



IMMERSION
OUTFITTERS
OUTFITTING MEN FOR LIFE IN CHRIST

Liberia, West Africa
December 2-20, 2023
George Ramirez, Jr.
Genevieve Ramirez



SCHEDULE FOR LIBERIA TRIP DEC 2-20

Dec. 2 Saturday Depart 1:13pm	Dec. 3 Sunday Arrive in Liberia @ 8:20 pm	Dec. 4 Monday Day of Rest	Dec. 5 Tuesday Visit Comfort Toe/ IO Bible study	Dec. 6 Wednesday Visit School of the Blind
Dec. 7 Thursday Resting Day	Dec. 8 Friday Bong County Gbaota	Dec.9 Saturday Nimba County water well dedication	Dec. 10 Sunday Church service in Gbaota	Dec. 11 Monday Menema Water Well Project Dedication
Dec. 12 Tuesday Depart Menema to Gbaota	Dec. 13 Wednesday Sleep in Gbaota	Dec. 14 Thursday Depart Gbaota to Monrovia	Dec. 15 Friday Resting day in Monrovia	Dec. 16 Saturday Children Christmas party in VOA
Dec. 17 Sunday Church Service in Monrovia	Dec. 18 Monday Resting/ Packing Day	Dec 19 Tuesday Depart Liberia @ 9:40pm	Dec 20 Wednesday Arrive @ SATX 8:54 pm	

Christian Perfection

December 2

By Oswald Chambers

Not that I have already attained, or am already perfect... –Philippians 3:12

It is a trap to presume that God wants to make us perfect specimens of what He can do— God’s purpose is to make us one with Himself. The emphasis of holiness movements tends to be that God is producing specimens of holiness to put in His museum. If you accept this concept of personal holiness, your life’s determined purpose will not be for God, but for what you call the evidence of God in your life. How can we say, “It could never be God’s will for me to be sick”? If it was God’s will to bruise His own Son (Isaiah 53:10), why shouldn’t He bruise you? What shines forth and reveals God in your life is not your relative consistency to an idea of what a saint should be, but your genuine, living relationship with Jesus Christ, and your unrestrained devotion to Him whether you are well or sick.

Christian perfection is not, and never can be, human perfection. Christian perfection is the perfection of a relationship with God that shows itself to be true even amid the seemingly unimportant aspects of human life. When you obey the call of Jesus Christ, the first thing that hits you is the pointlessness of the things you have to do. The next thought that strikes you is that other people seem to be living perfectly consistent lives. Such lives may leave you with the idea that God is unnecessary—that through your own human effort and devotion you can attain God’s standard for your life. In a fallen world this can never be done. I am called to live in such a perfect relationship with God that my life produces a yearning for God in the lives of others, not admiration for myself. Thoughts about myself hinder my usefulness to God. God’s purpose is not to perfect me to make me a trophy in His showcase; He is getting me to the place where He can use me. Let Him do what He wants.

“Not by Might nor by Power”

December 3

By Oswald Chambers

My speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power... –1 Corinthians 2:4

If in preaching the gospel you substitute your knowledge of the way of salvation for confidence in the power of the gospel, you hinder people from getting to reality. Take care to see while you proclaim your knowledge of the way of salvation, that you yourself are rooted and grounded by faith in God. Never rely on the clearness of your presentation, but as you give your explanation make sure that you are relying on the Holy Spirit. Rely on the certainty of God’s redemptive power, and He will create His own life in people.

Once you are rooted in reality, nothing can shake you. If your faith is in experiences, anything that happens is likely to upset that faith. But nothing can ever change God or the reality of redemption. Base your faith on that, and you are as eternally secure as God Himself. Once you have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, you will never be moved again. That is the meaning of sanctification. God disapproves of our human efforts to cling to the concept that sanctification is merely an experience, while forgetting that even our sanctification must also be sanctified (see John 17:19). I must deliberately give my sanctified life to God for His service, so that He can use me as His hands and His feet.

“The Law of Opposition”

December 4

By Oswald Chambers

To him who overcomes... –Revelation 2:7

Life without war is impossible in the natural or the supernatural realm. It is a fact that there is a continuing struggle in the physical, mental, moral, and spiritual areas of life.

Health is the balance between the physical parts of my body and all the things and forces surrounding me. To maintain good health I must have sufficient internal strength to fight off the things that are external. Everything outside my physical life is designed to cause my death. The very elements that sustain me while I am alive work to decay and disintegrate my body once it is dead. If I have enough inner strength to fight, I help to produce the balance needed for health. The same is true of the mental life. If I want to maintain a strong and active mental life, I have to fight. This struggle produces the mental balance called thought.

