

Foundational Truths for Revival, Tape 2

by Ralph Sutera

Ralph Sutera's sermon outlines foundational truths for revival, focusing on the necessity of dealing with sins, self-life, and the Holy Spirit for true transformation.

Scripture: Psalm 51:1, Romans 14:17, Ephesians 4:26, Philippians 3:1, 1 John 1:9

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "Revival"

Description

Ralph Sutera preaches about the importance of dealing with sins, self-life, and the Holy Spirit. He emphasizes the need for genuine surrender to God, acknowledging sins, surrendering self to the cross, and claiming the fullness of the Holy Spirit for victory and power in the Christian life. Sutera encourages believers to focus on a lifestyle of victory, glory, and power through continuous acknowledgment of sins, agreement with God about self, and acceptance of the Spirit's power, thanking God daily for His work in their lives.

Transcript

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS: We have a good time in this ministry, it's a fun time, & if you think that a revival ministry is a knock-down, drag-out sort of affair where God's out to extract all the fun of your life, you've got the wrong crusade. Get ready for a good time. It doesn't mean God isn't going to speak to us in powerful ways, but the end result is going to be good.....Those who are here with our team are examples to you, people who have sat right where you are sitting, starting this crusade, & who have entered in, whose lives have been changed & who will never be the same again. Just as an encouragement to you that what's happening these days is not just a here-&-then-gone-tomorrow--God is going to change our lifestyle, & eternity is going to feel the effect of what's happening. That's why I am so glad you are here tonight because you're getting in on the basic truth that God has used to set so many of His people free to live at a deeper level...

THE EXAMPLE OF... TRILOGY OF TRUTH: The three-fold truth--deal with our

1. Sins,
2. Self-life, &
3. The Holy Spirit.

First, Christ died to redeem us from our sins, He died to purify us unto Himself, & He died that we have the zeal (motivation, spiritual power) of good work--to be everything God wants us to be.

Lou & I, on our own together for 18 years as evangelists, would preach to people on how they could deal with their sins, to be forgiven, to be saved & know they're on their way to heaven--& that was wonderful. But, sorry to say, for all those years, that was presented as the ultimate of the Christian life--to be able to say I know I am saved, I'm forgiven, I'm cleansed & I'm on my way to heaven. And it was in 1970-71 when God began to show us this truth of the importance of the Lordship of Christ being supreme in our lives as believers, did He begin to sharpen the focus of the need to present to God's people the plan of salvation at a level at which we could understand that Christ not only died for our sins, He also died to set us free from the bondage of self, from living for self. You say, is that scriptural? Yes, 2 Cor. 5:21. But in verse 15, in that Christ died, "that they which live"...because He died. You say, you live because Christ died? Yes. Then if that's true, he said, we "should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, & rose again." You see, he's saying, that if you really believe that Christ died for you & you have entered into that, then there is something that you should no longer do. What is it? Live like you use to live--all wrapped up in number one. Henceforth, no more live unto ourselves, but live unto Him, the one who died for us & rose again. That's the truth.

It's interesting that many of us quote, 2 Cor. 5:17, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." But did you realize that I just quoted to you 2 verses that preceded that one, and we somehow have forgotten that, lost the concept that that's what it means to be a new creature. We are no more living unto ourselves, we're delivered from the bondage of the way we use to live; & now the Apostle could say, when we are in Christ, & we understand what that cross means, there is a whole transformation of our lifestyle, (& the world will recognize it in the truest sense); then we began to see that it was not enough to teach people how to come to grips with dealing with the self-life. That's almost like the emptying-out process of all the contamination of the self-centeredness of my life, but now when that is dealt with there needs to be a replacement, that is, to be filled with the fullness of God, to know how to claim by faith (not by experience), the fullness of Almighty God. And what a thrill it is to see Baptists beginning to walk in the Spirit, & all the Evangelical Free people said, Amen...& all the Alliance people, & Free Methodists said... Some people thought that that was just for certain groups of people. It's wonderful. What a release, & it's thrilling to let God do that where we just really let God be God in our lives & we begin to understand how that spiritual power can become a reality in our beings. We need no longer live in fear & intrepidation in our Christian experience. And that's all a part of that portion of scripture that relates to the Gospel of grace--to be saved from ourselves. What a thrill

(Foundational Truths for Revival, Tape 2, continued)

to be able to see it. Since God sharpened the focus of that truth in our lives & in our ministry, I can tell you that the long range effects in people's lives have been so dramatic. That's why I can talk to you about people who met the Lord in 1970,'72,'75, & they're just as excited now about walking with God as ever before. They've learned how this can be a lifestyle, & it's thrilling how to make it real.

