

(Easter Convention 2008) the Public & Private Ministry of Christ - Part 2

by Gerhard Du Toit

Gerhard Du Toit's sermon emphasizes the transformative power of prayer and the necessity of accountability and burdens in the Christian life.

Duration: 1:09:21

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, John 14:13-15

Topics: "Ministry Of Christ"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the fifth chapter of the Gospel of John, focusing on the miracles performed by Jesus. He emphasizes that these miracles were a manifestation of the life of the Father through the Son. The preacher also mentions the limited time available to share the Scriptures and expresses a desire for people to listen faster. He encourages the congregation to pray together in small groups before delving into the Scriptures. Additionally, the preacher mentions the personal conversations Jesus had, highlighting how they revealed different aspects of the Father's life, such as Jesus being the divine teacher in the third chapter and the divine soul winner in the fourth chapter of John's Gospel.

Transcript

I want to thank you for being back here this afternoon. How many of you were not here this morning? Can you please put up your hands? Ah, so where have you been this morning? Ah, sure, good excuse, isn't it? So you will say, well, none of your business and I won't be back, so I don't mean that that way. But you know, sometimes when we live for north in Canada and we often, when we speak to people about prayer in Canada, I tell them how we pray under blankets in Canada and so I, some place people didn't understand that and one man came to me and he said, so what is the oldest and integral understanding of the blanket? I said, it's got nothing to do with it.

He said, so why do you pray under a blanket? I said, because it's so cold in Canada, that's why you are doing this. But sometimes people say to me, well, I can't be here tomorrow night because I'd be there, but I'd be there in my spirit. And so I would say, well, just tell me where your spirit is sitting so that we could keep a spot open for him to say.

But be glad that you are with us and the reason why I'm saying that to you is because, you know, in some of these days, and that's what we are doing today and that's what we will do tomorrow and God willing

also on Sunday, because the subjects that we are dealing with, it's impossible to try to cover them in one session. And if you are free tomorrow to be with us and we would love you to do that, we're going to look at the Old Testament in prayer in our sessions together tomorrow. And I don't want to make this too complicated when it comes to that, but in the Old Testament there are 11 Hebrew words that are speaking to us about prayer.

I said last night that when you study those words in their context in Old Testament and the Old Testament theology of prayer, that you will discover that three times in the Old Testament were the prophets so affected by the Messiah or the life of the Messiah, the Christ that should come or that was going to come, and they were so affected by his prayer life that three times in the Old Testament when they prophesy about the coming of the Messiah, that they use one of those Hebrew words and they refer to Christ as a prayer. And then on Sunday when we will go into the New Testament in our times together, and we mentioned this morning that in those 7957 verses in the New Testament, when you study them as they relate to prayer, 248 passages are coming to the surface. And those are just tremendous passages of Scripture.

I just came out of the land of Romania because we are able to travel to quite a number of countries, and if you ever go to Romania, we were there for nine days, and I was teaching at the Immanuel University in the city of Oradea, and then in the Immanuel Baptist Church, it's a wonderful church with about 4,000 people in that beautiful country of Romania, and I discovered when you get there these Romanians, you know, they think that when you come into a country, you haven't done anything for three months, and they think when you go leave them, you're not going to do anything for three months. And so in nine days, I was supposed to speak for 16 hours, and eight of those hours at the seminary of a university, but these Romanians come and they keep changing the schedule, and they keep saying to me, there's been a change in the schedule. I mean, you know, they just about kill you when I was there, but we had 16 hours.

I wish, you know, I thought this morning when we began to deal with these concepts of Scripture, because there's so much in the Word of God, and brother and sister, we know so much about the Word of God, and yet, you know, the Scriptures know so little about us. That's why God's Word needs to become part of our lives, because we are born of personality, but God is in the process of building our Christian character, and so I'm looking forward to Sunday, and the problem what I'm saying to you, if you can only come to one session, then you are missing the rest of this material that we systematically would like to go through, but we would encourage you to do, if you can, to be at all the sessions. If you've got a problem with your church, just bring the whole church on Sunday.

I mean, you know, you can just let God listen. We've brought quite a bit of material with us that we would like to put into your hands, and one of the things that we are doing in the countries where we are traveling, mostly working with missionaries and Christian leaders in different countries, but if you are interested in this, we would love to put this in your hands, because these are questions that I put together on the level of accountability, and you say, what is accountability? That's when I become responsible to another Christian. If I'm a Christian father and a husband, I need another father and a husband, and I say to him, can you and I spend time in prayer together? And so you begin to meet for prayer, and then I give him a list of 20 questions that they ask one another.

We've done this all over the world, brother and sister. It's been a great blessing, and so we ask one another these questions, and the first question that I ask him is, where are you presently in your relationship with God? And so we discuss it with one another. The second question that I ask is, what

have you been reading in your daily devotions this last week? And so, because 75% of my growth as a Christian depends upon what I read, and so we discuss the passages that we have been reading in our times together.

What has God been saying to you during those readings? Are you making notes of what God has been saying to you? You know, for the last more than 30 years, I never studied the Bible without a notebook, and my wife said to me some time ago, Daddy, when you go to heaven, what is it that you will miss the most? And without a moment of hesitation, I said, it's going to be my notebooks. You see, the places where God spoke to me, and where God ministered to me, and I wrote those things down. You know, Charles Haddon Spurgeon.

I profoundly love Charles Haddon Spurgeon. Spurgeon was the man whom George Muller of Bristol taught how to pray. Spurgeon had a great struggle with personal prayer, and so Muller of Bristol, the man who had 85,000 answers to prayer, taught Charles Haddon Spurgeon how to pray, and Spurgeon became a great, marvellous biblical expositor.

