

Announcer

Welcome to transformed by the word, a podcast about discovering how to live your life with gratifying purpose. God created you for a reason and the Bible contains the keys to unlock your transformed life. Now, here's your host, Debora Barr

Debora 0:26

Thanks for joining me for Episode 27 of Transformed by the Word.

Are you a believer in Jesus Christ? If so, someone shared the gospel message with you, and that is what we're discussing today. The Great Commission. This great commission, or assignment comes from Jesus to all current believers in him. And it is found in Matthew, chapter 28, verses 18 to 20. Here's what it says. And Jesus came and spoke to them saying, All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I've commanded you. And lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.

Today, I've invited a special guest back to the show.

Her name is Reverend Lettie Carr, and she was with me previously, on episode 22 as we discussed the topic of listening prayer, how to hear God for yourself and for others.

Lettie completed her ministerial training at the church of the Great Commission, ministers Institute in camp springs, Maryland, where she served as an elder over evangelism and the evangelical training Association accredited Church of the Redeemed Bible Institute, which she co-founded and served as its first president.

She currently reaches the lost and encourages the saints of God through the word through her daily 3:16 pm prayer line, and the Whosoever believes.org social media platform. She has experienced and been a conduit of the miraculous grace of God manifesting in healings and deliverance. And we will learn more from her today about the Great Commission of Jesus.

Stay tuned. We'll be back in just a moment.

MUSIC INTERLUDE

Debora

Hey, Lettie, it is so good that you could join me again on this podcast. I was so blessed by your first episode with me. And it turned out to be such a blessing to so many people.

Lettie

I'm glad to know that and it's certainly my pleasure to join you again.

Debora

Our topic today is the Great Commission, what Jesus has called each believer to do and how to witness to non-believers in our day to day lives. So I want to keep it real, really practical today. My first question is, why should we share the gospel message with other people?

4:17 Lettie

Well, first and foremost, we share it because it's a commandment. It's God's will that we do that he gave us the commandment, that we should go and share the gospel to make disciples. But secondly, on a more personal level, I think about the fact that if you know someone or encounter someone who doesn't know Jesus, what you're recognizing or witnessing, is a person who's headed to hell.

God loves people. He loves people enough to send a son and die for them. So if he provided for our salvation, they're important, and we love God. Surely we should be concerned about what concerns him and salvation is something that is deeply important to God.

5:00 Debora

It's a really stark reminder, as we look around and we see people in our day to day lives, maybe it's the person who brings our mail, it could be someone we speak to on the phone service representative. It could be somebody in the line at the grocery store, I mean, just everywhere, if we were to put on that filter and realize that those who don't know Christ, those who haven't accepted Him as Lord, that's their destination.

Lettie

Exactly.

5:28 Lettie

And think about the people you love. Would you want to know that you had something that could have helped them from spending eternity in hell? A, you didn't share me? Surely that will. And then think about yourself, somebody shared with you? If somebody was kind and gracious and loving enough and concerned enough about yourself, then surely you should be that concerned about the souls of friends?

5:55 Debora

Yeah, what you just said is so powerful. And I actually had a very disturbing thing happen recently to me in that one of my neighbors died. And I realized that I did not take that step. We talked about spiritual things a little bit, but I never really took that additional step. And to find out what his eternal status would be.

6:24 Lettie

Oh, man, and it's something to that I learned, you probably remember, when we have the leaders retreat, we learned that the vast majority of unbelievers who engage who we engage, are willing to say, Yes, we'll go ask them just like we set them up. But we don't seal the deal. And they're prepared to say yes, if someone would just ask them. So it's amazing. It's like a salesperson telling you all about the vacuum cleaner, but never asked him, do you want to buy it? Because like, they really, in a race found that people are open and willing to receive the gospel and say yes to the Lord, if we came back and to do so.

7:07 Debora

Right. So what exactly is the gospel? Some people don't really understand what that is.

7:15 Lettie

Well, of course, the Gospel means good news. It means telling about the death, burial and the resurrection of Christ, who died for us and is letting people know that once they accept Christ as their Savior, all of their sins are forgiven, because he paid the penalty for them, and that they not only will have eternal life, in the hereafter, but they have it from the moment they say yes to the Lord. So it's having a relationship with God even now. But the essence of it is sharing the good news that God sent His Son to death for us.

