

(John - Part 50): Believing Prayer

by A.W. Tozer

Faith is not the failure of the mind to grasp the truth, but rather a moral sin that allows us to know things that cannot be explained by science or logic.

Duration: 52:16

Scripture: John 14:13

Topics: "Expositional"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of knowing and memorizing the promises of God. He encourages the audience to have a deep understanding of God's will by familiarizing themselves with His promises. The preacher emphasizes that we are saved and will go to heaven because of the merits of Jesus, not our own efforts. He also highlights the power of faith in experiencing the wonders of God and challenges the reliance on reason alone. The sermon concludes with a reminder to trust and love God wholeheartedly, and to preach about His attributes and perfection.

Transcript

Tonight, I want to read two verses from John 14, and then turn to John's first epistle and read it out to you. John 14, 13 and 14. Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do.

That the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it. Now that's what John records Jesus as having said.

Then, in 1 John, same man is writing, but now writing out of divine inspiration, and writing in line with what John said, our Lord said, these words, this is the confidence that we have in him. That if we ask anything according to his will, he hearth us. And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petition that we desired of him.

Now you will notice similarity in the language, in the phrase, in the emotional mood of the two passages. John was the author of the last one, and he quoted our Lord as having spoken the first passage. So I want to talk tonight about faith as confidence in God.

And this may have a familiar ring in as much. As it will constitute my philosophy of faith, and it is of course among us evangelicals a theme that we like to dwell on. Now John says that Jesus said, ...whatever we ask in his name, he would do.

Then he says that we have this assurance, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hearth us. And if he hear us, we have the petition that we desired of him. Now let me say this to begin, that there is a great deal of praying being done among us that doesn't amount to anything.

It is fruitful and never brings back anything to us. Now there is no good possible can come of trying to cover this up, or attempting to deny it. We will do a great lot better by admitting that there is enough prayer made any Sunday to save the whole world, four or five suburbs of the world.

But the world isn't saved, and much of our praying is simply the echo. The only thing that comes back to us is the echo of our own voice. Now this has a very injurious effect upon the Church of Christ.

Not only injurious, but sometimes disastrous. There are about six things that unanswered prayer does in a congregation over an extended period. It tends to chill and discourage the praying people.

If we continue to ask and ask and ask like a petulant child that doesn't expect to get what it asks for, but continues to whine for it, we continue to do that and never get an answer. Temptation is that we will get chilled and cold inside of our heart and get discouraged. And then it confirms the natural unbelief of the human heart.

For remember this, that the human heart by nature is filled with unbelief. It was unbelief that led to the first act of disobedience, and therefore not disobedience, but unbelief was the first sin. While disobedience is the first recorded sin, back of the act of disobedience there was the sin of unbelief, or the disobedience never would have taken place.

So to pray and pray and have a church pray, pray for her sick and have them all stay sick or die, pray for deliverance and never get it, pray for a thousand things and never see one of them brought to pass, I say the effect is to confirm the natural unbelief in the human brain. And then it encourages the idea that religion is unreal. And a great many people have that idea, religion is unreal.

It is a subjective thing purely, and there is nothing real about it. There is nothing to which it can be referred. I use the word coarse.

Everybody's mind immediately jumps to a large animal with short hair and hears its stand-up intelligent face fast on its feet and powerful. Everybody knows what the word coarse means because our English word coarse has a reference, something to which the word refers. I use the word lake.

Everybody thinks of a large body of water. I use the word star. Everybody thinks of a heavenly body.

But we can use the word faith and belief and God and heaven and all these words, and there is nothing to which it refers. They are just words like pixies and fairies and such things. And that encourages that false idea in our hearts when we pray and pray and pray and get no answer.

And then it gives plenty of occasion to the enemy to blaspheme. The enemy loves to blaspheme. He's a dirty-mouthed, obscene blasphemmer.

And I don't like to abuse the devil. I don't like to even abuse the devil, but I have a lot of secret sympathy, though I wouldn't myself use it, but I have a lot of secret sympathy for that rough old Irishman, William Nicholson, who calls the devil a dirty old pig. And he is just that, an obscene old pig.

And he loves to blaspheme. And if he can get a lot of Christians howling to high heaven for weeks on end and then see to it that they never get an answer, I don't know what he says, but I know what he says that has moral obscenity in it, and he blasphemes God. And worst of all, perhaps, it leaves the enemy in possession of the field.

The failure of a military drive, when it once fails, the worst part is not the men they lose, the worst part is not the face they lose, the worst part of the failure of a military drive is that it leaves the enemy in possession of the field. And when the people of God pray and pray and get nowhere, it leaves the enemy in possession of the field. And my listening people, this is in itself a tragedy and a disaster.

The devil should be on the run. We should never see anything but the back of his neck. He should be always retreating and retreating, and his worst fighting should be rear-guard action.

Scorched-earth policy, burning and destroying as he goes, but always on the run. But instead of that, the obscene and blasphemous enemy smugly and scornfully holds his position, and the people of God let him have it. And it, of course, retards the work of the Lord great.

Having no prayers answered, having prayers sent up to heaven that come back empty, it is like sending an army out without weapons. It is like sending a pianist down to a piano without fingers. It is like sending a woodman into the woods without an axe.

It is like sending a farmer into the field without a plow. The work of God stands still. Now Jesus said, Anything we'd ask in his name we could have it, and John said, This is the confidence, the boldness, the assurance we have.

I'm not adding words. Our English tongue is a very highly versatile, almost volatile tongue, and we can say anything we want to say. It is the richest of all the languages because it has received tributaries from everywhere.

But our difficulty is that sometimes we have to use a half a dozen words to mean as much as one word means in a means in another language. So when the Holy Ghost said, This is the confidence we have in him, that word confidence, our English word confidence is not enough, so the translators call it, This is the boldness we have in him, and others say, This is the assurance we have in him. So it takes the words confidence, boldness, and assurance to mean what God meant when he said, This is that which we feel toward him.

Now right here comes a parting of the way between the man of faith and the man of unfaith. For the man of unfaith rejects flatly this kind of teaching, that this is the confidence that we have in God, that if we ask anything according to his will, he'll give it to us. The man of unfaith says that can't be so, and he will not accept it, and he demands the proof of human reason.

Now we're going to leave aside a little for the moment the fact that unbelief is a moral thing. It is not a mental thing at all, but a moral thing. Unbelief is always sinful because it always presupposes an immoral condition of the heart before it can exist.

Faith is not the failure of the mind to grasp the truth. It is not a bad conclusion drawn from logical premises. It is not the failure or unsoundness of a logical premise.

It is a moral sin. But we'll leave that aside for a little bit and simply say that the man of unfaith cannot understand the language that I'm giving. This is the confidence that we have in God, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.

If he'll ask anything in my name, I will do it. He says I've got to have a reason about this. But the man of faith feels confident.

The man of faith does not dare rest on human reason. I have wondered sometimes why somebody didn't come out, they'll do it one of these days, and say that I have used reason to prove that reason was no good. But here's what I have done.

I have used reason to do what reason can do, the I-Z and namely to show that there are things that reason cannot do. I have never been against human reason. But I have been against human reason.

Trying to do things of human reason is not qualified to do. I once more say to you that the great difference today in the world is not between the liberal and the fundamentalist. But the great gulf fixed today is between the evangelical rationalist and the evangelical mystic.

The one who believes God and disbelieves human reason and the one who believes that the things of God can be proved by and grasped by human reason. You will live, if I don't live to see it, some of you younger people will live to see that I was right in what I'm saying. We have evangelical rationalists that insist upon trying to reduce everything down to where it can be explained and proved.

And the result is, we have rationalized faith and we have pulled Almighty God down to the low level of human reason. There are some things human reason cannot do. And you can use human reason to discredit human reason.

Anything that human reason can do, I'm for it. Turning human reason loose. You have a can opener in your house and what woman does it? You don't use it to mend your little boy's stocking.

You use it to open cans. Your husband has a hammer and saw. He doesn't use them to paper the wall of the living room.

He uses them to cut board and pound nails. Everything was created for a purpose and I claim that there are some things human reason can't do. Human reason and faith lie not contrary to each other but one lies above the other.

Faith, when we're believers, we enter another world altogether, a realm that is infinitely above little reason. My thoughts are not your thoughts nor my way is your way. High as the heaven is above the earth, so great are the thoughts of God above the thoughts of man.

Faith never goes contrary to reason. Faith simply ignores reason and rises above it. Reason could not tell us that Jesus Christ should be born of the Virgin Mary, but faith knows he was.

Reason cannot prove that Jesus took upon him the form of a man and died under the sins of the world, but faith knows that he did. Reason cannot prove that third day he arose from the dead, but reason knows that he did. For faith, I mean faith knows, for faith is an organ of knowledge.

You see, the fundamental rationalists say the human brain alone is an organ of knowledge, and they forget there are at least two other organs of knowledge. Feeling is an organ of knowledge, too. All the

reason in the world couldn't tell you the temperature was 98 today.

You felt as if it was, didn't you? I did, even I, and I can stand the heat like a lizard, but I've had enough of this. And I know that it was hot today. I have an organ of knowledge, feeling.

A young man loves a young woman. How does he know it? You read the Encyclopedia Britannica and reason to it? No, he listens to the ticking of his own heart. He knows it by feeling.

Feeling is an organ of knowledge, and reason is an organ of knowledge, and faith is an organ of knowledge. And they've got to believe that. Reason cannot say, Jesus rose from the dead.

Faith knows he did. Reason cannot say, he sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, for reason doesn't know, but faith knows that he did. Reason cannot say, he shall come to judge the quick and the dead, but faith knows that he'll come.

Reason cannot say, my sins are all gone, but faith knows they're gone. It's all down the line. Faith is an organ of reason, and the man is an organ of knowledge, and the man who believes, he's having knowledge that the man who merely thinks can't possibly have.

Poor little old brain can come staggering along behind like a little boy trying to keep up with his dad, coming along on his little old short stubby legs trying to reason. That's why in the New Testament the word wonder appears, and they wondered at him, and they wondered at him, and they all marveled. Faith was going ahead doing wonders, and reason was coming along wide-eyed marveling.

That's always the way it should be. But nowadays we send reason ahead on his little short legs, and faith never follows. Nobody marvels because they can explain the whole business.

I claim that a Christian is a miracle, and just the moment you can explain to a Christian, you have no Christian left anymore. Some of you may have read William James' Varieties of Religious Experiences. I've read it two or three times.

It's helpful to me because I'm a man of faith. But William James did this. He tried to psychologize the wonders of God working in the human brain.

But when the early disciples, they were on Solomon's porch in prayer and praise, people stood back awestruck and durst not join themselves to them. And the real Christian is somebody that cannot be explained by human reason. Something happened that psychology cannot explain.

And faith is the highest kind of reason after all, for faith goes straight into the presence of God and what goes behind the veil. For also our Lord Jesus Christ has gone our forerunner for us and engages God Almighty and reaches that for which he was created and communes with the source of his being and loves the fountain of his life and prays to that one that begot him and knows the God that made heaven and earth. He may not be an astronomer, but he knows the God who made the stars.

He may not be a physicist, but he knows the God who made mathematics. There may be many technical and local bits of knowledge he doesn't have, but he knows the God of all knowledge and enters in past the veil into the presence and stands hushed and wide-eyed and gazes and gazes and gazes upon the wonders of the universe. Faith takes him there.

Reason cannot disprove anything that faith does, but reason can never do it. Some of you, my dear friends, may have wondered why a few weeks ago I sat down and took my pen in hand and wrote a tongue-in-cheek, half humorous, half ironic review of the book *Prior Claims* because it's all going in the wrong direction. It is supporting the Bible by reason, and it's coming to the help of God Almighty by a few scientific facts.

No, my brethren, good men are doing it, better men than I, but they're wrong. Not all the scientific facts ever assembled in any university of the world can support one spiritual fact because you're in two different realms. You're two different worlds with one, one deals with reason, the other deals with faith.

If the sun were to start rising in the east, very west and going to the east, and if the summer were to have no fall but suddenly plunge into winter, and if the corn were to start growing down instead of up, and if the goonie birds were all to start laying eggs and hatching puppies out of them, it wouldn't change my mind about God or the Bible, for my faith in God is not dependent upon some support of scientific help. We don't even know they got their science straight in the first place. Faith is an organ of knowledge, and this is the confidence that we have in him.

Faith mounts up on its long, heavenly boots, up the mountains, up toward the shining peaks, and says, God says it, and I know it so. Why? This is the confidence that we have in him. You see? This is the confidence that we have concerning him.

Now, you see, we're dealing with him. I don't recommend we have faith in faith. There's an awful lot going on these days.

People have faith in faith. There are men going around preaching faith. No, I don't preach faith.

Never, never did, and so help me God, I'll not start it now. Let them know better. Nobody ought to go around preaching faith.

I'm not preaching faith tonight. The Bible says this is the confidence that we have in him. There's the origin and source and foundation and resting place for all our faith.

In that kingdom of faith, we're dealing now with him, with God Almighty, the one whose essential nature is holiness, the one who cannot lie, and the one before whom goes faithfulness and truth. Faithfulness and truth, I say, go before him. He can't lie, and we're dealing with a character, you see, brethren.

Our confidence rises as the character of God becomes greater and more beautiful and more trustworthy. Oh, my, this thing of memorizing promises in order that we might have more faith. Now, I'm a memorizer.

I got a New Testament in cadence form, and I have a book of Psalms in long meter form, easy to memorize, and I carry them around with me and memorize. So I'm a memorizer. I believe in it, strictly believe in it.

But if we think that more verses will bring more faith, we're on the wrong track. It won't. Faith does not rest upon promises.

Faith rests upon character. Faith rests upon the one who made the promise. It's written of Abraham that he staggered not at the promises of God through unbelief, but waxed strong in faith, giving glory to God.

So the glory went to God, not to the promise. What's the promise for? The promise is that I might know intelligently what to claim and what direction to go and what God plans for me and what God will give me. Those are the promises.

They are the intelligent direction. Suppose a man made a will, just thinking, if I made a will, all I'd have to will to anybody would be of some books, a little household furniture, but a few books, that'd be it. I will to my son this book, and so on.

That'd be it. But suppose that I made a will, and my heirs came in to listen to the reading of the will, and the lawyer said, says, I will to my son, Lowell, a yacht in the Gulf of Mexico. I will to my son, Stanley, a hundred-acre estate in Florida.

To my son, Wendell, a rich uranium mine in Nevada. Everybody'd say, well, the old man cracked up before he died. He doesn't have one of those things.

Not one. He doesn't own one of them. He doesn't even have a, he doesn't have a toy sailboat from Ten Cents Store.

He doesn't have a thing. He actually made a will with no character back up. The old fellow would crack up when he went.

They'd all smile and go out and say, well, it was all right up to the time he made that will, but there was no character. Nobody could make good on that will. But suppose some rich man makes a will.

He dies, and they call in the heirs, and they read, as I will, ten times, will, so they say, it's all right, he can make good. He's a great businessman, a well-to-do man, a man that had the confidence of all the American business public. Everybody trusted him down to the last.

The will, he makes the will in order that his heirs might know what they can claim. But his will is only as good as his character. And if he's got no character, or he's, as I pictured myself to be, penniless, then he, the will doesn't mean a thing.

He might, I could promise a yacht, but I haven't got a yacht. I could promise an estate in Florida, but I don't have an estate in Florida. Duckton remembers me with a lot of gratitude.

I fed ducks when I was down there. Sat on the bank and fed ducks by the time you sent me down there to rest. But I have no property in Florida.

How can I will what I don't have? So you see, brethren, faith does not come from promises. Faith comes from confidence in God. But faith rests upon character, not upon promises.

But the promises are as good as the character of the one who made the promise. So when I read my Bible, I have a promise. This is the confidence we have in him.

You ask anything according to your will, they hear it up. If we hear it, we have the petition. That's a promise from God.

Jesus said, Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, I will give it. There's a promise from God. How good is the promise? As good as the one who made it.

How good is that? Ah, this is the confidence we have. Faith says, God is God, the holy God who cannot lie. A God who is infinitely rich and can make good on all of his promises.

A God who is infinitely honest and never cheated anybody. A God who is infinitely true and never told any lies. That's how good a promise is, that God makes.

It's as good as God is, because God made it. But we push God off into the corner and use him as an escape from hell and to help us when the baby's sick. And then we go our way.

And then we try to pump up faith by reading promises. No, it won't work, brother. It won't work.

This is the confidence that we have in him. He glorifies God by faith. There's God, not the promises.

Promises, of course. We learn what God wants to do for us. We learn what to ask for.

We learn what God has willed to us. We learn what we may claim as our heritage. We learn from the promises how we should pray.

But faith always rests down upon the character of God. Is that difficult to see, friends? Why is nobody else in the whole world saying it? Why aren't we saying that to our people? Why aren't we telling our evangelical people once more, you've got to get to know God. You've got to get past making God a lifeboat to save you.

You've got to get away from making God a ladder out of a burning building. You have to get away from the idea that God simply exists to help you run your business or fly your airplane. That God isn't simply a waterboy bringing you water while you have fun.

God isn't simply a red cap carrying your suitcase and serving you. God is God. He made heaven and earth and holds the world in his hand and measures the dust of the earth and the balance in the sky.

He spreads out like a mantle. And the great God Almighty is not your servant. You're his servant.

He is your father. You're his child. He sits in heaven, your honor.

The angels veil their faces before the God who cannot lie. I think it would be a wonderful thing if every preacher in America would begin to preach about God and nothing else for one solid year. Just one solid year, preach about God.

Who he is, his attributes, his perfection, his being, the kind of God he is. Why we dare to trust him? Why we can't trust him? Why we should trust him? Why we can love him? Why we should love him? Why we dare not? All short of loving him. Keep on preaching God, God, the triune God, and keep on until God fills the whole horizon and the whole world.

Faith would spring up like grass for the watercourse. Then let a man get up and preach a promise and the whole congregation would say, I can trust that promise. Look who made it.

Look who made it. This is the confidence. Brethren, confidence may be slow in coming.

Because you see, you and I have been brought up in a land of lies. David, in his haste, said all men are liars. But I don't grieve that he ever changed his mind when he cooled off.

Because everybody is built alike. Don't anybody get mad now and leave because he'll only come back, sorry, afterward. Everybody has a deceitful heart, desperately wicked by nature.

And we are brought up in a world of lies where lying is a fine art. And on the radio, and I'm not a betting man, but I'll buy you a soda. If you can find an advertising program where the announcer can talk for 20 seconds without lying.

Now listen to me. If there is a program anywhere that tells the exact truth, I don't know where it is. Lying has become an art.

They lie in pictures, they lie on the radio, they lie on billboards, they lie in magazines, they lie everywhere. And of course, we've got that psychology. We don't have confidence in people.

We've got the psychology of distrust. Reason tells us don't trust them. Don't trust them.

If a man were to come down to my house and offer me a \$100 bill, I wouldn't take it. Unless, of course, I knew the man. If he won't do that, I know he'll take it.

But no man can come a stranger and rap on my door and say, Pardon me. I am giving \$100 to some upstanding citizen in your neighborhood. I'd say, You don't even know my name, mister.

I've seen your kind before. Goodbye. One day I got a don.

Somebody done me. He said, You owe me such and such for a fountain pen which I sent to your house. I'd never gotten any fountain pens.

I wrote him a little letter back. And it was a racket. It was a racket.

Boy, I'd come along and say, Good morning, Mr. Tozer. He'd ask the next fellow next door what my name was. So he knows me.

Twenty-six, true haircut, and a smile that won't come off. And I'd say, What are you doing? Selling magazines? Oh, selling magazines? Oh, I should say not selling magazines. I should say not.

What gave you that idea? And after about 15 minutes' conversation, you'll find out he's taking subscriptions for magazines to get through college. But they call it something else. You don't believe the man who comes to your house unless he has a reputation that dates way back.

