

# (Easter Convention 2008) the Public & Private Ministry of Christ - Part 3

by Gerhard Du Toit

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*The importance of accountability and prayer in ministry, and how they can help individuals stay focused on their goals and objectives.*

**Duration:** 1:10:37

**Scripture:** John 14:15-17, John 14:26, John 15:4-5, John 15:7, John 16:7, John 16:13

**Topics:** "Ministry Of Christ"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of having a balanced understanding of God's work in our lives. He shares that he has been mentored by four older men who have a deep relationship with God. He describes how he systematically teaches them about God's plan of salvation, discussing topics such as man's lost condition, God's provision through Christ, and man's responsibility. The speaker also shares a powerful testimony of leading a couple to Christ during an evangelistic service, highlighting the significance of sharing the gospel and the work of the Holy Spirit in conviction.

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## Transcript

Those of you who have been with us this morning and this afternoon, we mentioned to you about some material that we would like to put in your hands. Let me just see how many of you, this is your first session with us this evening. Can you just put up your hands? Ah, there's a few, three or four of you.

Those that were here this afternoon who were not here this morning, we're asking where they were this morning, but we're not going to ask you. That's what we normally do. You say, well, there's a thousand and one reasons why I couldn't be here, but we're glad that you're with us this evening.

But we have some wonderful material that we want to put in your hands, and this is the first of a number of sheets that I would like to give you, questions on personal accountability. If you are praying as a lady with a group of ladies at your church, then I often give them this list, and they ask one another these questions. You know, I have 12 men that God has brought into my life in Western Canada where we live, and I've asked these men to hold me accountable.

You say, what is accountability? That's when I meet with someone and they can ask me any question about any aspect of my relationship with God. And so, I trusted the Lord when we stepped into ministry

and said, Lord, I need these men because of the situation that we find ourselves in. You know, Janice and Monica, my wife and daughter, I'm gone from them for six months of the year, traveling to 10 or 13 countries every year.

Sometimes when it's a safe country, I'm allowed to take them with us if the funds are available because we need to cash out for all our expenses. But most of the times, Janice stays with Monica at home, which means I'm two weeks home and two weeks I'm on flights in airports and different countries, and sometimes very volatile and dangerous countries in the Middle East and other countries in Africa. But the Lord has given me 12 men, and I've asked these men to hold me accountable for every aspect of my relationship with God.

Four of those men are theologians. They've got a deep understanding of Old and New Testament theology. And so those men are helping me that when you deal with aspects of biblical truth, that you will always interpret the Bible in the light of its context.

And when you study the Scriptures in context, you never will be able to go right. You know, the enemy of our souls, brother and sister, if he can't get us back, he's going to push us over the edge. And the secret of a Christian life, as far as my commitment to Scripture, has to do with balance in the totality of what God's Word is all about.

And then God has given me four men who have got a deep, intimate relationship with God. They are in their 60s, some in their 70s, and one is 88 years old. And they asked me questions about my relationship with God.

And so when I spent time with them, they said to me, You know, what is God doing in your life? And I've given them this list of questions. Which areas of your relationship with God do you experience resistance? Are there any unresolved issues in your life? What are the general and specific things that you are praying about? What habits are you struggling with as a Christian at this time in your walk with God? How are you doing in regards to your spouse and your children? You know, no ministry that we are involved with is going further than your family. Brother and sister, these are circles, you know.

And the first circle is my relationship with God. The next circle is my relationship with my wife and my children. The next circle is my relationship with my fellowship.

And the next circle is my relationship with the world. And so I need to be accountable when it comes to these things. My precious wife, you know, I so appreciate and love Janice.

But I've asked her, I said, You know, when I preach on a Sunday, I don't want you to tell me Monday how it went on Sunday. And she said, Why not? And I said, Often on a Monday morning, the only thing that I feel I would like to do is to drive a bus in Boggaboggaland where no one else is going to see me. Because that's what it means when you are in the ministry, brother and sister.

It takes absolutely everything from you. But I'm so thankful for that because this is the kind of accountability. You say, So how does it work with you? Well, let me just be transparent with you.

We have a system where every day of my life, if it's possible to be in touch via phone, we talk to one another. And if you live in Canada, there is a way that for \$19.95, Janice can phone me in 72 countries in the world, and she can talk to me for a thousand minutes. And I can tell you she used every one of those minutes.

And so when I travel to a country, I said, Okay, my darling, I said, We have 20 minutes a day. And when we talk to each other and we pray with one another. And this morning when I talked to her, she said, So what's it like? I said, Well, I'm staying in this little trailer that belongs to some Australians.

And I said, You know, it's not the biggest of all. I said, If you're with me, we can't take one another too far around because we bump into one another at night. And so that's what we do.

I trust you not that you pray with your wife. You know, I don't always find it easy to pray with Janice. You say, Why? Because she knows me so well.

You know, and God brings opposites together, you know. I'm a morning person. My wife, Janice, she's an evening person.

And if I would wake her up at 7 o'clock in the morning and say, You know, come and watch the sunrise with me, she will turn to me and say, Daddy, if God wants me to see it at 7 in the morning, He will schedule it much later. She's not a morning person. And so, you know, I want to be in bed at 10 because I need six hours sleep.

If I get in bed at 10, then I can be up at 4 o'clock in the morning. But Janice and Monica are evening people. And so in the evenings, you know, when they come sometimes to try and pray with me at 10, 30 at night, I'm just had it.

But some time ago they came and prayed with me and I was just half dead. And I was so tired. And I said, so let's pray together.

And before I knew what I did, I said, Lord Jesus, thank you for this food that is in front of us. And they just shook me and said, that is no food. And I said, man, you know, I'm so tired I can't keep my eyes open.

But you know, we need to pray together. You know, I once stayed in a house, and oh, it was great playing with the children. And I turned to the little boy, and I said to him, is your daddy a Christian? Oh, yeah, my daddy is a Christian.

And I said, how do you know that your daddy is a Christian? You know what he said? He said, my daddy prays with me on the carpet. And he said, my daddy plays with me on the carpet. He said, that's how I know that my daddy is a Christian.