You notice that we have been talking about 3 truths: deal with sins, deal with the self-life, & deal with the ministry of the Holy Spirit. You say, "Is that a biblical pattern that we can see in many places in the scripture?" Let's look at just a few so that what I am sharing tonight is biblically sound:

PSALM 51:1-9, David is primarily dealing with his sins. He said, In sin & iniquity did my mother conceive me. It's interesting that in the first four verses in this Psalm, David, in describing his sin of adultery, uses all 3 Old Testament words to describe how sinful he really was. There was no area of sin that was left out in his sin. Talk about complete repentance--he was not holding back a thing on being honest with God. He's dealing with his sins, where it says in vs. 7, purge me with hyssop that I may be clean. And I get a connotation of what it was like when Lou & I had the opportunity of being in the Middle East, & on the desert in Lebanon & Syria, Jordan, where we had the unique opportunity & privilege of being in the tent of one of the nomads & see the threshing floor & watch it--he would just move that crude piece of equipment around & around, with the stones & rocks on the bottom of the pieces of wood, & all the chaff would go to the wind. And then when you got to the bottom of that threshing floor there was the real grain right there. And I got a picture of "purge me with hyssop"--God, deal with me in rock-bottom issues, get right to the core of the matter, deal with me at the heart, get rid of all the chaff. That's the way the psalmist is writing--purge me; Lord, show me everything I don't want, anything that is going to hinder. Some of us need to be open & honest to that extent during these days. We've been misnaming our sins, condoning it, making room for it--not so bad, I'm as good as the average Christian in the church, brother, or sister. You haven't said much for yourself. Such a difference between average & normal. And God's going to teach us how to deal with our sins in these days.

Not only did he want to be dealt with sin, but then in verse 10, he says, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; & renew a right spirit within me." Now he is even going further. He is saying, Lord, I don't only want You to deal with that sin of adultery, but with what caused that adultery, that wicked, filthy heart. I want a right spirit. The spirit that's controlled me has been a wrong spirit, a self-centered spirit, a spirit that demanded Bathsheba; it's a spirit that satisfied its own lust. Create a right spirit within me. Now he's talking about the inner man, the self-life to be dealt with. And then notice what he does after that--take not thy spirit from me (vs. 13). Now he's talking about the Holy Spirit, the Old Testament concept of the Holy Spirit. He's concerned that he has the anointing of God on his life. And after that the next words are, "then will I teach transgressors thy ways; & sinners shall be converted unto thee." He's saying, Lord, all these years I've been teaching Sunday School with no results. But now, Lord, I've dealt with my sins & I've surrendered the rights of self, & I'm entering into the fullness of God & claiming His power to be mine; now I am claiming results in my life--sinners shall be converted. I'll not only show transgressors Thy way but they'll be converted; now I'm going to see results. It's a reminder to everybody who is talking about evangelism in the month of April that is coming to your area, that reviving in our hearts must precede the evangelism out there. If God can get a hold of our hearts & lives there will be a whole new spiritual motivation--the dynamics of God's Holy Spirit flowing through us. Sinners will be converted because of our lives. So I say to you tonight, if you know some people in your church or other churches, & you say I just can't be involved in this crusade & be involved in the next one that is coming in April, you let them know that it's not an "either-or." This is a preparation for the other one, God preparing our hearts so there will be no hindering spirit for His Holy Spirit to flow at a deep level when the opportunity will come for sinners to be presented with the Gospel. In a very candid way, this is one of the reasons why this crusade was put in the month of January, when it was scheduled for April, so that it could be the preparation for the evangelism to come. Here it is biblically sound because it is the pattern.

(Foundational Truths for Revival, Tape 2, continued)

ROMANS 14:17-18. The Apostle Paul deals with legalism--talks about eating of meats, days of worship; & it's interesting to note that it is a tremendous chapter about the Lordship of Christ, where it talks about the

Lord is the Lord of the living as well as the dying. It talks about every one of us giving an account of himself to God, a tremendous portion of scripture about Lordship of Christ in our lives. But when you get down to verse 17, the Apostle Paul says, Do you really want to know what the true nature of the kingdom of God is? He says, The true nature of "the kingdom of God is not meat & it's not drink..."

It's RIGHTEOUSNESS, PEACE, JOY in the Holy Ghost--

a. The opposite of RIGHTEOUSNESS is unrighteousness--& the Bible says that all unrighteousness is sin; thus, I need to deal with all my unrighteousness.

b. The opposite of PEACE is war--"From whence come wars & fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?" (James 4:1). He's saying, the reason that there are wars & fightings among you is that there is a problem within you; your own lust that wars, the self-life that wars against the Spirit within you. The true nature of the kingdom of God is, not only to deal with your sins, but deal where the war is--those lusts, self demanding its rights within you.

c. JOY: one of the fruits of the Spirit. Remember, Christ-i-an: deal with our sins (Christian once), deal with the self-life, (Christian twice), deal with the Holy Spirit (Christian three times). You will find that it comes out of the scriptures in so many ways. And we have so diluted the message & wonder why there is such a fallout in our churches of people who make professions of being Christian & you can no where find them.