7:49 Debora

I know a lot of Christians are reluctant to share their faith with other people. Why do you think that's so? And what would you say to them?

7:58 Lettie

Well, we don't deal with rejection very well. So we're afraid that if we tell somebody, they'll just reject us, sometimes we're just afraid to speak up, you know, some people fearful talking to others, that they don't know or even about sharing their faith, just have a certain anxiety and fear.

But the Holy Spirit gives us bonus, so we can pray and ask them to help us in that area. It's important to keep the first thing first thing. In other words, this isn't about you. It's about you, loving only your father who loves you, and to make sure you have eternal life. You know, if you are in love with somebody, you do what you got to do that make them happy. You know, we know they like roses, you give them roses, they like candy. You give them candy, they like steak, you cook steak for them, because you love them and you want them to know.

And so likewise, God's love languages. Obi Wan Kenobi love me says, keep my commandments. And my command is that you share the past so that you make disciples. So you know, take your eyes off yourself. Remember, something, too, is not about you. He said, If I be lifted up, I will draw man and to me. So really, once you do your part is really on God at that point. So you know, take the weight off for you.

If they don't accept Christ, you never lost anything. And you may be used by God to plant a seed, or to be the water of a seed that was already planted? Sometimes people take a process. I know I was like that. You know, when I was in law school, somebody shared the gospel with me, but my seed had been planted. I had prayed even in my heart received I believe I accepted Christ, but I didn't have any understanding. There's no way to disciple me, but they kept watering. Everywhere I went, God kept watering that seed until finally I surrendered. And may have more. So, you know, just take your eyes off for you. And focus on the fact that you're doing this to please God.

10:09 Debora

Yeah, that's, so good because we're often more self-conscious and self-aware than we need to be. Exactly. Can you share a time when you tried to share the Gospel with someone, and maybe it didn't go so well, and anything that you learn from that experience?

10:26 Lettie

So I was in South Africa, I was in Cape Town, on a missions trip one time and you know, everywhere we went, you know, we will share the gospel. And we were coming out of our hotel, and they were these three guys, I want to say they were from Belgium. And I remember starting to share, and this one guy was like, basically everything I said, he shot him down, and his friends were like, You're wasting your time. He's not gonna listen. I said, Well, that's fine. But guess what, guys? God's Word does not return void. So I'm believing God that one day you're gonna accept Christ. And it was like, yeah.

And I guess, um, you know, it was just as a reminder that not everybody will, you know, accept Christ that everyone will have their hearts open. But again, a preacher said something one time in a service that has stood with me - stayed with me. He said, even concrete will crack if you throw enough salt on it. So you might not see it right, then. It's just like the roads in the winter when they throw the salt down. And the roads are fine, but over time when they keep putting it down so we start getting potholes and, and cracks because that salt will crack anything over time. So again, you might only be the planter, you might be the waterer, you might be the one that allows to actually bring that person to the point of receiving him. But you don't know that. So you just keep giving out the work. Again, take your eyes off of you. And I mean, for me, that lesson was, Hey, not everybody's gonna receive it, but just be faithful.

12:16 Debora

Yeah, that's good. What do you do when you encounter someone who's actually being combative toward you about the Gospel message

12:26 Lettie

Paul's real clear that we don't argue with people about the Bible. And so we do our best as he said, and they make peace with Oh, man. So sometimes, you know, you shut it down you, you prayerfully are willing to be still and humble. And let that person get it out. Because a fire goes out without a fan, you know, without wood or Ember, as the scripture says. So you know, that person is really combative.

And remember this weapon that you have, because sometimes I even have had to remind myself, stop and pray. That doesn't mean you have to pray out loud. But in your inner man, pray, you know, by that spirit, because it's really a spirit that's operating in that person trying to fight for that. So think about a brick wall, around a person's house, you know, they keeping everybody out so that they can be safe. The devil is trying to keep you out so he can be safe in that house, so to speak.

So, you know, pray that God will tenderize that person heart, bind any hindering spirit, and ask the Holy Spirit to give you the right words. One of my favorite scripture is Matthew 4:19 I believe it is where he says, Come Jesus say Come follow me and I'll make you fishers of men. Now, one of the things that I love about this scripture is that when I began to think of it in practical terms, fish have different bait. You know, I'm not efficient, but I know you don't catch sharks with the same thing that you catch a fillet. I mean, we call him flounder. Or if you're, you know, going after carp, you know, there's all these different kinds of bait. So likewise, it's different bait for every heart. So you pray and I have prayed, Lord, give me the bait for this person. What's the need that they have that you want to speak to? what's the what's the impetus that you want me to put on your particular area of your Word so they can hear? You know, what testimony do you want me to share?

