

John 10

By Don Richardson

Don Richardson:

Thank you for your warm welcome and good morning. Just think, a hugging match was scheduled this morning and I came without my wife. I must remember next time I come to Biola in a cold morning to expect that and be prepared. I'm always afraid when I've got one of these mics on that I'm going to step in the cord and then stretch and snap the cord. I heard of a pastor who was plugging on his mic on his suitcoat one morning and he said to the congregation, I'm so glad there won't be any mics in heaven. One of his ushers, who was named Mike, said, I resent that.

I want you to turn with me to John chapter ten. In verse ten I'm reading from the New International Version. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I have come that they may have life and have it to the full. Let's read it together. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy and kill and destroy. I have come that they may have life and have it to the full. Or have it more abundantly as the King James Version says. This was one of Jesus' great statements of his purpose in coming, but many do not agree that that is the effect his coming has had upon the world and upon individuals. A famous English poet named Lord Byron wrote these scathing criticism of Jesus Christ.

He said, O thou pale galileum, the world is made gray by thy breath. How about that? What a contrast between what Jesus promised would be the effect of his coming and this criticism of a secular poet. So the world has in many areas, the concept of the coming of Christianity means replacing gay pagan festivals with somber Church meetings, lilting songs with dull hymns,

replacing enviable sexual freedom with Puritan ethics, replacing carefreeness with concern over dogmas and creeds.

How are we to respond as Christians when we face this kind of criticism? Has Jesus really brought life and wholeness of life to those whom he has touched? Or has the world been made gray by his breath? I want to turn for a further text to Mark chapter five. They that is Jesus and the Disciples in verse one went across the Lake to the region of the Gerasenes. When Jesus got out of the boat, a man with an evil spirit came from the tombs to meet him. This man lived in the tombs, and no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain, for he had often been chained hand and foot, but he tore the chains apart and broke the irons from his feet. No one was strong enough to subdue him night and day among the tombs and in the hills he would cry out and cut himself with stones.

When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and fell on his knees in front of him. He shouted at the top of his voice, what do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God, swear to God that you won't torture me. For Jesus was saying to him, Come out of this man you evil spirit. Then Jesus asked him, what is your name? My name is Legion, he replied, for we are many.

Here was the demon speaking out of the man's vocal apparatus, and he begged Jesus again and again not to send them out of the area. A large herd of pigs was feeding on the nearby hillside. The demons begged Jesus, Send us among the pigs. Allow us to go into them. He gave them permission, and the evil spirits came out and went into the pigs. The herd, about 2000 in number, rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned. Those tending the pigs ran off and

reported this in the town and countryside, and the people went out to see what had happened. When they came to Jesus, they saw the man who had been possessed by the legion of demons sitting there dressed, and in his right mind they were afraid. Those who had seen it told the people what had happened to the demon possessed man and told about the pigs as well. Then the people began to plead with Jesus to leave their region.

As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon possessed begged to go with him. Jesus did not let him, but said, Go home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you and how he has had mercy on you. So the man went away and began to tell in the decapitalist that is, in the ten cities, how much Jesus had done for him, and all the people were amazed. This man was an extreme case, to be sure. And yet the qualities, the characteristics of a life that is invaded and overcome by forces of evil that were manifested in his life can find themselves manifested in perhaps more subtle ways in the lives of millions of people.

Notice, for example, that he could not be subdued. He was untamable like a man who is driven by dark forces, a woman with horrible compulsions within her, and she cannot be tamed. The pleas of relatives of loved ones are to no avail. He cannot be restrained. He plunges on in a reckless course. Notice also that in verse five, night and day among the tombs, restlessness is a characteristic of evil. Untamable restless. And among the tombs morbidity preoccupation with things that have to do with death, degradation, evil, corruption.

Further and in the hills, estrangement is another characteristic of a life under the control of evil. Untamable, restless, morbid, estranged, then crying out, anguish is added to these other already

fearsome characteristics. Then cutting himself self-hatred is another inevitable end result of processes of evil in the human heart. And as I've commented on these characteristics, it may be that there are hundreds of you here who can remember a time when these characteristics were in your life. And perhaps it may be that there's these characteristics of untamableness, restlessness, morbidity, estrangement, anguish, and self-hatred are controlling your heart and mind right now, you're still in the grip of evil. You have not been delivered from these things.

