

# Authority in Praying

by J. Glyn Owen

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*The church's authority in prayer is based on Jesus' presence and total victory over sin and Satan, making collective decision-making and prayer effective.*

**Duration:** 50:56

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, Matthew 18:15, Matthew 18:18-20

**Topics:** "Authority"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on the concept of binding and loosening as mentioned in the Bible. He explains that when Christians face moral issues or conflicts, they should strive for reconciliation and peace. The speaker emphasizes the importance of prayer and engaging in spiritual warfare in a society filled with sin. He also highlights the need for a deeper dimension of faith and a stronger Christian witness in the world.

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## Transcript

You kindly turn with me to the gospel recorded by Saint Matthew, chapter 18, and I would like to read as the basis of our meditation this evening, verses 18 to 20. Matthew chapter 18, verses 18 to 20. And I'm going to read this from the New International Version.

Now, our Lord is the speaker here, as will be very evident, and he says, I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.

Authority in praying. Earlier in Matthew's gospel, in chapter six to be precise, our Lord Jesus stressed the importance of private prayer, and I think we need to bear that in mind when we come to a passage such as this. The entire emphasis in Matthew chapter six is upon the individual believer going aside, locking the door, or closing the door.

I believe that by intention our Lord meant us to lock it, or at least to make sure that no one intrudes. Close the door so that in the privacy of your own sanctuary in the home, you can open your heart, you can bring your praise, you can offer your petitions, you can make your intercessions, no one, no human being hears you but only God. And he who hears you in the secret will in due course grant you your request.

That's the message in chapter six. And it is, let me repeat as far as I can understand, it is absolutely basic. Private prayer, individual prayer, is something that we must learn for ourselves and in a sense master before we can know much about the validity of public prayer and intercession.

But now in our present text, Jesus focuses attention upon the importance of God's people praying together, praying publicly, meeting together, in order that we should together make our intercessions and offer our praise. And as a matter of fact, he almost takes our breath away by the apparent extravagance with which he tells us of the possibilities that await us. One is tempted here to try to amend the text in order to lessen the gulf that exists between the experience of the church and the promise held out by our Lord.

And I know personally of many people who have tried to do that. Of course they believe that the Bible is the word of God, but they cannot conceivably imagine that our Lord really meant what he had here in mind when he said, again I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. Authority in prayer.

Now whether or not we find it difficult to comprehend and take in this message at the beginning as we read the text, we are in honor bound to look into the face of the word of God and see what it has to say to us. And however it may cut across our own experience, however it may humiliate us by showing us that we know next to nothing about real prayer, I think we must be honest and face the testimony of scripture concerning this most important and basic exercise of the Christian life, namely prayer to almighty God our Father. Now the first thing I want to dwell on for a moment then is the immense possibility that our Lord places before a gathering of believers.

This word that really takes our breath away. Let's look at it. In the words of the text, Jesus places before the church, before the congregation or assembly of believers, a most far-reaching possibility.

And he speaks of it in two ways. With the one breath he speaks of it as the possibility of binding and loosing. With the other breath he speaks of it as asking and receiving.

As I understand it, he has the same kind of thing in mind when he refers to the one as when he refers to the other. What is he thinking about? What kind of situation does our Lord here envisage? Well, let's look at these two briefly before we come to grapple with the heart of the subject. Binding and loosing, verse 18.

I tell you the truth. Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven. And whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

Now, I'm not going into some of the detailed exegesis that that passage invites. I simply want to take it at its face value that whatever a Christian community here upon earth, be it only two or three gathering in Jesus' name, whatsoever they bind has been bound in heaven or is bound in heaven. And whatsoever they loose is likewise loosed in heaven.

In other words, they are able to bind something and they are able to loose something or loosen something. A privilege which Jesus had already given to Peter, the foundation member of the Christian Church following his epochal confession of faith in Caesarea Philippi, as you will notice in chapter 16 and verse 19, Jesus now gives to the whole church, to the entire community of believers. He's envisaging, of course, a local community of men and women who believe in the Savior.

And he gives to them exactly what he gave to Peter as an individual in chapter 16, the power to bind and to loosen. The very same terms are employed in both cases and it is quite impossible to find any valid reason for distinguishing between them. Now what's the nature of the authority that evidently underlies the conception of binding and loosing? I think the context tells us quite clearly.

