

An Eye For Opportunities by Daniel Del Vecchio 29th May 1980

We are reading this morning from the 4th chapter of the Gospel of John.

JOHN 4:27-36

- ²⁷ *And upon this came His disciples, and marvelled that He talked with the woman: yet no man said what seekest Thou? or, why talkest Thou with her?*
- ²⁸ *The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men,*
- ²⁹ *Come see a man, which told me things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?*
- ³⁰ *Then they went out of the city, and came unto Him.*
- ³¹ *In the mean while His disciples prayed Him, saying, "Master, eat."*
- ³² *But He said unto them, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of."*
- ³³ *Therefore said the disciples one to another, "Hath any man brought Him ought to eat?"*
- ³⁴ *Jesus saith unto them, "My meat [or My food] is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work.*
- ³⁵ *"Say not ye, 'There are yet four months and then cometh the harvest?' behold, I say unto you, Lift up our eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.*
- ³⁶ *"And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together."*

May God bless His Word to our hearts. My message this morning is entitled, "*An Eye For Opportunities*". Life is filled with opportunities that most people never see, it depends on what you're looking for. Jesus said, the kingdom of heaven is like a man seeking precious pearls, he eventually found one because he was looking for them, his eye was trained to discern a precious stone. (MAT 13:45-46)

I read of a precious stone that was for sale on an open stall in Italy for a long period of time, and it was labelled quartz. And it was up for sale for a few Liras, and because of ignorance they didn't know it was a precious diamond. Things are not usually what they seem like from the outside. Even our difficulties and problems, are opportunities to grow in grace. Opportunities to know Christ in more intimate relationships. Abraham Lincoln said many times he fell to his knees in prayer because he had no where else to go. How many people have been driven to God because of problems and circumstances? Situations, they are opportunities to save your soul.

*"He is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness,
and sanctification, and redemption...
let him that glorieth, glory in the Lord."*

1 CORINTHIANS 1:30,31

We are to know Christ in many relationships, as Saviour, as Lord, as Baptizer in the Holy Ghost, as Healer. But how can you ever know Him as Healer unless you are sick. As Baptizer in the Holy Ghost unless your hunger reaches a point where you say, "*I must have God!*" We are to know Him as our Righteousness. How do we know Him as our Righteousness until we come to the end, we're bankrupt, we realise we can't, and then He gives us His Righteousness by faith. We are to know Him as Sanctification. We're to know Him as our Wisdom when we realise we know nothing as we ought. The Apostle Paul said,

*"All the things that were gain to me, I count them loss that I
may gain Christ... that I may know Him."*

PHILIPPIANS 3:7,10

He wanted to know Him in the power of His resurrection, and the only way he could know Him in the power of that resurrection, is to know Him in the fellowship of His sufferings. And so everything that God allows to cross the threshold of our door is an opportunity if we have eyes to see.

The Bible says, "*And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, and are the called according to his purpose.*" (ROM 8:28) I'm going to give you seven opportunities this morning, and I pray as I preach that future lives may be redirected, that you may find a vision for your life, a calling, a purpose, an idea that can change you and change your world through this message. Seven opportunities that I trust I can open your eyes to see things that may not have looked like opportunities before this moment.

1) *Every need is an opportunity.*

Every human need is an opportunity. A problem is an unmet need. There are spiritual needs unmet that create problems. There are social needs unmet. People have problems; domestic problems, marriage problems. Unmet needs in the home become problems. There are economic needs; people are poor, hungry, lacking food and shelter, and the necessities of life. Those unmet economic needs are problems. There are health needs; there are sicknesses in people. There are material needs. Now every need is an opportunity for you and I to meet that need through the power of God, and to glorify God in that need.

Jesus saw something in that woman at the well that the disciples missed altogether. Here was a lonely, broken woman too embarrassed to come to get water in the morning because of her life – five different men that she'd married, living with another that wasn't her husband. And the women's tongues wagged and so she came in the heat of the day not to run into any other ladies at the well. There she found Jesus. Jesus found the need and that need became the opportunity to save her soul. But that woman was just a seed. When Jesus saw that woman, in her need and in her loneliness and in her emptiness, seeking water of life, He saw beyond her to the entire city. And I can imagine that He looked into the future, and saw the revival that was going to break out right then. And He probably even looked into the future and could see Philip preaching to Samaria and thousands saved. He could see Peter and John coming down from Jerusalem and laying hands on them and seeing all these people with the Holy Spirit and the Church established. Jesus met one need and He set in motion a law of supply that is still blessing the world.

