

Question and Answer Session Answers From the Word

by William MacDonald

William MacDonald addresses key questions about the relationship between the church and the kingdom, the charismatic movement, and the role of Christians in society and personal faith.

Duration: 48:07

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Luke 6:20, Luke 14:33, Romans 8:13, 1 Corinthians 16:1-2

Topics: "Question Answer"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of Christians using their talents and gifts to serve God and spread His truth. He mentions the need for believers to be actively involved in society and to be a positive influence in areas such as politics, war, art, and culture. The speaker references Matthew 5, where Jesus teaches that believers are the salt of the earth and the light of the world. He encourages Christians to live a balanced life and to be obedient to God's leading, while also being mindful of the practical responsibilities and challenges they face in society.

Transcript

Questioner 2 Do McDonald. You made a reference to a difference between the church and the kingdom of God. If I am a member of his church, what is my relationship to the kingdom of God? Answer 2 Two aspects of the kingdom of God in the New Testament, and I like to picture it by two concentric circles.

There's the outward aspect of the kingdom of God, and that includes all professions. You get that in the parables in Matthew, Chapter 13. Everyone who professes to be a subject of God as king is in the kingdom of God.

For instance, you have the wheat and the pears. The pears aren't real, but they're part of the kingdom. This is the kingdom of God in itself.

Questioner 3 This is for Bill Conard, and the reason it's directed at him is because he's a Christian. I've combined two questions here. Please comment on the charismatic movement today.

No criticism, please. Give us Scripture references, but the emphasis that I'm asking Bill Conard to take is on the latter part of the question. What is the effect of the charismatic movement in the Catholic Church in South America, and how has this affected evangelistic work? Answer 2 I think the charismatic movement

is one of the phenomena of this day that is definitely a sign of God's moving in our period.

There have been several waves of religious emotion that swept across the United States, and these give us fantastic opportunity to present the truth of the gospel. The charismatic movement shows the lack of faith and a lack of reality with God that most people are feeling. Now, there's a very high emotional pitch we have to work on, because people can go high on emotion for a certain evangelical Bible-believing and practicing Christian.

Yes, this goes into the subject of headship. Mr. McDonald, you mentioned desecration of the Lord's Day. In the Old Testament, it comes home rather close in the New Testament.

Eric Erickson Think of the young man and the people who are surrounding you, the elders in your local assembly, your closest friends, so it's not something that you just feel and you do. There is an inner push that comes from the Holy Spirit, and there is an outer coincidence in this same direction. That's why you have the right hand of fellowship of those who are going to be behind you in the work.

At least that was my experience, and I think that goes along with the scriptural principles. Now, Mr. McDonald, Mr. McDonald defined the ideal citizen with several scriptures. One, James 2.5, says, God has chosen the poor of this world, etc.

Since I am rich compared to the greater percentage of this world, could I ever be an ideal citizen? Mark 10.21, should this command be taken literally by all those who would follow Christ today? Remember, Mark 10.21 was the answer of our Lord to the rich man, Go and sell all that you have and give to the poor. If we would take this literally for today, should we be concerned with who gets our savings? With so many groups crying to the Lord's people for support, how does one decide where to give? In today's typical middle-class assembly, how can we know who is poor and or how to find poor people? If we keep only what is needed to meet our current needs, how is current defined? I believe what the New Testament teaches is that we as Christians should work hard for the supply of our current needs and the needs of our families, put everything above that in the work of the Lord, and trust God for the future. That's where the life of faith comes in.

There are moral problems connected with being rich. In a world where 7,000 and over half of the world's population is poor, the Lord Jesus says, so I cannot tell the only perfect life that has ever been on this earth. He owns nothing and left nothing.

But I believe that there are a real view of Christ in luxury, who, though he was rich, yet thought he might be rich. He didn't do that. And one of the works that I just take from the New Testament is the work of the Lord.

Thank you. I have a general question here which has bothered as many people I know sometime during their lives. It is related to the emblems that we use at the breaking of bread at our communion service.

Why do we use leavened bread in our remembrance feasts when the Jews could not have it in their houses at the Passover time? Leavening is a type of sin, and in him was no sin, right? The same question is asked about the grape juice and wine, and some ways insist on one and some on the other. Maybe Brother Bill would give us a word on this. There's no question in my mind that when the Lord instituted the Lord's Supper, that the bread on the table was unleavened bread, and the wine was, which kind of is the opposite, isn't it? The fermented He instituted the Lord for anything to see the Lord.

Maybe some others would have something. All right, I'm going to address this to Bill Conard. If an unsaved father forbids a Christian mother to teach her child her fundamental beliefs, should she go against his wishes and fulfill her responsibility to God? Our basic responsibility to God.

We have to be very careful how the example of a God. I would say, yes, she should do what she can to teach her child. James chapter 5. The question is, would you please comment on James chapter 5, verses 13 and 14.

Is any among you afflicted? Let him pray. Is any merry? Let him sing psalms. Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.

