

(Youth and the Fires of Devotion) the Fire That Burns Incense

by Denny Kenaston

The sermon emphasizes the importance of prayer, faith, and the fire of God in a cleansed and consecrated heart for effective prayer and a strong devotional life.

Duration: 53:22

Scripture: Genesis 1:1, Matthew 6:33, Revelation 22:21

Topics: "Devotion"

Description

In this sermon, Brother Denny discusses the importance of maintaining a fervent and passionate prayer life. He uses the analogy of a fire in a wood stove to illustrate how our prayer life can sometimes become like hot embers instead of a blazing fire. He encourages young people to cultivate a deep prayer life and not let pride quench their fire. He also addresses the potential pitfalls of corporate prayer and emphasizes the need for personal, fervent prayer.

Transcript

Hello, this is Brother Denny. Welcome to Charity Ministries. Our desire is that your life would be blessed and changed by this message.

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These messages are offered to all without charge by the free will offerings of God's people. A special thank you to all who support this ministry. Well, what a blessing and an honor to be able to share with all you young people.

We all have different motivations and gifts that God gives to us. And I do believe, I'm not sure what to call it, but one of the things that God has wrought in my own life is a gift to motivate people. Someone once accused me, when they hear a certain person preach, they feel very restful and relaxed.

But when they hear me preach, they want to go run and do something. It was an accusation, but it was a confirmation to me. I believe that it's a gift that God has given me to motivate people.

And it's just a real blessing to me this week to be able to take some of these subjects that are dear on my heart and stir you up. And this morning, it's a real great blessing to do that on the subject of prayer. So we want to get into that subject this morning.

The fire that burns incense. I don't know if you figured that out as you read the little description of the subjects, whether that was going to be on prayer or not, but that's what the subject is this morning, is on prayer. Brother Ross put the diagram up here, so we'll use it.

And I've studied this afresh today just to make sure that I was right. But one of the things that they did in the holy place was to burn incense. And I thought I knew, but I wanted to go and study to make sure.

And sure enough, the priest goes out here and gets fire off of this altar and goes in here and burns incense on the altar of incense. Isn't that interesting? And that's exactly the only way that we are going to have a prayer life in our own lives, is if we go back out here to this altar and get some of the fire that is on this altar in order to burn incense unto our God. It's the only way.

And when that priest would go and get fire off of this altar and burn incense on the altar of incense, the whole temple was filled with a beautiful fragrance. And that's what prayer is all about. The altar of incense, the sweet smell that came up off of the altar of incense was called a sweet savor to God.

We find verses like that in the New Testament. I don't want to turn to them this morning. But our whole lives are supposed to be a sweet smelling savor to God.

And I do believe that the more we learn to live a life of prayer, the more our lives will be that sweet smell to God. And also sometimes a bad smell to others around us. Let's turn to Revelation 5. To begin here, we want to read a little bit about incense in the book of Revelation.

Revelation chapter 5 and verse 8. And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of saints. And that word odors is incense. So here we have a scene in heaven.

We have the four beasts and the four and twenty elders. They're falling down before the Lamb, who was worthy to take the book and open the seals and loose the seals thereof. They fall down before him and they have in their hand harps and they have golden vials that are filled full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

I don't know if you've ever pondered that before, but I like to make heaven real in my own meditations. I like to make God real in my own meditations. And I don't understand what all that means, but somehow or another I get a picture in heaven as the prayers of the saints ascend up to God.

I get a picture in heaven of angels up there with golden vials and they're gathering up all of these prayers and they're filling their vials, these golden vials, full of the prayers of the saints. Now, I don't know about you, but I'd like to fill a lot of vials in my days while I'm here upon this earth. Turn over to Revelation 8. We see that there's more to that than just a nice little thought in Revelation chapter 8 and verse 1. And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.

And I saw the seven angels which stood before God, and to them were given seven trumpets. And another angel came and stood at the altar having a golden censer, and there was given unto him much incense that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the

throne. And the smoke of the incense which came with the prayers of the saints ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.

And the angel took the censer and filled it with fire of the altar and cast it into the earth. And there were voices and thunderings and lightnings and earthquakes. Now, I'm not sure at all what that means, but the prayers of the saints had something to do with this little scene that just happened.

