

Extreme Prayer - Part 2

by David Smithers

David Smithers emphasizes the necessity of extreme prayer through biblical and historical examples, urging believers to deepen their devotion and sacrifice for the sake of others.

Duration: 22:30

Scripture: Romans 9:1

Topics: "Prayer Life", "Personal Devotion"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the extreme devotion and sacrifice of individuals like David Brainerd and Joseph Elini in their prayer lives. These men would wake up early, spend hours in prayer, and were deeply troubled if they heard others working before they had finished their devotions. The speaker challenges the audience to consider how much they are appropriating the grace of God in their own lives and encourages them to strive for greater sacrifice, devotion, and prayer for the lost and the church. The speaker also highlights the need to approach the Bible with a thirst and hunger for God, rather than treating it as mere words or an escape.

Transcript

You ever try to run a little bit? Many of us, it won't take long to get us breathless. But do you pant like that? Taking a deep breath. Oh God, I need more of you, I'm thirsty for you.

Is this not the scripture? Is this not the truth? Is this not what this book is all about? About us loving God like that, being extreme. And what are we content with? Ask yourself, what are you content with? Where have you been living? On the edge or in the safe place? Paul, Romans 9, 1-3. Talk about an extreme brother.

You know, it is such a sin today that we have made the books, the epistles, the writings of Paul into the most bunch of dribble and escape and backdoor. You ever try to run a little bit? Many of us, it won't take long to get us breathless. But do you pant like that? Taking a deep breath.

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Talk about an extreme brother. You know, it is such a sin today that we have made the books, the epistles, the writings of Paul into the most bunch of dribble and escape and backdoors out of obedience to Jesus there is. When the man's life was so sacrificial, it's not even funny.

He laid his life down, he was beaten, he was stoned, he was whipped, shipwrecked. You know, this man prayed, he nurtured the church with such love and devotion and yet we've tried to take his writings to make it an easy way in the Christian church. There's going to be a lot of folks accountable, I believe, on judgment day.

Listen to the man's devotion. It's just like Moses. Here again, we see him with that same vein, that extreme vein.

I tell you the truth in Christ, I am not lying. My conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit that I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. Extreme language.

For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, for my countrymen, according to the flesh. Are we there in prayer? I'm not. I tell you, I'm not there.

Remember folks, we're holding up this standard. We're holding the extreme edge up so it can build within us a desire to want more, to go more. These are lifting up the possibilities of grace.

These are not fairy tales. These are not just old stories in history. These are the possibilities of grace.

How much are you appropriating in Jesus Christ today? How much of the grace of God, the unmerited power of God are you using to go into greater sacrifice, devotion and prayer for the lost and for the church around us? Philippians 3, 7-15 But what things were gained to me, these I have counted lost for Christ, for Jesus. Yet indeed, I also count all things lost for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things. And count them as rubbish, or more literally, dung.

And count them as rubbish that I may gain Christ and be found in Him not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith. That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings being conformed to His death, if by any means I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. Extreme language.

Giving it all up. Praise God. Acts 12, 5 It talks about when Peter had been put in prison that it was the constant prayer.

The saints were giving up constant prayer in behalf of Peter. It would more literally be translated fervent or uttermost, extreme. What kind of prayer opens the prison gates? Opens the prison doors? What kind of prayer lets you be ushered on by the arm of an angel? Extreme prayer.

Extreme prayer. Out here on the edge. It's not safe.

On the very edge. Okay, let's talk about some other folks. Let's talk about some folks in church history.

Let me read you a portion of a man named Joseph Eleni. He wrote a great little book called The Alarm to the Unconverted. He was a Puritan preacher in the 17th century.

He arrives speaking about his devotional life, his prayer life. He said, He did rise constantly at or before four o'clock and on the Sabbath sooner if he did wake. He would be much troubled if he heard any smiths

or shoemakers or such trademans at work at their trades before he was in his duties with God, before he was in prayer.

He sang to me after, Oh, how this noise shames me! Doth not my master deserve more than theirs? From four till eight he spent in prayer, holy contemplation and singing of psalms, which he much delighted in, and did daily practice alone as well as in his family. This man, if he got up at four o'clock and he heard another trade working, it broke his heart. Doesn't my master deserve more than theirs does? David Brainerd, the great missionary to the American Indians, what a man of sacrifice, lived in the most harshest conditions, gave himself to constant prayer, was literally translated, it seems, if you read his journal, just in being enraptured with the glory of Jesus, just in love for Christ.

