

# John McGregor - Broken Before the Throne 2010

by John McGregor

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of being 'broken before the throne' and having a soft heart, which allows us to be more receptive to God's guidance and to obey Him more easily.*

**Duration:** 1:22:05

**Scripture:** Luke 9:12-13, Luke 9:33-35, Luke 9:38-40, Luke 9:46-50, Luke 9:54-55, Philippians 2:5-11

**Topics:** "Heart Attitudes", "Sanctification"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of maintaining the right heart attitudes as followers of Christ, highlighting the need to avoid pride, impulsive actions, faithlessness, unteachableness, selfishness, arrogance, and intolerance. It encourages a commitment to ongoing sanctification and a willingness to mentor others in the faith.

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## Transcript

When I think about how sometimes we can feel a little set on the side, I'm reminded of a friend of mine up in Canada. He was posturing in the city of Prince Albert when the Revival came to the city of Saskatoon in 1971, and for weeks my friend Ernest took a busload of people to the Revival. And as he would go, night by night he would sit there in those meetings and say, Lord, is there anything that you want to show to me? And for twenty nights he did that.

And you know, on the twenty-first night, when my friend Ernest sat in the service, he said, Lord, I know tonight there's nothing that you want to show to me. Yeah, well, what happened is that on the twenty-first night, the searchlight of the Holy Spirit came to Ernest's heart, and the Lord spoke to him and said, Ernest, you're a very proud man. As a pastor for the next six weeks, he never did get to preach.

The church was always so full of people who wanted to give testimony about what the Lord was doing in Revival that Ernest would prepare the message, but he'd never get to preach it. So do you think he was ready and rip-roaring, good to go, when he did get back into the pulpit? Yes, but it was with a changed heart, because now it wasn't just what the people had said God had shown to them, but he was able to say, you know, the Lord didn't forget me in all of this either. And sometimes I've sat with folk and they will say things to me like, you know, it's been kind of a dry season, or there doesn't seem to be a lot happening spiritually for me, and so on.

So I want to take the opportunity just to think about the ongoing sanctifying work of Jesus in a life, in the disciples. And so as we open the chapter, we see they are certainly very excited, commissioned to go out, and Jesus gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases and so on. They weren't supposed to take anything with them just to go.

There's an interesting little note in verses 7, 8, and 9 about what happens in Herod's heart as all of this preaching and healing is going on. The king is thinking, has John the Baptist been raised from the dead? What's going on? There's something happening in the country, and you see guilt is like that. He has the guilt of murder in his heart, and so every time there's a stirring going on, he is brought back to face that guilt.

And then we come to that section beginning at verse 10, where we would call it really the feeding of the five thousand. And I love this passage. I love the John 6 counterpart passage of it as well, and if you just think about it for a bit, it's quite a teaching exercise, because why did Jesus do it? Well, in John 6, it says he knew what he was going to do, but he wanted to work with the disciples.

And Jesus had already seen the people. He always sees the people, and he saw their need. He had compassion on them, says Matthew's account of this.

The Lord, you see, doesn't change. He still sees the need in the people's hearts. But he's working with his own people, his own disciples.

And as Jesus sees the people, we're told in John 6 that Philip sees the problem. He's saying, we're going to get the money to feed these people. Even if we had all this money, look how much it would take.

Did you ever run into people who only ever see problems? You know, Pastor Dan and I were talking about this the other day in the car. One of the things I believe the Lord is teaching me is my inclination is to say to him, Lord, if you supply, I'll go. And he simply says, John, you go, and I'll supply.

And you know, that's quite a lesson. And that's part of what we see. Philip sees the problem.

You can see we are so often talked out of things and talk ourselves out of things, even because of the size of the problem. Why is it broken before the throne? And we don't have every Christian in North America broken before the throne. And we can look at that and say, wow, look at the size of the problem.

How would we ever accomplish something like that? Well, I learned a few lessons from a little man in South Africa. He's a farmer. His name is Angus Buchan.

And he started a men's conference. You can catch it online under Mighty Man if you want to look it up. He's done a book and a video called Faith Like Potatoes.

You can check that out, too, if you want. And you know, after doing the conference the first year, he figured there might be 3,000 that would come and 7,000 came. But Faith Like Potatoes didn't run out of food.

Everybody got fed. And then Angus rented the biggest tent he could find in Africa for 30,000 people. Wow, that's a big tent.

That's a lot of tent posts and rope and so on, you know. How do you think Angus felt when 61,000-some came? He didn't run out of food. You see, sometimes we get so hung up on the problems that we just fail

to exercise faith.

You look in the John 6 passage, you'll see that Andrew, I love Andrew, my oldest son is called Andrew. The reason for that is every time you find Andrew in scriptures, he's bringing somebody to Jesus. And in John 6, it's Andrew who brings the loaves and the fishes, the little boy with them.