And so the little girl was around, and I said to her, so is your mommy a Christian? Oh, yes, she said, my mommy is a Christian. I said, how do you know that your mommy is a Christian? You know what she said to me? I know that my mommy is a Christian, because when she makes a mistake, she comes and tells me she's sorry. You know, these children, you know, they could be fools, but they're not stupid.

I know they know exactly what is going on. So, I trust you. I don't have time to tell you tonight.

Maybe tomorrow at some point. But twice a year, I'm in the most amazing circumstances in North America. You say, what happened? I find myself amongst about 2,000 people that have come to Christ after the Old Order Amish.

You know those people in North America that go in those horses and buggies, the Amish and the Mennonites and the Hathonites? And twice a year, I find myself amongst those people. And these people are unbelievable when it comes to the Christian family and the commitment to our children and to pray for

our children. And so what we want you to do tonight, make sure you take some of these sheets.

And even, I sometimes do it with my family. I sometimes do it on my own. And when I meet these men, so I meet with four men who are theologians.

Four of them are deeply spiritual men with great prayer lives. And then I meet with four men who are in the medical field. You say, what are they? They are doctors.

They've met with God in meetings that we have had. And Janet often said to me, well, I guess they are helping you to keep your mind straightened out. I said, no.

They just want to make sure that you don't burn yourself out. You know, God doesn't want us to burn out, brother and sister. God wants us to burn on in our relationships with Him.

And we have a responsibility towards our bodies because our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit. And if you kill the horse, you can't get to the next point. And so we need to be accountable in what we do.

So I want to encourage you. You're going to put this at the back of the table. And tonight when you go home, please make sure that you take one of these sheets.

I want to remind you of tomorrow as we're going to contemplate the next two days exploring the subject of prayer. And it's going to be wonderful. And then let me just mention to you if you are interested, it will be good for us to know if you are going to come or if you are able to come to those sessions next Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday evening at Southwest Baptist Church.

Because what we are doing in the mornings, if you have an interest in prayer, we are going to go into some very deep aspects of what the Bible is saying to us about prayer. And so we meet from 10 o'clock to 12. I'm going to take about an hour to speak to you.

And then we spend an hour or so in prayer together. And then in the evenings, of course, we will deal with different subjects. So, if you are in the Adelaide area or you're not too far away, we would love to have you part of those gatherings.

We're going to spend some time in prayer together this evening again as we have done. Now, maybe some of you, when we say that we break up in groups and we pray, maybe you feel threatened and you say, you know, Gerard, this is not something that I'm used to. And when I would say, if there's something that you have in your heart to share, if it's a family member or if it's a burden that you are carrying, if you don't have a sense in your heart to feel, I want to share that because it's so personal but it's so private.

We want to respect and we want to appreciate that. But I want to tell you, it's a wonderful thing for us to pray together. That's why the Bible is saying to us, we're two or three are gathered together in my name.

And there am I in the midst of them. That's why we read in the fourth chapter of the book of Acts, when those early disciples came together after the day of Pentecost and they were full to the Spirit of God on Pentecost and then 3,000 people came to Christ. And in Acts chapter 3, there was terrible opposition.

So, why did the opposition come? Well, you remember Peter and John, the apostles went up to the temple at the hour of prayer in the third chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. And so as they came to the temple, nine o'clock in the morning it was, there was a man sitting at the gate to the temple who was lame. And the Bible says he was asking for alms.

Dr. Graeme Scoggy in his commentary said, he wasn't in need of alms, he was in need of legs. But he sat there and he wanted money. And you remember what Peter and John said to him.

They turned to him and they made this staggering statement. Every time when I see that statement, it breaks my heart because he turned to them, they turned to him and they said to him, look upon us. It's an amazing thing, you know.

Look upon us. And so the man looked upon them expecting to receive something from them. And they turned to him and they said to him, Sovereign gold have we none, but such as we have in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.

You know what's our problem today? We are able to say sovereign gold we have, but we are not able to say in the name of Jesus Christ rise up and walk. And you remember how God touched this man and he was miraculously healed. And an unbelievable opposition came upon the early church.

And they were trying to do everything to stop the preaching of the Gospel of Christ. And just they threatened those early disciples. And when they were threatening them, what did those early disciples do? The Bible says in Acts 4 that they went to the same place where God met with them.

So you say, Gerard, where did they go to? They went up into the upper room. What was the upper room? It was the place where the Spirit of God was poured out on the day of Pentecost. What kind of a place was it? It was the house of Mary, the mother of Mark, who wrote the Gospel of Mark.

And so they went back to the place where God met with them. Secondly, they went back to the Word of God. And as they were praying, all they did was quoting the Scriptures.

And brother and sister, when they got those two things, when they went back to the place where God met with them, when they stood upon the Word of God and they prayed, and they said to the Lord, Lord, behold their threatenings. They were threatening those early disciples. And they said, Lord, behold their threatenings, and grant unto Thy servants that they may speak Your Word with boldness.

And the Bible says, as they prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken, and they were all full to the Holy Spirit of God, and they spoke the Word of God with boldness. They prayed together. You remember in the Acts, in the 12th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, Peter was thrown in prison.

And so while he was in prison, what did those early disciples do? They came together for prayer. And this is what the Scriptures is saying to us. And prayer was fervently made for the Apostle Peter while he was in prison.

And brother and sister, as they were praying, it's an amazing passage from the New Testament. Because Peter was in prison, he was in chains, and as they were praying, the angel of the Lord came, God came to Peter, and what happened? The chains fell off. And you come across the first remote control in the Scriptures.

You say, what happened? The Bible says, the gates open of their own accord. You know when God gave us our house, one of the things that we got with our house when Janice and myself stepped out into faith, was a garage door opener. And you know, I sit there day after day playing with this thing.

And I said, you know, and she said, what are you doing Larry? I said, this is in the Bible. She said, what do you mean? I said, you remember Peter was in prison, and the Bible says, the gates open of their own accord. Isn't that wonderful? Brother and sister, you say, where was the button? The button was in heaven.