He had up to 6,000 people who would come in his church to preach, and he would speak to them on a Sunday, and Spurgeon was an amazing man. In fact, they would say that there were times in the church of Charles Haddon Spurgeon on a Sunday morning that when he would preach, and the Spirit of God would come upon the life and the ministry of Charles Haddon Spurgeon, and a word that we refer to as the unction of God. Something that you can't always explain or define, but you always know when it is not there.

And this sense of God's presence would come upon Charles Haddon Spurgeon, and Spurgeon would make this statement, and he would say, I sense the wind of the Spirit of God in my wings. And when this immense consciousness of God would come upon the exposition of God's Word, as Spurgeon was preaching, 6,000 people would leap to their feet and just sit there in absolute awe, and they wouldn't move. And when the service was over, and people would go to them and say, why did you rise to your feet in great reverence and respect as he was speaking? Did they make this observation, and they said that when the presence and when the unction of God's Spirit came upon Spurgeon, we were so affected that we rose to our feet because we were afraid that we would miss one word that would come from the lips of Spurgeon.

And you know, Spurgeon never had the difficulty to find a sermon. He would look at a passage, and someone said he had a golden hammer, and just struck it, and it fell open, and he had three points, and he was able to expound this passage. In fact, he was 17 years old when he was supposed to go and preach for his father, who was also a pastor, and he was late at the service.

And so, his father began, he was speaking out of Ephesians chapter 3, and his father began to preach, and the young 17-year-old Charles Hutton Spurgeon walked into the service in the middle of the sermon that he was supposed to preach, and his father just stopped, and he said, now my son has come, and he was supposed to speak on this passage. And he said to the people now, he said to his son, now Charles, this is my first point, this is my second point, and this is going to be my third point, and you're going to come and speak on that third point. He just got up and preached, you know.

And he was an amazing man. Do you know what happened to Charles Hutton Spurgeon, brother and sister? One night he couldn't get his sermon together. On a Saturday night, he just couldn't get it together for Sunday, and it was getting late, and he said to his wife, my sermon is not coming together for

tomorrow.

And he said, I don't know what to do. And his wife said to him, Charles, why don't you go to bed? And he said, I can't do that, because my sermon is not ready. And his wife said, I will wake you up early tomorrow morning, and you can work on your sermon.

And so Charles Hutton Spurgeon went to bed, and his wife came to bed, and when she turned the lamp off, he fell asleep. And do you know what happened? He began to preach in his sleep, and his wife listened to him, and she thought, now that's the passage that he wants to speak on tomorrow morning. She turned the lamp on, she got a piece of paper and a pencil, and she wrote down his sermon, and she never woke him up the next morning.

And so when he woke up the next morning, he saw the time, he said to her, why did you not wake me up? I'm not ready for my sermon. And so she said, well, that's what you preached in your sleep last night. And he looked and he said, that's exactly what I was looking for.

And he got up and preached a mighty sermon. You know, the Bible says God will give it to his beloved in his sleep, so you better just watch out there now. But we've got copies of this, and we would love to put this in your hand.

On tomorrow or Sunday, I would love to hand you this, and it will be a tremendous blessing to you. Brother and sister, these are 23 passages of Scripture, and every one of those passages of Scripture have three or four questions that they are asking you. For instance, Matthew 6.33, But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.

Question number one, is there anything in which you have failed to put God first in your life? And you need to answer yes or no. Have your decisions been made after your own wisdom and your own desires, rather than seeking and following the will of God? And you need to answer yes or no. Do any of the following in any way interfere with your surrender and service to God, your ambitions, your pleasures, your loved ones, your friendships, your desire for recognition, and for money and your own plans? And you need to answer yes or no.

You know what I do many times in countries where we go to, because sometimes we need to fortify for 6,000 people who are in ministry. In Latin America we are dealing with 35,000 missionaries and pastors, and you know what I do sometimes to these people? I say, I want you to take this and go and find a place under a tree, and go and sit there for an hour, an hour and a half, and systematically go through these questions. You know what I do in my own walk with God? Because brother and sister, when we speak about prayer, as we will do in the next few days, you never get to the place where you really know how to pray, you know.

You always learn how to pray, and learn the language of prayer, and let it become part of your life. That's why we are saying to people, prayer is not everything, but everything should come through prayer. And in my own quiet times, I often take these questions and just systematically would go through them.

And so we would like to put this in your hands, if you will. We'll spend some time in prayer together. If you've not been with us last night, and this morning, one of the things that we do before we turn to the Scriptures is that we pray together.

And so if you are new here this afternoon, what we are doing is that we break up in groups of three or four or five. And then what I want you to do, I want you to turn to the person in front of you, and I want you to say to them, how can I pray for you? Is there anything that is upon your heart? Is there any sense of burden? Or is there something that we can pray about? I want you to share it with them, and then we're going to climb underneath the burden of God. You know, tomorrow we're going to explore one of the words that we will explore.

It's this Hebrew word, *masah*. It speaks of the burden of God, and how it relates to prayer, and what is the unfolding process as this becomes part of your life. In fact, if I can be honest with you this afternoon, if you don't have a burden, you shouldn't be a Christian.

Because when God gives you a burden, the burden of God brings brokenness, you know. And so when God brings to us a sense of brokenness, brother and sister, if you sit here this afternoon, and there is an area in your life where you don't know victory, it's because God has never broke you in that area of your relationship with God. And so let's take some time, turn around and find three or four or five people, and let's spend some time in prayer together.

So can we do that? Just turn around and find three or four or five people. We can do it without chairs, and then I will bring our time of prayer to a close. And for these glorious and precious and marvelous days that you have given unto us, and Father, I was reminded today of the possibility of the way that Jesus took those three disciples, Peter and James and John, and took them unto the Mount of Transfiguration, and how when you spent time with Elijah and with Moses in your glorified state, how those early disciples was overwhelmed with sleep.