Jesus saw the people. Philip saw the problem. Andrew saw the potential.

You think about the potential that there is from broken before the throne. You say, John, what do you mean by that? Well, in 1857, a schoolteacher in Northern Ireland in County Antrim, which is the county my wife comes from, someone which had been sharing a little bit with him about the revivals under Wesley and Whitfield and so on, and he decided he'd go out to the schoolhouse at five o'clock in the morning and pray for revival. Prayed that way for a year, and the Lord led somebody else to join him.

Boy, that's a massive crowd, two people. But a year after that, God came, and he swept that little land off the face of the earth. Unforgettably, in 1959, one of my friends, a man called Alec Luke, is a young fellow in a place called Ahawco.

And it's in County Antrim, quite close to where the 1859 revival broke out. If Alec was here tonight, he would just say, remember being in church when we had the 100th anniversary of the revival, and a few of us had been praying, and God came. He said, we made a mistake.

We tried to keep it to ourselves. Let's not share it with the other churches. We'll just keep it.

And he said, in a short time, the Spirit of God moved on. Think about the potential that there is. And you know, Jesus is teaching that as he's doing the feeding of the 5,000.

The people who were there that day, they saw the power of God, powerfully and wonderfully poured out. I love this story, as you can probably tell. A couple of years ago, when I was in South Africa, after taking a series of meetings, a woman came up to me after the closing service, and she said, I want to give you this.

God told me to paint it for you. And she gave me a painting on a black background of five loaves and two fishes. And I said to her, you didn't sign it.

And she said, yes, I did. And I noticed in the corner, it said, Sola Dea Gloria. It's on the wall in my study to remind me of the potential.

The people that day saw the power, just that little bit, and it continued and continued. And you'll notice in Luke chapter 9, it says that Jesus broke it and gave it to the disciples, and the disciples gave it to the people. Isn't that just a picture of revival? What he gives to you, you give on to others, to others, to others.

And then just a last thought before we leave that little section, although we won't leave it entirely, Jesus says, go and pick up the pieces, because he's still interested in the fragments, in the last little bits, that nothing will be wasted. I'm so glad Jesus is interested in the fragments, because in times when my life has been hurt, or wounded, or struggling, or broken, it's him who picks up the pieces and starts to make sense of it, and starts to put it all back together, starts to make it work. It's a bit like a story that I read one day of a man, a father, was looking after his little girl, young girl, probably four years old, I think, and she was keeping him busy, and he wanted to get some things done, so he took the newspaper, and one of the pages of the newspaper had a half-page gull of the world there.

So he took it, and he tore it up into eight or ten pieces, and mixed them all up, and gave her some tape, and said, go ahead and put that back together, so it's right. And in no time at all, the little one came to him, and the world was put back together exactly right. And he said to her, how did you do that? And she said, well, it's really easy, Daddy.

Look on the other side, there's a man's face. I just put the man back together, and the world was okay. When life is ripped up, it's Jesus who puts it back together, and when we have him in the right place, everything else is right also, isn't it? So as we see, the disciples have been out, they've done what they were told, they're excited, they come back, and Jesus continues to teach them, to show them of his power, and of his strength.

But you know, there are seven times in this chapter that Jesus teaches them something deeper. We have a tendency just to look on the surface. You think about the Sermon on the Mount.

What was Jesus teaching? He said, the law says don't commit adultery, but if you've looked at a woman in the wrong way, you've done it. Don't commit murder, but if you've thought about it, you're guilty of it. You see, he always goes deeper than just the surface of what is to be seen.

And so, let's for a few minutes just walk through here in Luke chapter 9, the seven times that Jesus is working with his own, and this whole thought of the progressive nature of the sanctifying work of the Spirit. He just continues to reveal things to us, and to deal with us in a loving way. And as you take your Bible here, let's return to the 5,000 story for a minute.

Let's just go to verse 12. When the day began to wear away, the twelve came and said to him, send a multitude away, that they may go into the surrounding towns and country and lodge and get provisions, for we're in a deserted place here. Here's the first thing that Jesus shows to us.

There is in the disciples, even though they've been out and ministering and they've come back excited, there's a cold heart. Now, why would I say that? Because you see what they are saying. Lord, send the crowd away.

Move them on out of here. Lord, we've been out there doing it, and we're kind of tired. So, he's exposing this, isn't he? You give them something to eat, he says there at the beginning of verse 13.

And you know, the disciples are sort of looking and saying, oh, we had this busy day. We've done this work. We did what we were obediently told.

Lord, get rid of these people. Boy, that sounds a bit like a poem I learned in Ireland a long time ago. This is what it says.

For me to love the whole world is no chore. My only problem is the guy next door. It would sometimes be wonderful to serve the Lord, but people kind of get in the way.