I'm not sure at all what it means. Maybe the angels gathered all the vials in heaven from all the prayers of all the saints that cried out through all the centuries, O Lord, righteous God of heaven and earth, vindicate this earth, O God who judges in all righteousness. Come and judge your enemies, O God who is the God of all the heavens and the earth.

Will you not judge this earth in righteousness? I'm not sure what all of them were. Maybe they gathered all those prayers up and brought them up, all of them, in unison before God. And at the same time, judgment came out of the throne of God upon the earth.

I don't know what it all means. But I know that prayer is no little thing in a Christian's life. And I know that God recognizes our prayers.

God records them. And it seems that God gathers them up in heaven, our prayers. Now, if you want to pray, if you want to learn about this matter of prayer, you have to go back to the basics or you will never learn it.

And the basics are right back here where we started at the beginning of the week. Mark it down. If you are not one of those consecrated, cleansed believers, you do not have an effective prayer life.

If you are not one of those cleansed, consecrated believers, you don't know much about what prayer is. Prayer is a struggle to you. It's something you do, or maybe you don't do.

It's something you do when you're corporately together with others, but probably don't do on your own. Prayer is a natural outflow of a heart that has been cleansed, a heart that is consecrated to God and has a fire burning in it. Without the fire, prayer has no sweet smell to it.

Amen? No fire, no sweet smell. Without the fire, prayer has no spirit in it. Without the fire, prayer doesn't ascend.

Without the fire, prayer has little effect. But with the fire, prayer flows out of the heart. It flows out of the heart.

Maybe you're already noticing it this week. Many of you, you may be able to give this testimony already, that as the week has gone by, prayer is coming easier and easier for you. It's easier to pray.

I have more to pray about. I have a burden of prayer. Maybe you could give that testimony.

Well, my desire this morning is to encourage you, to motivate you, to help you to see that you need to make prayer a priority in your life. In fact, you need to set yourself that you will learn how to pray. You know, the disciples, they came to Jesus and they asked Him that.

They said, Lord, would you teach us to pray? John taught his disciples how to pray. And I'm sure that the disciples had watched Jesus, because sometimes when He'd get up early in the morning, there's accounts

in the Scriptures that some of the disciples would sneak on behind Him and watch Him. When He'd get up early and go away, they wanted to see what He did.

And He went away to pray. And probably from a few of those experiences, they got up the desire to present it to Him. Well, Lord, will You teach us how to pray? We want to learn how to pray.

Well, I want to encourage you to learn how to pray. In fact, if you don't have a prayer life, don't make any major decisions in your life. If you do not know how to pray, then don't make any major decisions in your life.

If you don't know how to pray, then change all the priorities of your life until you know what prayer is all about. If you don't know how to pray, you have no prayer life, don't get married. It's one of the foundations of married life.

It's prayer. If you don't know how to pray, don't get married. And just mark that one down in your mind.

Okay, I'd like to get married. Maybe in a year. Maybe in two years.

But before I get married, I'm going to learn how to pray. You can learn how to pray. In fact, you won't be much of a prayer unless you set yourself to learn how to pray.

Just like the disciples said, Lord, teach us to pray. We can come before our Lord Jesus because the veil is rent and the way is made open. We can come before Him and say, Lord, teach me how to pray.

But I guarantee you'll never learn how to pray if there's no fire burning on your heart. And you'll never learn how to pray if you don't put in any time. You'll never learn.

But if you'll set yourself and say, I'm going to learn how to pray. God will teach you how to pray. Turn to Hebrews 11, verse 6. In Hebrews 11, verse 6, we see that prayer is one of the greatest acts of faith that we can do.

In fact, I do believe that you can measure your faith by your prayer life. He who believes God will pray much. He or she who has very little faith won't pray very much.

Notice this verse. But without faith, it is impossible to please Him, God. For he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.

Somebody who prays is somebody who comes to God. And not only somebody who comes to God, but he's somebody who comes to God and believes that God is. And not only does he believe that God is, but he believes that God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

So he who prays much, believes much. He who prays much has much faith that God is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. If you could just look at prayer in the natural for a moment, it makes absolutely no sense at all.

For a natural man who does not know about the things of God, and has no light at all about the things of God, if he were to watch somebody in the early morning hours get up out of his bed, maybe at four o'clock in the morning, and there he goes into a room by himself, and he gets down on his knees, and there's nobody there. And there he is on his knees for an entire hour, and he's talking to somebody that he cannot see. He's crying, and there's nobody there to listen to him.

