

Prayer

by John Musser

John Musser emphasizes the transformative power of prayer in achieving peace and contentment through a personal relationship with God.

Duration: 59:14

Scripture: Matthew 6:25-34, Philippians 4:4-9

Topics: "Prayer"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by expressing their desire for God's guidance and the ability to speak to people's hearts. They mention their favorite scripture, Philippians 4:4-9, which they have memorized and use as the basis for their messages. The speaker emphasizes the importance of having a personal experience with God and sharing that reality with others. They discuss the concept of being anxious for nothing and how Jesus taught not to worry about basic needs but to seek God's kingdom first. The speaker also mentions Paul's financial struggles and how the Philippians supported him. They conclude by expressing gratitude for the faithful attendees and acknowledging those who couldn't be present.

Transcript

I believe that every one of us should have a place in our homes, our attics, basements, somewhere where we can get along with Christ. If we don't, we're going to see in this message, there's not going to be the peace, there's not going to be the spiritual alertness. And I believe one day, without that time of prayer, we can fall into error.

One time without that closeness and intimacy with God, we can fall into error. We can make rash decisions, we can make mistakes. And we're going to try to get into a little of the Greek and here in Philippians chapter 4 and share what Paul has promised through prayer, what God has promised through prayer.

It's therapeutic. The Word of God and prayer is therapeutic. As we're going to see this afternoon also in Renewing the Mind seminar, please come.

If you've got question marks in your mind, just at least try it out, the first session. It's going to be overhead transparencies of how the Word of God affects you mentally, spiritually, physically, and emotionally. We're going to be talking about how the Word of God gets right into your bloodstream.

Right into, like Spurgeon said, our blood must be vivid. And I believe that. Because that is scriptural, there's scriptural basis for it.

Jesus said, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. We're going to talk about eating the Word. Father, thank You for these people.

We love these people. We thank You that some of them have been so faithful and be with us every day. And others, Lord, because of long distances, have not been able to be with us.

But we thank You for the times that they can be with us, Lord. And then others, new today, Lord God, help us to be able to speak to all the hearts and in the direction of Your Spirit. And we'll thank You, in Jesus' name.

Philippians chapter 4, verse 4-9. If you've been around me long, you know that's my favorite portion of scripture. I love Philippians chapter 4, verse 4-9.

I memorized it a long time ago. In fact, most of the messages that I share in the Revival Crusade have come out of my scripture memory box. Out of memorizing the Word of God.

Because there's an incubation period, and then I experience these truths in my own life. And then I have a life message, and then I can share it with others. If we don't have a life message, we can't share it with others.

We've got to share reality with people. You can't just share doctrine without experience. And that's why Paul said one of the reasons why the apostles and the preachers went through an abundance of tribulations, that they might learn the victory through the Word of God, and they might be, in turn, be able to teach others.

They said, as the tribulations abound in us, so our consolation toward you abounded. So Paul, going through all the trials and tribulations, he digs into the Word of God, or by revelation at that time, receives insight from God and puts these truths into practical application, and then he shares with others the victory he's received through these truths. And that's basically what we're doing in these days.

A head will communicate to the head, but hearts will communicate to hearts. And that's true also of our witnessing and sharing with unbelievers, and sharing with other people that need Christ. It has to be a heart message.

In Philippians chapter 4, verse 9, Paul, I believe, is giving one of the secrets of his life. I believe that he's just opening up the curtains of privacy in his own daily life with God. And here he was in a prison cell, and the Philippians, of course, they sent a financial gift to Paul through Epaphroditus.

It's interesting to me, and I'm just making some added comments here before I'm getting to the core of the matter, I guess, but do you know that Paul the apostle struggled with finances many times? Do you know that Paul went through financial heartache? I know some of you have gone through some real tribulations in this area, but Paul says in Philippians that there was no church at the beginning that communicated with Paul the apostle, but the Philippians also, and then the Philippians got discouraged, and they stopped supporting him for a while too. And then he said, I thank God that your care for me has flourished again. Not that I desire a gift, but fruit may have fallen on your account.

And it's interesting, as we study this out, how Paul went through these times, but Paul learned to look at life from God's perspective. And this is the very reason why the book of Philippians was written. It was occasioned by Epaphroditus coming to him with a financial gift, and it really relieved some pressures in the life of the apostle Paul.

It took away some pressures he's going through at the end of the chapter we see. But as he sends this letter, after Epaphroditus bringing the financial gift to Paul, Paul is telling them that his eyes are on the Lord Jesus Christ, that he's looking at life through God's eyes from God's perspective. And he says there in Philippians 4, Paul says, Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice.

You can't always rejoice in your circumstances. But we can always rejoice in the Lord. Because he's unchangeable, and he's always the same.

He's always Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today and forever. You can always rejoice in the Lord, no matter what's going on. The outward conflict, the financial dilemmas, the physical heartaches, the pressures, the discouragements of life.

