

A Praying Church

by Keith Malcomson

This sermon emphasizes the importance of prayer and the need for the church to be a house of prayer. It highlights the early church's dedication to prayer, the different kinds of prayer, the unity in prayer, and the steadfastness required in prayer. The message calls for a revival of prayer in the church, urging believers to be persistent, single-minded, and determined in their prayer life.

Scripture: Acts 2:42, Ephesians 6:18, Acts 1:14, Luke 18:1, Matthew 21:13

Topics: "Importance of Prayer", "Unity in Prayer"

Description

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Transcript

Turn with me to Acts chapter 2 here this morning, Acts chapter 2, and for two weeks I've been going in a different direction. I've been preparing a very different message for this morning, but on Friday God made it so clear I had to go in a very different direction. It was so important.

What God was doing in my heart, my life, what he was making me aware, it would have felt like sinning if I would have preached the message I'd prepared over the past two weeks. And there's some times when God begins to deal with you, you realise this becomes the all-consuming thing, nothing else even comes into the equation. This is the only thing that matters at this minute.

And if you miss this thing at this moment, on this day or this weekend, doesn't matter what was happening a week ago or what will happen in a week's time, this is so important. You could miss God. You could miss something he's doing or saying, and that becomes very sacred ground.

You've got to be so careful. And so I become convinced by, it took to the prayer meeting Friday night, and sometimes we preachers are a bit like wood, we eventually get there and go, I'm listening Lord, I hear you and I will obey. So this is my message here, part seven, still in our same series, the 21st century church.

What is it? What is it going to be like? What is it going to look like? And my message here, a praying church, a praying church, since I'm telling you for this church, this message is for you. You may say it

doesn't sound exciting. I'm telling you, you better not miss this this morning.

A lot is going to hinge on you hearing this. It's nothing new. It's nothing exciting in some ways.

And yet I know you've got to hear this as a church. This is for you at this point, and it's critical. It could affect major things that happen with you this year or in the years to come or this decade.

It could all hinge upon this this morning, whether you hear, whether you receive, whether you respond or whether it washes over you and you will go home this afternoon as if you never heard it and by tonight, you'll go home and switch the television on. I spoke to a pastor on Friday and the presence of God come down as we fellowship for two hours. I go, God is here.

God is here. And he told me of some years ago when he was in South Africa preaching, ministering to 2,000 pastors and preachers, and when it got to the end of that meeting, all 2,000 were on their face, groaning, praying, seeking God. And he went back to his hotel, sat down, turned on the television and began to watch football.

And do you know what God spoke to him? Your gifting has outrun your character. And he went through a terrible dealing of God. That's the man I spoke to on Friday for two hours and the presence of God was there.

Saints of God, most of the church don't realize what they've just lost. But I'm telling you, this is the answer, a praying church. Go with me to Acts chapter 2. We're going to read one verse here, Acts chapter 2 and verse 42, just one verse.

And they continued steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship and in breaking of bread, and this is it, and in prayers. Let's pray together. Father, I thank you, Lord God, even for our friends visiting here this morning, speak to them, oh God, surely there's no accidents in your plan and purpose, nor God, in directing their steps to this door this morning, will you speak to them and accomplish your will for this church, oh God, I pray that you'd give us right now ears to hear, eyes to see, a heart to perceive and to understand.

We know that you've spoken in this book about the house of prayer, that my house will be a house of prayer. You've said that that house of prayer, that you will bring us to it, that you'll bring us to your holy hill, nor God, that you'd make it a place of joy because of answering prayers, of hearing our prayers. My God, you said this house of prayer would be a place where your heart perpetually dwells, where your eyes perpetually dwell, where your ears perpetually dwell, nor God, we don't want religion or tradition or mere churchianity, we want the living God, we want a house of prayer where you manifest yourself, where you speak and reveal your mind, nor God, where you meet with us in life-changing ways.

We don't want Christianity as normal, we don't want the normalcy of Christianity, we want the God of fire to come amongst us, we want a heaven-sent revival, we want you to do something in this hour, in this time, oh God, the like of which hasn't even entered into our minds and our hearts, where you would shake cities and nations, where you'd reveal your power. My God, we're asking that you come to your house again. The glory would fill your house, that man wouldn't be able to stand or to enter in the door, the flesh of man and the carnal mind would have no place, oh God, but that the glory of God would be manifest.

Nor God, we're asking, oh God, that you'd make us a house of prayer, that our homes would be a place of prayer, that our lives would create a fragrance, oh God, that would ascend unto you, in Jesus' mighty

name, amen, amen. Let me read it again, a praying church, my message, and they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship and in breaking of bread and prayers. Four things are mentioned that the first church, the early church, the church in the book of Acts, dynamically, determinedly set themselves towards, four things.

The apostles' doctrine, that's teaching. You know in a lot of churches, doctrine or teaching is a dirty word, or it's a side issue. I want to tell you it had first place in the church in the book of Acts, first place.