And the evidence that they were asleep came from the revelation of their lips, that when they woke up, that they said, Lord, it's good for us to be here. Let us make three tabernacles, one for thee, one for Moses, and one for Elijah. And Father, we accept today the principle that when we are not really sensitive and receptive, and do not have a sense of anticipation, and when our hearts is not being prepared for us to listen to the voice and the word of God, is for consequences always that the experience that we experience on the mountain do not last in our relationships with you.

And that we always think that I need to go back to that place. And yet, if we are open and transparent, and when our Christian lives are like a sponge that receives, and when we discover the sense of responsibility that you have sent unto us, as my Father has sent me, so sent are you, then Father, it makes a difference. And in spite of where we find ourselves, that which you've taught us on the mountain becomes a reality because we were transparent and open.

And God, you know the concern upon my heart for this weekend is that there is the possibility that we can just come to these gatherings for the sake of coming. And that our hearts are not really fertile and prepared for the seed of God's word. And then it becomes just another Easter convention.

And we sit with churches that are full of people, and yet they are not full of God. And we are involved in experiences that is a mile wide, and yet they are an inch deep in our relationships with you. And Father, the burden and the passion and the brokenness of my own heart is that somehow during these sessions, this weekend, that God will plow deep into every aspect of our relationships with you.

Lord, I was reminded of that Old Testament passage that is saying unto us, it is time to seek the Lord. Break up your fallow ground so that we can seek God. And this Hebrew understanding of fallow ground in

the Old Testament, that this is not ground that has never been plowed.

It's ground that has been plowed, and the rains have come, but it hasn't been freshly tilled. And God, I pray that somehow that you will so plow and work in our hearts and in our lives that this Easter convention will be something that will stand out to us as a place where we were able to say that God came, and I was able to raise up an Easter, and I didn't have to go back. But when we will do something on prayer and the ministry of the Holy Spirit again, if it's five or ten years down the road, that we will be able to look back and say, I don't have to cover old ground again, because God has helped me to move forward.

And Lord, that's the burden of my heart, because we know in our hearts that life never becomes static, and we know that life is an ongoing process, and that we want to grow in our relationships with you. And Father, I thank you for the sense of burden in my own soul for these gatherings. I'm so grateful that you didn't allow me to come back to Australia, because we have nothing else to do, but that we simply came because we want to meet with God, and we want you to change our lives.

And I'm so thankful this afternoon that that's not the work of the one that is communicating the exposition and the truth of Scripture. But Lord, we can't change one another's lives. But Father, that's the work of the Holy Spirit of God.

And we want to pray this afternoon in Jesus' name, that this campground will become a sacred place over this weekend. That in every one of these sessions, that you will crown them with an incredible consciousness of the presence of God. And Father, that even these people who are permanent campers, and who pass this building, that as you pour out the consciousness of your presence upon us, and as you purify us, and cleanse us, and break us, and fill us with the Holy Spirit, and Father, as you come and pour out upon us a spirit of prayer, and a sense of transparency, that that fragrance, that aroma of the greatness of the presence of God will be able to flow into this camp.

And Father, we only have this one life to live, and only that which is done for Christ is going to last. And so we pray again this afternoon, bring us into the grip of a consciousness of eternity in our relationships with you. Thank you for visitors that have come to be with us.

And Father, I pray that it will be in their hearts if they have been with us from this first session of last night when we gathered together. Thank you for your word now. We love this book.

Oh God, you said unto us, is my word not like a hammer that breaketh a rock? Is my word not like fire? Is my word not sharper than any to which it sought, cutting through the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and bone and marrow? And we pray that as we expose ourselves under this wonderful word of God, that the Spirit of God, who witnessed to the word, and witnessed to the efficacy of the blood, will find a resting place in our relationships with you, because we ask it in Jesus' name. Amen. I want you to open your Bible, if you will, again at those passages that we began to look at this morning.

You just turn your chair around and find your Bible. I encourage you to bring a notebook in these other sessions that we will be. And turn with me, if you will, to John 14, 15, and John 16 in your Bible.

We have been sitting so long, and we are going to change our positions and just stand for the reading of the word of God. John 14, 15, 16. Let's stand to read.

John 14, verse number 13. Jesus said, And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you will ask anything in my name, I will do it.

If you love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give unto you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever. Even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him.

But ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and he shall be in you. Verse number 26. But the Comforting which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

Chapter 15, verse number 26. But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth which proceeded from the Father, he shall testify of me. Chapter 16, verse number 7. Jesus said, Nevertheless I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you that I go away.

For if I do not go away, the Comforter will not come. But if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.

Of sin, because they do not believe on me. Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and you see me no more. Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

I have many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth. For he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak.

And he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and he shall show it unto you. You may be seated.

Those of you who were not with us this morning, we mentioned in our opening session of this day, as we spend these three sessions in the gospel of John, that there are two wonderful possible ways for us to explore these marvelous 879 verses in the gospel of John. And if you take time to explore them, you will discover that there is the possibility for us in the gospel of John, to see Christ as our New Testament tabernacle. And we said it this morning on the basis that when you study the first chapter of John's gospel, that the Apostle John made this statement, and this is what he said, the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we behold his glory.

The glorious are the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and full of truth. And if you have an interest in languages as it relates to the Old and the New Testament, you will discover that this little word dwelt, is the word in the Greek language for the word tabernacle. And when you follow that word in the New Testament, you will discover that it's the same word that we come across in the book of Revelation, when the Apostle John said, the tabernacle of God was amongst his people.

And so when the Apostle John came and he said, the Word was made flesh and he tabernacled amongst us, my brother and my sister, one of the most fascinating studies in the New and the Old Testament, because of the fact that the Old Testament is revealed in the New Testament, and the New Testament lies hidden for us in the Old Testament, when you study the Old Testament tabernacle, you come to this amazing understanding how Christ became our New Testament tabernacle. And as you systematically would go through it, you will discover the fulfillment of this beautiful picture of what the Scriptures is saying to us about the life of Christ. We also mentioned this morning that there is another way for us to be able to come to grips with the Gospel of John, and that's by looking at this Gospel and discover within this Gospel the different ministries of the Lord Jesus.