The passage, if you'd like to look back to verse 15, the passage envisages a professing Christian who hears that his brother is offended. Oh, let me read. If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault just between the two of you.

Your brother's done something against you. He said something or he's done something. What do you do? Well, says our Lord Jesus, first of all go to that brother or to that sister and just the two of you together privately talk it out.

Seek a reconciliation. Let the offending person acknowledge his wrong and put things right just the two of you before God. But now sometimes that doesn't work.

If that doesn't work, says the Lord Jesus, he says to the one upon whom he puts the responsibility for the initiative, he says, take with you one or two witnesses. And then try and explain what has happened and try and get the truth out and go through the process of seeking a reconciliation as best you can. And you have these two or three witnesses with you so that they're witness to the spirit of the whole episode as well as to the content of what goes on between the two of you.

Now if you can't make any headway that way, then there is one final court of appeal. Take it to the church. Take it to the congregation of God's people, says Jesus.

And it is in that context that he speaks about binding and loosing. The Lord required that the matter be brought before the church or congregation and added in that context, if he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. If he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven. And whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Your decision, what in that spirit will be a decision that will be final, whether it be to receive the offending party back into the fellowship of the church as a penitent who's been forgiven and they've forgiven one another if both of them were wrong in what has gone on.

The church's authority is final to receive the penitent back into the fellowship or where there is no repentance and no forgiveness to shut that person out, out of fellowship and to treat him as you would an uncircumcised and a tax gatherer, to keep him outside the fellowship of the church. Those words of the second part of verse 17 reflect the final authority of the church in dealing with such a matter. If he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

The decisions of the church are final and the reason is not far to seek because where two or three, however small the church is, if it is a true church of Jesus Christ, where two or three are gathered together in my name says Jesus, I'm there and I'm one of the participants in either receiving the penitent or rejecting the impenitent and if the two or three are in fellowship with me and I am lord over them, they and I together acting in fellowship can bind or loosen, open or shut. Authority is ours in fellowship, yours as a church in fellowship with me. So much for binding and loosing.

Asking and receiving, verses, verse 19. Again he says I tell you and I'm taking it as axiomatic that our Lord Jesus is here referring to the same thing in principle but he's using entirely different language. Again I tell

you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my father in heaven.

What a very dangerous thing to say. Well yes if you don't read the next verse again. For, because, where two or three come together in my name there am I with them ordering their thinking and their desiring and their acting, what they ask for and how they ask for it.

Let me repeat then it would appear to me that our Lord is here again referring to the same matter namely that of binding and loosing but now uh in different language. And if that is what he is doing then he is referring to what would inevitably be involved when Christians would have to face the kind of moral issue envisaged in in the incident or in the hypothetical incident suggested in verses 15 to 17. Such Christians when they find that the two people who are at loggerheads with one another can't come together, can't be reconciled, can't have peace together what do they do? Well they pray together, the congregation ultimately and they think it through together and they decide what they ought to pray and they discover what they think is the will of God and submitting the whole thing to the Lordship of Jesus Christ as present with them, they come to a decision.

And Jesus says when such a decision has been arrived and you choose to ask that the Lord would cast him out that is binding. Or you choose to ask that God would receive him back into the family and bind the offending party again to the family of God into the fellowship and integrate him then the congregation has the authority to do that whatever you ask. Now of course whereas the hypothetical circumstances envisaged in verses 15 to 17 are clear and the principle relates to that specifically in the context.

I believe that the principle is in many other areas than in the area when we have such an incident taking place in the church. Let me put it like this if a Christian congregation albeit comprising a mere handful, a mere two or three believers plus the Lord Jesus, that's the point, plus the head of the church consciously present, active, moving, ministering to his people, if there is just a group of believers present with the Lord they're faced with a problem they may be assured of the effective nature of their intercessions and any ensuing action they are called upon to do that is in accordance with the will of their Lord. The immense possibility.

Now that brings me to an attempted explanation of all this. The validity of the promise and the text explained. How can this be so? Isn't this an error here? Isn't there something wrong here? Isn't the Lord Jesus going a little bit too far here? Isn't he promising too much? Well now if we are to appreciate the provision with which the church was divinely endowed in the terms of Matthew 18 19 and 20 we must take a broad view of the whole New Testament teaching that is relevant to the subject.

