

Books in the Laundry ~ Witnessing Through Literature

by William MacDonald

William MacDonald shares how discreetly distributing Christian literature can lead to profound spiritual conversations and transformations.

Duration: 9:54

Scripture: Romans 3:28, Ephesians 2:8

Topics: "Witnessing"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares a touching story about a couple facing difficult circumstances. The wife is in the hospital with terminal cancer, while the husband has become blind due to diabetes. Despite their challenges, the speaker offers to visit the wife in the hospital and read scriptures and pray for her. The husband is deeply moved by this gesture and later asks the speaker to share the story at his wife's funeral. The sermon emphasizes the simplicity of accepting Jesus as one's Lord and Savior and encourages listeners to share their faith with others in subtle ways, such as leaving Christian books in public spaces.

Transcript

I live in an apartment building. It had 17 apartments in it, and I've been there 20 years, so the people all know me. I have a little plaque on my door, as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

And I think when the people go by my door, they kind of detour around it, lest they become infected. But I catch them by guile. Every Christmas, I put Christian books down in the laundry.

And they can go, and they can get a book with the gospel in it, and nobody sees them. That's very important. Very important.

There's a book, and there's a little box of Andy's Candies tied onto the book. That's the base. And this might be an idea for some of you dear people.

Really, the books always go. Nobody sees them taken. I mean, they're never taken if anybody saw them taken.

A few years ago, a dear lady upstairs went to the hospital with cancer. Cancer. Chain smoker.

Poor dear. Marge. The same week she went to the hospital, her husband Bill went totally blind with diabetes.

What a week in the life of any couple, huh? The wife goes to the hospital with terminal cancer, and Bill is stricken with total blindness. One day, I went down into the lobby to open the mailbox, and Bill was there groping around. And he said to me, I should explain to you that he's really a wicked man.

He has a most profane mouth. So bad that the building owner had to speak to him about it. He said to me, Marge is in the hospital.

I said, oh, I'm sorry to hear that, Bill. He said, would you go and visit her? I said to him, Bill, I would do anything for you folks at a time like this. Would it be all right if I read the scriptures to her and prayed? He started to cry.

He started to cry there in the lobby of the building, and he blubbered, it would be all right with me. So, I went up to Eden's hospital, and it was a bad day to go for a visit. She had just finished her last chemotherapy treatment, and she was in a visitor's room there, and a lot of people there.

So, I just kind of got down on my knees by the side of her chair and prayed. A couple of weeks later, I was out on the sidewalk, and somebody from the Lions Club was taking Bill for a walk. And I said to him, did Marge tell you I visited her in the hospital? He said, no.

He said, she's coming right up here to the convalescent hospital tomorrow. And I thought to myself, you better visit her. But you know, we have a terrible habit of procrastinating, don't we? It wasn't really a thing that I was eager to do, I have to confess.

But the Lord got a hold of me the Saturday before Mother's Day, and said, you better go. So, I did. I went to the convalescent hospital.

I finally found her room, and it was darkened. And I went in. What do you say? This is kind of an inane question at a time like that.

And I stood on one foot, and then I stood on the other foot, and wondered, what do you say? I should pause to say I'm not an evangelist. He probably detected that by this time. I said to her, Marge, you know, the most wonderful thing in the world is to be saved.

And it was a solemn stillness. And then she said, very weak voice, she said, I know. But she said, I've never been able to do it.

I said, do it. Do it. Do it.

Salvation by work, huh? That's what went through my mind. Salvation by work. What did she... I said, Marge, you know, it's not by anything you do that you get saved.

It's not through your works of righteousness. It's not through joining a church. They never darkened a church.

That wasn't an issue. It's not through it. And she said, I know.

And she was lying almost motionless on the bed. Well, I said, do you think you should do it? And she said, yes, but I've never been able to do it. And I said to her, Marge, it's so easy.

I said to her, really, all you have to do is say, Lord Jesus, I'm a sinner. But I believe you died for sinners. And the best way I know how, I receive you as my Lord and Savior.

And she looked up at me, and she said with that weakened voice, Lord Jesus, I'm a sinner. And then she looked up at me as much as, what was the rest of that? I said, I believe you died for sinners. And she repeated it after me.

I didn't ask her to. I never asked her to say anything. She said, I believe you died for sinners.

I said, the best way I know how, I receive you as my Lord and Savior. And she said, the best way I know how, I receive you as my Lord and Savior. I prayed with her and left and wondered, was that just a procession, or was she real? I went back a few days later, and I said, Marge, do you have peace? She said, I have peace.

Two weeks later, I preached her funeral. And after I preached her funeral, I learned she had read every book she had ever taken from the laundry. Sow the seed for 20 years.

God uses it. And she had read every book she had ever taken from the laundry. Her husband came to me, and he said, would you take Marge's funeral? I said, I'll take it on one condition, that you not try to pay me.

Because you know, they all think, oh, well, all they want is your money. I said, that's the only condition I'll take it on, that you not try to pay me. I said, let me, sit down, Bill, let me tell you what happened in her room before she died.

And he sat down and listened. And he said, would you tell that at the funeral? He said to me, I said, well, that will be the funeral message. She preached her own funeral message.

And shortly after that, a knock came on my door, and it was her adult son by a previous marriage. And he said, I've come to ask you if you'd take my mother's funeral. I said, I've already told Bill I would take the funeral as long as he didn't try to pay me.

And he said, would you tell that story? And I said, yeah, but sit down and let me tell you first. I wanted to get the most mileage out of it possible. And so, he sat down.

You know, that dear fellow's in eternity today. He died not long ago, cancer in one of the eyes, and it had spread. It's so simple.

Dear friend, if you're here tonight without the Lord Jesus, it's so simple. Look up into his face and from the bottom of your heart say, Lord Jesus, I'm a sinner. But I believe you died for sinners.

And the best way I know how, I receive you as my Lord and Savior. When you do that, God saves you. And you can know it on the authority of the word of God.

Shall we pray? Father, we thank you for this privilege that we've had to hear this tabernacle resounding with praises to your great name. And oh Lord, you're worthy, worthy of it all, and far more in addition. Our hearts have been lifted up as we've been reminded of our blessed Savior and his tender care for us and the hope that shines before us tonight.

And of course, our prayer is, as always, that if there is someone here and they've heard all this, they know the gospel message, and yet they belong to the group known as the fearful and unbelieving, we pray that they might step over the line tonight and say yes to the Son of God. We ask it in his worthy name and for his glory. Amen.

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