When I came to Torremolinos there were needs. There were two young girls, two nurses, who needed a job, needed a place to stay. It stirred my heart. I felt unable to meet that need but that became an ache, a groan, a longing in my heart. They were just the seeds of this work and now hundreds and hundreds around the world are saved, their needs are met, they have eternity in their heart because there was a burden placed because of a need of two girls.

I remember when I discovered the power in the name of Jesus to deliver people from demon power. And I was able to pray for a man in the hill country of Cuba, that suffered from epilepsy and was being held by five men, and instantly he was healed, and a church was established overnight.

Then what I did from that moment was to try to find other people with epileptic attacks. I spread the word throughout the town, "*Find me people with epilepsy!*" and I'd go.

I remember a woman whose husband was a garbage collector who kept her in such fright by beating her, threatening her, and she had these epileptic attacks. And the people knew about my desire to help and they called me right away, and I went running to her bedside. And there she was, under these demon powers, you could sense the darkness in the whole room, she hadn't recognised anybody and her tormented situation was an opportunity for Jesus to come. I brought Jesus into that room and soon she was delivered.

Soon they told me about another case. For three days a man was lying in bed, attack after attack, coma after coma, injection after injection. For three days he hadn't recognised anyone. I said, "*Bring me to him!*" It was an opportunity and I went there. The room was filled with people staring, I said, "*Will you please bow your heads, we want to pray.*" Not a soul bowed their head and not a soul closed their eyes. I'll never forget that they all stared at me, they didn't want to miss anything. This man for three days unable to recognise a soul, and as I began praying it seemed like an eternity, every second seemed like a year. I said, "*In the Name of Jesus Satan take your hands off of this man! I command that he come back!*" And brother, I was just waiting, I tell you it was a tense moment with all these eyes on me. Would anything happen? He was in a coma, my first case of a man in coma. And his eyes opened, it must have been a minute but it seemed like a week, and he sat up in bed and recognised everybody. An opportunity for Jesus to be glorified, for souls to be saved. Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

Have you seen any opportunities around recently? Any unmet needs? Any souls that are in need of help? You have the answer!

I read something this morning that was very interesting, in Durban, South Africa, there are a 180 Christians who have gotten together to ride the trains. These Christians are trained in personal evangelism and they get on the train in Durban, and they begin singing and they spread out throughout the train. And they are singing and after they are through singing they split-up and begin witnessing. And by the time the train comes to the end of the line, over the bridge just a few miles out, they've won souls to Christ. And every week they are winning 2000 souls to Christ. Just a train ride. A need, they have the answer, they are meeting it.

2) *You can turn your obligations into opportunities.*

Maybe you never saw your obligation as an opportunity to grow, to learn, to learn a trade, to find a future.

There is something you are required to do, it may be unpleasant.

I suppose the man who invented the dishwasher probably got tired of washing dishes! Maybe his wife would say everyday, "*Henry, wash those dishes!*" And he finally tried to figure out an easier way. I don't know.

Turn your obligations into an opportunity to glorify God, to help people. In every duty there's a seed for something wonderful. You can go from where you are to anywhere.

I heard of some black woman in Mississippi, they lived in a swamp, we call it 'the Bayou'. So they all lived on the Bayou, and they felt cut off from the world. They always complained about their lot in life. One day the woman had a bright idea and she said "*Quit complaining, because the Bayou leads to the stream, the stream leads to the river, and the river leads to the ocean. So you can go anywhere from where you are!*"

Think of that, you can go anywhere in the world from where you are. Do you believe that? Where are you, you can go anywhere from where you are? If you get into the boat of faith you have a duty, find in it an opportunity to serve Christ, to glorify Christ. Jesus said, Even a glass of cold water to a prophet...would receive a prophet's reward. (MAT 10:42,41)

It's an opportunity for you to grow in grace and grow in maturity, as you fulfill your obligations conscientiously, seriously, not doing the least you can but doing the most you can. A simple obligation, a simple duty, you can turn it into an opportunity. There are things you have to do, you have to clean your home and raise your children. Why don't you make them the best children in the world, make presidents out of them or preachers or whatever. You have to work on the farm, what do you learn from work on the farm? You have to repaint and restore an old abandoned house. That could become your future life, there's a lot of money and a lot of blessings in renovating houses. Imagine, this idea the Lord has given us of renovating houses could spread over this country, we could transform this country and have youth centres all over this nation, just an idea of an old abandoned house. I don't think I'm original, the gypsies have been in there before we got there!

