

How I Went to the Congo Missionary Message

by William A. Deans

The parable of the laborers in the vineyard teaches us about God's sovereignty and justice, emphasizing the importance of trusting in His plan and serving Him with faith and obedience.

Duration: 48:32

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Matthew 9:36-38, Matthew 20:1-16, Mark 6:34, Luke 10:2, Luke 15:4-7, John 4:35

Topics: "Missionary Work", "Serving God"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by expressing gratitude for his family's missionary work and the fact that his daughters are also serving the Lord. He then reads from Matthew 20:1-16, which tells the parable of the workers in the vineyard. The speaker emphasizes the importance of being available for the Lord's work, even in the eleventh hour. He mentions four young people who have chosen to serve the Lord instead of pursuing lucrative careers, highlighting their dedication and sacrifice.

Transcript

After the testimony I was privileged to give day before yesterday concerning the way the Lord planned in connection with our going out to serve Him in Central Africa, going back to the time my own grandfather trusted the Lord Jesus on the street corner in Aberdeen when a black man was preaching the gospel and tracing in some measure the wonderful working and providence of God. I thought afterwards of Genesis 45 as Joseph was telling how the Lord had planned the whole thing for the salvation of His people, and looking back we can say that truly the Lord's hand has been wondrously in all that was done. Several people have said, well you stopped too soon, you didn't tell us how you met your wife, and I think it but right that I should tell a little bit about that.

I really should go back to the fact that my wife's father and mother lived in Boston, her father had a partnership in a tugboat business in Boston Harbor, and they loved the Lord Jesus. Both of them, father and mother, were born again Christians, and they were associated with a church there in the Boston area that was very liberal indeed, and they were unhappy about this, and finally withdrew from this church. But they didn't know where to go beyond that.

If they had known some of the truths of simple gathering of believers and perhaps locating a group of believers in the area of Westboro, where they were at that time in New England and in Massachusetts, they doubtless would have associated with those believers. But they knew nothing of this, and so they had a gathering every Lord's Day in their own home. And the father was the preacher, and they sang, and they

passed the collection basket, and they sent money out to missionaries, and they had their own little meeting.

They didn't break bread, they didn't know perhaps that this would have been perfectly in order for them if there were several of them together who loved the Lord. However, for some years they had this little gathering in their home, because they wanted to be where the word of God was loved and obeyed, and there they were. Then the Lord took the father to be with himself, and the mother was left provided for, and she was rearing her family in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

There were five children, one son and four daughters. And when they became old enough to go to college, the mother felt that they should go to a Christian college, and the college that she knew about was Wheaton College, and so she sold the property there in Massachusetts and moved the whole family to Wheaton so that the young people could go to Wheaton College. And all five of them went through Wheaton College and were graduated, and four of those five became missionaries to the conglomerate associated with the Africa Inland Mission.

And the one single girl who was not called to go out as a missionary remained with the mother there in Wheaton where they had their family home, and from that home the other four went out as missionaries. One son and three daughters of that family went out to serve the Lord in the Congo, and the one daughter remained with the mother. And the mother was a true steward of the means that had been left at her disposal, and through the years she very carefully planned her budgeting so that she was able to help her sons and daughters to get out to the mission field and to fellowship with other missionaries who were serving the Lord, particularly in the Congo.

And through the years she helped in building a home for each of those young people on the mission field, and so on. When the time came for her to go to be with the Lord, she had just about enough to take care of her own burial expenses, and that was all. And she had carefully planned it and given it to the Lord.

I never knew the father, but I knew the mother. I knew Mother Windsor very well indeed. A godly woman, and one never lacked in her home.

One always had sufficient. But she was one who herself would deny herself in order to have a little more to send for the work of the Lord. When the rest of us would have butter at the table, she was having margarine in the day when margarine was not very popular.

And if there were scraps to be eaten up, it wasn't that there wasn't plenty of the other, but you would see that Mother Windsor took care of those little scraps so that there might be more to send for the Lord to the mission field. And her entrance into heaven was a triumphant one. And she left the home to the one single daughter who had remained there and taken care of her until the Lord called her.

