

# THE LIVING GOD MINISTRIES

revealing THE UNKNOWN GOD - Acts 17:22-23

PO Box 2784, Eugene, Oregon

Ph: 541-461-3337

Email: [billgloverLGM@comcast.net](mailto:billgloverLGM@comcast.net)

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## YOU AND YOUR SALVATION

by  
**Bill Glover**

Greetings to all of you from Eugene, Oregon, USA. My wife and I consider it a privilege to serve all of you once again through this sermon.

This sermon is going out in two different forms. I was scheduled to deliver it through our telephone hookup this morning but due to technical difficulties that was not possible. Therefore I am making a tape recording available along with this written version. I am giving the sermon and my wife is transcribing it on the computer for printing in article form.

### THE SERMON:

As many of you know I am in contact with people in eleven different countries. I get different requests and questions from all over. Some people want the latest "prophecy" items. Others want the latest religious ideas or fads expounded. Many want titillating subjects explained. Or, some want my personal opinion of the different splinter groups springing up from the former WCG.

It seems the situation is much like that found in Athens during Paul's time. You might want to read Acts 17:21-32. Here we find that these Athenians spent much of their time debating the latest religious ideas. Verses 16-20 give us the crux of what is being recorded here. As verse 18 states Paul was preaching GOOD NEWS ABOUT JESUS AND THE RESURRECTION. Truths that really count and have meaning. This was the theme of Paul's message. Let us see this further. Paul stated in 1 Corinthians 2:1-5, "I determined to know nothing among you but Jesus and Him crucified."

Paul sets the tone! He sets the stage! He sets the example! Yet, in the 59 years I have been affiliated with the church I have heard hundreds of sermons that are specifically designed to make the speaker look good and knowledgeable. I have noticed over the years that what you will not hear from these speakers is HEART TO HEART EXPERIENCES. They seem totally unaware of the real Christian struggle that true followers of Jesus Christ encounter. It seems they have a spiritual inferiority complex and are afraid to open up and allow people to see who and what they really are.

God says that we must make sure that our personal works for God endure and survive the trials and tests of this life. That includes ministers as well as members alike. Paul's example shows

that a true minister of God struggles with his human nature as much, if not more, than the average person. With that in mind, where are the fruits in our lives? What are our fruits? Can we find tangible fruits that reflect the presence of Jesus Christ in our lives?

May I share something with you? At the outset I know that some will accuse me of bragging. But that is not going to stop me as my intent and purpose is to show the power and glory of God through Christ and through us human beings.

The Apostle Paul set the example in this. Repeatedly he cited the people and the changes in their lives AS PROOF OF HIS MINISTRY and what God was doing through him in helping people.

Regularly I encounter people that God used me to influence or help 30, 40 or even 50 years ago. In the past two weeks I received an email from such an individual whom I tried to help in the early 1960's. This lady has been traumatized for over 30 years by what she encountered in the church. She recently came across my name and address in *The Journal* and contacted me. She believes that the help she got from another church denomination has helped her survive. However, it seems evident she is still in trauma over these experiences going back over 40 years. God is still very much concerned with her and her salvation and wants her to get beyond these hurdles. God wants her to regurgitate these hurts once and for all so the true spiritual healing can occur. I believe God will use me to help her get over these serious hurdles PROVIDED SHE IS WILLING. These hurdles have stymied her for over 35 years.

Hardly a day passes that I do not see concrete evidence as to why God allowed my life to go as it did. I know who I am! I know what I am and why! I am not ashamed on my calling! God is using me to help desperate people because I have been there and I have experienced their pain and their trauma and this desperation.

At the time when I was ready and willing to make spiritual progress from this dilemma God raised up a human being to help me during my darkest hours [read my article entitled "The Armstrong Legacy" for more information on this trial]. Keep in mind that God uses humans to help humans. This man that God raised up was not even converted. But God chooses whom He uses and His choices would seldom be our choices. The main difference here is that I recognized the true source of this help which was God Himself. This man did not know he was providing help that would someday help many across the United States and in foreign lands. He helped my family and me and then he died. I never really got the chance to thank him in person but someday I will be able to do that. He will then understand that he was actually used by God to not only help my family and me but many others in far away places.

At this point I wish to break into this sermon and repeat a portion of a sermon I gave over our telephone hookup on January 3, 2003. That sermon was titled, "YOU AND THE KINGDOM." In this sermon I stated that a brother from South Central Africa wrote an email letter to me as a result of my articles and ads in *The Journal*. In his letter he wrote: "Please send any information that can assist me in RE-ESTABLISHING MY FAITH . . . (after) watching with helpless dismay the disintegration of the WCG. I will be grateful for any assistance and counsel you can provide."