We can always rejoice in the Lord when you get your eyes elevated. Of course that's what David did many times when he was going out into the field of battle. Many times he would rejoice in the Lord, he would praise God, and praise is really magnifying the attributes of God in your heart.

And it's delighting oneself in the Lord regardless of circumstances, regardless of pressures of life, regardless of whether or not you have that job. Because we can always delight ourselves in the Lord Jesus Christ, because he's the same. Men may fail us, but Jesus never.

Amen? We can all say that. You know something? I will fail my wife, and my wife at times will fail me, and my children, and one another. But God will never fail you.

Never, never. And He'll never, never forsake you. And so even though seemingly, Paul, no one was helping him financially, no one was intervening in his life, and now he's revived and flourished again, because Epaphroditus did come and says, Praise God when he was saying that Philippians, their love for me, has revived again.

It's blossomed, it's revived. And that just puts so much joy in the heart of Paul. But Paul says, I want you to know something.

We see it in other scriptures. He says, I've learned the secret of life. And that literally means to be content in whatever state I am.

And maybe I better just turn there, because I think maybe God's leading me in that direction before we get to the Philippians 4, 4-9. Let's look at it. We're in Philippians chapter 4 and verse 10.

But I rejoice in the Lord greatly, that now at last your care for me has flourished again. Wherein ye were careful, but ye lacked an opportunity, not that I speak and expect and want. For I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, even if it's Nebraska, Michigan, wherever it is, of course you know you're not talking about that, or whatever the circumstances, the trials therewith to be content.

And in the Greek it literally means that Paul was exclaiming, I have tapped in and I have learned the secret of life. I've learned the secret of living, and that is godliness with contentment is great gain. I know both

how to be amazed, I know how to be humiliated, Paul says financially.

I know how to be amazed and I know how to abound, I know how to take care of my finances when God's really blessing. I know how to handle them biblically. We're going to be talking about that Wednesday night.

Everywhere and all things, I'm instructed by the Lord Jesus Christ, both to be full and to be hungry. Even the great apostle Paul? Yes. Both to abound and then to suffer need.

And in the most strict context, he says, I can do all things through Christ to strengthen me. And he's talking regarding financial matters, and the needs, the basic needs of life. Notwithstanding ye have well done in that you did communicate with my affliction.

He was going through intense affliction because he did not have the proper arraignment, the food, and many other things as we see in his personal testimony. Now you Philippians know this, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I started preaching out in my evangelistic campaigns and missionary crusades, that when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as giving and receiving but you alone. Can you imagine that? One church, and we read about the life and times of the apostle Paul and God used him to write 14 books in the New Testament, and at one time there was only one church that was supporting him and then they stopped.

This is not that I desire a gift, but I desire a fruit that may abound your count. Sometimes I believe I can identify with the apostle Paul, the gospel, there's so much that could be done and revival work and evangelism and many other things. But we cannot get our minds on the adversity and the heartaches of life.

Paul is teaching us here what he learned in his own personal experience and now he's communicating it to the Philippians and to the whole body of Christ and how bad the Philippians bore. Paul says rejoice in the Lord always and again I say rejoice. Look at life from God's perspective.

Look at life in God's eyes. And I believe that's one of the greatest challenges that we have every day of our life. And you will not be able to look at life through God's eyes, and I know this so much personally, unless you're meeting with God on a daily basis.

Now watch it. You want to look at life through God's eyes? Verse 5, let your reasonable sweetness be known to all men, the Lord's at hand. And here it is, be careful for nothing.

Be anxious, be worried, be troubled for nothing. It talks about carnal anxiety. Jesus said in Matthew chapter 6 four times to take no thought for the basic needs of life.

He says otherwise it is in a way worshipping manner. Because you're under the burden and servitude and bondage of finances instead of trusting in the Lord. He said take no thought, take no thought.

But he said seek ye first the King of God and his righteousness and all of these things shall be added unto you. He said get your priorities straight. Because all of these things he said do the Gentiles seek after unbelievers? But he says your Heavenly Father knows that you have need of these things.

I believe most of us do not come to that very simple realization that our Heavenly Father knows that we have need of these things. And we get anxious and we get worried and we fret and we wonder and we lag

in the past and project in the future. But there's only one way that you're going to be able to walk day by day with Christ and moment by moment and hour by hour and that is you must be careful for nothing.

I want you to underscore that word nothing, that you'd circle that. He says not one thing that you're to allow, not one thing bring anxiety into your heart. Now he's not talking about legitimate concern because you can become passive.

There's a lot of passivity today and I think Christians many times don't know the difference between passivity and legitimate concern because Paul had legitimate concerns and many times his heart was so burdened that he said I'm willing to give my soul he said for the children of Israel. So he wasn't passive he was willing to give his never ending soul that Israel might be saved. And he was on many campaigns but he says don't let carnal anxiety bring you down.

Be anxious for nothing. He said but in that strong contrast in everything and I've underscored that word everything. In everything by prayer or via prayer supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be known to God.