The apostles' doctrine, teaching, instruction, that's got to be in place. You'll never have a prayer life, this church will never be a house of prayer unless the apostles' teaching is in place, unless you as individuals give yourself, you see if your doctrine does not lead to prayer, there's something wrong with your doctrine. You haven't heard, you haven't understood it right.

You may have a form of doctrine, but no power in it, no life in it, no reality in it. You can hold a understanding of all the right teachings, you can say amen every week, you can say I do believe this, and yet if it doesn't lead you to prayer, there's something wrong with your understanding of doctrine. But here, the apostles' doctrine when understood brings you to a place of prayer.

The first thing is the apostles' doctrine. The second thing is fellowship. That's not casually sitting around saying how are you chum, how are you mate, having a laugh.

That is not fellowship. That has destroyed true fellowship in the Christ. Real fellowship is a communion, a spiritual edifan of the body of Christ where we edify one another, or we point out sin, or we encourage each other, or we say come on brother, third of all you have the break in the bread, what we've done this morning.

We're not moving away from it. We're going to have the break in the bread. But fourthly, prayers.

They continued steadfastly in prayers. What was the secret of the first church, the early church, the church of the apostles? Was it Peter? Was it John? Was it the twelve? Was it their testimonies? Was it the miracles? Do you know what the secret was? Was prayer. Prayer.

Every time you read in the book of Acts anything is happening, revival, miracles, an angelic visitation, an intervention of God, souls getting born again, God setting aside elders in the local church, or sending out apostles as missionaries to other nations. Do you know what you find before all of those things every single time, every single time without fail? A prayer meeting, a gathering of the church to pray. Without the prayer meeting, I mean a corporate joint prayer meeting.

Not you praying at home. Not you praying in the car for five minutes. Not you just saying, Lord help me when I'm in trouble.

I mean the church at prayer. You cannot explain the book of Acts unless you understand a prayer meeting. The gathering of God's people in the same place at the same time to pray the same things determinedly, not willing that anything would hinder them.

Do you know what the great key and secret of the early church was? Prayer. That's what the key was. You remember when the disciples of Christ come to him, did they say, teach us how to preach? No.

Did they say, will you teach us how to prophesy? No. Will you teach us how to speak in tongues or do miracles or do signs? It's all over the church today. Seminars on how to heal the sick.

The early church never done that. Do you know what the apostles, Peter and John and the rest, they went to Jesus and said, teach us to pray. Teach it.

Not one thing. You know why? Everything comes out of that prayer life. Saints of God, if you're barren, it's because you do not have a prayer life.

If your marriage is in trouble, you do not have a prayer life. If your life is in a state and your mind is in a state and you're not walking in the will of God, it's because of your prayer life. I'm telling you the answer.

You can blame a thousand things. You'll say, God, why don't you do something? All the time he's saying, come back to the place of prayer. James chapter four, verse two, it says, you have not because you ask not.

There is a connection. You want to know why you don't have. It's because you're not asking.

Do you remember in Acts chapter 12, verse five, that when Peter is thrown in prison, James has just been killed, beheaded. James was the leader of the church. Now they take Peter and throw him in prison, the preacher at Pentecost, and they're going to do the same.

He is locked behind door after door after door, guards after guards after guards. What's the church going to do? Petition the politician, demonstrate at the door, try and hatch a plan to rescue him out of the prison, smuggle something in. What are they going to do? It says here in Acts chapter 12 and five, Peter therefore was kept in prison.

What did the church do? But prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him. There was a church that went to its knees, gathered together. Not one individual, not, well, say a prayer when you get at home.

Do you know the church gathered together in one place and made prayer without ceasing, saying we're not going to even leave this house. We're not going to leave this building until he is free. We know later that they're shocked when God answers the prayer.

They could hardly believe that God answered their own prayers that they were determined to make without ceasing. A few verses later in verse 12, it says that Peter, when he gets out, goes to the house of Mary, the mother of John, where many were gathered together praying. Do you want to know the answer to every breakthrough in the spiritual life? Prayer.

Do you want to know the answer to every breakthrough in this church LCC? Prayer. Do you want to know the answer? Every person watching this message online, do you want to know the answer to a breakthrough in your life? Get on your knees now and pray. I'm telling you, Saint, it's not the easiest thing, but it's the most revolutionary thing.

It's all through scripture, yet we count it as a side issue. You know that one and a half years ago, Candice and I went into the doctor in Limerick, and we sat there as that doctor said, I can't operate. We can't do anything.

You have six months. It's terminal cancer. It's in your breast.

It's through your body. It's in your glands. We've got the medical report.

We're looking at your body. You've got six months to live. You can always take our treatment if you want, which will extend your life maybe a year and a half, but you'll be confined to home and maybe to your bed, and your quality of life is going to greatly decline.

That's what they said to her. We sat there in that doctor's surgery and cried. I cried.

Candice cried. We were in shock for five days. All I'd done was cry.

I cried for five days. I hyperventilated. I was in shock.

I love my wife. I don't want to lose my wife, but I'm in shock for five days. At the end of five days, we got on our knees, and I said, right.

