

What Luis Palau Taught Promise Keepers About Evangelism

On Friday, we received the news that Dr. Luis Palau, celebrated evangelist and longtime friend of Promise Keepers, had passed to his eternal reward.

Palau spoke for Promise Keepers in stadiums across the width and breadth of our country. He reminded Promise Keepers that the life of integrity for a Christian man includes a commitment to sharing the Good News of the gospel with the lost.

Today, due in no small measure to his influence, the men of Promise Keepers are praying for a massive revival and transformation in our nation by 2025.

In the 1990s, Promise Keepers published a landmark book, *Seven Promises of a Promise Keeper*, to explain what it meant to be a Promise Keeper. Of course, Palau wrote the chapter on the Great Commission. His words are as powerful and relevant now as they were then. I'm sharing them in the prayer that together, we'll recommit to evangelizing our world just as Palau committed to evangelizing the world.

Here, then, are the words of encouragement to the men of Promise Keepers by Palau:

Lord, I promise to help fulfill the Great Commission in my world for Your glory.

It's a gutsy commitment to make, no question about it. It's not one to make lightly, flippantly or without counting the cost.

We men should lead the way—in our families, our churches and

our communities. I can think of no greater thrill than obeying the Lord in this area of personal involvement in and commitment to evangelism.

God is calling you to be a Promise Keeper, a man of integrity. You know that. But have you grasped that the Lord is calling you to be a godly man who—as much as anything else—is committed to influencing his family, friends, neighbors, work associates, countrymen, and others around the world for Jesus Christ? Incredible? Idealistic? Impossible? Listen to what the Lord Jesus said:

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matt. 28:18–20).

“Well, Luis,” you may say, “I agree, the Lord does want us to help fulfill His Great Commission in our generation. It’s just that, um, I suspect He’s thinking more of using you than using me. After all, I certainly don’t have the gift of evangelism.”

Cut!

I don’t see anything in the Great Commission about gifting or talent or ability or personality or even opportunity. The Lord is clear: “You ... and you ... and you, I’m calling all of you men to go, make disciples.”

It’s not a matter of gift; it’s a matter of heart.

What I’ve found is that the great “fishers of men” (Matt. 4:19) over the years all have shared 10 distinctives that gave them a tremendous heart for the world. Both Scripture and church history speak to the importance of these distinctives that should shape every Christian man’s heart

and life:

- Passion for those apart from Christ.*
- Christ-centered message.*
- Holiness in every area of life.*
- Vision to reach the great cities.*
- Boldness to try new methods.*
- Willingness to endure criticism.*
- Commitment to a local church.*
- Love for the whole body of Christ.*
- Sacrificial financial giving.*
- Seriousness about private prayer.*
- Faithfulness to the end.*

Sounds like a Promise Keeper, doesn't it?

Almost all of us get nervous about witnessing. At least I do, even after all these years. But when we willingly obey the Lord, He uses us.

Today, before another hour goes by, let's look to the Lord and say, "Yes, I am willing to help fulfill Your Great Commission." That's prerequisite to all else. Unless we're willing to say yes to the Lord in every area, there's no use pretending we're a Promise Keeper in any area of life, wouldn't you agree?

Next, let's begin to take pride in the good news of Jesus Christ. Like the apostle Paul, let's affirm, "I am not ashamed of the gospel." Why? "Because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes" (Rom. 1:16).

It's sick what pride the world takes in its debauchery and sin. As Promise Keepers, shouldn't we be all the more proud of the liberating, life-changing gospel of Christ?

What is the gospel? It's "that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve, "and then to the five hundred" (1 Cor. 15:3–6).

Are we proud enough to share this good news with others?

Next, let's gain a better understanding of those outside Christ. To me, the word that best describes our society today is confusion. According to the latest Gallup polls, an astounding eight out of 10 Americans claim to be Christians. But ask the average American to define what he or she means and you'll be in for a surprise. Here are some of the most popular myths about what makes someone a Christian:

- Being born in America.*
- Thinking positively.*
- Living a good life.*
- Attending church.*
- Giving to others.*
- Receiving a sacrament.*
- Believing in God.*
- Talking about Jesus.*
- Praying.*
- Reading the Bible.*

Those are all good things, but they're not good enough! Let's

take God at His Word and not believe everything men tell us. Just because someone says he is a Christian doesn't mean he's right.

Our task is urgent. To finish it, we must have the authority of God that comes from a holy life. Paul told Timothy, "God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline" (2 Tim. 1:7). I like to think of that as holy boldness.

The unfinished task of winning the world to Christ is enormous. Promise Keeper, let's press on to finish the task set before us. {eo}

*Founded in 1990 by Coach Bill McCartney, **Promise Keepers** is one of the most significant movements of God in the history of the church. In 1997 alone, Promise Keepers packed 22 NFL stadiums and gathered 1 million men for Stand in the Gap: A Sacred Assembly of Men at the National Mall in the District of Columbia. On July 16-17, 2021, men from across America and around the world will converge on AT&T Stadium in Arlington, Texas, home of the Dallas Cowboys, for PK's annual stadium event. Visit or Facebook at facebook.com/promisekeepers.*

Read articles like this one and other Spirit-led content in our new platform, CHARISMA PLUS.