You see we're like human pressure carcasses. We have not been created to handle fear, bitterness anxiety, worry, fretting and all these things that we have not been created by God to handle these things and are devastating to the human body chemistry. In fact the human mind is so constituted that it can only effectively meditate on one thing in the heart.

And that's why Paul said this one thing I do. You cannot worry and fret and be anxious about all your problems and all your family tribulations and all your financial tribulations or your physical problems and have your mind at Christ. And so Paul says take them one by one and their heavy burdens and God says casting all my care upon you, on me because he cares for you.

God commands us to take these mental weights and that's what they are. Casting all your care that's what it is. They're like mental weights and anxieties.

When we share people with people, Psalm 37 the committed way, we teach them that when they've got many vexations and many trials like Martha she was covered about with many worries and many contemplations in her mind. Many times we encourage people to come before God and just picture in their mind's eye coming before Heavenly Father that's on mission and knows all of our needs and one by one taking all those problems and putting them into a basket. Take the physical dilemmas.

Take the worries about the future. What's going to happen next year? We may not even be here next year. We may be ever with the Lord Jesus Christ next year and you may be wasting hours of energy in thinking about next year and we're going to be into the eternal realm next year.

Who knows? And you take those problems one by one and you say, Lord this thing has vexed me for years but I can't handle it no more. Physically, emotionally, mentally, spiritually I know that it's wrong against you Lord. Here it is.

I confess that I've worked against it and I've underestimated your power and Lord God that I have sinned against you and I've doubted you in this area. Here it is. Bang.

Right now it may be ten things. It may be twenty things. Put it all in that basket and then you say what do we do next with the basket? You take the basket and give it to God.

You say, Lord here's the problems. Lord, I'm going to obey your word and you know whatever you committed they're God's hands. He'll take care of it.

God has a divine obligation that whatever you commit in His hands that He will take care of it. He will intervene. Dear friends, I want to tell you through personal, practical experience that it is so true.

That God never fails. Great is His faithfulness. And He always will intervene.

But until you're willing to learn in this committed way. Now put Psalm 37 if you would beside verse 6 of Philippians chapter 4. Just write the reference down. Psalm 37.

And also if you would write Psalm 91 down there beside that reference. And source of commandment. Be worried for nothing.

But all your trials and tribulations you bring to God through the avenue of prayer and thanksgiving with supplication. Supplication with thanksgiving. So we see three things right here.

We take these mental pressures and anxieties, financial needs or whatever it may be. Paul's exposing the secret of his tranquility of mind, his peace and his joy that he has in the midst of all circumstances. He's teaching us right here of what he was talking about in the latter verses of how he'd learned the secret of life.

Now prayer to be defined is asking. James says we receive not because we ask not. Jesus said ask and it shall be given you.

Seek and you shall find, not that it shall be asked on you. But the great prayer warrior James says one of the reasons why we are not entering into the promises of God because we're simply not asking. We saw this morning in Sunday school.

But the word supplication is earnestly beseeching God. Coming to God and it's a heartfelt supplication. It's a burden that you're lifting up to God and you're giving this burden to God.

Supplication is more of an intensified prayer. We are coming to God and you say Lord this is something I've had so long in my life. I give it to you or we're interceding for someone or whatever it may be.

And then it's all this debate balanced out as we saw this morning in Thanksgiving. Let your requests be known unto the omniscient God. Jesus said that your Heavenly Father already knows that you have needed these things.

Then why do we pray? Because we've been commanded and there's a mystery in prayer that God wants us to bring our burdens to Him specifically and definitely. I find one of the probably the major problems in the Christian life is that we're not definite in our burdens. We're not specific and we've generalized.

But He says everything and underscore the word things so it means definite things and specific things. Bring them to God via prayer and supplication through Thanksgiving. And this is the fruit of it.

This is one of the most beautiful verses that I know of in the New Testament for the Spirit filled Christian. And He says the peace of God which passes all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. He said that if you look at life through God's eyes as we see in verse 4. He says if you allow the weights and anxieties and tribulations of this earth to weigh you down, then in all these problems you

will constantly commit them into the hands of God and live the committed prayer life.

He says God's peace that transcends all human understanding will baptize your spirit in your heart or make a garrison around your innermost being. It's like a guard or a garrison that goes around a city. And He says God's peace will literally bathe your spirit and your mind and will keep you through the energy and the power of the Lord Jesus Christ.

That's exciting. You know what that tells me? That you can't abide in Christ and I can't abide in Christ unless I have a daily meeting with God. That there's no way that I can have the strength to live the Christian life without committing myself and drawing upon God every day and feeding on the Lord.

And I want to tell you something. I don't know who you are today, but if you do not have a daily quiet time, I will guarantee you that you are a defeated Christian. And you have no power and you have no victory and you have no peace of mind and anxieties and tribulations and worries are constantly bombarding your mind.