And that home was the missionary home, so that as we came home on furlough, this was our home. As one missionary son-to-son or the daughters came, they had access to this home as headquarters during their time of furlough and then back to the feet. And the daughter, who was with Wheaton College for a while in the school work, and who later was in the Gary Wheaton Bank, kept the home for this purpose.

And not only were the missionary parents, that is, my brother-in-law and my wife and her sisters and their families welcome in the home, but the children of these families were also welcome. So this became the rallying point for young people who came to college there or who came to school there, Wheaton

Academy and so on. And many of those young people from those original families are now serving the Lord on the mission field, another generation.

Well, how did I meet my wife? Well, that was down in Congo because she went out to the field in 1928 and we went out in 1929, so she has one year more service than I on the mission field. After I went to Iowa to open the station there, I was out yonder in the dampness of the forest and not eating, perhaps as I should have been eating as a single man out yonder, dropping the trees and making a clearing for the mission station of Iowa, not perhaps taking too good care of myself. I came down with a bad case of rheumatism and I was on crutches for a year.

And in course of this year I went to Dr. Becker, who was the outstanding physician in that whole area. First when he was south of us and later when he moved up to Abba associated with the Africa Inland Mission, I was up there for a year. And there was a young lady there.

Well, do I must I go into the details of it? We used to play tennis and we had lots of things in common and this is the way the Lord brought us together. Very definitely as Dora was serving the Lord up there, working with women and girls and particularly those unfortunate children whom we call half-cast children over there, whose parents are white men who have carelessly taken African women and these children are the offspring of this illegitimate union. And she had these children as her special care.

Some of them have grown up to go on to serve the Lord in a wonderful way. And so the Lord graciously led us together, gave us a real love for each other and we had the joy of coming down later and working together at Nyankunde. The Lord has given us three daughters, all of whom were born in Africa, all of whom speak the African language.

And two of those daughters are themselves now commended missionaries serving the Lord in Africa. And the third daughter is married to a Christian man and he is the assistant athletic director at Taylor University. This young man is a godly brother and he majored in physical education, majored in sports.

That was his major in college, so that through sports he might win young people to the Lord Jesus Christ. And he takes teams, for example, in December, takes basketball teams up there to British Columbia and they play basketball with the Indians up there. But in between the halves, in the period of rest in between the halves, they have a testimony meeting and all members of the team are Christians and they tell how they were saved and they give a witness to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Exhibition basketball with the purpose of glorifying the Lord Jesus in testimony. And our daughter is living then at Taylor University and she and her husband are serving the Lord there. And so we have much for which to thank God that as a family, shall I say, as two missionary families, we were brought together in his gracious will and that he has given us three daughters who are going on to serve the Lord, two of whom are on the mission field, one married with her husband, Calvin Williams, serving.

I'd like to read now the portion the Lord has laid on my heart for this morning, and this is the in the 20th chapter of Matthew and our brother Anderson has sung regarding the coming of the Lord. Now we had no previous plan as to this. This is entirely in the Lord's arranging, and yet it fits in wonderfully to the message that's on my heart for this morning.

May we read those first 16 verses of the 20th chapter of Matthew. For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard. And

when he had agreed with the laborers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard.

And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, and said unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way. Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise.

And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing idle, and said unto them, Why stand ye here all day idle? They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He said unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right that shall ye receive. And when even was come, the Lord of the vineyard, his steward, call the laborers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first.

And when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more, and they likewise received every man a penny. And when they had received it, they murmured against the good men of the house, saying, These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us which have borne the burden and heat of the day. But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong.

Didst thou not agree with me for a penny? Take that thine is, and go thy way. I will give unto this last even as unto thee. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine I evil, because I am good? So the last shall be first, and the first last, for many be called, but few chosen.