Morally it is the same. Anything that does not strengthen me morally is the enemy of virtue within me. Whether I overcome, thereby producing virtue, depends on the level of moral excellence in my life. But we must fight to be moral. Morality does not happen by accident; moral virtue is acquired.

And spiritually it is also the same. Jesus said, “In the world you will have tribulation...” (John 16:33). This means that anything which is not spiritual leads to my downfall. Jesus went on to say, “...but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” I must learn to fight against and overcome the things that come against me, and in that way produce the balance of holiness. Then it becomes a delight to meet opposition.

Holiness is the balance between my nature and the law of God as expressed in Jesus Christ.

“The Temple of the Holy Spirit”

December 5

By Oswald Chambers

...only in regard to the throne will I be greater than you. –Genesis 41:40

I am accountable to God for the way I control my body under His authority. Paul said he did not “set aside the grace of God”— make it ineffective (Galatians 2:21). The grace of God is absolute and limitless, and the work of salvation through Jesus is complete and finished forever. I am not being saved— I am saved. Salvation is as eternal as God’s throne, but I must put to work or use what God has placed within me. To “work out [my] own salvation” (Philippians 2:12) means that I am responsible for using what He has given me. It also means that I must exhibit in my own body the life of the Lord Jesus, not mysteriously or secretly, but openly and boldly. “I discipline my body and bring it into subjection . . .” (1 Corinthians 9:27). Every Christian can have his body under absolute control for God. God has given us the responsibility to rule over all “the temple of the Holy Spirit,” including our thoughts and desires (1 Corinthians 6:19). We are responsible for these, and we must never give way to improper ones. But most of us are much more severe in our judgment of others than we are in judging ourselves. We make excuses for things in ourselves, while we condemn things in the lives of others simply because we are not naturally inclined to do them.

Paul said, “I beseech you...that you present your bodies a living sacrifice...” (Romans 12:1). What I must decide is whether or not I will agree with my Lord and Master that my body will indeed be His temple. Once I agree, all the rules, regulations, and requirements of the law concerning the body are summed up for me in this revealed truth-my body is “the temple of the Holy Spirit.”

“My Rainbow in the Cloud”

December 6

By Oswald Chambers

I set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant

between Me and the earth. –Genesis 9:13

It is the will of God that human beings should get into a right-standing relationship with Him, and His covenants are designed for this purpose. Why doesn't God save me? He has accomplished and provided for my salvation, but I have not yet entered into a relationship with Him. Why doesn't God do everything we ask? He has done it. The point is— will I step into that covenant relationship? All the great blessings of God are finished and complete, but they are not mine until I enter into a relationship with Him on the basis of His covenant.

Waiting for God to act is fleshly unbelief. It means that I have no faith in Him. I wait for Him to do something in me so I may trust in that. But God won't do it, because that is not the basis of the God-and-man relationship. Man must go beyond the physical body and feelings in his covenant with God, just as God goes beyond Himself in reaching out with His covenant to man. It is a question of faith in God— a very rare thing. We only have faith in our feelings. I don't believe God until He puts something tangible in my hand, so that I know I have it. Then I say, “Now I believe.” There is no faith exhibited in that. God says, “*Look to Me*, and be saved...” (Isaiah 45:22).

When I have really transacted business with God on the basis of His covenant, letting everything else go, there is no sense of personal achievement— no human ingredient in it at all. Instead, there is a complete overwhelming sense of being brought into union with God, and my life is transformed and radiates peace and joy.

“Repentance”

December 7

By Oswald Chambers

Godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation... –2 Corinthians 7:10
Conviction of sin is best described in the words:

My sins, my sins, my Savior,
How sad on Thee they fall.

Conviction of sin is one of the most uncommon things that ever happens to a person. It is the beginning of an understanding of God. Jesus Christ said that when the Holy Spirit came He would convict people of sin (see John 16:8). And when the Holy Spirit stirs a person’s conscience and brings him into the presence of God, it is not that person’s relationship with others that bothers him but his relationship with God— “Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done this evil in your sight...” (Psalm 51:4). The wonders of conviction of sin, forgiveness, and holiness are so interwoven that it is only the forgiven person who is truly holy. He proves he is forgiven by being the opposite of what he was previously, by the grace of God. Repentance always brings a person to the point of saying, “I have sinned.” The surest sign that God is at work in his life is when he says that and means it. Anything less is simply sorrow for having made foolish mistakes— a reflex action caused by self-disgust.

The entrance into the kingdom of God is through the sharp, sudden pains of repentance colliding with man’s respectable “goodness.” Then the Holy Spirit, who produces these struggles, begins the formation of the Son of God in the person’s life (see Galatians 4:19). This new life will reveal itself in conscious repentance followed by unconscious holiness, never the other way around. The foundation of Christianity is repentance. Strictly speaking, a person cannot repent when he chooses— repentance is a gift of God. The old Puritans used to pray for “the gift of tears.” If you ever cease to understand the value of repentance, you allow yourself to remain in sin. Examine yourself to see if you have forgotten how to be truly repentant.

The Impartial Power of God

December 8

By Oswald Chambers

By one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified. —

Hebrews 10:14

We trample the blood of the Son of God underfoot if we think we are forgiven because we are sorry for our sins. The only reason for the forgiveness of our sins by God, and the infinite depth of His promise to forget them, is the death of Jesus Christ. Our repentance is merely the result of our personal realization of the atonement by the Cross of Christ, which He has provided for us. "...Christ Jesus...became for us wisdom from God— and righteousness and sanctification and redemption..." (1 Corinthians 1:30). Once we realize that Christ has become all this for us, the limitless joy of God begins in us. And wherever the joy of God is not present, the death sentence is still in effect.

No matter who or what we are, God restores us to right standing with Himself only by means of the death of Jesus Christ. God does this, not because Jesus pleads with Him to do so but because He died. It cannot be earned, just accepted. All the pleading for salvation which deliberately ignores the Cross of Christ is useless. It is knocking at a door other than the one which Jesus has already opened. We protest by saying, "But I don't want to come that way. It is too humiliating to be received as a sinner." God's response, through Peter, is, "... there is no other name...by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). What at first appears to be heartlessness on God's part is actually the true expression of His heart. There is unlimited entrance His way. "In Him we have redemption through His blood..." (Ephesians 1:7). To identify with the death of Jesus Christ means that we must die to everything that was never a part of Him.

God is just in saving bad people only as He makes them good. Our Lord does not pretend we are all right when we are all wrong. The atonement by the Cross of Christ is the propitiation God uses to make unholy people holy.

The Opposition of the Natural

December 9

By Oswald Chambers

Those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. –

Galatians 5:24

The natural life itself is not sinful. But we must abandon sin, having nothing to do with it in any way whatsoever. Sin belongs to hell and to the devil. I, as a child of God, belong to heaven and to God. It is not a question of giving up sin, but of giving up my right to myself, my natural independence, and my self-will. This is where the battle has to be fought. The things that are right, noble, and good from the natural standpoint are the very things that keep us from being God's best. Once we come to understand that natural moral excellence opposes or counteracts surrender to God, we bring our soul into the center of its greatest battle. Very few of us would debate over what is filthy, evil, and wrong, but we do debate over what is good. It is the good that opposes the best. The higher up the scale of moral excellence a person goes, the more intense the opposition to Jesus Christ. "Those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh..." The cost to your natural life is not just one or two things, but everything. Jesus said, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny *himself*..." (Matthew 16:24). That is, he must deny his right to himself, and he must realize who Jesus Christ is before he will bring himself to do it. Beware of refusing to go to the funeral of your own independence.

The natural life is not spiritual, and it can be made spiritual only through sacrifice. If we do not purposely sacrifice the natural, the supernatural can never become natural to us. There is no high or easy road. Each of us has the means to accomplish it entirely in his own hands. It is not a question of praying, but of sacrificing, and thereby performing His will.

The Offering of the Natural

December 10

By Oswald Chambers

It is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, the other by a freewoman. —Galatians 4:22

Paul was not dealing with sin in this chapter of Galatians, but with the relation of the natural to the spiritual. The natural can be turned into the spiritual only through sacrifice. Without this a person will lead a divided life. Why did God demand that the natural must be sacrificed? God did not demand it. It is not God's perfect will, but His permissive will. God's perfect will was for the natural to be changed into the spiritual through obedience. Sin is what made it necessary for the natural to be sacrificed.

Abraham had to offer up Ishmael before he offered up Isaac (see Genesis 21:8-14). Some of us are trying to offer up spiritual sacrifices to God before we have sacrificed the natural. The only way we can offer a spiritual sacrifice to God is to "present [our] bodies a living sacrifice..." (Romans 12:1). Sanctification means more than being freed from sin. It means the deliberate commitment of myself to the God of my salvation, and being willing to pay whatever it may cost.

