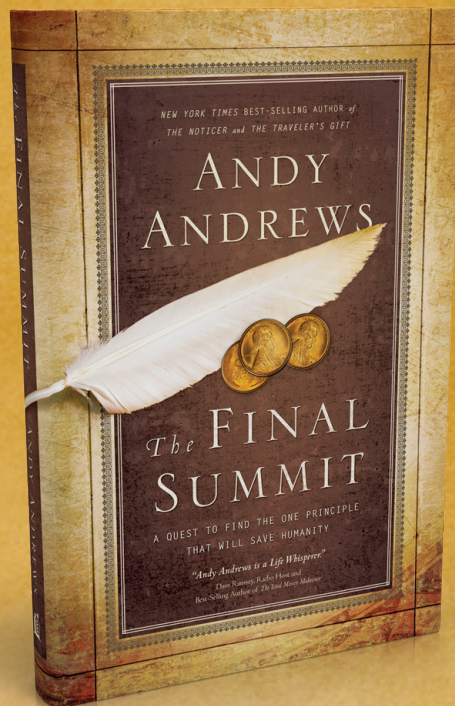


GOD'S SUMMIT WITH YOU: WORDS TO SAVE HUMANITY

A SIX-PART SERMON SERIES *by* DR. ALAN W. MCBRIDE

PART SIX OF SIX: DO SOMETHING



based on

The FINAL SUMMIT

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Introduction - My Absolute Favorite Pastime	3
II. A Summit with God’s Word - Joshua 1:2-9	4
A. Walking Through the Middle of a Miracle of God	
B. The Text	
C. The Interplay of Obedience and Promise	
III. The Final Summit - Action in the Answers	7
A. A Creative Resource for Your Preaching and Teaching	
B. The Most Crucial Question for Humanity	
C. A Verb Followed by a Noun	
D. An Action Word Needs an Actor—“Be doers of the word.”	
E. Do Something!!	
IV. Conclusion: “Arise, go.” Do Something!	12

I. INTRODUCTION: MY ABSOLUTE FAVORITE PASTIME

Being an active part of a move of God's Spirit in the Church has been the most exhilarating experience of the past 19 years! Through four pastorates and congregations whom I love very much, I have learned so much about God, about people, and how Christ works with, in, and through those people to bring about His purposes.

I have also learned about "Me." Literally, I have learned that "Me" frequently prevents Jesus from doing everything in me. Daily, I pray that the Holy Spirit will re-instill me with the understanding that it is not about "Me." I really believe so much that is happening around "Me" has little or nothing to do with me, but rather with the purposeful, powerful, progressive move of God's will—It is all about Jesus!

Having said all that, let me spend a few moments talking about me...Particularly, let me begin the last message in this series by telling you about my favorite pastime. If you have never heard of Orange Beach, Alabama, then you must know from an expert that it is the finest place I know to live. The weather is temperate year-round because of maritime moderating conditions. In other words, the climate is great most of the year because we live on the Gulf of Mexico.

God has used the composition of the seabed off the northern Gulf coast to create incredible sugar white sand. It is brilliantly white, soft on your bare feet, and actually squeaks when you walk in it. When a lab analysis was done to determine the composition of the sand, it was found to be 100 percent crushed quartz...not another mineral was present!

My favorite pastime on this wonderful island is placing my favorite beach chair in the sand just north of where the gently subsiding waves have made the sand damp. I push my feet down into the coolness of the white sand a few inches below the surface. With my favorite cool beverage in hand, enough sunscreen to make my wife happy, and a good book handy, I love to sit. In fact, I would sit from sun-up to sundown and into the night if I could.

After a brief while sitting there, though, my cool drink gets warm and becomes empty. It is warm enough in the sun that perspiration removes the sunscreen from my exposed skin (savagely tanned). Because the drink can is empty, I discover something else is full. The book I'm reading is finished and the tide begins to come in and I am sitting in the waves. I can't just sit like I want!

The book on thermodynamics I was reading while sitting in the sand tells me **why I can't just sit**. As soon as I place my chair in the right spot and plop down and open my beverage and book, the Second Law of Thermodynamics breaks in. More commonly known as the Law of Increased Entropy. As one of God's natural laws, it won't change.