I sent a quick email reply inquiring as to whether he had the computer capability of receiving "attachments" so that I could immediately send printed material rather than wait for up to two months for mail delivery to arrive. Regretfully he did not have that capability so I sent material by mail.

In his response to me he said: "I thank you for your very quick response to my email letter and the uplifting message it contained. I shall endeavor to ask questions that can be responded to by email. You have already touched on an area of interest and great concern to me when you mentioned: 'We were all [past WCG] looking ON and TO a physical structure . . . rather than . . . the actual true SPIRITUAL CHURCH . . . made up of individual CALLED OUT ONES . . . who may be scattered around this earth.'"

Clearly he got my point. He goes on to state that what he is struggling with now is the STATUS and the STATE of the church today. He closed his letter with "I do realize I cannot continue with the uncertainty that events in the church have left me in. I will be patiently waiting for your promised assistance."

[SPECIAL NOTE: I will be writing an article that expounds how this comment by this individual in Africa has affected so many people in God's church today. This article will show that too many are trying to determine the STATUS and the STATE of the church today rather than spending the necessary time in determining their PERSONAL STATUS and their PERSONAL STATE before God. Request this article if you choose.]

What does this letter from this individual in South Central Africa do for you? Here is a son of God crying out for help. How deeply did these words enter into your innermost being? Does his plight affect you? Are you concerned with him and his salvation? What about all the countless brothers and sisters we have in these (often Muslim) countries who could well literally be chopped to pieces with machetes or swords simply because they follow Christ? How much concern do we have for the lost sheep of God who were scattered from the fold due to no fault of their own? What are we willing to do to help these people? Are we willing to pray earnestly for them, imploring God to keep them safe since they are a part of our spiritual family – the body of Christ?

Please brethren, close your eyes for a moment. Can you imagine this brother in his country and in his circumstances? He once heard a voice in the wilderness. The same voice you and I heard at one time. It is totally immaterial whose HUMAN VOICE we all heard. It was actually the voice of Christ that was speaking to us through flawed human servants. This man was led to respond. Something that he did not even understand moved him to want to learn more. He then began his spiritual journey. Suddenly his journey ended because the source of what he considered spiritual food dried up. Where does he turn? Put yourself in this brother's shoes. Do you see him as a brother? As a fellow heir to salvation? Be honest with yourself. Do you really see him as such?

This man is not alone in his quandary. I have now received requests from people in eleven countries on four continents. These are very sincere people. They are searching . . . wondering . . . asking! They are wondering what happened and why! They are seeking answers. They are wanting to go forward. But how? They believed the basic message. They were actually called by

God even though they may have given too much credit to the human instrument. They responded. But suddenly their spiritual help dried up. Brethren, I am convinced there are thousands scattered all over this earth in very similar circumstances. I have proof of this through the responses I have already received.

But who is helping these people? What kind of help will be provided? Will an erudite sermon on some obscure Bible text really help them out of their dilemma? What do they need? Or, to make it more personal, what do you need? Do you really know? I have preached sermons, written memos and given verbal accounts of such circumstances. Many have heard or read these reports. Ironically only three people have shown enough interest to ask questions about these hurting people who are fellow heirs of God. Why is this?

I know I make people nervous by these questions. I know that some do not want to hear about these people in Africa, Australia, Canada, England and across the United States. But these are God's people. These are our brethren. These are our fellow heirs. These are the beings with whom we are to share eternity. Why is it then that we cannot seem to muster the interest needed in their quest for salvation?

I believe with my entire being that we personally need to ask ourselves if we truly feel the hurt of these hurting people. Where is the proof? The evidence? Remember God knows everything about each one of us. He knows whether we have feelings and concerns for our fellow saints. We too often fail to remember that God knows this about us.

You may be one of those who dislikes my bringing these points to the surface and asking my questions. Frankly I have no choice but to do this. I serve God. When I see a need I must address it. But I cannot force anybody to address these problems. All God allows of me is to address these matters and then leave it to each individual to determine what he or she will do about it. Let me remind you that in the second and third chapters of Revelation God delivered through His servant, John, specific messages to His church. The concluding thought in each of the seven cases God proclaimed, "*HE THAT HAS AN EAR LET HIM HEAR!*"

Now let's get back to the current sermon. What about you? What are you doing that truly helps others? Are you so burdened by your own personal cares that you find no time to pray or meditate on your brothers and sisters who are living in very dangerous places across the earth? How do you expect God to use you in His Kingdom to bring others to salvation if you cannot even bring yourself to God? Go back over that last thought again and candidly ask yourself that question and stay with it until you know that you know the answer. Meditate on that.

Brethren, this is our calling! The only job that God holds out to us in His Kingdom is that of service to others. Where are we getting the practice? Do we believe that we are just somehow going to squeak into God's family not having demonstrated any of these fruits? We need to look into that mirror very deeply! We need to ask ourselves some very hard questions. Hopefully you are not going to get angry with me for pointedly bringing this to your attention. That approach is not going to help you at all. In fact, it's going to keep you out of the Kingdom.

