

Dr T.L Osborn



SOUL WINNING (PART 1)

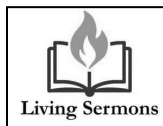
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Soul Winning (Part 1)

Preacher: Dr. T.L Osborn

Publisher: LivingSermons.com

Watch Live Video [Here](#)



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Foreword

Some messages deserve to be preserved not merely because they are inspiring, but because they carry timeless truths that every generation must hear again. **Soul Winning** is one of those messages.

Dr. T. L. Osborn was more than a preacher of the Gospel; he was a pioneer of global evangelism whose ministry inspired millions to believe that every Christian is called to carry the Good News beyond the walls of the church. His life demonstrated that the Gospel belongs in the marketplace, on the streets, in homes, among families, and wherever people live and work.

In this message, Dr. Osborn reminds us of a simple but often forgotten truth: **the Church is not merely a building or an organization—it is the living Body of Christ expressed through every believer.** Because Christ lives in us, He desires to continue His ministry through us. That conviction forms the heartbeat of this book.

As you read these pages, you will discover that soul winning is presented not as the responsibility of a select group of evangelists, but as the joyful privilege of every follower of Jesus Christ. With remarkable clarity, Dr. Osborn contrasts the methods of the early church with many modern approaches to evangelism, calling believers back to the New Testament pattern of taking the Gospel **out where the people are.**

At LivingSermons, our mission is to preserve the spoken ministry of God's servants and make it accessible to believers around the world in a readable, lasting format. This edition has been carefully transcribed, proofread, and formatted for clarity while preserving Dr. Osborn's voice, emphasis, and preaching style as faithfully as possible. Minor editorial corrections have been made only where necessary to improve readability and remove transcription artifacts. Every effort

has been taken to maintain the integrity and spiritual impact of the original message.

As you continue reading, do more than admire the truths presented. Allow them to challenge your heart. Let this message renew your vision for the Great Commission and awaken afresh the compassion of Christ within you. The Gospel has always advanced through ordinary believers who simply made themselves available to God.

May these pages stir you to see people as Jesus sees them, to love them as He loves them, and to become an active witness of His saving grace wherever He has placed you.

May the Lord use this book to strengthen your faith, deepen your love for souls, and inspire you to take the Gospel to a world that still needs to hear the wonderful message of Jesus Christ.

— ***Wisdom Epsi***
Chief Editor, LivingSermons.com

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Publisher's Note

This book is a faithful transcript of a live sermon delivered by the preacher under the inspiration and unction of the Holy Spirit. Every effort has been made to preserve the preacher's exact words, tone, flow, and spiritual authority, while carefully proofreading and formatting the message into a clear and readable ebook format.

The message you are about to read was originally ministered in a live congregational setting. As such, it carries the weight, urgency, and atmosphere of that sacred gathering. Minor grammatical and structural adjustments have been made solely to enhance readability, without altering the substance, intent, or power of the original delivery.

Watch the live sermon from which this message was transcribed on YouTube, **for Dr. [TL Osborn](#)**

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Our standard is reverence for the Word of God.

Our daily goal is to transform powerful live sermons into polished PDF and ebook editions for the edification of the Body of Christ.

It is our prayer that as you read, the same grace, conviction, clarity, and impartation present in the live service will minister to you afresh.

— ***Livingsermons.com***

A Spirit-led Publishing Stewardship

Main Message

Begins Here



Introduction

Dr. T. L. Osborn of Tulsa, Oklahoma, USA, has recorded for you his internationally renowned book entitled **Soul Winning: Out Where the People Are**.

He wrote the first edition during the early years of his worldwide ministry, and today it has become widely recognized as a living classic among evangelism literature. From its conception, the Osborns believed that its motivating ideas were destined to bring about a revolutionary change in traditional evangelism around the world.

When the first edition was published, they made a major investment to plant these seed concepts into the minds and hearts of influential Christian leaders. Complimentary copies of **Soul Winning** and its companion volume, **Join This Chariot**, were sent to more than **125,000** selected Christian leaders, pastors, evangelists, missionaries, youth directors, and other church and mission representatives in nearly one hundred nations.

Since then, this book has come to be recognized as one of the major influences in the worldwide renewal of sharing Christ outside the sanctuary—**out where the people are**.

It has become the standard textbook for innumerable Bible schools, evangelism classes, teaching seminars, and conventions throughout the world because of its inspirational insight and practical application in sharing the Good News.

Now, here is Dr. T. L. Osborn to share the audio edition of **Soul Winning** with you.

CHAPTER ONE

The Heartbeat of Soul Winning

A prominent soul winner once said:

"Let the cross be raised again at the center of the marketplace as well as on the steeple of the church. Jesus was not crucified in a cathedral between two candles, but on a cross between two thieves, on the town heap at the crossroads so cosmopolitan that they had to write His title in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek. The Son of God was crucified at the kind of place where cynics talk smut, where thieves curse, and where soldiers gamble. Because that is where Christ died, and since that is what He died about, that is where Christians can best share His message of love, because that is what real Christianity is all about."

From my conversion as a youth, I wanted to be a soul winner.

With a toy printing press, I printed Scripture verses on little scraps of paper and distributed them. Never did I dream that, in a few years, we would be publishing

Gospel literature in more than 120 languages at the rate of over one ton per working day to facilitate personal soul winning worldwide.

In the book of Acts, there were only two methods of evangelism:

- Mass evangelism.
- Personal evangelism.

Within a short time after the death of the apostles, theological controversy usurped the place of soul winning in the church, and apostasy resulted. By the fourth century, the Dark Ages had already begun.

It was not until the eighteenth century that mass evangelism began to reappear under John Wesley.

Personal evangelism, as the early church practiced it, has only begun to be rediscovered in this century.

For generations, Christians evangelized the church, the classroom, and the pews—but not the world.

People were enlisted for the class or the club and invited to the church building, where it was hoped they would decide for Christ. That was good for those few who would attend.

But ninety percent of the unconverted never enter a church. Therefore, they can never be won there.

That is why the Christian's greatest opportunity is **outside the church building**.

This message encourages and teaches Christians to win souls:

- At the factory.
- In the parks.
- On the streets.
- In the homes.

