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The Disciple's Impact



Genuinely Following Jesus - Steve Gregg

Steve Gregg discusses the impact that disciples can have on the world, outlining God's vision of conquering the world and bringing all to His side. Gregg uses biblical promises and references to emphasize that through evangelism, prayer, and living a life of righteousness, disciples can bring glory to the Lord and help fulfill His vision. He stresses the importance of prayer, self-defense, and spiritual warfare to combat worldly influences and ensure that Christians remain steadfast in their faith. Ultimately, Gregg highlights the great reward in heaven for those who impact the world in Christ's name.

Transcript

This lecture is called The Disciple's Impact on the World. And we could not really consider this series in any sense complete without this information, because we've talked about what it costs to be a disciple, the difficulties involved, what the duties are, but we haven't really gotten into detail about what the impact is that God plans for us to have on the world. And so we want to talk about that.

First point I'd like to make is that the world has been targeted for conquest by Jesus Christ. This has to be understood, because many people understand becoming a Christian meaning, okay, I'm now going to heaven. I've become a Christian now.

I go to church, I give the tithe to the church, I try to be a good person, and when I die, I get to go to heaven. And many Christians don't have any idea what God's vision is for the conquest of this world. And it's very clear, both in the Old and the New Testament.

And it is this that we are called to participate in. You've no doubt heard the expression spiritual warfare. Well, if you're called to be a soldier, what are you fighting for? What is it? Well, the issue is that there are two kingdoms at war.

There is the kingdom of darkness, and there is God's kingdom. And you've been called out of the power of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son. And these kingdoms are at war with each other.

And the problem with them is that they both have the same objective, world dominion.

That is, Satan wants to continue to control the world, as he has been accustomed to doing since the centuries before Jesus came. Whereas Christ has the objective of conquering the world for himself.

And by conquering, we mean bringing them over to his side. When a person becomes a Christian, they have been conquered. They have traded kingdoms.

They've traded loyalties. And this is ideally what God wants to happen to every human being. So, the world has been targeted for conquest by Christ.

Let me show you some scriptures about this. When God called Abraham in Genesis chapter 12, He gave, in the first three verses, what's often called the Abrahamic Covenant. And Bible scholars will tell you that the entire Bible after Genesis 12-1 is a commentary on these three verses.

God made promises to Abraham in Genesis chapter 12, verses 1-3. And the rest of the Bible records how God went about to fulfill those promises to Abraham. Well, what are those promises? Well, among other things, God says to Abraham, I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you.

And in you, all the families of the earth shall be blessed. Now, all the families of the earth, that doesn't leave many folks out. All the families of the earth are to be blessed through Abraham.

Now, what's made clear as the book of Genesis proceeds, and God repeats some of these promises and adds details, is that this blessing to the nations and to the families of the earth is to be through Abraham's seed, not through Abraham himself. Abraham himself did not have impact on all the families of the earth. But God, as he restated these promises multiple times, emphasized that it would be through his seed that all the nations and all the families of the earth would be blessed.

When you come to the New Testament, Paul, especially in Galatians chapter 3, amplifies on this and says that that seed of Abraham, the seed of Abraham through whom all the nations are to be blessed, is Jesus. Many people think the seed of Abraham is the Jewish nation. But Paul points out in Galatians 3.16, for which I do not have a slide, I apologize, but in Galatians 3.16, Paul says, now to Abraham and his seed the promises were made.

And then Paul goes on to explain, he says, it does not say to your seeds as of many, but to your seed, which is Christ. That's what Paul says, Galatians 3.16. When God said he would, he made promises to Abraham and to Abraham's seed, Paul says he didn't say seeds like he's talking about lots of seeds of Abraham, but to your singular seed, which is Christ. That is the seed of Abraham through whom all the nations of the world will be blessed is Jesus Christ.

And how are they to be blessed? Well, if you read Galatians 3 in its entirety, you find it's

by them being made righteous through faith in Christ. In other words, people who are condemned and on death row, spiritually speaking, are to be given a pardon and a release through coming to faith in Jesus Christ. That's a blessing.

That's the blessing that God promised to the earth through Abraham. But we go back to the beginning when God said it, and in Genesis 12.3, he was told all the families of the earth shall be blessed through him. And of course, ultimately, that means through Jesus.

If you look at Isaiah 49.6, this also is an Old Testament reference to the same target. The world is the target. God's speaking actually to Christ in this passage in Isaiah.

And he says, It is too small a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob. He means the nation of Israel. And to restore the preserved ones of Israel.

I will also give you as a light to the Gentiles, that you should be my salvation to the ends of the earth. Christ is not just sent, of course, to his own people, Israel, as we well know. Most of us are not Israelites by birth.

But his salvation is to the ends of the earth. It's that extensive. There's not one part of the earth that Christ's salvation is not intended to reach.

Likewise, in Matthew 28, 18-19. We've quoted it many times in this series. And this is a good place to mention it again.

Jesus said, All authority has been given to me in heaven and in earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations. So, all the earth, all the families of the earth, the ends of the earth, all nations.

This is the goal. This is the target. God spoke to Christ again in Psalm 28.

Now, how do we know he's speaking to Christ there? The New Testament tells us so. The New Testament quotes this section of Psalm 2 as God's words to Jesus. Of course, these were uttered a thousand years before Jesus was born.

In today's day, but it's a prophetic anticipation of Christ. And God says to Jesus, Ask of me, and I will give you the nations for your inheritance. And the ends of the earth for your possession.

God has promised to give Jesus the nations. And to give him the ends of the earth. Again, we saw that expression, the ends of the earth in Isaiah 49, 6. So, here also.

Christ is going to be God's salvation to the ends of the earth. He's going to give Christ the nations and including the entire earth. To be his possession, to be his inheritance.

He will be the ruler of it all. The next verse, which I don't have a slide for, says, God says to Jesus, you will rule them with a rod of iron. So, Christ is to be the ruler of the whole

world.

That's what he has in mind. Now, lots of Christians have some concept of this being true, but don't realize that this is defining of our mission. Many Christians feel like, well, yeah, I guess when Jesus comes back, when he comes back, then he'll set up a millennial kingdom and then he'll, I guess, reign over the whole world.