It was high, it was fast, and it was powerful, and the gates opened. And do you know what the Bible says? God is amazing. The Bible says, when Peter came to himself, you wonder where he has been all this time.

When Peter came to himself, and so what did he do? He went to the place where those early disciples were praying. And brother and sister, you know, sometimes we pray, and God answers prayer, and we pray right past the answer. Right past the answer.

You say, why do you say that? The Bible says, when Peter was praying, or rather, when the early disciples were praying, Peter came, and he knocked at the door. And as he was knocking at the door, this young girl with the name of Rhoda came, and she opened the door, and as she didn't open the door, she opened a little latch, as it were, and saw Peter, and she ran back. Can you imagine? She was coming out being released.

And you don't know, these guys are after him again. And they wouldn't let him in. And she ran, and she said, Peter is at the door.

Do you know what they said to her? I wish I could read to you the Greek New Testament. They said to her, you're totally off your mind. It's exactly what they said to her.

You say, what happened? They were praying for the release of the Apostle Peter. And yet, brother and sister, when he was standing at the door, they didn't believe it. And you know, sometimes, and I'm looking forward to us to explore prayer, sometimes we pray right past the answer.

And there are ways for us to discern when we have prayed through. When the witness of the Spirit of God comes, I've touched the throne of God, now I need to begin to thank God for what He's come to do. Do you know what happens sometimes? God answers prayer, and the answer is delayed.

He's answered the prayer, but the answer is delayed. And you know, she said, why does that happen? There's numerous passages in Scripture that we're going to explore for us to relate to these 12 aspects of New Testament prayer. But when the answer is delayed, it's something that God needs to do for us, you know.

Because He can't entrust unto us the greatness of the answer of prayer. So, we're going to spend some time in prayer together. You know, when I went out into ministry for the first time, after a year, I came back to the school where I studied theology.

And they gave me a group of students to take into the land of Namibia. And I said to them, if you're going to work with me, there were eight students. I said, one thing you need to know is that we're going to spend extended times in prayer.

And I said, if anything is going to happen, it's going to come through prayer. And so, those students were with me for three weeks. And every morning, we spent about three or four hours in prayer.

And every afternoon, about two or three hours. And half a night, half nights of prayer. And we were doing evangelistic services.

And when they went back to the college, the president of the school met with those eight students and he said to them, what was it like to work with Gerard? And how did you find that every single one of them said, he prayed us to death. I thought, well, that's great. You know, at least they can say we spent time.

So, this is, maybe after this we can say, you know, we've prayed ourselves to death. But this is what I want us to do. I want us to spend time in prayer.

So, Brethren and Sisters, find three or four or five people. And find people that you haven't prayed with already. You don't want to come and say, no, I don't want to pray with you.

I've prayed with you already. No, I don't mean that. Find three or four people that you haven't prayed with.

Turn around. You can ask Him how I can pray. And we're going to spend some time.

We've had some great times today as it relates to prayer. We're going to do the same now. So, can we do that? Turn around and find three or four or five people please.

Our Heavenly Father, we want to thank You so deeply tonight for these wonderful times that we have been able to spend in Your presence today. And Father, it's so precious for us to recognize that when we pray together like this, that there is a sense of unity. We're sharing the burden of one another.

And we were reminded again today that six times the Apostle Paul said to us, Brethren, pray for us. Pray for one another. And what a tremendous encouragement to know this evening that the God that we are serving is a prayer answering God.

Father, that prayer is initiated by You. That You are the One that creates in our hearts a desire and a hunger and a thirst after the things of God. And we want to thank You this evening for ways that You have answered prayer today.

And Lord, we know that we in these days with this Easter convention that there are many of us that somehow we have not seen our way open to be campers. And some of us, we are nearby and we are able to drive in and out to be at these gatherings. And yet, our God and Father, we want to pray that You will not allow us to miss anything that You have in store for us as we gather these days together.

We thank You for the blessing of Your presence. We thank You that maybe some of us, we have never prayed so much as we have prayed today. And yet, our God and our Father, we have not even scratched the surface.

And You have given us another day tomorrow, which is Saturday. And then You have given us a full day on Sunday. And Father, we have, if we tarry till Monday morning, that after this evening do we have six marvelous opportunities not just to be exposed only to the work of God and the wonders of Scripture, but that we can be exposed to the need of one another.

And Father, it is the burden of my heart that somehow in these days as we spend these extended times lingering in the greatness of the presence of God, that You will help us to cultivate a life of prayer. That You will help us to cultivate a spirit of prayer in our relationships with You. And that in our relationships with our wives and our husbands and our children and those of us who are single, God, that You will bring

into us this sense of unity.

That as families we will pray together and we will seek the face of God and we will wait in Your presence. And the church will be looked upon as a house of prayer. And Father, the only way that we are going to see God pouring out His Spirit in this Adelaide Valley and this community of Adelaide upon the churches is when we come together to pray.

And we come together to seek the face of God. And we confess tonight again, Father, in Your presence that there is nothing spectacular about prayer. That no one is going to come to us and pat us on our backs and say, isn't it wonderful that God has given you a life in the ministry of intercessory prayer and that you spend these extended times with the Lord.

They simply are not going to know about it. Because He is going to wake us up in the middle of the night and 1 or 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning, and suddenly the burden of God is going to settle upon our relationships with God. And we will experience that sense of the spirit of prayer and ours will become like minutes as we prevail and agonize and persevere under the greatness of the burden of God.

And Father, this is why we have come together. And Lord, we ask that You will create in us a hunger and a thirst after You. That our hearts will become so thirsty for us to be able to learn the greatness of the language of prayer.

Just as we bow in our little groups, my brother and sister, I just want us to have one more little segment of prayer. And this is what I want you to do. I want you to pray for your own relationship with God.

That somehow that which God has planned these days in your heart, oh, that you will not miss it. And secondly, I want you to pray for some of your family members. People that you know tonight that do not know Christ.

And then thirdly, I just want us to pray for visitors who are going to come on Saturday to be with us. We don't want these people to walk in as strangers, because they bring with them an atmosphere of their own. But we want them to come in to this sense of prayer and an expectation.