And there's a reason why Jesus calls us sheep. You ever work with sheep? My grandfather had sheep in Ireland. And I'll tell you, when you get left as a small boy to move only two sheep from one field to another, it's an interesting day.

You can try to lasso them, but they're stubborn, and they're not going anywhere. You can try to chase them, but one's going this way, and the other is going that. You can get a stick and try to beat them in from

one field to the other, but you can never get them sort of close enough to make that cunt.

And at the end of all those frustrations, when Granda comes home, the sheep are still where they started out the day. That's kind of an amazing thing, because then the shepherd just takes and dips a cup in a little bit of food and starts to rattle it. You know, as he wanders from one field into the next, those two dumb sheep, they just follow along like you wouldn't believe, even after a whole day of frustration.

Maybe that's what he meant when he said, my sheep hear my voice, and they follow me. A stranger they won't follow. But here, as you think about this cold-hearted attitude, isn't that one of the dangers that we are going to face when we leave here tomorrow? We'll go back into the regular run-of-the-mill times of our lives and daily-ness and busy-ness of our lives, and we'll get back into all of that kind of thing.

And before we know it, it's easing to a lot of the heart, just to grow hard, isn't it? One day, working for the Billy Graham Association, I was asked to go and ask a man for \$75,000. There's a good job. His last name seemed as mine.

I think that's why I got the assignment. Down in Alabama, I tried hard to find a family connection. Sorry, nothing doing.

No rich relatives. Took a lot for breakfast because I figured that's the cheapest meal of the day. And as we sat and talked, this businessman, he said, you know, I used to be a pastor.

I said, really? You're a well-known businessman in the area. You used to be a pastor? Yeah. I said, you miss it? Nope.

And the nope was altogether too fast. So I said to him, isn't there anything that you miss about it? Nope. I said, oh, there must be something that you miss about it.

He said, I don't miss the committee meetings. I don't miss the board meetings. I don't miss the expectancy of people.

Do all right without it. I said to him again, isn't there one thing that you miss about it? Very slowly, he said to me, I no longer hear the trumpet call in the morning. I said to him, explain that.

He said, when I was in the pastorate every morning, I heard just like a trumpet call, God calling me to come and meet with him. I no longer hear that. I said to him, is it worth it? And he said, I'm quite a rich man, but I can't replace the trumpet call in the morning.

I said to him, if you take this back to the Lord, he'll take you back to where he wants you to be. He is a pastor today. That trumpet call.

You know, C.S. Lewis in his writing says there are no ordinary people. It's so easy for us just to get that hardened heart. So as we go from here, something that we can seek the Lord for is, Lord, day by day, keep my heart soft.

While we've been here, he's broken our hearts, and we have had that tender work of his Holy Spirit, haven't we? And this afternoon as we lay down and said, Lord, I just want to attend my own funeral, that was with a soft heart to say, even as Jesus did, not my will, but yours, Lord, and to go on from there. Jesus is just constantly addressing things in the life of his disciples, and this chapter is classic for them. Let me move you to another verse here in the chapter and another thing that Jesus is addressing in the

heart of his own.

But don't forget, we want to guard against a cold or a hard heart. Look with me at verse 33, and let's just read it again. Then it happened as they were parting from him that Peter said to Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here, and let us make three tabernacles, one for you, one for Moses, one for Elijah, not knowing what he said.

Now, Al said, you know, we have an identification factor with Peter because he's kind of impulsive, and that's what Jesus exposes in Peter's life here. There's an impulsive attitude, and I, maybe I'm not the only one in the room who would be guilty from time to time of being impulsive. He's just seeing it and saying it, and there's not a lot of thought going in as to what he's actually saying.

In fact, the verse says, not knowing what he said, and you see he's focused in rather on self than he is on Jesus. And as we think about this impulsive attitude, often when we are just impulsive, we miss the opportunity to be obedient because we've already committed ourselves, just as Peter did here. I find it interesting when I look at the harmony of the Gospels in this section, you know, in the verses here before where Jesus is saying, who do people say that I am? And, you know, in Matthew 16, Peter says, you're the Christ, and then he goes on, and Jesus says, I'm going to die, and so on, and Peter says, Lord, that's got to be far away from you.

There's that same impulsive attitude in the heart coming out. And, you know, it's really just the flesh life that Al was speaking with us about this afternoon. Peter's flesh and the desires of his flesh are coming out, and isn't it interesting that in any of the Gospels that you pick this up, you'll find the verse right after where Jesus says, if anyone would follow me, he must deny self, pick up his cross daily, and follow me.

That's the Lord's response to Peter's fleshy response to his question. An impulsive attitude, and I like to think about obedience, and when we think about being obedient to the Lord, obedience always makes me think about three things, and so I want to ask you this evening just to switch back a couple of years in your life to a time when you had the freedom to watch your favorite television show, something that you would not want to miss on a sort of weekly basis, and at a time in your life where that was important to you, and you're still living at home, and mom and dad are still around, and as you're there, you're watching your very favorite television show, and so dad comes in and he says, take out the garbage. Now that's a whoo-hoo! Wouldn't you get excited about that? Well, okay, so you're watching your very favorite show.