The devil will be bound and so forth. This is how many Christians have taken this. And I know because I took it this way when I was young, I hadn't really looked at everything the Bible had to say on this subject.

And yet, we'll see that when Christ gave his commission, he commissioned his disciples to be the change agents of this mission. To bring the salvation of Christ to all nations and to every family of the earth, he commissioned his disciples to be the carriers of that. And so, Jesus said to his disciples, but you shall receive power, in Acts 1.8, when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be witnesses to me in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth.

The same phrase you find in Psalm 2, I will give you the ends of the earth for your inheritance or for your possession. You see, Jesus is referring back to the promises of the Old Testament where David and Isaiah said that God has promised to give Jesus the ends of the earth. And Jesus says to his disciples, yeah, that's what I have in mind, exactly.

And you're going to bring them to me. You're going to go to the ends of the earth. And you're going to fetch these people for me.

They are going to be mine. And that's going to be through your efforts. You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth.

That's how this is to be going about. In Acts 11.19-21, we see this beginning. Initially, all the preaching was done in Jerusalem until Stephen was stoned to death and persecution broke out in Jerusalem.

And we read in Acts 11.19, Now those who were scattered after the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch. These are foreign countries as far as Israel is concerned. Gentile regions.

Although initially most of them were preaching the word to no one but the Jews only, but some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene who when they had come to Antioch, which was in Syria, a neighboring pagan country, they spoke to the Hellenists, meaning the Greeks, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them and a great number believed and turned to the Lord. So we begin to see it beginning.

Do you know the first ten chapters almost, at least the first nine chapters, focus on the twelve disciples in Jerusalem, building the church there after Pentecost and evangelizing

that city. But we see now they begin to reach out beyond there and to reach out to the Gentiles. Now, regardless of the world's opposition to this, and they do oppose, that is Satan opposes, and he's the ruler of this world, the Bible says, really their resistance is futile because Christ is going to win this.

God has determined that. And the resistance of Satan is futile. He cannot stop this from happening.

In Psalm 22, are you familiar with Psalm 22? How does that psalm begin? Anyone can tell me? My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? This is the psalm that Jesus quoted when He was on the cross. Why? Because it's a psalm about Him. And later in the psalm, it actually says, they pierced my hands and my feet, all my bones are out of joint, my tongue cleaves to the roof of my mouth, they gape upon me, and the dogs of Bashan have howled against me, and so forth.

And these passages in Psalm 22 are talking about Jesus being crucified. But the psalm ends on this note. Of course, the result of His crucifixion and resurrection is that all the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the Lord.

And all the families of the nations shall worship before you. For the kingdom is the Lord's and He rules over the nations. So, the crucifixion of Christ anticipated in Psalm 22 is said to have this as its upshot, that eventually all the nations, all the families of the earth, will worship before God.

In Isaiah 11-9, there is this statement, and there's a similar statement in two other places in the scripture. I want to show you all of them because it's interesting how they are alike with each other and differ from each other. In Isaiah 11-9, it says, For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

So, knowing God will be so universal throughout the world, it's as universal as the waters covering the sea. Now, I sometimes ask audiences, you know, how much does the water cover the sea? And I've had to say, three quarters? No, you're thinking how much the water covers the earth. How much does the water cover the sea? A hundred percent.

So, how full of the knowledge of the Lord is the earth going to be? A hundred percent. Now, this is talking about how universal the knowledge of God will be. But in Numbers 14, verse 21, we have a similar statement, which says, But truly as I live, says God, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord.

Now, we've got the earth going to be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. We have this guarantee that the earth will be filled with the glory of the Lord. And how certain is it? Well, it's just this certain, as truly as God lives.

How true is that? Well, if you believe Scripture, that's about the truest thing there is. It's the one thing that's more absolute than that we live. He's the only one who lives self-

exisiently.

We at least are contingent in our existence because we're created and maintained. His existence is a given. And therefore, that the earth will be filled with the glory of the Lord is equally a given.

Then there's this third occurrence of a similar statement. This is in the book of Habakkuk, or Habakkuk. Chapter 2, verse 14.

He says, For the earth will be filled, starts to sound familiar, right? With the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. There's that line again, as the waters cover the sea. But notice the difference here.

Because the earth will be filled as the waters cover the seas with the knowledge of the Lord, according to Isaiah 11.9. With the glory of the Lord, according to Numbers 14.21. But according to Habakkuk 2.14, the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, which obviously combines those two things. Isaiah says the knowledge of the Lord. Numbers says the glory of the Lord.

And Habakkuk says the knowledge of the glory of the Lord. But where do we go with this? Well, we have a New Testament passage that kind of explains this to us. Habakkuk said, The earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

Paul said in 2 Corinthians 4.6, For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shown in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Now, Paul is not unaware that he's using the same phrase that's used in the Old Testament here. I mean, after all, the knowledge of the glory of God, the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, it's a rather awkward expression to tell you the truth, but Paul is deliberately echoing it because what he's saying is, yes, someday the whole world will be filled and we'll know the glory of the Lord like we do.

But God has already shown in our hearts to give us the knowledge of the glory of God. How? Through the gospel, through Jesus Christ. Through our knowing Jesus, we have already been absorbed into this blob that's going to eat up the whole world.

Like Bill Cosby's Chicken Heart that ate New York City, you know? Or the blob. You know, when I was a kid, the movie The Blob, you ever see The Blob? That scared me to death. Stephen Queen was in that.

That's right. I had nightmares about that because I was a real little guy when that came out. We saw it on TV.

The Blob. They remade it. I don't know who's in the remake, but anyway, it doesn't matter.

But I don't think it would scare me as much now. But it was like this big blob of Jell-O, you know? It actually starts out really small like a little blob of Jell-O and it eats up the guy who finds it. It falls from space and it eats him up and it becomes as big as he is because it ate him.

And then it eats up some more people, gets as big as all of them combined. Eventually, it's eaten up whole cities. Well, that's kind of how the kingdom of God is only less scary.

It's actually probably just that scary to the devil because the devil is watching it happen because the gospel is going out and the light of the knowledge of the glory of God is enlightening hearts all over the world. And the blob is growing and consuming. And the Bible says it's going to cover the whole earth.

The knowledge of the glory of the Lord is going to be universal someday. Now, am I a universalist or a post-millennialist or someone who says that, you know, the day is going to come when, you know, through the preaching of the gospel, everyone is going to get saved? No, not necessarily. I just am... I mean, it may be that God will have to sweep away those who refuse to know Him.

But the day will come when the world is occupied only by those who do know Him. And He will be ruler over all. As He is now, you know, as far as God is concerned, but we are the ones who are enforcing that reality, that victory of Christ on earth through the preaching of the gospel.

Isaiah 42, 1-4. I love this passage. It says, Behold, my servants... It's a reference to Christ.

It's actually quoted in the book of Matthew as being about Christ. Behold, my servant whom I uphold, my elect one in whom my soul delights, God says, I have put my spirit upon him. He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles.

Well, I can't wait for that. He will not cry out nor raise his voice nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. He is not a street preacher.

Sometimes people picture Jesus as being the John the Baptist type out there screaming at people as they walk by. Jesus wasn't that type. In fact, Matthew quotes this verse in order to point out that Jesus kind of tried to stay a little obscure, a little bit under the radar.

And, you know, he's not the type who's forcing himself on people as they walk by. You know, he's not imposing himself on them. He's not crying out in the streets at people.

He's a gentle influence. That's what it means. You know, a bruised reed he will not break means even a reed that's got a little bit of an imperfection, he'll be gentle with it and prevent it from breaking.

And a smoking flax, that means a candle wick. Candle wicks were made of flax. A smoldering wick that's obviously almost gone out, he will not snuff it.

He will not quench it. It's basically saying he's not coming in an overbearing, aggressive, militant sort of way. His movement expands by gentleness.

Remember what Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount? Blessed are you meek, for you will inherit the earth. The earth is going to be won and inherited by those who are meek, not by those who are carnally aggressive. But this verse goes on, speaking about Jesus, and it says, He will bring forth justice for truth.

He will not fail nor be discouraged. Now, I get discouraged sometimes, but Jesus doesn't get discouraged about this. Sometimes it looks to me like we're losing ground, but he knows better.

He can see the big picture. Do you ever invest in gold or silver or stocks and watch day by day as one day gold has gone up \$10 in a single day? You say, oh boy, I've made a lot of money. And then the next day it's down five.

And then, oops, I'm losing some of that. And then it goes up another two, then down three, and then it's going up and down. You think, man, I'm getting dizzy here watching all this movement.

But if you just step back and look at five years or ten years of it, it's like a line that's moving almost steadily upward. And if you look at the small picture, it's up and down and up and down and up and down, and you don't know if you're winning or losing. You step back and watch over five, ten years, and you say, man, if I was holding on to gold for that long, I really made a good profit here.

Because it is, in general, moving up. But day by day, it has its ups and downs. And that's how the kingdom of God is too.

Only it's not day by day. It's like decade by decade or century by century. It goes up one century and down one century and up one century.

And you look over the period of thousands of years and you say, wow, there were only twelve followers of Jesus two thousand years ago, and now there's like a billion and a half. It looks like a net profit here. He's not discouraged.

We are because we have such a small range of vision. He will not fail. And he will not be discouraged until he has established justice in the earth.

And who could be opposed to that? And the coastlands will wait for his law. Well, they've been waiting a long time, but they'll wait. He'll get there.

He'll get there about as quickly as we take him there because that's how he moves. Now,

the objectives of the mission. What exactly is it that his objectives are? Every nation, every person.

In fact, every thought of every person. That's what's got to be brought under the authority of Jesus Christ. In First Corinthians, chapter 15, verses 21 through 28, Paul says, As in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive, but each one in his own order.

He's talking about resurrection here. Christ, the first fruits, afterward those who are Christ's at his coming. Then comes the end when he delivers the kingdom to God, the father, when he puts an end to all rule and all authority and power, for he must reign until he has put all enemies under his feet.

Christ has enemies, but you know where they're going? They're going under his feet. And he's reigning at the right hand of God right now. He's reigning over his disciples, over his kingdom.

And his kingdom's expanding. And know what's happening? Every time someone gets converted, another one of his enemies comes under his feet. You were one of his enemies, and now you're under his feet.

You're under his rule. And he's going to stay right where he is, it says, he must reign at the right hand of God, as he is now, until all of his enemies have been put down. Now that almost sounds like every last person on the planet is going to get converted someday.

And that's what gives post-millennialists their encouragement and their vision. They actually believe that the whole world's going to be converted. I think there's some scriptures elsewhere that indicate that that's not precisely correct.

But, of course, all of his enemies are going to be defeated one way or another. They'll either voluntarily come under his rule, or else when he comes, he'll take care of the rest. He will take care of the rest when he comes.

There will be wheat, and there will be tares. There will be tares there when he comes too. But the point is, the time is coming when all opposition will be swept away, and he's going to reign until every last one of his enemies has been subdued.

We have been subdued in the way that's desirable to be subdued. We voluntarily got subdued. Some will be involuntarily brought under his feet.

In Philippians, Paul said, Therefore God also has highly exalted him, and given him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. How many

knees? How many tongues? All of them. All of them.

There's going to be a time coming when Christians are not being mocked because they praise God, because all the people mocking will be praising God too. Because all the knees and all the tongues are going to be saying the same thing and doing the same thing, bowing before Jesus and confessing him as Lord. In 2 Corinthians 10, verses 4 and 5, Paul said, For the weapons of our warfare, this is the spiritual warfare motif here, are not carnal.

That means fleshly. Our weapons are not fleshly. We are not planning to win this battle by taking up boobies and bombs, whatever is used in worldly warfare.

Carnal warfare doesn't change people's hearts. It can captivate or kill people's bodies, but it can't change their opinions. What we are to do is to bring people's thoughts into captivity, so we don't use physical weapons for that.

Unfortunately, there have been times in history where the church was a little mistaken about this. And they did try to convert people, or at least subdue people who were resistant by warfare. And of course, the Muslim religion does this as a matter of policy.