Listen very carefully as we consider how Jesus dealt with a man in this situation. Another aspect is implied by the fact that later he was dressed. Presumably he was naked or nearly naked before shamelessness. Irregard for valid human conventions was another characteristic. And we see these black blossoms, these characteristics of evil flowering in the lives of more and more people around us in this day, even in Christian North America. Now I want to ask you, while this man was manifesting these characteristics, roaming among the tombs and out into the hills, crying at night, cutting himself with stones, was he manifesting his true culture?

Can this be described as culture, as an enviable lifestyle? When did the man regain his true culture? Notice at the end of the story, Jesus said to him, well, first of all, the man came. He sat at Jesus feet. He was at rest now. He didn't have to be leaping, running, roaming. But he was sitting at Jesus feet, dressed and in his right mind. And now Jesus said to him, Go home to your family. Family relationships are about to be restored. He's going to go back and look for some way to support his family, as presumably he did before he fell into this deplorable situation.

And then he is told to share with others the goodness that God has invested in his life, the deliverance that God has brought to him. Tell them how much the Lord has done for you and how he has had mercy on you. And so the man became a testimony, a radiant witness to the grace of God from that time forward. Was that man's life made gray by the breath of the galileum whom Lord Byron called pale? Has Africa been made gray? When you consider that 85% of the schools and hospitals in Africa have been established through the work of missionary forces over the past 150 or more years, 85% of the schools and hospitals, treating the sick, giving education to those who were illiterate, preparing entire peoples to enter into nationhood in our day, is this grayness?

And what happened to Europe when a man named Adolf Hitler turned his back upon Judeo Christian ideals and philosophy and went back and embraced instead the gods and the principles and the philosophy of the pagan Teutonic peoples as he understood them. Hitler studied the culture the Lord of the Teutonic tribes, the Lord they had before the gospel came to them and before Christianity had its impact upon them. And he reverted back to those days. He took the Swastika, which was a favorite symbol of those tribes, and made it the symbol of the modern Nazi movement. Although he reversed the direction of the Swastika, it was a symbol from ancient times of the tribes of Germany.

And he sought to take the German people back to that pagan situation which they had centuries earlier escaped from. But they had by that time lost the ability to appreciate the value of that escape. And as a result, war broke out which took the lives of an estimated 30 million people. You've all heard of the 6 million Jews who were slaughtered in Hitler's concentration camps, but

that was only part of the toll. I read a book by a Jewish historian named Max Demant called *Jews, God and History*, and he made this interesting comment. He said, Everyone bemoans the fact that 6 million Jews were slaughtered by the Nazi regime. Almost no one is aware that that same regime wiped out 7 million Christians in Germany and in Western Europe alone. Hitler was even more avidly anti-Christian than he was anti-Jewish.

But Jewish propaganda machines have made it so well known that 6 million of their people were lost while we Christians haven't had such a good advertising campaign, no one very few people that is known that Hitler killed more Christians than he did Jews. And cities were grainy not from the breath of the Galileans, but from the smoke of burning cities and the paw of the flesh of dead men and dead women and dead children spread out across Europe, bringing with it a terrible stench as a result of one man's return to pre-Christian philosophy and ideals.

Moving further back into history. Did you know that the Irish tribes used to practice head hunting then missionaries going out from some of them that is not necessarily all? Missionaries working out from the central area Christian areas of the Roman Empire went to Ireland and successfully evangelized a large percentage of the people there. They took with them to Ireland the learning, the scholarship of the Roman Empire. In monasteries, Latin was spoken and Latin works and many scholarly works were preserved. Later, when the Roman Empire fell, wiped out by the Goths and the Visigoths, who sworn down and quenched the light of scholarship and education in Rome and surrounding areas, the Dark Ages set in.

After the Dark Ages began to set in, then missionaries from Ireland began taking the light of scholarship, along with the gospel of Jesus Christ, back to the other areas of Europe, which were in terrible darkness after the fall of the Roman Empire. If Christian missionaries had not successfully evangelized and brought up lifting renewal to the people of Ireland before the fall of the Roman Empire, the Dark Ages would have been a hundred times darker. Who knows? Perhaps that Dark Age might have continued even until today.