Five days, we sat at that table and began to praise God and rejoice and shout. That wasn't pretense. I tell you, I went, it's time to pray, to go to our knees.

This church went to its knees. You ladies meant from home to home, you went to your knees with fasting and praying. I'm reminding you, because on Friday, just this week, we went back to the doctor.

She hadn't seen her doctor for one year. Her doctor, who was utterly shocked, saying, I haven't seen this in 21 years, what is happening with your body? Candice said, I've just been through four weeks of bad COVID, no vaccine, no treatment, not all your painkillers over the past year and a half, and that doctor cannot comprehend it. We went to the chemist.

The chemist said, didn't recognize her, so it's been so long. I keep going in there, and they look at her and say, what's the name? Said, Candice, you're looking so well. Since this battle isn't finished, Candice is at home this morning.

She needs a breakthrough. We need to see the completion of this. But for a year and a half, we've gone to our knees.

The answer is a church that's a prayer. There on Friday, talking to my new friend, and he's a dear friend now, I feel like I've known him all my life, Pastor Dennis from London. We were on there talking.

He began to share, and I began to share. We're strangers at the start of the call. But as we began to share, I went, the presence of God is here.

I know the Lord is here. And we began to fellowship back and forth. And he shared how two years ago, something hit him, and he lost all of his strength.

Didn't know what it was. Three days later, he's rushed into the London hospital and diagnosed with appendicitis. Your appendix burst three days ago.

You won't live a day. If you know anything about that, poison goes through all of your body. The doctor said, if we try to operate on you, you'll probably die.

If we don't try to operate on you, you're going to die. So we're going to try and operate on you. As he's on the table, surgery with doctors and nurses around him, his heart fails on the table.

Two hours operation, his heart fails, then his lungs fail. He's gone. And they notify his wife, who notifies the church.

Do you know what that church done? They went to prayer. Saints, I want to stir you again. It's a call of God here this morning.

It is time again. For two months, we've gone through COVID. Many of you are sick, scattered, not together.

We've been going through all manners of things, feeling isolated and alone. Saints, it's time again. Let's strengthen ourselves as a house of prayer again.

It is time to pray. It's time to seek the Lord. It's time to lay a hold of God.

Get breakthroughs of holiness and lives. Touch the sick again. Save the lost.

Saints, it's 2022, and it's time that we got on our knees again. I know we've all been praying, but we've been scattered. But it's time to set ourselves.

Five weeks, I wasn't preaching in this pulpit. I couldn't have got out of bed. But I'm telling you, I know what God is saying.

My friend Dennis, on, stop breathing, he's gone. The doctor said if he'd come back after that length of time, he'd be brain dead. You know that church got down to prayer.

His sister, who is a woman of God, she said to the church, we're making a covenant. We're not going to leave. We're not going to stop praying until he's raised up by God.

Well, as I told you Friday night, the Lord raised him up. I'm talking to him on Friday. I'm not filming for two hours.

He's very much alive, I want to tell you. He is alive. He's alive in more ways than one.

The church is to be a house of prayer. In 2 Chronicles 6 in the Old Testament, we see Solomon, the king of Israel, the son of David, having built the house of the Lord, he then dedicates it as a house to the Lord's presence. But it's a house of prayer.

And he begins to pray. And he's praying about all those that will pray in the house. When you begin to study chapter five, chapter six, chapter seven of 2 Chronicles, you read the word house 37 times.

That means the Lord's trying to get a message across. And we begin to see that Solomon says, this house is going to be a house of prayer. People are going to come here from all nations.

All nations are going to be affected by this house that I have built for the Lord. It was the temple in Jerusalem. And that temple was a picture or a type of the church in the New Testament.

All the instructions, all the information that you find in 2 Chronicles 6 about being a house of prayer is for the church and for you in this church. I mean, he has given us a full understanding to say, you know what? If famine comes and there's a drought and no rain, no revival, you need to come back to this house of prayer again. If you get sick in your body, you can touch God in this house.

If there's a pestilence that sweeps through the nation, you've got to come back and pray in this house. And you have an entire instruction about how God's house is to be a house of prayer. And do you know what the Lord says? My glory will be there.

And he says, my heart will perpetually dwell. If this church is a house of prayer and you make this church a house of prayer, if you, like that early church, continue steadfastly in prayers, you know what? God's heart is going to be here perpetually forever. And his ears are going to be here perpetually.

And his eyes are going to be here perpetually. And God will answer your prayers. And if you're backslidden and far from God and you've fallen into sin, but you get back into the house of prayer and begin to cry unto God, God is going to heal you and restore you and forgive you and save you and deliver you from your enemies.

When you begin to study 2 Chronicles 6, it is remarkable. When you come over to the New Testament and Matthew, Mark, and Luke, listen to what Jesus said when he went into the temple, the temple that should have been what Solomon said. Matthew 21, verse 13.

And Jesus said unto him, it is written. Wonder where he read it. He's reading what I've just told you.

It is written, my house should be called the house of prayer. Is this church a house of prayer? It's meant to be. Is the church known as a place of prayer? It's meant to be.