Converts at the edge of the sword. Well, what kind of convert is that? Jesus doesn't want that kind of converts. You know, people who convert out of expedience to save their necks.

He wants people to convert because they love Him. That takes a different kind of weapon. You can't make someone love you by putting a gun to their head.

You have to win them some other way. And we have weapons for that purpose that are not carnal. They're not fleshly, but they're mighty in God.

For pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. Now, I've usually heard when people quote this verse, they usually talk about how, I need to bring my thoughts into captivity of Jesus because Paul said I need to bring every thought into captivity of Jesus. In the context, he's talking about bringing everybody's thoughts into captivity.

Every thought. Not just you getting your brain going, right? But you being an instrument through the weapons of the warfare God's given us to bring all thoughts of all people into subjection to Christ. And this, again, is not done by carnal pressure or carnal threats.

This is done by the preaching of the gospel, by the making of disciples, by teaching them to observe everything Jesus commanded, and by their willing submission because they love him. That's what our warfare is about. Paul says this is the objection.

We've got to get every thought captive to the obedience of Christ. For this purpose, for us to have this impact on the world, we need equipment, of course. We just read in 2 Corinthians 10 that we have weapons.

Weapons of our warfare. They're not carnal. But there's more on this subject in Scripture.

2 Peter 1.3 says, Now, everything that is necessary for life and godliness, I suppose life here means physical life, although it could mean spiritual life. Certainly God has given us all things we need for both. But godliness has to do with our own need to remain subject to God's rule.

And everything necessary to keep us subdued and to keep us godly has been given to us through the knowledge of him by his divine power. There is really nothing that God requires us to do that he hasn't already given us the resources to do. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, through the name of Jesus, through the grace that is given to us, whatever is needed, we have it.

The word of God is given to us for that purpose. To instruct us. The grace of God is given to enable us.

The spirit of God is given to us to equip us with divine supernatural power to carry out the mission. All things necessary for life and godliness are given to us through his divine power. Says 2 Peter 1.3. 2 Timothy 3.16 If you were raised as I was in an evangelical church, you should have this verse memorized.

I'm interested in the verse following it also. But Paul said, We think of doctrine as like theologically abstract concepts like the doctrine of the Trinity or things like that. The word doctrine is just an old word.

It means teaching. In the Bible, it usually means teaching practical Christian living. For example, Paul said to Titus in Titus chapter 2, teach the things that become sound doctrine, that the old men should be sober and temperate and not given to wine.

That's sound doctrine. Be sober, be temperate, don't be drunk. That's what Paul calls sound doctrine.

And he goes on and gives more things for the older women and the younger women and the young men. But the point is, Paul said sound doctrine is teaching about how to live a godly life. The church has changed the focus on that somewhere back about 1700 years ago.

They began to consider that sound doctrine has to do mainly with the abstract concepts that you believe in about theology. Now, I'm not suggesting that there's no value in knowing the right abstract concepts of theology. But we sometimes think that that's what doctrine means.

And some people say, I don't need a doctrine. I just want practical stuff. Well, that's what it is.

In the Bible, doctrine means teaching and teaching was practical. Remember, Jesus said, teach them what? To obey, to observe everything I commanded. That's practical stuff.

The word of God is inspired for that purpose and also for reproof. That means to tell us when we're doing the wrong thing for correction and for instruction in righteousness. Tell us how to do the right thing.

But the next verse says that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. God has stuff in mind for us to do good things, good works for us to get done. But they requires supernatural ability.

He doesn't call ordinary unregenerate people to do his work. Remember when Jesus called one disciple, he said, follow me. And the man said, well, let me first go bury my father.

And he said, let the dead bury the dead. You go and preach the gospel. What's that mean? Let the dead bury the dead.

People who are spiritually dead can do that kind of work. They can dig holes and put dead bodies and cover them up again. That's the kind of stuff anyone can do.

A non-Christian can do that. Spiritually dead people can bury dead people. You are called to do what spiritually dead people are not permitted to do.

Preach the gospel, he said. Let the dead bury the dead. You preach the gospel.

Why? Because preaching the gospel requires ability and enablement that people who are spiritually dead don't have and can't have. Because God gives us that enablement. He causes the man and woman of God to be complete and thoroughly equipped for every good work of God that you're to do.

Now, what is it that this line is talking about? It's saying that God gave us the scriptures as the equipment. He has given inspired scriptures to teach us, to reprove us, to correct us, to instruct us, so that as a result of being so instructed by the scriptures, we are thoroughly equipped for everything we need to do. You know, there are other things you can study for specialized ministries.

I mean, if you're called to be a medical missionary, for example, then the scriptures won't tell you how to do an apodectomy. But you need special training for some of those things. But for the spiritual side of winning people for Christ and so forth, the scriptures, along with the Holy Spirit and the other things that God has given us, are all you need.

You don't need to be highly trained to win people for Christ. You don't even need to be

highly trained to disciple people. In order to train a dog, you just need to know more than the dog.

And if you're going to train a person, you need to be ahead of them on the road. But you can be a little ways ahead of them. As David said in the Psalm 119, he says, I know more than my teachers because your word is my meditation.

Through your law, you've made me wiser than all my enemies, David said. He said, I know more than my instructors. I know more than the ancients.

That doesn't sound very humble. But we have to assume that he's giving sober truth about this. And I can understand that.

I have seen 16-year-olds who know the Bible well enough to know more than their pastors. And whose pastors told them so. Paul said that's what the scripture is given for.

To equip us to be complete and thoroughly equipped for all the good works that God has for us to do. You can become specialized in other things that require other kinds of specialized training. I'm sure there's a lot of kinds of ministry I could not do because of the peripheral things that have to be done.

But when it comes to making disciples, all you need is the scripture. That's the equipment you need. After all, making disciples means what? Teaching them to observe everything Jesus said.

What do you have to know to do that? You have to know what Jesus said. And you need to be doing it yourself. Ephesians 6. This is the classic passage on spiritual warfare that most people think of when they think of that subject.

And Paul says, finally, brethren, be strong in the Lord. Verses 11-13. And in the power of his mind, he says, put on the whole armor of God.