Now in principle and in embryo the explanation I believe is implicit in our text. It's all here in principle. Christian believers can bind and unbind, ask and receive because they meet in the name of Jesus and all that that implies they meet in the name of Jesus Christ the church's head and Lord and are in a moral and spiritual condition in which his presence among them is honored and respected.

So that the prayer they offer or the decision they come to is not simply their decision per se but it is the decision of the members plus the Lord. He is involved in the decision making. He is involved in the prayer that goes to the throne of God and what he says is this if you and I are praying together if I have a part in fashioning and formulating your prayers if your fellowship and mine is so deep that I have a say in your prayers those prayers are infallible.

Now you see it hits me like this if that is the case then you and I have prayed many a prayer without being in fellowship with Jesus Christ and the sooner the better we confess it. But what is implicit in our text is elsewhere very much so explained and explained in far greater detail and I want to turn to some of the aspects in the explanation of all this just now. Now the first thing I want to do is to look at the objective basis for the church's authority in prayer.

The objective basis. In the first place in this regard we need to remember that Jesus Christ has accomplished not only a total salvation for us in the sense of saving us from our sins he has done that but in accomplishing our total salvation with the promise of a new body and of our inhabiting a new heaven and a new earth wherein righteousness is at home. He has done something beyond that.

He has also conquered the enemy of our souls who would hinder us as we seek to mature in our understanding of things spiritual and in our exercising of our Christian privileges. He has overcome Satan. He has overcome Satan as he has overcome sin.

So that there is nothing whatsoever that can stand in our way that Jesus Christ has not already dealt with. Now again let me confess to you when I say that it boomerangs and it tells me if that is so then you have done an awful lot of things in the in the power of carnal self. If this kind of thing is open then you is possible then you are inexcusable for so many things and this is exactly what the text does do.

It tells us that we are inexcusable when we pander to sin and Satan because our Lord Jesus Christ has not only mustered sin and temptation but he's lord over Satan. So there is no reason for us to falter no reason for us to sin. Oh brethren brothers and sisters let us get this.

Our Lord Jesus Christ has pardoned the transgressions of his people. He has justified us in Christ. He has clothed us with a righteousness not our own.

Then he has breathed his own spirit of divine sonship into our human hearts crying Abba Father. So you see he has given us a status and a standing in the presence of God as sons and that means that we can draw near to God. We have the right to draw near and to call him our Father in Christ Jesus our Savior.

In our great high priest he has made it possible and he's dealt with Satan. He's opened up a new and living way into the presence of God. But now let me add to that let me add to that what I've already referred to namely the fact that our Lord Jesus Christ has disarmed Satan so that you and I can overcome all his subtleties if we will.

Do you remember these words from Colossians chapter 2 verses 13 to 15? Some of us were meditating upon them earlier on in the year. When you were dead in your sins says Paul to the Colossians and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature God made you alive with Christ as regeneration. He forgave us all our sins having canceled the written code with its regulations that was against us and that stood opposed to us.

He took that away nailing it to the cross and having and here's the point and having disarmed the powers and authorities he made a public spectacle of them triumphing over them by the cross. Jesus Christ has disarmed Satan. He has done so in and through his death and resurrection and it is on the basis of this objective fact that we are to understand our Lord's words about binding the strong man or about binding and loosing or about seeking what our the will of our Father in heaven and seeking what God has promised seeking to possess our possessions.

It is in this context that we are to understand a word a word like this Matthew 12 29. Again says Jesus how can anyone enter a strong man's house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man binds the strong man then he can rob his house. Now Luke puts that even even stronger and perhaps a little better.

Luke Luke's version goes a little like this when a strong man fully armed guards his own house his possessions are safe. Now Satan is the strong man in this in this image. Satan is the strong man fully armed guarding his own house and his possessions are safe.

All the dupes of Satan are safe in his hand prisoners and they're safe there they can't get away but when someone stronger attacks and overpowers him he takes away the armor in which the man trusted and divides up the spoil. Now Jesus Christ did that on the cross and by the resurrection he overcame Satan he took away his armor and Satan is no longer master over men who trust in Christ. Hebrews 2 and verse 14 expresses the very same truth and perhaps even more forcefully since the children have flesh and blood he too shared in their humanity.

