

# Be Bold, And Give God the Best

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[ 0 : 00 ] Good morning again to you all. Hope and pray that we all had a very good night as we come together to worship God and to receive from His Word.

But the presence of the church in the Indian Ocean started in the beginning of the 19th century. In 1810, missionaries came to the Indian Ocean. And in those days, there was no sort of structured churches.

And it's funny, when we look at the birth of a church in the Indian Ocean, everything was decided from the island of Sri Lanka.

Known in those days as Ceylon. And so the Bishop of Ceylon was the Bishop also, not only of Ceylon, but also the Bishop of Madagascar, Ceylon, Mauritius, and Australia.

[ 1 : 40 ] We then belonged to the church of God. We were all together. Most of the time, we remind ourselves that Australia is part of the Pacific.

But in the very beginning, Australia was part of the Indian Ocean. And so in 1973, the church, which was so big, so vast, became independent dioceses.

And Australia went separate. And then, Mauritius, Ceylon, and Madagascar became what is known today as the Church of the Indian Ocean, which will include, as I said earlier, the French territories of Réunion.

In the North Tip of Madagascar, we had the Comoros and Mayotte. In the Mozambique Channel, we had the Scattered Islands.

And I forgot to mention, on the map of the Indian Ocean, to the northeast of the Indian Ocean, there was what is known as the British Indian Ocean Territory.

[ 3 : 26 ] This island, the northeast, is the islands, you know, where there is a military base.

Diego Garcia, the British and the American, has established a military base there. So, once upon a time, Australia and the Indian Ocean were together.

And it's good to see the link between these islands being reestablished.

And we pray and hope that the missionary work of God will continue and that the friendship binding us together will grow further.

The theme of my sermon this morning is in the context of this growth of the Church.

[ 4 : 40 ] But especially, as the Church is growing, we are all facing challenges.

And challenges that could bring division within the Church. Division. Division. alrededor. Division. Our belief, especially of the Bible. When I was still a student at St. Paul's Theological College in Mauritius.

There was once a bishop in England who made a declaration on the day of Easter, saying that Jesus was never resurrected.

A church leader challenging the authenticity of the resurrection. And this brought within the Christian world questions, and was born what we now know as the liberal theology.

[ 6 : 11 ] Nowadays, there are people in the world and in the church who would have in their life the liberal theology.

And this is bringing division concerning the place and the role of the Bible in church and in our personal life.

My dear brothers and sisters, as Christians, I believe and I hope you believe as well, the Bible is the final authority in our everyday life.

The Bible is the central authority in the church. And without the Bible, we don't exist.

So God is calling all of us to remain faithful to His Word. And in the text taken from the book of Deuteronomy, Joshua is entering the Holy Land.

[ 7 : 37 ] And Moses is reminding himself and the people, I will not cross the Jordan. I will not enter. And you will hear later from the mouth of Joshua, Joshua, as for me and my house, we shall serve the Lord.

Joshua called by God to continue the walk and to enter into the promised land.

To be faithful, he has to be bold. He had to give God the best and especially had to act.

Because the people of the Hebrew were people with stick knife.

And most of them, though entering the promised land, they were not always happy to listen to the Word of God.

[ 9 : 04 ] And a lot of them chose to disobey. But God was asking Joshua, as He is asking all of us this morning, to be bold in our Christian life.

to give God the very best. And to take action, which will manifest our belief.

So, let us pray. Almighty God, Almighty God, we thank you for your presence in our midst this morning.

Thank you for your Word, which we have just received. Your Word is indeed a lamp unto our foot and a light unto our path.

Bless every one of us here as we meditate upon your Word. Open our hearts, our intelligence, and our minds, so that we can see you better, love you better, and serve you better.

[ 10 : 26 ] In the powerful name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Be bold in your faith. As a sign of being bold in our life, the boldness is an expression of our faith in the Lord Jesus.

Indeed, as Christians, everything we say, all that we do must always be inspired by the Bible.

Some years ago, there was a movement in the world, the Christian world, and a lot of young people were wearing bracelets or chains with these characters.