PHIL. 3:1-9, the Apostle Paul is giving his testimony, telling how religious & devout he was, & then God had to bring him all the way down--those things that were gain to me I count but loss. I not only count them but loss, but I count them but dung (refuse) that I may win Christ & be found in Him, not having my own righteousness which is of the law but that which is by the faith of the Son of God. Then he turns & says here's the goal: that I may know Him. How? In the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death, & the power of His resurrection. But the Apostle Paul put first, the power of His resurrection (that's an empty tomb). Then he said, in the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death. Paul, did you have your chronology mixed up? You should have started with the fellowship with His sufferings... & then resurrect--suffer, die, & then resurrect--but he started backwards. I wonder why? When I get to heaven I may ask him why he wrote it that way. But my brother thinks he knows why...: "When the Apostle Paul gives his testimony in those first 9 verses, he tells how far down he came from being so religious & devout, & God was stripping him of all that he was, & it was nothing but refuse--that I may win Christ. It's as if he is saying, I want you to know that God took me all the way down in order that I may know him in the power of His resurrection. Here's the goal--all the way down to no resurrection power, but by the way, if you would like to know how to find & enter in to the power of the resurrection it comes by the fellowship of His suffering being made conformable unto his death." I don't know if that's correct but let my brother enjoy it. But somehow I like it. If the Apostle Paul is saying, our goal is the power of the resurrection, & if you want that power in your life there is only one way to enter into it--enter into the fellowship of His sufferings. What did He suffer for? Our sins. Enter in to being conformable unto His death--death means a cross, me being willing to identify with the cross, no more I but Christ, I am crucified with Christ, I make that a practical experience in my lifestyle so that the power of His resurrection can flow through my life. And lest I should forget, from that truth the Apostle Paul goes on with the rest of that chapter, vs. 11-21, & he says, "Not as though I've already attained, but I follow after...I press toward the mark for the prize." He is saying, revival must be the crisis in my life if I have lived for self & for self-sufficiency, God has to break that.

Verses 1-10, REVIVAL IS A CRISIS;

Verses 11-21, REVIVAL AS A PROCESS, a continuing process.

(Foundational Truths for Revival, Tape 2, continued)

And you know what's so interesting about that? That even these people who have come to work with us in these days, none of them have begun to sprout wings yet, even though they have met the Lord deeply years ago. God is still teaching them, & we're still learning & growing, & we're still having to deal with issues, & still need to ask forgiveness, & still need to come back to the cross--but it's a process of learning how that can be real, & how we can really claim God's fullness & keep on walking in the light as He is in the light. So I'm not talking about an ARRIVAL POINT; I'm talking about an ENTRANCE INTO A LIFESTYLE OF VICTORY & GLORY & POWER. Here it is: deal with sins, self, & the Holy Spirit.

(Now you notice there is room for a #4 & #5 on your page. That's so you can go home & find the rest of them in the Bible! That's a reminder that I didn't give them all to you, & when this becomes an obsession about the trilogy of truth, you will begin to look for that in many portions of scripture--you'll begin to see that come leaping out of the page to you as the essence of what it really means to walk with God.

Let's see if we can put it into outline form. I like to call it--

THE WAY TO LIVE

1. DEAL WITH OUR SINS. WHY?

We are coming to God for 2 things:

- a. Forgiveness &
- b. Cleansing

1 John 1:9, God is faithful to forgive & to cleanse us. (And there are other verses listed there.)

There is a distinction:

When a man is forgiven something he is no longer GUILTY;

When a man is cleansed he is no longer FILTHY.

That's where the change begins to take place: where God forgives He takes the guilt, & He cleanses us (using His heavenly washcloth) with divine detergent, the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son cleansing us from all sin. No longer filthy. And some of you here tonight have not yet been willing to accept that, & you're still questioning it, & you're still wondering, & still begging God to forgive you, & you still act as if God doesn't mean what He says & doesn't say what He means. And you have not claimed that forgiveness & cleansing. No wonder your assurance of salvation is so tenuous. I knew it a long time ago--just ask my wife.) The forgiveness & cleansing--& the truth is that many of us in dealing with people who want to find Christ have been saying, Ask the Lord to forgive you & cleanse you from your sin, you'll be forgiven & cleansed, God bless you, go on your way, read your Bible, say your prayers, come to church, witness to a few people, if you sin ask God to forgive you & keep right on doing it, & they keep on going that way. That was the essence of being a Christian. O yes, we're suppose to grow in grace, but as

far as understanding the Gospel of grace & our functions many of us have never come to grips with that. But that's where we start; that's not victory, that's the entrance, the beginning.