Because there's no other escape route. This is the only way. He didn't give us five or six alternatives.

He gave us one specific route to victory. And there's victory no other way. And He said God will make a garrison around your hearts and your minds the peace of God, which is the fruit of the Spirit of God.

And then He goes over there verse 8. Finally brethren, what sort of things are true? What sort of things are honest? What sort of things are just? What sort of things are pure? What sort of things are lovely? What sort of things are good reported? If there be any virtue, if there be any praise, meditate or fix or fasten your mind upon these things. And then He goes on to say that God had learned in talking the secret of life. Anybody that will study the Word of God on a regular basis will see that prayer is one of the most prominent themes from Genesis to Revelation.

Just recently we were in a church in Michigan and I challenged someone to take their concordance and look at all the times the word prayer or praying or prayest or pray, the word pray is following the Bible. One man said I'm going to go to my computer system and just make a print out of the New Testament alone. And I believe that there are at least 10 to 15 pages of extra long paper, 17 inch paper that was printed out on praying, prayers and praying in the New Testament alone.

And we find this from Genesis to Revelation. You read through the Psalms and you see this man that had a heart after God, that panted after God. Trace all the times that you find the word prayer mentioned in the Psalms.

It breathes through the Psalms. The Word of God in prayer is breathed into every Psalm that David sang and all the songs that the children of Israel sang. It was a life of prayer and He said evening, morning, at noon will I make my prayer and cry aloud unto thee.

You know something, you know why? Because prayerful spirit is the end of the self-life as we talked about the other day. Because a person who will pray has to be crucified with Christ. There's no way that he's going to maintain a daily prayer life because he knows and he's understood that I cannot survive spiritually.

I can't even please Christ unless I draw all my strength and power from Him that there's no other way. It's through Christ. It's by Christ.

If you abide in me, Jesus said. And my words abide in you. And we see that Daniel, that it was so prayer was so important to Daniel that he was willing to give his life.

Sometimes I've meditated upon Daniel. Just recently I was reading through the book and studying late at night. I was trying to every night meditate on the book of Daniel before I went to bed.

And I said Daniel was not trying to be haughty. He was not trying to be arrogant when they made that decree and said that no man is going to be able to pray before any God but the King. And when he went to his prayer closet or he opened his windows toward Jerusalem three times a day and kneeled and prayed toward Jerusalem, he was not doing it because I know the heart of Daniel.

You don't even find a blemish in the book of Daniel toward this man. This man. But there's only one way I believe that Daniel was totally convinced that he could not survive in a wicked and idolatrous Babylon without coming to God and praying.

There's no way that he was going to be able to show these kings that God reigned over the affairs of men. There's no way that Daniel was going to be able to stand up against the tide of the times. People trying to kill him, throw him into a den of lions and from the very beginning God's sparing his life.

And we see the secret of Daniel's power that he could conquer everything through prayer. And only if we would take the tribulations, the burdens, and get along with Christ until the thing has been prayed through, you would see miracle after miracle after miracle in your life. We give up too soon and we let the devil defeat us and discourage us and we run away and we don't persevere in prayer and we give up and we throw in the towel.

We see Nehemiah and how I love the book of Nehemiah. I've studied it many times. We find an intensely spiritual man.

The importance of prayer and work. Whenever you've got that reversed, you have chaos. But Nehemiah, this great man of God, under circumstances that we can't even conceive of, he was the king's cupbearer and yet under those conditions, under a heathen king, he received permission from the king to rebuild the gates and the walls of Jerusalem, even during troublous times, and even when Sambalot and Tobiah and all the adversaries constantly were against Nehemiah, everything was against him but he was a man of prayer.

Sometimes we read over these books and we don't realize the odds that these men were up against. We don't think about David, how many times he was outnumbered a hundred to one, that when he was going to the battlefield, that he could have easily been taken over. And sometimes we can identify with these men.

And we don't realize that they were men of like passions as we are, just like you and me, but they knew how to totally abandon themselves to Christ, to God. If Elijah's going to stop the heavens, he must pray. If he's going to open up the heavens again, then he must pray.

We read in the book of Luke about the prayer life of Jesus. And I love to go over these truths as we went in this morning to the prayer life of Paul. But you look in the book of Luke and there's another beautiful Bible study.

Go to each time that you see Jesus in prayer in the book of Luke. You'll find that He was engaged in intercessory prayer at His baptism and then the Spirit of God came down from heaven and descended upon Him like a dove. You'll find that before He chose His disciples, that He spent an entire night in prayer, praying for those disciples.

An entire night. And He wasn't deceived because He even said from the very beginning, have I not chosen you and one of you is deemed possessed? He knew that Judas was a traitor from the very beginning, but He still chose him. And then we find that Jesus went to a solitary place because the crowds and the thrones were coming up against Him and He'd gone to a solitary place and prayed.