What would Jesus do? And these bracelets or necklaces would remind them, before speaking out anything, before taking any decision, what would Jesus do if he was in my place, in their place?

[ 12 : 04 ] So before any word is voiced, is proclaimed, before any action was taken, as a Christian, we need to ask ourselves, what would Jesus do?

Are the words we are going to say will bring glory to God? Are the actions we are going to take will be praised and honored to our God, our living God?

And whether we are in the Stations, in England, or in Brisbane, the testimony of the church is so, so important.

We need to be very bold in our actions, in our decisions, and give God all the glory. But in our context, the word of God is telling us, you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you.

And you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth. The word of God given to all of us from Acts chapter 1 verse 8 is requesting, is ordering all of us to go and to be the witnesses of Jesus.

[ 14 : 07 ] I'm sure you have heard this verse many, many times. And Brisbane here is your Jerusalem.

but we are all called to go and to be the witnesses of Christ, our Lord and Savior in the world.

You start here in beautiful Brisbane. But then, you should also be able to go out in all Judea, in Samaria, and to paradise in the Seychelles, in Madagascar, to be the witnesses of Jesus.

And when you go out, you will never go out alone. For Acts chapter 1 verse 8 tells us, you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you and then you will be my witnesses.

So, as we go out, we go out in the power of the Holy Spirit. We are not alone.

[ 15 : 49 ] And my dear brothers and sisters, the Word of God teaches, if God is for us, who can be against us? And if we are going in the power of the Holy Spirit, we are going to be part of God's planning.

Not only for the church here in Brisbane, but for the church in the world. And this is why we have this teaching from the Word of God.

for God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son so that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eaten alive.

He has saved you. You have been saved by the grace of God through Jesus Christ.

You know the truth and the truth has set you free like it was for Isaiah.

[ 17 : 15 ] The Word of God whom shall I send? Whom shall I send? the truth and myself we were in Mauritius another corner of paradise.

But then the call came to leave Mauritius and to go to the Seychelles. Another context, a different context.

Mauritius is more Asian Seychelles is more African. Different context, different way of approach to the gospel, to the people.

But you will go and you will receive the power of the Holy Spirit and then you will be my witnesses. God is not inviting us to be witnesses of his love only in Brisbane or only in Australia.

There is a world to be saved. And when Jesus died on the cross, he said, it is finished.

[ 18 : 55 ] The possibility of salvation is offered to the whole world. but a lot of many times as we grow, we have a feeling that we are so happy to be in our comfort zone.

so happy to be able to live as a Christian in our zone of comfort.

But God loved the world so much. God loved the world so much. God loved the world so he is sending you, people of God, to the world.

He is sending us into the world. And as he sends us, we are called to be obedient to his word, to his commands.

the great commission. Go and make disciples of all nations. It is a command to the local church, but it's also a command to the whole body of Christ to go out and to make disciples.

[ 20 : 49 ] disciples. And we need to be obedient to the word of God who is calling us out of our zones of comfort to go and to make disciples of all nations.

Are we obedient to the word of God?

Have we been hearing the word of God concerning his mission? Again, Jesus was obedient to the will of his Father.

He obeyed and did the will. And this was expressed in the Garden of Gethsemane prior to his crucifixion.

Father, may this cup pass away, but not my will be done, but your will be done.

[ 22 : 25 ] And he knew that he will obey his Father until death on the cross. And he prayed, Abba, Father, everything is possible for you.

Take this cup from me, yet not what I will, but what you will. And Jesus is our role model.

If he was obedient, he is asking us also to follow his model and his action, to be obedient in making the whole world his disciples.

And we are obedient only if we love Jesus. The Bible teaches, if we love God, we will obey his commands.

Do we love God? Are we really keen to obey his commands? Do we love God? God, if we love him, we will, in his presence and with his help, we will be able to take up the challenges.

[ 24 : 18 ] was it easy for Jesus to leave his Father, his kingdom, to come into our world and to be faithful to the will of his Father if the Son did not love the Father?

