

WELCOME DR. DAVID GIBBS!

We are blessed today to have Dr. David Gibbs with us. His presence at Christchurch today marks a tradition of which I am so appreciative. He is scheduled to be with us every Sunday following Thanksgiving. You have heard me say over the years that when I am booked in Bible Conferences anywhere in the United States, I often share the pulpit with another preacher. There is no preacher I am teamed up with more often than Dr. David Gibbs, Jr., and for this I am most thankful. Therefore, for having this opportunity for multiple decades, I believe I can say I know the man. I would like to take this venue to talk with you about the man you will hear speak today.

1. David Gibbs is a lawyer.

I first became acquainted with Dr. Gibbs in the mid 1970s when I was a young college professor in Crown Point, Indiana. For over forty years, Christian Law association, founded by David Gibbs, has been providing free legal assistance to Bible-believing churches and Christians who are experiencing difficulty in practicing their religious faith because of governmental regulation, intrusion, or prohibition in one form or another. It all started with a phone call from Pastor Levi Whisner. Dr. Gibbs took his case *pro bono* and discovered the depths of the Christianity in a man who lived by conviction, not mere preference.

Dr. Gibbs was reared up in a beautiful Christian home. His father, David Gibbs, Sr. was one of the hardest working men you would ever want to meet. He managed a huge farm and provided much of the meat for McDonald's hamburgers. David's mother was one of the godliest ladies I have ever met and was the pianist of their church while he was growing up. David's parents were some of the pioneers in the bus ministry that burgeoned in the late fifties, sixties and seventies. Although David's mother spent the last years of her life with the debilitating disease of Polio, she was still responsible for countless young people getting saved and surrendered to full time service. At her funeral (if I recall correctly), there were approximately sixty young men in attendance who were influenced to enter the ministry through her witness and discipleship. Although David had this very rich Christian background and was already a successful lawyer, it wasn't until he took Levi Whisner's case that he witnessed God beginning to fine-tune His will for his life. With much prayer and great coaching from his wife, Glorianne (who has been behind this ministry from the beginning) he surrendered to be a legal missionary. For almost fifty years David has travelled the length and breath of this country without charge to represent Christians who are in trouble and cannot afford legal counsel.

He is Founder and President of Christian Law Association, a nationwide legal ministry of helps dedicated to defending Christian liberty in America. Gibbs & Associates Law Firm represents over 10,000 ministries nationwide. CLA receives in excess of 100,000 phone calls annually, not counting the thousands of pieces of correspondence from those who are in some way facing legal difficulties for doing what the Bible commands. These cases involve Christians arrested for witnessing to others in

public, students in public schools being told they do not have the right to read their Bibles at school, churches being excluded from communities, Christians being fired for sharing their faith at work, and thousands of other shocking assaults on our precious religious freedoms. CLA provides free legal services based in part on the generosity of God's people.

2. David Gibbs is a preacher.

David's mom prayed for him to be a preacher in the formative stages of his life. Even though you might say he came in through the backdoor by first becoming a lawyer, he arrived at that perfect center of God's will for his life as a preacher of the Word of God. While in college he won awards for oratory, but when he preaches the Word, it is so much more than a great speech; he is a Spirit-anointed messenger of God. More than one influential servant of the Lord have quite candidly told me they considered David Gibbs to be the finest preacher in our ranks and quite frankly in our land. No one can illustrate a sermon like David Gibbs. No one can tell a story like this man. I have been in the audiences who were quite literally mesmerized while he spoke. When a man of God in the caliber of Dr. Gibbs is discussed, our words seem to fail, because it is really so much more than elocution or the ability to exegete the Bible (which he does as well as anyone you will ever hear) or to tell a story that will have you on the edge of your seat. It is God. David Gibbs is a great preacher because he is surrendered to a great and mighty God. When Jesus is Lord in a man's life, as He is in David Gibbs' life, he does more than give a sermon--he delivers a message. I personally have never heard Dr. Gibbs preach without being ministered to. This passage would easily apply to David Gibbs: "And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power" (I Corinthians 2:4). When he opens his mouth, you hear from God.

3. David Gibbs is a friend.

I know this first-hand and so do men of God all over the country. Allow me to tell you just two examples of his magnanimous friendship (trust me, there are many more). One preacher's son went totally prodigal. He was living a lifestyle that appeared that he wasn't going to be coming back to God. On one evening Dr. Gibbs asked if he could go to the preacher's home and wait for this son to come home. This wayward son came in late, past 1:00 in the morning. And Dr. Gibbs began to talk and continued talking to him into the night. Well, that young man is happily married and in the ministry today at a very successful church. I was preaching a couple of years ago with this former prodigal and he attributed God using the night his father's friend, David Gibbs stayed up until he got home and then spent a great part of the night preaching one-on-one to him.

On another occasion, a preacher's son was going into a very serious cancer surgery. Without asking permission, David flew across the United States, prayed with the family and then stayed until he was out of surgery. He had not come to preach, he had not come to teach. He just came to be with his friend at this, the greatest trial of this family's life. The young man has since recovered and his cancer is in remission and this

young man is serving in one of the largest and most influential churches in America. "A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity" (Proverbs 17:17). David Gibbs makes everyone who knows him feel like they are his best friend. He never looks down on anyone. Everybody feels special when in the company of Dr. Gibbs.

4. David Gibbs is a family man.

This is perhaps his greatest testimony! Glorianne Gibbs, his wife is the closest person to David, next to the Lord Jesus. She is his confidant, his best friend, his lover and encourager. Brother Gibbs would be the first to tell you, he would not be where he is today without her. She is an author and like her husband, when she writes a book it is worth your while to read it. Perhaps her greatest writing doesn't come in the form of a book, but rather in her daily prayers she writes out to her Lord.

Dr. Gibbs and his wife love their children and grandchildren with undying, unconditional love. Whenever he is with me he usually tells me the needs of all of his children and often intersperses his report to me with, "Would you pray about this for them?" His children are blessed to have a father who prays for them.

Ephesians 5:25 admonishes, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church." David Gibbs lives like Jesus and loves like Jesus and no one knows that better than his own family.

For everyone who has heard David Gibbs, I know you can't wait to hear him again. And for those of you who have never heard Dr. Gibbs, be prepared to hear a message straight from the heart of God.

-Pastor Pope-