So why don't we just take one more little segment and just in our little groups, just one after the other, we spend some time in prayer. Let's do it right now. Heavenly Father, we want to thank You again this evening that for many of us this has been a long day, and yet we can testify to the greatness of kinds of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.

We thank You that as we ponder upon Your Word and allow Your Word to become part of our relationships with You, that somehow, Lord, when You allow us to saturate Your Word in the place of prayer and allow You to prepare our hearts for the seed of God's Word, that somehow it falls onto fertile ground and the Spirit of God is able to fertilize the seed of God's Word so that it will be able to bring forth the manifestation of Your Word in our lives. And Father, we are so grateful that over this Easter weekend, that this is not just an Easter weekend, but this is a prayer weekend for many of us when we learn to spend time with God in more deeper ways, and we learn to climb underneath Your burden, and we learn to what it means to prevail within the greatness of the presence of God. And yet, Father, we are just touching the tip of the iceberg, and we are scratching the surface because there is so much in Your Word.

And as we read the life stories of men and women that have known the secret of what it means to really pray through, and men and women who have sought the face of God for revival, and men and women that

have prayed people through to God and saw them gloriously being saved, do we confess tonight, Father, in Your presence, that we have no understanding of the depth of what the agony of prayer, Lord, is all about. And yet, we are at Thy disposal, and we want You to teach us how to pray. And we want You to work in our hearts.

And, Father, the greatest blessing that You can bestow upon the inadequacy and the insignificance of my own simple relationship with You over this weekend is that we would go away on a Monday morning or lunchtime by Monday, and we will become different men and women because God has poured into our hearts the reality of a life of prayer. And in the days to come, we will be able to seek You in the way that we have never sought You before. Father, we thank You this evening that this life of prayer can become one of the most sweetest, one of the most encouraging, and one of the most blessed experiences in our walks as Christians.

And, Father, it is the burden of my heart that somehow here in Australia, over these days that we will be together and next week as we spend those four days in South West Baptist, that somehow that God the Holy Spirit will take us into this life of intercessory prayer and that we will become great men and women who will know the secret of what it means to touch the throne of God as it relates to prayer. Now, Father, many of us, we feel the face of today and I pray that in the closing moments of this evening, as we just take a few minutes to ponder upon Your Word, just give us the freshness mentally and emotionally and physically, but most of all, give us the keen spiritual sensitivity to be able to grasp the wonders of what Your Word is about. And, Father, I pray that we would be like those disciples on the way to Emmaus, that when you have spoken to them the Law and the Prophets and the Writings, that when you departed after their presence, that they turn to one another and they make this marvelous statement and said, did not our hearts burn within us when He spoke to us on the way? And, our God and our Father, we pray this evening, give us the burning heart.

If you want to wake us up in the middle of the night or 2 or 3 or 4 o'clock tomorrow morning and bring to us this reality of the burden of God, then we want to ask You that You will just help us to submit to it and so that we would become men and women of prayer. Father, we long for an outpouring of Your Spirit in the Revival in the Adelaide Valley, but You need to begin it in our lives as we wait upon You. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen. Thank you so much. I want you to turn around with your chair, if you will.

And I want you to open your Bible. And our time is gone. I am just going to take about 15 or 20 minutes of your time if you would allow us to do that.

So, open your Bible if you will again at John 14, 15 and 16. John 14, 15 and 16. We are not going to read those passages, but I am simply going to quote them to you because this afternoon we began to spend time in what we would refer to as the private ministry of the Lord Jesus from John 14 to John 16.

Now, I want to encourage you tonight if somehow you have developed the ability in your relationship with God to be able to memorize Scripture. And it's one of the greatest encouragements when you and I memorize God's Word and it becomes part of your life. One of the greatest blessings of my own relationship with God since the beginning of this year has been just to allow God, as you spend time with Him, to allow God to let you pray through the Scriptures.

And one of the most wonderful things in my own times alone with God is that when I go into expressions and we get involved in these aspects of prayer which one of them is what we would refer to as routine praying, when you pray about the same things every day, that God will bring Scriptures to my heart and to my mind. And I would just allow those Scriptures to come and just wash through my life and pray through the Word of God and so let God's Word be able to become part of your life. But if you have learned the secret of memorizing Scripture and the consistent repetition of what that is all about, and you come to the Gospel of John, there are a number of chapters that you will be blessed by is to memorize John 14, 15, 16, and 17.

And so those chapters are dealing with what we would refer to as the private ministry of the Lord Jesus. You see, my brothers and sisters, what has happened in those chapters is that Christ turned away from this world and for a period from what we can gather in the New Testament of approximately something like maybe 48 hours, do we see the Lord Jesus moving from one place to the other as He was opening His heart to those early disciples? Now, why was He doing that? He was preparing them for the coming of God the Holy Spirit. Because the Bible says the Spirit has not yet come because Christ was not yet glorified.

And so what He was doing, He was dealing with a work of preparation. Now, one of the most fascinating studies in the Scriptures is that if you study those passages, or rather those chapters, and you go to the Acts of the Apostles, you will discover that whatever happened in the Acts of the Apostles, that the basis of what took place in the book of Acts was found in John 14-16. In this preparation ground for Christ for the coming of the Holy Spirit.

Now, we have been focusing not on all those other passages in those chapters, but we have been focusing on that which the Lord Jesus said about the Holy Spirit. Because He was referring to the Holy Spirit of God as a person. And when He referred to the Holy Spirit of God, this is what He said to the early disciples.

He said, it is to your advantage that I go away. Because He said, if I do not go away, the Holy Spirit cannot come to you. But He said, when the Holy Spirit will come, He said, you will do greater things than Me.

Why did He say that? Because He was speaking of the omnipresence of the Spirit of God. You know, it's a wonderful thing this evening. Tonight we are meeting here in Australia.

Brother and sister, if I can take you to the land of China, where in the underground church in the last 12 months, they are telling us that something like 680,000 people has come to Christ, just in the underground church in China. And so the Spirit of God is omnipresent. If you and I are praying for people in Eastern Europe, as we are praying, God is in the process of answering our prayers.