To be a loving people, we need to be able to love God. and we need to be able to love the presence of God in all the citizens of the world.

God did not come into the world to save a small group of people. And the love God has bestowed upon each one of us is a love that will go out.

And we have been taught not only to love our brothers, our sisters in the church, but the love God is asking us to love is also the love for even our enemies.

Father, forgive them. They don't know what they are doing.

[ 26 : 26 ] And out of love, we go into the world. the world that God loves so much.

The world into which God is sending us. Especially in the Indian Ocean, Madagascar, the potential of the mission of God in Madagascar is real.

But God is calling us to go and to make disciples. just to share some stories about the mission of God in Madagascar.

Two years ago, Madagascar was hit by a severe drought. drought. And in the midst of a drought, there was no food.

There was famine. rain. And when the rainy season started, in one month, they had four cyclones.

[ 28 : 06 ] Madagascar is one of the poorest nation in the world.

People of God reacted from around the world, especially from this island continent of Australia. Australia and a lot of Christians in Australia helped.

Around \$70,000 US dollars were sent to Madagascar. This money was used to drill wells nearer, closer to the villages to help the ladies who had to carry water every day from the wells far away from the villages to their homes.

to the church brought fresh water nearer to the villages. And with the financial help we received, we also gave food freely to the population affected by the drought and the cyclones.

we also brought with the water, with the food, the word of God.

[ 30 : 11 ] Two years ago, I was so privileged, Doreen and myself, to visit Madagascar. and we could see the change in the life of the Madagascar people, especially in the southern part of Madagascar.

They had fresh water nearer to their villages. They received seeds to sow.

they received food and they were blessed. And they were asking questions.

Where would the money come from? They asked. Ah, the money come far, far away from Madagascar.

the money came from Australia. What would the Australian help us? Ah, because they love you.

[ 31 : 29 ] But we don't know them. Why would they love us? Ah, they love you because Jesus commanded us to love one another.

So you mean because Jesus loves us and that the Australian Christians will love us without knowing us? Yes.

Yes. the result of a partnership in this situation brought in God's kingdom over 7,000 Madagascar people.

they were blessed. They never heard about Jesus. But with the help they have received, suddenly they were confronted to a reality they never knew before.

the love of God, the love of Jesus manifested in the generosity of the Australian church.

[ 33 : 11 ] And in these regions today the church is still blooming the witness of the new believers is contagious.

In this seventh part of the diocese of Chileau a new diocese is soon to be opened. In the northern part of Madagascar soon also a new diocese a new church will be formed.

In the central region of Madagascar free area will be dedicated for church growth.

And in doing so God is calling us as church to be bold to be obedient to be loving and to be dedicated.

Our dedication to serve God means that we have not been called by God to serve for some months or some years.

[ 34 : 42 ] we have all been called by God to serve him for the whole of our lives.

Called to serve. Called to be bold in serving and in doing the mission of God. I thank God through CMS this year a couple will be going to Madagascar.

A young family going to be in theological education and the province the church in the Indian Ocean will have just launched a program which is known as the Grassroot Theological Education Commission.

The grassroots this is where the gospel has to go to be gone and to be preached. And the missionary from CMS Australia will go and definitely will contribute to empower this commission so that the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ will not remain only the former church but will go down to the people on the grassroots level and we need your help we need your precious help and we need to see your participation salvation as witnesses of the salvation in

God through Jesus Christ so my dear brothers and sisters the harvest is plentiful the king of the laborers so pray for the master of the harvest he is calling you I pray that you will be answering as as here I am Lord send me let us pray father god you have created all of us to be part of your church and

[ 38 : 10 ] Lord we belong to a worldwide church Lord we pray for a closer collaboration to bring all the peoples of the world into your kingdom thank you Lord for teaching all of us that you love the whole world and that your son Jesus Christ died on the cross so that the world may be saved so as you speak to each one of us this morning help us to remain faithful obedient and dedicated speak to us and encourage us to answer back to you here

I am Lord send me in the name of Jesus we pray Amen God do that good did he was I said put him.

Come come other to him I want the him