What for? The answer so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death that is the devil. The word destroy means of course not not annihilating that would not be true. What the word literally means is this he renders Satan's power ineffective.

That is ineffective to those who accept what he has done and build on the basis of that and have confidence in him as such. On account of this total victory of our Lord over sin and Satan Paul pictures him seated at the right hand of God in the heavenly realms ruling every conceivable opposition to himself and to his people. Talk about breathtaking if there is a breathtaking passage in the new testament surely this is a nice one of them Ephesians 2 21 and 22 where Paul in praying for the Ephesians prays that God would do certain things for them according to the power which he exerted when Jesus when Jesus was raised from the dead and he goes on to say that he has been raised far above all rule and authority power and dominion and every title that can be given not only in the present age but also in the one that is to come and God placed all things under his feet.

You and I need the image of that the imagery there. Our Lord Jesus Christ has been crowned with power and with authority and he is seated above principalities and powers. He is above every throne above every name that can be named in this age or the age that is to come.

There is no one anywhere that is higher than he is. He's Lord of all. Now this is evidently what our Lord had in mind when commissioning his disciples he said all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me and because of that I'm sending you everywhere because I have authority everywhere.

I have authority in the uttermost parts as well as in Jerusalem and I send you to Jerusalem Judea Samaria the uttermost parts. Why? I've got authority over all. They don't know me yet they've never heard about me but I have authority over them they're in my hands and I have authority over them and I'm sending you out because all authority has been given to me.

You go teach them what I've told you every bit of it and you'll find that I'm with you to the very end of the age. How is it that we can have any authority in prayer weaklings sinners that we are as saints? I'll tell you basically because our Lord Jesus Christ has gained authority and he shares it with his people. Christian men and women are so intimately identified with their Lord in this his total victory over sin and Satan that they may thus effectively engage the enemy and overcome him if they will.

Following his description of the elevation of our Lord over every conceivable opposition in Ephesians 1 20 to 22 Paul makes this very significant statement in Ephesians 2 verses 6 and 7 he says every word is important and God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace expressed in his kindness toward us in Jesus Christ. Now have you got that point?

Jesus is raised he's risen he's Lord he's seated at the right hand of the majesty upon high and there is no one above him he's over all but now says Paul when God raised us spiritually from the death of sin he raised us up with his son Jesus and not only were we raised from the dead with him we ascended with him and because of our intimate relationship with him the bride with the bridegroom the body with the head when the head was glorified the body was glorified and we are associated with him he he is not ashamed to call us his brethren what is his has been accomplished not simply for him personally no no but specifically for us who belong to him those whom the savior has quickened a new life and redeemed by his blood he has also bound in an indissoluble bond to himself so that we are

limbs of his body and we are so intimately related to him that if we choose to if we have real faith in him if we're in vital life union with him we may take our stand in the heavenlies and we too may claim our inheritance and bind satan and come to our father in the name of the son for petitions that have been worked out between us and our lord and such petitions are authoritative and infallible oswald saunders in a book power a prayer power unlimited uses or says this i believe it's toward the end of a chapter on this very subject of authority he he says something like this i'm not sure whether i've got it verbatim any power satan now exercises over us is either because we fail to apprehend and appropriate the completeness of christ's triumph or because we have conceded territory to

satan through tolerating sin in our lives in either case the remedy is clear the objective basis of this kind of possibility is found in what christ has done in his total victory over our sin his total redemption gained for us and in the fact that he is lord of all principalities and powers and of all men and women everywhere he's lord of all and as such if we are in real fellowship with him our actions and our prayers can share in his authority in binding and loosing in asking and receiving now the operative discipline for the exercise of such authority all is not yet said notice again the context in which these words appear it is eloquent with meaning and important instruction for the actualizing of the kind of potential which our lord attributes to even two or three humble believers