And when Jesus turned to those early disciples and He said to them, you will do greater things than Me, He was speaking not just about the ministry of prayer, but He was speaking about the ministry of the Spirit of God. So, what did He say about the Holy Spirit? He mentioned a number of things about the Spirit of God, and I'm just going to touch on those things in closing this evening. He said to those early disciples, when My Spirit comes, He said, My Spirit will be with you, and He said, My Spirit will be in you.

He said to those early disciples, when My Spirit comes, He said, My Spirit shall testify of Me. He said, when My Spirit comes, He said, My Spirit will become your teacher. He said, when My Spirit comes, My Spirit will convict 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 He said, of judgment, because the Prince of this world is judgment.

He said, when My Spirit comes, He said, My Spirit shall glorify Me. He said, My Spirit shall lead you into all... And what He was doing, brethren and sisters, He was bringing to those early disciples the reality of the ministry of the Spirit of God. Now, if you look at those passages, which we do not have time tonight to take them individually and focusing upon them, but if you look at those passages and you go to the Acts of the Apostles, you will discover the fulfillment of those passages in those 1007 verses of the book of Acts.

And when you go to the epistles of the Apostle Paul, you will discover that when Paul speaks about the Holy Spirit of God as a person, that these things that Jesus said about the Holy Spirit, they came into the fulfillment of what the rest of the New Testament is thought about. So, let me just mention to you this evening what did the Lord Jesus say? He said, when My Spirit comes, My Spirit will be with you and My Spirit will be in you. What does that mean? It's the witness of God, the Holy Spirit.

That sense of a consciousness that God is with us as His children. Now, when we speak about the witness of the Spirit of God, there is what we would refer to as the initial witness of the Spirit of God. That's why Jesus said to Nicodemus, we'll blow open.

Do you not know where the sound is coming from? He said, so is everyone that is born of the Spirit. You see, my brother and my sister, if I would be allowed to say this to you this evening, when you and I lead people to Christ, in North America where we find ourselves, it takes me approximately three or four hours in order to be able to lead someone to Christ. You say, why are you saying that? Because my brother and my sister, when we are in North America, we've got churches that are full of people, but they are not full of God.

We have thousands of people that are sitting in our churches in Canada and the United States, and when you begin to spend time with those people, you discover that there is a large percentage of those people that has never been born of the Spirit of God. You say, what happened to them, Gerard? They made a commitment to Christ. They responded at an invitation in evangelistic service.

Many of them walked down the aisle with a smile upon their face to give their lives to Christ, and they made this little commitment to Christ. But brother and sister, they've never been born of the Spirit of God. They've never received the life of the Lord Jesus Christ.

They never came to the realization that in the Gospel of John, when Jesus turned to those early disciples and the people that followed Him, and He made that observation and He said to them, you do not follow Me because of who I am, but you are following Me because of the signs that I am doing. And then He made this statement and He said to them, no man can come to the Son unless the Father has drawn him. And you see, I find thousands and thousands of men and women in different countries of the world, brother and sister, who've made some commitment to God.

Many of them have gone through the waters of baptism. They have become members in their churches. But when you deal with the indwelling life of Christ and you begin to ask them, when were you born again? When did you receive the witness of the Holy Spirit? When did you receive the life of Christ? When did God say to you that if any man is in Christ, it's a new creation? And when you begin to spend time with Him, do you discover that there are thousands and thousands of people who have never received the witness of the Spirit of God? So you say, why does it take you three hours, sometimes four hours, to lead

someone to Christ? You know when you lead someone to Christ, you are doing the most important work that anyone on this planet can ever do.

You are dealing with the eternal values of the lives of men and women. And when I sit down with these people and I say to them, ok, we are going to need two Bibles. I just did it last week with a group of ladies of my wife.

They wanted to be saved. And they said, you know, we are not interested in cheap grace. We don't want to make a commitment and then nothing is going to happen.

And I said to Janice, you need to tell them. We are going to need about four hours to sit down with them. And last Wednesday morning I sat with those ladies in this Bible study with my wife.

And I said to them, I want you to open your Bibles. And I said, we are going to spend all this time, I want you to have a notebook with you. And I am systematically going to go with you through God's plan of salvation.

And we are going to look at man's condition that is lost. We are going to look at God's provision that Christ came. We are going to look at man's responsibility which is repentance.

We are going to look at the promise of God which is eternal life. And I said to them, now let's go to the Scriptures. And I would say now, we are going to look at this passage.

And I let every single one of them read it. We discuss it. We talk about sin.

We discuss the understanding that the psalmist said, Behold I was born in iniquity and in sin that my mother conceived me. And we went through passage after passage. We went through man's God's provision that Christ came and that the prophet Isaiah said.

And He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him.

And we went systematically hour after hour. And you know a pastor said to me some time ago, Why do you do that? Why do you have to spend so much time with people that want to come to Christ? Do you know what I said to him? It saved me so much time in the future. You don't have to run after them to find if they've really come to Christ, brother and sister.

Because you see the Spirit of God witness to the Word. Can I ask you a question this Friday night? You sit here as a Christian. If someone would knock at your door at 3 o'clock tomorrow morning and that person will turn to you and say to you, I don't have much time to live.

Would you be able to sit down with God's Word and systematically explain to them how they can find Christ as their Savior? Or do you have to go and phone a pastor or some counselor and say, You know, I'm sitting with a soul and I don't know how we lead it to Christ. You say, What is it? You say, It's the Word of God. Now let me tell you something, brother and sister.

When I have the joy of leading someone to Christ, you know what happens? I see those people, we come to the end of our counseling session and I turn to those people and you know what I say to them? I say to them, You know, maybe you need some time to think about this. Maybe you need some time to ponder about this. Maybe you don't fully understand it.

And I watch these people and I don't pressurize them and I don't try to push them into the kingdom of God. You see, when we are speaking about winning souls to Christ, brother and sister, we are not in the numbers game. We are looking for men and women who are going to be born of the Spirit of God.