Everything else changes, constantly, because of it. This law states that the quality of matter and energy in a system deteriorates steadily. The deterioration is called entropy. The only way to affect the rate of deterioration is to add back energy or matter. I can't just sit, because systems will wind down. Changes I do not wish to occur take place unless I add back energy and matter. **I've got to get up and DO SOMETHING.**

II. A SUMMIT WITH GOD’S WORD - JOSHUA 1:2-9

A. Walking Through the Middle of a Miracle of God

Can you see the spectacle, feel the excitement, and relish the awesome sense of history unfolding before your eyes as you walk through the middle of a miracle of God? Most of us never fully attend the movement of God around us all the time. The Israelites did.

After Moses died, about 1,300 years before Jesus’ birth, Joshua took up the mantle of leadership, blessed by God, and lay on Joshua’s shoulders by Moses himself. His first step in leadership was to move the Hebrew people across the Jordan River to take the Promised Land given them by God. This crossing of the river at its flood stage mirrors the crossing of the Red Sea 40 years before.

God told Joshua to have the Levite priests take the Ark of the Covenant and walk into the swollen river. As they bore the Ark into the fast flowing stream, God piled up the waters to their left and the riverbed was dried under their feet as they stood in the middle of the course. Joshua told the people, “Sanctify yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you” (Joshua 3:5).

Some estimates suggest 2 million men, women, and children crossed through the dry bed of the Jordan into Canaan, just out from Jericho. There could have easily been that many since, for 40 years, they were well fed and cared for while in the wilderness of the Arabian Peninsula by God.

PERSONAL NOTES:

II. A SUMMIT WITH GOD’S WORD - JOSHUA 1:2-9

B. The Text

Before they crossed through the river, Joshua prepared them for the wonders of God about to break out before them. God also prepared Joshua himself for his task of leadership:

² “Moses My servant is dead. Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them—the children of Israel.

³ Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you, as I said to Moses.

⁴ From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the River Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your territory.

⁵ No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life; as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you.

⁶ Be strong and of good courage, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them.

⁷ Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go.

⁸ This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

⁹ Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.” Joshua 1:2-9

PERSONAL NOTES:

II. A SUMMIT WITH GOD'S WORD - JOSHUA 1:2-9

C. The Interplay of Obedience and Promise

God's own voice instructed Joshua carefully about the task before him by connecting two ideas prominently in this passage. There is a fascinating and important interplay between Obedience and Promise in God's instruction of Joshua.

1. **Obedience:** "Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people,"
2. **Promise:** "to the land which I am giving to them."
1. **Obedience:** "**Be strong and of good courage,**"
2. **Promise:** "to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them."

1. **Obedience:** "Only **be strong and very courageous**"
1. **Obedience:** "that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you"
1. **Obedience:** "This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth...that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it."
2. **Promise:** "then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success."
1. **Obedience:** "Have I not commanded you? **Be strong and of good courage;** do not be afraid, nor be dismayed,"
2. **Promise:** "for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."

Anytime you see a pattern of repetition or repeated phrases or ideas in scripture, it is crucial to note what God's Spirit intended to be learned by His repetitious instruction.

- A. A repeat in the middle of God's instruction emphasizes Obedience.
- B. Now, God's promises to the Israelites aren't lying on the ground like the Manna and Quail in the 40-year wilderness, just to be picked up. His promises to them are full, but require obedient action.
- C. Three of the five Obedience statements use the same command, "Be strong and of good courage." In our culture, we tend to read this phrase as a gentle, heartfelt word of encouragement. To Joshua, God emphasized being strong and having courage as commands for Joshua's action.
- D. The remaining two Obedience statements:
 - "arise, go" directs decisive action.
 - "do all that is written," actively do!

III. THE FINAL SUMMIT - ACTION IN THE ANSWERS

A. A Creative Resource for your Preaching and Teaching

As a creative resource, throughout this six-message preaching/teaching series, I have touched repeatedly on the godly written wisdom in the book *The Final Summit*. It communicates God's biblical principles for saving humanity in such a way that readers are ushered gently into the greatest truths of God's plan for each person's action.

PERSONAL NOTES:

III. THE FINAL SUMMIT - ACTION IN THE ANSWERS

B. The Most Crucial Question for Humanity

In this book, the author creates a setting in which the answer to the most crucial question in human history must be discovered collectively by some of the greatest leaders and intellects from across history. They are brought together in heaven for a “final summit.”

Remember the question? **“What does humanity need to do, individually and collectively, to restore itself to the pathway toward successful civilization?”**

Serving God in convening the summit, Gabriel tells the Travelers they have five opportunities to reach the correct answer, or civilization will continue to spiral downward to judgment and destruction. Led by David Ponder, this final summit is instructed by the archangel Gabriel to respond to the question in the form of a two-word solution.