LOOK FOR OPPORTUNITIES TO TEACH THE WORLD WHAT GOD CAN DO WITH NOTHING!

Look for opportunities to teach the world what God can do with nothing! You feel like you are nothing? You can imagine what the Lord can do with nothing. He can do a lot with nothing. Start where you are, use those obligations as stepping stones to climb to where God wants you to go.

Remember, "*The man makes the place, not the place the man.*" For example, Jesus was born in Nazareth, they said "*Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?*" (JOHN 1:46) Yet Nazareth was known the world over because Jesus was born there. Amen. There was a little hill outside of Jerusalem where the people were killed and murdered and crucified. That hill had become famous around the universe and even in heaven because Jesus died on the hill called Calvary. So the man makes the place,.

3) Every handicap can become an opportunity.

Every opportunity or every handicap can become an opportunity. Every handicap, maybe you think your face is a handicap, look at mine! You would never believe that I was almost voted the most handsome boy in school. The pendulum has swung the other direction, I could win the other contest now!

So what are you doing with your handicap? When this handicap, the paralysis, hit me I wanted to quit. If it was up to me I would have quit, I wanted to quit desperately. I hated to face people, I hid myself in my home. But praise God, God was good and He wouldn't let me. If it was up to me I would have. I have no credit to say, "*Look I've turned my handicap into an asset.*" It wasn't me - I would have quit - it was God who wouldn't let me and I'll be perfectly honest with you, Hallelujah! Maybe your too skinny, maybe your too fat, maybe you think you're too small, maybe you think you're too tall, maybe you come from a minority race. You know what I read about? I read about some of these Hollywood movie stars, the most beautiful women, who complain about their faces. They see all the ugly spots. I believe you can turn any handicap into an asset and into an opportunity.

I heard of a man who had leprosy, and not only did he have leprosy but he started to go blind. Here he was in a leprosarium going blind. If anyone should try to commit suicide it should be that man! And yet an idea came into his mind and he said, "*It's not what you have lost but what do you have left.*" It isn't what you don't have, it's what do you have! You could moan and complain about what you don't have but what do you have? And so the man became a famous writer and used his problem and his handicap to help people who were going through similar situations.

I think of the handicap of poverty, for example you may not have any money. Most of you here are pretty poor, at least in pesetas, you may be rich in other ways. But I think of Peter and John, they were going to the

temple to pray and by the gate of the temple there they found a man who was begging for money. He was crippled, and I could imagine that Peter could have said, "I'm sorry old chap I don't have any money, when I get more later I'll help you."

That would be perfectly normal and natural now wouldn't it? Wouldn't it? I'm sorry I don't have any money. We Pentecostal or charismatic preachers, we are poorly paid, and we really have a handicap – we don't have any money! "Oh I wish I had money but I don't." But he turned that handicap into an asset, and he said,

"Silver or gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee."

ACTS 3:6

Thank God for the handicaps that force us, that get us out of a rut that make us go forward. I read of a man, in the Voice magazine, who had polio. One arm was practically crippled and he had to drag his leg, but that handicap so forced him on, that he became a first team football player or soccer player, and then went on into boxing. Every time he was faced with a challenge he won because of the handicap. It made him stronger than he would be otherwise.

I imagine that Peter was always looking for a miracle. Jesus was alive and anything could happen! And when he saw this crippled man, because he had been looking for opportunities, he thought here's one.

Now the Holy Ghost came upon him and the faith came into his heart but I believe that it happened because he was waiting for opportunities. He was just going around the streets waiting for something to happen, and the moment he saw that man his mind began working – that man is crippled, here's an opportunity! And as he began thinking, the Holy Ghost came upon him and gave him faith, and whammo next thing you know there was a miracle and Peter was in jail. And that was another opportunity. Hallelujah!