The Christian's greatest opportunity is not winning souls inside the church building, but **out in the world—out where the people are.**

The church was born in a blaze of personal soul winning. It was a house-to-house, face-to-face ministry.

These messages that I have recorded for you on soul winning are intended to be a stimulant for pastors and laypeople, rekindling every believer's passion for souls.

They can serve as a passport to the busy crossroads and marketplaces of humanity—**out where the people are.**

More than one hundred thousand complimentary copies of the first edition of our book entitled **Soul Winning**, together with its companion volume, were mailed to pastors, missionaries, national church leaders, and evangelists worldwide.

Its seed concepts have helped produce a new breed of Jesus followers around the world, promoting contact between church insiders and world outsiders—in homes, schools, factories, markets, parks, and streets—out where humanity hurts most and where only Christ's love can truly heal.

These inspiring ideas were received with such worldwide enthusiasm that we published a natural sequel entitled **Join This Chariot.**

Today these two books have been translated into many major languages and have become classics in evangelism literature.

A fresh breeze of New Testament-style evangelism is blowing across the world today.

The Christian's life motto is very simple:

One Way. One Job.

The one way is **Jesus**.

The one job is **evangelism**.

There is no fulfillment like being part of God's number one assignment—giving the Good News to every creature and winning souls out where the people are.

CHAPTER TWO

The Errand Boy Philosophy

A group of Christian women were holding their regular prayer meeting. The evangelist at their church, an ardent soul winner, was their guest speaker. He overheard them talking about a disreputable woman in their neighborhood.

The evangelist asked,

"What are you doing to show Jesus' love to that lady?"

One of the women answered,

"Oh, we're faithfully praying for her salvation every time we meet."

The evangelist replied,

"Fine. But she'll go to hell if all you do is pray for her. Have you gone to her? Have you shown Jesus' love to her? Have you visited her home?"

Have we made an errand boy out of God?

Have we forgotten that He is the Master and we are the servants?

Do we tell God to do all the things that we, as Christian believers, are encouraged to do?

To visit the poor and needy.

To comfort the feeble.

To bless and provide for the destitute.

To encourage those in prison.

To sustain the weak.

To witness to unbelievers.

Do we expect God to do all these things while we simply pray?

Have we developed a religion of convenience?

Ponder this question:

Can you think of one thing that Jesus Christ can do in your town or community without a body through which to operate?

When God visited humanity to reveal Himself, He came in a physical body.

Jesus Christ was **God manifested in the flesh** (John 1:14).

God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself (2 Corinthians 5:19).

They killed Him.

But He returned in the person of the Holy Spirit to make His home in our bodies as His temple. That is confirmed in **1 Corinthians 6:19**.

Now you and I are Christ's body.

You are the church.

You are Christ's body today.

Christ ministers through His body today just as He ministered through His physical body nearly two thousand years ago.

Today His body is the church.

But the church is **me**.

My body.

And **you**.

Your body.

We are His temple.

I am the church.

I am Christ's body.

You are the church.

You are Christ's body.

Ephesians 5:30 says:

"For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones."

Christ can do nothing except through the church, which is His body.

That is **you** and **me**.

Not our congregation.

Not our denomination.

The church—Christ's body—is me.

And it is you, if you are a Christian.

You Personally, Are the Church

When we stand before God, we will give an account of the deeds we personally have done. We will not be judged in the light of what our church accomplished as an organization.

God will not call our assembly together as a unit for judgment. Neither will He judge what our congregation accomplished as part of the corporate Body of Christ.

We will not be able to say,

"Lord, my pastor will speak for me. I was a faithful member of the church. We all worked together as one body, so I cannot answer as an individual."

Did you know that, as far as God is concerned, **you personally are the church?**

You are Christ's body.

We often speak about the church, or the Body of Christ, as the mystical union of believers—the spiritual community of the called-out ones.

That sounds very holy.

And it is true.

But like every truth, it must become personal, otherwise it remains fruitless.

Christians usually think of the Body of Christ only in its general or collective sense, not in its personal application.

Salvation is personal.

Christ must live **in us personally**.

Colossians 1:26–27 speaks of:

"...the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints... which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."

Christ must have a body through which to minister.

That body is **me**.

That body is **you**.

We are the church.

His body.

His temple.

I think that is terrific.

CHAPTER THREE

Christ Ministers Through You

This does not mean we ignore the Body of Christ in its collective sense, made up of all true believers. It simply means that you and I must remain alert to the fact that Jesus Christ lives in us, and that we are now His body.

It sounds more correct to say that we are members of His body—and indeed we are, according to **1 Corinthians 12:27**.

But this historical membership concept has somehow sedated the personal reality of **Christ in you**.

Christians often remain passive in their churches, leaving ministry to the community of believers.

They say,

"The church will do this."

"The Sunday school will do that."

"The ladies' society will take care of it."

"The men's group."

"The youth team."

"They will handle this ministry."

"They will handle that ministry."

Members like knowing that their church is busy doing good things. They are willing to pay for it—as long as someone else does the work.

But Christianity is personal.

If Christ has come to dwell in you, **you are His body**, as far as you are concerned.

I believe that is some of the greatest news in the Bible.

He dwells in you because He desires to minister through you.

He must have your body in order to reach your community.

The essence of the Christian experience is **Christ in you**.

When Jesus was in Nazareth, the Bible says:

"And he could there do no mighty work..."

—Mark 6:5–6 (KJV)

Because of their unbelief, His ministry was limited.

Likewise today, without human instruments through whom He can live and speak, His ministry is limited.

God could have sent angels to preach the Gospel.

How often people have said that.

But He did not.

He ordained that **human beings** should preach the Gospel.

If they do not, it will not be proclaimed.

And souls will be lost.

Listen carefully.

The preaching of the Gospel is limited to the willingness of human beings to step forward and open their mouths for Christ to speak through them.

This same truth applies to every phase of Christian living and witnessing.

Christ cannot visit those who are incarcerated unless He can go in **your** body.

He goes in you.

You are the church.

When you visit those who are in prison, Christ is visiting them through you.

Otherwise, He cannot visit them.

