

What God Can Do Part 2 of 3

by Yorrie Richards

Yorrie Richards shares his powerful testimony of transformation through prayer and faith in Christ, highlighting the importance of community and divine encounters in his journey.

Duration: 48:26

Scripture: Psalm 34:17

Topics: "Prayer Power", "Spiritual Transformation"

Description

This sermon shares a powerful testimony of transformation and redemption through prayer and surrender to God. It highlights the impact of consistent prayer, the miraculous intervention of God in a life spiraling out of control, and the profound change that occurs when one surrenders to Christ. The narrative also includes the beauty of finding love and building a family in the midst of spiritual growth and the deep experience of encountering God's presence and cleansing.

Transcript

And so, looking at it now, the whole thing is just wonderful. God was working out a plan that I was not conscious of. Many people were conscious of it because they were taking part in it.

And this local apostolic church had begun in their Thursday prayer meetings. Pastor Ivor Davis was bringing my name to them Thursday after Thursday as a point of prayer. Many of the people there didn't know me and I certainly didn't know them.

But they were praying Thursday after Thursday, Thursday after Thursday. And prayer works, friends. I want to tell you that prayer works.

I was totally unconscious of this, this chain of prayer that was going up on my behalf, that God would rescue Uri Richards from the kind of ramshackled life that he was living at the moment. The amazing thing is, one Thursday morning, my friend Billy and I had agreed to go out on a drinking session. On a Thursday morning, we went up to a very little historic village near my state called Llanguanoid.

Llanguanoid means, Llan means church. Gunnoid means Cunnoid. So it was the church of St Cunnoid.

And we went up to Llanguanoid and there we began to drink in one of the public houses called the Old House. Now I've got a video on my shelf which gives a brief history of Maesteg town. And the Old House is mentioned in it.

And the man who did the video about Maesteg said that the Old House was once the oldest non-conformist chapel in the valley of Llynfi. It was the oldest non-conformist chapel. But we used to drink there when it was a pub.

And there was a rock there as well, where the archers that used to go out to the crusades many years ago would sharpen their arrows on. And we would also go to another public house which was nearby, just a few yards, called the Corner House. And in those days, it's been modernized now, but in those days there was a great stone fireplace.

And there you would always see on a winter's day, you would always see a blazing log fire. It would be fantastic. And there was an old lady sitting in a rocking chair doing knitting at the side of the fire.

And we were drinking in there. We got so drunk that I didn't know what happened with Billy. But I decided to make for home.

So with every thundering footstep, I say thundering because as I walked, the very impact of my feet hitting the floor used to thud in my head. And I went down through the woods. There was a shortcut as I went along.

And I came to, eventually, at the bottom of this country trap, there was an old stone bridge. I don't know the age of the bridge, but it was a very old one. I don't know anything about it, but they used to run underneath it and still does.

There is a river that runs under it. And when I got to this stone bridge, I was grunting because I was so drunk. And I went into the river.

I was wanting to get some water on my face to try and sober up a little, but I could hardly walk. And as I lay in this river, yes, I was laying in this freezing river and throwing water over my face. I nearly drowned.

It's only God's grace that I didn't meet my end there. I made for home. I eventually reached home.

I went to bed for a while. And then on Thursday night, I was out again. You remember I said on Thursdays, the little apostolic church under the leadership of Pastor Ivor Davis were bringing my name to the Lord Jesus Christ in prayer.

I had no idea of this. I went out on the Thursday night and I went into a pub called the Molster's Hotel. I sat at the table in the Molster's Hotel smoking and drinking.

I smoked as well in those days. I sat at that table all alone and I thought to myself, there's something wrong with the atmosphere of the public house. And I was pondering on the idea of going somewhere else and to change my public house.

And as I was pondering, I seemed to begin to think about the apostolic church, which was not a hundred yards away from where I was sitting in the bath. And a voice, I'm not saying it was an audible voice, I'm not saying anything like that, but the impression was made upon me so intense, so strong, that it may as well have been an audible voice. Go down to that church.

Would you believe it was God talking to me as a result of the prayer of these people. And I was lighting up fresh cigarettes. I was putting more drink inside me to try and silence this mental impression that was being put into my mind.

And finally, I decided to come out of the Molster's Hotel. So I came out and the swing doors closed behind me. It was a very dismal night.

Remember it so well, light rain, very, very light rain, and the roads and the pavements were wet. So I walked along this pavement. I went down these old stone steps over an old concrete bridge that was on the bottom of Temple Street.