Another scourge that ravaged Europe in the Middle Ages was the Vikings. These great chesty, muscular, bearded warriors with their great clubs and their massive swords sailed out southward from Norway from what is now Sweden. From the general Scandinavian area, they ravaged the coast of Denmark. They ravaged the coastline of England. They moved still further south, burned cities and towns along the coast of France. They even followed rivers way back, hundreds of miles inland. Even inland areas were not safe from their savagery. They came further on down into Spain, burning and they especially loved to burn Christian churches wherever they found them. They even passed through the straits of Gibraltar and began burning cities along the shore of the Mediterranean.

Still not satisfied, some Viking expeditions went through the Dardanelles. They attacked Istanbul, they sailed up through the Black Sea, followed the Volga River way up into the heartland of Russia. Still killing, pillaging, burning as they went. All of Europe trembled under the threat. What could possibly stop them? You know what happened? These savage Vikings found beautiful maidens in some of the areas that they attack, and they took them to be their

wives. Some of these gentle maidens were devout Christians. They suddenly found themselves reluctant missionaries to Scandinavians.

And, you know, I can just imagine the emotional turmoil, the distress. But a number of these young women, finding themselves by no choice of their own, suddenly placed in this difficult situation, still held on to their faith in Jesus Christ. And they decided to try to do something about the savagery of their husbands. And they started in whenever they learned, however long it took them to speak Norwegian or Swedish or whatever language they had to learn, I'm not sure whether they were all that good linguists, how long it took them to learn those languages, but these reluctant missionaries eventually led their husbands to Christ.

And a change came about through Scandinavia. The Vikings stopped sailing forth on their expeditions and Europe was delivered from one of the worst scourges that it has ever known. I wonder if Lord Byron might have modified his statement a little bit if he had been cognizant of this aspect of history. Moving out to other parts of the Earth, in the interior, Veyron Jaya. There are formerly Stone Age tribes known as the Acadia, 100,050 people, the Yali, 40000 people, the Dougal, probably about 7000 people. And I could name other tribes. All of these tribes were deeply concerned over a problem common to all people. Death.

All of these tribes rejected death as being a rightful part of man's experience. They said, Death should not be. Our forefathers enjoyed immortality, then the lizard of life from the bird of death had a race to decide whether men and women would be allowed to continue to enjoy this privilege of immortality or become subject to death. The bird of death won the race, went out

and built the first grave house, turned around and mocked mankind squealing phom phom phom which means mud on you, mud on you, mud on you. In other words, the implication was, from now on, you humans will smear your bodies with the mud of mourning for your dead. I have brought death upon you. Mud on you, mud on you, mud on you. But if mankind once possessed immortality, there was perhaps a chance that he might someday regain immortality.

And these tribes have names for a message of immortality that they hoped would someday return. The Akari tribe called that principle of immortality Ayi, the Dama called it Hai and the Moni called it Hazi, Badani called it Nabalán Kábalan, and the Yali called it Habalal Kabala. But all of these tribes, close to half a million people, had this deep concern over the question, will mankind someday regain immortality? Will we be delivered from death and the despair that it brings to us?

Now, these tribes developed a way of trying to make sure that immortality would come back. They had this concept that mankind had to fill up a certain measure of suffering first. And once men had suffered, mankind had suffered to a certain extreme degree. Then whatever powers or gods or spirits there might be would look upon humanity and say, they've suffered enough now. Let's give immortality back to them. Let the principle of immortality that was represented by the lizard of life be restored to mankind. Now, they thought, if we voluntarily subject ourselves to extreme suffering, perhaps that message of immortality will come back the more quickly.

So what sort of suffering did they voluntarily subject themselves to to that end? Well, whenever someone would die, his relatives in any of these tribes that I've mentioned in the mountain areas

would take a sharp stone axe and call a relative over some friend and say, now look, I blade my little finger on this log, place the blade of the stone axe on this joint of my little finger and then hit the stone axe with a stone and keep pounding it until that segment of my finger is severed. And so a person would cut off a segment of his finger each time a relative died voluntarily subjecting himself to that extreme pain to try to fill up the measure of suffering that had to be filled up before death could be abrogated and mankind could escape from its dominion.