Now I would like to tell you what this portion means to me. I'm not going into a lengthy theological discussion concerning this. It's the application of it that interests me particularly this morning.

Now the passage has to do primarily with the sovereignty of God. And the illustration is given to show that God is sovereign. In order to understand this story, you have to understand how we tell time out in a land like Africa, or how they told time in the Middle East, and how the Arabs still tell time in the Middle East.

You see, the day begins at dawn. I presume this is east over here. About that, Brother Willie? Or is it over here? All right.

Here's east. I looked to see where my shadow was as I came along, and it looks to me like this would be east. All right.

In Africa, we're just slightly north of the equator. And at six o'clock in the morning, the sun is on the horizon in the east. At seven o'clock, it's one hour up.

Eight o'clock, nine o'clock, ten, eleven. At twelve o'clock, it's right overhead. But that's not the way they designate the time.

They have a much more practical way of designating the time. If the hour is one hour up, it's one hour. And so when the sun touches the horizon, that really is the twelfth hour of the night, is what it really is.

Because the first hour is when the sun is one hour up, and the second hour, and the third hour, the fourth hour, the fifth hour, the sixth hour, the sun is right overhead. And then the seventh hour, the eighth hour, the ninth hour, the tenth hour, the eleventh hour, and the twelfth hour. And I don't really feel you can understand the tremendous import of this passage unless you think in the way they told time in those days.

And perhaps an illustration of this, one of the best illustrations we could give, concerns the Lord Jesus Christ when he was on the cross. We know that the Lord was on the cross from the third hour to the ninth

hour. In other words, from the third hour, which is what? Nine o'clock, until the ninth hour, which is three o'clock.

And so this is perfectly understandable to an African when you say from the third hour to the ninth hour. Well, that's exactly the way they tell time now. They know that the third hour is nine o'clock, and the ninth hour is three o'clock in the afternoon.

And so the Lord Jesus was on the cross in the sunshine, in the brightness of that Palestinian sun, from nine o'clock in the morning until noon there. So the sun was at its bright, and that's the time that darkness came over the face of the land, when the sun was at its highest point. And then down to the third hour, or down to the three o'clock in our time, the ninth hour, there was darkness over the face of the land.

And it was in the ninth hour at the time of the evening oblation, at three o'clock in the afternoon, when the Lord cried, My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me? It is finished, and Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit. It's good to know this way of telling time because you can understand this story very much better. You see, in the beginning of the story, we have the picture of a householder that went out early in the morning.

Now this is at the very beginning, there isn't any time yet, it's just early in the morning. Now this is at, well, we would say six o'clock in the morning, but actually it's the time when the sun hits the horizon, at least in the equator area, the sun hits the horizon, and we have the beginning of the day. And this is, if you like, at the dawn of Christian witness.

This is the time when the Lord called those fishermen, shall we say, those fishermen to follow him that he might make them fishers of men, at the beginning of the Christian testimony and the Christian era. And this is the time when the first call came for laborers to go out into his vineyard. Now I'd like to think of the vineyard in the wide sense of the mission field, in the wide sense of that field which is the world, and the Lord calling workers to go forth, because it was in the beginning, in the very first that we read in Matthew 28 and in Acts 1, how that the Lord gave this commission, as we have in Mark, going into all the world and preached the gospel to every creature.

Here was the call of the householder calling laborers to go out into his vineyard to bring in the harvest. And if there was a harvest in those days, if there was a harvest to be brought in in the time of the Lord, how much more now in these days is there a harvest waiting when the population of the world is so vastly greater than it was in those days. And so in the beginning, the first call came to go, laborers go out into the vineyard.

And then there was the promised reward, the reward that he would give that to them which he had agreed upon, that they would have their promised reward, a penny a day. Now a penny a day may sound like small money in our money, but the actual fact of it is that the equivalent of this penny was a day's wage, a normal day's wage for a man. And that's what the thought is here, that he would give them a promised, fair reward for the labor that they were to engage in.