Not far away was the apostolic church. Now what I am about to tell you is true, absolutely true. I don't exaggerate because I hold that an exaggeration is a lie.

So I'm telling you what happened. I can only tell you what happened. You will have to be the judge of what I'm telling you.

But I got finally to the door of Carmel Apostolic Church. I didn't go in through the door. I paced the pavement outside like an angry tiger in a cage, pacing back and forth and back and forth.

And I was wondering, what am I doing there anyway? Shall I go in? Shall I go to another public house? And I was thinking upon these things and walking back and forth the pavement. I'm sure if anybody had seen me walking up and down this pavement, they would have thought that there was something wrong with me. Now an amazing thing happened, and I had no recollection.

I found out about it later on. One of the young men inside, a man by the name of Ken Rees, he's now a pastor with the Apostolic Movement. Ken told me sometime later that while he was sitting inside the church, praying for me, he seemed to sense that the He who you are praying for is at the door, and no one came to the door.

And he told me later on, some years later, when I had met him, he said to me, I remember the night that you came in. I lost a big blessing there because the Lord had said to me, He that you are praying for is at the door. But I, perhaps I didn't believe it, but I never came to the door.

You remember the account in Acts when the church were praying for the release of Peter from prison. Peter came to the door of the house where they were praying, and they couldn't believe that he was out of prison. Eventually, I ventured in myself.

I went into the church very sheepishly, and I remember opening the inside door, and I went into the hall. I could see a lot of bowed heads as they were praying, and I went in. The time was, perhaps by now, about half past eight to quarter to nine, and I sat.

They had these long wooden benches there then. They didn't have seats, but they had long wooden benches, and I sat on the fifth row back, and I sang a song called Five Rows Back. I remember it well, and that night I sat there in my jeans and in my t-shirt.

I knew I was at the crossroads of my life. If anything was going to happen, it was going to happen now. And as I sat there, right on the end of this wooden bench, I could see Pastor Ivor Davis coming out to the front.

He was going to close the meeting, but he saw me there and didn't close it, but I could see tears running down his face. It was crossroad time. I was at the crossroad.

If I had said no to God at that time, I fear what would have happened to me. Remembering the dreams where God said, I have warned you, I have warned you. It was crossroad time.

And I myself, Pastor Ivor Davis didn't come to me. I went to him, and I caught hold of the lapels on his jacket, and I said, help me, Pastor, help me. And Pastor Ivor Davis said to me, Jory, there's only one person can help you, and that is the Lord Jesus Christ.

And he said, would you like to pray? And of course, you will remember that I had this chronic stutter. And I said, Pastor, I can't pray. I can hardly put two sentences together.

He said to me, and I shall never forget it. When you pray, it's your heart that God is listening to more than your words. He's listening to your heart.

Your heart is praying before the words come out. And I remember him saying that. So I agreed, and we both knelt on the floor in that little apostolic church in my jeans and t-shirt, and Pastor Ivor Davis knelt with me, put his arm around me, and we both prayed.

He prayed first, and then he said to me, simply ask the Lord Jesus to come into your life. And so I did. In my stumbling, stuttering way, I seemed to say some sort of a verbal prayer, but it's my heart was praying more than my mouth was.

And that night, that night, a transfer, I had had many transfers, a transfer on the railway, a transfer from one colliery to another, but here was another transfer. One who was being transferred from death unto life, from darkness into light. I didn't know what had happened to me that night.

I had no recollection of any basic biblical teaching at all as to what had happened inside of my life when I surrendered it to Christ. I don't know. But that night, I simply prayed, and I had heard someone say, under new management.

And my life was under new management. And that night, there was great rejoicing in that church. Can you imagine? Can you imagine their feelings when they had been praying Thursday after Thursday, Thursday after Thursday? And here I am coming from the Molsters Hotel with a couple of pints of scrumpy in my belly, coming to give my heart to the Lord Jesus Christ.

That night, Ken came out of the church with me. And I remember so clearly, I smoked, I chewed tobacco, I took snuff. But that night, coming out of the church, I put my hand in my pocket and felt a pocket of cigarettes.

And I remember it was woodbine. And I remember wringing the pocket of woodbine. I wrung it until it broke into two halves, and I threw them onto the floor.

Now, I have heard of others struggling to give up smoking. But I can tell you, with all truthfulness, God did a miracle with me that night. There was no struggle.

And I have never put a cigarette to my lips from that moment when I surrendered my life to Christ. No cigarette has ever, has ever been put between my lips. I have had total freedom and total liberty.