One of my fond memories, and that was giving my partner a book, or the Guidepost, you know, I had no clue what God told me to give him that book. But when he opened it and came back, home, I love that

story. But it was the sub story about fishermen. I had no idea that thing was in it, but he loved to go out in this boat. So God knew what was needed for his heart that we create. So I'm saying pray, don't forget your weapon of prayer.

15:06 Debora

And that also puts you out of being the one responsible for the salvation of that person. Once again, it's God that actually is doing the work. And we just have to be obedient to what he's prompting us to do and be humble and prayerful.

15:25 Lettie

Amen. It's not about us. And there's got to be some ego. And I think we're worried about how we're going to look how people gonna look at us, even our friends, are they gonna see as trying to be holier than thou, you know, we are worried about us. Take your eyes off of me. What does Jesus want to speak to them?

15:41 Debora

I think it's a lot easier to share with people overseas or on a plane that you're never going to see again, , or even over a podcast. But when you're sharing with a friend that you've known for years, and maybe you've never said anything about your faith with them, that can be very fearful.

16:00 Lettie

Amen. And sometimes, again, knowing that the best, I don't know the percentage, but a large percentage of people have said, if somebody had just asked, I would have accepted Christ, I just wonder how many times I was to chicken to ask. You know, we're about will I get rejected instead of looking at him, and saying that I'm just being obedient, you do what you want with that. So yes, it we have the opportunity of a lifetime because, I mean, it's almost like being in a in a desert and you got a whole bunch of water, you know, people need the Lord. And we're too scared to offer them the water. When we talk about the water, we tell them the benefits of water, but we don't give it to them.

17:01 Debora

What is one of the most memorable times that you share the gospel and someone responded in a positive way and accepted Christ, maybe somebody that you never would have thought would have said yes to Jesus.

17:14 Lettie

Man, I've had some really interesting opportunities. Most recently, you know, as you know, do the 3:16pm prayer. And I've got someone who heard it out in New Mexico and gave his heart to Christ. He blessed me because he said, normally only listen to that stuff you don't like, I hear those tapes coming on. I'll see it on TV. I just change the channel. But he said, I was looking at a video because my friend's mom had passed. And he wanted me to see that he had a song that he played at her service. And he said, and as soon as his video went on, yours popped up. He said, I was here, he said, but your voice just grabbed me. And you said, I prayed that prayer. And now he's on my website. Now he's sharing his testimony with his friend who apparently used to be a Christian, and then somehow fell into

condemnation because he back slid. And he thought God wouldn't love him anymore. So I've been feeding him and he then feeds his friend.

And then most recently, he even joined his friend join him and watching my Bible study on Monday night, because a lot of men come on my website, and they watch it. I call them bootleg. But no, they watch it, and they love it. And so that's just like, out of the blue somebody never moved, you know, but God used my voice. And it's interesting because it's a lesson that some of the things that we think aren't that big a deal like I don't even like my voice for real - I don't like listening to it. And yet over and over, I've had people say to me recently, your voice comforts me your voice. So, the very thing you think, you know, I mean, it's not all that great, is a very thing He'll use so that just lets you know it's not about you.

Just be obedient. Let him use whatever he wants.

Debora

Isn't that how he works, though? The things about ourselves that we don't like or that we don't esteem are the exact things that God will use. Because it humbles us.

Lettie

You know, the thing we think we got going on with he says is a mess. You let me use what you think is not so important. Because then we know this awesome power is from him, is not about us. You know, I mean, we couldn't have manufactured it. I couldn't have made my voice be whatever they think it is, right.

19:57 Debora

Let's talk practicality. How exactly do you work a spiritual conversation into speaking to someone? What do you look for? Like? Like, how do you even open that door to have that conversation with someone?

20:14 Lettie

That's the thing, not trying to force because sometimes we try to have an unnatural conversation and that's not comfortable. You know, will you just walk up? Do you know, Jesus? You know, sometimes you can ask something as simple as How can I pray for you today? You know, is anything going on in your life? Everybody wants prayer, everybody, you know, rarely do you find a person, I don't care how hard hearted they are, that won't allow you to pray for them. And that might give you the opportunity as they share something that's bothering them.