What's the first thing you say? I'll take it out later. This is the exciting bit. Have you been obedient? No, because when God asks us to do something, he wants us to do it right now, and so let's go back a couple of feet in the tape here, and you're sitting watching your favorite television show, and dad comes in and says, take out the garbage, and so very quickly you go to the kitchen, you grab that garbage bag, tie the neck of it, tunnel out quickly through the back door, and having a quick look around to make sure nobody's watching, toss it into the neighbor's yard, and wheel back in and sit down and watch your show again.

Have you been obedient? You did it right now, but you didn't do what was asked, right? And let's make a third scenario, shall we? You're sitting watching that show, and dad says, here, take out the garbage, and so you say, let Hannah do it. You're always picking on me. Let somebody else do it.

Others can take it, but then you figure, well, I gotta obey, so you get up and you run into the kitchen, and you get the garbage bag, and you go out the back door, making sure that the whole street understands that you tossed it, and you go on down to where that garbage trash can is, and you hang the top up on it

so that the neighbors understand exactly where you're positioned, and you fire the garbage in there, and slam the lid on it, and with a little foot assistance, going back into the house, close the door again, and sit down. Were you obedient? Well, you did it right away, and you did do what you were asked, but there's a problem. It was the wrong attitude, and this impulsive thing is just like that, isn't it? It's the wrong attitude.

It's without thinking. It's without seeking. Yeah.

A couple of years ago, I was having trouble with a car. I went to a dealership. I got a good deal in a trade-in, and I drove away saying, press the lid.

No more bother. I wasn't a quarter of a mile out of the dealership when the Holy Spirit said, you never asked me. Impulsive.

My nice, shiny, red, Chevy Cavalier has so many chips in it and stuff. I didn't have it very long when somebody ran into the front of it, but because the Lord had just spotlighted this in my heart, I sat there the day that the car was hit and said, dear Lord Jesus, somebody just hit your car. Do you see it? If it's mine, it's my problem.

If it's his, he'll take care of it. See how Jesus works just in the life, in the ordinary, working with these men day by day. There are things that he is working with them in.

Let's look at another one in verse 40. Here's another situation that Jesus is teaching in and addressing. In verse 40, it says, so I implored your disciples to cast it out, but they could not.

Now, what's the problem here? Again, in a comparison or harmony of the gospels, you'll see the disciples say, Lord, why could we not cast it out? There's a faithless attitude. I was preaching in Ontario one time in a church in Lindsay, Ontario, and the pastor's son came by, and the pastor afterwards was saying to me, my son used to be so into drugs and stuff that even the police were afraid of him. And I said to him, what happened? He said, well, actually, I came home one night and discovered that my son had slit his wrists, and there was blood everywhere.

He said, I grabbed that boy, and I started to cry out to God, God, in Jesus' name, don't let this boy die. He said, I knew that the Lord was going to touch him. When we got him to hospital, they said, not very many more minutes, and it would have been too late.

He said, you know what? That was not a faithless prayer. I knew that if God did not act, this boy was lost. Actually, that boy is now the head of a denomination in Canada.

God has great plans, doesn't he? This faithless attitude. Many people, you know, ask the Lord for revival, but I like when Bill McLeod often says to me, do you believe it, or are you just hoping that somehow God will do it? Or are we praying in faith, believing, trusting, understanding the sovereignty of God and all that goes along with it, and yet by faith, believing God for what we cannot do? It needs to be faith, believing prayer. So, if we look just back for a second at these three, as we leave here tomorrow, we want to say, Lord, I want to keep a soft heart.

Keep your spirit working in and on my heart. Lord, I don't want to become impulsive. I want to be obedient to you.

Teach me how to walk softly before you. And you know, it is an amazing thing how God does that and how he works with that. A long time ago, as a pastor in a Baptist church up in Canada, I had the invitation to go into full-time evangelistic work with the Billy Graham team, and nobody knew about it but me.

And I prayed, Lord, in the next 48 hours, I need to give an answer. Lord, in the next 48 hours, would you send someone who knows nothing about the situation with a specific word that even I cannot miss? I was preaching at a family camp, and we happened to be going out fishing on one of those putt-putt catamaran kind of things, you know? And another pastor's wife, who knew zero about what was going on in my life, said, John, the burden of your heart is evangelism. If you ever get a chance to go full-time in evangelism, take it.

I said, Marge, would you say that again? She said, you're an evangelist. If you have a chance to go into evangelistic work full-time, take it. And then she looked at me and she said, what is wrong with you? I said, why do you ask? She said, you look like I hit you with something.

