

A New Beginning In Prayer

by Al Whittinghill

Transcript

But believe God for it, it's a big difference. I want to thank Shane for letting me be with you this morning. As I said earlier, that I feel that I've looked forward to this as much as even the conference that we just had, because I could tell when we got here that you're a well-watered garden, and the people that served us that were from here were so gracious, and we sensed the presence of the Lord here.

And to see the pastor and his family, and many of you men, and to hear about your families, it's been great. You know, if God wants to, we sang it, plow new ground. He wants things to become new in our homes and in our lives.

When God does something new, he always does it the same old way. So it's by the book, by his spirit, through his blood. Let me just pray, and I want to just say my heart is very, very, very full, because during the night, over and over, I kept waking up, and I felt that the Lord was giving me his own anticipation, and really, anticipation and enthusiasm for what he wants to do in every single heart in this room, without any exception, of who's here.

And there's some that might be watching that also, that he's not the same as we, he's not just here, he's there too. So may the Lord bless his word. Let's pray.

Father, in Jesus' name, we know that these are perilous days. And apart from you, we are nothing, and we can do nothing, and we can't really be anything. But you say that as we are in you, all things are yours, and in you, all things are ours.

So show us how to lay hold of what you have for us this morning, and quicken each heart, make it live, and sing, and put your spiritual desire in each one. We pray this in Jesus' name, amen. Well, I wrote this down.

If you knew you had but one year to live, would you change anything? Or, if you knew you had just one day to live, and you knew it, you knew it, how would you spend your last day? What's really important to you? How would you spend your time in the next year? Suppose God were to graciously, like Paul, take you to heaven in a vision and prayer, and allow you to experience and very look right at the throngs of people around the throne, and the angels crying, holy, holy, holy, and you could see things that couldn't even, they're not even allowed to be said on earth, like Paul saw, and the absolute reality of the eternal spiritual world became just blazed on your spiritual retina. Do you think it would change the way you live your daily life, do you? Don't be too sure about it, because sometimes we can have amazing things

happen to us, and we don't do what he wants from us, which is to make a love faith choice, a choice, and it involves the cross in our choosing, it involves laying down of our life in it. Your prayer life, would it change if that happened to you, would it? I mean, I know we want to say, well, I know it would, because I just know it would when I see a healing, but there's plenty of healings, and we see a lot of things around us that never really changes us in the way we approach our daily living.

So maybe this morning the Lord will give us something that will do a new thing, and in fact I want to call this a new beginning in prayer, because that is what will change everything. If you turn in your Bibles to Luke chapter 10, I want to read some things from the Word of God, and then I want to pray one more time and have you say with me, Lord, speak to me and change me at the core on these matters. I want to just draw your attention, not reading, but saying in Luke chapter 9, the Lord Jesus sent out His disciples and others and gave them authority over all devils and to cure diseases, and He sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.

And so they went out, and you see that famous, if any man will come after me, let him pick up his cross and follow me. You see, that's when all that happened, there were disciples going around. In chapter 10, it says, verse 1, after these things the Lord appointed another 70 also.

Have you ever seen that? That's 140 people that He sent out around, and they sent them two by two before His face, before He came into the cities and the places where He Himself would come. Now that's preparation, but as they went, you see, He says to them, the harvest is plenteous, it's ready, but the laborers are few. And then He said these words, pray ye that the Lord of the harvest would thrust out.

See there's three things, you look at the harvest, you pray for the harvest, and you go into the harvest. That's God's order. A lot of people look and then go, but they've never prayed.

They haven't been changed, they haven't got communion in their own heart. But they go out as lambs among wolves, and they preach in these cities, and they saw spiritual authority, they saw Satan running before them. And that's got to change your life when you see that there's invisible realities in your daily life, and conspiracies of evil that you can't see to bring you down and to slow you up, and to blind you and distract you, and keep you from the things that matter.