And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up. And even if they have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. I think it's good to see the gem in its setting, otherwise we might come to some very erroneous conclusion.

A lot of people come to these verses and they take it as a blanket promise that when somebody is sick and you call the elders and they come and anoint him with oil and pray over him, that he will be healed. That is not true. If you see these verses in their setting, I believe you'll see that there's a very consistent progression here.

You have sin, confession, prayer, and healing. And I personally believe, I know that there's disagreement, and it's perfectly all right, I personally believe that this refers especially to a person who has sinned, and perhaps of a public nature, that has brought disrepute in the name of the Lord and the assembly, and as a result of that sin, he has been taken down with illness. It's a promise from the word of God that if he calls the elders, he confesses, they anoint him with oil, and pray with him that God will raise him up.

Now, let's look at the passage and see this connection between sin, confession, forgiveness, healing, prayer and healing. It says in verse 15, at the end of the verse, if he has committed sin, it doesn't say he has, it says, if he has committed sin, they shall be forgiven. It says in verse 16, notice the connection between confession and healing, confess your faults one to another and pray for one another that he may be healed.

Confession, healing. Elijah is mentioned in verse 17. There was sin in Israel.

Elijah prayed to God, and the drought came. Israel turned, Elijah prayed to God, and the rain comes. Another illustration of the same thing.

There was a moral connection here between sin, confession, healing. And then finally, it says in verses 19 and 20, Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, there it is again, sin, do err from the truth, and one convert him, let him know that he which converted the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins. So I believe in the passage you have a very recurring connection between sin, sickness, confession, prayer, and healing.

And I take it that this refers especially to a man who has sinned, and God lays him low, and he realizes why he's laid low. Nobody else might know it, but he knows why. And in that condition, he calls for the elders, they come, they pray, they anoint him with oil, and it's a promise from the word of God that he will be raised up.

It's a judgmental sickness that has come upon him. Now, supposing somebody is in the fellowship and they're sick, and maybe they don't see the passage this way, and they call the elders to come and pray over them and anoint them with oil. If I were an elder, I would do it.

I would do it. But I would do it on the understanding that that not being the case, that perhaps this sickness not being the result of sin, it is like I would pray and commit them to the Lord, but I certainly wouldn't demand healing from God as many do today. Ken Fleming, what does it mean to be filled with the Holy Spirit? If we do something in the Spirit, witnessing, for instance, does it become easy and free of frustration? How can you make sure you are witnessing in the Spirit and not in the flesh? Sort of a two-barrel question for you.

Actually, three barrels, if I heard it right. According to Ephesians 4, we are commanded to be filled with the Spirit. And this, therefore, is not something that is voluntary or we do it if we please, but it is obligatory on all Christians that we should be full of the Spirit.

In other words, the Spirit of God should have the control of our lives and that the whole general tenor of our lives should be toward not only knowing more about God and His Word and serving God in terms of a local assembly. If we do something in the Spirit, because we are commanded to witness in the Word of God, it has to do with the whole character. And if I am happy that I am obeying my Lord and that the Spirit of God is leading me to witness of Him, then I certainly will be free of frustration.

We have a young fellow at a mass, or did last year, his name is Angelo. And Angelo was very keen about witnessing, keen on witnessing that he broke school rules to witness. He didn't come in in time of the evening.

He didn't bother studying his lessons. He said that God had told him, that we live a balanced life and a life that is pleasing to God. Now I have several questions directed to Mr. McDonald regarding Christians in politics, war, art and culture, joining of organizations, political organizations such as John Birch, voting, and the most concise one is, Mr. McDonald, are you sure those aren't our bombers? That last question goes back to an incident I told about a young fellow who was taking keen delight during the war in our bombers going over Germany and dropping bombs on innocent women and children.

And he went up to a servant of the Lord and he said, I hear our bombers were over Germany last night, and this servant of the Lord said, I didn't know that the Church of God had bombers. And the question is, are you sure those aren't our bombers? Well, if that means are you sure that they aren't the Church of God's bombers, the answer is yes, I'm sure. The Church of God doesn't have bombers.

It has dynamite in the Word of God, the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, this power in prayer, but the weapons of our warfare are not carnal. Is there any place in politics for a Christian? My answer is a flat no. Jesus said concerning his disciples, they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

He said, my kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight? Politics is by its very nature corrupt. You might not get that by reading the paper day by day, but it is.

Then it's a system of compromising. As I mentioned the first day here of our conference, a Christian is in an adversary relationship to the world. You see it very clearly in the life of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And the New Testament is devoid of any encouragement to me to think that I should engage in politics. The general aim of politics is to make the world a better place to live in, but that's not my calling in life.

God's purpose for this present age, as we mentioned, is to take out of the Gentiles a people for his name.

And the aim of politics and the aim of the Christian, well, they're quite different aims, and they're achieved by quite different methods as well. I believe that we as Christians have the answer, and the answer is the Lord Jesus Christ. I really believe he's the answer to the problems of the world.