Have We Made an Errand Boy Out of God?

Through the tradition of prayer, have we made an errand boy out of God?

Prayer is vital to the Christian.

Christ taught us to pray.

But He also taught us **what** to pray for.

Jesus prayed.

Yet He did far more than pray.

Acts 10:38 says:

"...who went about doing good..."

He witnessed.

He comforted.

He visited.

He spoke.

He showed compassion.

In short, He demonstrated **God in action**.

How sacred we make our traditional prayers sound.

How humble and devoted we feel while we pray, sending to God all our orders for the day, the week, or even the month.

Do we tell Him to do the very things that we, as Christians, have been commanded to do?

Should we simply ask Him to preach too?

Why not?

If He is so convenient for us, perhaps He could include some preaching on our behalf as well.

But Christ is not merely **with us**.

He is **in us**.

Isn't it remarkable that we often talk about how the Spirit was **with** people before the Day of Pentecost, yet now we rejoice that He is **in** us? That is exactly where He is. He is in us—not floating around the world, hovering over humanity, solving people's problems, visiting them, and encouraging them while we quietly live private, secluded lives.

That is not God's plan.

Through God's redemptive purpose, Jesus Christ has returned by the Holy Spirit to live and act through you and me.

Philippians 2:13 beautifully expresses it:

"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

I especially appreciate how one translation says:

"God is at work within you, helping you want to obey Him, and then helping you do what He wants."

This is exactly what God accomplished in Christ.

Now He accomplishes the same through us because **we are His body today**.

He speaks through our lips.

He visits the needy through us.

He lifts the fallen through us.

He encourages the discouraged through us.

He heals the brokenhearted and binds up the wounds of the suffering through you and me.

You and I are His body.

We are the church.

And that is wonderful news.

Prayer Must Lead to Action

Now you can understand why that evangelist told the ladies' prayer group,

"That woman will go to hell if all you do is pray for her."

If we do nothing more than pray...

If we never visit the lost...

If we never witness to people...

They will never hear Christ's invitation to salvation.

We must pray.

But then we must arise.

We must go.

We must give people the Good News.

Christ's Ministry in Your Community

Christ's ministry in your community is expressed through **you**. He longs to speak to people about salvation. He desires to convince them of sin and reveal the Gospel through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. But He is in you.

And He works through **your lips**.

Through **your body**.

Through **my lips**.

Through **my body**.

If you refuse to go...

If you refuse to witness...

If you never speak His message...

Your community may remain lost.

Christ's plan is to live in you.

He cannot visit people independently of you any more than He can stand in a public place and preach the Gospel without a Christian through whom to speak.

Do we prefer to live selfishly?

Do we enjoy withdrawing into private prayer while sending a barrage of requests and errands to the Holy Spirit?

Are we too occupied with television...

Our clubs...

Our recreation...

Our personal interests...

He has no other channel.

Remember this:

The Holy Spirit moves through us.

We are His temple.

If we are too busy to witness, Christ has no other channel through which to minister.

The unbelievers in your community will never be visited by the Lord unless you go to them in His name.

The sick...

The prisoners...

The forgotten...

They will never be visited by Jesus Christ unless you and I go to them in His name.

People will never see God except as they see Him through you and me.

Christ's love can only be manifested through the life of a believer.

His compassion for lost souls can only be demonstrated through us.

Jesus Christ visits your community every time **you** do.

Are you unintentionally confining Him to your house?

Do you ever allow Him to speak to your neighbors?

Have you ever permitted Him to tell them the way of salvation and offer them His life?

Do you criticize people for living in darkness while neglecting to let Jesus Christ tell them the truth?

You Are the Church

The church—Christ's body—is **you**.

Have you always believed these responsibilities belonged to "the church"?

You are absolutely right.

They do.

However, the church is not the congregation. It is not the denomination. The church is Christ's body. And that is exactly what **you are**.

What good news!

What a privilege!

What an identity!

What an honor!

Christ does not live in a cathedral built of stone. He does not live in a temple made of brick and mortar. He lives in **your body**.

You are His temple.

He ministers through you.

He reveals Himself through you.

He demonstrates His compassion through you.

He extends His mercy through you.

The wonderful person you become is the person Christ transforms when He lives in you.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Heartbeat of Personal Soul Winning

This truth is the heartbeat...

The pulse...

The motivation...

Of personal soul winning.

Everything else is merely the mechanics of witnessing.

This truth is the essence...

The spirit...

The power...

The dynamics of personal evangelism.

You can memorize the mechanics. But the dynamics must be born within you. It must become a divine revelation. A miracle. And I believe that miracle is happening to you even now as you listen.

A spiritual transformation is taking place in your heart so that personal soul winning will take on a new, life-giving dimension in your life from this day forward.

You have been saved to become:

- Christ's witness.
- Christ's body.
- Christ's church.
- Christ's voice.
- Christ's heartbeat.

Your body has become His temple. He ministers through you. You are hidden in Him. His life becomes the power of your witness. You go on His behalf so that He may go through you and reach the unconverted.

That is Christianity in its deepest sense. Everything else is superficial and without lasting significance. Christ is in you. You have a purpose for living.

And you have a purpose for witnessing.

Are We Reaching the Lost?

A soul winner once visited a Sunday school class and was asked to teach a large group.

He asked,

"How many of you are Christians?"

Everyone raised a hand.

The regular teacher exclaimed,

"Wonderful, isn't it?"

The guest teacher answered,

"No. It is terrible. We should have unbelievers here so they can be converted in this classroom."

He was right.

Too often the church has become separated from the unconverted.

It has become what some have called **"the sacred spot"**—a place where small groups quietly gather to minister only to themselves, studying Christ in seclusion.

Christianity Must Reach the Marketplace

An evangelist was trying to encourage a small congregation in Japan to become more evangelistic.

The pastor replied,

"Evangelist, you don't understand. We don't want a large crowd. We only want a small group where we can quietly study God's Word and learn of Christ in depth."

Think about that.

On another occasion an evangelist encouraged a men's prayer group to go from house to house witnessing for Christ.

Their leader answered,

"Oh, we can't do that. We're not deep enough in God."

The evangelist asked,

"How long have you been meeting and praying?"

The man replied,

"Only two years."

For two years they had kept their Lord confined to one room and had never allowed Him to share His life with the people in their community.

What a contrast with the believers in the early church.

Acts 19:10 declares that within only two years,

"...all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus..."

Isn't that remarkable?

The reason the Gospel has not yet reached every creature is that individual Christians have misunderstood who the church really is.

It is correct to speak of the church as the collective body of believers.

But personally...The church is **you**.

Your body is Christ's body.

He can witness only through you and through me.

And I think that is tremendous.

Christ Still Wants to Reach People

Have Christians misunderstood the ministry of the Holy Spirit through them?

Could that explain why the world remains largely unevangelized?

Could it explain why unbelievers often ridicule Christianity?

Why communists have mocked Christianity?

Why many Jews have rejected Christianity?

Their leaders read the New Testament.

They know Jesus was a Jew.

They know how He lived.

They know how He instructed His followers to live.

But they also observe how differently many Christians live today.

Jesus was a soul winner.

He mixed with people.

He befriended the needy.

He healed the sick.

He proclaimed the Good News.

He served people continually.

Has He changed?

Does He still desire to do these same works today?

Philippians 2:13 answers:

"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

But can He accomplish those works today if you and I refuse to allow Him to express Himself through our bodies?

Without our bodies...Is not Jesus Christ cut off from the people?

Love for Those Who Hurt

There was a man who directed the evangelism department of a large church.

A new pastor arrived who was an enthusiastic soul winner.

Soon after he became pastor, he invited the evangelism director to accompany him in door-to-door witnessing.

That evening they led several people to Christ.

When they returned, the evangelism director said,

"Pastor, I have directed the ministry of evangelism in this church for thirty-three years. But tonight I experienced a personal knowledge of Jesus Christ that I now realize I had never known before."

What a testimony.

Another story illustrates the same truth.

A faithful church member became involved with a married man.

When her sin became known, she was overwhelmed with shame and left the church, determined never to return.

The ladies' fellowship prayed for her.

But they did something more.

They appointed one woman to go personally and express their love and concern.

That was the spirit of the Good Shepherd at work.

The Christian woman searched for her friend throughout the day but could not find her.

Early the next morning she went again.

Around noon she finally found her alone and deeply discouraged.

She gently said,

"Come back to church."

The broken woman replied,

"I can never return."

The Christian answered,

"But we want you to come back."

In disbelief, the woman asked,

"Do the women really want me?"

The Christian lady replied, *"Yes. They sent me to assure you that we love you. We want you."*

The hurting woman returned to those who loved her. She was forgiven. She was restored. She was encouraged. And all of it was done in the name of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER FIVE

Let Jesus Work Through You

This is what happens when a Christian allows Jesus to do what He longs to do. That Christian woman allowed Jesus to seek the one who had wandered from the fold.

He did it through her.

That is real Christianity.

At first you may feel afraid...

Timid...

Or hesitant to act in Christ's place.

But go in His name.

He is in you.

Yield your emotions to Him.

He will guide you.

Then you will discover a dimension of Christian living that you have never known before.

How Can I Know God's Voice?

Some people ask,

"How can I know when God is speaking to me and leading me to do something?"

It is really very simple.

I explain it this way:

Listen—and you will hear.

Look—and you will see.

Reach out—and you will touch.

When thoughts come to you that will help people...

Lift people...

Heal people...

Forgive people...

Or bring glory to God...

Act upon them.

What voice would tell you to go and share the love of Jesus Christ with someone?

What voice would urge you to lift, help, heal, or forgive another person?

Would that be the voice of the devil?

Certainly not. That is the Lord speaking.

Act on it.

Go.

You can do it.

And you will discover that it is one of the most exciting experiences of the Christian life.

The Witness at Midnight

One night, after attending church, a certain Christian could not sleep.

He felt a strong impression to go and tell a particular man about Christ's love.

Finally, after midnight, he got dressed and walked to the man's house.

When he knocked, the man came immediately to the door.

The Christian apologized.

"It probably seems strange for me to be knocking at your door at this hour."

Before he could continue, the man interrupted.

"No! Not at all! Please come in. I have had no peace. I know I need to get right with God, and I need help. You are the very person I wanted to talk with because I have confidence in your life."

That night the man was born again because one Christian allowed Jesus Christ to minister through him.

The Deepest Christian Life

You will grow deepest in Christ by sharing Christ with others.

Many people want to become more spiritual.

Yet one of the most spiritual things you can ever do is reach out to another person with the loving message of Jesus Christ.

As He ministers through your body...

Through your life...

He will become more real to you than ever before.

You are His church.

You are His living temple.

This truth is the very heartbeat of Christian living and of soul winning.

CHAPTER SIX

A Visit to the Early Church

How would you like to visit the early church?

Would their lifestyle of soul winning interest you?

How did they evangelize?

Who were the preachers?

How many believers became witnesses?

Which denomination was the largest?

Or was there one?

What is your personal concept of the New Testament church?

Could we follow their example today?

Or have times changed too much?

Let us take a journey in our minds back to those first churches.

Suppose we stop in Ephesus.

Imagine that we are visiting Aquila.

A Visit to the Church at Ephesus

We knock on the door.

"Good evening, Aquila. We understand you are a member of the church here in Ephesus. May we come in for a visit?"

Aquila smiles.

"Certainly. Come in."

We continue,

"Aquila, we understand that you have been a member of the churches in Corinth, Rome, and now Ephesus. You should know something about evangelism in the New Testament church. Would you mind telling us how the church here carries on its soul-winning ministry? And while we are here, we would also like to visit your church."

Aquila replies,

"Sit down. You are already in the church. It meets here in my house."

We ask in surprise,

"You mean you do not have a church building?"

He answers,

"What's a church building? No, I suppose we don't."

Completely astonished, we ask,

"Tell us, Aquila, what is your church doing to evangelize Ephesus? How are you reaching the city with the Gospel?"

Aquila calmly replies,

"Oh, we have already evangelized Ephesus. Everyone in the city understands the Gospel."