We refer to his predestined ministry when the Apostle John in his Gospel said, in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, and nothing was made by him that was not made. And as he would continue in that, we discover this ministry of Christ in the Old Testament. What we would refer to as Theophanies or rather Christophanies of Christ and the Old Testament, that when you study the Old Testament, and you discover the second person of the Trinity, that he walked through the Old Testament in one of the most amazing ways.

And my brother and my sister, if I would be allowed to say this to you again, you will never come to grips with the Christ of the New Testament and all his glory and his centrality and his majesty if you have not seen the revelation of the Christ of the Old Testament. That was the reason why God said in the book of Genesis, let us make man of... and he mentioned the plurality of the greatness of his Trinity. We mentioned this morning in the time that we were together that there was the second aspect of the ministry of Christ, from chapter 1 to chapter 12.

And we discover the public ministry of the Lord Jesus, that in those chapters he manifests himself to public. He did that through eight miracles that he did, and the reason why he did those miracles is because they became signposts towards spirituality. In other words, he did a miracle, and the consequences of that miracle became the opportunity for him to reveal unto them the greatness of God the Father.

He was not just involved in eight miracles, but Christ also had eight personal conversations. And in those personal conversations, he revealed to us another aspect of the life of the Father, because you see he was God in the flesh, and he had to manifest himself. And in those personal conversations, we discover that in the third chapter of the gospel of John, he became the divine teacher.

In the fourth chapter of the gospel of John, he became the divine soul winner. In the fifth chapter of the gospel of John, he became the divine physician. And you discover in those miracles this amazing manifestation of the life of the Father through God the Son as he did this in public.

I'm concerned this afternoon and tonight, and the time in which we are living, and you know it's amazing, this country of Australia, you're not only just a day ahead of all of us in the rest of the world, but time runs twice as fast when it comes to this. And our time is so limited, and the scriptures is so full. And I often say to my wife, you know, I wish I can get people who can listen faster, and I'd be able to say things as twice as fast as possible.

But you know we are, we feeble human beings, and some of us, we don't have enough brains to give us a headache, and I'm one of those people. And so I'm trying to share with you as much as I possibly can. But brother and sister, in fact if you can't, if I'm too fast, just listen faster, get the CD.

If you can't pay for them, we, my office will pay for them. But let me explain to you something. When you come to John chapter 14 to 16, you'll discover that we are dealing now, not with the predestinate ministry of Christ.

We are not looking at his public ministry. But my brother and my sister, something significant has happened. You say, Gerard, what happened? Well you see, Christ has come to the place where he has turned away from this world.

The end of the 12th chapter of John's gospel has come. The last supper has taken place. There was a moment when Jesus turned to those early disciples and he said to them, one of you are going to betray me.

And those early disciples in the insecurity of the relationships with Christ, because of the lack of the indwelling of the Spirit of God in their lives to the fullness of that degree, they began to wonder who it was that was going to betray the Lord Jesus. And you remember how the Apostle Peter, because of the impulsiveness of his temperament and his character and his personality, made that bold statement and he said, Lord, if anyone else is going to do it, I will not do it. And how Jesus faced him up with a reality and said, Peter, before the talk is committed, you are going to deny that you even know me.

But there was one that was close to Christ and it was probably again the Apostle John. And so the Lord Jesus showed him more bread and asked him, put it into the hands of Judas Iscariot. He said to him, what you do, go and do it with me.

You know, people often ask me what is the difference here between Judas Iscariot and the Apostle Peter? Because the Apostle Peter denied the Lord Jesus and the Bible says that he wept and he received forgiveness. And the Bible says Judas wept because of the fact that he betrayed Christ, but he hanged himself. And they say, can you explain to me the understanding of that? And I said, you know, it's so simple.

When you study it with the understanding of the Greek New Testament. Because the word for repentance comes from the root word, matah, and the Greek language. And in the case of Peter, you come across a Greek word that is amazing, that is distinctive from Judas, although the words are connected with one another.

You say, what is the difference? Oh, you see, when Judas wept or when Judas repented, the Bible, the word in the Greek language is the Greek word mephilomai. And so when Peter wept, which is the word for repentance in the Greek language, which is the word metanoia, those two words, brother and sister, has two different meanings. You say, what is the difference in their meanings? Mephilomai, or rather in Peter, metanoia, means that he was sorry for what he did, but he was deeply sorry, not just because for what he did, but also because of the condition of his heart.

Now when you came to Judas Iscariot, and the Bible says he repented and he was sorry for what he did. It's the word mephilomai. You say, what does it mean? He repented because of what he did, but he was not concerned about the condition and the state of his heart.

That's the distinction. And so you say, what happened? Well, let me explain to you what happened. There was a moment when Christ said, Judas that mortal became brother and sister.

There was a moment, there was a moment, when Jesus said to him, what you do, go and do quickly. And that moment when he stepped out, the New Testament is saying unto us, there was darkness. Can you imagine the darkness in the soul? You know, I was in Romania in November of last year, and if you have no idea about communism in Eastern Europe, I tell you, it will blow every circle in your mind and it will break your heart.

And when I was speaking in Euradia, in Emmanuel Baptist Church in the city of Euradia, 17 years ago, communism fell apart. And when communism fell apart, prior to communism, you know what happened in

Romania? Every pastor in the Monday morning had to go to the police station. He had to tell them what he was speaking on.

He had to tell them how many people were in the service. On a Monday morning, he had to tell them what happened in the service, and he had to give an account because it was under the awful and brutality of Francesco in communism in Romania. And so when communism fell apart 17 years ago, six months ago in the land of Romania, they said to the pastors in Romania, we are proud about you.