He prayed till he sweat profusely, he just was exhausted where he could not walk, the man prayed, where there was no strength left in him to get up and go back home after praying in the woods. Extreme prayer. Daniel Nash, this was a man that accompanied Charles D. Finney almost everywhere he went and preached.

This man would go and lock himself up in a motel room while Finney preached. He would not come out for meal. You ever try to run a little bit? Many of us, it won't take long to get us breathless.

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Where there was no strength left in him to get up and go back home after praying in the woods. Extreme prayer. Daniel Nash.

This was a man that accompanied Charles D. Finney almost everywhere he went and preached. This man would go and lock himself up in a motel room while Finney preached. He wouldn't come out for meals, he wouldn't come out hardly at all many times till revival broke.

He'd find the worst sinner in the town, he'd take their names down and get alone with God in the closet till that man broke and then a huge revival would break out as a response to seeing the worst sinner come to Christ. But referring to Daniel Nash, this is what Charles Finney has to say, I have never known a person sweat blood, but I have known a person pray till the blood started from his nose. And I have known persons pray till they were all wet with perspiration in the coldest weather in winter.

This man prayed till he bled from his nose. Oh, that's extreme, that's crazy. Why would God want us to do that? If we could literally see what's at stake today, see eternity, would it be too extreme? If we saw souls perishing in hell, if we saw the state of some men's lives, if we saw the tragedies that are going on like Markita talked about, little babies being thrown away, other children abused and molested in their own homes, would it be too extreme to pray like that? Mothers beaten and battered on a daily basis.

For nothing at all. To live in that kind of suffering, to see it, to witness it, and yet it's too extreme, it's too crazy to pray like that? You let one of your children get out here on this highway with oncoming traffic, and you tell me what's too extreme. Won't you raise your voice? Won't you run? Wouldn't you do anything? Maybe dive in front of the car yourself to block and save that child? What's the difference, folks? That's just temporal life.

That's nothing of eternal life. Edward Payson, or as Leonard Ravenhill called him, Praying Payson of Portland. What a man of prayer.

A precious Presbyterian minister would kneel down next to his bed and rock with fervency and intercession on a daily basis. After he died, they said he had huge calluses on his knees. And there next to his bed were long grooves like this, and this wide, worn into the hardwood floor next to his bed where he rocked with fervent intercession.

We don't know anything about that, folks. What was the fruit of that? Revival. Revival.

We don't know what's at stake. We don't know what its cost is. Mrs. McCauley.

Let me read a little section about her. Jerry McCauley was a drunkard given up by everybody at the rescue missions. Went to the altar time and time and time again until people ignored him.

One day, it stuck. He got gloriously saved. He had a great mission on the Water Street Mission, it was called, to the winos, the derelicts, the drunkards there.

And him and his wife moved to the east side of London. Let me read about her life, though. She was a real woman of prayer, Mrs. McCauley, Jerry McCauley's wife.

When Mrs. McCauley went to toil in the east of London with her devoted husband, she was so brokenhearted at what she saw of the ravages of sin, at the impotence of the Christian church, that she cried herself blind. She lost her sight. The sight of one eye was restored, but she carried one sightless eye to her grave, thus bearing in her body the marks of the Lord Jesus.

She knew indeed what it was to sigh and cry over the abominations done in that city. Am I losing you? Is that too far out there? Is that too far out there on the edge? These things, they should shame us. They should show us that we've been living in a fairy tale.

We really don't know what's going on. We don't know what's at stake. The greatest of our concerns a lot of times is if the sanctuary's cool or if the seat doesn't hurt our backside.

Some of you young people, what are you concerned about? What's going on at school? Don't all of our deepest concerns pale in significance in light of these kind of things? Let me talk about Thomas Hare. He was a man that traveled with Leonard Ravenhill, and while Ravenhill preached, Thomas Hare would pray. Thomas Hare and Leonard Ravenhill were both together in a great fire when they were preaching at A.W. Tozer's church where they both had to jump out, I believe, of the 12-story window.

Thomas Hare was given to all-night prayer sessions. This man would pray throughout the night on a regular basis. That sounds pretty extreme, doesn't it? Giving up whole nights of sleep, fasting sleep.

But what I understand is that Thomas Hare, to help himself in this discipline so he would wake up, so he could travail and intercede for lost souls, used to take his belt and tie himself to the side of his bed on his knees. So if he started to fall off asleep, he'd catch himself. Crazy, right? I mean, that doesn't make sense.

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