I said, you did. You just didn't know that you were hitting me with it. Let's believe God for some things in the next year.

Let's believe God for some things as individuals. Let's believe God for some things in our churches. Let's believe God for some things in this conference, in this prayer movement, seeking that God would come.

Let's believe God for some things in his world. And you know there's absolutely nothing wrong with asking him just as I did. Lord, show me.

I could tell too many stories, so I better get my skates on here and look at four other things here quickly. Verse 45, here's a fourth thing that Jesus is addressing just in the regular working with his own. Verse 45 says, but they did not understand this saying, and it was hidden from them so that they did not perceive it, and they were afraid to ask him about the saying.

Here's an unteachable attitude, and Jesus has made a statement. Picture this going along the road that day. He makes this statement about how he's going to go to Jerusalem and die and so on, and they don't pick up on it.

And so, can you picture this? Somebody says, Peter, ask him. I'm not asking him. You ask him.

I'm not going to look stupid. John, John, you're the one he loves. Ask him.

I'm the youngest. I'm not going to ask him. Now, why would they not ask him? Pride.

Pride. There is the Son of the living God, the source of all wisdom, the greatest teacher that ever has walked this earth feet away, but they would not ask him. And you know, I think sometimes as we consider this whole attitude thing, what a picture there is here in this verse.

It just demonstrates again the strength of the flesh that we are working in and with as the Lord progressively moves in sanctifying our lives and drawing us deeper into holiness and life in him. I have a wonderful friend who was born in Malaysia. His name is T.V. Thomas.

He was educated at University of Madras in India. He'd be a good speaker and broken before the throne sometime. T.V. had been a Christian for quite a while.

And at the university, another Christian, a man called Ambrose, came by one day and said to him, what are you doing after lunch? And T.V. said, nothing. He said, good, let's go and pray. So, T.V., to use his description of the incident, says that they went to the physics building and they went up onto the roof of the building where there was nobody there but the two of them.

And they got on their knees and Ambrose prayed for an hour. And he prayed as if God was deaf. You know, the volume was well up there.

And he never did ask T.V. to pray. And so T.V. was thinking, well, what was the point of this? And a week went by and Ambrose came by and said, T.V., after lunch, you don't have a class. Let's go and pray.

And so three times over three weeks, this exercise is repeated. They go to the top of the building. They get on their knees.

Ambrose opens up and he prays for an hour as if God was deaf. And on the fourth week, T.V. is thinking, why doesn't he ask me to pray? I could pray as good as him. So Ambrose got on his knees, T.V. got on his knees, and Ambrose said, T.V., why don't you pray? T.V. says, I prayed everything I could think of, and I thought I must have prayed for at least an hour.

But when I looked at my watch, it was three minutes. He said, when I finished, Ambrose prayed for an hour as if God was deaf, and then we were done. What was the problem? T.V. was kind of unteachable, wasn't he? That's something we want to ask the Lord to guard us against.

In the next year, Lord, God, I want to be teachable. I want to hear the still, small voice of the Spirit of God speaking to me. And that would be a guard against pride, wouldn't it? Just to remain, oh, so teachable.

Psalms 103, verse 7 says, he showed his deeds to the children of Israel and his ways to Moses. Teachableness is saying, Lord, I don't just want to know the things that you do. I want to know you.

I want to know how you do them. Answer Dan's question, why? As he was talking about this morning. Why is this like this? Getting to know the ways of God.

Let me move us then on to verse 46, the very next verse. Before I read this verse, let me just ask, is anybody in here who's seen any conflict in the church and just wanted to be an evangelist for a minute and say, I see those hands? Then a dispute arose among them as to which of them would be greatest. Wow.

John, are you telling me that the disciples who walked beside Jesus had the same kind of thing going on? That's exactly what I'm telling you. This is why we need that sanctified life. This is why we need to be dead to self, and that the life of Christ would be lived in us and through us and flow in us.

Here is this selfish attitude. Who's the greatest? Don't you love what verse 47 says? Jesus perceiving the thought of their heart. What's that tell you? You can't hide anything from him.

He knows exactly what's going on in the heart. And when we have that selfish attitude, he knows all about it. Who's the greatest? I'll give you a chuckle.

This is a few years ago now, 1990, in a crusade in the city of Calgary, Alberta, a deacon from a Baptist church qualified through classes that I taught to be a counselor at an evangelistic series of meetings for the Billy Graham people. And he and his wife went early and they got good seats down in front of the platform, probably the best view in the house. And lo and behold, a guy from the street who's dirty and

smelly and just awful come and sit beside him.

And the deacon said to himself, let's move. So he and his wife got up and they moved over a couple of sections and sat down. Only problem was the guy off the street got up and moved over two sections and sat down right beside him again.

So he said, let's move. So they moved over some more sections. Now they're sitting away around the side.