And so he sent them. As my Father has sent me into the world, the Lord sent laborers into his harvest field. Now notice in verse three, he went out about the third hour.

Now remember, the third hour in our time is nine o'clock. Three hours have elapsed. This is the third hour now.

And there's work that has been done, and yet there remains much to be done, and much of the day remains. And the householder comes out, goes out, and finds others standing idle in the marketplace. Now you know what they do in the marketplace.

He's not speaking about those who went into the market to sell their wares. He's talking about these people who are standing idle in the marketplace. On a land like Africa, we know the danger of that.

Many evil things occur by standing idle in the marketplace. It's the place of gossip. It's the place of arranging all sorts of evil things.

Standing idle in the marketplace, it's the rendezvous for all sorts of people who come not with a job to perform, not with a task. They're going to pass the time away, and they get into all sorts of trouble at the same time. But when the householder came, he found them standing idle in the marketplace.

Idle, and the householder, the Lord, has given orders to go forth and to reap the harvest, and the day is advancing. And so the third hour, nine o'clock in the morning, the third hour, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace. And again, the commission is reiterating, Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right, I will give you.

Abraham knew that when he was interceding on behalf of Sodom, or behalf of the inhabitants of Sodom and Lot particularly. He knew that the judge of all the earth will do right. We need not question the sovereignty of God and His justice.

We need not spend our time worrying about what happens to the heathen who never hear the gospel. Let's not occupy ourselves with this. Let's leave this entirely in the hands of the Lord.

We have our marching orders, there is work to be done, souls are perishing without Christ, and we have the message of salvation. Go ye also into the vineyard, and what is right, I will give you. And they went their way, yes? And further along, in the day of Christian witness, in the day of grace, in the time of Christian testimony, others heard the call and went out as His servants to reap the harvest.

Verse 5. And He went out about the sixth, and did likewise. The sixth hour, now it's midday, and He comes out about the sixth hour into the marketplace, and there they are, idle, at a harvest to be reaped. And they're standing idle in the middle of the day.

And so He says to them the same thing. Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right, I will give you. And they go.

And then again at the ninth hour. So there's a call at the third hour, and there's a call at the sixth hour, and there's a call at the ninth hour. Now the ninth hour is hour three o'clock, the day is moving along now.

And here's another call, the ninth hour. And He says, as He finds them idle, go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right. Now the day is broken up in chunks of three hours.

Third hour, sixth hour, ninth hour, and then ninth. Verse 6. About the eleventh hour. He didn't wait till the twelfth hour.

But in infinite grace, He comes and once again gives us call in the eleventh hour. There's one more hour until darkness, and still the vineyard has fruit to be gathered. And so He goes out about the eleventh hour.

Oh, what a joy it is to know that there is that grace on the part of the Lord Jesus. And I believe as we travel around the country, and as we see in various groups of believers throughout the country, that there is at the present time a sense of call, a sense of the Lord raising again a call in this day, which many of us believe to be truly the eleventh hour, that the day of Christian witness has gone on, and the time is running out, and the Lord now is giving another call in this eleventh hour to go out and reap the harvest. Eleventh hour, He went out and found others standing idle.

Doesn't it seem incredible? With work to be done, that there should still be those who could hear the voice of the husband was standing idle, and night is almost here. What grace! In the sequence and cadence, it would have been the twelfth hour when He would have come, but He came instead in the eleventh hour, and once more gave a last call, because night was coming in which no man could work. And one of these days, the Lord Jesus is coming, and the church will be caught up to be with Him.

The restraining work of the Holy Spirit will not be here, because He that restrains until He's taken out of the way, and over this world there will come a darkness such as we've never known in our day, a real darkness in the world. Of course, for the believers caught up into the presence of the Lord, it's not going to be night, because we're going to be in the presence of Him who is the light of the world, and we're looking forward to that time when there'll be no night there, and the Lamb will be the light of that new city. But for the world, it's going to be darkness, and certainly as far as gospel witness is concerned, it's going to be night.