Jesus said, my house shall be called the house of prayer. If it's not, there's something wrong. If you don't even know this is a house of prayer, there's something terribly wrong with you.

I would actually worry about you terribly. If you're not a man or woman of prayer or you're not convicted already in this message, you really need to get on your knees and rend your heart. You're on dangerous ground.

The ones who get disturbed with themselves are usually healthy. The ones who go, sure, I'm okay, they're on dangerous ground. But listen to what Jesus said.

My house to be called the house of prayer, but you have made it a den of thieves. If God's house is not a house of prayer, it becomes something else. Again, and I'm repeating myself, Mark 11, 17.

And he taught them, so to teach them, saying unto them, it is written, my house shall be called of all nations a house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves. Then again, a third time in Luke chapter 19, saying unto them, it is written, my house is the house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves. When the church becomes something else about ministries, about money, about us, what we have done, entertainment, excitement, you can be sure the prayer meeting has died.

I believe every church, including Laodicea, that departs from the way of God, it began in a prayer meeting. The neglect in a prayer, driving in your car, in the home, first thing in the morning, no longer do you rend your heart. No longer do you say, God, have mercy.

Lord, help me. Don't let me continue like this. I need you.

When those prayers are lost, you're finished. You see, in the house of prayer, there's always hope. I don't care how far you would get away from God, you can get back, but it's in the place of prayer.

I don't care what you've lost, because you neglected and the enemy come in. You can get it again. Remember what David said, pursue.

The Lord told David, they've got your children, they've got your womenfolk, your wives, they've got your possessions. You know what the Lord said, pursue after them, chase after them, make sure you're in the house of prayer, and then go get back what you've lost. You lose that sensitivity to the Holy Spirit.

You lose the power of holiness. You lose the reality of faith. Go get it again this morning.

It's in the place of prayer. And so we see in the New Testament, Christ takes a whip and cleans out the house of God. He said, my house, my father's house, is gonna be a place of prayer.

And you know, after he cleaned it out, turned the tables over, chased the money changers, the sellers of doves. A lot of people are selling doves in the church of this hour. They sell the Holy Spirit.

They're making merchandise out of the Holy Spirit. It's become a massive business. What a tragedy.

The dove sellers in God's house, and it's no longer a house of prayer. It's gotta be a house of prayer again. Saints of God, we need a move of God.

We're in a crisis. Two years of this. And where is the church? Am I hearing across our world a call back to a house of prayer? No, I'm not hearing it.

What does 2 Chronicles 6 say? When there's trouble in the land, and there's no rain, and there's pestilence, and there's trouble, and your enemies are trapped, he said, you need to come back to this house. And the call isn't there anymore. We have lost it.

In the darkest, hardest, most tragic hours, the church doesn't even know how to get back again. I've got three points for you here, I hope simply, about this one verse, Acts chapter 242. And then, saints, we're gonna go to prayer.

We're gonna make an altar here. We're gonna find a place to bow the knee, meet with the Lord. Don't you dare walk out of here unless meeting with him.

I don't know the consequence of you making a decision in this meeting. I don't know. I know on Friday, I know God is moving on me.

After that doctor's surgery with Candice, sitting outside waiting for her, that doctor going, you're defying all the odds. I don't understand. Then talking to my brother, raised up off that deathbed, and that was only one testimony.

That man's filled with testimonies, unbelievable testimony. And his mom, man, she's still alive. I need to meet that woman.

We'll get her to come and testify. I tell you, that woman, her child died. And that doctor says, it's gone.

Swallowed its tongue. And that woman of God said, I'm not letting go of my child. You know what the doctor done? Put a sign on the door.

Said, when I can't help you, and the medical profession can't help you, go to Mrs. So-and-so and she'll help you. Well, Mrs. So-and-so got angry. She got her hat on and her coat on and got her handbag and

marched on to doctor surgery.

Said, you take my name off there. Put the name of the Lord Jesus Christ on there. Saints of God, we need to get back to a house of prayer again.

Here's my three points. And I'm gonna be very brief here this morning. Number one, different kinds of prayers.

In Acts chapter 2, 42, where we see the church beginning, and this will steer the church. Do you know what we're ministering in this series? The 21st century church. What is the church of the decade ahead gonna look like? Of the year ahead, of the 2020s? What does the church gonna look like in the 21st century? And I'm not going into all the mechanics of ministry and of function.

I'm telling you the foundations here. I'll tell you what the church is gonna look like. It will depend on what I'm telling you this morning.

If the church of the 21st century doesn't come back and become a house of prayer again, and that doesn't dominate their gatherings, we are in for troublesome days. But if the church gets back to the altar of prayer, we are gonna have a glorious period of history just ahead of us. It's all gonna depend on this.

And saints, if we're gonna get back to the golden candlestick, my house must be a house of prayer for all nations. Number one, different kinds of prayer. In verse 42, we have read, they continued steadfastly.

What was the fourth thing? In prayers. Notice it's plural, not singular. He didn't say in prayer.