PERSONAL NOTES:

III. THE FINAL SUMMIT - ACTION IN THE ANSWERS

C. A Verb Followed by a Noun

Starting with David Ponder and Winston Churchill, the summit adds Joan of Arc, President Abraham Lincoln, World War II intelligence agent Eric Erickson, the Old Testament king, David, and George Washington Carver. With an hourglass propelling their deliberation, they choose, in order, the following answers:

- Restore Hope
- Seek Wisdom
- Show Courage
- Exhibit Self-Discipline
and Build Character

Each two-word response to the question contains a verb followed by a noun. If the summit members chose to alter “the rules,” the conditions of Archangel Gabriel, and not add an action word, the outcome for a correct answer would be gravely in doubt. David Ponder may have led the summit to suggest “Hope, Wisdom, Courage, Self-Discipline, and Character” standing by themselves. These great words would represent noble virtues, but be antiseptic...passive...remote.

PERSONAL NOTES:

III. THE FINAL SUMMIT - ACTION IN THE ANSWERS

D. An action word needs an actor—“Be doers of the word.”

You know godly virtue in a vacuum is no solution to any need. These virtues alone will not restore humanity to the path of successful civilization. Adding the verb, an **action word**, to each solution connects the virtue to a personality—**an actor**. For when you choose to Restore Hope, Seek Wisdom, Show Courage, Exhibit Self-Discipline, and Build Character, you are actively engaged in your world, and especially with others. Your engagement will lead others to engage human civilization.

In *The Final Summit*, the author includes several instances where Gabriel reinforced the connection between all these “failed” answers with the correct solution. The servant of God confirms after five incorrect responses that each of their responses points to the correct answer to save civilization.

James, the brother of Jesus, only gave us six brief chapters in his New Testament epistle. In reading how Jesus’ Spirit inspired James to write, there are two impressions that come to me. Please read James tonight and see, first, he labored in his life following Jesus’ resurrection to embrace and receive faith leading to his salvation—his faith in his brother for salvation was hard-bought. Secondly, I want you to notice that James understood in his flesh that this belief in Jesus as Savior for humanity had to be expressed in action. In the second chapter of his letter, he states seven times in thirteen verses, “Faith without works is dead.”

“Be doers of the word, and not hearers only.” (James 1:22)

PERSONAL NOTES:

III. THE FINAL SUMMIT - ACTION IN THE ANSWERS

E. Do Something

“Restoring, seeking, showing, exhibiting, and building” shout out to you and me that we are to **Do Something!!**

PERSONAL NOTES:

IV. CONCLUSION: DO SOMETHING!!

In the scriptures of the Old Testament and the New Testament, there are numerous cautions from the Holy Spirit about failure to do something in obedience. Moses and the Israelites could have had the Promised Land in 40 days with active obedience; instead, they died in the wilderness, never receiving God's promise. In I Samuel, the corrupt priest Eli abused his position as servant of God. God spoke through the young boy Samuel for Eli to repent and faithfully serve God. He would not. Eli's sons were killed in battle and his family name was ended at his death.

Luke recounts the summit Jesus held with the rich young ruler. Jesus asked him to act out his desire for salvation by doing something—"give your possessions to the poor." The young man went away unsatisfied and dejected because he could not act in giving. In The Revelation, in the third chapter, the Spirit of Jesus calls the church at Laodicea to choose to be either hot in serving Him or cold in denial of Christ. Their problem was they did nothing.

God's Word illustrates that each failure to do something Jesus commands you regarding His purpose to save humanity will lead to stagnation and, ultimately, death.

My favorite pastime is sitting in my chair, toes in the sand, soaking in the sun. That form of rest and relaxation is fine for the moment, but by the nature of God's immutable laws, I must do something, or I deteriorate.

Jesus is now calling you to carry forward all you know of His love, forgiveness, and power and join God in saving humanity.

With all your heart, mind, soul, and strength, "arise, go" and Do Something!!

Let us pray:

"Father,

We ask You to forgive us for the times we've been lazy or indecisive or fearful. We know that You are a God of action and today, this moment, we desire to be more like YOU. We acknowledge today, Lord, that The Great Commission was—and is still—a living, breathing call to action. We commit to You now, Father, to serve You as people and as a church with more than just words.

We will DO SOMETHING!

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen."