

Watching Joseph Die

by Bill McLeod

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Transcript

You know, revival doesn't come through great preaching, it comes through great praying. It was like that at Pentecost, and in all the great revival sins. But once revival begins, great praying, great preaching develops, and sometimes in strange ways.

This has nothing to do with my message tonight, but something happened. And right after Saskatoon, I was called to come to Winnipeg, I lived then in Saskatoon, and I was called to come to Winnipeg for some meetings, revival meetings. And during those meetings, a truck driver, who was a new immigrant from Germany, whose English was very broken, was touched by God.

And a few days earlier, he was down in the States driving his transport, Sunday morning he saw some cars and a church, and so he pulled in. As he came in the door, somebody said, and where are you from? I'm from Canada. Oh, the guy said, we heard there's a revival in Canada.

And the truck driver said, yeah, yeah, I've got a revival. So the guy at the door told the pastor, and the pastor said, we have a man from Canada who's been in the revival, he's going to come and share. Well, this guy hadn't done anything like this in his life.

When he got home, he told us what happened. He said, I went up to that pulpit, I didn't know what to do, so I did what Bill did, in Winnipeg, he said, and I preached the same stuff, you know, dying to sin, being honest. He said, I preached, and all of a sudden there was 30 people kneeling at the front, he said.

So I decided to keep on preaching. And he said, pretty soon everybody was there, and I couldn't preach anymore. Well, then he said, I knew that Bill did something like, what do you call it, counseling? He said, I was counseling them people at 2 o'clock in the afternoon.

This truck driver, yeah, amen is right. Many things like that happen over the years. When God's in it, you can't tell him how to do it.

Just rejoice in how he does it. There's a text given twice in Proverbs, before honor is humility. Before honor is humility.

We'll come back to that a little later. They found a jar in a cave somewhere in Arabia, and it had some kernels of wheat in it, 3,000 years old. Now, they didn't say how many kernels there were in the jar, so we took the number, well, let's say 500.

So here are 500 kernels of wheat. 3,000 years, and you count them, there's still only 500. How can this be? 3,000 years, and still not even 501? Why? Well, because it never died.

It wasn't planted, except the kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies. It can't bring forth any fruit. But if it dies, it brings forth much truth.

And it's the same for your life and for mine. We must learn how to die to self and accept the will of God for all of life. David had to learn that.

Honor doesn't come until we're humble. He was running for years, living in the wilderness with a crew of motley men, nothing to eat many times. And then he knew that someday he would be the king of the 12 tribes of Israel.

But he had to be humble and dealt with before God could give him that. Jacob was much the same. Gideon, Elisha.

He poured water on the hands of Elijah for years. Then someday, Elijah was taken home to heaven. And all of a sudden, Elisha was a prophet.

But he had to learn before honor is humility. We're going to look at Joseph. It's one of the most amazing and beautiful and helpful stories in the Bible.

I'm not going to preach on the idea like of Joseph, his life, being a picture of Christ. In many aspects, I'm not going to deal with that. It's a message all by itself.

If I would call this anything, I would just say, we're going to watch. We're going to watch Joseph die. How God did it and what it meant.

Because he went from a 17-year-old kid to be the prime minister of the most powerful nation in the world in his time. But it didn't happen overnight. Somebody put it this way.

See, there were 12 boys in the family. Joseph was the only one of the 12 playing the game by the rules. His brothers were a bunch of rascals apart from Reuben.

And he used to bring their evil report to their father. And they hated him. Not only for that, but for other things as well.

But he was the only one on a team of 12 playing the game by the rules. And the great umpire of the universe, God, gave him a 13-year penalty. And so from 17 to 30, he was under a cloud.

One of the amazing things about the story is this. He never complained. It seems strange.

How could he go through all of this and not say at least, hey God, what are you doing down here? No hint. The one thing we see again and again, it says God was with him. He didn't have a Bible.

How could he exist as a believer without a Bible? But he did. He couldn't attend a conference like this. He didn't know of any Christians or believers in God in Egypt.

They're idolaters. He had no helps at all. And he did better than a lot of people in our countries.

There are all kinds of helps. God is my helper, we read in the Bible, and he is. The Lord is my helper, Hebrews 13 reminds us.

If you have nothing else, you have God, which means you have all you'll need. Right? That's all you need. Joseph.

Well, he had to die first of all to his youth because he was only 17 years old when he was betrayed by his brothers. And, you know, that's, I mean, this is youth. No doubt great ambitions, ideas, and so on.

Everything is not flat in a minute. He had no idea, apparently, how his brothers felt about him. They were very envious, jealous, angry.

They planned to murder him, actually, and would have. But Reuben kind of talked them out of it, I think. So they just sold him as a slave.

And they made a little money at it. Twenty pieces of silver sold to the Ishmaelites. They went into Egypt, and they sold them naturally at a profit.

And likely another ten shekels or whatever. He probably, in that respect, the same price paid for him as for Christ later on. Anyway, he had to die to his youth.

And that may happen to some 17-year-olds here. It won't be just like his. It can be in a multitude of ways, all open to God.

He not only sees the beginning, it says he sees the end from the beginning. Your life and my life. Then he had to die, secondly, to youthful ambitions.

He had some dreams which clearly indicated that someday he would be some kind of a ruler over all his brothers and his mother and dad. And they hated him for these dreams. One of the reasons for the problems that developed.

He had to die to that. It didn't look very hopeful as a slave whose master's name was Potiphar, which meant a fat bull. And he was the head of the executioners.

And really, Joseph had nothing. He didn't even own the loincloth he was wearing. He had nothing.

These ambitions, these youthful dreams, oh, come on, he had to forget about it. I suppose he wondered, what did those dreams really mean? What has God up to? Has he forgotten? Did I just eat too much? Was

that the problem? We don't see any indication he felt that way. But I'm sure being human, he must have thought some things along that line.

The next thing is this. He had to die to favoritism. He was the favored child in the family.

That's never, never a good thing. If you have children, you know this. Some of your children are very easy to raise and handle, and some are not.

It's just the way it is. And we have a tendency then to favor the child that is easy to raise. Don't make that mistake.

His parents did. And they hated him. The more because he was a favorite.

So he was in deep trouble insofar as his family was concerned. He had to die to freedom. As a 17-year-old in the land of Canaan, he was as free as a bird.

He could do what he wanted. I'm sure he had a lot of fun roaming the hills, looking after sheep, and all of this kind of thing. Totally free.

And all of a sudden, totally a slave. I mean, overnight. You see, if you're going out to some country as a missionary, you have the privilege, and everybody does it.

You try to find out all you can learn about this country. Population, ethnic origin, economy, all these things, political systems. And you learn all you can, and you get many pictures, and you listen to missionaries who've been there.

Well, Joseph had nothing like that. He'd never been there before. There were no travel brochures he could read.

He's just stuck suddenly in a totally foreign country, whose language he did not know. So he had to die to a lot of areas. Freedom was one.

He had to die to human love. That's hard. Like it says of Jesus, neither did his brethren believe in him.

And his brethren didn't love him, they hated him. It wasn't just that there was no love. It was that they were full of hate.

And they saw their opportunity. And he heard them talking and realized they were planning to kill him. And they might have.

But God's hand was in the whole story, and they didn't. I never knew until years later what had really happened from God. He had to die to his own family, to their love.

He never had that. It's hard to work in Christian work if your family doesn't believe in it. If they talk against that, and we've often counseled with people who had that kind of problem.

They don't know what to do. Their own family thinks they're wasting their time, always yakking at them about it. We've counseled with people, even recently, that had that kind of a problem.

Most certainly he, Joseph, had that kind of a problem. He died to his own family because he never saw any of them for 20 years. Supposing God came to you and said, Now I want you to take on this ministry in

a country you've never heard of, never seen, and you'll be gone from your family for 20 years.

You'll have no contact with them. They had no telephones in those days, no Internet, nothing like this. Would you accept it? It would be hard.

That's what he'd have to do. He'd have to die to marriage, which in those days, of course, was extremely important, as it is for many today. As a slave, no thought of marriage.

He just had to obey Potiphar, the fat bull. That's all he had. It wasn't a very intriguing situation, or hopeful either.

So he never died. He never ever got back to his own country again except to bury his dad. 20 years later, he buried his dad, and he went back with his dad's body to Canaan to bury him.

That's the only contact he had with his own country. He had to die to some customs, I'm sure. You know, when you travel a lot in foreign lands, you learn a lot.

You find out they don't do things in many of these countries the way they do in Canaan or the States. We were in South America, and we said something, like, oh, it was a great thing. And we went like that.

Oh, and they said, don't do that. That's bad. That's bad.

I'd never heard of this before. So we learned. And in going into a store in some countries, you don't walk in and point with your foot and say, I'd like some of that.

You don't even point with your hand. In some countries, you don't point with your left hand, or with your, yeah, with your left hand. You must point with your right hand.

But here's what you do in some countries. You walk in the store. A clerk walks up.

And, of course, he inquires, what would you like? No, that's not how it starts. You start by asking him if he's married. Are you married? You are.

Yes, yes. Do you have any children? Yes. How many children do you have? And you find out all about the family, no? Then after you've asked a few questions, he will ask you, is there something in the store you'd like to buy? We don't do it that way.

We just roar in, get what we want, and roar out again. So you learn how to go slow and to watch others, to see how they do it, and try and pattern your life so you won't offend anybody unnecessarily. So he had to die to many customs he was used to.

He certainly had to die to all spiritual fellowship. I'm sure there's times when Joseph just longed to go back somehow to get home, sit around the fire with the family and sing the songs of Zion. None of that.

Certainly he must have been witnessing for God because there's some evidence later on that others in the nation have become believers too. But, I mean, he had nothing to start with. Just God.

Isn't that enough? I guess it is. It has to be. He had to die to his nationality.

It says in Genesis that it was an abomination for an Egyptian to eat bread with a Hebrew. So somebody asked Joseph one day, where do you come from? I came from the land of Canaan. Yeah, but there's a lot

of nationalities in Canaan.

What nationality are you? Well, the guy said, come on, what are you? Well, I'm a Hebrew. And the guy said, a Hebrew? Oh, man. And he just walks away.

So he had to die to his nationality. He had to die to his past work because it says every shepherd was an abomination to the Egyptians. So somebody asked Joseph in the land of Canaan, what did you do? I worked for my dad.

So what kind of work did you do for your dad? Well, I was a shepherd. A shepherd? He walks away. An abomination to an Egyptian.

So God is closing the door in all directions. He's dying to everything, it seems. He had to die to his, well, to a very sheltered environment, we might say, living in a tent somewhere.

Now he's in a house, probably a very costly house for those days and times. You know, Ur of the Chaldeans, where Abraham came, they had flushing toilets in Ur of the Chaldeans back in Abraham's day. They found this out through archaeology.

And of course, Egypt being the head nation of the time that Joseph was there, they're probably very modern. And he had to adjust to all of this. And he seemed to do it very well.

He had to die to his life's work with Potiphar because he didn't have any freedom at all. He just had to do what he was told and do it right. And then when Potiphar discovered what kind of a man he had, he was delighted.

Everything Joseph did was right. And Potiphar saw this. He could trust him with anything.

He began giving him more responsibility. And the more responsibility he gave Joseph, the more blessing he saw happening to his crops and his business and everything. Finally, he committed the whole business to Joseph.

And Joseph ran the whole thing. He enjoyed that because, after all, he did have some administrative abilities, as later we'd learn. And he was having a great time.

Then all of a sudden, something happened. And that had to end. And Joseph... You see, there's a verse in Psalm 102 that says, You have lifted me up and cast me down.

And he had been lifted up to be the administrator for Potiphar, the head of the executioners in Egypt. And all of a sudden, he's in jail because his wife, Potiphar's wife, accused him of trying to rape her. He had not, but that was the accusation.

And so, all of a sudden, he has nothing. He's not in the administrative end of things at all. He's out of it.

And again, I'm sure he was wondering, Well, what kind of a curb comes in their old nets? I wonder what God is up to. So he had to die in these hard areas. He died, for example, of human lust.

That was difficult. That's what got him in jail. When he refused to lie with Potiphar's wife, that got him in jail.

He did the right thing and ended up in the wrong place. How can that be? When God's in it, you're never in a wrong place. You're just in a different place.

That's all. Well, then, he had to die to his personal reputation. Dear people, this is hard.

If he's in jail, so are prisoners talking to each other. Hey, Joe, what did you do to get in here? Well, I was accused of rape, but I never, ever did it. And everybody in the jail is innocent.

Did you know that? I was taken by a Christian superintendent to the penitentiary in St. Cloud, Minnesota. And he said, We have 1,200 prisoners here. 60 of them are lifers.

But everybody is innocent. You can't find a guilty person in the whole jail. So I'm sure Joe's got the same problem.

So they'd walk away, Oh, yeah, yeah, we know, Joe. We know all about it. Everybody's innocent.

You know, that would be very hard to be in jail, accused of anything, if you're a Christian believer. But sometimes it's in the plan of God. So in 2 Corinthians 6, it speaks about us honoring God as ministers of his.

Now, I think the word minister is used not just for people in the ministry, but Christians everywhere. And one of the things he mentions there is this. We are to honor God by, it says, honor and dishonor, evil report and good report, as deceivers and yet true.

So what about, you know, the honor part, that's good. What about the dishonor part? That's not so easy. What about the evil report? That's not easy either.

And people regarding you as a deceiver, that's not easy either. But see, we just look at the one side. We forget there's another side.

Christ said, Woe unto you when all men speak evil of you. So did their fathers to the false prophets. Christians often congratulate themselves that they're never in trouble.

They think it's just great. They walk as if there's eggs on the floor, so that if an egg gets in the way, they just push it aside gently. They don't want to crush an egg, and they manage to make it in perfect health to death's door.

And some people are living that way with these thoughts in mind. Honor and dishonor, evil report and good report, as deceivers and yet true. We have to be prepared for this.

If you're going to do anything for God, you have to be prepared. The Lord comes down the road. He will allow things to happen.

He'll allow people to come into your life that are not nice people. He'll give you problems you cannot solve that drive you to Him. All things work together for good to them that love God.

When I preached the gospel in Logging Camps, I'm glad I started, well, not quite started there. I'd been pastoring a church just once before that. But what an experience.

In these logging camps, there were people just out of jail. There were people that should be in jail or hiding in a bush camp so they won't be caught. You'll meet people that can't read or write.

You'll meet people with university education. You've got just about everything. And they're usually rough, not necessarily bad, but when they find out who you are, certain reactions surface.

They see you giving thanks for your meal at the table. Oh, it produces almost a riot, you know. They get laughing about it.

It's so funny. They've never seen anybody do that before, you know. So it's time they saw it, right? Anyway, sometimes when you're preaching, they pull out a cigar and light it or a pipe, but you're on their turf.

You can't have them stop. You could do it here. You can't do it there.

Or you might pull out a whiskey bottle and take a swig or two while you're preaching, you know. Or they might get up and leave because if it's a Friday night, they used to have fights on radio Friday nights, and some of your crowd would leave Friday night to watch the fight for a while, then come back to the meeting. Ever have that happen? You just never knew it was going to happen.

You just did it and enjoyed it, and you didn't eat meals there, then lay on your bunk till the evening when you could have a service. You had to work for the guys in the bush, and you cut logs with them, and you deck logs with them. You did a lot of things with them.

And when you did, I remember one camp I walked in about 20 miles. It was in the spring, and the winter roads often, they take advantage of the lakes, and they travel on the ice. But the snow was gone.

The ice was still there, and there was places where for the length of this auditorium there'd be water on top of the ice. So I take off my shoes and stocking. I sit on my pack sack.

Then I walked on my bare feet on the ice to the end of this water. Then I sit on my pack and had a towel and dry my feet, put my socks and shoes back on. I did that maybe five times to get into this one camp.

So when I got there, the guy said, How did you get here? I said, What do you think? I didn't fly. No, but did you walk? Yeah, I walked. And word spread like wildfire through the camp.

Everybody was at the meeting that night. You know? And things like that. God gives you opportunities for doing things that'll soften tough guys' hearts.

I remember I was talking in one case, warning about the danger of hell, and one of the men that ran the camp was not a believer, and I was talking to him afterwards, and he said, I know, he said, there has to be a hell because God has to have a place for the coals. Do you know what a coal is? Any log in the bush that won't make lumber, they call it a coal. They throw it aside.

So he said, God has to have a place for the coals. One of his brothers became a Christian. I do not know if he ever did.

Okay, we're to approve ourselves as ministers of God then by honor and dishonor, evil report, good report, as deceivers and yet true. And remember this, no matter what they say, the God of truth is on your side, and you don't have to worry about it. Let him talk.

Dr. Shields in Toronto used to call him the Canadian Spurgeon, and people said all kinds of things about him. He took a very strong stand for righteousness and had a large Baptist church in Toronto. And he said,

when somebody was talking to him one day and said, you know, so many people are against you.

Aren't you upset about it? He said, I don't care what they say about me just as long as they talk about me. Because he said, every time they open their mouth against me, there are people who say, I've got to hear this guy Shields. And so all kinds of people come because of this.

And he served God wonderfully well. He's in heaven by the grace of God today. One other thing Joseph had to die to was human health.

Because when the butler and the baker offended the king of Egypt, then they were both thrown into jail. And so they had a dream one night, and Joseph was in charge of the jail by this time. And so he saw they weren't looking happy, and he asked them what their problem was.

Well, the butler said he had a dream, and in his dream he was pressing grapes into Pharaoh's cup. And oh, Joseph, that's a good sign. You're going to be restored to favor again.

Then the other guy, the baker, he felt happy because it was a good interpretation there. His dream was not interpreted the same way. And Joseph told him, you're going to die in three days.

And so it happened. But before they left the jail on that third day, Joseph begged the butler to remember him. He told him all about himself, how he'd been betrayed by his brother, in the jail, all these things that happened all these years.

He's probably 28 years old or so at the time. And you know what happened? The butler forgot. Every day I say to myself, what kind of a fool was he? How could he forget? It just wasn't God's time for him to get out of jail.

So the butler didn't remember. And Joseph, I'm sure, waited a day, two days, three days, four days, a week, nothing happened. After a month he knows it's not going to happen.

He's going to stay there in jail. But of course, the day finally came. You know, we cannot see God's footsteps are not known.

That's the Old Testament. The New Testament says God's ways are past finding out. You don't know why.

You see what, but you don't know why. And we have to be quite content with the what and forget about the why. Leave that with God.

Remember that verse in Proverbs? A merry heart has a continual feast. It does good like a medicine, it says. Well, medicine costs money.

Having a merry heart doesn't. Why don't you go for it? It's sure a lot cheaper. A merry heart, just rejoicing in God.

Jesus said, don't ever rejoice because the spirits, the demons are subject unto you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven. Written in heaven, O glorious thought, what consolation Christ has brought. Written in heaven, we can rejoice by night and by day, and we should be to the glory of God.

So we have to die to all human help and trust. My soul, wait thou only upon God. Only upon God.

He's our help. He's our shield. He hasn't forgotten.

He hasn't run out of resources. He cares, casting all your care on him, for he cares for you. Sometimes we're like the devil.

You see, I came from a broken home. My parents were, I would say by worldly standards, good people. They loved us four boys, but they didn't love each other.

And it got to a place where my mother left. Then my dad had a job, and four boys, nobody else in the home. We got into all kinds of stuff.

And then my dad was not a cook. I can still remember those cabbage soups we ate so often, you know. And then what happened was my mother got into a car accident somehow, could have been killed, those old-fashioned cars.

And she got saved. She accepted Christ. And one day dad said, your mother is coming home, but you don't have to listen to her religious talk.

Now we didn't know what that meant. She was a very wise woman. She didn't lay a heavy gospel trip on us.

She would occasionally say something about Jesus. We'd walk away, or she'd leave a Bible open somewhere or a Christian book around. Many years later she told us this, when I came home I determined that my family would be saved, you boys and dad.

And you know what happened? Nothing happened for 14 years. And when my older brother Don was in his 20s, I was not far behind. Don got saved.

That was the first thing that happened. But she waited patiently 14 years. And some of us, we give up on God after 14 months or less.

Give God time. Let him do it his way. It's a great problem with many believers trying to hurry God up.

Hey God, get moving. Haven't you heard me? My mother said one day the devil got on her back and told her this faith stuff didn't mean anything. Give up on it.

This God stuff isn't real. And she said, I wrestled with the devil all that day and I threw him off my back finally. And I decided forever I'm believing God, no matter what.

So Don was saved a couple of years later. The four boys were saved in the order of age. And my youngest brother Keith, he was in the Canadian Air Force.

And he and his wife, when they were alone, after they got married, they agreed, they shook hands and agreed together they would never become Christians. But what hope did he have? When my mother was praying and believing God. And I'll never forget years later when his wife phoned and said, your brother's in trouble, you better come and talk to him.

So I went over to the house. He was sitting on the floor. I sat down beside him.

What's up, Keith? He said, I'm so low down, there's no way out now but up. You want to be saved? Exactly. I led him to Christ.

But you know what happened that night before I called on him? He had decided to end his life. He had a deer rifle. And he first of all went to the house and kissed his kids goodbye.

He and his wife didn't get along at all. And then he took his gun and he put it to his head and pulled the trigger and it didn't go off. So he put a different shell in and the same thing happened.

It wouldn't go off. Then he woke up in bed the next morning. He doesn't know what happened.

He could never remember what had happened after he pulled the trigger twice. But God was in it. My mother was praying.

And he was in the ministry for years as an evangelist. Led a lot of people to Christ in the States. They shook hands and said, we'll never become Christians.

That must make heaven laugh, you know. It's just saying God can't do anything here. That's not how it is.

I remember a fellow said to me one time, oh, Brother Dale, he said, oh, I really need help. He said, I need so much help. Please ask God to help me.

I said, God doesn't want to help you. He wants to kill you. What? And I explained that to him so he wouldn't have a wrong idea.

And finally he said, Brother, that's what I needed to hear. And he entered into a new relationship with God when he realized what I was saying. Dying with Jesus, I am, I have been crucified with Christ.

Nevertheless, I live. Yet not I, but Christ lives in me. We sing a chorus, oh, what a salvation this.

That Christ lives in me. And finally all four of us boys found Christ. And three of us went into the ministry.

My dad was saved when he was 75. He moved down to California, Carmel-by-the-Sea. And he built a little house there.

And we never saw him, rarely heard from him. Then he phoned and he wanted to come and spend some time with us. So he came.

And after he'd been with us a couple of days, he said to me, why don't you ask me to ask a blessing on the food? I said, would you like to do that? Well, he said, why wouldn't a Christian like to ask a blessing? That was his Presbyterian way of telling us he'd become a believer. So thank God. You know, my mom up there in the glory land, when I look back, her faith, I thank God.

Not just for her faith, but for the life she lived. Always cheerful. I don't remember her ever being unhappy.

And then reading the Bible the way she did. Then helping me get started after I got saved at the age of 22. She was always there coaching.

It was just so neat. I thank God for her. I can't think of any other human person that I can thank God for as much as her.

And over the years, here was a man. He was a university professor, also a Christian. He heard I was holding meetings in New Brunswick, Canada.

And he contacted me, and he showed up at one of the meetings. And he told me what had happened. He and his wife heard that revival was buzzing.

So they started praying, search me, oh God. And he said, for three weeks, we've done nothing but pray the prayer, search me. And we've dealt with everything God has shown us.

But he said, that's not the problem. I said, what's the problem? He said, the problem is this wicked self. You deal with sin, but self takes over and you sin again.

How do you handle this? I said, you can't. Only God can. And we talked about that.

And he went to prayer. I think he forgot I was in the room. It was just he and God.

And it was a wrestling match. And he kept telling God, I want to die to myself. And I want to die now, 100%, he kept saying.

No little thing left of self, he said. I mean, he just went down the line. He took care of everything.

And all of a sudden, he said, oh, what peace. He was filled with the spirit of God. Now, he'd been a high school teacher and a university professor for a total of 25 years.

In those 25 years, he'd never lent his soul to Christ. He never had anybody come to him knowing he was evangelical to ask him questions about God or the Bible. Never happened.

In the next 18 months, he prayed with over 400 people. Some he led to Christ. Others were Christians who helped to walk with God.

And this university professor even went on the road holding revival meetings, can you believe it? He told me, over the years, I often anxiously asked God, God, why don't you use me? I found out he couldn't use me. Because self was in the way. He was a very determined sort of person.

God couldn't get in. He said, I understand clearly now why. He didn't use me, he couldn't.

I was in the way. That may be true for some of us here as well. It's a problem everywhere.

People say they pray, God, use me. That's not the way to pray. God, make me usable.

That's the way to pray. He'll use you. He's looking for people.

His eyes, we know, run to and fro through the whole earth. To show himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is perfect towards him. Which is to say, he's looking for humble, faithful people that he can use and flow through.

In the Song of Solomon, there's a verse, chapter 4, verse 12, I think. It speaks about a garden barred, a fountain shut up and sealed. So he's talking there about a fountain of some kind that doesn't flow because it's sealed.

I'll give you an illustration. Back in Canada, Piney, Manitoba. You drill down 70 feet and you hit a hard pan.

You get to drill out as fast as you can and the water comes right out of the ground. Everybody in that little town of Piney had running water. And it never ceased.

Then somebody came into the area. They were going to have a creamery. They needed lots of water.

They only drilled down 30 feet and they hit the oil pan. It was a three-inch hole instead of a one-inch. Pretty soon the whole country was flooded with water.

Basements, very few people had basements, but those who had. And the trails and the roads were covered with water. They sent an SOS down to Winnipeg.

They sent out a fleet of concrete trucks, you know. I think there was eight or nine of them all together. And they couldn't get to this fountain in the field.

They had to build a bridge to it so these trucks could back up to it and dump their load of concrete. It was a big deal. And finally, it shut off.

And nothing had been done about it. But, you know, the water is still there. The power is still there.

Somebody's got to blow the lid off it. It's that way, you know, Christ remembers that promise in John 7. He that believes on me, as the Scripture said, out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water. About this he spoke of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive.

So there may be some concrete in your life. We will allow the devil to come with his trucks and dump in some concrete. And so we can't flow a garden barge, a spring shut up, a fountain seal, Solomon 412.

But the power is still there if you're a Christian. If you're saved, God's Spirit lives in you. He can do what you can't do.

He can do what he wants to do. We have to start cooperating with the Spirit of God. And it may begin by me making things right with people I've wronged over the years.

I had meetings in Winnipeg right after Saskatoon in 72, and a quartet wanted to sing. So we made inquiries about them and found out they were Christians, but they weren't really living for God, so we politely informed them, and we didn't need their services. They weren't happy about it.

But God got through to two of them, and they prayed. And one of them gave testimony one night. He said, I heard about this self-problem.

I never heard of that before. He said, I made a list. He called it a death list.

He had 35 things he had to make right with other people. He said, I'm not singing again. I'll never open my mouth for God again until I've taken care of these 35 things, his death list.

And he took care of it. And his friend took care of his death list. And we had them sing one Sunday morning in the church where I was holding meetings.

They sang a song about the cross. I can't remember what that song was, but it had a powerful effect because before they sang, they testified. We didn't really give an invitation when they were through.

We could see what had happened. Half the congregation in tears. We just pointed to the prayer room.

There must have been 200 people streamed away to the prayer room to meet with God. So then I went to help the people that had gone to the prayer room, and my wife was there, and she took the meeting over.

And she had another meeting with the gals that were left and the people that were left, and did very well.

And another 50 met with God before she was through. But you know, this problem, it isn't with God. It isn't with the church.

It's with me. I'm in the way. I'm preventing God.

Stop blaming others. Oh, God, show me. Show me.

I was counseling with a man one time. He told me he had a number of things he had to make right, and he mentioned one and then two and then three and then four. And then he stopped.

I said, my brother, is that all? Is that all God has to say? No, he said there's more. And he confessed something else and something else. Then he stopped.

I said, is this the end? No, he said, there's one more. And he struggled for the longest time. And finally he confessed this sin.

And immediately the joy came. And God has used him in many ways ever since. We hear from him a couple times a year, still rejoicing, still walking with God.

God said that his word was a hammer and a fire and wheat and water. Anything you need, it has. I try to read and study carefully 14 chapters of the Bible a day.

I'm not suggesting you do that. You probably don't have the time. But it's been a great night.

You know, I read in Deuteronomy where kings of Israel were supposed to write a copy of the law of God. Well, the five books of Moses, the law of Moses, it's just about the same size as the New Testament. So I decided I would write out a copy of the New Testament.

And I used some Greek and Hebrew help. I'm no great scholar, but I had a wonderful time just writing it out. You do that.

You start writing. Start with a small book, 1 John or 2 John or something, and just start writing it. Typing, whatever.

It's hard to forget what you've written. So I got the New Testament done. I've done Isaiah, Jeremiah, Proverbs and the Psalms and some other places.

I have a friend, teaches music, Christian. And he heard about this and he decided to do the same thing. Only he writes with his hand.

And he's got the most beautiful writing you ever saw. It's just perfect. Every line is perfect.

But he started in the Old Testament. And he told me, I haven't finished yet, but I'm working at it. The precious living Word of God.

Why are we here? What are we doing? Isaiah said in chapter 30, the last verse, A little one shall become a thousand, And a small one a strong nation. I, the Lord, will hasten it in its time. That has certainly happened over the years.

Dallas Billington, Akron, Ohio. Some of you have heard of him. He's dead now.

Grade 5 education, working in a rubber factory. And God led him to start a Sunday school. And the first Sunday they had, I think he said 18 people.

And an offering of \$1.80. The Sunday my wife and I were there. I didn't preach there, I was just a visitor. They had 5,000 in the adult Bible class.

18,000 members in the church. So people say, well, that's not a good thing, Putting all the eggs in one basket. Well, I learned when I was there, That the Akron Temple had started 250 other churches.

They hadn't put all their eggs in one basket. But I did ask Charles, who was a son to Dallas, How did your dad get the people to do the soul winning they're doing? He said, Dad tells them to do it, and they do it. Quite simple.

No training classes. It was such a joy to be there, though, just to sense. Now Dallas is dead, and his son Charles is the head pastor.

I think there's five or six pastors there. But they had determined, when he started, Dallas had determined with a friend of his named Notley, That they would build the biggest Sunday school in the world To the glory of God. And they had that for years.

They were passed by other churches. They weren't concerned about that. They were just concerned about winning souls And establishing churches to the glory of God.

People sit in judgment sometimes on big churches. But you know, in Jerusalem, The church there probably had 50,000 people Before they were scattered abroad. It's not a big church, I would say.

I don't know if they ever met together. But I'm sure when people met, there'd be thousands maybe meeting at a time. A big church doesn't necessarily have to be a bad church.

Sometimes it is what we make it. We thank God. When Jesus told the twelve that he was going to Jerusalem And would be betrayed and crucified, scourged and killed, Peter said, in the Greek he said, Pity yourself.

Pity yourself. And in the context, Jesus said, Deny yourself. Deny yourself.

We're not to pity ourselves. We are to deny ourselves. And God will use us.

As we learn to follow Joseph Dying to himself over a period of 13 years And finally winds up suddenly Without any warning As the prime minister of Egypt And then everything unfolds as it had before. There had been 13 years of uncertainty But if you're walking with God You're never walking in uncertainty. You're just walking a little slower.

That's all. And that's always, always good. I remember in Saskatoon During one of those wonderful meetings A Mennonite Christian kid, about 15, a girl We're having testimonies And she asked if she could sing hers But she said, I just want to sing I don't want any accompaniment I just want to sing.

So she got up and she started to sing About the Lord. And you know what happened? God came. There wasn't a dry eye in that crowd.

I was weeping. Everybody was weeping Because God had come in On the wings of her song Let me lose my life And find it, Lord, in Thee May all self be slain My friends see only Thee Though it cost me grief and pain Though it cost me grief and pain I shall find my life again If I lose my life I'll find it, Lord, in Thee And she sang. I talked to my wife after I said, honey, what did you sense When that gal was singing? She said, it's the closest to heaven I ever expect to get Till I get there.

You couldn't explain it. It was just that God came. And He does things like that.

You know, sometimes People will say things like this. You know, all you hear about God Is a cough behind a curtain. And that's all that happens Oftentimes, just a cough Behind a curtain.

The Bible speaks about that. How little a report there is of God, you know. Why is this? He fills the universe.

We can't comprehend. Did you ever stop to think of this? That God has counted All the stars in the universe. Says that.

And named them all. Can you comprehend that? They compute there are probably As many stars in the universe As there are grains of sand In all the seashores of the world. And He's counted them all.

And named them all. And think of this. Sometimes He has to listen To maybe 5,000 people praying Or 5 million praying At the same time.

How can He listen to each one individually Then answer each one individually? Well, you can't comprehend that. I can't either. I don't have to.

You're not talking about a human being. He's not just a big human being. He's not a human being at all.

He's a spirit so big The universe can't contain Him. And the Bible said He's stretching out the heavens As a tent to dwell in. The universe isn't big enough To hold God.

This is the God we trust in. This is the God to whom we're praying. You know, a lot of people When the trumpet blows They're going to go up feet first Holding on to the doorknob Of their \$200,000 house Or maybe that \$50,000 car.

They'll go up feet first. The Bible says in 2 Peter 2 That the earth also And the works that are therein Shall be burned up. So why are we saving all this stuff? So when the day comes There'll be people standing there saying Hey, my fire is higher than yours.

Mine is 60 feet high. You've only got a small fire here. Is that how we're going to handle it? What you have, give to God.

I don't mean to give everything away But let it all be God's stuff And use it for His glory. We've had people as a pastor You know, trying to get people To pick up people from Sunday school. Oh, they couldn't do that.

They had a new car. They didn't want to have Any mud on the floor. Oh, come on.

But I mean, things like that. Am I His or just partly His? What I have, does it really belong to Him? Or is it mainly mine With my fingerprints on it all over? And God is just standing On a sideline somewhere Living

for Jesus A life that is true Striving to please Him In all that I do. He's waiting.

Now many of you people Have met God during a meeting Perhaps just seated there The truth has gotten hold of your heart Or maybe you've gone back to your room And cried to God And got things straightened out Or maybe you came And knelt at the altar here And God blessed you that way But there may be a few That haven't done anything And you're still, you know Not really right with God And usually it's some thing We didn't say anything about afterglows But during the revival days We had a thing called the afterglow When the public meeting was ended It might be two and a half hours, whatever Then we had smaller meetings In a different auditorium Maybe 30 people, 40 people With chairs set in a circle With a place on two sides Where people could move in and out And in the center was a chair With a box of Kleenex And we'd sing a few choruses A few people would give testimonies Of what God had done for them Then we'd ask anybody Have you had a need? You haven't responded to God yet? Come, kneel at the chair If women came, we had women come And pray with them Or men, likewise It was amazing what happened In some of those meetings Sherwood worked You may have heard of his book He wrote about the afterglow He phoned me from Minneapolis He was Billy Graham's right-hand man He edited the paper Decision magazine for 25 years And he phoned about the revival in Canada And he flew down for one night That night, a man and a couple He was a deacon, she was a deaconess They were in the meeting And they gave their testimony And it went like this She said, I was planning To take our daughters And move to Vancouver And he said, I was planning then He didn't know what she was planning He didn't know he'd be left With the boys in Winnipeg They didn't get along But one night, a couple nights Before they gave their testimony They both came forward And since we ran There were so many people responded We didn't have counselors So they counseled with each other They just got honest with each other Spilled it all out Made things right And they gave their testimony And sure it weren't herded Then he and his wife Weren't getting along very well And he told me about that And he was blaming her And I didn't say anything I just kept looking at him And he said, I think I'm to blame too So he invited this couple Who had given their testimony To come down to Minneapolis And conduct an afterglow Which they did And nobody responded They're sitting there And Sherwood thought, well I guess I'll have to go Kneel at the chair Nobody else was coming So he kneels at the chair And then Harry Thiessen Laid his hand on his head And told him to ask God To search your heart Confess everything God shows you And he thought, he said I thought to myself How can I do that With this crowd here, you know But he did And he was going to get up Feeling good And Harry had his hand On his shoulder and said No, you have to die to yourself And he said, I said to myself What in the world Is he talking about And Harry explained it And he got it that night Then he said, he told his wife Honey, I think I'll dry the dishes And she said, you're feeling sick No, he said I've just been filled with the spirit So a few days later Honey, I think I'll take the garbage out She said, you're still feeling sick No, I'm filled with the spirit Prove it, she said That went on for three months I was holding meetings In Buell Alliances In Alberta and Edmonton And I get a phone call His wife had attended an afterglow And met with God He said our home was like heaven now Simple, not easy Simple but not easy To die to yourself And just give up on yourself Spiritually speaking Let God have it all Let God say what he wants to say And do what he wants to do In me and through me You get to that place You never know what God may do from there Meetings in Saginaw, Michigan A lady in the Lions Church met with God The pastor told me He said she's the shyest person In the whole congregation I'm amazed that she even came forward He contacted me a year later He said that lady I told you about What about her? She's led 18 people to Christ She's a fireball I can't believe what I'm seeing So what had happened? She died to herself For people It's not only dying to self It's living for God Letting God have his way I think that's about it Watching Joseph die There'll be another sermon on Joseph After the resurrection When he sat on a throne And ran the country That's another story But dear people Whatever it is If you're holding back on

God You're not hurting God You're hurting yourself Tied up or free You know that Samson Flew more of God's enemies By dying Than he did by living On one occasion He flew a thousand Philistines With the jawbone of an ass But when he pulled the pillars of the temple And gazed it down Thousands died All the lords of the Philistines were there Three thousand people on the roof Maybe five thousand down below The whole thing came down I guess most people died So he did more by dying Than he did by living And that's true for us as well As we die to self And live to the glory of God We can do a lot more Than we can do otherwise That's just the way it is So By the grace of God Whatever he may be saying to you Just do it Ask for help He'll give you that Whatever you need He has It's marvelous to Just cast yourself on him Here I am dear God Take me as I am Change me where it's needed Show me what you're saying Help me Help me to die He'll do that He'll be with us You know when he speaks about Being crucified It's always With Christ With Christ Think of the company you're keeping When you're dying To self With Christ Let's pray Father thank you so much For Joseph No wonderful lesson we learned through him By your grace Certainly he never knew that his story Would be written in a book called the Bible And millions of people would read about it Over the years And be blessed by it He didn't know that But he knows now And he can see the wonderful wisdom of God In everything he does Again that all things work together For good To those that love God Because we're called according To your purpose Make us know that purpose dear God we pray And while we're in the attitude of prayer It may be that some of you Just remain in the attitude of prayer It may be that some of you Do not feel you have Reached the point yet And you'd like prayer I'd like to pray for any like that Would you raise your hand Yes Yes Are there others You have a need Hasn't been met yet Father Thank you for all you've done here We see some of it We cannot see all of it We pray for those Perhaps some have been saved And others have met with you And are walking now in the spirit Dear God Bless such And any who raise their hand here Thank you Bless them too we pray And Father we ask that things That started in these days here May continue forever To your glory and honor In Christ's name Amen Just one thing the Lord Suddenly laid on my heart It's this We're told in Galatians They that are Christ's Have been crucified with Christ It doesn't say some of them But they Who have believed on Christ We've been crucified with Christ Whether we know it or not That's how God sees us And the same chapter ends by saying If we live in the spirit Let us also walk in the spirit What's the difference Well according to Romans 8 You live in the spirit From the moment you're born again You're now a spiritual person You're living in the spirit For God is saying If you live in the spirit Walk in the spirit If you walk in the flesh You'll die We're told Also in Romans 8 So to walk in the spirit Is to just obey him As he leads Let him lead Much of the problem lies right here Because we know we're born again We're living in the spirit But we're not walking in the spirit And we can't walk in the spirit Until we understand That we're crucified with Christ

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