More than that, even the drinking ceased. He was due to appear in court at the time, because he had broken into some shop, him and his mates, and they'd stolen fruit or whatever. And our pastor at the time was a man by the name of Pastor Ivor Davis, originally from Aberdale.

He went to court with Yorrie to vouch on his behalf that Yorrie was now a changed man. And of course, this all came out in the local press. The headlines of the local gazette was, Man Run Wild Before He Got Saved.

And Yorrie's testimony was then blazed across the town. Of course, it was still a joke. I mean, the men in the local pubs, knowing what Yorrie was, still wouldn't believe that a man like Yorrie could be changed.

But our God can do anything. And as I've already said, there's nobody too far from the gospel of Jesus Christ that can't be reached. And our friendship, my friendship, and the friendship with the family grew quite strong.

And Yorrie spent a lot of time in our house in Maiden Street in Macmillan, where we had prayer meetings. My father instructed him in the scripture. We went to various services together.

And it was my own father who bought him his first Bible, which he treasured for some time. And Yorrie's life certainly changed after that experience with Christ. He was really a sort of task experience.

He was on the Damascus Road, and yet God met him. And from that day on, Yorrie's life was completely changed. How I thank God for a changed life.

And life really had taken on a new meaning once again. And more wonderful, round about seven months after my dramatic conversion, round about seven months, which would bring us into April. There was a special apostolic Easter convention going to be run at a place called Neath in South Wales.

And of course, we all were making plans to attend this convention. And I went along with some of the young people from the Mystic Church. And we were in a group of about six young people.

Mind you, I wasn't that young. I was 27 when I came to the Lord and Jesus Christ. And anyway, we went to this convention at Neath.

And one of the services, I sat in the front row of the upstairs balcony seats. I was in the front row upstairs. And I was casually, before the service began, looking around the crowds underneath me on the lower floor.

And my eyes dropped upon a certain lady. She was dressed in green. I can see her now in a green suit.

And sitting next to what I later learned to be her mother. My eyes fell upon Irian, for that was her name. Irian.

And I said, what a beautiful woman. I think if we believed in Cupid, the bow would have twanged then and an arrow would have pierced my heart. Because I really felt attracted to this young lady.

Once the service was over, I made a beeline for downstairs. I wanted to see if I could talk to this young lady. When I got downstairs, there was no sign of her.

Couldn't see her anywhere. So I ran outside onto the road amongst the crowds that had gathered from the inside out on the road. And I looked around there to see if I could see her.

Couldn't see her. So I ran back into the church. Now running into the church, quite amazing I think really on reflection, I nearly bowled her over.

When I was running in, I nearly knocked her off her feet. And she had to jump against the wall. So I stopped and I made apologies for what I had nearly done.

But at least I was talking. And I began to speak to her. And I said that a group of young people who I had come to the convention with from my state will go into a certain restaurant to have some refreshments between services.

And I was brave enough to ask her, would she like to join us? So she said, yes. Let me first tell my mother where I'm going. So she did that.

So the group of us went off to a restaurant and there we had fellowship around a lovely cup of Welsh tea. And I began to get to know Irene a little more. Later on, I asked her, would she like to come out with me one time? And to my surprise, she said, certainly I will.

And so from there on, we started courting. When I got to my own church on the Sunday morning after meeting Irene, I got to my own church on the Sunday morning and went to my pastor, Ivor Davis. And I said to Pastor Ivor, I said, you know, last night I met a lovely young lady at Neath and he, looking at me all interested, he said, all right, who is she? And I said, well, her name is Irene.

Irene Carr. His face dropped a mile. And he looked at me so concerned.

Ivor Davis never smiled a lot normally, but certainly now he wasn't smiling at all. And he said, do you mean Irene Carr from North Conelly? Yes. He slowly said to me, Yori, stay close to God and he will lead you to the lady of his choice.

Little did he know, little did I know, actually, for that matter, that he had actually done so, because Irene, the following December, the following December the 10th, we were pronounced man and wife. And guess who officiated at the wedding? Pastor Ivor Davis, who said that I should seek the Lord's face. And it was wonderful because Irene and I, we have spent 47 years together.

Recently, the Lord took her home. But we spent 47 wonderful years. And Irene put a lot of legacy, as my daughter says, she put a lot of legacy into my life, into all our lives.

And she taught me lots of things. One thing she taught me how to spell. I could read, but I couldn't spell very well.