When I spoke at Emmanuel Baptist Church, the president of the university, Dr. Paul Magrath, said to me, you have no idea what it was to live under communism. I said, what do you mean? Well, he said, you know, we were never, we had Christian music in our homes 24 hours of the day. I said, why? He said, because everything in our homes that we said, they were microphones, they recorded.

He said, every telephone conversation. The children said to me, we whispered in our homes. You know, we have no idea here in Australia and the other countries.

And so you know what happened when communism fell apart 17 years ago, six months ago, the government came and they said, we're opening the files. If you are a pastor in communism, there is a file at your availability. And Paul Magrath went to Timisoara, and he got this file about his ministry.

They could never put a finger upon his life, you know. It's worthwhile to walk with God, brother and sister. They could never put a finger upon his life.

But when he brought those files, they wouldn't give him both files. They were so thick, they gave him one file. And he said, brother Gerard, I came back to my home, and I opened that file, and I saw my whole life under communism.

I was watched day after day. They watched me the way that I pray. They watched me the way that I studied the scriptures.

They recorded every word that I ever spoke on the telephone. I said to him, well, you know, it's amazing. And then he said, let me tell you something shocking.

I said, what is it? He said, I was opening those files. He said, I came upon a file, and I discovered the pastor that was my associate for 20 years, became an informer to the government for all those years. He said, we prayed together.

He said, we preached together. And he said, I never knew in his heart that he was a communist. I said, what did you do? He said, he's retired.

He's 80 years old. He's a doctor. And he said, I phoned him up, and I brought the deacons of the church together.

And he said, we brought him into this room. And he said, as he brought him into this room, he said, I threw these documents in the table. And he said, I turned to him, and I said to him, I want you to know, I will never hold it against you.

He said, I want you to know that I have forgiven you. But he said, I want you to know, I want to know what happened here. Why for 20 years did you pray with me? You preached with me.

You were my associate in this large Baptist church. Why for 20 years did you inform everything to the government, every intimate detail of this man's relationship with God? And this pastor just broke down and wept and wept. He said, you don't understand.

He said, for the last 10 years, I've been trying to find forgiveness from God. And Paul said to him, why don't you repent? He said, I can't. He said, I tried, and I tried.

And he said, I can't receive forgiveness from God. Listen, you read into that whatever you want, okay? Let me tell you something. That man sat right in front of me.

This is a church about 4,000 people. And every night he sat right in front of me as I was speaking in this church with his open Bible, and the tears were streaming down his cheeks. But he said, I can't find forgiveness from God for what I've done.

I hope to tell you today, it's because he maybe cannot forgive himself, but you never know. You never know. I want to tell you this afternoon, listen, when we are dealing with the Word of God, we're dealing with holy things, you know.

Brother and sister, there are times that I'm frightened, you know. You say, why are you frightened? I'm frightened that there could come a time that I could not discern the voice of God anymore. I'm frightened that there is the possibility that in my Christian life, I can become like the dark of the blacksmith.

And you say, what happened to that dark? When the man came into the blacksmith's shop, the dark was sleeping underneath the table, and the sparks were flying, and the noise was unbelievable. And the man looked at this dark, and he said to the blacksmith, what is going on with this dark? Why isn't he afraid of the sparks? Why isn't he scared of what is happening? Is he dead? What is going on? And the blacksmith just began to laugh, and he laughed. And he turned to the man, and he said, you don't understand.

And the man said, what do you mean? He said, you see, this is my dark. And he said, my dark, the first day when I was working, and the sparks were flying, and the noise was unbelievable. He said, you know, I couldn't get this dark near.

And he said, you know, my friend, every day it came closer, and closer, and closer. And one day he crawled in, and he was sleeping under a chair, and now he's right under the table, and the sparks are flying, and the noise is unbelievable. And the blacksmith laughed, and he said, you know what happened? He got used to the sparks.

Don't you ever get used to the presence of God. Frightening statement in the Old Testament about two men, you know. You say, who were they? The first was Moses.

And you remember what the Bible says about Moses? The Bible says, Moses wished not that his face was shining. Why was his face shining? You see, he spent 40 days and 40 nights in the presence of God. And brother and sister, when he came down from the mountain, incidentally, did he explain to you something? The Hebrew word for the word spirit in the Old Testament is the word ruach.

But when you come to the life of Moses, and he came down from the mountain, there is a word from the word ruach that found its way. And this is the beauty of Old Testament Hebrew interpretation. Theologically speaking, that there is a word that found its way from the word ruach.

And we found that word in the life of Moses. And when you study the life of Moses, when he came down from the mountain, and as he came down from the mountain, you remember what happened? They had to put a veil in front of the face of Moses. Why did they have to do that? Because of the greatness of the Shekinah glory of God.

And you know when Moses came down from the mountain? Here is the Hebrew. I wish I can say that sentence to you in Hebrew. But you would say, what are you talking about? You won't understand it.

But you know what is the word? It's the word ruach. So what is it? It's the glory of God. Now there is another word in the Old Testament.

That word scares the life out of me. Do you know what it was? It was the life of Samson. Do you remember him? And Samson did everything.

And people often say to me, what went wrong in the life of Samson? I marvel at people's understanding and explanations of what went wrong in the life of Samson. Because they would say, Gerard, I know exactly what went wrong. It was when he committed adultery, when he committed fornication, when he was living under depths of immorality.

That's what went wrong in his life. And I said, no, no, you don't understand. That was the consequences.

That was the symptoms. And they say, so what? What went wrong in the life of Samson? I said, let me explain to you. You remember Samson? There was a moment when he went and he killed the lion, brother and sister.

There was nothing wrong in killing the lion. But you remember when he came back with his mother and his father. And as he was coming back with his mother and his father, something happened.

He turned away from his mother and his father. He didn't tell them where he was going, but he turned away. And why did he turn away? He turned away.