If we do not sacrifice the natural to the spiritual, the natural life will resist and defy the life of the Son of God in us and will produce continual turmoil. This is always the result of an undisciplined spiritual nature. We go wrong because we stubbornly refuse to discipline ourselves physically, morally, or mentally. We excuse ourselves by saying, "Well, I wasn't taught to be disciplined when I was a child." Then discipline yourself now! If you don't, you will ruin your entire personal life for God.

God is not actively involved with our natural life as long as we continue to pamper and gratify it. But once we are willing to put it out in the desert and are determined to keep it under control, God will be with it. He will then provide wells and oases and fulfill all His promises for the natural (see Genesis 21:15-19).

Individuality

December 11

By Oswald Chambers

Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself..." –Matthew 16:24

Individuality is the hard outer layer surrounding the inner spiritual life. Individuality shoves others aside, separating and isolating people. We see it as the primary characteristic of a child, and rightly so. When we confuse individuality with the spiritual life, we remain isolated. This shell of individuality is God's created natural covering designed to protect the spiritual life. But our individuality must be yielded to God so that our spiritual life may be brought forth into fellowship with Him. Individuality counterfeits spirituality, just as lust counterfeits love. God designed human nature for Himself, but individuality corrupts that human nature for its own purposes.

The characteristics of individuality are independence and self-will. We hinder our spiritual growth more than any other way by continually asserting our individuality. If you say, "I can't believe," it is because your individuality is blocking the way; individuality can never believe. But our spirit cannot help believing. Watch yourself closely when the Spirit of God is at work in you. He pushes you to the limits of your individuality where a choice must be made. The choice is either to say, "I will not surrender," or to surrender, breaking the hard shell of individuality, which allows the spiritual life to emerge. The Holy Spirit narrows it down every time to one thing (see Matthew 5:23-24). It is your individuality that refuses to "be reconciled to your brother" (Matthew 5:24). God wants to bring you into union with Himself, but unless you are willing to give up your right to yourself, He cannot. "...let him deny himself..."— deny his independent right to himself. Then the real life—the spiritual life—is allowed the opportunity to grow.

Personality

December 12

By Oswald Chambers

...that they may be one just as We are one... –John 17:22

Personality is the unique, limitless part of our life that makes us distinct from everyone else. It is too vast for us even to comprehend. An island in the sea may be just the top of a large mountain, and our personality is like that island. We don't know the great depths of our being, therefore we cannot measure ourselves. We start out thinking we can, but soon realize that there is really only one Being who fully understands us, and that is our Creator.

Personality is the characteristic mark of the inner, spiritual man, just as individuality is the characteristic of the outer, natural man. Our Lord can never be described in terms of individuality and independence, but only in terms of His total Person— “I and My Father are one” (John 10:30). Personality merges, and you only reach your true identity once you are merged with another person. When love or the Spirit of God come upon a person, he is transformed. He will then no longer insist on maintaining his individuality. Our Lord never referred to a person's individuality or his isolated position, but spoke in terms of the total person— “...that they may be one just as We are one...” Once your rights to yourself are surrendered to God, your true personal nature begins responding to God immediately. Jesus Christ brings freedom to your total person, and even your individuality is transformed. The transformation is brought about by love— personal devotion to Jesus. Love is the overflowing result of one person in true fellowship with another.

Intercessory Prayer

December 13

By Oswald Chambers

...men always ought to pray and not lose heart. –Luke 18:1

You cannot truly intercede through prayer if you do not believe in the reality of redemption. Instead, you will simply be turning intercession into useless sympathy for others, which will serve only to increase the contentment they have for remaining out of touch with God. True intercession involves bringing the person, or the circumstance that seems to be crashing in on you, before God, until you are changed by His attitude toward that person or circumstance. Intercession means to “fill up...[with] what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ” (Colossians 1:24), and this is precisely why there are so few intercessors. People describe intercession by saying, “It is putting yourself in someone else’s place.” That is not true! Intercession is putting yourself in God’s place; it is having His mind and His perspective.

As an intercessor, be careful not to seek too much information from God regarding the situation you are praying about, because you may be overwhelmed. If you know too much, more than God has ordained for you to know, you can’t pray; the circumstances of the people become so overpowering that you are no longer able to get to the underlying truth.

Our work is to be in such close contact with God that we may have His mind about everything, but we shirk that responsibility by substituting doing for interceding. And yet intercession is the only thing that has no drawbacks, because it keeps our relationship completely open with God.

What we must avoid in intercession is praying for someone to be simply “patched up.” We must pray that person completely through into contact with the very life of God. Think of the number of people God has brought across our path, only to see us drop them! When we pray on the basis of redemption, God creates something He can create in no other way than through intercessory prayer.