The time is past. The last call, and He finds some idol. Why are they not on the job in the vineyard when there is so much to be done? Now, I believe in all sincerity that the Lord Jesus is coming, and that He's coming soon, and soon we'll see as we heard in song, we'll see His lovely face, and anything we do in this hour will seem as nothing in the joy of His presence.

It'll be all so worthwhile, any little sacrifice, dare we call it that, when we think of Calvary and His sacrifice there. Any little thing done in His name will seem as nothing at all in view of the loveliness of Himself and His great person. We feel that in Congo today, there is a tremendous opportunity.

We feel that the field is white unto harvest. The Lord said in John 4, lift up your eyes and look on the field, that they're white already to harvest. Don't say they remain as yet three months and then come unto harvest.

Now the fields are white to harvest. And in the Congo we're seeing many souls saved in these days. I don't know if I mentioned to you, I don't think I did mention to you, that believers who were baptized in the Nyankundi area in 1967 numbered 1,121.

Believers who were baptized in the Nyankundi area alone, this is not counting low or in 10 days, this is the Nyankundi area alone. And I just had a letter from one of the elders at Nyankundi, and he gives me statistics for 1968. And he says 1,420 believers were baptized during 1968 in the Nyankundi area.

We don't keep statistics on how many professed to be saved, but the government requires that we keep statistics on how many are baptized, and this we must turn into the government. And that's how we know this so accurately, because we must keep books on this for the government's requirement. How many have trusted the Lord? All I can say is that there are thousands who are coming to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ in these days.

Not because we missionaries are doing more, but because the African Christians have caught the vision and the sense of responsibility in the gospel witness, and they're going out with the gospel, and our testimony is multiplied now a thousandfold by the African Christians who are bearing the word to those who know not the Lord Jesus Christ. The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few, because no man hath hired us, these people said in the eleventh hour. No man hath hired us.

They never heard the call of the Lord. They imply that they're available, but they haven't just understood what there was to do. No man hath hired us.

They're saying in effect, I'm ready, what can I do? We're standing idle, because no man hath hired us. And so the Lord says to them, go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is ripe, that shall ye receive. The same to each one.

In his sovereignty, the Lord is going to take care of the reward at the end of the day. And one thinks of Isaiah in the sixth chapter, you remember, when the Lord said, whom shall we send, and who will go for us? He said, hear my, send me. Available, and yet not in one sense hearing the call in a specific way.

And it's the eleventh hour. Oh, that in this week of missionary conference, every one of us who knows the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior will become involved in this last hour. You remember the word the Lord said concerning Mary, when they were criticizing what she had done, the Lord said she had done what she could.

And it's good to find out what we can do. As some are saying, I'm ready, ready to go. We've mentioned these four young people with whom we are directly in contact.

Four young people who have great promise in this country. I know for example a Jim Deaver, working as a lithographer, as an offset man. I know that he would get a splendid wage in a commercial plant in this land, and yet he's giving this up, and he and his wife are going out to serve the Lord out in Yonkundi with no guarantee of any kind from anybody with the fellowship of his brethren, but going out trusting the Lord.

And this sister who is qualified now as a registered nurse and who is ready to go out and serve the Lord on the mission field. You know how registered nurses are in demand, but she's going out, she's heard the marching orders of the Lord Jesus, and she's going out as his witness out in the Congo, and to serve in the medical work. And so it is with this other sister who's going out in connection with the Emmaus courses to serve there at Yonkundi.

There are those young people who are hearing the call of the Lord, and who are going out. But others have the privilege in these days, perhaps not of going in actual physical presence, and yet in participating in a very real way in the gathering in of the harvest which is so plentiful, and which awaits to be gathered in this last hour that remains before the Lord Jesus comes. And it's for each one of us to be before God to know how we can serve, and what part in the work we are going to have.

I never tire of thinking of Robert Chapman and that remark that he made when he was in his 96th year of the tremendous burden the Lord had laid on him, so that he had very little time for anything else. And it was the burden of prayer for God's people. A planned, organized program of prayer.