And so what did he do? He went to the carcass of the lion. And so when he came to the carcass of the lion, you remember what he found? He found honey on the carcass of the lion. And so he took this honey and he came to to his mother and his father, and so what did he do? He gave the honey to his mother and his father, and he never told them where he got it from.

So what did he do? He touched a dead animal. He was a Lacerat. And oh, you remember what happened to Samson.

The Bible says Samson wished not that the Lord departed from him. Brethren and sisters, I don't want you to misunderstand me today, but I want to ask you this afternoon, is God with us? You say, why do you say that? Well, let me explain to you why I'm saying that. These passages from John chapter 14 to John chapter 16, what did Jesus do? He was speaking about the ministry of the Holy Spirit, and he mentioned nine aspects of the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

And you know what you will discover? That every time when he spoke about the Holy Spirit, in those passages that we read together this morning and this afternoon, every time when he spoke about the Holy Spirit, brethren and sisters, he was referring to the Holy Spirit not as an influence, not as a manifestation, not as an experience, but he was referring to the Holy Spirit as a person. You say, how do you know it? I

know it from the Greek concept of the text. But I love it in the King James Version of the Bible, because whenever you discover, when you read the translation, you will discover when he says, Holy Ghost, it was the person of the Holy Spirit.

When he said Holy Spirit, you will discover it could have been an experience or an influence, or some aspect of what the Christian life saw. And Jesus came and what did he do? He introduced to those early disciples the work and the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Brethren and sisters, why did he say that? Let me tell you why he said that.

In John 7, he said the Holy Spirit was not yet given. Do you remember he said, ye that believe within me as the Scripture says, rivers of living water shall flow from the innermost of this being. And the Bible says, what he said of the Holy Spirit.

Why did he say that? Because the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Christ was not yet glorified. That's what the Scriptures are saying to us. Now Jesus came in John 14-16, and what did he do? He introduced to them the person of the Holy Spirit.

And do you know what he did? He said to them, when my Spirit comes, he said, my Spirit will be with you, and my Spirit will abide with you, and my Spirit will be in you. Can I ask you this afternoon my brother and my sister, do we know the presence of the Spirit of God in our relationships with God? Do I know that God is with me? Do I know that He abides in my relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ? Do I know the essence of Him? You say, what are you saying about the Holy Spirit? Listen folks, the Holy Spirit of God never speaks about Himself. He always brings us back to the Scriptures, and He brings us back to the life of Christ.

And so when we are speaking about the Holy Spirit, we are saying that the Holy Spirit of God is a person. Now you sit here this afternoon and say, Gerard, when you say to us that the Holy Spirit of God is a person, can you define, can you explain to me what you mean? You see brother and sister, when we speak about the person of the Holy Spirit, when you and I are speaking about a person, if I would speak about Kevin this afternoon, I would define Kevin as his personality. And we would say, you know, I wonder what's in the mind of Kevin.

I wonder what is in the will of Kevin. What is he planning? What is in the emotions? So when we speak about personality, we are speaking about a trichotomy. We are a trichotomy.

And as a result of that, God has given unto us a body, and a soul, and a spirit. Now God has given me a body. And you say, Gerard, why did God give me a body? God gave me a body so that through the senses of my body, He made me conscious of this environment in which I find myself.

God has given unto me a soul. What constitutes my soul? Why is there the distinctive word, so we refer to it as *tsuchoi* in the Greek language. It's my soul.

It makes me conscious, brother and sister, of myself. And when I come to Christ, I discover my identity in Christ. And then God has given to me a spirit.

You say, why did God give us a spirit? He has given unto us a spirit so that He can make us conscious of Himself. And you say, what happens? You see, I am a person. Now the Holy Spirit of God, we can't see Him, but He's the person of Christ.

And so He represents the mind of Christ. That's why the Apostle Paul said in Romans chapter 8, he said, let this mind be in you. Twice in the first seven chapters of Romans, he referred to the Spirit.

Not in great detail, he spoke about the Spirit of holiness in Romans chapter 1, and once more he referred to this word, Spirit. But in Romans chapter 8, he introduced unto us the person of the Holy Spirit. And he said, let this mind be in you that is also God.

And it's the mind of the Spirit. That's why Paul said in Romans chapter 12, we not conform to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. And so can I ask you this afternoon, when it comes to the Holy Spirit, where is my mind as it relates to the surrender of the Spirit of God? Ah, brother and sister, do you realize that anything that you read as a Christian, if you are engulfed by the Holy Spirit of God, you are forcing the Holy Spirit of God to read it with you.

Everything that you think about as a Christian, if I am engulfed by the Holy Spirit of God, I force the Holy Spirit of God to think it with me. Everything that I see. You say, why do you say that? Because He is a person.

The mind of the Spirit. The will of the Spirit. Are you struggling with the will of God for your life? Are you struggling to surrender to God's will for your life? The emotions of the Spirit.

It's a marvelous word, you know. When the Apostle Paul spoke about the Holy Spirit as a person, as it relates to prayer in Romans chapter 8, he made this observation, and this is what he said. He said, the Spirit of God helped our infirmities.

And then he said, the Spirit of God intercedes for us. And he used this word, he said, with groanings. It's the Greek word, stanochmos.

You discover the Spirit of God as a person. Let me explain to you something this afternoon, and then we are through. When the Holy Spirit came into my... How do we know that we are born of the Spirit of God? If you sit here today and you say, how do I know that I am born of the Spirit of God? This is what the Scripture said.

The Apostle Paul said, the Spirit of God be a witness of my spirit. The witness of the Spirit of God. And brother and sister, can I explain to you something today? When I receive the Holy Spirit into my life, I receive Him into my life as a person.

Folks, you can't divide that personality. When He came into your life as a person, you say, Gerard, what happened? I received that which there was of the Holy Spirit. You say, what are you trying to say to me? Why do I struggle in my Christian life? Why am I defeated? Why do I lose my temper? Why are there evil thoughts coming from my heart and my mind? Do you know what's the problem? The Spirit of God is resident and yet He is not president.