Many people get stagnated. They just lie around doing nothing, complaining, waiting for somebody to go and set something into their hand. You have a financial problem, you have a handicap, don't just wait for somebody to drop something from heaven. Learn that there is an opportunity in that handicap to glorify God, to bless people, to meet the need. Look what Jimmy Durante did with the handicap of the big nose he had, he made a fortune over it.

Fanny J. Crosby was made blind by a doctor in her infancy. A mistake by a physician. Now she could become cynical or bitter. And she could have died in remorse, a simple blind woman selling lottery, or going down the street with a cane cursing everybody. But Fanny J. Crosby, instead, has become the most famous of all the gospel hymn writers and every one of her songs exudes power, praise, joy. Think of all the multitudes of people that have been blessed by that song, 'Blessed Assurance'.

*Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!
O what a foretaste of glory divine!,
Heir of salvation, purchase of God;
Born of His Spirit, washed in His Blood.*

O there's nothing more joyful than the songs of Fanny J. Crosby. Think of Helen Keller, born blind, deaf, and dumb. Blind, deaf, and dumb with an indomitable spirit and a brain that wouldn't be kept restricted. Don't you moan about your handicaps, your background, your lack of education, remember the woman in Mississippi, you can go anywhere from where you are if you see an opportunity in that handicap.

4) Turn your obstacles into opportunities.

You know I didn't have too many obstacles in my life until I was a mature man. Oh I had the little problems everybody has but I overcame them. But then all of a sudden it looked like half a mountain fell on me.

'Beware of falling rocks!' That's the sign they have on the turnpikes in Pennsylvania. That's the most ridiculous sign anybody's ever put up. How can you beware of a falling rock? After they've fallen you can see them but while they're falling, it's just going to come right through the car! But anyway, I guess all along life's road we could have these signs 'Beware of falling rocks!' A tragedy suddenly strikes, a rock falls in front of you. A disappointment, things didn't work out just as you thought they would.

Disappointments do come in this life; there are rocks that fall in our path. I think of the two women who went to embalm the body of Jesus. Early in the morning they took their spices and they went to the tomb and at the last minute they thought of the stone, that huge stone, who's going to remove it for us? And there are stones in your path and stones in mine.

I read about a man who had a big stone in his backyard. He tried everything to get rid of that stone, he tried to blast it out, dig it out. He couldn't. He finally got the bright idea to make a rock garden. He's had one of the most beautiful gardens, vines all over this big rock. If you can't move the stone, you can't go around it,

you can't go over it, and you can't go under it, turn it into a rock garden!. Hallelujah!

Have you ever had a tragedy come into your life?. There's a family in Pennsylvania who had a tragedy in their life. A Mongoloid child was born in their home. Only those who have experienced the pain and anguish of something similar could understand, but these people had faith, they loved the Lord Jesus, so what they did was they began taking in other Mongoloid children. Now they are the directors of a Home called the Millmark Homes in Pennsylvania, I think one the finest homes for retarded children in the world. They could have become bitter and cynical, and yet they turned that rock, that obstacle, into an opportunity. And they are making a good livelihood, its got to cost over \$400 to get your child into that school plus government assistance, I looked into it I know about it.

But there's other people who would have gone on a drunk, and got good and drunk, and maybe become alcoholics, because an obstacle fell in their path. How many people? I met a man in Málaga years ago who became an alcoholic, a hopeless useless drunk, because his wife died. Oh there are obstacles that will come. I think that Hudson Taylor lost his wife and child, it didn't stop him!

What do you do with your obstacles? With the rocks that come into your path? God will give you grace, raise the level of water, you'll be able to go over them with His grace.

5) *A challenge can become an opportunity.*

Have you ever faced a challenge when people said it couldn't be done.

*Somebody said it couldn't be done.
But he with a chuckle replied,
Maybe it couldn't. But he would be one
Who wouldn't say so 'til he'd tried,
So he buckled right in, With a trace of a grin.
If he worried he hid it!
He started to sing as he tackled the thing,
That couldn't be done and he did it!*

There are thousands to tell you it cannot be done. There are thousands to prophesy failure in Barcelona. There are thousands to point out to you one by one the dangers that await to assail you. *"But just buckle in, with a bit of a grin [or a little bit of faith]. Just take off your coat and go to it, just start to sing as you tackle the thing that couldn't be done, and you'll do it!"* Somebody say Amen. That's a spiritual poem, written by Edward Guest, from New Jersey I think by the way. Hallelujah!

