commission to pray is as demanding.

As the commission to prophesy. How many preachers have I heard tell me? Well, if I turned away from my commission to preach, I do believe rightly that the Lord. I would be afraid that the Lord would kill me, I would I would be so afraid if I turned away from my commission to preach.

And if you have turned away from your commission to pray, do you feel the same fear? Because both of these are just as demanding upon the man of God. Now, there's some things here that I want to be clear. Brothers, young people, young preachers.

Battles are won in the nightwatch, battles are won in the nightwatch. Battles are won in the nightwatch. They are battles are won alone on the knees.

Uction is gained alone on the knees. So much is gained on the knees. Where are these wild men? Who take God at his promise? Where are these men? Who want no.

Armor. Except God's presence, who want no help, but his arm, who will fight with men and fight with God and fight with God about men and fight with men about God to preach, knowing that there's no hope. Except the wind blow.

Except breath come to preach in such a way that you can get no response except the wind blow. All brothers. How many men today carry that mantle, but I can go back just a few generations and count countless men.

We will not be able to achieve. What the men of the Great Awakening achieve by just reading the men of the Great Awakening, but by doing what they did, you know, we're so strange. I hear people all the time when it comes to the Matthew four in the temptation, Jesus defeated the devil because he quoted scripture at the devil.

No, he didn't. He defeated the devil because he obeyed the scripture he quoted. It's a big difference, it's not just reading, it's not just information, it's not just gnosis.

But it's his life, his power flowing through the preaching. Spurgeon said this. Preaching alone does little, it may make the stir, it may bring the people together, there is an attractiveness about the gospel which will

draw the people to hear it, and there is moreover, a force about it which will excite them for it is quick and powerful and sharper than any two edged sword.

But there is no life giving power in the gospel of itself apart from the Holy Spirit. Now, we'll finish by just looking at verse 10. In verse seven, what does the prophet say? He says.

I preached in verse seven. As I was commanded. In verse 10, he's saying, and I prayed.

As I was commanded. So let's add some more letters on that gravestone of ours. I preached.

As I was commanded. I prayed. As I was commanded.

Brothers, the more that we trust in the arm of the flesh with all these strategies and these fads of church growth and everything else that just go past us one one a day and they last about that long to shun all of that and say, no. This is a war that cannot be won by any carnal means, this is a giant far too large to be taken down by human ingenuity, the gathering together of organizations, strategies and plans and programs, no, I'll shun it all and I'll take up my weapons. The proclamation of the word.

Of the living God. Intercessory prayer. And if you would like to add two more, I will give them to you, sacrificial love and suffering, those are the weapons of our warfare.

May we use them well to the exclusion of all others. Let's pray. Father.

You know, Lord, I would request of the. That you would do a mighty work. In your people, that you would, Lord, in all of us, make us more diligent in the study of scripture, make us more diligent in depending upon scripture alone.

Make us more diligent in prayer, help us, Lord. Help us. And Lord, tonight, if there is one that is dead here, make them alive through the life, death, resurrection, exaltation of your son, Lord, help your people in a way that they will know that they have been helped in Jesus name.

Amen.

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