You say, what do you mean? There are areas of your life that you have never surrendered to God. And so, let me ask you, as a husband, as you lay with your wife on the altar for God, as you lay with your children on the altar for God, as you lay with your future on the altar for God, you see, the Holy Spirit of God is a person. Brother and sister, it's everything or nothing.

You say, why do you say that? Because it will cost you more to miss the will of God for your life than it will cost you to find it. And so, you say, what is that? It's the person of the Spirit of God. Our time is gone.

We've got a program there on the radio in Canada. It says this hour has got 20 minutes. You should get that program.

Listen, our time is gone. Let me tell you something. You know, my family, and I've got pictures of Janice and Monica and myself.

There we are. If you ever see my wife, she's just beautiful. And by the way, she's not blind because I'm just an ugly fellow.

But there she is, and there's our daughter Monica. She's going to go to Bible college. In fact, I said to her, Monica, the first young man that ever wants to come and visit you or see you needs to spend a week with me in prayer and fasting.

And so, she said, Dad, don't you worry. No one will do that. Well, I said it in a meeting in Peru some time ago, and there were a whole bunch of sons of pastors who were wedding.

So, I changed it to 40 days, by the way. Anyway, you know what happened? My wife and our daughter, we only have this one child. And when Monica was born, you know, we didn't want to have children.

We said to God, God, we don't want to have children if we're going to populate hell. God didn't give you children to go to hell, you know. And so, we said, God, we'd rather go without children.

But if you're going to give us a child, you're going to need to give us promises. And so, God gave us promises. And I, we got married late in life.

I was 35, and Janice was 33. You know, when she prayed for her husband, she said to God, she prayed for years. She said, God, I don't want to get married unless He's someone who's got a passion for prayer and a passion for revival.

And you know what she said to God? I'm so thankful. She said to God, I don't care how he looks. In fact, a few years ago, she came to me and she gave me a hug.

And she said, Dad, I just need to tell you that I really love you, but I never married you for looks. And I just love it. I've known it for years, you know.

Anyway, by the way, but you know, we are a little family. And I was born and brought up in Africa. I was brought up in a cattle ranch in Africa.

And I wanted to become a vet. And then God got a hold of my life and I went to study theology and came to Christ. And because of that, I love animals, you know.

And Monica loves animals. I mean, she's like Daddy. And if you see Monica, I mean, it's the irresistible force meeting the unmovable object, you know.

We are just the same. And we both love animals. And my wife couldn't care less about an animal.

So we got married. Monica was born and she's about three or four years old. And I discovered she has this love for animals.

And there was a time we had a hamster. I mean, thank God this thing died and hopefully went to be with the Lord. I was ready to have him for breakfast.

He went and he was gone. Another time we had a snake. It just drove Janet up the wall because it got out of the fish tank.

We had an empty fish tank. Don't know where he is up to today. And we love these animals, you know.

We've got two retrievers and we've got a cat. And you know what happened a number of years ago? Monica was about 11 years old and she came to me. There's a local newspaper.

And she came to me and she said, Papa, she said, Daddy, you wouldn't believe this. I said, what is it? She said, in our local newspaper, there is someone who has a parrot that he wants to get rid of. And I said, what do you mean? She said, Daddy, you wouldn't believe it.

She said, it's an African grey parrot. Boy, when she said African, I was right there. I said, you've got to be kidding me.

She said, Daddy, that's what he said. He's looking for a good house for this African grey parrot. And I said, Monica, they're really expensive.

The thing must be sick. There must be something wrong with him. Something is not right.

And she came to me and she said, why didn't you just phone us? Well, we need to talk to Mommy. So we talked to Mommy and I said, so what do you think, Janet? She said, I don't want it. I said, well, let's take up a vote.

You know, we live in a democracy. So we take up votes all the time, you know. You say, why? Because, you know, for all these years, the one party that has ruled has been 50% majority.

I mean, you know, when it comes to animals, it's just worse that way. Well, you know what happened? I phoned this man. I said, you've got this African grey parrot? He said, I've got it.

I said, why do you want to get rid of it? Well, he said, my girlfriend and myself, we split up and the bird is lonely. We've had it since it's been a baby. And I said, so what is it? He said, I'm very specific.

I'm looking for a house of people that really love animals. I said, oh, OK. I understand that.

I said, so he said, are you interested? I said, yes, we are, but I need to know some questions. He said, what is it? I said, this bird, is it sick? No, he's not sick. I said, what's his name? Is it a male or a female? He said, it's a male.

I said, what's his name? He said, his name is Spike. I said, does this bird talk? Oh, he said, you don't know African greys. He said, they can say up to 1,500 words.

That's what they say to us. I said, well, that's not the issue, sir. He said, what is the issue? I said, my question to you is, I said, I'm a minister and we are Christians.

This bird talks. Does he swear? You know, I don't want to bet on my answer. It's swearing.

Because, I mean, you know, the thing doesn't, can't become a Christian. You can't change it. You need to kill it.

You know? And I said to him, I said to him, he said, no, he doesn't swear. And so, by that time, he knew that he loved animals. And he said, listen, can you just help me? I said, what is it? He said, I really need help.

I said, what? He said, I will bring this bird to your house. I put it in a cage. I said, I'm just looking for a good home.

Well, it was a perfect match, you know. He brought this bird to our house, this African Grey. His name was Spike.

We discovered afterwards, it wasn't a male, it was a female. You know? You say, how did you do that? DNA. Well, in Canada, you know, don't care what it is these days.

It's just a mess of a country. But we discovered, so we changed the name. We called her Abby.

But this bird came into our house. Brother and sister, this big cage. And there she was.

She's never seen a cat. Never seen two dogs. Never.