Then God shows us that Christ died to deliver us from the bondage of ourselves. Now we are talking about deliverances from bondages and release from selfishness:

2. DEAL WITH SELF

a. Deliverance from bondages

b. Release from selfishness

I like to call that THE COMMITTED LIFE, where we are now committed to the cross. This is the cleansed life, & now there's the committed life where we say, alright God, I'm sick & tired of living

(Foundational Truths for Revival, Tape 2, continued)

for self, of number one being in control, of demanding my rights, of having my own way, of self demanding to be vindicated-- and I can't do anything about it, tired of it. I bring it to the cross for deliverance from that kind of bondage. That's what we are talking about, dealing with self-life--agreeing with God about being crucified with Christ. During these days this is going to come into sharp focus as we're going to see it more clearly.

And it's even possible to be this far & still not have genuine spiritual victory. Do you realize that some of us want to deal with our sins because we've had such habits that we want to get rid of, & it's wonderful to get rid of our tobacco, our filthy language, & wonderful to think that God took all that from us. Just to think now we are better off, our children would love us a little more if we don't blow the tobacco breath in their face, we'll save so much money if we don't have to spend it on cigarettes, all kinds of things--that's just one example.

But now God has dealt with me, & now I'm being delivered from being such a self-centered person, & I've been such a selfish person for so long; oh, I'm so glad to get rid of that. Just think! Now I'm going to have friends. And people around me have said, you know why you don't have friends? You're so selfish nobody wants to be around you. But now I'm going to have friends, people will like me. Who is the beneficiary primarily there? We are. Now are you saying to me that the Lord doesn't do that for you? Of course He does. I want to say that I know people who don't even come near the Lord, who have been able to deal with certain issues in their lives & have been able to improve themselves without coming to the Lord. And you know people like that. I'm saying to you that it's even possible for some people to come to grips with issues in their lives without coming along that far. Now, they cannot be cleansed & forgiven, but they can get over some habits & traits in their personality, beleaguered with them for so long. But where does the Lord genuinely get the glory? Right here, where the Holy Spirit begins to magnify Jesus Christ in our lives.

3. DEAL WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT. What for? For VICTORY & POWER.

You see, it's not until we've dealt with our sins, then have surrendered the rights of self, that now we are candidates to be filled with God's power, fullness & victory. I'm talking about the world being able to see those of us who walk with God: who go through difficult situations & tragedies; human circumstances that from a human perspective should take us under, but the world sees that there is victory, that there is joy & glory in the midst of those "impossible situations"--that the world can only say, God alone can bring a man

through that, where God gets the glory, where God takes that alcoholic & so transforms him & fills him with the fullness of God to the place that he becomes a firebrand for God's glory, & the world has to say, look, there's something divine that is taking place. The glory of God, walking in the fullness of God's power--that's what this community needs to see. And when we begin to walk like that, what is the fruit of the Spirit? Love. Oh! I thought you were going to say the fruit of the Spirit is tolerance. Some of us are going to churches tomorrow where we tolerate each other. And God wants to change that, & fill us with His love for something so divine to take place, like they said when Christ performed the miracle in Mark 2 where they said of the one who was healed, "We've never seen it on this fashion before." That's what this community needs to see: believers who are so walking with God that the change is going to effect the neighbors around them.

In Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, in the 1971 Canadian revival, when we were on the television station being interviewed, & we were being asked what was going on, it was just marvelous to share with that interviewer. Guess what he said? He said, "It's about time something like that happened to the church!" It was an unsaved interviewer! Do you think the unsaved don't know it, when we've got all our hassles & our problems, & all kinds of grudges & fussings, fuming & fighting,

(NOTE: The beginning of SIDE 2 of this cassette tape is on page 5, indicated above by the bold words, But now God has dealt with me...)

(Foundtional Truths for Revival, Tape 2, continued)

intolerance & merely tolerating each other & all that kind of thing, & we claim that love of Christ in our hearts? Do you think the world doesn't know it? By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples in that you tolerate each other. No! LOVE! God, the Holy Spirit, wants to begin to give that kind of victory for the world to see that glory.

CONTINUING DAILY...

DAILY ACKNOWLEDGING (SINS)

DAILY AGREEING (SELF)

DAILY ACCEPTING (SPIRIT'S POWER)

DAILY THANKING.....

Lest we think I'm talking about a once-in-a-lifetime kind of experience--somebody says, "Brother, have you experienced it?" What do you mean, IT? I'm talking about entering into fullness of God & making it a CONTINUING DAILY lifestyle. Of what? DAILY ACKNOWLEDGING my sins, DAILY AGREEING with God about self not being in control, DAILY ACCEPTING a fresh infilling of God's holy, pure, clean Spirit, & DAILY THANKING God for His fullness in my life. Daily thank Him. Now, what am I talking about? I'm talking about the fact that when we enter in to God's power & fullness like this, there's a whole new sensitivity about sin. We are so much quicker to agree with God when we sin, whereas before, we argued with God & tried to misname it. There is a recognition that that sin is caused because we have allowed self to control an area of our life. And we recognize that as we deal with it, & we now can claim a fresh infilling of the Holy Spirit, & then we say thank you...& every "dot" is another thank You, thank You, thank You God, thank You, thank You. You see, thanking is the first step of faith that I have received. When does a person say thank you? Watch this example:

Here is a good volunteer: (Gave him something & he said), "Thank you." He learned it! Thank you, brother...Now watch here: even when he grabbed it, he said thank you. As long as I was going like this (holding it back) he wasn't saying thank you, but when did he say thank you?--The moment he knew he received. Thank you is the first step of faith in saying, "God, by faith, I have received." And during these days God is going to teach us how to claim that forgiveness & thank Him--deliverance from the bondage of self, & thank Him. And claiming the fullness of God, thank Him. That's how we're saying, "God, I've received; I'm taking You at Your word, I'm entering in."

Now let me illustrate it. Suppose you respond to God about this truth tonight, & tomorrow morning you get up, one half hour after you wake up you sit down at the breakfast table, you have a fight with your wife, & here you're suppose to be walking in the Spirit. And the coffee tasted as if it had dirt in it, & therefore you got mad--of course it was just ground that morning...(that's almost like social security--most people don't get until they're 65). And there you are, you've sinned, you got mad, you had a fuss with your wife. So you know what you do? You listen what the Bible says where it says, "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath" (Eph. 4:26). And you know what most of us have interpreted that to mean? It means that we can live with that sin all day long & just before we go to bed at night we ask God to forgive us. During these days I believe that God is going to teach us what that verse really means. It didn't say, let the moon come up on your wrath; it said, let not the sun go down on your wrath. And we'll explain that. But you say, so you go through the day...no, no, no--now that you are walking (before, that's what we use to do when we use to walk in the flesh, we would argue it out & leave the house & not come to grips with that) but when you begin to walk in the Spirit all at once, when that happens, there is a pricking at the heart, there's a checking, you recognize that you have grieved the holy, pure, clean Spirit within you. Now He's been there, but you could not recognize it before. Why? Because self was in such control! Now there's a whole new sensitivity about sin--that's walking in the Spirit! And so what do you do? God forgive me, cleanse me; wife, forgive me--before I go to work I've got to get this settled; God, forgive me; I allowed self to take over in that area, & God, I bring that area to the cross. Now, God, I claim a fresh infilling of Your Holy Spirit--thank You, God; thank You, God; thank You, God! Suppose you go a

(Foundational Truths for Revival, Tape 2, continued)

half hour later & you have an evil thought--what should you do? Go through the same process. God, I allowed that sin to take over, self controlling in that area; God, forgive me, cleanse me, I bring it to the cross; God, I claim a fresh infilling of Thy Spirit over my mind, my thinking processes. Thank You, God; thank You, God. Well, you say, what if I had to do that 20 times in one day? Just think how sensitive God made you, whereas before it didn't even bother us. If you did that 20 times tomorrow, just think how holy you will be tomorrow night. ...Our sister said, Does that mean being shot full of holes--holy? But you say, well, what will happen the next day? Well, maybe the next day there will only be 15 times--you're getting better. What about the next day--only 10 times. What about the next day--only 5 times. What about the next day--only 2 and one half times. You say, well when will it be no time--(sings) when we all get to heaven. What am I saying? I am saying, as long as we're here in the flesh we'll always be dealing with issues like this, but this is the pattern, this is the process God's trying to teach us to conform us to the image of His Son & to the beauty of Christ to be seen in our lives & in our hearts. Oh that's exciting. During these days it will come into sharp focus.

I sat down one day & I began to write--forgiveness, deliverance & victory:

FORGIVENESS DELIVERANCE VICTORY

Sins Self-life Holy Spirit

Confession Crucifixion Communion

Repentance SURRENDER Lordship

Honesty HUMILITY Holiness

Current cleansing Continuous agreeing Constant claiming

Blood Cross Dove

1. FORGIVENESS, deal with SINS; DELIVERANCE from the bondage of SELF; VICTORY through the ministry of the HOLY SPIRIT.
2. FORGIVENESS through CONFESSION; DELIVERANCE through coming to the cross for CRUCIFIXION (agreeing with God about that, am crucified with Christ); VICTORY, life of COMMUNION. (Confession, Crucifixion, Communion).
3. FORGIVENESS, by REPENTANCE; DELIVERANCE, in SURRENDER; VICTORY, in LORDSHIP.
4. FORGIVENESS, in HONESTY; DELIVERANCE, by HUMILITY; VICTORY, in HOLINESS.
5. FORGIVENESS, through CURRENT CLEANSING; DELIVERANCE, by CONTINUOUS AGREEING; VICTORY, by CONSTANT CLAIMING the fullness of God. HOW?
6. BLOOD of Christ, the cleansing; coming to the CROSS, agreeing with God, no more I but Christ; & then the ministry of Holy Spirit the heavenly DOVE for constantly claiming the fullness of God.