For example, get a copy of that book that we heard about last night concerning those workers in South Africa, and make this a project, and or get the missionary handbook that the fields put out, or other missionary lists that give help to missionaries by prayer. We on the mission field who are, yes, we're on

the firing line out there, and we know what it is to be up against the forces of evil. We know what it is to get into a village.

Brother Dr. Harlow and I, going out into the Banyali, we went into some of those villages that seemed like a pall of darkness hung over the whole village. I remember one time in one of those villages a naked woman came. She had just little vines hanging around her body.

And whether I should call her demon-possessed or not, I don't know, but she had all the evidences of being demon-possessed. And when I opened my mouth to speak in the gospel and spoke of the Lord Jesus, this woman snarled blasphemies and obscenities, and cursed the name of the Lord Jesus, and spat on the ground when she heard his name, and went off screaming into the forest. We felt sometimes the very darkness of Satan in those lands, in the Congo, in the forest among the Banyali, for example, in a tribe that had integrated into its customs some of the most immoral and evil customs we know of any place on the earth.

Yes, the Lord has worked for us to do each one, and we can do that which he desires us to do. Some are going out into the field, and some are remaining at home, and who are participating at the throne of grace, and interceding, and giving too. Let us say this openly and freely, giving of their means that workers can spend their time out in mission land serving the Lord.

And at the end of the day, the Lord came. The day was done, even had come, the work was done, the harvest is in. One of these days the Lord Jesus Christ is coming.

And then, oh, what joy it is. But you know, I think that that which will occur shortly after the coming of the Lord, when we're gathered into his presence, and we see his lovely face, and we rejoice in the beauty of the Lord, we stand before the judgment seat of Christ. And every one of us will give account of himself before the Lord.

And we'll give a report on our lives, on those things that have been entrusted to us, the talents that he's given to us, the strength, the physical strength, and the means that he's given to us in this avenue and that avenue. We're going to give a testimony before him there. And I believe it's going to be a place of surprise.

I'm thinking of one brother out in Africa. He's with the Lord now. His name was Marcel Kimarecki.

He was a man who had large legs that were affected with elephantiasis. His legs were tremendous legs. And God called him to go and bring the gospel to a tribe known as the Walesi tribe.

And in this Neunkundi area, he was the first man in that area to go and live in that tribe with the gospel. And he used to come in once in a while, lifting those heavy legs, one leg after another, lifting them over the many miles as he would come in, perhaps to get a little more medicine to put on the wounds that he would have in these legs. And his legs were, his feet were filled with chiggers.

These are little sand fleas that find their way into the leg. They burrow in, and they lay their eggs there. And after a time, these eggs hatch, and as the man was walking along, these eggs would be scattered abroad, and people didn't even like to walk too close to them, lest they would become contaminated with these eggs that were being thrown from his legs.

And I don't think that Marcel Kimarecki ever had any better clothing than simple, unbleached muslin, or certainly the very best would have been that which we would call the overall cloth in this country, the blue

denim type of cloth. I don't think he ever had anything better than that. Very simple in his life.

And then he went out to this tribe, and he preached Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit of God, over much opposition. And there was a time when famine came to that land, and the tribe was there with very little to eat. Their banana crop failed, and they had little to eat.

And everyone who was not a member of that tribe cleared out and went back to their own tribe. That is, everybody except Marcel Kimarecki. He stayed with them.

He said, God has sent me to you with the gospel. If you people suffer, I stay here and suffer with you. And he suffered.

And I saw him after that time of famine, and he was very thin. That is, all except his legs, they were as big as ever. And he preached the gospel, and many souls were saved.

Many came to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. And when finally the Lord called him, the Walesi, who don't touch the corpses of other tribes or the dead bodies of a person of another tribe, many of them offered willingly and with great desire to have a part in the honor of laying aside the body of this apostle to the Walesi, Marcel Kimarecki. He's with the Lord now, and yet his name is frequently mentioned.