Gethsemane, who we believe in Hebrews, we see the life of prayer that characterized the Lord Jesus Christ. The disciples were crying out for wisdom and illumination from God, from Jesus. And I can almost see the disciples when Jesus is engaged in prayer, we've got it in Luke chapter 11, you need not turn there, but when He stopped praying, the disciples said, Lord, teach us to pray.

We want to see the results. They'd already been taught the disciples' prayer, the formula for prayer, but the disciples said, Lord, how do we get the results? Extraordinary, unceasing, importunity in prayer, shameless persistence. Not always to pray, Jesus said, and not to faint, but we faint.

It's so easy today to go to the bank and buy the thing through the bank. That's one of the easiest things to do instead of waiting on God. And there are many things that we can bring into our lives.

And we can think about these things. We're always going to man. We always want to result to something apart from God.

But God keeps on bringing the brook down on us, and God keeps on taking the floor away from us, and all He wants us to do is to be totally and completely dependent upon Him. That's the message that I received from Genesis to Revelation to the Christian. It's total allegiance to God, dependency upon God for everything, because I'm going to tell you, friends, if this nation survives, there's going to be a day in the near future where God's people will have to depend on God.

When the economic system is going to crash, as most men in Washington, many of the scholars and people believe that we are on the very threshold of an economic crash. This world that we live in today is in crisis. Many things are taking place that most Christians are unaware of, and they are literally deceived, blinded, and it may be because of ignorance that we are on the threshold of a multitude of crises around the world.

And if anybody does any study, and they will read along these lines, I'm going to be sharing, the Lord willing, this week, a world in crisis, a message, and I'm going to try to take all the universal crises we see in the world. Jesus said at that time the Son of Man would come. But we have to learn in America how to be totally dependent on the Lord Jesus Christ, because it could be in the very near future all taken away.

And the indebtedness that many of God's people have incurred will be a temptation to them, to be involved. I believe personally, and I'm just going to give you a little thought here, I believe you know why many people are going to receive the mark of the beast during the Tribulation Hour? I believe because of the crash of the economy that they are going to be so indebted to the banks, and those banks are turned over to the government that they're going to be pressured that they will lose everything that they have unless they're willing to receive the mark of the beast. 666.

And I believe that's why so many people today will go in after the rapture of the church during the Tribulation Hour and receive the mark of the beast is because of their great indebtedness. It's all a program of Satan to bring people to such a point where they're totally dependent upon the government instead of God. The time is coming and it's nearer than what we think and this is the day and hour when we need to learn God and learn His ways and assimilate the Word of God and fill our hearts with the Word of God because times of great adversity and tribulation are in this nation and they're coming.

For some reason, many Bible scholars believe that before the elections of 1988 that things are going to take place, it's going to bring many Americans to their knees. And we've got to learn to draw strength and peace from Christ and we can do it even in the middle of heartaches and even as Paul said, even though this outward man, this body perishes day by day, the inner man is renewed day by day and I want to tell you something, if that inner man is not renovated every day through prayer and the Word of God, you won't make it. Because when the outward man is battered and the inner man is battered, there's no spiritual survival, there's oppression and fatigue and discouragement and loss of testimony.

When will we as Christians, all of us, every one of us come to the conclusion that these are imperative commands, they're not optional. We measure sin in our mind, we talk about all the drunks that we've downed the road and how we see them every day filled with alcohol and how they're hooked on drugs of all kinds and thieves and all these other things. But do we ever think of prayerlessness as one of the highest forms of pride that there is? And it is because it's self-sufficiency, self-sufficiency and really it's taking away the place of God.

God has made us to the point where we cannot exist without Him. But we'll try to fill it with the world and the many ambitions of life and many things. But Paul, we looked into his life this morning, he had some prayer list.

And that's why Paul says, I learned the secret of life. If anyone was battered, it was Paul. You read his personal testimony of the Jews five times received 40 stripes, saved one a night and a day.

He said, I've been in the deep. He said, wild animals ricked at his body. He said that he'd been deceived by false brethren.

He said he'd gone to places where he thought that they were Christians and had deceived him in perils of robbers, he says. Perils of my own countrymen going to Damascus, they want to kill him. They stoned him in Lystra.

How can this man keep going on? Because he'd learned the secret of life. And he just gave it to us in Philippians 4, 4-9. He learned to depend on God for everything.

Going in heathen nations. Going to Ephesus and causing such a riot and such a ruckus that they all want to stone him and kill him. They cried out, great is Diana of Ephesus.

Can you imagine this little Jew coming into town and just turning the town's right side up, even though he was battered and bruised? Yet he had a power that most of us don't understand. He was tapping into something and we begin to equate. We do this so many times.

We have a tendency to do it, but God told us not to do it. James told us not to do it. Many of the scriptures that we find teach us not to do it.

Not to put these men on a pedestal and say, we can't experience the same peace, the same joy and the same power. Because James says that Elijah was a man with like passions as we are. And Paul says, be ye followers of me, as I am a follower of Jesus Christ.