"What? How could that be?" We ask in amazement, *"How did the church accomplish such a thing? You certainly did not have radio... Television... Or electronic communication. Did you hold many evangelistic campaigns?"*

Aquila answers,

"No. As you have probably heard, we occasionally tried mass meetings. Most of the time they only resulted in us going to jail."

"So how did you do it?"

"Oh," he says, *"We simply went from house to house. That is how the believers in Jerusalem first evangelized their city. All the churches throughout Asia Minor followed the same pattern."*

Still amazed, we ask,

"Does it really work everywhere?"

"Yes," Aquila answers. *"In fact, so many people are becoming followers of Christ that many pagan leaders fear their own religions will disappear."*

He continues,

"When Paul left Ephesus for the last time, he urged us to continue following this same method."

We respond,

"This is incredible! At this rate, there is no telling how many people will hear the Gospel."

Aquila looks at us and says,

"Haven't you heard? We have already shared the Gospel with everyone in Asia Minor—both Jews and Greeks."

We protest,

"That cannot be possible! Surely you do not mean everyone."

"Yes," he answers, "Everyone. But that includes Ephesus... Damascus... Dozens of large cities... Countless towns... Villages... Even the nomadic tribes in the desert."

"How long did it take?"

"Twenty-four months," Aquila replies. "We kept careful record. The same thing is now happening throughout North Africa and Southern Europe. The Gospel has reached Spain. We have even heard about a land called England. Perhaps there are already Christians there."

We stand speechless.

"Aquila... What are you telling us? You have accomplished more in one generation than we have accomplished in a thousand years."

Aquila quietly replies,

"It has really been quite simple for us. It is difficult for me to understand why it has moved so slowly for you."

Then, with a smile, he asks,

"Perhaps you have discovered a better way to spread the Good News?"

I would simply answer:

"Perhaps there is."

And perhaps these messages will become a seed planted in your life and in your church.

That is my prayer.

Born in a Blaze

The next message will help you understand what happened to the enthusiasm of the early Christians.

You will discover how discouragement gradually replaced their passion...

How the church entered the Dark Ages...

And how God finally led believers into the modern experience of world evangelism.

That message is entitled:

Born in a Blaze.

My Desire to Be a Soul Winner

I was only twelve years old when I accepted Jesus Christ. From that day forward, I wanted to become a soul winner.

I was the seventh son of my parents. My father was also the seventh son of his parents. We were raised on a farm, and we worked very hard.

My older brother, Lonnie, was converted in an old-fashioned brush arbor meeting. The transformation in his life so impressed me that, even as a twelve-year-old boy, I became deeply interested in Christ.

Lonnie took me to what he called a revival meeting in an old building in Mannford, Oklahoma. That night I received Jesus Christ as my Savior and became His follower.

Within a few months, my father moved our family into town. He opened a feed mill and operated a cream-buying agency for a large company. I managed the little cream station.

Using a toy printing press, I began printing Scripture verses on scraps of paper—my very first Gospel tracts.

I distributed them throughout our little town of only three hundred to three hundred and fifty people.

Little did I dream that one day we would be publishing Gospel literature in more than one hundred twenty languages at the rate of more than one ton every working day.

From the moment I was converted, I had one simple desire.

I wanted to be a real soul winner.

The Greatest Calling

Many years have now passed.

I began preaching when I was fifteen years old.

I married at eighteen.

I became a missionary to India at twenty-one.

My wife, Daisy, and I have now preached face to face to millions of people in more than seventy countries.

The more we study the Scriptures...

The farther we travel in evangelism...

The more convinced we become of one great truth:

The greatest calling for every Christian is to lead people to Jesus Christ.

In these recordings I am sharing seven reasons why we are soul winners.

These messages present:

- New ideas for pastors.
- New concepts for Christians.
- New inspiration for evangelists.
- New goals for churches.

They may well be among the most important recordings we have ever produced for believers who have a passion for souls.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Two Types of Evangelism

Remarkable as it may seem, the first major book devoted to personal soul winning was not published until after the year 1900.

Can you imagine that?

Many Christians...

Many pastors...

Many churches...

Have still not rediscovered the powerful ministry of witnessing **out where the people are**, just as the early church practiced.

In the book of Acts there were only two forms of evangelism:

- Mass evangelism.
- Personal evangelism.

By far, the greatest results came through personal evangelism. The early church was born in a blaze of personal witnessing for Jesus Christ.

Occasionally multitudes gathered to hear one of the believers preach, especially after an outstanding miracle or healing.

But day after day those Christians could be found in marketplaces...

On streets...

Inside homes...

Persuading men and women to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. They were personal soul winners.

Jesus Continued His Ministry Through Them

The opening chapter of Acts establishes the pattern for the early church.

It speaks of all that Jesus **"began both to do and teach."** (Acts 1:1)

After His ascension He continued doing and teaching the very same things through His followers.

He lived through them.

He ministered through them.

They understood that reality.

They became His voice.

His hands.

His feet.

His body.

He had not changed.

He simply continued His ministry through them.

The Bible records astonishing results.

Acts 5:42 declares:

"And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ."

What a tremendous verse.

Those believers possessed what we might call **20/20 vision**.

Acts 20:20 describes it beautifully:

"...I have taught you publicly, and from house to house..."

And **Acts 20:21** summarizes their message:

"Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."

There was no prejudice.

No barriers.

Only one message.

Repentance toward God.

Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

That remains our message today.

Here we see both kinds of evangelism working together:

- Public ministry.
- House-to-house ministry.

From Acts chapter 2 through Acts chapter 20—a period of about thirty years—soul winning was not merely one ministry of the church.

It was their way of life.

A Brief History of Evangelism

Tucked away in Acts 19 is one of the most exciting verses in the Bible.

Acts 19:10 says:

"...this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks."

Think about that.

In only **two years**—just twenty-four months—all of Asia Minor heard the Gospel.

And it happened without automobiles...

Without jet airplanes...

Without radio...

Without television...

Without tape recorders...

Without newspapers... Without films... Without videos...

Without any modern means of communication.

How was it accomplished?

Through two simple methods:

- Mass evangelism.
- Personal evangelism.

And by far, most of it was accomplished through **personal evangelism**.