You can believe the polar bear man. He won't steal your teeth before he leaves because he's got a reputation to maintain. But for the most part, we live in a land of lies and deception.

And we have a psychology of disbelief ground into us from our birth. But when we enter the realm of kingdom of God and the realm of faith, everything changes. Everything is different there.

Never was there a lie told in heaven. Never in the sweet kingdom of God did anybody deceive anybody else. The dear old Bible is a book of absolute honesty.

Jesus, when he walked among men, didn't pull the trick of the evangelist. Uh-uh. Now raise your hand.

Now put it down. Now go get it. Never any of that.

The fellow, a couple of evangelists I heard one time. Evangelist led the song leader out. And he said, now my brother and co-worker, he said he'd been away from his family a long time.

And this morning he got a letter from his wife. It all reached for an acre of chips. Began to blow.

Very tender. He said, let me show you what he's got. And he pulled out.

And he said, here's what was in the letter. Telephone bill due. Electric light bill due.

Gas light due. Said back in his town, his little wife is keeping the home fires burning. And he's out here serving God.

Now, let us all stand and pray that the Lord will send in the money to pay this fellow's electric light and telephone and gas. I stood up, but I didn't pray, ladies and gentlemen. I'm telling you that.

No scoundrel ever get me to pray. You can't. You can't trust people much.

But in the kingdom of God, nobody ever cheats you like that. Nobody ever goes down to some dear old lady with a mother complex, rubs back it. I used to have a lot of tube hair.

He said, you remind me of my dear old mother. Will you pray? I need 500. And so they prayed tenderly.

And before he leaved, he gets her poor old check for 500. I have more respect for a man who'll take a gun and go out and get it in the danger of his own life. Hear me? I've got more respect for the gunman who meets a man and says, give me your money or I'll put a bullet through you.

He doesn't know but what a policeman around the corner will put a bullet through him. And he does it the hard, tough way. And he gets it.

And I've just as much respect for the man who robs with a gun as I do for the dirty cheats who take advantage of a motherly old woman and pray hypocritically. Yet that's been done. And I'm considered a cynic and a pessimist and a scoundrel for daring to say so.

I'll say it all right if it cuts my audience down to nobody but MacArthur. Because if there's anything, any old place where we ought to be honest, it's in the Church of God. Brother, what you hear from this pulpit, you can believe.

And the old boy may be wrong, but he's honest. And if I know it, no man will ever stick his feet down here on this rug who isn't honest. The cheat can't get within gunshot of the Church.

But the Bible always tells us the truth. It tells us David was a man after God's own heart and then tells us David fell and committed the doubt. We wouldn't do that now.

We'd smooth that over and leave that chapter out, but God put it in. It tells us Peter was an apostle of the Lord and that he cursed and swore and said, I never knew him. It tells us that Paul was a man full of the Holy Ghost and turned on the high priest and said, you white of the wall.

And he said, you know, that's the high priest. Oh, he said, I'm so sorry. The apostle apologized and said, I was thanked by it up to that moment, but I sort of lost it there.

Excuse me, I didn't know he was an apostle of the Lord. The Bible always tells all the time. It doesn't tell you that if you accept Christ, it doesn't tell you that you're going to relax and go to bed and sleep 12 hours.

It doesn't tell you that you're going to suddenly become successful and grow hair on your bald spot. It just tells you that you'll have eternal life now and lots of trouble and hardships and thorns and cross-bearing and glory in the world to come and eternity with God. And if you're a man enough to put up with the thorns and the crosses and the hardships and the hostility, you can have the crown.

But you buy the crown by blood, sweat and tears. That's what the Bible tells you. Honest, good, honest, old Bible.

No wonder they die with this beside their bed. No wonder they lay this on the breath of the saints when they lay them away. When I die, I want you to put a Bible on my breast, but don't put a Scopia Bible on my breast, please.

Just a plain text King James Version. Amen? All right. Now, don't come down and criticize me for saying that because it won't do you a bit of good out of laughing your face.

Well, amen. Just this little word and then I'm finished. Three minutes to nine, and I'll be done at nine.