Then I said, now that I've got them down, why don't I just look at it this way, and I was intrigued to note that:

(First column):

FORGIVENESS from SINS, through CONFESSION, by REPENTANCE in transparent HONESTY, & the CURRENT CLEANSING through the BLOOD.

(Second column):

DELIVERANCE from the bondage of SELF, through CRUCIFIXION, by total SURRENDER, in genuine HUMILITY, as I CONTINUOUSLY AGREE with God, that I'll live my life at the CROSS.

(Foundational Truths for Revival, Tape 2, continued)

(Third column):

VICTORY through the power of the SPIRIT, a life of COMMUNION, where Christ becomes LORD of my life, entering into a HOLY life, as I CONSTANTLY CLAIM a fresh infilling of God's Holy Spirit.

Then I took one more look at it & said, what is the CENTER of it all? And I looked at the center of the page & found that it is SURRENDER & HUMILITY--right in the center of it all! What a beautiful pattern God has for us, & it's all a part of the Gospel of grace, saving grace. And some of us are going to be saved from the

bondage of ourselves during these days. Some of us have thought we would go to our graves always with those habits hanging on & never expecting victory. And that's why God is bringing us together so that this is going to be a reality in our hearts & in our lives.

PRAYING WITH OTHERS folder:

This becomes the basis for the prayer room ministry during this crusade, in the way we are going to minister to people. And I would like for you to look at it for a few moments, PRAYING WITH OTHERS. Open the folder once, then look on the right hand side where it says, PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS ON PRAYING WITH OTHERS. Here is the way in which we function--let's read the dark print together:

1. It must be Spirit-directed as people must meet God, not the person praying. People must meet God, not the prayer room worker; it's no time to impress anyone with your Bible knowledge, or your personality--they must meet God. We want to make sure that we understand that. That helps you to better understand the front page where there is a letter saying, "Dear Brother Sutera,..." & that was written to us by a lady who interfered with someone who was trying to meet the Lord in a meeting. She wrote to warn us to make sure that prayer partners do not interfere with people who need to respond to God. They have to meet God--that is a key truth. Now open your folder again--what do we do?

2. Kneel & pray silently next to the person. When the invitations will be given, people will go to the room of prayer, they will kneel & there will be a chair empty next to them, & then another person & an empty chair, & another person...& the empty chair will be for the prayer partner to kneel & pray silently next to them. When a prayer partner goes to the prayer room to pray with people, he doesn't go to say anything primarily, he goes to pray--he's a prayer partner. Aren't you glad I didn't have to call you a counsellor? If you are a counsellor then you have to have all the answers. Some of them get paid \$75. an hour for their wisdom, & I know there are some in this room who have never been interested in being involved with a prayer room ministry of praying with people simply because you thought that you had to have the answers, & you couldn't remember it all. And what if you'd be involved & somebody would ask you something you didn't know & you'd be confused & all the rest of it? I'm not asking for a counsellor. I'm asking for prayer partners. Now what does a prayer partner need? He needs to believe in prayer, that God answers prayer, & in a right relationship with God so that God can hear his prayer. Now notice at #2, DO NOT GET IN THE WAY BY SAYING ANYTHING. The person needs to meet God. How should you be praying as a prayer partner?

a. For personal cleansing yourself, & for a fresh infilling of the Holy Spirit. Then you deal with any sense of unbelief in your own spirit whether or not God can meet that person's need. Say, God forgive me for a spirit of unbelief if it's there. I want to be right with God in order to pray in faith. Then,

b. Ask God for wisdom to relate to the seeker when he finishes praying. Say, God, give me the wisdom to know exactly what to say when this person has finished his prayer. Then,

c. Ask God to meet the seekers need, whatever it is, & then thank Him for meeting that need. You ask God once, God meet that need, then you spend the rest of the time thanking God for meeting it. That's the exercise of faith. That's the way you pray, quietly next to an individual.

(Foundtional Truths for Revival, Tape 2, continued)

By the way, PLEASE DO NOT GET IN ANYBODY'S WAY--not only by butting in by saying something, but also by physical contact. All kinds of people have been disturbed from meeting God genuinely because the person that was kneeling & wanting to meet the Lord, but somebody rushes in & wraps his arm around him & prays over him & starts praying out loud next to him, & prays so loud that the person can hardly hear himself, what's going on around him, & all at once there's all kinds of interferences. This is serious business, & we are asking that there is a sensitivity about praying quietly next to people who are responding to God, & even physically being sensitive not to cause an interference. Now please don't misunderstand me--I'm not radical. I understand there are certain times where God leads a person in a very direct way to gently put an arm next to somebody, or around someone, or touch someone's hand, or hold someone's hand--& there is a conscious sense that God is leading you to do that. But I'm talking about just this idea of all at once, or immediately, out of habit, to jump in & become an interference even though we're anxious to help. Please be sensitive about that.