I find a lot of times there's some connection, you know, my marriage was I've been married. I know, it's tough. So I can share maybe a test while my mom is sick. Well, my mom was sick. So, God will give you some kind of connection where you can kind of relate and relate to that person. And then you know, as you talk, depending on how things go, if God can open a door and say, you know, hey, what's your relationship? You know, are you sure that you have eternal life that you will go to heaven? If you pass? And sometimes people even have churchy answers. Oh, I grew up in church, I've been saved all my life. Okay, well, tell me about that. You know, because a lot of time when you're unpacking, they don't have a clue of what it means to be saved. They just know what it means to be a church goer.

But I did find that I had learned not to be so pushy, but that let that thing come, you know, evolve as you're talking to people. And sometimes again, you might not be the one, you might only be the one

that uses to share his love. And then the next person may be the one that he actually can use to bring him in, because now he's, he's touched their heart. But you want to listen, this is the big piece. Listen to the Holy Ghost. You know, what is he leading you to say he is amazing, I will give you the words to say if you just open your mouth.

And so when you trust God and flow, and allow yourself to be used of him, you'd be amazed how much less stressful it is. And you think it is, is when you try to take it on yourself and make it happen yourself. That that can be very frustrating and fruitless, quite honestly, I'm out of line. But if you in a normal way, talk to people, you know, be friendly to people, you know, look for opportunity to connect with people find a common ground, that's a big piece, you know, finding something that you can relate to, that you can say, Hey, I went through XYZ or Hey, I understand. When people understand that you care, then they care about what you have to say. But if they feel like you just punch in a ticket, like the Jehovah Witness got a knock on 10,000 doors. You know, I told somebody today God, but did you really relate? Because God has relation. And that's something I've had to grow into, quite honestly, because you know, my thing was who boom, drop it, move it. Drop the seed and keep moving, but being relational. And then especially if it's somebody you get the opportunity to know, but then they begin to see your witness, the more you have that opportunity to share. You know, that door opens for you.

24:00 Debora

Yeah, that's something you just said. Some people think, well, I will just act like a Christian around people and they'll get it. Now they'll somehow know that it's Jesus. But there's something missing in that yes, we are to be like Christ and, and be helpful to other people. But like you said before, if you don't actually get to the ask, they may not get it.

24:27 Lettie

That's why we don't share the gospel by osmosis. Yes. Our witnesses - and living a life that's honoring to God is important. But guess what, sometimes you're not even gonna do that. Sometimes you're gonna fall short because all have sinned and fall short. Even when we try to do our very best, you know, we're human still. Yes, we have the Holy Spirit. But sometimes we miss it. So I'm saying that to say don't just rely on your good works so to speak, because sometimes you're not gonna be so perfect.

Of course you do everything you can. But I'm reminded of Romans and chapter 10. How can they hear less than be a preacher? In other words? Yes, there's something to be said for your witness physically, and your, you know, lifestyle. But there's still a place and a time to open your mouth and share the gospel. They can't hear just by what they see. Because even if they're drawn, let's say they say something about you. They're still asking for you to open your mouth and tell them what that is. You know, if you just say, Oh, yeah, I try to be a nice person when you glorified yourself. But your lifestyle can definitely be a magnet, because guidance, you're lifting them up in your lifestyle. But sooner or later, they're gonna want to know, What's the reason? You know, what did Paul say? Peter, say, Be prepared to give the reason for the hope that you had with it. So we should always do that. And as he say, with gentleness and respect, so yeah, we got to open our mouth at some point.

26:05 Debora

Yeah. Are there any other things that you would like to share with our listeners about how to actually engage people in coming to know who Christ is?

26:19 Lettie

I think that your everyday walk, let people know that you love through your actions and through your words. In other words, when they are cursing, you speak like you speak. You speak, you know, right, just that, again, sets of witness when you get those opportunities. Share that here's another piece, pray before you leave home each day. Father, use me today, to share your word with somebody, help me allow me use me, to me somebody to Christ will honor that prayer, because that's his heart.

But when it's not on our radar, you know, I had a situation the other day, my dress prophesied to me. I was going to one of our coworkers, homegoing services that something's tragic. And his wife asked us to wear some kind of Hawaiian blouse, you know what happened? And I said, No, I got one blouse that kind of looks like that. But it's packed away in the attic, and I don't have time to go out and dig around. So I wore my traditional suit. So I get there. And me and paster are the only people in the suit.