There is no other answer, and I'm not going to drop my sword to pick up a fake weapon. There are some things even in life that are good, but remember that good is often the enemy of the best. And I think that in the Christian warfare we have what is best, and we should not step aside to go off on some other tangent.

It was mentioned in the question here. Well, it's all the same lump of wax as far as I'm concerned. I see no place for voting.

I don't condemn anybody else to vote. If you feel free that you can vote, you go ahead and do it. But I see no place for it, really, in the life of the child of God.

What about the military, further on in that question? I think that's a very good question, too. Although I myself served in the armed forces, I think that I have had other thoughts about it since then. On the other hand, I don't go around in a judgmental condition, looking down my supercilious nose at those who are in the forces.

I know that God is using many of them today, but the whole idea of taking human life seems so foreign to the spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ that it certainly raises very grave moral problems. And when we get to heaven, I won't be at all surprised to find that those who've adopted that position were on the right side of the line. I'll just let any of our panel that would like to speak to the question.

That's right in keeping with our messages that we've had and our general conference theme. Go ahead. I believe that God created us in His image and gave us many different gifts that we're to use for His glory, many different expressions.

And I think that one of the beautiful things that we can do as Christians is take all the areas that God sets before us and seek to use them as vehicles for expressing His truth. This means that there are tremendous challenges, intellectual, practical challenges in society. And I do not believe that it's right for us as Christians to permit the devil to be the main spokesman in many areas of our life.

We complain about some of the decadence that is taking place in our nation today. What are we doing practically to go against that? What are we doing practically in our society, in our school district, to turn around the thing? I believe that we as Christians have a distinct responsibility. I believe that the Lord taught us in Matthew chapter 5, you are the salt, you are the light of the world.

And it's laid before God, His talents, the things that God has given us. We use them in every way possible. If we have leadership ability to stay out of it completely, you can't get involved in, you might even be removed from the field and it would bring disgrace upon the name of the Lord.

And among the Africans that I have seen, we've had some bright young men that have got a good education, comparatively good education. Those that have gone into politics have not maintained their Christian testimony and they have not been a benefit to the assembly because no man can serve two masters. Some of them have been corrupted by political power and the opportunity to get wealth.

And so I would just say from my own experience that I believe for the majority of us anyway, it's not our calling to enter the political field or to encourage others to do so. First Timothy chapter 6. Does what I say mean that the Christian camp have a home? An automobile? What were some of the other things? A business. It says here, verse 6, First Timothy 6, But godliness with contentment is great gain.

For we brought nothing into this world and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment, let us be there with contentment. Honestly, some of these verses might just as well not be in the Bible.

Isn't that right, students? Having food and raiment, let us be there with contentment. Now that word raiment, the word really means covering and it refers just as much to the roof over your head as to the clothes that you wear. So what the verse is saying, having a house to live in, clothes to wear, and food to eat, let us be there with contentment.

Of course, of course, I can see where it's better discipleship in many cases for a family to be buying a house, to own a house, than it is to rent. Because when you rent it, then you have at the end of the year, as I do in my particular case, you have a handful of rent receipts. Whereas when you're buying a house, you're building up an equity in that house, and you can use that house like the home at Bethany where Lazarus and Mary and Martha live.

You can use it for the Lord. David Livingston said something that has been very helpful to me in sorting this out in my own life. He said, I am determined to hold or possess nothing except in relation to the kingdom of Christ.

And I really think if we would follow that rule, it would answer a lot of these questions. You say, well, what about you, McDonald, you hypocrite? I say, you have a Chevrolet out there. Well, that's true, I do.

Guilty. If I could possibly get along without it, I'd be delighted. I'd be delirious.

For the kingdom of Christ. I have a typewriter. I have books.

I have these things. I seek to use them for the kingdom of Christ. But I think that's helpful, and I commend it to you.

The words of David Livingston, I am determined to hold or possess nothing except in relation to the kingdom of Christ. I would like to go on to one other question. This is somewhat of a plaintive question.

I don't know who wrote it. I don't know if it's a man or a woman, a brother or a sister, but listen to it. For years, literally, I have put questions in the box.

At no time have I ever had them answered. Of circumcision, as it is contained in the Scripture, please, with three exclamation marks. I'm going to ask Brother Fleming, since this is one of the teachings of Romans, if he would answer the question.

Circumcision in the Old Testament, as first given in the book of Exodus to the Israelites, was a mark of their covenant with Jehovah, their covenant God. God set apart His people and demanded it by a type or a symbol that was a cutting of the flesh, that this is spiritualized in the New Testament to mark just the sort of thing that we saw briefly in Romans 8, verse 13, where we are to mortify the deeds of the body. And I look at spiritual circumcision in two ways.

First of all, that God has set us apart, marked out for Himself. And secondly, that we are to make this practically true in daily mortifying or putting to death those things which are fleshly and wrong.

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