Corrie Ten Boom tells us all some of the preachers were in that area before it fell into communists' hands. And she tells the story all around the nation of how preachers came in. It was an easy gospel.

It was all going to be taken care of. Christians are just going to be evacuated during the rapture and they'll miss all the tribulation and all these things like this. And we believe that as Christians that we'll not go into the Great Tribulation.

But he said the preachers prophesied peace, peace, and there was no peace. And Corrie Ten Boom said that most of us were not ready when the Holocaust came. We were not ready.

And many Christians turned away from God and they became embittered because the preachers said, it's all right, it'll all be taken care of. You're just going to be taken out of this world. It's all going to be easy.

I don't want to be a prophet, like Jeremiah and Ezekiel and Daniel and others. Something tells me in my spirit, something tells me, and as I've shared with world leaders, I've talked with men today that have crisscrossed this globe in evangelism. I was in the office of a man just recently that has literally traveled the globe for over 40 years and these men are saying that something is on the verge of taking place and they can sense it in their spirit.

And it's universal wherever you go, whether it's Canada, whether it's America, whether it's in other nations of the world, there's a universal witness in the body of Christ that we're on the verge of some climactic event. It could be the evacuation of the church. It could be that many things, a universal collapse.

Can you imagine that just recently now America is borrowing and multiplying millions and billions of dollars from Japan now because our debt and deficit is so great. At one time that we were such a great nation and now we are borrowing from Japan so we can survive financially in America. I've got some solutions for the economic problems of the world.

Let's introduce a new monetary system. Paul spoke of a man who labored fervently in prayer and we need prayer warriors. We need people like yourself that will pray that the Word of God will be unbound and praying for pastors and leaders and evangelists as we saw in Ephesians 6.18 this morning, praying for one another.

There's many things that a person can be charged with in the cares of this world but we need to pray. I was sharing with some of the men and I just want to say this by the grace of God because God has brought me to the point where I can't live without it. I can't even keep my sanity without prayer because I've gone too far.

Too many things have taken place. There's been too many workings of God's Spirit. I can't even keep a mind unless I fill my heart with the Word of God and prayer and then I have that peace and that joy.

Unspeakable and full of glory. But I was telling some of the men last week, I said, I've got many things to do in these past two weeks but I praise God that every day by the grace of God and I had to go out just a few moments ago and just pour out my heart to God because I needed Him. I said, Lord, fill me with Your Spirit.

I can't go out on that pulpit without the power of God and in these two weeks I have prayed and studied the Word. I may not be getting too many of the things done but I'm keeping my heart to God. Woody Finney Brainerd, Hudson Taylor, Catherine Booth all of these people one outstanding characteristic that they drew their strength, they drew wisdom, they drew everything from God through the closet of prayer.

The secret place of prayer. I've had different places for prayer through the years. As I told you when I first got saved, I was so ignorant.

God's still teaching me. I'm still learning many things from the Lord. But when the Lord said enter into thy closet, I literally entered into my closet.

I'll never forget after my salvation, I was upstairs my dad was yelling for me downstairs John, where are you? I couldn't hear him. I just heard a faint voice I yelled out, I said, I'm up here finally walked up the stairs and there I was in my closet with the clothes hanging around my head. But from that time, I've always sought for a place where I can get alone with God.

I've always everywhere I go, one of my greatest desires is when I come into a crusade location, where am I going to get alone? Where can I intercede? Where can I pray? Every time, I want to tell you something if I ever have anxiety you'll see it in the beginning of the crusade area. It's one of the problems that we've been in some situations where there's not been a place where I can get alone with God because I can't function without it. I cannot function without getting alone with God.

And to be honest, I believe it's true with every one of us. And we pray prayers many of us have not prayed through it. We've not tapped into the resources of God.

D.L. Moody said the first essential means the grace of the word of God in prayer and how this man of the sixth grade education well knew the source of his power. And one man put it like this and I like it and I've quoted it for many years labor prayer then watch God work. Wesley said, and he's the one that God used so widely in England and also in the United States of America in great revivals and George Whitefield and others.

Wesley said God does nothing but by prayer and everything with it. R.A. Torrey said if you won't stay long with him, you won't be much like him because Jesus was a man of prayer. Andrew Murray has said that God's child can conquer anything and everything through prayer.

And Hudson Taylor the man that God used to open up China said Satan the hinderer may build the barrier about us, but he can never roof us in so that we cannot look up. David Brainerd that was working with the Indian people and no one wanted to go amongst the Indian people but David Brainerd he had a passion for these people and he was willing to forsake a pastor in the city and even marrying Jonathan Edwards daughter he was willing to forsake all that to walk through the forest and to get on his horse when he was burning with consumption at times falling off his horse but this is the kind of life that David Brainerd lived. He lived a life of prayer and many of the missionaries that we know today that we read their biographies have gone to the field because of a 28 year old man that was an example of prayer and he said oh the pure delight of a single hour that before thy throne I spend when I kneel in prayer with thee oh God I commune as friend with friend and A.C. Pearson this great man of prayer and Bible study that we read his literature even today he said the word of God represents all the possibilities of God at the disposal of prayer.