We are looking for people that when they make a commitment to God, that it is something that's going to change their lives for time and for eternity. Most of those times, you know what would happen to those people? They would say, No, I want to give my life to Christ and I'm ready to ask Him to come into my life. And sometimes they are so convicted and they are so broken up by the work and the ministry of the Spirit of God.

And you know what I say to them? I say, Well, why don't we go on our knees? And you know, brother and sister, if someone really understands the Gospel, you don't need to teach them a little sinner's prayer. They know exactly what to pray. And so, when they ask Christ to come into their lives, we sit down and we go through the promises of God systematically.

I like let him write it down. 24 hours later, I sit down with them again and systematically we go through God's plan of salvation. But can I tell you something this evening? You know when I lead people to Christ, you know what? I never say to those people that they are born of the Spirit of God.

You say, What do you mean? That's the work of God, the Holy Spirit. You and I as a soul winner and as a counselor, as it relates to the work of the Holy Spirit, brother and sister, we are not in a position to say to people that they are born of the Spirit. That's the sovereign work of the Holy Spirit of God.

You say, Why do you say that? Listen to what the Scripture says. The Bible says, The Spirit of God bear witness with my spirit that I am a child. That's why the Apostle Paul said in the epistle to the Ephesians, he said, After you believed, he said, you were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of your inheritance.

That's why the Apostle John came to us. And what did he say? He said, He that have a son of life, he that do not have a son of life, that do not have, the son of God do not have life. He said, These things have I written unto you so that you may know that you have eternal life.

He said, What is it? It's the witness of the Spirit of God. Now let me ask you a question this evening. Do you have a witness of God's Spirit that you are born from above? Do you have that sense of assurance that God the Holy Spirit is in my heart? Brethren and sisters, may I say to you this evening with all the love of my heart that if you were here nine years ago when we were together and you look at your Christian life and you say, Gerard, you know, there's not been any change in my relationship the last nine years.

Everything is just the same. I need to be absolutely honest with you. You're going to need to ask yourself, Have I really been born of the Spirit of God? I will never be able not to remember this, you know, but we were doing evangelistic services in the land of Namibia.

It was called Southwest Africa many, many years ago and we had services. We did these services in the tent and sometimes those services lasted for 14 days and sometimes they went on for 21 days as we spent time with these people. And what we did, we would preach the Gospel night after night and men and women would come to listen to the Gospel.

And brothers and sisters, sometimes they would sit there for 17 days before we would make an invitation. And we would let them understand the Gospel. We would let them see what the Gospel of Christ is all

about.

And I will never forget we were in a place with the name of Okohonde outside of the city of Bintuk. And night after night we had these services. And actually we had these evangelistic services in the back of this tent where we were preaching the Gospel.

For five years I did evangelism in my own land. And in the back of that service every night there was a little lady and her husband who sat. And they listened to the Gospel.

And I knew that God was speaking to them. And it was about the 14th night when the Friday night came that she and her husband sat in the back of that tent. And there was a moment when she broke down and she was just weeping.

And I knew that God the Holy Spirit has done His work of conviction. You see, the Lord Jesus said, when the Spirit comes He will convict the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment. Brethren and sisters, you cannot do that.

It's only the Holy Spirit of God. And that 14th night came and God the Spirit broke into her heart and I knew she was ready to give her life to Christ. You say, did you make an invitation? No, I did not.

But the next morning after my choir time, it was a Saturday morning, I felt constraint in my heart to need to go and see her and her husband and to find out exactly how we can help them spiritually in the seeking of Christ of their souls. And you know what happened, brethren and sisters? I came to that little house and when I knocked at the door of this little house, her husband unfortunately was out. In fact, to be honest with you, I didn't want to go in.

But when she recognized me through the window, she came running to the door. And she opened the door and I said to her, Madam, I would like to come and see you and your husband. And she said, you know, my husband is just out.

And I said, well, when can I come and see? And she said, you're not going to go away from here. I said, what do you mean? She said, I'm desperate. I'm desperate.

I'm desperate to find Christ as my Savior. And she said, will you please come and sit in the kitchen table? I had my Bible with me and we sat at the kitchen table. In fact, you know what happened that morning when I stepped into this little house? I mean, forgive me for saying this, but you know, when I came into this little house, brethren and sisters, this little house was in an absolute mess.

I mean, the place was filthy. I sit there in the door and I said to God, Father, I thank you that you sent me to preach the gospel here and you didn't send me to clean the house. And you know what happened, brethren and sisters? I sat at that table that morning and I opened my Bible with this little lady and as we sat there, I systematically went through God's plan of salvation.

And as we went through it at the end of that time, I turned to her and her name was Mary and I said to her, I said, Mary, I said, maybe you need to think more about it. I said, do you understand your condition is lost? She said, absolutely. I said, do you understand that Christ is going to die? She said, yes, I do.

I said, Mary, do you understand your responsibility? It's repentance. She said, absolutely. I said, but maybe you need to... She said, no.

I said, what do you mean? She said, listen, I'm ready to give my life to God, brethren and sisters. I tell you what I miss today, you know. I miss conviction of sin.

Oh, I miss conviction of sin, you know. And she was so convicted of sin. And I said to her, why don't we just go on our knees? And we went on our knees and I said, now I want you to pray.

And I remember that simple prayer. You know, that little lady is in heaven today, but I remember that simple prayer. And she said, God, I'm a sinner.

I'm lost. I'm on my way to a lost eternity. She said, Jesus, you're the only one who can save me.

Would you come into my life? Would you come and save me? And she asked Him to come into her life. And then, you know, when she asked Christ to come into her life, brethren and sisters, you know, sometimes it's amazing how she was praying. I just sensed how the burden of sin lifted from her little soul and how God brought peace into her life.

And I knew, I knew she got through to God. We sat at the table and I went through the passages from the assurance of salvation and I turned to her and I said to her, Madam, I said, I can't tell you that you are born of the Spirit of God. She said, what do you mean? I said, that's the work of the Holy Spirit.

I said, I cannot do it, because if I tried to do it, you were always going to connect the Holy Spirit with this time of counseling this morning. I said, that's the work of the Spirit of God. I remember I left this little house, brethren and sisters.