So when a second relative dies, here goes a second segment of the little finger. And then a sister dies and the third segment goes. The little finger is completely gone. Now they start on the second finger of this hand. One death, one segment, another death, another segment. And it was quite common to see large numbers of donny men, women, young people walking around with just two fingers left on the left hand. They saved these two fingers from the thumb for weeding their gardens, for holding onto axes so that they could chop firewood or hue boards to make walls for new houses or whatever. But if still more deaths occurred after these two fingers were gone, then they would start with a little finger of the other hand. 123456.

With a total of twelve deaths, four fingers would be missing. If still more deaths occurred, then they would start on the ear lobe. And each time a relative died, they would cut off a segment of the earlobe. There were even a few individuals who not only had two fingers missing from each hand, but also had just tattered remnants of what used to be ears on both sides of their heads.

Does this remind you of Mark 5:5? Night and day among the tombs and in the hills, he would cry out and cut himself with stones. But you see, they meant business about this problem of death

and the possibility of immortality. The deepest philosophical concern of these people was, can man escape the misery of death? And they tried to do something about it. When the first Christian missionaries arrived and learned the languages of these people and began to teach the word of God, inevitably, they soon came to Bible stories that you and I take for granted so easily. The story of Jesus raising the widow of Nain's son from the dead. The story of Jesus raising Gyrus daughter and Lazarus and finally himself.

And he proclaimed, I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live and here these people whose culture taught them that death really didn't belong on the human scene. It was there because of some tragedy that had happened after man was initially created, began to respond to the gospel of Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of that ancient hope which they called variously Ayi, Hai, Nabalán Kabalan, Habalal Kabalal or whatever. And as a result of the response that began within less than 25 years, 1100 churches were established, averaging about 200 members each.

But you just tried to picture 1100 churches in your mind. It's hard to do, isn't it? It's almost more than you could shake a stick at as they say down South. I mean the Southeast. What a work of God. Along with this response, the chopping off of fingers and the cutting of earlobes has stopped. Why? Because the people of those tribes now realize that when Jesus died upon the cross, he filled up that measure of suffering that had to be filled up before mankind could begin to experience a return of the forces of immortality, lost at the beginning of time.

Try to persuade Adamal, Anakati, Adani that his valleys have been made grave by the breath of Jesus the Galilean. And you'll have a rather hard time. As he looks out and sees villages on the mountainside where not too many years earlier, at least some of those villages at any point in time would have been blackened as burning with the smoke caused by intertribal warfare. And as Dani men and women now see their hands with five fingers and they can feel their ears and feel not the tattered remnants that some of the older people still have. And as they see their children growing up and they know that they can continue throughout life with five digits in each hand and without marring their ears, they would express that Jesus has brought them life and life more abundant.

Other tribes in the other parts of the island didn't cut off finger segments, they didn't cut off earlobes. But they tried to fill up that measure of suffering by actually waiting until the corpse of a loved one was seeping with maggots several days after death occurred and then thrusting their hands in among the maggots. Then without washing their hands, taking food, and eating it, it made them vomit. They felt extreme revulsion. But that's gone now. It's only a bad dream. Why? Because they know that Jesus has already dealt with the problem of death along with the problem of sin at Calvary.

I mentioned the Yali tribe. Among the Yali people, there was an extremely severe set of taboos. Most of the taboos were directed against women and little children. It was comparatively easy for a Yali man to walk through life without breaking any one of these rigid taboos. But there were so many taboos directed against women and little children that they often ran afoul of them. Yali women were taught from childhood that the Kimbu spirits could accept nothing female.

Their glory increased in proportion to the degree that everything feminine was excluded from their presence.

So at the Yali woman overheard some sacred incantations being uttered by Yali men. They had to have pig's blood rubbed in their ears. If they observed with their eyes some ritual being performed, then the men, if they saw that the woman had observed that thing, they would kill a pig and take the pig's blood and rub it in her eyes to make everything right again. If a Yali woman tread upon certain plots of ground that were sacred to the Kimbu spirit, she had to be thrown in the river. There was no other remedy. Yali women live with a perpetual sense of rejection from the supernatural world.