It's plural, prayers of different kinds. It says in Ephesians 6, verse 18, praying always with all prayer. The apostle knew there's not one kind of prayer.

There is all prayer. There is something in the house of God called all prayer. And you need to know about it.

If we are gonna be a house of prayer, this is the first thing you need to know. There are different kinds of prayer that we need to bring into the equation. It's called all prayer.

What does that mean? All kinds of prayer. Every kind of prayer available that's taught in the Bible. All manners of prayer, different types of prayer, different functions of prayer, the entire scope of prayer, the breadth of prayer, the teaching of the Bible on prayer.

If you're neglecting an area of prayer, why are you? Saints of God, it's time to be a house of prayer. Let's bring all the teaching of prayer into the house. You know, if I put on a conference about miracles, we wouldn't have a place big enough to house that.

I'm gonna teach you how to do miracles. But if I say I'm gonna teach you how to pray, you know this prayer. Sorry, I'm gonna quote him several times because I just so enjoyed the fellowship.

Brother Dennis, he was invited some 20 plus years ago over to Norway. And there was gonna be a gathering of leaders and churches and he was gonna teach them on this conference. And do you know what? Very few people do this.

He was praying about it. And he wrote to me and he says, I'm not gonna do that. I'm not coming to teach or preach.

You've got enough of that. I'm coming to pray. And I wanna come over, not preaching, teaching, ministry.

I wanna come over at six o'clock every morning in that church. I want you to meet with me in prayer. Suddenly the conference got very small.

There was a handful of leaders and one young man. Do you know when he got appendicitis 20 years later, that young man's the only one who flies and lays hands on him at a time where he should have died of that appendicitis. Is there a connection? Do you think there's a connection? A young man who wants to be at six o'clock morning prayer meeting 20 years later can be there to make sure a man of God doesn't die of appendicitis.

Do you think there's a connection? Do you think it's possible there's anything in that? I'm talking about all prayer, spontaneous prayer, short prayer, long prayers, reasoning prayers, arguing and pleading with the Lord. Not just saying, Lord, if you're gonna do it or why haven't you done it? Why not begin to plead? Twice in the gospels, we read about Jesus coming walking in the water and it seemed as if he would walk straight past them. You're saying, Lord, why aren't you getting into my boat? Lord, don't you care about me? Remember, when Jesus was in the boat and they're gonna be shipwrecked, where's Jesus? He's asleep in the bottom of the boat.

Don't you know he knew a storm was coming and they're gonna head into disaster? He's fast asleep. You know what he says? Any moment now, Peter's gonna come. Master, don't you care about us? Do you see it in the spiritual life? Don't you realise the Lord's looking? If you're gonna let the Lord walk past in the water, he's not gonna answer your stinking lousy prayer.

Do you know what the Lord's looking for? You better get desperate and say, you've gotta get in my boat. Like the two on the road to Emmaus. Remember, it said they got to their destination and it seemed like the Lord was gonna keep walking.

You know what they done? They compelled him to come in and break bread with them. Do you know, if the Lord's left you and walking down the road, it's because you let him. He tests the heart.

He proves the heart. Are you willing for me to walk past and not answer your prayers? I'll keep walking. You say, God wouldn't do that.

Really? Done it in the Bible. Keep walking in the water. The storm's gonna destroy me.

You don't care about me. Make him get in your boat. You said, how? You better get desperate.

You better lay a hold of him. Remember that little lady who should have been dying with her blood disorder and she's anemic. She's probably as thin as anything.

She's about to die. The doctors have almost destroyed her body and she pushes through the crowd and touches the hem of his garment, instantly healed. That's a determined lady to say, I must touch the master's garment.

I must touch the hem of his garment. You see, there's different kinds of prayer. We need to bring it into the church.

We need prayer in the spirit. We need wrestling with God like Jacob. We need to wrestle against powers and principality.

Are you gonna let the devil destroy your family and your home and your life and this city and this nation? Are you gonna sit there and say, why is God allowing this? You need to get up and wrestle in the place of prayer. It is life and death, saints of God. There is times to pray alone, but I'm talking about church prayer, audible prayer, groaning prayer.

Do you know what groaning is when you groan and can't even utter the words? I'm talking about rejoicing prayer where you shout and you've got a hallelujah and there's a victory, but also weeping and sadness and mourning and brokenness of waiting upon God. What about the prayer of faith? The prayer of agreement where you get a brother and sister who say, well, I just seem all alone. Why not stop something in the church and say, brother, sister, you need to come pray with me.

Grab their hands, say, agree with me and pray here. The prayer of agreement, prayer of consecration where you say, Lord in the church, I am given everything. Maybe you need to do that this morning.

Prayer and fasting. When's the last time you fasted and rent your heart? I don't mean just miss a meal. I mean, when did you set your heart to say, I'm not gonna touch that food until I make the Lord.

Prayer when you're tempted. Prayer for yourself. Prayer for others.

This is different kinds of prayer. You want this to be a house of prayer where all nations come to be blessed. See through that little camera.