And that guy got up and walked over there and sat down beside him again. And all through the service, my deacon friend prayed, God, please don't touch him because I don't want to talk to him. I don't want to have to counsel him.

Would you say he had a selfish attitude? It's kind of what I would get out of that. You know, when the invitation was given that night, that man was one of the first to go. And the deacon said, I fought with the Lord.

I said, Lord, I don't want to go. And the Lord said, you go. So he said, I went and stood nearly beside him, John.

Said, then the Lord seemed to be saying, put your arm around him. And I said, Lord, I don't want to touch him. I don't even want to talk to him.

He said, and the guy fell down on his knees and he's sort of down there on his knees. And now I got to get down on my knees beside him. And I got down on my knees and I put my arm around his shoulder.

And he said, the man came apart at the seams. That man said this, I walked into this place and I said, God, if you're real, let somebody in here touch me. Otherwise I'm going to the river because it's over.

That deacon started a ministry called the mustard scene that is now established in many different cities, looking after those who are street people and sharing the gospel with them. You see, this selfish thing just doesn't fit when the self-life has been surrendered to the Lord. And we're no longer living for the flesh or in the flesh.

Keep your finger there and look nine and look with me at Galatians chapter five and verse 24 for a minute, 24 and 25. And those who are Christ have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the spirit, let us also walk in the spirit.

You see what they're saying? The word is telling us when we live in the spirit, all of that stuff has been put aside just as Al taught us this afternoon. Quickly, let me look at two more and then we're going to finish and I believe we'll be done early this evening. Number 49, verse number 49.

Here's another thing that Jesus is dealing with and teaching and addressing. Now John answered and said, Master, we saw someone casting our demons in your name and we forbade him because he does not follow with us. And here is an arrogant attitude.

He's not one of us, so we forbid him Lord. Somebody else speaking in your name Lord. And you see what Jesus says? Do not forbid him for he is not against us is on our side.

There in verse 50. Unity is not uniformity. Unity is not everyone using the same traditions or liturgy or anything else.

Unity is a heart that is connected to Jesus and obedient to him. This whole idea, the attitude that the heart can be arrogant, we want to say Lord, what a humble heart. I don't remember exactly when, but I remember talking to Dr. Graham one day when some meetings were on and I said to him, do you know that my mother and father were converted in services that you held in Belfast in 1953? And he said, no, I didn't know that John.

Those were amazing meetings. He said, you should probably talk to Ruth sometime about her impression of those days in Belfast. And so I asked Mrs. Graham that the next opportunity, what do you remember about those meetings in Belfast? And she smiled and she said, I remember before we left London being told a little bit about the culture of Northern Ireland and I was told, whatever you do, do not wear any makeup, nothing.

Whatever you do, don't do it. So she said, and you know, I didn't, except one night I was headed out from the house where we were staying and as I was passing by the hall mirror, I looked and said, oh, pasty face. She said, I put just the tiniest sliver of lipstick on, nobody will ever notice it.

So like it wasn't even that I did it in the full lips or anything, it was just after the service, she said, this lady came up to Billy and she said to him, Mr. Graham, you're a wonderful preacher and don't worry about your bad wife. John Wesley had a bad wife too. Sounds like Northern Ireland, all right.

But you know what? That lady sat in a service where the gospel was preached and she didn't hear one word of it. And the reason she didn't hear one word of it was because of one tiny little sliver, one little idiot, one little idiot, one little idiot. Tiny, bitty bit of lipstick.

You see, this thing of pride is always the trap, isn't it? And so again, as we think, we're just saying over the next while, Lord, help me to walk in biblical humility with you. When we do that, we don't accomplish it because we can, but because of the work of his spirit in us. And as you just ask the Lord day by day to address these kinds of things in your heart, you're building that relationship with him that allows you to walk in freedom and allows you to see the ongoing sanctifying work of the spirit as he builds you up from the inside.

I got a lesson one day. I was called upon by a friend, a pastor friend. I thought he was joking.

He phoned me on Sunday morning and he said, John, are you preaching this morning? I laughed and said, no, Henry, I'm not preaching this morning and I'm not going to be. He said, John, I'm not joking. I've lost my voice.

Would you come, please? Buddy, honest, I'll pay you. I said, Henry, are you really serious? Yes. So, I'm driving across the city and saying, Lord, what am I going to preach in this church? And I started to think, well, you know, I could preach about this and I could preach on that, and this is a nice little sermon, maybe I should do something on that.

And every couple of minutes there came into my mind this word, election, election. When's the last time you heard a sermon on election? It's not exactly the most popular subject in all of scripture, is it? And I said, Lord, are you serious about this, election? So, I arrived and Henry honestly did have a throat that could not function and he probably had a high temperature running as well because the sweat was just

pouring out of the brother. And I did the service and I spoke from Ephesians chapter one, and I spent about half of my time talking about what a thing it is when you realize that those who are elect of God are chosen by him.