Three days later, I came back to do follow-up work. I knocked at the door of this little house and she came running to the door of her house. And as she came running to the door of her house, she opened the door and she said, Oh, Gerard, please come in.

He's coming. And I step into this little house and do you know what happened? The moment when I stepped in, guess what? The house is clean. But I said to the Lord, Father God, if nothing happens to the woman, thank You, something happened to the house.

Hey, do you know what happened? God saved her, brethren and sisters. We sat down and I turned to her and I said to her, Mary, did God give you the witness of the Holy Spirit that you were born again? I said, that's something that I cannot do. And she turned to me and she said, Gerard, she said, let me explain to you something.

She said, when you said that to me three days ago, she said, I couldn't comprehend. I didn't understand exactly what you were speaking about. But she said, you know, three o'clock this morning she said, I woke up and she said, the moment when I woke up, she said, these words came to me.

Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. And though they be red as crimson, they shall be as wool. And she turned to me and she said, you know, I don't know where those words are found, but I just can't get away from them.

Can you help me? And I said to her, Mary, that's the witness of the Spirit of God. She said, what is the witness of the Holy Spirit, brethren and sisters? The witness of the Spirit of God is like a scale. You say, what do you mean, Gerard? This is how it is.

On the one side of the scale there is your experience when you came to Christ. You say, what determined my experience? That which happened to you mentally? That which happened to you spiritually? That which happened to you physically to a degree as you knelt in the presence of God and you asked God to come and your experience of salvation, brethren and sisters, will always be determined by those factors. And that becomes one part of the scale as it relates to the witness of the Spirit of God.

You say, what is the other side of the scale? The other side of the scale is the Word of God, you see. And so when the enemy will come to attack you and your experience of God, most of the times he will not attack you on the basis of Scripture, but he will come and attack you on the basis of experience. And can I ask you tonight, is God's Word in the process of becoming part of your life? You see, we speak about the initial witness of the Spirit of God.

But, brethren and sisters, here is the progressive witness of the Spirit of God as He grows deeper and deeper in my relationship with God. You see, what is it? Jesus said, when my Spirit comes, my Spirit will be with you. And He said, my Spirit will be in you.

Our time is gone. Twice as fast time is running in Australia. And we are seven hours behind ahead of Canada anyway.

Twenty-seven hours probably. Let me close. Listen.

He said, when my Spirit comes, my Spirit will be with you and my Spirit will be in you. Jesus said, when my Spirit comes, my Spirit shall testify of me. My Spirit shall testify of me.

Listen to the Apostle Paul. He said, I am crucified with Christ. He said, nevertheless I live.

He said, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. And He said, the life which I now live in the flesh. Which life? The crucified life.

The life which I now live in the flesh. How do I live it? I live it by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and who died and who gave His life and who died for me. You see, brethren and sisters, there is nothing in us.

Nothing. I mean, forgive me for saying this, but the self-life stinks, you know. It's an awful, rotten thing.

And God needs to come to us as Christians. And He said, you know what needs to happen? God needs to come and He needs to put the sentence of death upon the self-life. And as He put the sentence of death, that's why the Apostle Paul said in Romans 6, he said, knowing this therefore, that our old man is crucified with Him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, so that from henceforth we will not serve Him.

You know, this concept, the body of sin, it's an amazing understanding in the Roman times of those days because what happened is that when someone committed a murder and they found the body and they said someone has been guilty of this crime and this person has committed this murder and as a result of that, we've got a corpse. And then someone would come and say, you know, I saw something and I think I know who killed this person. And they would begin to investigate it in the Roman empire of those days.

And then they would find the person that became the murderer. And then this is what they did in Roman times, that they will take the body of this person that is dead, who has been murdered, and they have found the murderer. And brother and sister, they will tie this dead corpse to the body of this living

murderer.

And they will tie it together and throw it out of the city. And that's the way that he was going to die. And so the apostle Paul came and he said, so that the body of sin might be destroyed.

You say, what are you speaking about? Are you speaking about sin that is perpetual? Not one moment. You say, what are you speaking about? You know what I'm speaking about? About the possibility that the God that we are serving is able to cleanse us from every sin that we are conscious of. If you would be conscious of all the sin as it relates to the depravity of sin, let me tell you something, you and I will totally disintegrate under the greatness of the presence of God.

But you know what He's able to do? He's able to cleanse us from the sin that we are conscious of. And so Jesus came. Do you remember what He said? He said, when My Spirit comes, He said, My Spirit will testify of Me.

Can I ask you tonight, brother and sister, is the Spirit of God testifying about the life of Christ in us? When men and women come into our presence, do they become conscious of the presence of God? Is there an aroma about My relationship with God? Is there a fragrance? Do you remember what the Apostle Paul said? He said, we've got this treasure in urban vessels. Now why would he say that? He said, we've got this treasure in urban vessels. Why? So that the excellency might be of God.

And then Paul said, there is a fragrance of the Christian life. And this is what he said. He said, to some, it's the fragrance of death.

And he said, to others, it's the fragrance of life. But there is this fragrance of what the Christian life is all about. Can I ask you tonight, is God the Holy Spirit testifying about the life of Christ in me? What did he say? Is God the Holy Spirit? He never speaks of Himself.

He said, what is He doing? He speaks of the life of Christ in me. When My Spirit comes, My Spirit shall become your teacher. Oh, I wish we would have had time to explore that.

The immensity of the teaching of the Holy Spirit. When My Spirit comes, My Spirit shall abide with you. The presence of God the Holy Spirit.

When My Spirit comes, My Spirit will convict the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment. I want to close. You know, my wife Janice, when I was 17 years old in Africa, I was thrown by a horse one Saturday morning on our cattle ranch.

We, as Africans those days, we would get on horseback and most of the time, we didn't bother with saddles, you know. I mean, you just got on and off you would go as fast as you can. And I came back this Saturday morning and I was on my way back to our farmhouse about 400 yards from the farmhouse.