The Great Life

December 14

By Oswald Chambers

Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give

to you. Let not your heart be troubled... –John 14:27

Whenever we experience something difficult in our personal life, we are tempted to blame God. But we are the ones in the wrong, not God. Blaming God is evidence that we are refusing to let go of some disobedience somewhere in our lives. But as soon as we let go, everything becomes as clear as daylight to us. As long as we try to serve two masters, ourselves and God, there will be difficulties combined with doubt and confusion. Our attitude must be one of complete reliance on God. Once we get to that point, there is nothing easier than living the life of a saint. We encounter difficulties when we try to usurp the authority of the Holy Spirit for our own purposes.

God's mark of approval, whenever you obey Him, is peace. He sends an immeasurable, deep peace; not a natural peace, "as the world gives," but the peace of Jesus. Whenever peace does not come, wait until it does, or seek to find out why it is not coming. If you are acting on your own impulse, or out of a sense of the heroic, to be seen by others, the peace of Jesus will not exhibit itself. This shows no unity with God or confidence in Him. The spirit of simplicity, clarity, and unity is born through the Holy Spirit, not through your decisions. God counters our self-willed decisions with an appeal for simplicity and unity.

My questions arise whenever I cease to obey. When I do obey God, problems come, not between me and God, but as a means to keep my mind examining with amazement the revealed truth of God. But any problem that comes between God and myself is the result of disobedience. Any problem that comes while I obey God (and there will be many), increases my overjoyed delight, because I know that my Father knows and cares, and I can watch and anticipate how He will unravel my problems.

“Approved to God”

December 15

By Oswald Chambers

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to

be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. –2 Timothy 2:15

If you cannot express yourself well on each of your beliefs, work and study until you can. If you don't, other people may miss out on the blessings that come from knowing the truth. Strive to re-express a truth of God to yourself clearly and understandably, and God will use that same explanation when you share it with someone else. But you must be willing to go through God's winepress where the grapes are crushed. You must struggle, experiment, and rehearse your words to express God's truth clearly. Then the time will come when that very expression will become God's wine of strength to someone else. But if you are not diligent and say, "I'm not going to study and struggle to express this truth in my own words; I'll just borrow my words from someone else," then the words will be of no value to you or to others. Try to state to yourself what you believe to be the absolute truth of God, and you will be allowing God the opportunity to pass it on through you to someone else.

Always make it a practice to stir your own mind thoroughly to think through what you have easily believed. Your position is not really yours until you make it yours through suffering and study. The author or speaker from whom you learn the most is not the one who teaches you something you didn't know before, but the one who helps you take a truth with which you have quietly struggled, give it expression, and speak it clearly and boldly.

“Wrestling Before God”

December 16

By Oswald Chambers

Take up the whole armor of God...praying always... –Ephesians 6:13,18

You must learn to wrestle *against* the things that hinder your communication with God, and wrestle in prayer *for* other people; but to wrestle *with* God in prayer is unscriptural. If you ever do wrestle with God, you will be crippled for the rest of your life. If you grab hold of God and wrestle with Him, as Jacob did, simply because He is working in a way that doesn't meet with your approval, you force Him to put you out of joint (see Genesis 32:24-25). Don't become a cripple by wrestling with the ways of God, but be someone who wrestles before God with the things of this world, because “we are more than conquerors through Him...” (Romans 8:37). Wrestling before God makes an impact in His kingdom. If you ask me to pray for you, and I am not complete in Christ, my prayer accomplishes nothing. But if I am complete in Christ, my prayer brings victory all the time. Prayer is effective only when there is completeness— “take up the whole armor of God....”

Always make a distinction between God's perfect will and His permissive will, which He uses to accomplish His divine purpose for our lives. God's perfect will is unchangeable. It is with His permissive will, or the various things that He allows into our lives, that we must wrestle before Him. It is our reaction to these things allowed by His permissive will that enables us to come to the point of seeing His perfect will for us. “We know that all things work together for good to those who love God...” (Romans 8:28)— to those who remain true to God's perfect will— His calling in Christ Jesus. God's permissive will is the testing He uses to reveal His true sons and daughters. We should not be spineless and automatically say, “Yes, it is the Lord's will.” We don't have to fight or wrestle *with* God, but we must wrestle before God *with things*. Beware of lazily giving up. Instead, put up a glorious fight and you will find yourself empowered with His strength.