It's a great thing. We have also that moment in time when we choose him, but it's also a biblical truth that he has chosen us. I said, you know what, that's enough to get an Irishman to kind of suck in the middle and stick out the top.

Chosen? You know, when I played sports I was usually the last guy picked for the team. When you stop and think about this thing, election, then I asked that congregation, how do you feel about the others that God has chosen? Look around the room, look at these men and women. God has set his hand upon them and he saved them.

How do you feel about them? We went on to look at those verses in Ephesians 1, talking about how God has lavished his grace on us and so on, and then I gave an opportunity for people to respond. I said, you see, this thing of election shouldn't puff us up at all. In fact, it's a biblical doctrine that ought to teach us absolute biblical humility, that ought to lay us on our face before the Lamb of God with nothing to merit us at all, but to see the depth and the extent of his love and his grace.

And I basically said, if God is saying something to you today, you need to just come and say something to him and we'll open the altar for an opportunity for prayer. It was like a bomb going off in that place. There were 280 some people at the altar.

I turned around and looked at Pastor Henry and said, what's going on? Now he wasn't sweating, but there was a lot more liquid and obvious. I said, you come and take over. Now he said, he come and got on his knees at the altar, told me this afterwards, said, I don't know how you knew, but we were this far away from a split.

We'd gotten into camps and everybody's right, and everybody has rights. And he said, you came along this morning and you said, there's only one who is right, and his name is Jesus. And when we know him, we give our right to be right to him.

That church never did have a split. And it's one of the larger churches in the city today, and I thank God for it. Oh, you see how Jesus loves his own and works with them.

I'll do one more in verse 54, and then we're going to take some time to meet the Lord. When his disciples, James and John, saw this, they said, Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them just as Elijah did? These are the Irish disciples. I am convinced of it.

Here's an intolerant attitude. You see what Jesus says? You do not know what manner of spirit you are of, for the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. It's easy for us to look and to give back what we get.

The disciples were rejected when they went into that village, and they were going to give it back big time. But Jesus says, you don't understand the spirit that you are. And they go on to another place, don't they? I want to just wrap things up.

Let me ask you to turn with me to Philippians chapter 2. This verse and verses have been quoted in the morning session, and Al mentioned them in the afternoon session, and I just want to read them for us here

again in the evening session. Philippians chapter 2, verses 5 through 11. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant and coming in the likeness of man.

And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted him and given him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven and those on earth and those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. Jesus said, if anyone would follow me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily.

You think about these seven attitudes that we've looked at. These are things to ask the Lord. Lord, by your Spirit, guard me from this.

So what are we going to do as we move out of here after Al preaches that final message tomorrow morning, and I'm sorry I won't be here to get it. I'll have to get it online. It's been a blessing, brother, to sit under your ministry.

What are we going to do? What have we been doing for seven days? We've been praying, and I want to suggest to you we're going to close in a little bit with an opportunity just to make a commitment to the Lord to say, Lord, don't let me slip back don't let me lose the things that I've gained these days. Help me to keep the right heart and attitude and spirit and learn to pray in a way that honors you and that takes your burden and brings it back to your throne. One of the best Bible teachers that I know is a dear South African brother called Gerard de Toy.

When Gerard started in South Africa, he and I are prayer partners, so I know him very well. When he started to preach in South Africa, people would say to him, you need to get this lady to pray for you, and so he would ask her and she would say, I'll think about it and I'll pray about it, and one day she called him in and she said, all right, I'll pray for you, and Gerard would go out on a weekend and he would preach, and he'd come back to give a report to this lady, and when he would come in, she would say to him, seven people trusted the Lord Jesus in the weekend where you preached, and he'd say, that's right, how did you know? She said, I prayed every single one of them into the kingdom. That's teamwork.

I said, sometimes I'd go back to see her and I'd go in and she'd say, is it that boy? What were you doing this weekend? You were wasting your time reading books when you should have been preaching the gospel. He said, she never missed. I wish Gerard was here to tell you tonight, when that lady had a stroke and she was dying, they called him on the other side of the country and they said, if you want to see her, you better come now, and he came into that hospital room, and she's in an oxygen tent, and he can hear her say, is it that boy? Yes, he says to me.

He could see her hand rustling around under that plastic. Give me your hand. I want to pray for you once more before I go, and she did.

Gerard says, John, when I walked out of that room, I said, who's going to pray for me now? I want to ask you, at this prayer conference, God's been working in this thing of prayer, and dear ones, we dare not walk away from here and lose ground, not because we allow pride or anything of self into the picture, not because we are strong enough to do anything in our own way or flesh, but because we have a call and a commission. Do you know why the devil hates intercessors? I was smiling because he sure knows the

answer to this one. I'll tell you why.