Once you see that, it'll help change you, because you realize what's at stake, not just for you, but your family and this church. Just one bad instrument in a symphony can make the whole thing sound bad. And so they came back after seeing this, and they said, Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name.

And he said, he didn't diminish that, but he said, rejoice in the real priority. I'm paraphrasing, but this is what he said to them, this is what he's saying to us. Rejoice rather and more that your names are written in heaven.

You see, not just fixing people up for time, but eternity. That's what it's all about. This is just a drop in the ocean, what we're going through here, at any price is worth making it that, because it's going to affect everything from now on for everybody you know, and everything you are involved in.

So you've got to learn to think spiritually, learn spiritually, see spiritually. As Norman Grubb once said to me, you've got to be a see-througher, and not just a look atter. Don't just look at the way things appear, but see through them and see what's really going on behind what you see, because behind it all, there is one who loves you.

And he wants you to receive these words this morning, and he wants every single person to leave this place, I believe this, with your heart singing and rejoicing that there is a God in heaven and he's alive, and he is not only in heaven, but by his DNA, divine nature from above. He lives in those who are washed in the blood, and who are born into his family, and he wants to embarrass the devil that's trying to mess with your families. He doesn't want to just fix your problems, he wants you to put your feet on your problems, and he wants you to trust him.

And even in the midst of problems, in all these things, to be more than a conqueror and to triumph. Well, I've got to get on the message or I never will get to it, but as they came back to where they came back together, here are 70 men, probably, maybe a few less, we don't know how many, but in chapter 10, verse 38, it says, it came to pass as they were going, that he entered into a certain village, and a certain woman called, named Martha, received him into her house. Now that was Bethany, Mary and Lazarus were also siblings in this home.

Now, my wife loves hospitality, and we have missionaries and friends in the home that are special, and so when that happens, she is really good at it. She's a great cook, and you know, she, I mean, I had to learn to love bows when I got married, I did, I just, you know, bows aren't my thing, but I see it's a bow takeover over the years. I've been married 40 years now, there's bows all through my house, not really, but I've learned.

But when company's coming over, you need to realize she's focused, because she wants it to be right, not because just to impress anybody, she just wants to honor the Lord and bless them, and so imagine how Martha felt when Jesus and his disciples were coming over for lunch or whatever they had, I mean, that's some heavy pressure. I mean, you know, it really is, and so she's focused, because she probably has, it sounds like a gift of doing things, there are plenty in the church, thank God for them, that are like this, that get things done, you can just say it, there it goes, and it's a wonderful thing, it's also dangerous. But they're coming over to this house, and so Mary, the younger sister is probably, she's probably younger, is solicited to help her in the kitchen, because it's 70 guys or however many there are, it must have taken a lot in that day when there wasn't anything quick.

And so, as it's there, you see them coming in, I can see them in this other room, I try to go to it in my mind, and Mary must have been there with her sister, helping her, and suddenly Martha looks in the pressure of the moment, and Mary's not there. Where'd Mary go, oh no, and it says here, that in verse 39, that Martha had a sister called Mary, and here's how the Lord describes her, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word. Now that's awesome, sitting at the feet of the Lord, listening to His word.

As I said in the earlier service, that wouldn't be bad to have on your tombstone. He sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word. And so, Martha looks around, and she, it says, she was distracted, is the word, and with much serving, and it's possible to let that happen even though it's good stuff, in your own life.

You can let all these things, not bad things, but good things, make you too busy to come to prayer meeting, you gotta go to all these things. That's why I love your pastor and his wife, because they put aside their anniversary and all those things, and they say, we want to so honor the Lord and be part of what God, we hope, is doing in our church. They sensed it, we've sensed it.

That's the anticipation all night, that God is up to something, and you know, He told 500 people to go to the upper room, raised from the dead, they should have been amazingly, and about 120 showed up, oh, we thought He said supper room, sorry, and they went somewhere else. I mean, I don't know, maybe they

got back in when Pentecost finally fell, but, you know, it was a prayer meeting that Pentecost fell upon, not a preaching meeting. It turned into preaching, and that's what'll happen to our lives.