Redemption-Creating the Need it Satisfies

December 17

By Oswald Chambers

The natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him... –1 Corinthians 2:14

The gospel of God creates the sense of need for the gospel. Is the gospel hidden to those who are servants already? No, Paul said, “But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe...” (2 Corinthians 4:3-4). The majority of people think of themselves as being completely moral, and have no sense of need for the gospel. It is God who creates this sense of need in a human being, but that person remains totally unaware of his need until God makes Himself evident. Jesus said, “Ask, and it will be given to you...” (Matthew 7:7). But God cannot give until a man asks. It is not that He wants to withhold something from us, but that is the plan He has established for the way of redemption. Through our asking, God puts His process in motion, creating something in us that was nonexistent until we asked. The inner reality of redemption is that it creates all the time. And as redemption creates the life of God in us, it also creates the things which belong to that life. The only thing that can possibly satisfy the need is what created the need. This is the meaning of redemption— it creates and it satisfies.

Jesus said, “And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself” (John 12:32). When we preach our own experiences, people may be interested, but it awakens no real sense of need. But once Jesus Christ is “lifted up,” the Spirit of God creates an awareness of the need for Him. The creative power of the redemption of God works in the souls of men only through the preaching of the gospel. It is never the sharing of personal experiences that saves people, but the truth of redemption. “The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life” (John 6:63).

Test of Faithfulness

December 18

By Oswald Chambers

We know that all things work together for good to those who love God... –

Romans 8:28

It is only a faithful person who truly believes that God sovereignly controls his circumstances. We take our circumstances for granted, saying God is in control, but not really believing it. We act as if the things that happen were completely controlled by people. To be faithful in every circumstance means that we have only one loyalty, or object of our faith—the Lord Jesus Christ. God may cause our circumstances to suddenly fall apart, which may bring the realization of our unfaithfulness to Him for not recognizing that He had ordained the situation. We never saw what He was trying to accomplish, and that exact event will never be repeated in our life. This is where the test of our faithfulness comes. If we will just learn to worship God even during the difficult circumstances, He will change them for the better very quickly if He so chooses.

Being faithful to Jesus Christ is the most difficult thing we try to do today. We will be faithful to our work, to serving others, or to anything else; just don't ask us to be faithful to Jesus Christ. Many Christians become very impatient when we talk about faithfulness to Jesus. Our Lord is dethroned more deliberately by Christian workers than by the world. We treat God as if He were a machine designed only to bless us, and we think of Jesus as just another one of the workers.

The goal of faithfulness is not that we will do work for God, but that He will be free to do His work through us. God calls us to His service and places tremendous responsibilities on us. He expects no complaining on our part and offers no explanation on His part. God wants to use us as He used His own Son.

The Focus Of Our Message

December 19

By Oswald Chambers

I did not come to bring peace but a sword. —Matthew 10:34

Never be sympathetic with a person whose situation causes you to conclude that God is dealing harshly with him. God can be more tender than we can conceive, and every once in a while He gives us the opportunity to deal firmly with someone so that He may be viewed as the tender One. If a person cannot go to God, it is because he has something secret which he does not intend to give up— he may admit his sin, but would no more give up that thing than he could fly under his own power. It is impossible to deal sympathetically with people like that. We must reach down deep in their lives to the root of the problem, which will cause hostility and resentment toward the message. People want the blessing of God, but they can't stand something that pierces right through to the heart of the matter.

If you are sensitive to God's way, your message as His servant will be merciless and insistent, cutting to the very root. Otherwise, there will be no healing. We must drive the message home so forcefully that a person cannot possibly hide, but must apply its truth. Deal with people where they are, until they begin to realize their true need. Then hold high the standard of Jesus for their lives. Their response may be, "We can never be that." Then drive it home with, "Jesus Christ says you must." "But how can we be?" "You can't, unless you have a new Spirit" (see Luke 11:13).

There must be a sense of need created before your message is of any use. Thousands of people in this world profess to be happy without God. But if we could be truly happy and moral without Jesus, then why did He come? He came because that kind of happiness and peace is only superficial. Jesus Christ came to "bring...a sword" through every kind of peace that is not based on a personal relationship with Himself.

The Right Kind of Help

December 20

By Oswald Chambers

And I, if I am lifted up...will draw all peoples to Myself. —John 12:32
Very few of us have any understanding of the reason why Jesus Christ died. If sympathy is all that human beings need, then the Cross of Christ is an absurdity and there is absolutely no need for it. What the world needs is not “a little bit of love,” but major surgery.

When you find yourself face to face with a person who is spiritually lost, remind yourself of Jesus Christ on the cross. If that person can get to God in any other way, then the Cross of Christ is unnecessary. If you think you are helping lost people with your sympathy and understanding, you are a traitor to Jesus Christ. You must have a right-standing relationship with Him yourself, and pour your life out in helping others in His way— not in a human way that ignores God. The theme of the world’s religion today is to serve in a pleasant, non-confrontational manner.