It makes absolutely no sense at all to the natural mind to go into a room by yourself and talk to somebody that you cannot see. Yet, we are a people who live by faith. And it's faith that pleases God.

And prayer is one of the sweetest ways that I know that you can please your God. Because it takes faith to get on your knees for an hour and talk to a God that you cannot see. But I promise you, if the fire is burning in here, and you get on your knees for an hour and talk to the God that you cannot see, you'll know the God you cannot see, and it won't take as much faith the next time.

Hallelujah. It won't take as much. But prayer is one of the greatest acts of faith that we can do.

We must believe that God is. He's there, and He rewards those who diligently seek Him. Listen, when you get a hold of that, I mean when you really get a hold of it, I mean, think about it.

If someone came to you and said, My brother, my sister, I've opened a bank account for you. Here's the checkbook. By the way, I filled it with money.

Anytime you need anything, just go there, fill out a check, sign your name, and it's yours. What would you do? Would you just let it sit over there? I don't believe anyone here would do it. Yet God has said, I have a storehouse of spiritual riches.

They're yours. It's in an account there. It's sitting there waiting for you.

Anytime you need anything, you just sign your name to this check, go to this bank, and you can have it. But we need to believe that God is, and that He's a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. And I promise you, young people, He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

He rewards and rewards and rewards. He is obsessed with blessing His people. He is obsessed with it.

It's an obsession with Him. He longs to do it. It's His very being.

It's His very character to pour blessings out upon His people. But, you must come to Him and believe that He is, and believe that He's a rewarder of those that diligently seek Him. And once you get a hold of that, and you believe it, you won't have to drag yourself out and say, Well, I've got to put my time in again today.

It's time to pray. I've got to do my half an hour. No, no, no.

I'm going to the bank of heaven again this morning to get all the resources I need for another day's task in the kingdom of God. Turn to Jude with me for a moment. Jude has some very challenging words for us.

In Jude, verse 20 and 21, the verses that precede verse 20, speaking about those who are turned aside from God, they're murmurs, they're evil, they separated themselves, they're sensual, they don't have the Spirit. And then verse 20 comes out to say, But ye, beloved, building up yourselves in your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God. Now, we'll just stop right there.

We could read the rest of the verse, but I'd like to read it that way, so that you can understand. You have a responsibility to keep yourself in the love of God. Now, God's keeping power is available, but we also have a responsibility in this matter of maintaining our relationship with the Lord.

And it says here, the way that you do it is to build yourselves up in your most holy faith by praying in the Holy Ghost, and that will keep you in the love of God. It'll keep the fire burning inside of your heart. And I thought of a way, how could I illustrate this to the young people, and here's what I came up with.

It's a little bit like this. You know how it is, if you've ever burned wood in a stove in your house. You put a bunch of wood on this fire at night time, and you go to bed.

By the time you wake up in the morning, you open up that wood stove, and what do you usually find? You usually find a bed of hot embers there. There's a fire in there. It's burning in there, but it's not blazing.

So what do you do? You take a little more wood, you put it in there in that stove, and all of a sudden, those embers that were burning in the bottom there, they burst into a flame. That's exactly what Jude is telling us right here. Our lives should be lives that are lived with a fire that is burning in our heart.

But there needs to be times in our life where we open up the stove and throw a bunch more wood in there, and get that old fire blazing hot again. And that's exactly what Jude is saying. There needs to be seasons.

There needs to be times. In fact, you need to do it every day. Just like you stoke that fire in the morning, you need to do it every day.

Where you fan those coals of fire in that heart of yours, and they'll burst into flame and begin to burn hotly. It's the will of God that each one of you learn how to stoke your own stove every day. Praise the Lord.

We don't burn wood in our house anymore. I miss it. Just for that reason, I used to enjoy doing that every morning.

I'd get that thing, open it up and throw a little wood in there, blow on it, see those flames burst up in there. And then once the fire got burning, then go upstairs and stoke the other one in here. And by the way, young people, if you have a little fire burning in your heart and you never let it blaze, what happens to the other one if it never blazes? Soon there'll be no fire.

Turn to James chapter 5. In James chapter 5, reading the last part of verse 16 and down to verse 18. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain, and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.

And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit. Well, here's a very interesting verse on prayer. I want to help you this morning.

I believe if you'll get a hold of some of the things that we're sharing with you this morning, it could change your whole devotional life. Effectual fervent praying. Someone shared with me just the other day about a certain preacher who used to go around asking how many people have read the Bible through from the beginning to the end.