meeting in his name now you will want to ask again as i've asked how can a little group of people have such authority as this ah is there a queue here is there anything more than what we've said that will give us some understanding of it i want to suggest one or two things first of all i want you to notice the general atmosphere of sanctity that pervades this little group of two or three with their lord matthew 18 15 17 if thy brother sins against you etc go to him put it right that passage matthew 18 15 to 17 describes a moral and spiritual climate in which sin and personal relationships are treated with the uttermost seriousness by the individuals and by the little community involved you see the atmosphere there can only be described as one of sanctity and honesty and openness in which

each individual member is very concerned that god is not grieved and that nothing is said or done to mar the fellowship and the glory of the lord that sanctity and the authoritative praying that asks and receives that binds and loosens it all takes place in an atmosphere where men and women are quick to put wrongs right not to put rights wrong to confess their sins if they've sinned against somebody else to be reconciled to one another if there's anything coming between two people and in that atmosphere they can ask and

receive that's the first thing i think that's very suggestive then i want you to notice that the particular expression of unity in their prayers when people are thus brought together and are thus bound and acknowledge anything that may have come between them and put it

right and forget it and bury it and don't remember where it's been buried you know i've met many people who say to me i've buried the hatchet long ago but they remember where they buried the hatchet and they go and have a good look at the grave sometimes that's not forgetting that's not forgiving that's something else there's something far deeper here something far more godlike here there's a forgetfulness of the things that are behind but now you see when that is done there emerges a unity a real bond of unity these people are one together they really belong to one another they really love one another there's no sin between them they allow no wall to be built between them no separation to divide them they're bound together and in this bond of holiness and love and affection they can ask

what they will because their lord is honored they would not ask for anything that is contrary to his word they would not ask for anything that is contrary to his spirit they would not ask for anything that is contrary to his glory the whole atmosphere is this the glory of the lord is safe in their hands you see such a people can ask anything conversely when we are not there we might as well play rock music as pray to almighty god because if i regard iniquity in my heart the lord will not hear me the other feature is this the actual expression of their human of their unanimity in the requests they make again i tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for it will be done for you by my father in heaven sometimes such requesting will require nothing but a simple

asking in order to receive sometimes i say ask and it shall be given you says jesus knock and it shall be open seek and you shall find and sometimes it is as simple as that mark tells us therefore i tell you he says whatever you or jesus said it mark records it whatever you ask for in prayer believe that you have received it and it will be yours it's as simple as that in some cases at other times however we may be required to wrestle rather than rest to wrestle in order to secure the long for prize there are many passages in the new testament that refer to this i have not opportunity now to go into them let me just mention two we've been studying collotions of latent right at the beginning of chapter two in the very first verse uh paul tells the collotions uh he says how strenuously i

exerted myself on your behalf now the word exerted myself it comes from a greek agon i was fighting i had to fight i had a battle it's a it's a kind of wrestle perhaps more than a fight but at any rate there's an agony behind it the word agony comes from the from from this root and paul continues the same thought when in in in in uh ephesians chapter 6 and verse 12 he says for we wrestle not against flesh and blood or as the niv puts it our struggle is not against flesh and blood but there is a a struggle there is a wrestling what is the wrestling well you see it is the attempt of satan to frustrate our prayers it is the attempt sometimes of good men to frustrate our prayers sometimes it's the carnal flesh the old man and the old nature that will rise in up rise up in us and somehow or

other will muzzle us in our prayer and we'll try to cut our faith short and say no don't don't you're asking too much it is this militant ministry of intercession that is often required of the church we too in the name of our lord must bind the strong man in his name he's already been bound by him but we in our circumstances must take our armor upon ourselves and in the name of jesus say to him in certain circumstances i defy you in the name of jesus and they overcame satan by the blood of the lamb and the word of their testimony here is a making war against satan the whole book of the revelation is interlaced with this concept of making war against the enemy my friends what do we know about this it's because of this kind

of background that we we ought to have clear in our minds and the

apostles did it's because paul had such a background to his thinking about prayer that he could say to the corinthians though we live in the world he says we do not wage war as the world does the weapons we fight with or the weapons of our warfare as king james puts it the king james version we the weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world on the contrary they have divine power to demolish strongholds we demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of god and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to our lord jesus christ how do you do it by this means in the name of jesus in the presence of jesus by his presence in the fellowship the living lord and ourselves come to a decision and sin is not allowed to rest in our company and