That you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. Therefore, he says, take up the whole armor of God. That you may be able to withstand in the evil day.

And having done all to stand. The whole armor covers all the needs in the warfare. Protects you as much as you need to be.

Now, we have weapons and we have armor. Weapons are for offense. Armor is for defense.

We have weapons of our warfare that are mighty through God to tear down opposition. Mental and philosophical, ideological strongholds. That resist the knowledge of God, Paul said.

What we have in God is mighty in God to tear down those strongholds. And all

arguments, it says. And to bring every thought into captivity of Christ.

That's how we attack with spiritual weapons. We defend ourselves with spiritual armor. And there's enough.

There's the whole armor of God. Paul twice uses that expression. The whole armor.

He goes and talks about what it is. He says, stand therefore having girded your waist with truth. Having put on the breastplate of righteousness.

Having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel. And that expression, preparation. The Greek word preparation means readiness.

So, it's an attitude of being ready to preach the gospel. That's what it really means. The gospel of peace.

Above all, taking the shield of faith. With which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation.

And the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God. Now, the last of those is a weapon. Everything before that is armor.

Defense. Defense, right. And what has God given us in terms of the whole armor for total defense? Our equipment is the truth.

Righteousness. An attitude of readiness to carry the gospel. Our faith and our salvation.

These things, you know. Sometimes when people think or sometimes when people speak. Or write on the subject of spiritual warfare.

They talk as if spiritual warfare is some kind of special set of disciplines. That highly trained Christians, if they go to the right seminars. Learn how to do.

How to bind the territorial spirits. How to do spiritual mapping. How to do the Jericho marches properly.

And so forth. None of those things are talked about in the Bible. But see, I think people want to make spiritual warfare more sexy.

Than it really is intended to be. Spiritual warfare is just a metaphor. For the mission of the church to bring people to Christ.

To make disciples. And the armor he talks about. Is not some kind of special stuff.

You ever heard people say. When they teach. Now in the morning when you get up.

You need to put on the armor of God. And they sometimes say. You need to pantomime

this.

You know, put on. Sit on the bedside and say. I'm putting on the helmet of salvation.

I'm putting on the breastplate of righteousness. You know, I'm putting on the shoes of the preparation of the gospel. That's not what Paul's talking about.

He's not talking about doing something goofy. He's simply saying. That the stuff that's the normal stuff of the Christian life.

Faith. Truth. Righteousness.

Salvation. You can talk about these things. Without the metaphor of warfare.

If you want to. Or with it. Because when you do consider.

Our Christian mission as a warfare. These things that are the normal things of the Christian life. Serve us the way that armor serves a soldier in the battle.

To protect us from the deception of the enemy. From the temptations of the enemy. From doubts.

And so forth. I mean, there's all kinds of ways that these things defend us. When we're in the thick of facing the enemy's opposition.

But these are part of our thorough equipment. So Peter has said. That God's divine power has given us all things.

Pertaining to life and godliness. Paul said. That the scriptures.

Can make the man of God complete. Thoroughly equipped for every good work. Paul also says that God has given us.

Complete armor. Whole armor. To cover every part of our vulnerable spirits.

Because this is spiritual protection. Not physical. By the way, the Bible does not ever tell you.

How to defend yourself physically. Except Jesus said. If you seek to save your life.

You'll lose it. If you lose your life for his sake. You'll find it.

Your physical defense. Is not from your armor. God has given you no armor for your physical defense.

Because that's not your concern. That's the angel's concern. He's given his angels charge over you.

To keep you in all your ways. In their hands they'll bear you up. Lest you dash your foot against a stone.

Says Psalm 91. Verse 11 and 12. Psalm 34 says.

The angel of the Lord encamps around about them. That fear him and delivers him. The angels.

They're the ones charged with our physical protection. And they'll protect us as long as they're supposed to. There comes a time when we're not supposed to be protected anymore.

It's time for us to go home. But that's not our concern. Our concern is with our own spiritual integrity.

And that we don't lose ground. In our love for God. In our faith in God.

In our righteousness. Our walk and so forth. And our grasp on the truth.

And so these are the things. That secure our spiritual well-being against defect. So God has given us full equipment.

All that we need. Now the disciples proclamation of the kingdom of God. Is what Paul means when he talks about.

Take the sword of the spirit. Which is the word of God. That as I said.

In the list of items in Ephesians 6. Is the only one that's not really armor. It's the part that you use to hurt the enemy. A soldier who goes to battle has two objectives.

One is offensive. And one is defensive. If you were called to go to Afghanistan.

And fight against whoever is over there opposing us. You'd have two objectives. One is to get home safe and alive.

To serve your tour of duty. Do the right thing. And get home with all your limbs still attached to your body.

And with your head still on your shoulders. In other words you don't want to die. If you don't have to in battle.

And so that's your defensive objective. Is to watch out for flying bullets. And watch out for bad guys.

Try not to get hurt. But the other objective in warfare. Is to conquer the bad guys.

To make them lose ground. To make them lose their soldiers or whatever. And so Paul

tells us these pieces of armor.

That's for our defense. For our spiritual self-defense. So we don't spiritually lose any ground.

Or even our lives spiritually. But there's also the aspect of going out there. And hurting the enemy.

And that's what the sword is for. And that is the word of God. He's not proclaiming the word of God there.

He's talking about preaching the gospel. How do I know that? Because the same image is used in a symbolic vision. In Revelation chapter 19.

In verses 11 and 15. John says, Now I saw heaven opened. And behold a white horse.

And he who sat on him was called faithful and true. And in righteousness he judges and makes war. Now out of his mouth goes a sharp sword.

That with it he should strike the nations. Now there's two things of interest here. Well maybe more.

But there's two I want to point out. One is that he's on a white horse. Many people consider this to be a picture of the second coming of Christ.

And it's possible that it is. I always just assumed it was. Until I knew more options for interpreting the book of Revelation than I was originally taught.

And it may be that this is a picture of the second coming of Christ. It may be that it's not. I'll tell you why.

Because there's more about this white horse elsewhere in scripture. But there's also the means by which he is conquering the nations. It's by the sword.