And he was shocked at what he got in most congregations. There might be maybe eight or nine in the whole congregation that had read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. I remember John Rice doing that at the Bible school where I went.

Each year he'd come there and speak, and one of the first things he'd say, he'd preach a message on the Bible, and he'd always begin it by saying, and he was just a dear old man, and he'd walked with God for so

many years, and he had these big bags under his eyes, but he'd stand up there behind that pulpit and he'd say, I wonder how many of you here have read your Bible at least one time from Genesis to Revelation? How many of you here would you raise up your hands? And there wouldn't be very many hands who had done it. Well, I have a question to ask you this morning, and I'm not going to ask you to raise your hand, but I'd like to ask it, and I've been asking it, and the more that I ask it, the more that I'm surprised. And here's the question that I've been asking.

How many of you here pray out loud? I've been shocked. How many people do not pray out loud? Now, I'm not saying that you have to pray out loud, but I tell you what, I believe it'd change your whole devotional life if you'd give audible prayers unto God. Audible.

One young preacher, I was sharing with him, we were talking together and sharing, we were traveling somewhere together, and we were talking about revival and God's work in people's lives and all those things, and right in the middle of that conversation, he said to me, well, I don't know what's wrong with me, but I just seem so dry so much of the time. And I knew him to be a dedicated man, so I didn't feel like he needed a revival, so I felt led to ask him this question. I said, well, brother, do you ever pray out loud? And he stopped for a minute and he said, well, no, I never do.

And I said, well, brother, let me tell you something you can do. You find an old chicken shed or an old barn somewhere where you can be by yourself and you just go out there and lift up your voice and pour your prayers out to God out loud. You try it and see what happens.

And I would recommend it to you. Effectual, fervent prayers. They don't have to be out loud.

But I'll tell you what happens to most people, and especially young people, when they pray silently. Their mind wanders. They fall asleep.

They put their time in but really don't get anything done. Pray out loud. Even if you have to hide yourself in a closet in your bedroom, do it so you can pray out loud.

In fact, I believe that's why Jesus said, go into your closet and pray. So you can be alone, so you can make your petitions before your God. In fact, maybe it's not this way with you, maybe you know God well enough, but it helps me to relate to God if I can talk to Him out loud.

You don't have to yell, but you should be praying with passion. With passion. If you've never spent an hour in passionate prayer to God, you don't know what praying is all about yet.

You don't know what the blaze of that fire striking up inside your heart is all about. You probably don't know. If you've never spent an hour in fervent prayer, in passionate prayer, just pouring out your petitions before your God, you don't know what the blaze of that fire is all about.

There's two things that hurt most of all, that build me up, that strengthen me in the faith. One of them is audible, fervent prayer before God. And another one is standing up behind a pulpit and preaching.

It just builds and builds and builds me. I would recommend audible prayer. I would recommend fervent prayer.

What is fervent prayer? Well, the Romanians call it hot prayer. Fervent prayer is hot prayer. Isn't that interesting? Fervent prayer is hot prayer, where somebody's taken the fire off of the altar and used it to

burn incense under God.

Fervent prayer is hot prayer. And that's what they call it in Romania. Well, he doesn't pray very hot, which means there's not much fire underneath him.

Come on, Brother John. So I would recommend to you earnest, fervent prayer. And you may say here this morning, well, I'm just not that way.

I was taught, some of you girls, you may say, I was taught from little up to be meek and quiet and all of those things. Well, you just ponder a little bit with me. I'm not saying you have to get in a barn and holler to the top of your voice.

But you just think with me how your prayers would be if you had a little baby that was about to die. How would you pray? Would there be no passion in that voice of yours? Wouldn't there be a great earnestness behind the words that you said? Wouldn't there be an urgency in what you're saying? I know there would be. And I would just encourage you to set out on this adventure of learning how to pray.

And while you're learning, take a few of these hints with you and just try them out. And I believe you'll find it to be a blessing to your life. Let me ask you this question.

And I know how you would feel. How many of you enjoy going to a dry prayer meeting where everybody prays in a monotone without any fervency and without any burden and they all just kind of go around and monotone their way around the circle? How many of you enjoy going to a prayer meeting like that? I don't think I get very many volunteers. And usually prayer meetings like that are not very well attended.