We oftentimes hear of him. And there are three assemblies in that tribe at the present time, the Walesi tribe, and many of them say, I found the Lord Jesus through the ministry of Marcel Kimarecki. Yet if you had seen him, or if you saw him, with his physical deformity because of these legs, and with his simple clothing, sometimes torn, with his simple manner of approach, you might disdain him.

And yet I feel that many, such as Marcel Kimarecki, will be a surprise to us at the judgment seat of Christ, and perhaps some who are heralded in the land as outstanding preachers in our land, some who are well-known and perhaps have much notoriety in their work for the Lord, perhaps these will not receive the reward that the Lord is going to give to a man like Marcel Kimarecki, who has so many souls that have been won to Christ through his ministry. It's going to be a time of surprises, perhaps a time of sorrow. I know that every tear is going to be wiped away from our eyes, but when we see the Lord Jesus in that loveliness of which we've heard in songs, will we not feel that all we have done has been far too little when we see him? And when the full import of his work on Calvary's cross dawns on our souls in his presence, I believe there will be regrets thereto.

Certainly when he looks at our work with the eyes of fire, and he sees some wood, hay, and stubble, and it's burned up, and the work of years is gone, certainly there will be sorrow for that. Rather than that work which is for him, and which has the character of gold, silver, and precious stones, which will abide the scrutiny of the eyes of our Lord with his eyes of fire. But he might say, well done thou good and faithful servant, and yet we would say you can hardly say that because we've done only those things which we ought to have done anyway.

At the very best we're unprofitable servants. But all that time could be very near indeed because we're in the eleventh hour now, and one of these days we're going to hear a shout. In the Derby translation it's called an assembling shout.

The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with an assembling shout, and we'll be called into his presence, and then we'll give account of ourselves, and he's sovereign. I don't think anyone's going to say

that the Lord was not just in that day. I believe we're going to recognize in that day that in his sovereignty he knows how to give rewards as the rewards have been earned.

But here's the joyful thing that I would like to pass on to you. It's been a blessing to me in my own soul. Last September I had my sixtieth birthday, and you know when you start when you turn into sixty, and then seventy is a little further on, and maybe eighty, you begin to feel that there's not much you can do for the Lord.

But I thought of this last hour that was given and how that these who came in rather belatedly, they came in to serve, they really received more reward than the others. As the most fruitful hour of all the day was that. And Brother Maxie, who is in Vancouver, in the Granville Chapel in Vancouver, gave me a little book.

I don't know if he knew what effect it was going to have on me, but it's a book by Durbanville Henderson, I think his name is. Durbanville is his nom de plus. And he wrote a book called The Best Is Yet to Be.

And in that he said something that really bucked me up quite a bit. He said that more things in the history of the world have been accomplished by men who are in the age group of between sixty and seventy than any other age group. And the next is the seventy and eighty age group.

Amazing. And when he came down to what has been accomplished in the twenties and thirties, they're way down the list in accomplishment, real accomplishment in the world of history. And I thought, well, perhaps truly the best is yet to be right here on earth.

And these last years the Lord gives us here can be the most fruitful years of all of our lives. Sometimes as I go around and tell about the opportunities on the mission field, tell how we need medical workers and we need workers in literature and we need workers in schools. A number of times I've had some person whose past middle age come up to me in tears and say, you know, I heard the call of the Lord years ago, but I didn't go.

It was because of this person, this girl that I eventually married who didn't want to go with me, or because I had disinterest in business and I wanted to build up my business first, and I didn't go. And that person is in sorrow. I've lost my opportunity.

I turned my heart against the call of the Lord. And the Lord called me to go to the mission field way back there when I was twenty-one and I didn't go. And now I'm sixty-seven.

But oh, the wonder of it all. I thought of that in the next chapter in the twenty-first chapter of Matthew. You know, we have these two sons, the one who hears the word, son, go work today in my vineyard.

And he said, I will not. And afterwards repented and went. And then he went to another and said likewise.