Out of his mouth goes a sharp sword. Well what goes out of someone's mouth, biblically speaking? Their words do. Their words do.

His word is the sword. Take the sword of the spirit which is the word of God. Over in Hebrews 4.12 it says, The word of God is alive and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword.

What is the word of God? It's sharper than a two-edged sword. Hebrews 4.12 says. So this is simply a pictorial image of Christ's word going out.

Proceeding out of his mouth as he rides victoriously through the earth. Conquering the nations on this white horse. Now by the way, if this is a reference to his second coming.

It's different than all other references to his second coming. Because they never refer to him coming back on a horse for one thing. Secondly, it does say in Acts chapter 1. That when he comes back he'll come back the same way he left.

And he didn't leave on a horse. And this does not really necessarily depict vertical movement. One can picture it that way.

You know he's coming down. If we picture it as the second coming. But this is a person riding horizontally across the earth.

Striking the nations and conquering them. With the words that come out of his mouth. And who is the white horse? I wouldn't be too sure about this.

But this is an interesting thing. In Zechariah chapter 10 verse 3. There's a reference to certain battles that Israel fought. Against the Greeks in the Maccabean war.

And in that passage in Zechariah 10.3. It says. For the Lord of hosts will visit his flock the house of Judah. And will make them as his royal horse in the battle.

That is in that warfare between the Jews and the Greeks in the Maccabean period. God said that he was the one fighting that war on their behalf. And they were simply his vehicle.

They were his war vehicle. They were his armored car. They were carrying him.

Because a horse was a war vehicle in ancient times. That's what they were primarily known for. Now what white horse does Jesus ride on to conquer the nations by his word? Possibly his people.

Possibly we are the vehicle that's carrying Christ to the nations. So that his word can conquer the nations. Of course in Revelation 19.

It's a very war like bloody gory kind of image. Because there's a lot of slain and stuff in that vision. But in my opinion.

I think we should consider. That we're getting a picture of spiritual warfare and spiritual conquest. That's simply being cast in the imagery of a natural war.

With a lot of victims. A lot of conquered foes. I don't mind if you still see Revelation 19 as the second coming of Christ.

Many people do. Probably most people do. I don't have anything at stake in it.

But I'm pointing out to you that I think there's reason to believe. That the white horse he's riding is his people. And that the sword he's using is the gospel being preached.

And it's being carried to the nations by his people. This is the disciples of Jesus

proclaiming his word to the nations. In order to accomplish the mission.

Now one of the ways in which the disciple influences and impacts the world. Is through good works. And by good works we need to understand.

We're not talking about what boy scouts do. And have to lead little old ladies across the street. Now if a little old lady needs to get across the street.

Then it is a good thing to take her across. But it's not you just look for something to do to be good. It's rather when you see actual needs.

You do the thing God would want done. And you are living a life that makes your proclamation of the gospel look realistic. One of the problems we have in America today.

Is that Christian lives. Often or I should say the lives of people who at least call themselves Christians. In many cases are not really a very good testimony for Christ.

And there are certainly people. I was just talking to someone in this room earlier today. And he said that he was one to Christ.

At least partly by coming into a church. And seeing how loving these people were and so forth. He actually saw the goodness of Christians.

And it won him over. But there is also an awful lot of people who when they think of the Christians they know. They think of people who are judgmental, backbiting, hypocritical.

Who sin as much as everybody else. But just criticize sinners who aren't themselves. I mean let's face it.

Christians who do good works. That is who live the life of obedience to Christ. Are a powerful impact on the onlooking world.

But Christians who compromise. Are a powerful impact for the devil. Someone has said the best argument for Christianity is Christians.

And the best argument against Christianity is the Christians. So to be a disciple and to have an impact that is going to bring Christ successfully to the world. It is not all about what we say.

Remember Saint Francis' famous saying. Preach the gospel at all times and when necessary use words. The rest of the time you use your actions.

Your life should proclaim them. Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount. In Matthew 5 verses 15 through 16.

Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket but on a lampstand. And it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your

good works.

And glorify your Father in heaven. So if they are going to come to the knowledge of the glory of God. Which is going to fill the earth like the waters cover the sea.

They are going to have to see the glory of God in us. In our good works. In our behavior.

Again he is not talking about going out and doing gratuitous deeds to be seen by men. Remember he criticized the Pharisees for that very thing. All their righteous things they do to be seen by men he said.

And they have no reward in heaven because they are just doing it to be seen by men. Jesus isn't talking about that here. He is saying that a Christian who is really following Jesus.

Their life will just be a good life. The things they do will be good things. Because they are following Jesus.

Or more probably Jesus is living his life through them. And people will see Jesus. And the people who are doing these good works are not doing it to be seen by men.

But they can hardly avoid being seen by men. Because they will stand out like a sore thumb. And Jesus said when you do let your light shine.

Your love for God. Your obedience to God. Your presentation of Jesus through your actions as well as through your words.

Then men will see those good works and they will end up glorifying God too. And Peter said the same thing in 1 Peter 2.12. In fact he is probably alluding to that statement in the Sermon on the Mount. 1 Peter 2.12 he said having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles.

He means among the pagans. That when they speak against you as evildoers they may by your good works which they observe glorify God in the day of visitation. See the similarity.

Jesus said they may by your good works which they behold glorify God. Here he says by your good works which they observe they will glorify God in the day of visitation. Even though they are more inclined to characterize you as evildoers.

And you know that is what the world tries to do. They think that everything we say is a hate crime. Frankly I have to confess that sometimes Christians stand by certain political causes with a certain air and a certain spirit that does seem hateful.

When these guys are carrying these signs saying God hates fags this definitely is hateful. I wouldn't call it a hate crime because I don't think there is such a thing as a hate crime.

I think that is a goofy politically correct term.

But the fact is it is hateful and that is not of course what we are to do. That is not good works. Jesus didn't walk down the streets of Capernaum with a sign that says God hates prostitutes.

God hates tax collectors. His good works were of the opposite sort. He embraced those people to the chagrin of the religious people around him.