And as a result, whenever some extra soil came into their lives, like if a woman's husband would insult her or savagely beat her, lose his temper, burn her with hot coals, or knock her down, or if her baby died, or if she had a bad argument with another woman, then often a Yali woman would just say, Why do I want to live anyway? There's no point in living. Why should I live on until I accidentally break one of these taboos and have to be hurled into the river to my death? I'll save them the trouble. I'll just run down to the river right now and throw myself in. And they would actually do it. When the Yali female suicide rate was at least ten times greater than the male suicide rate.

Since the gospel has come to the Yali valleys, and hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of Yali women, along with their men, sit down to listen to the words of the Lord, who said, concerning a woman named Mary. Mary has chosen that good part. What was that? Sitting at his feet,

listening to his sacred words and not having pig's blood rubbed in her ears. Can you imagine? Mary has chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her. And where Yali women have received the gospel of Jesus Christ, that high female suicide rate has come down, down down. It's almost down to zero.

Missionaries writing from New Guinea just a few days, a letter came that said, in this entire Valley, two valleys which embrace about 15,000 Yali out of 15,000 Yali, approximately half of which would be women, there were only four deaths by suicide last year. Next year, we expect it will be less probably in two or three years from now, Yali female suicide will be virtually unknown. It used to be several dozen Yali women every year would commit suicide because now in Jesus Christ they found a God willing to be the God of the whole population. That compulsion to suicide is evaporating away from their culture.

The anthropologist who was President of the American Anthropological Association in 1978 a professor from UCLA I mean if he was President of the American Anthropological Association, you know, he's Mr. Big in the world of American anthropology at least. He was chatting not long ago with Charles Kraft, also a PhD in anthropology and a professor at Fuller Theological Seminary. And Chuck relayed to me a statement that Mr. Goldschmidt made. He said, in words, to these effect, anthropology as a science started out with a tacit assumption that human cultures develop because people just naturally love each other and want to live together, and so they need some rules by means of which they can live together and express their love for one another.

Goldschmidt continued, now we are realizing that the opposite is true. Human cultures have developed all over the Earth not because people love each other and want to live together, but rather to keep people from slitting each other's throats. Then Goldschmidt said, this is what you might call a scientific discovery of sin.

Now I want to make some observations. If the prime motivation behind the development of any human culture around the world is the controlling of the evil that is in the hearts of men and women, the restraining of it, then any message, any ideology, any messenger who comes to a culture to reinforce, to help that culture achieve its prime goal of controlling evil is not a culture destroying message or element. It is approaching that culture exactly parallel to the prime purpose of that culture. You see, Byron's statement, the world has been made gray by the breath of Jesus Christ is based on that original assumption that people out there all love each other, the noble savage that Russell wrote about everything's just hunky dory and everything's carefree and casual and just lovely.

It's an enviable kind of situation, but those of us who have actually gone out and examined the world at large, and those of us who know what life is really like for millions of people, even right here at home, know that everything isn't hunky dory. People are not carefree and happy. You find in India, for example, children being dragged into temple prostitution, young boys and girls forced to become prostitutes in temples in India. Amy Carmichael devoted her life to try to rescue children from that fate. And also in India, there were the problems of widows being burned alive with the corpses of their husbands so that they might accompany their husbands into the next life.

All of these sort of things do not speak of carefreeness, of delight, but rather of bondage. And people in these cultures who have found the gospel of Jesus Christ by and large have no desire to go back. And so the gospel of Jesus Christ around the world has brought to millions of people new hope, rest to replace that restlessness, love of truth to replace morbidity, a sense of belonging to wipe away the estrangement confidence, to replace the anguish, self-acceptance instead of self-hatred, and manageableness pliability flexibility instead of an untamable urge to go one's own way.