If we come to prayer meeting, God'll turn us into proclaimers. He'll thrust us out, not just across the street, but maybe around the world. So this Martha was distracted with much serving, and so she came out to Jesus, because she looked in, and she saw Mary sitting there at His feet, listening, and she, honestly, was miffed, upset.

And she came out, and she says, listen, she's rebuking the Lord Jesus, Lord, don't you care? Don't you care about this? We may say that, look at our family, don't you care that my son is this, or my child is this, or my wife is this, or my, this situation, don't you care? How dumb can we get? Don't you care that my sister has left me? She was there, but she's left me to serve all by myself, and bid her, therefore, that she help me. That's an interesting word. It's like carrying one end of a big log in the Greek.

So she's left me here all by myself. Tell her to get busy. You need to get involved.

You get saved, get baptized, now you get involved, work, work, work, work, activity, activity. And we think that busyness is an effectuality, and we don't teach them in the Word, they don't learn to sit at Jesus' feet. But look at what he says.

I mean, can you imagine the disciples who've seen demons running and everything, and now they look and they see the Lord Jesus there with Martha, and this conversation is always for more than just those two. People are listening around you all day when you're talking in the store, and the disciples are listening, and he looks at Martha, and he says to Martha, Martha, Martha, I can't read it like he surely said it. You are distracted or anxious and troubled about many things.

I said, well, that's one verse that's true about us. We are anxious and troubled about many things. It's the first amen I got back there.

No. But one thing, one, is needful, necessary, vital is what he's saying, and Mary has chosen. I don't know why God gives me the privilege of choosing what He wants, but somewhere in the mystery of the Godhead, before the foundation of the world, when the Father and the Son swore to one another with the seal of the Spirit within the Trinity, and He says, we're going to have a vast family of sons and daughters, but we're going to make it, this is before the world began, and in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth for a stage for this to all happen, that He would come in the fullness of time and send His Son to an afterwards created beings that inhabited the earth, that this is the kind of love that I am, and I want you, if you're going to participate with me in fellowship, I want you to have this same love in you, and so therefore, you're going to have to lay your life down like I'm going to vividly in history.

He gives you the chance to make choices against yourself, because that's what He does, even today. God chooses to love the agape, lay His life down, and He wants us to learn it. How do we learn it? Well, one way is through prayer, listening to His Word, the main way.

I mean, where else are you going to learn about heaven? I mean, your preacher, just because he has some ideas? No. You better make sure he speaks according to the Scriptures. And so, and he does, I'm not talking about somebody else.

The one thing that is necessary, Mary has chosen the good part, listen, the part that will never be taken away from her. You see, people say, well, I'm just too busy. Let me tell you, there's a great barrenness in

being busy.

I used to think that busyness caused barrenness, and it might, just to be busy and neglect things that make for fruit. But I've come to see, as I've been to a lot of churches, that sometimes there is a barrenness that can produce busyness to cover over a nervousness that I don't really know what I'm hearing. So, I'm going to go out, I'm going to mow the yard for the church, and if you mow the yard, thank you.

I'm sorry, but I'm not, don't stop. But I'm saying, it's possible for me to do all kinds of things to ease my conscience when I know I'm not spending time with God. And He'll bless this, and He'll bless that, and soon we find ourselves walking in this shell life, this barrenness, and this must have greatly impacted those disciples.

So that in the next chapter, verse 1, chapter 11, verse 1, my version says, and, yours might say now, but it's a connective word that says it's based upon what was just said. And it came to pass that as He was praying in a certain place, when He stopped praying, one of His disciples said to Him, Lord, teach us to pray. Just like John taught His disciples, there's a secret to why He might have been, that one of the reasons He was greater preacher never born of women than John, says Jesus.