30,000 promises in the Bible and Jesus said ask and it shall be given he that asks and keeps on asking it shall be given he that seeks and keeps on seeking it will be opened unto him I want you to think about something as I was meditating upon that this morning I think all of you need to really ponder this did you know that prayerfulness is one of the greatest indications of truly being born again not only of the spirit of life but that you are saved because the Bible says that when we are saved that the spirit of God comes within us and he cries Abba Father and so the new creation in Jesus Christ the new convert has a natural inclination to cry out to his heavenly father and come to him I was talking to a young man the other day that God is using in a tremendous way we are talking to

some people from Rise Junction the Canadian Revival Fellowship many of these men are coming to the point where they are beginning to believe that maybe that maybe that the carnal Corinthian or the carnal Christian doctrine may be heresy what do you mean by that you can't find any scriptures where God ever gives assurance to anybody who is living in sin you will not find one scripture that I know of in the Bible that will give you assurance of eternal salvation if you are living in sin in fact just the opposite constantly whole books are given to it and I just think this week as I was thinking that some people here and there that they get a choice whether or not they can get right with God or be stubborn or they can be carnal they say well I'll just be saved souls by fart I'll just be

saved by the skin of my teeth you don't know because if the Apostle Paul didn't know when he looked at these Corinthians he preached to them he preached to them and then they are in carnality and fornication and many other things and they are biting and devouring one another and Paul looks on that scene and says I don't even know if you are born again and repetitiously he said examine yourself whether you have faith I said yesterday and I believe it is true a lot of people that we think will be in heaven won't but a lot of people that we think won't will I am totally convinced of that through hours and countless hours and days and weeks of Bible study in this area now I am not saying that a Christian can't backslide but the common Christian has to deal with someone that lives in a state

of anarchy and John says you can't do it John says read 1st John please if you are questioning what I am saying right now whether it is biblical or scriptural please read 1st John and write what I just said read it and take it at face value because it just seems like so many times we have to convince people that they need the word of God they need prayer maybe first of all they need to be saved first of all maybe they really need to get their hearts straightened out with God and have true eternal life and I believe that this is one of the things that is being revealed to many people in Revival Ministries and we have been sharing this and we were talking about this extensively yesterday that we believe that many people that meet God in Revival are really meeting him in salvation because

they have never repented of their sins do you have a total dependency upon God or is your life characterized by a self centered life where Christ is not the prominent theme in your heart well you say well how do I know if I am truly a born again Christian God says there will be immediate chastisement if you are truly saved and you get out of kilter out of line you go to God's royal witch head he will chastise you that's one of the most outstanding characteristics apart from the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and the desire to pray and seek God is that God will chastise us and God will discipline us and in this context it teaches us that you will know that it's God that's doing it all just like a father is chastising his son and that son knows who's applying the board of education to the

seat of understanding that child knows right away that it's his heavenly father and so we know as born again Christians we need to examine ourselves to see whether we be in the faith God speaks so much

about prayer so much about getting alone with him could it be that some of us today are just unbelievers without regeneration in our heart we've got a few Christian cliches that we can parent we know a little bit of doctrine we know a few things about the Christian life and we've tasted of the world to come is Christ a reality in your life today and number two as born again Christians do you have that total dependency upon God I can't help it dear friends sharing what I'm sharing because the more I sit down and read the New Testament I can't help but see that this is the mind of Paul and

John and James and all of them these are the themes that they constantly preached and constantly they said don't let any man deceive you because there's a lot of false teachers that are coming out today and they're sharing it's alright it'll all be taken care of it'll all come out in a wash so to speak my Bible says that we are to work out our salvation that's not eternal life with fear and trembling it has nothing to do with eternity because Jesus paid it all and you repent of your sins believe that Jesus died for you but my Bible tells me that we are to live this Christian life with fear and trembling and Paul says therefore knowing the terror of the Lord we persuade men warning men day and night what do you do with all those exhortations just lay them along the side of the road so to

speak Paul meant business and he wrote under the inspiration of the Spirit of God and we're doing the same thing in these days let's pray together every head bowed and eyes closed there's no way that you can have the armor of God on unless we pray in Ephesians 6 pray always with all prayer in the Spirit and watch Him there after with all perseverance and supplication for all saints are you praying? do you have a daily quiet time? are you meeting with Christ? are you prepared?