But our only priority must be to present Jesus Christ crucified— to lift Him up all the time (see 1 Corinthians 2:2). Every belief that is not firmly rooted in the Cross of Christ will lead people astray. If the worker himself believes in Jesus Christ and is trusting in the reality of redemption, his words will be compelling to others. What is extremely important is for the worker’s simple relationship with Jesus Christ to be strong and growing. His usefulness to God depends on that, and that alone.

The calling of a New Testament worker is to expose sin and to reveal Jesus Christ as Savior. Consequently, he cannot always be charming and friendly, but must be willing to be stern to accomplish major surgery. We are sent by God to lift up Jesus Christ, not to give wonderfully beautiful speeches. We must be willing to examine others as deeply as God has examined us. We must also be sharply intent on sensing those Scripture passages that will drive the truth home, and then not be afraid to apply them.

Worship Music

My King Forever- Josh Baldwin

You gave Your life for mine
Nailed to the cross
You crucified all my sin and shame
It was washed by Your mercy
You are the treasure I find
My reason for living
So let my life become an offering
To the One who is worthy
And all praise to the Lord most high
All praise to the One who saved my life
All praise to Jesus Christ
High King of Heaven
My King forever
You stormed the gates of my heart
The veil in between was torn apart
Now You hold the keys to the grave
Cause You bring things to life
You roll stones away
And all praise to the Lord most high
All praise to the One who saved my life
All praise to Jesus Christ
High King of Heaven
My King forever
All praise to the Lord most high
All praise to the One who saved my life
All praise to Jesus Christ
High King of Heaven
My King forever
Oh
So I lift my hands up
Lay my whole life down
My whole life down before You
I lift my hands up
Lay my whole life down

My whole life now is for You
And I lift my hands up
Lay my whole life down
My whole life down before You
I lift my hands up
Lay my whole life down
My whole life now is for You, every voice
And I lift my hands up
Lay my whole life down
My whole life down before You
I lift my hands up
Lay my whole life down
My whole life now is for You, yeah
And all praise to the Lord most high
All praise to the One who saved my life
All praise to Jesus Christ
High King of Heaven
My King forever
All praise to the Lord most high
All praise to the One who saved my life
All praise to Jesus Christ
High King of Heaven
My King forever
I lift my hands up
Lay my whole life down
My whole life down before You
I lift my hands up
Lay my whole life down
My whole life now is for You, yeah
And all praise to the Lord most high
All praise to the One who saved my life
All praise to Jesus Christ
High King of Heaven
My King forever

I Speak Jesus- Charity Gayle

I just wanna speak the name of Jesus
Over every heart and every mind
'Cause I know there is peace within Your
presence
I speak Jesus
I just wanna speak the name of Jesus
'Til every dark addiction starts to break
Declaring there is hope and there is freedom
I speak Jesus
'Cause Your name is power
Your name is healing
Your name is life
Break every stronghold
Shine through the shadows
Burn like a fire
I just wanna speak the name of Jesus
Over fear and all anxiety
To every soul held captive by depression
I speak Jesus
'Cause Your name is power
Your name is healing
Your name is life
Break every stronghold
Shine through the shadows
Burn like the fire
Shout Jesus from the mountains
Jesus in the streets
Jesus in the darkness over every enemy

Jesus for my family
I speak the holy name
Jesus, oh
Shout Jesus from the mountains
Jesus in the streets
Jesus in the darkness over every enemy
Jesus for my family
I speak the holy name
Jesus (Jesus)
'Cause Your name is power
Your name is healing
Your name is life
Break every stronghold
Shine through the shadows
Burn like a fire
Your name is power (Your name is power)
Your name is healing (Your name is healing)
Your name is life (You are my life)
Break every stronghold (break every
stronghold)
Shine through the shadows
Burn like a fire
I just wanna speak the name of Jesus
Over every heart and every mind
'Cause I know there is peace within Your
presence
I speak Jesus