But you get a prayer meeting where there's a few people who have a fervency about them and there's a fire that's motivating and a passion that's motivating those words that they're bringing up before God and all of a sudden the word will get around and people will start showing up to that prayer meeting. Let me say something about corporate prayer. I was so silly to think that I wouldn't be able to fill up my time this morning with what I had down here.

Let me say something about corporate prayer. Corporate prayer is biblical. Corporate prayer is one of those ways that God has allowed us to fulfill some of what Brother John has been preaching about here in the book study on Ephesians.

Corporate prayer. It is one of the body functions of a New Testament church. It's one of the keys to growing churches.

And it takes humility. Now, some people say, we don't believe in corporate prayer. It fosters pride.

But I question that. I question that. Pride keeps many people from praying in corporate prayer meetings.

It takes humility to open that burdened heart of yours before God in the midst of your brothers and sisters. It takes humility. And many times, I'm going to step on your toes a little bit, young people won't pray in corporate prayer meetings because of their pride, their self-conscious.

They don't want everybody else to hear. They're afraid of their voice and all of those things. It's pride.

Do you know what would bless your churches as you go back home? Do you know what would be a great blessing to your churches as you went back home? If all of a sudden, you stepped into that prayer meeting

and you became one of those individuals, one of those spark plugs in the prayer meeting. You know what they are. One of those ones that everybody hopes that one will start praying because it will spark fire and begin to kindle a fire in the other ones.

Wouldn't it be a blessing if all of you young people would go back to your churches and just join into those corporate prayer meetings and all of a sudden, the young people are praying around here. Oh, that would bless the people back home, your preachers back home, your fathers and mothers. They'd say, Boy, something happened to Johnny.

I mean, he's right in the middle of the prayer meeting. He's got something to say. He's praying with a fervent heart.

He's burning. He's opening up his knees before the rest of them. What a blessing he is.

You can do that. Don't you have a fire in your heart? Don't let pride quench out that fire. Don't let pride do it.

That's what stops people from praying corporately. Now, it's true. Corporate prayer can breed pride.

But so can preaching. Shall we quit preaching? Learn to pray. I mean, put it on your list.

All of you young people, when you were about 14 years old, all of you were thinking, I'm going to be 16 pretty soon. And I'm going to learn how to drive. Didn't you? That's on my list.

I want to learn how to drive, you young ladies. I know the thoughts. I want to learn how to sew.

I want to learn how to drive. I want to learn how to cook. I want to learn how to keep children.

You young men, I know your thoughts as you were growing up. I can't wait till I can learn how to drive. I can't wait till I can learn to drive a tractor.

I want to learn how to weld. I want to learn how to build a house. I want to learn this.

I want to learn this. Well, put this one on your list. I want to learn how to pray.

That's going to be a priority. Before I get very old, I'm going to learn how to pray. And put it on a list.

And go after it like you went after learning how to drive that car. I mean, your mom and dad could hardly live with you for a while. Can I drive? Can I drive? Can I drive? Many of you, I know it was that way.

Because I've got them growing up in my house. Can I pull the car around? There's nobody else in the parking lot. Well, put this one on your list.

And say to the Father, Father, I'm grown up. Will You teach me how to pray? Can I learn how to pray? There's a prayer meeting tonight. I'm going.

I want to learn how to pray. Find somebody who knows how to pray. Say, could I pray with You? I want to learn how to pray.

Put that one on your list. Our Lord Jesus' life, His whole life ministry was bathed in prayer. I mean, He just prayed, and He prayed, and He prayed.

I mean, it was the man's side of the Lord Jesus that obeyed the Father by gaining strength in prayer. It wasn't the God's side. It was the man's side who submitted His will and said, I've got a big job to do tomorrow.

I'm getting up and going out into a place great while before day and draw strength and stoke the fires of love in my heart for my heavenly Father so that in the middle of the day, when He says, do this, my son, I'll do it quickly. In the book of Acts, the early church, they prayed. Life was filled with prayer.

Paul prayed often and admonished us to pray without ceasing. Daniel prayed three times a day. A little poem they gave us in Bible school.

Much prayer, much power. Little prayer, little power. No prayer, no power.

You can just about mark it up that way. Prayerlessness is laziness. Prayerlessness is laziness.

It's work to pray. Try it. Set yourself to spend a half an hour a day in fervent prayer and see.

Prayer is work. But prayer is very rewarding. It opens up the limitless storehouse of God before every believer.