One in my name. He says, what does that mean? Anything he asked in my name means asked according to his will for the promises come in. You've got to get those promises to know what his will is.

Memorize them, learn them, get him a part of your bloodstream so you'll have him on tap at any moment fully counting on his merit, the merits of Jesus. We're going to heaven on the merits of another. We'll get in because another one went out.

We'll live because another one died. We'll be with God because another one was rejected from the presence of God in the horror and terror of hell. We'll have the vision beatific because one hung with darkness around him.

We'll go to heaven on the merits of another so your faith rests down upon the character of God and the merits of the Son of God. And you don't have to have a thing, not a thing, only your poor miserable soul. The more miserable you feel yourself to be, the nearer to the kingdom you are.

Somebody said, as I quoted before, humanity's divided into two classes, the good who think they're bad and the bad who think they're good. And the bad man who thinks his good is shut out of God's kingdom forever. But the good man in God's kingdom is not much very likely to run around talking about how good he is.

He's more likely to say he's worthy to be called an apostle. He's the chiefest of sinners and an unworthy servant. And God likes to hear that kind of language if it's genuine.

So if I come in humility depending upon the merits of another, if you pray and say, Oh Lord, I've been a good boy, answer me with prayer, you'll never get your prayer answered. If you pray saying, Oh God, for Jesus' sake, good, you'll get the prayer answered. If you come saying, Lord, if you'll do this, I'm sure that I promise that I'll do this, you'll never get the prayer answered.

But if you throw yourself recklessly out upon God and make no reckless promises but trust his character, trust him, and trust the merits of his son, you'll have the petition that you asked of him. Why can't we see

wonders done in this day? Why can't we? I don't believe in wonders that are organized and incorporated. Miracles incorporated.

You can have it. You can have it. Healing incorporated.

You can have that. Evangelism incorporated. You can have that.

Vision incorporated. Without a vision incorporated, the people perish. You can have all that whenever we've got to incorporate it and get a letterhead and a president and secretary and a trailer.

You can have all that, God, isn't it? But the man of faith that can go alone into the wilderness and get on his knees and command heaven, God's in that. And the man who will dare to stand and let his preaching cost him something, God's in that. And the Christian who will put himself in a place where he must get the answer from God, he must get the answer from God, God's in that.

Live as Dr. Brown calls it, living hazardous. I believe in God. And I'll never be caught asking God to send me a trinket to play with.

Oh Lord, do a miracle for me so I can ride a track. God is not going to send Santa Claus toys to his little children. But if you're in trouble, and you have confidence in God, and you'll go in the merits of his Son and ask him and claim the promise, God won't let you down.

God will help you and get you out of your trouble. Do you know that? I've had them come to me, although I don't preach in a section of the city where I have more than too much contact with criminals. I've had them come to me and tell me, brothers and sisters, I've been in prison, and I ought to be in prison again.

Now I'm converted, and what will I do when I say, go back and tell the authorities, but first before you go, let's ask God. And on one or two occasions, I've had God upset the police court and the judges and all the rest and get that fellow out, because he dared to believe that when he was in trouble, God would get him out of trouble if he'd tell the truth. And God's that kind of a God.

Here old John Callahan is in heaven now, God bless his Irish memory. He was a scoundrel if ever one existed. He was a criminal in our office.

And John got converted in prison. And he got converted the old fashioned way. He hadn't dispensationalized.

He just got converted. So finally they let him out. And he said, there was just one thing bothered me, and that was my mug shot.

You know what a mug shot is, any of you people? One of these shots that keep on police records, you know, front view and profile, and your number underneath, and they kept that. The governor pardoned John, but he still had his picture in the rogues gallery. And he said, I felt so humiliated about that.

So he said, I called on God, and I said, oh God, please, I'm your child now. Please get that picture out of the rogues gallery. So he said he was somewhere preaching, and they met the governor of the state.

And they sat and talked together at a banquet. And he got to talking about the pardon the governor had given him. He said, if you believe in me, and you believe in God, and you'd like to stand and set a crown on what God done for me, would you do me a favor? He said, I'll do my best.

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