And so the Apostle Paul said, I am not ashamed of what? The gospel of Jesus Christ because it is the power of God onto salvation. That's its prime concern, not just making human society better, its prime concern is the salvation of men and women, but along with that salvation comes deliverance for entire cultures as well as Europe was delivered from the Viking scourge through Christian maidens who accepted their lot in life and sought to do the will of God where they found themselves. Deliverance to Yali and Akari and Dani who felt compelled to cut their fingers off segment by segment, mutilate their earlobes. Deliverance to Sau'i tribesmen who used to thrust their hands among maggots. Deliverance, deliverance, deliverance from whatever form of evil enslaved them. Jesus said, I am come that they might have life and have it to the full.

Now, it is true that missionaries do make some mistakes. You try to help someone with the gospel of Jesus Christ and you may make some mistakes, but any mistakes that you may make will be mere niceties, trivia compared to the atrocities that other men work against each other without the gospel. I remember reading a diatribe written by a secular anthropologist against a missionary in South America who gave a steel axe to a tribesman in the jungle who had never

had anything except a stone axe. And in the eyes of the anthropologist, this was a terrible mistake. It was a gross crime against the culture of that native to introduce a steel axe.

Now, the fact of the matter is that that tribesman is going to get a steel axe from someone else if he doesn't get it from that missionary. Eventually, it may take a while that he will sooner or later get one, or his children or his grandchildren will get one, that they will probably get it at a price that may leave them impoverished. If he gets that steel axed from someone else, he may have to prostitute his wife or his daughter as payment for it, or give up some land which he needs instead of getting it at a fair price or as a gift or as a fair exchange from a messenger of Jesus Christ.

There's a tribe in Southern Irian Jaya called the Kayakar, who found out about the existence of steel axes from a tribe called the Yakai that lived to the Southeast of them, closer to civilization.

The Kayakar were determined to get steel access, too.

And so they said to the Yakai tribesmen who had steel axes, what is the price? What is the cost of the steel axe? And the Yakai said, to get one of these, you are going to have to give a child for each act. And the Kaygar, in their desperation and their deep craving for advancement in this particular manner, were actually trading their children to get steel axes. Was my friend John McCain dehumanizing the Kayakar or going against their rights? Was he violating their cultural integrity when he said to them, Please stop praising your children for these axes. I've got a case of them in my storehouse. You can work for me for a little while and I'll pay you a steel axe.

Which is best? A naive cultural purist, doesn't take the full picture into view, but you know, the same anthropologist who may tell in his anthropology classes stories against missionaries who give steel access to Stoney's tribesman are strangely silent when he reads.

They read in their newspapers that communism in Cambodia, for example, having gained power promptly at gunpoint, forced tens of thousands of people whose culture was to be city dwellers to go out into the rural areas and become rural people. The rural areas were not prepared to receive them until thousands upon thousands of people starved to death. Now that is culture destruction and people destruction on a scale so vast you can't begin to measure it. But where are the anthropologists or psychologists or sociologists who, when they hear of something like that, will condemn international communism as a culture destroying movement because that's what it is? In Red China itself, thousands of Red Guards rampaged throughout the length and breadth of China, destroying thousands of priceless works of art and reviling the elderly, which Chinese cultures had taught for thousands of years, should be respected.

But where are those who will identify international communism as a culture destroying movement that destroys cultures, not with brings change, not with persuasion, but with force, with threat of life or death. Communist guerrilla movements and some of the areas where Aboriginal Peoples live commonly will force the Aboriginal people to take up arms with them. They'll teach them how to use weapons, they'll force them to join their ranks. They'll use them for their purposes. And often families are bereaved and whole villages may be destroyed as tribal people are caught up in the warfare that results.

Jesus said, I am come that they might have life, spiritual life, and along with that spiritual life, fullness of life in every way. The thief comes to kill, steal and destroy. When Billy Sunday lay in his coffin, thousands of people filed past to take a last look at the famous evangelist. In the file came a woman dressed in dark clothes of mourning leading a brood of little children. She lined

her children up along the edge of Billy Sunday's coffin, and some of them could just barely see over the edge of it. And as her children gazed down at Billy Sunday's still form, the mother said to them, children, there's the man who preached and our daddy left the drink and our home's been like heaven ever since.

What an epitaph. And it's echoed in the families of not just tens of thousands, but hundreds of thousands and millions of homes around the world, homes representing thousands of different cultures. Now it is this message of life, this vehicle for bringing fullness of life not only in this world but in the next that has been entrusted to us to you. What are you going to do with it?