Prayer does that. Did you ever think of this? If God answers prayer, and He does, why not pray? I mean, think about that. If God answers prayer, and that means we can come before that majestic God that Brother Ross talked to us about, and we can come right before Him and bring our request up before Him and see answers to our request, then let's go! I mean, come on! Let's go after it! If God is a prayer-answering God, then what are we waiting for? And He is.

He is a prayer-answering God. And I'll tell you what, it's a good challenge for you in your young years to set yourself to pray like that, and then if you don't see answers to your prayers, you go back to God and say, God, why not? Why don't I see answers to prayer? But instead, we kind of like hope it will just go away, you know? So we don't pray. And because we don't pray, then we're not faced with the reality that God didn't hear our prayers and we don't get any answers to prayer.

One man said in a book on prayer, we do more of everything else but pray. I mention a lot about reading biographies. Here's something that really blessed my heart.

I read in a book on prayer, the biographies, the accounts of great Christians is simply a history, a recorded history of answered prayers. That's all it is. God found a man or a woman who found a God who answers prayer.

And they said, if God's answering prayers, then I'm going to... And they started praying. God, would You use me to save that soul over there? And God heard their prayer and used them to save a soul over there. And the news spread around.

So and so won this man to the Lord. And that person, they came back before that God that they found was a prayer answering God and said, God, would You not use me to save another soul over there? And God heard that prayer and used them to save another one over there. And they kept doing that for about 20 years and others were looking on and watching on and said, what an exciting life that is! Let's write about their life! But all it is is a record of all the answers to His prayers.

And God is no respecter of persons. Do you believe that? He is not a respecter of persons. And He does not lay His hand on a certain individual and say, I'm going to use this one, but the rest of them, I'm just going to let them stay mediocre all through their life.

No way, no way does He do that. God goes about to and fro around the earth looking for a vessel wherewith He can show Himself strong in it. And He's doing it all this week.

Who can I find that I can show myself strong in them? That I can manifest my mighty power? That I can show the world around them that I'm a prayer answering God? Who can I find? Who can I find a vessel that will yield themselves to Me? That I can get in them and fill them and flow through them and use them and pray and answers will come and wonderful things will happen? God is looking for those kind of vessels. And it's so. There are so many needs in this world.

God is not saying, well, I think I'll use Brother Moses. Got a little work that needs to be done. I think I'll use Brother Moses.

Let everybody else sit in the pews. I think I'll use Brother Moses. I have a little work to be done.

No way. There's more work to get done than can ever get done. God's looking for a thousand Brother Moses.

All those Christians prayed. They prayed. It's one of those characteristics.

You can mark it down. If there's a record about an individual, about some wonderful things that God did through them, you just trace it out and you'll find it every single time. They prayed.

Prayer was a priority. Wesley prayed two hours a day. Every day.

And then, he got on his horse and prayed on his horse. Preached five times a day. Maybe it took him two hours to go from one village to the next one.

He spent time in prayer while he rode his horse. Now, we put a tape in. We get in our car and put a tape in.

Wesley prayed. He didn't have any tapes. Who's better off? Adoniram Judson, missionary to Burma, opened up the Gospel in Burma.

He prayed six times a day for 30 minutes. That's three hours of prayer. John Fletcher, the theologian of the Methodist church, way back in the 1700s.

He prayed two hours a day and felt that wasn't just quite enough for him, so he set aside one whole night a week that he just stayed up and was alone with God in prayer and meditation. Two hours a day wasn't enough for him. And I know you sit here and you say, look, I'm not John Fletcher.

I'm not Franny Crosby. I'm just John Smith. So was John Fletcher at one time.

Now, there's two ways to view prayer. And we've been looking a lot here already this morning at what prayer will do for you. You're young people and I must admit, my burden is to help you to realize that it would change your whole life if you'd get a hold of this matter of prayer.

You wouldn't have to come to church on Sunday to get the fire stoked because you had learned how to stoke your own on Monday and Tuesday and Wednesday and Thursday. But we also need to recognize what prayer will do for others. It will transform other people's lives.

And again, it's one of those corporate things that God is calling the church to. That you bathe this brother in prayer and you bathe this one in prayer, and he bathes this one in prayer, and she bathes this one in prayer, and this one prays for this one, and this one prays for this one, and they're all praying for one another. Grace down upon each other's lives.