Because there's an intercessor who sits at the right hand of the Father, and when you really get a hold of this intercessory prayer, what is it we sometimes say? Lord, I want to be like Jesus. Do you see it? Do you see it? It's time for me to quit and shut up and settle down a little bit. I'm going to, in a moment, ask Albert to come and sing a song.

I'm going to ask you to do something as Albert is singing. He's going to come and sing an old song that I asked him to do last night. He just says, I pledge allegiance to the Lamb.

I want to ask you, while he's singing, you know the drill. I didn't learn it in Canada, but you sure did. So, as God is moving you to the place tonight, saying, Lord, I want you to continue this sanctifying work in my heart.

I don't want to fall into any of these attitude traps. I want to pledge allegiance to the Lamb. I want to learn, truly, how to intercede.

Make it your opportunity just to respond to the Lord, just to stand where you are as Albert sings and pledge allegiance to him. Albert, would you come, my brother? I love this dear brother and so appreciate his ministry. I pledge allegiance to the Lamb.

With all my strength, with all I am, I will seek to honour He's the Lamb. I pledge allegiance to the Lamb. I have heard now Christians long ago.

They were brought before the tyrant's throne. They were told that he would spare their lives if they would renounce the name of Christ. One by one they chose to die.

The Son of God they would not deny. Like a great angelic choir sings. I can almost hear their voices ring.

I pledge allegiance to the Lamb. With all my strength, with all I am, I will seek to honour His command. I pledge allegiance to the Lamb.

Now the years have come and the years have gone, but the cross of Jesus still goes on. Now a time has come to count the cost, to reject this world and embrace the cross. And one by one let us live our lives for the one who died to give us life.

Till the trumpet sounds and the final day, let us proudly stand and boldly say, I pledge allegiance to the Lamb. With all my strength and with all I am, I will seek to honour His command. I pledge allegiance to the Lamb.

To the Lamb of God who bore my pain, who took my place, who bore my shame. And I will seek to honour His command. I pledge allegiance to the Lamb.

I pledge allegiance to the Lamb. With all my strength and with all I am, I will seek to honour His command. I pledge allegiance to the Lamb.

I pledge allegiance to the Lamb. With all my strength and with all I am, I will seek to honour His command. I pledge allegiance to the Lamb.

I pledge allegiance to the Lamb. With all my strength and with all I am, I will seek to honour His command.  
I pledge allegiance to the Lamb.

I acknowledge our allegiance to the Lamb of God. Above all earthly powers and all earthly thrones, you are the King of Kings. You are the Lord of Lords.

Father, as we stand in your presence tonight, you've called us here at this prayer conference. You've spoken to our hearts about many things and issues. We recognize, Lord, that we need your help in the coming days.

So many wrong attitudes can slip in so quickly. If it is true for the disciples in Luke chapter 9, then, Father, it can happen in our lives, too. And so tonight, we just acknowledge our absolute dependence upon you.

Father, quietly in our hearts tonight, we just would say to you, Lord, please don't stop the sanctifying work of your Spirit. Day by day, shine the searchlight of your Holy Spirit into my heart, my brothers and my sisters here. Continue to touch us and to draw us on and deeper with you.

Lord, would you show us victories that we could not imagine? Indeed, as your Word says, would you show us those great and mighty things that we do not know? By your Spirit, Lord, keep us soft before you, obedient before you. We want to simply pledge that obedience, Father. Not in our strength, but in yours.

Father, in this moment, you know our hearts. And as you've been speaking to our hearts, perhaps I'm speaking to someone this evening. And the Lord has been touching some issues.

This is a moment when you want to just come to the foot of the cross and set aside all those things of self, all our rights and all our ideas, and just let Jesus be Lord. Lord, as we remain in the attitude of prayer, I want to ask you to do one last prayer assignment. And after we've prayed on this for a few moments, we'll close this evening.

It would be a shame to leave here tomorrow and to go back and to get busy and to miss the things that God is calling us to. So I want to ask if you would just willingly come to the Lord in prayer this evening, and just to say to him, Lord, would you give me someone to mentor? These things that you've given to me, Lord, would you give me someone to mentor? In the next year, Lord, would you give me one or two people that I can mentor in these prayer truths and in this prayer walk? Help them to understand that when we die to self, we can live in the Spirit. And so just again, as we did when I first started this evening, let's turn to one or two others and I'd like you just for a few moments to pray for each other.

This issue of mentors, it means that broken before the throne next year, should the Lord tarry, we'd each have some folk to bring with us. And we would invest what God has put in us into others. So for a few moments tonight, I appreciate your patience with me as we've labored through the Word.

Just take time to visit with two or three other people. You pray for them and have them pray for you, that God would give each of us someone to mentor, someone that we can deposit these things into. So go ahead and pray for a little while.

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