And she taught me some, some of the Christians, well, more than some, there was quite a few who thought that this relationship would never work out because of the vast contrast in our backgrounds. Irene nurtured in the Apostolic Church, born into it. But of course, she had an experience of the new birth herself.

And, but she was well versed in Scripture. She had read the Bible like a book. That's the way that she used to read it from cover to cover, and then back to the front cover again.

And she, she told me one time that she had read the Holy Scriptures more times than she could bear think about. She had lost count. Well, I was just a complete learner.

So she took me on. And I thank God that she took me on. And we became inseparable.

Me and Irene, you couldn't get one, said one man who sent me an email from Portugal. You wouldn't get one without the other. We were constantly together.

And she was my friend, as well as a beautiful, loving wife. In the August of that very same year, it was the convention time at Pentecost. And the Apostolic Movement used to hire the local school.

They had their convention times when it was the school holidays, so that they could hire the school to put up many bunk beds to house those that were coming to the August convention. And so I went along to my first convention at the Apostolic Church. One night, after coming home from the final service, the epilogue service, the final service for the day, I came to the school.

I got ready for bed, and I rolled myself into bed. And then, round about half past ten, there came a call, lights out everyone, and somebody threw the main switch, and the school was plunged into total darkness. The only light that I saw was coming in through the school window from the orange street lights outside, and I just lay in my bed.

I was looking upwards, and I was looking and thinking of the vast change that had transpired in my life, a tremendous change. And I was thinking about this change, thinking about the new people that I was meeting, the new friends that I was getting to know, the young lady who I was now caught in, Irene. And I was thinking of all the wonderful things that God had performed in my life.

Now, something was about to happen, something that I couldn't explain at the time, but I tell you, as I lay there in that bed, running over the things of the way that I used to live, the things I did as an unconverted man, but now I'm living a new life, and I was reflecting on all this, when suddenly, and I mean suddenly, I felt an insatiable desire to worship. Something was happening deep within my heart, and I just wanted to worship. I wanted to perhaps put it in a scriptural sense, like Mary of old, when she fell at the feet of Jesus, she clasped his feet and said, Rabboni, Rabboni, Master.

And I wanted to worship. I couldn't get low enough. Now, this took place.

And again, I say, I'm not exaggerating one bit, but this took place. I rolled the sheets back from my bed and rolled out onto the school block floor. As I said, the classroom was in darkness except for the light that was shining in from the street lamps.

And I lay on the floor, and I began to cry. I felt as if I was being cocooned in the presence of God. God seemed to be all around me.

And actually, I had read Wesley's journals, and he speaks of an occasion much like this that took place in his life. And I lay on this school block floor and sobbed and sobbed and sobbed. I couldn't care less who could hear me, but I just lay there on that floor cocooned in God.

And the only way I can describe what was taking place was as if there was gentle waves of the sea rolling up and down my body, gentle waves caressing, gentle waves massaging almost my body. And I sobbed and sobbed and sobbed. I shall never forget that experience as long as my God lends me breath.

I will never forget that experience. I know within my own heart that a deep sense of cleansing was being done within my heart. There was a cleansing that I had never ever to experienced, and God was in a sense scouring me out.

And I lay there on that floor. I don't know how long, but I lay there until I could cry no longer. And all that was left regarding sound from my heart was the sighs.

That is how God had left me that night, sighing, sighing. I had passed through a deep cleansing. Something had happened.

I was cocooned in God. It's as if God had wrapped himself around me. And I got back into bed.

How I got into bed, I don't know. But I climbed into bed and went on my back, put the bedclothes back over me and fell to sleep. Something had happened with my life.

I woke up in the morning. Not sure where I was, but there was a total change in this ramshackled life of mine. God had done something extra, something special within my life.

From that time on, I was conscious only of the presence of God. I am not a devil conscious person. I never have been devil conscious, and I never will be devil conscious.

I'm more conscious of God. I'm more conscious of him who loved me and gave his life for me. And I love to bathe myself in his presence.

The following December, December the 10th to be exact, was the day when Irene and I were called Mr. and Mrs. We were pronounced man and wife by none other than Pastor Ivor Davis. And we were together for 47 beautiful years. We brought three children into the world.

And three children, not ten children at the moment, but they are following Jesus. They are following Jesus. What more can a man ask for than to know the Lord Jesus Christ in power and in a personal relationship and to know that his offspring are following the same Lord.

I am blessed. I am blessed. I'm not rich, but I'm richer than a millionaire.

As the song of old said, I'm richer than a millionaire just because he cares.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/wnzOI0vzb6Y.mp4>

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