A challenge can be an opportunity. The children of Israel were challenged by a great giant, what was his name? Goliath. How many brothers did he have? He had four brothers, they all had 12 fingers on each hand and 12 toes, 7'8" high. Imagine the challenge of Goliath. When he would go out to the armies of Israel and roar, the men would shake and quake with fear. And he would say, *"Give me a man to fight."* And there were a lot of them to sing in the choir but when it came to fight there weren't many men available! They were in the band and they marching and he said, *"I want one man."* And they all ran. I imagine they would look for the biggest fellows, but even the biggest Israelite couldn't compare with Goliath. So this little fellow came along from the field one day, about 18 years old, and he said *"Who is that guy making all that noise up on that hill? How dare he challenge the servants of the most high God!"* He saw Goliath, and his challenge, as an opportunity. Do you realise that without Goliath, David would have never made the throne of Israel? He married the kings daughter, and became the greatest king, but he needed Goliath to get his blood stirred-up. (from 1 SAM 17) Hallelujah!

How many of you say Amen? You need Goliath. If I didn't have a Goliath, or a few of them and his brothers, I don't think that I would make it. Thank God for challenges, for difficulties, for obstacles. We need them.

I remember when we'd just come into Málaga, sixteen years ago, we drove into 'that' procession. Here was all this idolatry, huge floats, statues everywhere, candles, these long robes, Klu Klux Klan (or whatever you call them when they cover their head) The moment I saw that idolatry it was, it was overwhelming, a challenge. Can anything be done in this? And I turned to my wife and said, *"We won't leave here until two or three are speaking in tongues."* And that two or three has become thousands praising the Lord. Amen. That was a challenge. When I came into Málaga there was nobody filled with the Holy Ghost. They had never heard of it. But it was a challenge. It was an opportunity. What are we doing with these challenges we have all around us here? The Devil is saying, *"It can't be done."* I think of the situation in England, during the time of William Booth, it was deplorable. The ghettos of London, the prostitution, the vice, the violence, the criminality. But that was a challenge to that man, to see what the grace of God could do. And because of a burning desire and a vision, he faced the challenge of that impossible situation and established what is

known throughout the world today as the Salvation Army. And thank God in June we will be using a Salvation Army hall, and working with a Salvation Army captain in Barcelona because one day William Booth faced a challenge, and overcame it and started an army of men and women and set them off around the world.

George Müller faced the challenge of the many orphans in England that were put into workhouses at a very early age. And he thought, "Wouldn't it glorify God if I could start an orphanage and help these children, and at the same time could do it without asking anybody for any money." Now we live like that today, but in those days it was unknown, he became a pioneer in the field of faith. He decided, "I am not going to ask anyone for anything, I am just going to ask God." George Müller raised this great orphanage and every day they'd pray, "Give us, Lord, our daily bread." There were days they didn't have any food. The children would sit by the hundreds at the table, the plates would be empty, and by the time that they were finished praying – they must have prayed a while! – by the time they had finished praying over breakfast, there was food! I think of one day they set the tables. There were all the plates laid out and the children sat down, with nothing to eat, and they began to thank God for the food. Just a few moments later there was a knock on the door, the bread man came by. I think his cart with the horse, the cart wheel fell off or something, he had all this bread. Just as they were getting all this bread in, the milkman came by and he had all this leftover milk. And they had their breakfast!

God taught the world lessons through George Müller, who faced a challenge to glorify God in the supply of the needs in orphans. Am I stirring you this morning? Are you feeling this or not?. Turn those challenges into opportunities to glorify God.

You must ask three questions when you face a future. First of all, if you are thinking about doing something:-

- 1) **Will it glorify God?**
- 2) **Will it meet a need?** A human need where people are hurting.
- 3) **Will it make you a better person?** More Christlike, after you've done it for 20 years.

If you get a yes on all three counts, then you can start going forward, it may be the will of God.

6) *Every promise in the Bible is an opportunity to take God at His Word.*

Lord, You promised it. It's in Your Word. I believe it. That settles it, I'm going forward because of Your promise. There's a land of promises waiting out there to be taken by the courageous, and those filled with the Spirit of the Living God.