What are you going to do with your life?

Are you going to allow yourself to be intimidated by the criticisms of secular professors under whom you may have sat in college before you came here, who constantly downgrade the gospel of Jesus Christ and deny its redeeming value? Are you going to keep your eyes upon its real value, its real purpose? And will you go out into the world to make sure that this gospel reaches people who need the deliverance it can bring? People who need to be made subject to the will of God and thereby made recipients of the grace of God? Do you really think that God has called you to go out of Biola College and devote your life to make some rich corporation richer still? Is that a good enough purpose for living?

Are you going to go out and be a public relations expert for some big corporation who can talk a little slicker than someone else to get the product sold? Is that a good enough purpose for you? Maybe God wants you to become a vehicle of this saving truth somewhere in the world,

somewhere in this nation or in some other nation, a bearer of this message that brings life and fullness of life along with it. Are you willing if you have tasted of the fullness of life that Jesus Christ has given, can you rest while millions of others don't have it? Or will you take the yoke of Jesus Christ upon your shoulder and say, Lord, I want to be your coworker. If you want me to go to some part of the world where men and women still languish in chains of darkness, restless, morbid, estranged, crying in anguish, retching with self-hatred, shameless, untamable.

You and I are the only ones who are messengers of that kind of deliverance. Do you know in Zaire, where 85% of the schools had been established through mission work. The Zairian and government came to the point where they said, all right, we don't need you churches and missionaries to govern these schools anymore. Hands off. We're going to take over the whole educational system. And they did. And the school system began declining. Things began dissolving into chaos. And finally Zairian government, in desperation, came back to the Zairian national churches and said, Help step back into the traces. Put the harness back on. Take over this educational system. We can't operate it.

And so the churches said, we will take it back again on one condition. That you will allow us to fire any teachers who are unacceptable, who are unethical. This was one of the problems, that teachers in the schools were sexually exploiting the children, you see, causing parents to rise up in protest and so on. You must allow us to fire any teacher who doesn't live up to the ethical standards that we require in the schools. And the government said, oh, no, we couldn't give you that power. You can't fire anyone. They said, Very well, we won't take it on. It's still in your lap.

So the Zairian government finally relented and said, all right, we give in. You can fire any teachers you want to.

And they said, all right. And now it is the churches again in Zaire that are operating thousands of schools throughout the country. And the educational standard is beginning to rise again. In evidence the gospel of Jesus Christ indeed, was necessary. Secular man cannot duplicate what the gospel can do. I read a book on the history of early missionary work in Ontario, where the missionaries came in among the Algonquin and Iroquois tribes. And they began to make peace between warring groups. Model villages were established, people were cleaner, they were growing better crops. And then the Canadian government looked on this and said, hey, that's really nice. It looks easy.

All right, you missionaries. Now you get out of the way. We're the ones who ought to take charge of this kind of a social program. So the Canadian government took it over, and the result was chaos and more chaos. And finally the Algonquin Indian tribe became totally extinct. The same thing happened in Tasmania, off the South Coast of Australia, where a Christian named Clark saw that the last remnants of the Aborigines who inhabited the island were dwindling in numbers facing extinction. He devoted about 20 years of his life and they were beginning to make progress. Then he died. No other Christian replaced him. Secular men came in, introduced alcohol, and the tribe vanished within ten years of the death of Clark.

Secular man cannot bring about secular programs, cannot do what the gospel of Jesus Christ can do. But it has to have a bearer. It has to have a vehicle to approach the people who need it. You

and I are those vehicles. The enemy will try to turn us out of the path, turn us aside, cause us to waste our lives in some lesser purpose. Don't let him do it.

Let's bound prayer, Father in Heaven. As I think of these hundreds of young men and women facing their futures, I tremble within my heart, O God, I covet the potential of their lives. For your work, for your will, your purposes on Earth. Grant O God, that they will become bearers of the light, agents of deliverance. That they will shout from their hearts along with Paul. I am not ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is the power of God unto salvation to the Jew first and also to the Greek. And I will be a bearer of that message in my day. We pray that this may be so in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.