Ephesians chapter 6 is all preventative medicine the people like Corrie Tenenbaum in her day and hour they weren't ready and so many of them fell away when the holocaust came when the economic system broke and when communist powers took over what are you going to do in the day of adversity what are you going to do when the real trials come what are you going to do as Ephesians chapter 6 says that evil day that will come to every Christian in Ephesians chapter 6 if you're strong in the Lord and the power of His might and if you're close to Christ and you're abiding in the Word you're going to be able to go through that tribulation and you're going to be able to withstand the pressures without falling but if you have no spiritual strength and that inner man is not strengthened with the

power of God and with God's peace you may fall and Jesus gave us a promise I just want to meditate this and I close and give the invitation when He said in Ephesians unless you do the first works He said otherwise you will lose your testimony you know I thought that to be a promise from Jesus that if we did not live in the devotional life and that's what He's talking about to the Ephesians that you will it's a fact, it's dogmatic you will lose your testimony I wonder how many of you say this morning, Brother John oh how I need to come to Christ oh how I need to give my heart to Him my anxieties, my trials, my tribulations my mind, I'm so perplexed and burdened with problems and tribulations and worries about things and people and events and oh how I need that peace of God that passes on

in your step and I want to do something about it this morning I want to commit myself afresh and anew to that daily quiet time that morning watch of feeding upon my Lord the best that I know how how many of you say that this morning with an upraised hand that's my need God bless you how many others oh dear friend say yes to God how many others you say God is speaking to my heart this morning anyone else hands been raised oh dear friend I stand at the Holy Spirit speaking to you right now lay aside your reputation put aside the pride cause you'll never have the grace of God unless you put the pride aside I know what we're sharing this morning is not easy but I want you to know that I'm on your side that I love

you with all of my heart God knows that I mean this and God is using these

meetings as I believe a divine appointment to spare some people from some real heartaches because I've always found that all of the meetings are exceptionally providential of God God loves us enough to use outside influences to come how many would say this morning brother John I'm not even sure that I'm saved you say I'd like to receive Christ and make sure that in this world of crisis in this world of tribulation in this world when the economic system is about ready to crash and the new age movement is one of the fastest spreading religions in the world which is the spirit of antichrist in the midst of the AIDS epidemic that America does not know what she will do by the year 2000 it will be a universal plague and it will affect everybody in the world you see in the midst of all these

things in all of these tribulations I want Christ because then my friend you'll be on the winning side then you'll know that you're in Christ that you're born again and even though this world is destroyed by fire or whatever it may be that you will go home to meet your Lord and Master eternally is there someone this morning with an appraised hand you say that's what I want put your hand up high you say I want Christ today I want to make sure or the assurance of my salvation put your hand up high alright we're going to stand together quietly prayerfully standing heads bowed and eyes are closed those of you that need to meet with Christ we're just going to give you that opportunity right now to slip out of your seats and to get along with the Lord would you do it right now? just God help

you to do it God help and give you the grace to say Lord this message is from you and I need it Lord I know that I need it there's a prayer room downstairs where people can get along with Christ how many of you would slip out of your seats hands are raised in the salt of triumph today I don't know of a better time that all these truths are fresh in your mind to just take them right before the Lord and I am not going to extend this invitation I believe this morning that I've spoken in the direction of God's Spirit and I'm not going to extend I'm not going to this morning prolong some of the invitations I'm not going to extend God is speaking to you it's right away you slip out go downstairs find a place to get on your knees to confess to pray to commit yourself and ask the Spirit of God

Lord remind me every day to seek you and maybe downstairs as you're praying maybe in your mind you might go over the areas in your home where Lord I could go to that place that attic, that basement Lord I could get along with you it could be as a family you want to get together and just submit to God and say, I don't know when's the last time I've ever prayed with my wife or my children maybe you just need to get along with Christ in that area maybe you've made mistakes and you've resorted to current means but you haven't come to God and prayed and tried everything else to get money to have help but prayer and searching the Scriptures you've gone to people but you haven't gone to Christ maybe Lord you know our hearts this morning and Father you know that my desire is to see these people

enter into your peace and the joy that you promised Lord and I'm totally convinced Father that there's people in this auditorium that think that they're saved and have not the light of Jesus Christ abiding within them Lord I pray that you'd open their eyes to their need of giving their life to Christ and Father to us as Christians may we be convinced that Lord God that we need you Lord may we see with Job, that I receive the words of his mouth more than my necessary food may we be like David Lord like a heart into the pan and water from the pan sent to God may we be like Paul and Father may we learn the secret of life and be anxious for nothing but everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving that your peace that passes all understanding would keep our hearts and minds through

your Son the Lord Jesus Christ and Father I pray that you would bring a spirit of humility amongst us Lord, a willingness to lay aside our reputation and meet you in revival because there's so much extinct Lord God there's more than just ours and our families and our homes there's unbelievers all around us Father there's suffering because we're not living the Christian life that we need to live and people grow up in the darkness Father because we're not shining and we're not salty the power has not been infused Lord so Lord do have mercy on us God be gracious and grant to us the gift of repentance Lord you turn our faces back again unto you Lord you turn our hearts back unto the Lord may this be a day Father when homes and families will be uniquely touched of your spirit we'll thank you

in Jesus name Amen, God bless you as you yield to Christ as you submit to him

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