PHILIPPIANS 2:12

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

His Will is revealed in His Word. So we have two things, we have the challenge of the promise of God, "God You said it."

I remember this challenge came to me in Mexico, I've told you about this many times, we were preaching in a Presbyterian church and I suddenly saw the Scriptures in John 14 in a new light, Jesus said:-

JOHN 14:12

"Verily, verily I say unto you He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto My Father."

But I never saw that Scripture as it was written. In my mind, I always interpreted it, "Verily, verily I say unto you they that believe on Me, the works that I do shall they do also; and greater than these they shall do." Sounds the same to you? Does it? It's not the same, you missed it too, I missed it for 20 years! He never said "they", He said "he". "He," and I was interpreting "they" – that a whole bunch of us together might get something done. But I saw there in that Presbyterian church, He didn't say "they" He said "he". And I said, "Lord that means me, I'm 'he', okay, I accepted the challenge." I accepted the promise in a Presbyterian church, the first person God healed was the wife of the pastor, who had arthritis. God began doing miracles as suddenly I saw the Word, the Word came alive. Jesus said, "Do you believe it?" If you claim it, it's yours. We've got a long way to go. There are a lot of promises in this Book. Take one. Make it an opportunity to glorify God.

7) *Every pain and sorrow can be an opportunity.*

Every pain and sorrow and trial, every heartache and thorn, can be an opportunity for the grace of God to be manifested in us. If you don't get deliverance you'll get development. Development is always more precious than deliverance. Paul, when he recounted the problems in his life he said, I rejoice and thank God because

now, *the power of Christ may rest upon me.* (2 COR 12:9)

I remember I was preaching in the ghetto of Philadelphia, in the Spanish section. I had legal permission, I had police protection, I had a police car driving around to be sure I had all my freedoms as an American citizen. But what I didn't realise was that there was another fellow who had liberties too. And this Roman Priest came, and he stood a few feet from me and began to talk. I had a P.A. system, I had an organised meeting and he didn't have anything, he just had his long robe. And he began talking – he was a very wise man I have to give him credit. He didn't talk very loud, but you had hundreds of people who saw me and who saw him and immediately they saw 'a religious clash'. And so because he wasn't very loud they all decided to go and hear what he was saying. It was easy to hear me, I had the P.A. system, but he was just using his voice. And his crowd grew and grew and he began giving me the works of course. And once he got a nice crowd he moved away and took them with him.

But I remember the opposition that I faced. There were people hanging out of the windows by the hundreds hearing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and if ever the power of God has come on me in my lifetime, it was that time when that fellow was giving me a hard time. It just seemed like God turned the faucet, and said, "*Okay, all right, My servant down there in Philadelphia is having a rough time, he's starting to get nervous and shake, open up the windows of heaven.*" And the power came on me to face that terrible situation, and that's just one situation that happened to come into my mind, I've had many, many more. In fact, my whole life has been that way. When ever I'm up against wall, God's grace is sufficient, His power rests upon me.

Some people say, "*I've got the Baptism of the Spirit but I don't have any power. How do I get the anointing?*" Get out on the street! Climb up on a box, or get up on a pew, or something! Make a fool of yourself, stand up on a wall and start shouting, and you'll see how the power comes! How many here have done that and seen it work? Let me see your hands. God bless you, God bless you.

Yeah, it'll work. I remember the first time Benito and I went out in Málaga, in the park. I had to disciple him. I was scared and he was scared, and we got out there in the park and we began shouting, and the power of God came on us. You want the anointing? In pressure is when God blesses.

What would ever have happened to the Apostle Paul? What would have happened to the Christian Church, if Paul was not put in prison?. One third of our New Testament was written by the Apostle Paul, most of his letters were written in prison, called 'the prison epistles.' How about the early church that was threatened, driven against the wall, and they began praying, and the place was shaken and they went out from that prayer meeting to transform the world. (ACTS 4:31)

What would we ever do without the power of God in our lives, through obstacles and oppositions and threatenings and challenges. Let's be thankful to God that He allows a stone to fall once in a while. I'm sure God can give you ideas.

They have walnuts in California, and the crows like to eat the walnuts but they can't get through the shells, so they pick them up in their beak and climb high, fly high up into the air, as high as they can and let them fall on the pavement or highways, and break them open. Now what's that got to do with what I'm saying? Well I don't know but I just happened to think of it.