Why were first-century Christians able to accomplish so much, while Christians in our generation—with all of our remarkable advantages—have often accomplished comparatively less?

Mainly because the most effective arm of New Testament evangelism, **personal soul winning**, has not been widely practiced in the traditional church.

To explain why I say that, let me briefly review the history of evangelism.

I think you will find it interesting.

During the first century after Christ, His followers possessed an unquenchable passion and an undying zeal to persuade everyone concerning Jesus.

They remembered His promise that the Gospel would be preached throughout the whole world before the end would come (Matthew 24:14).

During the second century, however, Christianity became entangled in theological controversy.

Instead of pressing onward to the uttermost parts of the earth, believers began arguing over doctrinal questions.

By the third century, Christianity had begun to sink into apostasy.

By the fourth century, compromise and backsliding had become complete.

Christianity entered nearly one thousand years of spiritual darkness—the period we now call **the Dark Ages**.

Believe me, it truly was a dark age.

That long period became a veil that prevented much of the contemporary church from seeing New Testament methods of evangelism.

The Long Road Back

Martin Luther was among the first to break through that darkness with the revelation of **Romans 1:17**:

"...The just shall live by faith."

The Protestant Reformation was a tremendous step forward.

Yet it was not a return to mass evangelism and personal soul winning.

Rather, it was a revolt against religious hierarchy and an invitation for believers to read and examine the Scriptures for themselves—something that had long been forbidden.

In those days, ordinary people were not even allowed to read the Bible.

Luther said very little about world missions or global evangelism.

In fact, it was nearly another three hundred years before William Carey restored the vision of missions to the hearts of believers.

Likewise, the biblical teaching concerning the baptism of the Holy Spirit was not widely rediscovered until the twentieth century.

Christianity has endured a long and determined struggle in returning to New Testament truth.

Even today, many have not fully returned to the foundational principle of the early church:

Personal soul winning—Christ ministering through the individual believer.

The Return of Mass Evangelism

Mass evangelism reappeared approximately two hundred years ago through John Wesley.

George Whitefield helped introduce it throughout the Western world.

Since then there have been several great waves of mass evangelism.

- Under John Wesley.
- Under Charles Finney.
- Under D. L. Moody.

And the greatest expansion of all since the beginning of the twentieth century.

During the mid-1700s, God's Spirit moved powerfully through what became known as the **Camp Meeting Movement**.

In the nineteenth century, the **Brush Arbor Revival** became common.

Later, the word **revival** became widely used.

Eventually the terms **revival** and **evangelism** became almost interchangeable.

Then came expressions such as:

- Evangelistic Crusades.
- Evangelistic Campaigns.

- Church-wide meetings.
- City-wide meetings.

Yet throughout all of these developments, personal evangelism has still not been generally rediscovered by the institutional church.

Personal Evangelism Was Never Meant to Disappear

Charles Spurgeon and R. A. Torrey wrote some of the earliest books on personal evangelism in the modern era.

Since then, hundreds of books have appeared on the subject.

Unfortunately, much of their content still reflects the fact that the New Testament concept of personal soul winning has not yet been fully rediscovered by the average church member.

Many programs...

Projects...

Campaigns...

Committees...

And enlistment strategies...

Have developed over the years.

The primary emphasis has often been getting unchurched people to attend Sunday school, Bible classes, or church meetings.

But comparatively little has been taught about how to actually lead someone to Christ.

How to help a person make a decision for Jesus.

How to reach people where they live...

Where they work...

Where they gather...

At factories...

Restaurants...

Parks...

On streets...

And inside homes.

Too often Christians have never been taught that each individual believer is Christ's body on earth today.

The Lord reaches people through individual believers.

Many churches provide excellent instruction on how to invite people to church.

Far fewer teach believers how to bring people to Christ **before** they ever enter a church building.

Reversing the Pattern

In the New Testament, believers testified from house to house and made disciples among the people.

The traditional pattern has often become:

Bring people to church first—then to Christ.

The New Testament pattern was exactly the opposite:

Bring people to Christ first—then to the fellowship of believers.

That method works even for those who would never attend church.

The traditional system serves the small percentage who are willing to enter a church building.

But approximately ninety percent of unbelievers will never come.

The New Testament approach reaches them where they are.

Then they gladly come with us into the fellowship of believers.

The possibilities are limitless.

Recommend Jesus, Not a Building

Most training programs have emphasized recommending the church.

The New Testament emphasized recommending **Jesus Christ**.

Whether we wish to admit it or not, church buildings and denominations hold little attraction for hurting people.

But the Person of Jesus Christ, when presented as He truly is, has the greatest appeal to the human heart found anywhere in this world.

The Most Evangelized Acre on Earth

In his book **How to Have a Soul-Winning Church**, Gene Edwards made an observation that deserves careful consideration.

He wrote:

"We have attempted to evangelize the world by evangelizing the church building. Every room... Every pew... Every classroom... Has been repeatedly evangelized."

If our efforts proved anything, one might conclude that the church building itself needed conversion.

Meanwhile, the vast majority of lost people have never been there.

And many never will.

They are everywhere except inside the buildings where we have been trying to bring them.

The opportunity, therefore, is to go **out where the people are** and win them there.

Then they will gladly come with us to the place where believers gather.

CHAPTER EIGHT

A Great Rediscovery

After waiting in the wings for centuries, personal evangelism is once again returning to the center stage of Christian ministry.

Soul-winning churches...

Evangelistic organizations...

And countless individual believers...

Are rediscovering this vital ministry.

Gene Edwards wrote that there has not been a time during the past eighteen hundred years when a widespread movement of personal witnessing has gripped a significant portion of the Christian church.

He challenges us to examine church history carefully.

If we do, we discover that one of Christianity's greatest truths remained largely neglected until recent generations.

He described the situation this way:

"We have had a car without a motor... a plane without wings."

Then he concluded:

"The revival of personal evangelism is actually a rediscovery of the spirit of New Testament Christianity."

To that I simply say:

Amen.

The Only Way to Reach Everyone

Mass evangelism reaches those who attend the crusade. Church enlistment reaches those who attend Sunday school or church. But personal evangelism reaches everyone. It is not centered inside the church building.