Take You at Your Word- Cody Carnes

Your word is a lamp unto my feet
Your way is the only way for me
It's a narrow road that leads to life
But I wanna be on it
It's a narrow road but the mercy's wide
'Cause You're good on Your promise
Come on
I'll take You at Your word
If You said it, I'll believe it
I've seen how good it works
If You start it, You'll complete it
I'll take You at Your word
(Hey, hey)
Come on
You spoke and the chaos fell in line
Oh, I know 'cause I've seen it in my life
It's a narrow road that leads to life
But I wanna be on it, yeah
It's a narrow road and the tide is high
But You parted the water
I'll take You at Your word (woo)
If You said it, I'll believe it
I've seen how good it works
If You start it, You'll complete it
I'll take You at Your word
If You said it, I'll believe it
I've seen how good it works
If You start it, You'll complete it
I'll take You at Your word
You're good on Your promise
Yeah, I know
You're good on Your promise

You said Your love will never give up
You said Your grace is always enough
You said Your heart would never forget or forsake me
(Thank you, God)
Oh, You said I'm saved, You call me Yours
You said my future's full of Your hope
You've never failed so I know that You'll never fail me
I said, sing it again
You said Your love will never give up
You said Your grace is always enough
You said Your heart would never forget or forsake me
Hallelujah
You said I'm saved, You call me Yours
You said my future's full of Your hope
You've never failed so I know that You'll never fail me
I'll take You at Your word
If You said it, I'll believe it
I've seen how good it works
If You start it, You'll complete it
I'll take You at Your word
If You said it, I'll believe it
I've seen how good it works
If You start it, You'll complete it
I'll take You at Your word
'Cause You're good on Your promise
Hey, oh, You're good on Your promise
I'll take You at Your word
Let's go
Woo, Hallelujah

This is Our God- Phil Wickham

Remember those walls that we called sin and shame?
They were like prisons that we couldn't escape
But He came, and He died, and He rose
Those walls are rubble now
Remember those giants we called death and grave?
They were like mountains that stood in our way
But He came, and He died, and He rose
Those giants are dead now
This is our God
This is who He is, He loves us
This is our God
This is what He does, He saves us
He bore the cross, beat the grave
Let Heaven and Earth proclaim
This is our God, King Jesus
Remember that fear that took our breath away?
Faith so weak that we could barely pray
But He heard every word, every whisper
Now those altars in the wilderness
Tell the story of His faithfulness
Never once did He fail, and He never will
This is our God
This is who He is, He loves us

This is our God
This is what He does, He saves us
He bore the cross, beat the grave
Let Heaven and Earth proclaim
This is our God, King Jesus
Who pulled me out of that pit? He did, He did
Who paid for all of our sin? Nobody but Jesus
Who pulled me out of that pit? He did, He did
Who paid for all of our sin? Nobody but Jesus
Who rescued me from that grave? Yahweh,
Yahweh
Who gets the glory and praise? Nobody but Jesus
Who rescued me from that grave? Yahweh,
Yahweh
Who gets the glory and praise? Nobody but Him
This is our God
This is who He is, He loves us
This is our God
This is what He does, He saves us
He bore the cross, beat the grave
Let Heaven and Earth proclaim
This is our God, King Jesus
He bore the cross, beat the grave
Let Heaven and Earth proclaim
This is our God, King Jesus
Oh, this is our God

All Hail King Jesus- Bethel Music

There was a moment when the lights went out
When death had claimed its victory
The King of Love had given up His life
The darkest day in history
There on the cross they made for sinners
For every curse His blood atoned
One final breath and it was finished
But not the end we could have known
For the Earth began to shake
And the veil was torn
What sacrifice was made
As the Heavens roared
All hail King Jesus
All hail the Lord of Heaven and Earth
All hail King Jesus
All hail the Savior of the world
There was a moment when the sky lit up
A flash of light breaking through
When all was lost, He crossed eternity
The King of Life was on the move
For in a dark, cold tomb
Where our Lord was laid
One miraculous breath
And we're forever changed
All hail King Jesus
All hail the Lord of Heaven and Earth
All hail King Jesus
All hail the Savior of the world
All hail King Jesus
All hail the Lord of Heaven and Earth
All hail King Jesus
All hail the Savior of the world

Let every knee come bow before the King of
kings
Let every tongue confess that He is Lord
Lift up your shout, let us join with all of
Heaven
Singing holy
Singing holy
Cry out holy
Singing holy
All hail King Jesus
All hail the Lord of Heaven and Earth
All hail King Jesus
All hail the Savior of the world
All hail King Jesus
All hail King Jesus
All hail King Jesus
All hail King Jesus
All hail King Jesus
All hail the Lord of Heaven and Earth
All hail King Jesus
All hail the Savior of the world
All hail King Jesus
All hail the Lord of Heaven and Earth
All hail King Jesus
All hail the Savior of the world
All hail King Jesus
All hail the Lord of Heaven and Earth
All hail King Jesus
All hail the Savior of the world

NOTES