You know, I mean, I don't know what He meant by that fully, but I know this, that John had a prayer teaching for His disciples and that, and here, it's when the disciples saw Jesus in prayer that they said, teach us to do that, because they'd get up in the morning and He'd be gone. He'd be out under a bush somewhere praying with His Father. They'd get up in the afternoon, 5,000 people are asking for Jesus, where is He? He's in a solitary place, says Mark, chapter 1, and He's leaving the crowds to get along with His Father.

Who is this Father, the one He keeps talking about, Father? Wake up in the night, He's out somewhere under the moon, praying, many nights, it says in Luke, not just once, but a lot of nights, He was gone, they'd wake up and He'd, because you see, He said, I don't say anything, I don't do anything, I don't go anywhere but what my Father has directed me. And every word you hear from me, everything, it's straight from the Father, and when you've seen me, you've seen the Father, and by the way, as I was sent, so send I you. I want you to have a relationship with me like that, so that you can receive inward orders of love from the Spirit of God, and be involved in the plans and purposes and kingdom of God.

And so they saw this, the most conspicuous thing about Jesus was His prayer life, and He didn't have any sins to confess, and He didn't have any bad attitudes to overcome, what did He pray about? What we just said, He's with His Father, He's in communion, and this is the glory of prayer. You see, it's not just getting your needs met, or just getting a new job, or having the, keep the devil away, I mean, yes, prayer does that, and the Lord does, as we pray, those things, but we've never seen beyond that, and that's just first base to where God uses us to plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and make a hedge around our family, and lay hold, ask me for the nations, ask me for the possession of the ends of the earth, ask me of things to come, and concerning the works of my hands, the Father to the Son said, you tell me what to do, why, why? Because He's wanting us to learn His ways, and His kingdom, and giving us the infinite privilege of saying for the people around, He's just waiting for the church to go, you mean we can do that? Waiting for us to understand like He was trying to teach these, that you can get on your face, and pray for that hill up there with the house on the top at Leona Valley, and God wants to answer, you're not twisting His arm, He's been twisting your arm, and so He's trying to teach us about this, He wants us to learn this, teach us to pray, it's the only thing that Holy Ghost decided to write down in the New Testament

that they, ever of the disciples asked Jesus to teach them, they could have said, teach us to preach, I know they needed it, and teach us how to serve widows and orphans, we need this instruction from the Lord, but the only thing recorded was to show the emphasis, what Mary had just heard, one thing is needful, not two, one thing, and I said about my kids, if you can learn to pray, then the Lord will teach you, and the Word of God as you're at His feet listening, all these things, they'll assimilate by the Spirit of God in you, but see, too many people just read, a quick read through, and go out, and they wonder, why isn't God doing something, and they live hoping instead of believing, they hope that God will do something, instead of resting on the precious promises of God, and learning how to take them into the throne room, where you're welcomed now by the blood, and say, Lord, bring it to pass, and He said, that's what I've been waiting for, that's what I've been waiting, I've been waiting for a bridge of words and faith, and you've built it, here I come, and that's what happens in revival, when the church builds a bridge, you see, the Bible teaches that the single most important ingredient in every Christian's life is prayer, I'm not minimizing the Word, but you see, the Word is the sword of the Spirit, and you go to a hotel room, and you have Bibles, but there's no person to read it, except for you, what good is a sword without an arm to wield it in, wield it with, the arm of His strength, I believe, and the arm that wields the sword of prayer, in Ephesians 6, is the arm of faith, with all prayer, and with all supplication, with all thanksgiving, and with all manner of prayer, being sleepless, it says in Ephesians 6, 19, unto prayer, it's going without sleep for the purpose of prayer, to get in on what God is up to, the most important ingredient, and it really is the pulse that will determine where your life is, and where it will go, it's not what you know here, I mean, plenty of people can recite all their favorite authors, and everything they've heard, but you've got to let God put you on His anvil, and teach you His Word as you pray, it's also the surest way for this church, or any church, or any family, to become truly spiritual, to pray together, because that's when God breathes life into it, it's the best way to protect your loved ones, your children, those others, from the enemies, vices, and voices that are all around, on every side, the pressure of the world, you can pray and make a hedge like Job did, in Job chapter 1, the best man on earth, and the characteristic that God cited about him, was that he prayed every morning, for his family, and God put a hedge around him, the best thing the devil ever said in the Word, and I'm sure he wishes he hadn't have said it, when God said, have you considered my servant Job, it's like He's putting him out there before me, saying, give him a little trouble, and you're going to be surprised with what you find, and the devil says to the father, ah, does Job love you for no reason, you've built a hedge around him, and I can't touch him, take it away, watch what happens, a challenge to God, and see, God has said that whoever is born of God is kept by Him, and that wicked one touches him not, the only thing that can ever come to you, or get to you, is what God has allowed to come, for a greater good, if you can take time to see it, and understand it, before Him, I've got to get back, I'm just a lot different than the first message, but that's OK, because the Lord knows who's here, I don't, but you see, it's the best way to bless your children, and leave a legacy, have you seen the legacy yet, it's the greatest factor, and the necessary foundation for all discipleship, and all missions, and everything else that we're commanded to do, it all rests upon prayer, it falls short, preaching perishes, and kills even, that is prayerless, it's the key to church growth, and it's how to make preaching, and how to pray for your pastor, and make his word penetrate, you see, it's the most powerful instrument for good on the planet, prayer, it's the unailing way for God to strengthen you in trial, and in temptation, and all these other things, it'll dissolve your doubts, as you get in His presence, it's the best classroom for the word of God, that you could ever go in, and the Holy Spirit will teach you His word, the one who wrote it, it's the place where God gives vision, the prayer meeting, it's where the early church got vision, and prayer, when they were together in one accord, you see it like ten times in the book of Acts, and every single time God opens invisible doors, and does amazing things, there's prayer in every chapter in the book of Acts, except for