Do you have something you can't get through, a problem, an opposition? God can use that to teach us lessons and to bless the world.

What do you do when you face an obstacle? We can run from it, I was thinking about cancelling this meeting and putting a tape on. I thought, "*I don't want to face all those people looking like that. I'm going to get a tape and I'm going to hide.*" But I'm glad I didn't. I don't know about you, if your glad, but I'm glad I didn't because I feel the Lord had a message for us today, and I'm going to turn this accident into an opportunity to grow a beard! I've been wanting to grow a beard for so long but I haven't had the nerve, so all things work together for good.

Praise the Lord, there's a miracle waiting to happen in your life, in every human need. You may see a child cry, you may see the tears glistening in its eyes, you may look into the situation and find sorrow and need. You may begin an orphanage because of a child's tear. A broken home, a desperate situation, a sickness, whatever it may be, are opportunities in disguise to raise us. And I want to close with these words of Jesus, when He said, "*The harvest is ripe, but the labourers are few.*" (MAT 9:37) The harvest is ready but the people are not. And that harvest that is failing, that is being wasted, is a tremendous opportunity for you to become a partner with God, co-worker with God, co-labourer with God, in the salvation of the world in the greatest rescue operation the world has ever known. To rescue the slaves of Satan from spiritual bondage, and Jesus said, "*Everyone that reaps receives wages.*" (JOHN 4:36) And let me tell you God pays well! I'm not talking about on earth so much, but God pays.

"He that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal."

JOHN 4:36

Every needy heart is an opportunity for you to shine as stars in heaven, forever and ever, because one day, you cared enough to take a boy or girl by the hand and lead them to the feet of Jesus. Or you can stay here and moan and complain and sit and wait and do nothing and say, "Well I'm not beautiful. I'm not thin. I'm not pretty. I'm not intelligent. I'm not educated. I'm not whatever. I'm not rich. I can't get nowhere." But God has given you today an opportunity, wherever you happen to be, to turn that handicap, that obstacle, that promise, that challenge, into an opportunity to glorify God where you are.

You might have a difficult field to work in. When my father came over to America from Italy, he began working in a city, and because of the race wars and problems, my mother was on the verge of losing her mind, mental breakdown. The doctors said, "Get that woman out of here or you're going to lose her!" Five children, one every year. And so my daddy went off, and took the five children to a farm. He didn't have much money. He couldn't speak English. He was poor, uneducated - he only had two years of school. A race problem in those days, and the farm he was able to buy was just full of rocks. Nothing but rocks. Nobody wanted it, so he got it. And he began gathering those rocks out, and got those five kids out as soon as they were able to walk, able to pick up a rock - the big kids the big rocks, the little kids the little rocks. And they began carrying the rocks until they made walls with the rocks. And there on that farm without a doctor, without anybody I was born in 1932. That was the beginning of the ministry that God gave me today.

You can take those rocks that are in your way and make walls out of them, make rock gardens, or you can just curse them. You can curse the darkness or you can light a lamp, it's up to you. Problems you're going to have. The greater the calling God has given you, the greater the problems you're going to have. Turn them into opportunities to see the glory of God come into life.

Leaders are not born they are made, and God can make you and me into leaders that will save the world from disaster, because we believe that it can be done. I believe, don't you? Don't you believe? Do you believe God? Hallelujah! Every need is an opportunity for Jesus to show His power, shall we pray.

Gracious Father, we thank You for the difficulties in our lives. We thank Thee Lord, for the assets You have given us. There is a lot we don't have but we do have two legs, we do have two feet, and two hands, and a heart to feel. And we have eyes to see, and more or less we all have some brains, and most of us here can talk, and so with these wonderful assets. And most of all we have Your Holy Spirit, we have Your Word, and we have eternal life. Help us all to say today, "Such as I have, give I thee." Deliver us Lord, from being so selfish that we keep what we have until it grows mouldy and stagnant. Help us to give everything You've given us, that we may be blessed. Now I pray for the needs in this Community today, the pressures, the problems that the people are going through, Lord Jesus that you would meet those needs as we pray now, minister to hearts and bodies and minds, and may we leave this place strong and fortified in the gospel and in the faith which is in Jesus Christ. For Jesus' sake we pray. Amen.