Oh, what a mighty thing that prayer can do for others. Change people's lives. Totally.

The devil hates prayer. He's a master at stopping it. I'm sure you know a little bit about that already.

Maybe there are already a few of those milestones in your life where you said, that's it. I'm praying. And you took off for a week or two.

You were consistent and you just continued to pray and it was such a blessing and all of a sudden, here came a left hook from the devil. Well, you're going to have to do this this morning. Tomorrow morning this needs to get done.

And a couple of days like that went by and pretty soon it was gone. He's a master at doing that because he hates prayer. Satanists are trained to go into churches and zero in on the prayer meeting and stop it whatever it costs.

Prayer is warfare. Wouldn't it be a blessing when they came to us? Came to you young men and said, we want you to go get a gun and go to war. You tell them, I'm sorry, I'm already in one.

I can't go to war. I'm already in one. I've thought many times, well, that'd be a good way to do it.

It's either this war or this one. You take your pick. The government would say, young man, there's two wars going on.

You take your pick. You either get in one or you get in the other. Wouldn't that be a blessing? Wouldn't that be a motivation? Well, I think you need to be in one.

If you're not going to be in the other, you need to be in this one. And the authorities groan as they drive around Lancaster County and find all these non-resistant boys out having a good old time and living it up and carousing around and peeling their tires and all of those kind of things. And then when they come by and say it's time to go to war, they say, oh, I'm a Christian and I'm religious and I can't go to war.

Well, I understand why it irks them. Wouldn't it be a blessing if you could look them in the eye with a fire burning in your heart and say, I'm sorry, sir, I'm already in one. I can't step down to that war.

I'm fighting a higher one. Oh, what a blessing that would be. Learn how to pray.

Learn how to pray. I'll just shorten some of this and say something a little bit about single life. You may be here today and you don't know if you're going to get married.

I'm sure there's some in this room that will not get married. Well, try this one on for size for a while. How about having a ministry of prayer? I mean, a ministry of prayer where you submit yourself to it and you

say, God, here I am.

I'm going to give myself to You for an hour a day or two hours a day and I'm just going to pray. How about it? You know, God is looking for vessels that He can use in that very way. One of the reasons why everybody wants to get married is because there's no beautiful examples of hot single people around.

The ones that don't get married, well, they just kind of sit around and do nothing. Their lives are kind of listless, you know. They fill their time up with this and that.

Hey, that's not what Paul had in mind. Paul said it's better if you don't get married. How about living out a few examples that tell everybody, hey, it's great to be married to the Lord! A ministry of prayer.

I mean, young people who just say, okay, God, I don't know what You have for my life, but I've got lots of time and You do, and if You don't think You do, You wait about ten years. You've got lots of time. And you say, God, here I am.

I'm going to give two hours of my day as a ministry of prayer. Maybe not two hours all together. Maybe it's an hour in the morning, and it's an hour in the evening.

And I mean it's like Anna, who stayed in the temple and said, Lord, I'm just going to serve You with prayer and fasting. And God was so pleased with it, He recorded her in the Bible. He said, Lord, here I am.

I'm just going to serve You in a ministry of prayer. I'm in a church. I'm just going to bless the people all over the church.

I'm going to pray for them every day. I'm going to listen to all the prayer requests and bring them before God several times a day. I'm just going to pray and pray and pray and pray.

You do that for a while, you may not even want to get married. And I'm not against any of you getting married. It's a great blessing to be married.

But while you're waiting, why don't you fill your life up with something that will count for eternity so them angels can be up there catching all your prayers and putting them in those vials and just filling them up up there. Learn to pray. Lord, teach us to pray like John taught his disciples to pray.

I believe that God would answer that prayer for every one of you in this room. I believe He'd answer it if you set yourself to learn. Just bow our heads for a word of prayer here.

Father, we just praise You and thank You, God, for all that You do. God, I thank You for the hungry eyes of all of these young people who look on and listen. I know sometimes they wonder, could it be that way for me? Would that really happen to me? Oh, God, I pray that You'll give them eyes that they may see and ears that they may hear what You are saying to them.

Father, help them to see the mighty potential of their lives. Oh, God, make them count, Lord. Make them count in eternity, every one of them that is in this room.

Don't let them waste their lives on nothing. But make them count, dear God. I pray You'll just use these words to stir some desire in their hearts.

And God, I pray in the name of Jesus, Amen.

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