3. Ask questions. When you sense that the seeker has finished praying, you ask questions, like: What has God done for you? How did the Lord meet your need? What has God said to you? Now notice I didn't say, DID the Lord meet your need tonight? Don't ever ask that. What does that sound like? Not much faith on my part. Instead, HOW did the Lord meet your need, Tell me what the Lord has done for you tonight...And you will find that you will become an "Amen" corner to the testimony meeting as the person shares with you what the Lord has done for him. Amen! That's what I was praying for! Amen! I was praying that God would meet your need! Amen! Then begin to use the folder to pinpoint a few specific verses to show the importance of the entire folder.

Now open the folder wide & look what you have before you at the top: DEAL WITH SINS, DEAL WITH SELF, DEAL WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT. This is what people will receive in the prayer room, & that's why you are so much farther ahead because you came tonight, & God is preparing you uniquely to minister to others during these days. If a person is coming to find Christ, you start where it says, SALVATION on the first column of DEAL WITH SINS, & follow the rest of it through. If a person is a believer coming for finding deliverance from the bondage of self & entering into the fullness of God, you start down the side that says SURRENDER, & then continue straight through.

Now when you go home you will have an opportunity to check that over, & tomorrow afternoon at five o'clock we'll discuss a little of this further. But that's what we are talking about, finding out when a person is sure. Turn back to #3 on our discussion, "Ask questions," & where it begins, If the person is clear, lead him into Bible assurance or other scriptures that relate. Use the sections that "Deal with Sins, Self, & Holy Spirit" for assurance. If the person is vague, find the specific need & deal accordingly. In some cases the person may not have an idea of even how to talk to God. Others may need some use of scripture before prayer. Let the Holy Spirit direct you to assist as soon as necessary. If a situation is too difficult to handle, ask for assistance. Let me tell you what I have just read: If a person is clear as to what God has done for them, then just take the material, pinpoint a few verses, show the importance of him studying it on his own. Lead him into assurance of that victory by a point here, & here & here. If the person is vague, let him share with you personally. What is it that God is saying to him? And you will find out a number of times why God put you next to that person--something in your life, in your experience, that can relate to what that person is going through. I cannot tell you how God has done this so many times. You will see clearly that there is a reason for you being here. Brother Harold & sister Carolyn Knickerbocker are going to be leading the prayer ministry. When the prayer partners come to the prayer room, they will say, will you come & kneel here, come & kneel here. You know what they're praying? For God to give them wisdom as to who to ask

to kneel here. They don't know anybody. Isn't that wonderful! They might even put you with your pastor & they don't even know it. And just think, you have chance to get right with your pastor right in the

(Foundtional Truths for Revival, Tape 2, continued)

process. I can tell you all kinds of stories that have been so blessed, people who had odds & things against each other & had not settled them & they find themselves kneeling next to each other--one was suppose to be praying for the other & they end up finally praying for each other & settling it, then coming to the sharing room & telling how God set them both free. The people who will get serious about this aspect of the ministry are in for the greatest blessing of anybody in the crusade. Those of you who will do it will probably grow faster in your Christian life than anybody else who will come to these meetings, and you don't even have to have all the answers. All you need to do is know how to pray. Now if your situation is too difficult to handle, now here is the blessing: you're not going to be in a room all by yourself, but in one big room together. And if you find that you're in a situation that you seem to sense that you are incapable of handling, you just come to brother Harold or sister Carolyn & just say, could you have somebody else come & join us? And they'll have somebody else come & join you. And you say, ah, now I can go home. No, no, don't miss the blessing! You go back & stay there & enter in & you will see why God put you there--you're going to learn from that experience. There have been situations where people who have come & asked for assistance because they're praying with somebody & they needed some help, & somebody else came & entered in & they saw God bring that person through to spiritual victory; & they've come back the next night as prayer partners & in the sharing room the prayer partner said, Guess what happened to me tonight? Last night I had asked for help. Tonight I had to deal with a situation that was the same as last night but now I knew how to handle it--growing, yourselves, in the things of God; that's the beauty of it. We are just there together to minister.