And he said, I'd go, sir, and went not. I think it's very much encouragement about those who perhaps heard the call of the Lord a long time ago and didn't do that which the Lord wanted, but were ready now to give in these hours that remain of our lives. Now, these years that remain of our lives that the Lord be not come, give them entirely to him.

Like those Macedonian Christians, you know, they first gave themselves to the Lord and then to Paul in providing for his needs by the will of God. But first of all, gave themselves to the Lord. Oh, the tragedy of the unheeded call, but the joy of belatedly perhaps, but while there's still opportunity saying now, Lord, thy

will is the rule of my life and all that I have and am is thine in complete yieldedness to myself, because very soon we'll hear his voice and we'll be in his presence.

And so the eleventh hour can well be the most fruitful of the whole life that we have. And this eleventh hour of testimony in the world today can be the hour in which more are brought to know the Lord Jesus Christ than in all the years that have gone before. May the Lord exercise our hearts.

In his grace, he gives another call to us at the eleventh hour. Perhaps we can't go right out to the mission field, but we can get right involved in a very definite, positive way for the glory of our Lord Jesus in participating together in the work of the Lord on the mission field. One more thought and I'm done.

In the ninth chapter of Matthew, the Lord saw the multitudes and his heart was moved with compassion on them. He saw them as they were harassed and helpless, unable to help themselves. He saw them a sheep without a shepherd.

And so he said, the harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few. And then what did he say? Pray, therefore, the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers into his harvest field. You know, if we pray like that, Lord, send laborers into the harvest field, the Lord will send perhaps some of us, some who might be able to go, or the Lord might ask us to let someone go from our family circle to go out and serve him.

There was a young lady in Guelph, Ontario, some years ago, who came to me after we've been having some missionary meetings there. And she said, I believe the Lord would have me go and serve him at Nyankundi and do secretarial work in connection with the literature work out there. And we were so happy.

There was a person, well qualified, a godly young sister. She went home and told her mother, she said, Mother, I believe God's called me to go and serve him on the mission field. The mother's a Christian in fellowship in the local assembly in the city where she lived.

And the mother said, over my dead body. I'm not going to the mission field while I'm alive. And so this daughter, who loved her mother, regrettingly told us that she wasn't going to be able to go now.

She felt she should stay if her mother wasn't in fellowship. And so she waited. My wife and I went to the mission field.

We did five years on the field. We came back home after the five years. And on my heart there was a burden.

Let me go and talk to this mother. We need so badly a secretary like this on the mission field. And one of our first contacts in this country was in the town where this girl lived.

And we were invited to a home. And she was invited as well. And my wife and I were there.

And we were to have supper that night there. And this young lady was there. So we said to her, Betty, one of the things we want to do, first of all, as we're here in this country, we want to go and talk to your mother and tell your mother what a privilege it is to give her daughter for the work of the Lord.

Oh, she said, didn't you hear about my mother? The Lord took my mother to himself just two weeks ago. And now I'm free to go to the mission field. And so when my wife and I returned to the mission field, Betty Partridge went along with us.

And she served the Lord for two terms. And she's had another holiday. She's back there on the third term now serving the Lord.

But oh, what a joy that mother missed because she wasn't willing to let her daughter go. And so may the Lord give us the grace to hear the voice of the Lord in this eleventh hour and to give him what we have, what we can do, that the harvest might be gathered in, because so soon we shall see him. We are grateful to thee, Lord, that thy word can speak to us and can stir our hearts as to our responsibility before thee in obeying thy command in whatever way we can, in doing thy will and gathering in the hearts.

We commit ourselves to thee. We thank thee for these happy hours we've spent together, these days of fellowship, which have had much concerning the commission that has been given to us to go forth and preach thy word, witnessing for thee. I pray that thou wilt give that in these days, as we await the coming of our Lord Jesus, that our hearts might be stirred in personal involvement as personal witnesses unto himself, and as well a participation in thy work throughout the whole world.

Bless us now as we separate in the worthy and precious name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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