Many nations have come to be blessed the past year through that little screen. Why do you think that is? You know why. We prayed incessantly year after year after year when it seemed none of that was happening.

And then God does that. It's because it's out of a house of prayer. Saints of God, we need to be gripped with the reality of prayer.

Prayer is not a simple thing. It's not a singular thing. It's not an elementary thing.

It's a dynamic, dominating, all-encompassing thing. I've got an answer for you. I've got an answer for the sinners here who need born again.

You can seek God and be born again. Rend your heart. Repent this morning.

Cry unto him. Oh, God has an answer in my prayer. Really? Really? Or maybe he's saying, when this person lays a hold on me, I'll save them.

I'm walking down. I'll save everyone else and bypass you. You're gonna let him? Ian, are you gonna let him? There he is walking.

Someone's gonna stop and say, you're not leaving me until you change me. Saints of God, different kinds of prayer. The early church continued steadfastly in prayers, plural, many different types.

They brought everything to bear. I wanna bring every kind of prayer. And that's why you've got a book of Acts.

That's why you had a revival. That's why you had thousands added unto the Lord. We need it again.

Every time you see God working in great ways. I talked to Brother Dennis the other day. That church is a house of prayer.

I'm telling you, that church in London. If ever I get to London again, I'm going to that church. Not because of the preaching, not because of the worship, not because of the numbers.

I know there's a house of prayer, a people that pray. There's some old granny there can raise the dead. There's some sister there that says, I'm not letting my brother go to his grave.

I'm gonna pray until he comes in here and preaches again in this pulpit. Sing to God, be stirred again. We can have a church that understands all prayer.

Second of all, unity and prayer. Different kinds of prayer. Unity and prayer.

Let me read it again, because I love it so much. I love this scripture. Acts 2, 42.

And they, notice that word they. And they, it's talking about a particular group of people. They, not just everyone, because not everyone continues like this.

Not everyone prays like this. Not everyone thinks like this, or desires this, or understands this. Not everyone wants the church to be a house of prayer.

We're a worship center, really. Oh, we praise God here, worship. I could worship for two hours.

But this isn't a worship center. This is a house of prayer. And if we make it a house of prayer, it will be worship.

There'll be praise. There'll be spontaneous giving of thanks. Not a manufacturer.

We don't need to teach people to fling their leg, to how to dance, coordinate the worship. It's all coordinated in this generation. The greatest worship of our world.

And it's all organized and planned and highly financed. Take away the money. You won't have as many worshipers in this generation.

I promise you. Cancel their pays. Cancel and say, you won't earn a penny from it.

You'll have them leave en masse. Unity in prayer. They continued steadfastly in prayers.

In prayers. They did. Who? The 120 in the upper room.

It's talking about a band. Where are the 500? Remember Jesus just before this shortly? Jesus, the resurrected, glorified Christ. I mean, would you do this? You've seen Christ risen from the dead.

You've seen the marks on his body. You've seen him glorified. You've heard him teach him.

And the last thing he ever said to you before he ascended, remember those 500 there? All watching him, ascending up into heaven. The last thing he says is, tarry in Jerusalem. Wait, find your place, stay together, and pray until I baptise you with the Holy Ghost and fire.

500, above 500. There's only 120 here. You say, if I saw a miracle, that would change my whole life.

No, it wouldn't. There's people seeing the dead raised. There's people seeing the resurrected Christ ascending up.

They didn't make the prayer meeting. You say, if an angel come and spoke to me, I'd be in every single prayer meeting. No, you wouldn't.

You actually wouldn't. They continued steadfastly. It was them in prayers.

In Acts chapter 114, it explains about who they are. These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication with the women and Mary, the mother of Jesus, last time she's ever mentioned in the Bible. And with his brethren, the physical half-brothers of Jesus were there in the prayer meeting on the day of Pentecost.

It says in Acts 114, these all continued with one accord. They continued. Do you know what prayer the tendency is that shrinks down? We once knew a church in Germany.

Every Saturday night, two young men, not the pastor, not the elders, not the mature believers, two young boys, teenage boys, teenage boys, every Saturday night, they went to the church. One of them very young. One of them was half the size of the other one, but they joined together, the two of them.

Every Saturday night, they spent the entire night in the church praying for the meeting on Sunday morning, for the preacher, for the worship, for God to move. Every single Saturday night. You couldn't pay someone to do that.

They're teenagers. All the others weren't there in their beds. The preacher was in his bed.

The leaders were in the bed. The mature ones were in their bed. But two young teenagers said, we've got to have God.

I went there and preached and went, I wonder why God moved this morning. Must be the great preachers and leaders in this church. I don't think so.

Do you know what it says? They all continued. Church, if you hear me this morning and you get on your knees and we are a house of prayer and you determine, I'm not saying that we were a year ago or six months ago or seven years ago. That's history.

That gets moldy. It gets covered in cobwebs. It becomes dangerous because you can talk about what was and not what is.

But they all continued with one accord. The word there, one accord, means at the same place in the same time. It means to be unanimous in your prayer life.