Something happened and this horse was jumping. And as he was jumping, I knew I was in trouble. And I was thrown by this horse and landed with the back of my head on a rock and had a skull fracture and landed in the hospital for about two and a half months.

And as a result of that, I lost about 85% of my smelling abilities. I can't smell. In fact, some time ago, my wife was cutting my hair because I've got one of these amazing hairstyles that I recognize here with Max and with some others.

And the brutality of the unfairness that if we go for a haircut, they charge you just as much as these guys who cut a ton of hair. And so I said to my wife, you know, this is totally unreal. Can you learn how to cut hair? And so she was cutting my hair.

And as she was doing this, she came to this place at the back of my head. And she said, what is going on here, Daddy? I said, well, that's where my head hits the rock. Well, she said, it was just wood against rock, I guess.

I said, no, it's worse than that. And so as she was working around that, I said to her, I said, do you think I have recovered from that? And she smiled, and I could see it in the mirror. She said, I'm not so sure about that one either.

So I thought, you know, a typical cool, Canadian genesis. But you know, I lost about 85% of my smelling abilities. And so I can't really smell.

So, when Monica was born, guess who cleaned the diapers? Daddy. You know, I couldn't smell. No problem.

Here we go. And so that's what we did. And you know, my two brother and sister, when Janice and myself, we had a wonderful married life, and still have, and she came to me, I don't know, maybe, I don't know, a couple of months later, and she said, Gerard, I need to talk to you.

And so I said, what is it? She said, I need to talk to you about your preaching. So I said, what is it? She said, you know, when you preach, she said, you so get into this thing, she said, you perspire. I said, I'm aware of that.

She said, that's not the issue. She said, you know, when someone perspires, she said, what often happens to them, there is this amazing smell about them. You know, I can't smell.

So, I said, what do you mean? She said, you know, the Canadians are too Christ-like. They're not, you know. They stand at the door and say, what a wonderful message, but they really say, I wish I had a gun to shoot you.

You know? And she said, they are so Christ-like, she said, they won't tell you anything, but she said, I'm your wife, but I can tell you, sometimes it's pretty bad. And I said, so what do you think I should do? She said, listen, I'll tell you what you should do. I said, what is it? She said, it's a thing called ricot.

I said, what do you mean? She said, it's a deodorant. And she said, she said, put a lot on before you preach, and she said, after you preach, don't go to the door and say goodbye to the people, because they will never ask you to come back. I said, what do you mean? She said, she said to the pastor to go to the door, and then you sit there, and in your briefcase, you have one of those little containers, you take the plastic nozzle, and when all the people turn around, you just spray yourself, and then you go to the door.

You know how wives are. Anyway, you know, here I am, a husband, and seeing the Lord crucify me, giving me a heart like wine, I mean, what do you do? And so I said, my darling, if you think that would help, absolutely. And you know, we were expecting Monica, in fact, if you really want to know, I've got one of those here in my briefcase, and you know, it's good for a flat tire also, just watch it.

Anyway, you know what happened? I was, we were expecting Monica, and brother and sister, I was speaking in the province of Ontario, and in this church this Sunday night, you know, we had a great meeting. Oh, it was just wonderful. And so, I knew, as I was just pouring my heart into this material, I was just perspiring.

They heat these churches in Canada, and sometimes they're like ovens, you know. And the people think, you think they're praying for you, but they're all half asleep. And at the end of the service, at the end of the service, the pastor came to me, and he said, do you want to go to the door and say goodbye to the people? He said, they would love to do that.

I said, can I just come in one minute? And he said, absolutely. He said, he went to the door, and brother and sister, I went there, I took my canister out, and then I was, you know, get a nice fragrance, and then you went to the door. Well, you know what happened? You wouldn't believe it.

When I put that simple canister back in my briefcase, brother and sister, the top of that canister came off. And you know, I can't smell. And as the top of it came off, and it was on its side, I took my Bible, by the way, it was King James Version who did it.

I put my Bible, and I put it next to this little canister, and I didn't realize that what was happening, that my Bible was pressing against that little plastic knob. And so here I went with my briefcase to the door, and here, as I was going... I mean, there's nothing to laugh about. I mean, it's pretty serious.

I was going to the door, and brother and sister, as I was going to the door, I came to the door, and I had no idea that there was this amazing fragrance coming out of my briefcase. And the pastor, you know, he was such a Godly man. He never said a word.

In fact, it's there today. It wasn't that. I can tell you that.

But he was such a Godly man. He never said a word. And I was standing with my briefcase, you know, shaking hands with people, one after the other.

And they were going through, and said, oh, thank you for the message and everything. I saw some of them, you know, acting kind of strange. Well, you know, it's just average Canadian.

And so they're going through, going through. And when they were all through, I was standing, and I heard this sound. I mean, it's one of the large ones, you know.

And I sit there, and I thought, Dettoy, you're in trouble. I mean, you are in real trouble. And I turned to the pastor.

I said to him, Elmer, I said, can you smell something? He said, absolutely. I said, what do you smell? He said, I smell deodorant. I said, where do you think it comes from? He said, it's coming out of your briefcase.

And I said, what do you think? Well, he said, it's enough for you, and for me, and for the whole church, you know. You know, you know what? It's taken me 15 years to ask me to get back to the church. I'll be there in a few weeks, you know.

Oh, brother and sister, I went to my room that night, and my heart is broken, you know. Forget about the deodorant. I said, God, what about the fragrance of the presence of the life of Christ? Do you know that

presence? It's beautiful, you know.

And as it flows, and touching the lives of people, you know what it does? It makes them hungry for God. What is it? It's the presence of God. Holy Spirit.

When my Spirit comes, my Spirit will testify. Of me. Let's close in prayer, shall we? Our Heavenly Father, we thank You tonight for Your Word.

We thank You for the blessedness of the reality of Scripture. Lord, in our hearts is there a great expectation as we contemplate the next day or two, just to allow God the Holy Spirit to come and minister to us, and give unto us a sense of Your presence. We ask that You will give us the fragrance of God, that we will become a sweet-smelling Savior as it relates to the lives of people, so that men and women will become conscious of what the life of Christ is all about.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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