It is centered outside—**Out where the people are.**

Church buildings are valuable. They are an important asset to Christianity. But they were never the center of New Testament evangelism.

Again, Gene Edwards makes a statement that may sound shocking. He says that the church-building concept of evangelism has become one of the greatest hindrances to world evangelization.

Not because church buildings exist...

But because too many believers have remained inside them.

He wisely reminds us that a church building serves a very practical purpose.

It keeps us warm during winter.

Cool during summer.

Dry when it rains.

He is certainly not suggesting that anyone destroy church buildings. Rather, he urges us to see them in their proper perspective.

The church building is **not** where evangelism begins.

It is **not** primarily the place to bring unbelievers in order to convert them.

It is a **refueling station** where believers gather to be strengthened before going back into the world.

Just before Jesus ascended into heaven, He plainly told His followers where to go and what to do.

Acts 1:8 declares:

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

Take a map and notice the progression.

Jerusalem represents your hometown.

Judaea represents your region, your province, or your nation.

But why did Jesus specifically add **Samaria**? After all, Samaria was geographically part of Judaea.

The answer is simple. Samaria was a segregated people.

John 4:9 reminds us:

"...for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans."

Doesn't that sound religious?

Doesn't that sound respectable?

Yet when Jesus' enemies tried to insult Him, they said:

"Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?"

— *John 8:48 (KJV)*

Jesus deliberately repeated,

"...and in Samaria..."

In other words:

Do not forget the forgotten.

Reach the hurting.

Love the rejected.

Go to the neglected.

For us today, **Samaria** may represent:

- An Indigenous or Aboriginal community.
- A minority neighborhood.
- A migrant settlement.
- A refugee community.
- A rehabilitation center.
- An immigrant community.

- A neglected urban district.
- Any place that society has pushed to the margins.

Jesus specifically included such places.

Then He added:

"...and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

In other words:

At home...

And abroad...

Soul winning is a worldwide ministry.

Following the Example of the Early Church

The two types of evangelism—mass evangelism and personal evangelism—originated with the early church.

Daisy and I are simply following their example.

In mass evangelism, we have already preached face to face to millions of people. Yet regardless of the multitudes who attend our crusades, there are always millions of others in the same country who never attend.

Mass evangelism can only reach the people who come to the meetings. It can never reach the millions who choose not to attend.

Radio and television evangelism can only reach those fortunate enough to own, or have access to, a radio or television. It cannot reach the multiplied millions who are too poor or too isolated to benefit from those media.

The masses can only be reached by personal evangelism.

A great percentage of people can actually be won to Christ through personal witnessing.

Fortunately, even those who are not won can still receive a personal witness. It is the only way to reach every creature.

Isn't that interesting?

We are engaged in every possible form of mass evangelism in order to reach the greatest number of people who can be attracted to a public gospel meeting.

At the same time, we are involved in personal evangelism to reach the millions who will never attend a gospel crusade.

We have developed and supplied stockpiles of soul-winning tools—tracts, books, tapes, films, videos, and cassettes—to encourage Christians to go after souls and to make their witness more effective when they share the Good News.

CHAPTER NINE

The Secret of the Early Church

The early church held mass meetings occasionally, but their greatest results always came through believers engaged in personal evangelism—winning people to Christ through face-to-face, house-to-house ministry.

The Bible says:

"...And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."

— *Acts 2:47 (KJV)*

Minimum Church Growth

Have you ever stopped to think that the minimum number of converts in your church could be 365 souls per year if the Lord added to the church daily?

Yet, let's face it. Very few churches anywhere in the world achieve that level of growth.

How did the early church accomplish it?

The answer is found in Scripture.

"...I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house."

— *Acts 20:20 (KJV)*

That "20:20 vision" still works today.

It is working in many great churches around the world wherever these biblical principles are being practiced.

Go Out Where the People Are

Most pastors and Christians are deeply concerned about their churches. They wonder why the unconverted do not attend. They even pray for them to come. Usually, however, they do not go out where the people are.

If Christians only pray, the unconverted will remain lost because Christ can only reach them through the believer's personal life and witness.

Isn't it expecting an awful lot to ask non-Christians to come into church buildings in order to receive Christ?

Shouldn't Christians allow Christ to visit the unconverted wherever they are—through His body, the Church, expressed in every individual believer?

Are we really asking too much when we ask Christians to go into people's homes?

We are His body.

We are the Body of Christ.

Less Than Five Percent

The Moody Bible Institute has estimated that less than five percent of Christians have ever led a soul to Christ.

Only about ten percent of the people in so-called Christian nations even attend church.

Sometimes I am amazed to see God receiving more cooperation from non-Christians than from Christians.

There are unbelievers who will come to God's house.

Yet there is a much smaller percentage of Christians who will go and share Christ in non-Christian homes.

Of whom does God expect the most?

He never said:

"Go, ye unconverted, to My house and be saved lest ye die."

No.

But He did say:

"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

— *Mark 16:15 (KJV)*

Our Greatest Opportunity

My wife Daisy and I believe this is our greatest opportunity.

It is our calling.

It is our ministry. It is our open door of service to people. And it is your opportunity too. If you have believed on Jesus Christ, then this is your calling.

Jesus Christ desires to witness to people and to love them through you and through me.

From the Gallery to the Arena

Personal soul winning is the open door of success for every Christian on earth.

It transforms a believer from being merely a spectator into becoming a direct instrument of the Holy Spirit.

It lifts Christians out of the gallery, where they are only hearers of the Word, and places them into the arena where they become doers of the Word.

The Bible says:

"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."

— *James 1:22 (KJV)*

There is nothing more exciting than coming to church and seeing across the aisle a new believer whom you personally led to Christ.

Christ did it through you.

You found that lost person out where the people are.

You allowed Christ to win that soul through your life.

No church can remain ineffective when its members are scattered throughout the community living like that.

Returning to the Methods of Early Christianity

This message is meant to encourage the methods of early Christianity.

It calls believers back to the soul-winning method—the house-to-house ministry that inspires Christians to go out and share Christ with people wherever they are.

The church was born in a blaze of personal soul winning.