And don't get discouraged either! That won't help you at all! Remember who and what you are. You are a son of God, an heir of God, a joint-heir with Jesus Christ and you have been reconciled to God and sanctified by God for His holy use. Do you remember what that holy use is?

On numerous occasions I have expounded these spiritual principles set forth in Romans 8. We find extremely encouraging words in this chapter. We see that the whole creation since Adam has groaned and is waiting in anxious expectation for you and for me to personally get our acts together and allow God to equip us for His family. We need to take this personally!

Are you afraid to take this thought [a written copy of this sermon] before a mirror and look yourself straight in the eyes and ask yourself whether you really grasp and understand your calling? Do this before your maker - - - the one who is offering you this job - - - the only job He is offering?

If we do not understand and appreciate this calling that God holds out to us then how can we expect God to grant us immortality in His family?

How long has it been since you studied Revelation 21:7-8? This scripture is a clear warning from the Almighty God. Notice that He categorizes the "fearful" and the "unbelieving" with abominable acts committed by murderers, whoremongers, sorcerers, idolaters and liars. Remember that the fearful and the unbeliever will NOT be in God's Kingdom.

Now, again, don't get discouraged. Rather, get busy. Let's go to Romans 8 for a summation. As we have already seen, verses 19-23 state that the whole creation is waiting for us to get into the Kingdom of God as sons of God. Don't ever lose sight of that principle! Ask God to help you make this a part of your very being. Keep in mind that many are waiting on you personally to get your act together and allow God to lead you into His family. Can you grasp that? Do you grasp that? Think on these things! Meditate on these things! Take courage from your calling from God.

Yes, we are weak and frail and lowly and even despised as human beings (1 Corinthians 1:26 – 27). No, we are not great or influential in this life! But we are the chosen of God. We didn't have a choice in this choosing as we found in Romans 8. God believes that He can make from us the type of instrument He wants in His family. We have been called and chosen because God has confidence that we will respond to His instruction. Take courage from the fact that the Almighty Creator God is working here and never forget what God inspired Paul to write in verses 37-39: "No, in all these things we are more than conquerors THROUGH HIM WHO LOVED US. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, NOR ANYTHING ELSE IN ALL CREATION, WILL BE ABLE TO SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF GOD THAT IS IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD."

Now note verse 35 where Paul asked, "Who can separate us from the love of Christ?" Then keep verse 31 in mind which states, "If God is for us who can be against us?"

I know that God has inspired the preaching in this sermon! I am trusting that He will inspire the reading and the hearing. "He that has an ear to hear let him hear!" God repeated that admonition seven times in Revelation 2 and 3 so as to emphasize the point. Are we listening? Are we tuned in? Or, as God's word states, have we become dull of hearing? Each one of us must determine that for ourselves. My job, as a minister of God, is to place this spiritual food on your plate [make it available to you by whatever means]. It is entirely up to you to decide whether to partake of this spiritual food or dump it as garbage. Is this garbage to you? Are hurting people garbage to you? Your hurting is not garbage to God. God genuinely cares and is willing to help. But there are things that we must do so as to clear our mind and our emotions in order to receive this help.

The points in this sermon are the clear terms of God set out in His word – the Holy Bible. Please note that in all my articles and sermons I never stress a "performance driven religion." The fruits that we bear are the fruits of God through the Holy Spirit – not "acts of obedience" that we muster by our own efforts! Do we actually have concern over these matters? Let us be honest with ourselves.

I have now done my job by presenting these matters to you for your consideration. A true minister is only allowed to announce God's terms. He is not to ever be a policeman and try to force compliance. He must leave it to each individual to choose his/her course of action – or no action at all! God sets before us life on the one hand and death on the other and requires that we choose (Deuteronomy 30:19). He hopes that we will choose life but even God leaves that choice up to us personally.

Brethren, let us choose life in the Kingdom of God. We have everything to gain. But we also have everything to lose. Let us not lose out. Christ has pledged whatever help we need. Ceasing to exist for all eternity is a very long time. But, living for eternity as immortal spirit beings is also a very long period of time that never ends. These two opposites are what are at stake. Let us knuckle down and get to our calling. It is Christ that works in us both do will and to do His purpose (Philippians 2:13). As Paul stated in Philippians 4:13 we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us. We merely have to make certain that God's purpose becomes our purpose. Our future individually rests on how we respond or whether we respond at all. How badly do we want what God offers? Your reaction to this message from God will determine this!

God help you make the right choice!

-- Bill Glover

These were more noble . . . , in that they received the word with all readiness of mind,  
and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." Acts 17:11 KJV