4. Take time for God to work. I got a phone call today & was talking with an individual who picked up a cue from someone in another area, saying that in this ministry we don't let anybody out of the prayer room until they really respond. We keep them there, we tie them there until they're forced to respond. That was the rumor we got. Look at what #4 says, just to clarify that if you have heard anything like that. Do not force a decision or rush God by not taking the time needed. Be a good listener to the seeker & to the Holy Spirit. This is God's work & He must do it. If you sense the person is not ready to completely yield to Christ, share from your own life with him. Don't injure a seeker by being satisfied with "half" surrender or merely talking him into something not experienced. Failure to bring a person into complete victory is not always the fault of the worker. Continue to pray & keep in contact. Does that sound like we're forcing an issue? Not at all. There's some people who come to a place of prayer & it's just the beginning of the break through, or the beginning of God speaking to them. And if you sense that person is not really ready to enter into what God is really saying, share something out of your life, & encourage him to keep on coming to the meetings, keep in contact with him. Encourage him to keep coming, but we don't force anybody into anything, nor do we talk somebody into something he's not experienced. You know what I've learned? That I never tell a person that he's saved. I never tell a person that he's entering into spiritual victory. What I am waiting for is for him to tell me that. Does not your Bible say, God's Spirit bears witness with our spirit that a divine transaction has taken place? There needs to be the witness of God's Spirit within him so that he can say, "I know it's settled, I thank God for victory, I thank God for my salvation." I can show him the scripture, but I want HIM to tell me. We do not force the issue, but we remain open.

5. Don't let a person evade the issue...of sins, self, & the spirit-filled life. Some will talk "experiences" rather than deal with the real need. Others will get side-tracked on family or marital problems. Settle the

main issue before praying about anything else. When "straight talk" is needed, ask probing questions as the Holy Spirit leads--in love. What is this saying? Sometimes a person will come saying, "I've come because I want you to pray for my husband, or my children." But that's not the main issue. The main issue is, what did God say to you tonight? Sometimes people start talking about, Oh, if you knew my husband, how mean he treats me & all this & that & the other thing--& for years I would say, poor you, yes, yes, let's pray for your husband, & so we'd start to pray for her husband. Dear Lord, get a hold of that husband; dear Lord, you know where he is; strike him down, whatever is necessary; dear Lord..& she's saying while I'm praying like that,

(Foundational Truths for Revival, Tape 2, continued)

"Amen, Lord, do it, Amen Lord do it..." Isn't that spiritual to pray like that? Doesn't that sound like divine love? And as I pray & talk with a person like that, I can almost sense the bitterness coming right out of that person herself. Resenting God, resenting her husband; but now no longer do we pray like that. Now, sister, what is God saying to you tonight? Could it be that there is something in your life that is causing your husband to be responding like that? Could there be that there is a lovelessness that is not Christ-like, that you as a wife are not treating your husband as a wife because you think he owes you something & he's not living up to what you want? Could it be that you just want God to do something for him so that your life will be better, OR, are you concerned that his life brings glory to God? And it's amazing when we begin to see the sin of our heart in our attitudes. We don't let people evade the issues, let's make sure that's right first. Could it be, sister, that you're trying to play God in your husband's life, & you're trying to manipulate the circumstances to bring him to Christ? And God wants you to surrender that, take your hands off, self to be surrendered at the cross so you don't play God in his life & you let God become God in His life. Could it be that you've been trying to do all this in the energy of the flesh & you need the Holy Spirit to fill you so that you will begin to walk in the Spirit? And it's amazing how God begins to pinpoint the real problem. Once that's settled, now, sister, let's pray for your husband. I have found that the way we pray for our husband is altogether different. All at once there is divine love pouring through her prayer, & a surrender & a recognition of her own need. Now she's become part of the solution instead of part of the problem.

And guess what happened one night when a lady responded to God like this? By the way, ladies, it's not only true of ladies, it's happened to men as well. One night when that lady responded like that in the prayer room, she went home to her husband, & because God had to deal with her like that it was no 5 minute ordeal. So she was late in going home that night, & he's sitting there like this & saying, "Where have YOU been tonight?" She wraps her arms around her husband & gives him a great big hug, & she says, "Honey, I want you to know that I have never loved you as much as I love you right now." And then he says, "WHERE have you been tonight?" And she asks him to forgive her for trying to play God in his life. And she just surrendered her life to God & Saturday morning in the men's meeting that man comes to the meeting, hadn't been in church in 5 years, & he sat there wondering what was going on in this meeting, & he finally pipes up, & I say, "Sir, what brought you here tonight." I said, "Why?" He said, "I had to come to find out what you did to change my wife. I've been trying to do that for 10 years in our marriage, & I have to find what she has. Please pray for me." And now that man is a deacon, saved in that men's meeting, not because of my brother's sermons, but because of a woman who dealt with the issue & let the love of Christ pour through her life. That's just one little example. And you know what's going to happen during these days? God's going to put His finger on areas of our lives that have been keeping people out of the kingdom, close to us, & we have not even recognized it. That's what we are talking about--don't let a

person evade the issue.

6. Don't minimize sharing after prayer. That we'll discuss & I'll talk about how from praying with the people, then we sit together in a room where we share with each other; & I generally will lead that time, where we have a great time. We will even invite other people in the congregation to come & sit in with us, & some people will find by our sharing together God will reveal some of their needs. And it's a marvelous experience. After the service each evening, anybody who wants to can stay to get in on the sharing of what God has done for people in the prayer room. Amen? Amen!

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