In a revival of that same passion, the Church of Jesus Christ will reach her finest hour as believers write the church's final chapter before Christ returns.

Seven Reasons We Are Soul Winners

I have outlined seven reasons why we are soul winners, and I am going to share them with you in these messages:

1. I am a soul winner because Jesus was.
2. I am a soul winner because the harvest is so great.
3. I am a soul winner because the laborers are so few.
4. I am a soul winner because Jesus commanded it.
5. I am a soul winner because of the unfulfilled prophecies concerning Christ's return.
6. I am a soul winner because we do not want the blood of unbelievers on our hands.
7. I am a soul winner because of what Daisy and I have experienced in our own lives.

Now I want to share with you Message Number Four, entitled **"The Greatest Calling."**

This is a significant message that will enrich your understanding of who you are as a follower of Jesus Christ and what that means in practical everyday life.

My wife, Daisy, and I are soul winners because Jesus was a soul winner.

The Bible says:

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners..."

— *1 Timothy 1:15 (KJV)*

Again, the Bible declares:

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

— *Luke 19:10 (KJV)*

Jesus came to save people. That was His mission from beginning to end. Jesus was a soul winner—the greatest soul winner the world has ever known.

The first group Jesus called to follow Him received this challenge:

"...Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."

— *Matthew 4:19 (KJV)*

Then the last group that accompanied Him to His ascension received this command:

"...Ye shall be witnesses unto me..."

— *Acts 1:8 (KJV)*

And again:

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations..."

— *Matthew 28:19 (KJV)*

Jesus was, first and foremost, a soul winner.

That is why He came.

That is why He lived.

That is why He died.

That is why He rose again.

And that is why He sent the Holy Spirit to empower His followers to become effective soul winners.

To Be a Christian Is to Be Christlike

The word **Christian** means **Christlike**.

Christ came to save people.

He came to seek the lost.

Therefore, to be Christlike is to become a soul winner—to seek people and bring them to Christ.

Christ now lives in us.

You could even say that Christ has been reproduced in us, and He desires to continue through us the very ministry He performed when He walked this earth in the body called Jesus Christ.

Yet there are hundreds of thousands of Christians who have never known the joy of allowing Christ to win even one soul through them.

There are even preachers and Bible teachers who have never personally led a soul to Christ.

Missionaries have confided in me that during their entire years of ministry overseas they never led one person to Christ.

I repeat:

To be a Christian means to be like Christ.

And to be like Christ is to be a soul winner.

Could this be one reason the church has not yet succeeded in giving the Good News to every creature?

Have many Christians simply not discovered this truth?

Christ Ministers Through You

Since you are the church...

Since you are Christ's body on the earth...

You can allow Him to win souls through your life.

You can become a vital instrument in meeting the spiritual needs of your generation.

You can do it.

Jesus always took His message to the people.

He went wherever people were.

He ministered in marketplaces, on street corners, on mountainsides, by the seashore, and in people's homes.

The religious leaders criticized Him because He identified with ordinary people.

The Bible says:

"And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them."

— Luke 15:2 (KJV)

They spoke those words with contempt.

"This man receives sinners."

"He eats with sinners."

But Jesus walked among sinners.

He mixed with people.

He witnessed to them.

He convinced them.

He won them.

He was not a "holier-than-thou" religious snob, distant and self-righteous.

People were the reason He came into the world.

And it can be that way with every Christian.

Christ's Mission Is Our Mission

To be Christlike is to win people.

His purpose is our purpose.

His mission is our mission.

His plan is our plan.

He came to save people.

We are here in this world for that same purpose.

Jesus said:

"...For this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth."

— John 18:37 (KJV)

That is why we are in this world—to bear witness to the Truth.

And Jesus Himself declared:

"...I am the way, the truth, and the life..."

— John 14:6 (KJV)

He also instructed us:

"...Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled."

— Luke 14:23 (KJV)

Notice that He never said,

"Ring the church bell and pray for people to come."

He said,

Go out.

Compel them.

Win them.

Then bring them in.

Go and find them so that My house may be filled.

The Early Christians Followed His Example

Every follower of Jesus did exactly that after His ascension.

They witnessed in the marketplaces.

They preached on the streets.

They visited homes.

They spoke at public wells.

They reasoned with people.

They persuaded people.

They preached the Gospel.

They won souls.

They compelled men and women to believe the Gospel just as Jesus had done.

In fact, they reminded people so much of Christ that critics mockingly called them **Christians**.

Those critics did not realize that Christ truly lived in His followers.

They taught like Jesus. They lived like Jesus. They acted like Jesus. And they won souls like Jesus. That is why we are soul winners.

Jesus was.

Daily Ministry

The Bible says:

"And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ."

— *Acts 5:42 (KJV)*

In my New Testament, I have circled the word **daily**.

Today many church buildings are open only two or three times each week. Meanwhile, sports arenas, cinemas, casinos, race tracks, bars, amusement parks, and nightclubs are open every day. Too often the church building opens only on Sunday. But the real church is you and me.

We are Christ's body.

Christ can minister and witness through us every day, whether or not the church building is open. The early Christians were **daily** in the temple and **daily** in every house, teaching and preaching Jesus Christ.



About The Speaker

Dr. T. L. Osborn (1923–2013) was an American Pentecostal missionary evangelist, author, and Bible teacher whose ministry profoundly influenced global evangelism during the twentieth century. Together with his wife and co-minister, **Dr. Daisy Washburn Osborn**, he carried the message of Jesus Christ to more than 70 nations through large outdoor evangelistic and mass-healing crusades, often preaching to hundreds of thousands of people at a time.

Dr. Osborn was widely recognised for his unwavering emphasis on the believer's authority in Christ, the power of the Gospel, divine healing, and world missions. His ministry inspired countless pastors, missionaries, and evangelists to proclaim the Gospel with confidence while demonstrating God's compassion through prayer for the sick and the proclamation of the Good News.

The messages preserved in this volume continue to encourage believers to embrace their identity in Christ, rely on the Holy Spirit, and faithfully carry the Gospel to the nations.

Connect With Dr. TL Osborn via:

- [Official Website](#)
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