Everybody on the pulpit - everybody got all sudden looking, you know? And I said, Hey, I really missed this. I came home. Let me back up that morning, when I was getting dressed. I was drawn toward the left side of my closet. And I remember looking at this blue dress said, Oh, yeah, Well, right beside the blue dress was a very floral thing that would look perfect, but it was a dress. And in my mind, I'm looking for a shirt or a blouse. So I looked at it, but I didn't look at it.

And God said how many times have you missed me trying to put me in your frame of reference, instead of seeing what I'm showing you. And I'm saying sometimes we're making it so much harder than it has to be. If we would just keep it on our radar, so to speak, those times when God will put the people in our path. We don't have to go chasing people to have but we're so busy buying groceries or, you know, busy getting work or busy doing whatever, that the thing is right in our face.

God is saying, here's the soul - I set it up, but you're paying no attention. And so for me that is like that dress is right there. But we're not focused on it. Are we expecting it to be some kind of other way more profound. So just keep your ears attuned, and your eyes open and right in front of your face oftentimes is a hurting person, that God wants you to share his love. And when you do, ask God gives you that opportunity to love on them.

Also say, hey, do you know the Lord? Has your relationship with the Lord? Do you understand that God loves you know, he will give you the words to say, but it's got to be on your radar. So be intentional about setting your prayer life. Make a list of people that don't know the Lord that God will save them through you or others. Again, keep it as part of your intentional focus. And the more you do that, the more you'll see that God will set you up every time and give you those opportunities.

29:52 Debora

Now he's always looking for those willing workers. Amen. Amen.

Well before I let you go, as always Always I would love for you to pray for our listening audience, especially those that might have thought something today that maybe they could have the courage to share their faith with someone. Would you pray for them?

30:13 Lettie

Holy Spirit, we know. We can't even think about witnessing anymore without you. Your Word tells us that you empower us to be your witnesses. Holy Spirit, embolden us today, embolden that person who may be as questioning whether they have the right words, or even one of Scripture has seen that they are not that adequate. Their testimony is a map that somebody can give their heart to Christ and then, Lord God, show each of us - open our eyes, that when those opportunities come before us, we will take advantage of them and allow you to use us to draw somebody closer to you. As you look less each listener help each of us to keep on our radar. Keep intentionally chasing after you after the things that are important, including leading others to be thank you in advance for every soul that will be saved every listening on every part, every platform that is podcast will be here. In the name of Jesus we pray, Amen.

31:26 Debora

Amen.

Don't go away. We'll be right back after this short break.

MUSIC INTERLUDE

32:12 Debora

We just heard from Lettie Carr, about God's command to believers to share the gospel message, the good news of salvation with other people. And she gave us some practical tips to begin having those conversations.

First, we need to begin with prayer before we even start our day, interacting with other people. And in that prayer, we want to let God know that we would be willing to be used by him today to reach other people for Christ. And then throughout the day to allow God to lead us as we begin to share our faith with others.

Now, if you personally had not yet surrendered your heart to Jesus, you can do that right now. Because it is by faith, that we believe that Jesus died on the cross for our sins. And if you've been listening today, and you want to receive the message of the gospel, won't you pray this prayer with me?

God, I confess that I'm a sinner, and I need Jesus in my life. I repent of my sins and I turn to you. I believe that Jesus died on the cross for my sins. He was buried and he rose from the dead. And I accept this by faith and invite Jesus to be Lord of my life. Thank you for forgiving me, and saving me. Amen.

Now, if you just made a decision for Christ, you're just surrendered your heart to Him. I would love to hear from you. You can reach out to me through my website at TBTWPodcast.com. Click on the link and let me know about your decision for Christ so that I can encourage you and support you with the next steps of your faith.

My prayer for you today is that you will begin to look for opportunities each and every day to share your faith with other people. You have great news that other people need to hear. Be bold and courageous and participate with God in helping to transform someone else's life.

Stay tuned for our next episode of transformed by the word where we will discuss the question What is Faith?

Announcer 34:56

Thank you for listening to transformed by the word with your host Debora Barr, be sure to subscribe to our podcast on iTunes or Google Play and connect with us at TBTWPodcast.com. Until next time, be blessed.