in that atmosphere we know what to ask we rest in the sufficiency of the name of jesus sometimes we may have to wait long for the answer not for it to be heard but for it to be given you never pray in the name of jesus but that god hears your prayer but you and i may have to pray and wait for the prayer that he has heard to be answered in the time which is according to his will it is a striking fact that some of the godliest and most able prayer warriors of the ages have had to wait and wait long for the answers but they waited and this is the point they knew that they had overcome satan they knew that they were praying in the will of god they knew that the name of jesus was invincible and they waited and waited until the answer came now this is very important in every field but it's

especially important in christian ministry and on the mission field do you know that it was seven years before cary baptized his first convert in india was there a man of prayer to compare with cary william cary it was seven years before judson won his first disciple in burma have you read judson's prayers morrison toiled seven years before the first chinese was brought to christ moffat waited seven years to see the first movement of the spirit in becky on the land as it was called henry richards worked seven years in the congo before the first convert called upon the name of jesus now i've mentioned these name because they these names because they are among those warriors who knew how to make war in the name of jesus and how to claim the promises they were not people who dabbled with

praying and and left it there and you didn't know because their prayers were so general whether they'd asked for anything or not and whether what they'd asked for had been answered some of our prayers are in that category they're so vague they're so general nobody knows whether we've been answered or not these men prayed specifically they had to wait seven years but the point is you see they so believed that god had heard them and they so believed in the privilege of prayer and in the authority of jesus they kept on waiting waiting may have to be our lot but waiting after praying in the manner envisaged here is simply awaiting for a result that is divinely assured now my friends i am terribly humbled by this i don't know how you feel but i feel as if i had not begun really to engage in

the real warfare of pray and i invite you i urge you in a day such as ours when sin is so rampant and the ordinary christian witness in society is making very little headway organized missions of an evangelistic nature they're hardly touching hardly scratching the surface of things however many people profess conversion and i'm not pouring scorn upon that kind of ministry but you and i need something of a dimension that we've not yet known our world needs something of the dimension of pentecost and as you and i move forward into a new fall and all its demands and all its services and all its challenging situations brothers and sisters in christ i tell you there is one primary need and that is to know how to pray right and when we know how to pray to pray i am ashamed from time to time

when i hear of the few people from our knox membership who gather in public prayer i am really ashamed and i ask myself lord is this due to my preaching and influence have i so completely failed and i wonder i'm telling you my heart because you're the most lovable people i've ever known and the most gracious people i've ever ministered to but why is there no more urgent seeking of the face of god here obviously there must no be no real awareness of the privilege and of the priority of it i speak to you as one that loves you i don't want to quarrel with any of you i don't believe me but i fear either we don't believe this or if we do believe it we we think that something else will do the work and god has said no there is a kind of evil spirit in our day and age that is eating at the soul

of our society that will not go out with anything less than prayer and fasting i covet your cooperation in this i'd like you to pray that the lord would teach us together as pastor and people to pray like this will you pray for me that i should be able to do this will you seek the lord's face that we should be able to recognize the basis upon which we stand and together be able to claim the promises i assure you where there is a congregation and there is a real nucleus of men and women that are prepared to pay the price to pray like this to learn to pray like this you'll see your miracles you'll see your miracles for god is no man's debtor thank you for bearing with me thank you for listening i'll trust you that we may work together not only in the way we have worked together but perhaps

more especially in this avenue of intercession that we shall be able to accomplish something on our knees in our several stations wherever we are that the work that goes on here shall be a work that will stand and abide and shine to the glory of god and that men will know that it is not accomplished by man but by the right hand of the most high god let us pray oh god our father it is sometimes very difficult to look into the realities of your word and truth we acknowledge our lord what is known to you that it is far easier sometimes to gloss over the scriptures and just to take what appeals to us and leave the rest sleeping silently do not disturb the slumbering truths but we thank you there are times when the truth comes a light and a glow and we cannot leave it because it doesn't leave

us and we pray that your truth concerning the subject before us tonight may pursue us may make us uncomfortable until it wins us over and gives us a sense of priorities and enables us as individuals and as a company of people and others who are gathered with us here tonight enables us all to exercise the kind of ministry of intercession which is our privilege in the name of our conquering lord oh heavenly father hear our cry because we ask these things with the forgiveness of our sins in jesus name amen

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