Jesus was not really rejected by the scandalously sinful folks. He was rejected by the scandalously religious folks. Because he was too friendly with the scandalously sinful folks.

That was Jesus. We need to figure out how to be more like Jesus and less like the Pharisees. Unfortunately many people have seen no Christians except those who are more like the Pharisees.

And if they see Jesus more then they will glorify God in the day of visitation. Acts 2 45-47 describes the corporate life of the early Christian church in Jerusalem. And it says the disciples there sold their possessions and goods and divided them among all as anyone had need.

So continuing daily with one accord in the temple and breaking bread from house to house. They ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart. Praising God and having favor with all the people.

The early Christians had favor with all the people initially. Because of what? It would appear it's because they were selling their goods and giving to the poor. And being Christ like and loving others as they loved themselves.

And it says and the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved. As the Christians have a platform of righteous behavior to preach from. The message goes forth in power and God brings people into the church.

Our problem in this country right now is an awful lot of. I don't know what percentage of people who call themselves Christians don't seem to act like Christians. Certainly a good percentage do.

Most of us would probably say the Christian people we know are certainly better folks. Than the non-Christian people we know. But not everyone will say that.

Some people say I had better friends when I was in the world. Of course they're not really considering all the facts. When you're in the world the ones you call your friends.

Are the ones who have survived a process of elimination. Based on who has and who has not offended you. Who has and who has not treated you well.

Who has and who has not been generous to you. Obviously when you're in the world. The friends you have are the ones who treated you well.

The friends you have as a Christian are the ones who happen. God has picked them. He's the one who put them in your life.

And they're not all the ones who always do good. They're the same people some of them. Who wouldn't be your friends if you weren't a Christian.

They'd be eliminated. And so it's not hard to imagine people truthfully saying. Well I had better friends in the world.

Than I have in the church. Well if you think about it. You probably have some pretty good friends in the church too.

If you're involved. And if you've had some disappointments with people in the church. They wouldn't be your friends.

If you weren't in the church. You pick your friends when you're in the world. God picks your brothers and sisters for you.

When you're in the church. And therefore there are going to be some folks. That you rub up against them abrasively.

Or do the same to you. But the point is. If you look at the real Christians.

Who are really following Jesus. Even the ones who are abrasive. Even the ones who have rough edges.

They're probably a lot better than they were before they were Christians. You have to ask that question. Before you decide.

Is Christianity good for people or not. And look at the people who are not really very good. Who are called Christians.

You have to ask. Well how bad were they before they were Christians. They may be paragons of virtue.

Compared to what they were. You never know. The point is though.

God adds to the church. When the preaching of the gospel. By the preachers in the church.

Has backing it up. A community of believers. Who shine like lights.

In the community because of their good works. And that's what Philippians 1.27 says. Paul says.

Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ. So that whether I come and see you or I'm absent. I may hear of your affairs.

That you stand fast in one spirit with one mind. Striving together for the faith of the gospel. Paul's the one who had preached the gospel.

Everyone didn't preach. Not all early Christians were preachers. But they were all striving together for the gospel's promulgation.

How? When the gospel was preached by Paul and other preachers. These other Christians who weren't preachers. Were letting their conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ.

So that their conduct gave strength to the testimony. Of those who spoke on behalf of the Christian community. Because people said.

Oh the Christians. I know who you represent. Those people over there.

Oh I met some of them. They're really amazing people. I know somebody who sold everything he had.

And gave it to all the poor. I'm impressed. I'll hear what you have to say.

But when people hear Christians preaching. And they say. Oh yeah I know some Christians.

And they just strike me as this hypocritical. Self-righteous creeps. Well.

The gospel just goes right by. In many cases. Our impact on the world depends on our good behavior too.

Philippians 2.15. Paul said that you may become blameless. And harmless. That's how you behave.

Children of God without fault. In the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. Among whom you shine as lights in the world.

Titus 2.10. Is talking actually to Christian servants. But it's an interesting thing what he says. Paul says.

That they should not be pilfering. But showing all good fidelity. That they may adorn the doctrine of God.

Our Savior in all things. I love that line. That their lives would adorn the gospel.

The gospel is a message that's preached. But you can adorn the message. By your good behavior.

What does adornment mean? Adorning means you do things to make it attractive. And how do you make the gospel attractive? You make the gospel attractive. By being godly.

By being honest. By being different than the world. In the ways that are virtuous.

Now the disciples prayers are also an important part of our impact. We need to go through this rather quickly. Jesus said.

In this manner therefore pray. Matthew 6.9-10. Our Father in heaven. Hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come. Your will be done. On earth as it is in heaven.

Now we've seen some scriptures to realize that Jesus meant that seriously. That God's will would be done on earth. As in heaven.

That the knowledge of the glory of the Lord will fill the earth. As the waters cover the sea. How much is God's will done in heaven? Well all entirely.

There's no sin going on in heaven at all. No rebellion against him. Well that's what we're praying will happen on earth.

That God's will will be done on earth. As much as is the case in heaven. Now praying is the other part of our impact.

We do what we can do. And we pray for what we can't do. Our prayers and our works are to be two parts of one program.

I've heard people say you know. I really need a car so I'm saving up for it. But I just don't think I'm going to be able to get one in time.

I need one right away. I say have you ever prayed that God would give you a car? Oh I would never pray for something so selfish as that. Wait a minute.

If that's selfish why would you work for it? If you won't pray for it you shouldn't work for it. But if you would work for it you should pray for it too. Because working and praying have the same objective and view.

The will of God. If you think God wants you to have a car. You should work for it and pray for it.

If you think he doesn't then you shouldn't pray for it. And you shouldn't work for it either. What we have in mind for the world is that God's will will be done.

And his kingdom will come throughout the whole earth. We work for that. And we pray for that.

Because prayer extends the effectiveness of our works. It gives power to our works. But it also goes beyond what our works can do.

God can do more than we can. In Exodus 17 verses 10-13 we have the first time Israel entered into warfare after they came out of Egypt. They were attacked by the Amalekites.

And it says, So Joshua fought with Amalek, and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. And so it was when Moses held up his hand that Israel prevailed. And when he let down his hand Amalek prevailed.