I mean, nothing. And so, she stayed in the house. And she doesn't know Janice or Monica, myself.

And the fellow said, listen, it's going to take time to get to know us. I said, that's fine. And so, the bird came in the house.

And she would, he, or she, whatever, would never say a word. Not a word. The first day, not a word.

I go and open the little cage with my finger. And bang! She would knock me. And I, we had to put a glass.

And I said to Janice, I don't know about this. And she said, you got it. You voted.

It's here. So, here it was. And you know, brother and sister, for three days, this thing wouldn't say a word.

And I thought, I get, I used to get up early in the morning, four or five o'clock, and hit with God. And you know, I would get up about maybe half past four, whatever. And the third day, I got up and I took a shower.

I came down, wanted to go to my study, came into the kitchen to make myself a cup of coffee. And do you know what happened to me? I forgot about the bird. Totally.

And for three days, she never said a word. And do you know, when I came into the kitchen to make a coffee, at night we put a blanket over the cage. And, and I was making, and suddenly, there's this thing.

Hello? Oh, brother. You know, I just said, I flipped. I thought, there's an intruder in the house.

And then I thought, oh, it's a simple bird. So I went, I took her, and here she was, bright and smart, bushy tailed, you know. And this thing began to talk.

And it was a split personality. She answered the phone in three different ways. Cell phone, normal phone, and portable phone, and anywhere you make any kind of wrong sound with your body, and she picks it up.

You begin to cough, and in a matter of days, this thing is coughing. And she got my name perfect. And she would shout and say, Gerard.

And I thought, it's Jennifer. I said, I'm on my way, my darling. And the bird would say, he's on his way, my darling.

And I mean, you know what you're doing with this thing. And brother and sister, they would chat with the bird. You know what happened? I opened the cage one day, and I wanted to come out.

It was the time she got to know me, and I could take the glove off, and I would put my hand out, and Abby would climb onto my hand, and then I would come to the gate of the little cage, and she climbed back, because she didn't know me. Every day, I would do that. I just put her, she climbed into my hand.

One day, I came to the gate, and I wait for her, and she just sat and looked at me, and I brought her out, and I was walking in the house with her. And when she kind of got to know the house better, she took off, and she flew right back to her cage, and we began to get to know one another. And it was wonderful.

One day, I opened the cage, and as I opened the cage, she came running towards the gate of the cage, and she was going to show me something that she loved to do. She climbed, and she was hanging upside down. Gate was open, hanging upside down, and she was looking at me like that, and I thought, what is this thing up to? You know, just a typical woman, you know.

What is this thing up to? I said to her, what's going on here? And she said, well, I don't know. She's hanging upside down. And my wife, you know, it's so funny.

You need to get to know my wife. So she said, what are you going to do with her? I said, she's hanging upside down. And I said, wait, maybe there's something.

And I took my two hands, and I put it underneath her. And I said, Abby, what are you doing? And she's just lying there, saying nothing. And so, I lifted her up like that.

And as I lifted her up, she looked at me, and she looked at me, and there was a moment when the one little claw went. And I thought, ah, okay. And so I lifted her higher up, and I was waiting for the other claw to go.

And she looked at me, and she wouldn't. You see, she didn't know me well enough. And so I let her go.

We went on day after day, and one day I opened the cage. She came out with this little trick of hers. She was hanging upside down.

I put my two hands. Janice and Monica were standing there. I put my two hands, and I said to them, watch it.

And Janice said, what are you trying to do with the bird? I said, I want her to let go. And Janice said, she's not going to do that. I said, just watch.

And I held and held. And brother and sister, there was a moment when that one little claw went, and she held it like this, and she was hanging on the other one, you know? I mean, you know, just like the man when he fell over a cliff, and he grabbed this branch hanging over this cliff, and then he shouted to the top, and he said, he said, anyone up there? And a voice came down, and it was the voice of God. And God said, I'm here.

And then he shouted, and he said, what is it that you want me to do? And God said, I want you to let go. And he shouted back up and said, is there anyone else up there? You know, just like that. He was hanging on for a while.

And brother and sister, I was holding and holding and holding. And there's a moment when she let go. And she was lying on her back, right in my hands.

And I was walking through the house, and Janice and Monica stood there just amazed. They said, Gary, we can't believe it. I said, neither can I. And I was holding her.

But she was looking at me all the time, because in my eyes I said to her, Abby, you can trust me. I'm not going to drop you. I'm not going to hurt you.

And I walked through the whole house, right back into the cage, and she climbed back on, and she became my best friend. You say, why are you saying this? Listen, have you given every aspect of your life to God? It's a wonderful thing, you know. My life and its relationships, my mind and its thoughts, my heart and its affections, my body and its instincts, my personality and its prejudice.

I need to give it all to God. You say, what will it cost me? It will cost you absolutely everything. What is it? It's total surrender to God.

It's time to pray, shall we? Father, thank you for your presence with us today. We want to thank you that our lives are precious to you. And we thank you that we love you, because you first love us.

Dear God, we only have this one life to live. We want to give ourselves to you. My brother and my sister, I wonder this afternoon, you are standing in this little session, and you say, you know, I just really want to give my life, fresh, totally, absolutely over to God.

I really want to live for God with a broken heart. I want to live a Christian life that is clean, and I want to become a man or a woman of prayer. I wonder if you will allow me to ask you, as we close our eyes, and you say, Gerard, I just want to come and spend some time alone with God.

If I can invite you, just to wherever you are, just to come and find a little spot here, somewhere at the front, in one of these chairs at the front, and say, I just want to kneel and spend some time alone with God. Now, no one is going to pray with you. No one is going to counsel you.

You are just going to be totally on your own, and you are just going to spend some time in prayer. I wonder if there is someone, or some of us, and you say, you know, that's what I would like to do. Would you come right now and just find a little spot here at the front? We are just going to wait for you.

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