In Acts chapter, you want to know why there was an Acts chapter two and the Holy Ghost fell and 3,000 were added to the Lord in one day. You want to know why? Look at Acts chapter one. They were all in one accord.

They were unanimous. You know what the word unanimous means? No one dissent and everyone says, amen, I'll be here. I'm praying.

I'm a part of this. I believe in this. So God managed to get 120 who were unanimous.

The word means overwhelming agreement, no dissent, perfect harmony like an instrument. Have you ever been in a meeting? And I hope there's no one here like this. I'll be embarrassed.

But have you ever been in a meeting and been singing in worship? Have you ever stood beside someone who couldn't sing and they don't have a note in their head or who don't know how to clap? It's awful. It's awful. But I can bear with that.

That poor guy can't help himself. That's down to something very natural and human. I'd never judge anyone for that.

Just hard to think beyond that. But you know what you can help? If you are out of harmony in your life, your attitude, your character, your words, your actions, do you know what that bothers me? That bothers me. You're knocking off the step.

You don't believe in prayer. You don't believe like that. You don't want it.

You have to be begged to believe this. Do you know what that is? That's disharmony. We want a unanimous vote for prayer.

Brother Clinton said many years ago, he said, if you don't go to prayer, and I know we've been all over the place for two months, but if you don't go to a prayer meeting, when we pray, you're voting against revival. Brother Clinton said that years ago. He said, if you have no desire to understand practical circumstance, we understand all of those things, okay? So don't get down on me.

But if you don't have a desire, you are saying no to revival, the salvation of your family. You say, oh, but I'm only me. Yes, you're important.

I believe you're important. It's the entire harmony of everyone's views and feelings, no schism, no divisions in interests or purpose about what is spiritual and what is clear biblically. It says in Acts chapter two, verse one, and when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

Oh, we don't believe in gathering in one place. I'm just an individual. Then you don't know about church prayer.

You don't know about all prayer. And again, on that video, many people in other nations, they don't have a church, can't find a church, and they feel a part of us. Why not if you're on that camera, okay? You bunch up your ears, not for you.

You bunch on that camera, and this is your church. You feel a part of us, and you're seeking for a church in New Zealand or South Africa or Canada, wherever. Why not make 7.30 saying, I'm gonna make, I know there's a time difference, but if you're in your home and you're isolated, why not say 7.30 on a Friday night, I'm gonna be a prayer.

I won't move. I'm gonna seek God. I'm gonna fast on that Friday night.

Why not? Since there's always a way through with this. Do you know in Acts chapter three, verse one, it says, now when Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, you don't need to go to a building. They did.

They're in revival. Oh, you don't need to go at a set time. They did.

You don't need to go pray with others. They did. But of course, you could be greater than Peter or John.

Notice this, Peter and John didn't get on before Pentecost. Before the prayer meeting, they didn't get on. Remember what Peter turns to Jesus and says and goes, hmm, sees him walking a bit behind and he says, hmm, master, see John, what about him? What about him? Peter's going, I'm keeping an eye on him.

I'm watching him. Master, there's some things you need to know. I know you probably don't know this, master, so what do you think? The Lord will agree with me because the Lord sees these things.

I'll just remind him. Do you know what the Lord says? Never you mind, Peter. This is my interpretation, okay? My translation.

Never you mind, Peter. What is it to you whether he lives or dies? Our tarry's until my coming. That's what Jesus said.

And then he prophesied to Peter and says, do you know what? When you're old, you're gonna get bound and taken where you don't wanna go. They're gonna crucify you. Remember the disciples arguing who's the greatest? Jesus turned around and said, guys, what are you talking about? Oh, nothing.

Nothing, they're ashamed, embarrassed. The Lord knew what they're talking about. I think I'm the greatest.

I think I've got the greatest. Do you know how many blind eyes got healed through me? Do you know what happened back there? And they're comparing notes. This is Matthew and Peter and Simon.

I think I'm the greatest. Well, I know yous are all too spiritual. You'd never say it.

I think I'm better than her. I think I'm better than him. See the thoughts that can come up in that mind.

If it's never shocked you, I think there's probably something wrong with you. Thoughts come and you go, where did that come from? And you're disgusted. See, through the years, I've been disgusted with some thoughts that come up out of this heart.

I think I'm better than him. Once went to pray for a wee boy, come for prayer in Romania, he was a street kid. Didn't know how to use a knife and fork.

He stank, lived on the streets. I've never smelt anything worse in my entire life and I've smelt some things. Just a small boy.

I showed you the picture of him once. And as he came, he come forward and he says, I need prayer. They always come looking for me.

I kept sweeties in my little backpack after meetings. And all these street kids used to come. But he come in the meeting, come forward for prayer.

And he said it was his knee. And I went to kneel down and I was halfway down and the smell hit me. It was putrefying.

It would make you vomit. It was disgusting. And instantly I stopped halfway down.

And my heart smoked me. I felt the Lord say, how dare you? How dare you? I broke. I don't know whether he got healed that night, but I know something happened to me.