But Moses' hands became heavy. So Aaron and Hur supported his hands one on one side and the other on the other side. And his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.

So Joshua defeated Amalek and his people. What's this mean? What's this hands up in the air? Is this just some kind of magic? Lifting the hands to the Jew is the posture of prayer. The idea is as long as Moses was interceding the battle went well for the Israelites.

When he got tired of interceding the battle didn't go well for the Israelites. Our prayers are essential to the success of the battle. To conquer the nations requires more than that we give our best.

It means we get God to give his best and we do that by requesting it of him. By prevailing in prayer. Now this is the final point I want to make.

This is absolutely essential for our impact on the world. The indispensability of the unity among disciples. Jesus said when he prayed to his father in John 17 verses 21 through 23.

He said I pray that they may be one. He means his disciples be unified. That they may be one in us.

That the world may believe that you sent me. Notice the connection there. I pray that they will be unified so that the world will know that you sent me.

That they may be one just as we are one. I in them and you in me. That they may be perfect in one and that the world may know that you have sent me.

Twice he says it. As believers are unified the world then will know. Now why do you suppose the world doesn't know right now? They look at the church and there's 4,000 denominations.

Now there's a lot more unity among denominations now than there was a generation ago. And there is improvement in this area. That's the direction that the kingdom of God

is going to be going.

But there's still to the eye of man is still an awful lot of disunity. And they say well you say Christianity is true. But which Christianity? The Christian of that church or the Christian of that church or that one? And the world is less convinced than they might be that God sent Jesus to the world.

In Proverbs 6 verses 16 through 19 it says these six things the Lord hates. Yes seven are abomination to him. A proud look.

A lying tongue. Hands that shed innocent blood. A heart that devises wicked plans.

Feet that are swift in running to evil. A false witness who speaks lies. And look at this one.

One who sows discord among brethren. God hates it. God hates people who gossip and undermine other believers and who sow discord among brethren.

Why? Because the unity of the brethren is so essential to the enterprise that God is up to. He wants all the Christians not just loving the world but loving each other. And that's what unity is.

First Corinthians chapter 1 verses 10 through 13. Paul says, Now I plead with you brethren by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that you all speak the same thing. Now what's that mean? We'll find out.

And that there be no divisions among you but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind, in the same judgment. He's talking about unity here in the church. There was division in the church.

He says, For it has been declared to me concerning you my brethren by those of Chloe's household that there are contentions among you. Now I say this, that each one of you says, I am of Paul or I am of Apollos or I am of Cephas or I am of Christ. Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? Now notice, in the previous verse he said, I want you to all speak the same thing.

And a lot of people read that verse and say, well how can we ever hope for that? Because the Baptists speak one thing and the Presbyterians speak another thing and the Catholics speak another thing and Lutherans speak something else. And whose doctrine are we supposed to conform to that we all say the same thing? You know, who's going to prevail with their doctrine? It's not about the doctrine. It's about this.

Some are saying I'm of Paul. Some are saying I'm of Apollos. Some are saying I'm of Cephas.

And some are saying I'm of Christ. We're all supposed to say the same thing, not four

different things. We're not supposed to say I am of the assemblies of God.

Or I am of Calvary Chapel. Or I am of the Baptists. Or I am of the Lutherans.

Or I am of the Episcopalians. No, we are of Christ. And we can see that that's what Paul is saying because he was objecting to people saying, some were saying I'm of Paul.

He said, what? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized in the name of Paul? The answer is of course not. Well, who were you baptized into? Christ. Then you are of Christ.

You're not of Paul. You're not of Cephas. You're not of Apollos.

You are of Christ. All need to say the same thing instead of four groups saying four different things. The church has to know they are of Christ.

It's not a matter of coming to complete doctrinal agreement. It's a matter of saying the same thing. We're all of Jesus.

We're all his disciples. You disagree with me about baptism? Infant baptism or belief baptism? You disagree with me about eschatology, about the millennium, about the rapture? You disagree with me about predestination? So what? If you're of Christ, so am I. And we have got no grounds to divide over differences of opinion. We're not Christians because of our opinions.

We're Christians because we follow Jesus Christ and because we're devoted to him. We're of Christ. And that's where unity comes from.

Not from people agreeing about everything, but by people loving each other in Christ despite the fact that they don't agree with each other. This is Psalm 133. This psalm is short.

This is the whole psalm here. I left out two lines because they were not necessary for our points here. Psalm 133 says, Pleasant to whom? Well, at least to God because he hates those who sow discord among brethren.

So unity among brethren is pleasant to God. I'll tell you, nothing makes me happier than seeing my kids on good terms. Some of them weren't recently for a little while.

It really ruined my day knowing that my kids, who I love them all equally, but they didn't love each other like I did. Now they're back reconciled and I feel good, better. But then it says, You want the blessing of God to be commanded by God on the earth? Where is it? It's where brethren dwell together in unity.

The unity of the church, the unity of Christians is essential. The disciples have to be unified or else the blessing will be withheld. But one thing, what does this mean? It's like the precious oil upon the head running down the beard, the beard of Aaron running down

the edge of his garments.

Aaron is the high priest in the Old Testament. He's a type of Christ, the high priest in the New Testament. The oil I take to be representative of the Holy Spirit.

Aaron was anointed with a big jug of oil and it ran all over him. And I believe that represented the anointing of the Holy Spirit upon Christ. Now Aaron's head, I would say, corresponds to Christ as the head of the church.

Aaron's body, the members of his body, correspond to us. Aaron's whole body got anointed. But because it was standing in one place under the head.

What's a body for, crying out loud? It's for holding up the head. That's what Paul said in Colossians 2, that some people are not holding the head. Heretics, they're not holding the head.

The body is to be holding the head, not holding their own clubs and opinions and so forth. They're here to hold up the head. And if the body stands together under the head, then the anointing that came on the head is going to come on the body too.

The same anointing, the same oil that runs down over the head is going to run over every member of the body. The anointing of the Holy Spirit is what we need. That's where God commands the blessing.

And that can only be when brethren dwell together in unity and stand united under the head. And so that's what the disciples do. And only as they do can we have the impact that God wants us to have.