How dare you? He comes for healing and you would draw back, pull yourself back. Third and lastly, steadfastness in prayer. Acts 2 42.

And they continued steadfastly in prayers. This term continued steadfastly. It means to be earnest towards, to persevere or continue in, to be constantly diligent over.

Do you realize if you don't have this heart attitude, your prayer can draw back. You could have been a praying man or woman and now it's just not there. And then you feel condemned because you want the Lord and you desire the Lord and you feel guilty.

But this is an attitude of heart continue steadfastly. Do you know that's the tendency in all of our hearts and my heart? I could hardly get out of bed for weeks and then with COVID. I wouldn't like to tell you what time I was getting up.

I just slept around the clock and still I was tired. Do you know what? I've got to build back better. To steal a well-known person's term.

I've used it more than him anyway. It means to be constantly diligent, to attend to in great detail, to adhere to very closely and carefully. It literally means attending to something, watching over it, remaining by it, not leaving it, not forsaken it for anything.

Do you hear me? That early church at the beginning of the book of Acts, everything was against them to stop them being in prayer. Everything was against them. They had to fight to stay in prayer.

They had a fight to maintain their prayer life. They had overcome thoughts and circumstance and problems and issues. They had to stay in that place of united corporate prayer, meeting together, praying together, not leaving it.

This word means to persist obstinately in a task. I've met some obstinate people. Nope.

Some of the kids like that. Nope. They're obstinate.

Why not have that in prayer? The devil comes against you, the world, feelings, tiredness, circumstance, and you're obstinate, saying, God help me, I'll die, but I'm gonna pray. God help me, I'm not gonna get hindered. With kids and everything else, I will find the time to pray.

I will find a place to pray. Remember Wesley's old mother, right in the midst, was it 12 kids, 17 kids, whatever it was, she threw that old dress up over and say, you kids, God help you if you disturb me when that dress is over my head. Row on to you, if I have to come out from under this dress during my time of prayer, you will be sorry.

That was a woman of prayer who was determined. She was obstinate. It means to be single-minded.

One thing, you put prayer into your own personal life, your family, this church. If we make prayer a priority, everything else will find its place. Single-mindedness.

Everyone who's come in that door, who wanted to tell us what we should be doing here, guess how many in eight years said, I think you need to be praying more. Have a guess. Zilch, zilch.

Think you need more games for the kids? Think you need more entertainment, more worship, more lots of things, shorter messages? But no one said, can we have more prayer? Do you remember the little widow who came? Jesus used it as a parable. And this was his lesson. Men ought always to pray and not to faint.

If you don't pray, you're gonna faint. Prayer is the cure for fainting. And then he told the parable of an old widow.

You remember going to the judge, a wicked judge, and she kept going and saying, avenge me, avenge me. I've got an enemy, avenge me. And the poor man went, I'm getting demented here.

He said, I don't like the lady. I don't wanna do it, but she's gonna drive me nuts. Every single day, Mrs. Judge said, here, hubby, here she comes again.

It's eight o'clock, still an hour before opening time. She's coming knocking on your door. She'll be the first in the queue.

He goes, please tell her to go away. She won't go away. Avenge me, I've got an enemy, avenge me.

Jesus isn't talking about salvation in the last days. He's talking about prayer, the prayer life of the church in the generation when Jesus comes back. Everyone gets this wrong because how it finishes is, nevertheless, when the Son of Man cometh the second time and returns, shall he find faith on the earth? And everyone who talks about this says, oh, there's gonna be few people saved.

There's gonna be little faith when Jesus returns. It doesn't say that, it's not about that. It's about the prayer life that we're talking about this morning.

You know what Jesus is saying? This kind of faith, this prayer faith, this faith that goes with prayer, that every night, every morning says, avenge me, avenge me, avenge me. And Jesus is saying, when I return, will I find this sort of faith in the church that says, I am determinedly praying. We are a house of prayer.

I will not give you peace night and day until you answer me. I am gonna be at your door. And you know what Jesus is saying? If only I can find that sort of praying faith or faith that moves you to pray like that.

Faith does not exclude that kind of prayer. It creates that kind of prayer. And he says, if I can find that, it's very special, very rare.

We're there, saints. We're there. Will you respond this morning, right now, to what I believe God is saying to us? I believe he's speaking to me, to this church, to others online.

And he's saying, time to pray. He wants a house of prayer, a church, that's militant, single-minded, obstinate, determined to pray, and that nothing's gonna hinder you. Will you stand here this morning, hallelujah.

Thank you, Lord Jesus. We love you. We worship you, Father.

And in these moments, as we close, Lord God, we wanna make an altar. We wanna bow the knee. We wanna respond.

We wanna respond to this word. Lord God, with persistence, laying ahold of you, that you might make us a house of prayer and cause us to come to your holy hill. Will you draw out our hearts to a new season of fasting and praying, of seeking, of searching for you, Lord God, of getting up even in the middle of the night to pray and to search out a dwelling place for the Lord, in Jesus' name.

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