three, and in those three chapters, the church is in trouble, it's just amazing, it's just amazing, over 40 times in the book of Acts, prayer is mentioned, and then the word comes behind it, like an amazing fire and sword, but prayer was, it was like the breath in the body of the church, it was like the wind in the sails, it was everything that meant anything, so it's God's favorite place to bring forth before He ever moves in revival, it's prayer, it's a prerequisite for every revival, somewhere, there's been somebody on their knees praying, whether it's Hebrides, Peggy and her little blind sister, or whether it's in, I've met a lot of these people, and I'm telling you what it's interesting to hear, these hidden springs of revival, that's what we were believing God for this weekend, to see God send people home with a burden and a passion, see, prayer's the thing the devil fears in your life and mine more than anything else, he doesn't care how much you study your Bible if you don't pray, he doesn't care how much you give to this church if you don't pray, because you see, if he can cut off your supply lines of the spirit into your heart and life, you're going to give up because you're going to faint, but that's what Jesus says in chapter 18, He says, look, He told a parable that said, to this goal, that men ought always to pray and not to faint, and He talked about that little widow, remember, who had a court case come up, and the judge she had drawn in this court system they had was a bad judge, and he didn't care about widows, he didn't care about her case, and it's Jesus telling this parable, and He says, she had a judge who feared not God and regarded not man, and so she knew this, and so she was outside the courthouse with her umbrella, avenge me, do the right thing, the good kind of protest, not like what we see around now, but it was saying, avenge me, do the right thing, and this judge came out, he kept seeing her, he'd come out, and there she is again, there she is again, and he said, I better give in to what she says, or she'll hit me beneath the eyes when it says, with whatever she has, and he gave in, and he was right with her, and the Lord said, listen to what this unjust judge, who didn't fear God or regard man said, how much more will the judge of all the earth, your heavenly Father, listen to the voices of His children, He'll do what they say, even though He makes them wait a long time, you know why He lets prayer take a long time, cause He knows it's just like you with your little child, give me a dollar, daddy, here, it's gone, but I wanted to take you for ice cream, he's gone, you see, God says, tell me why, He wants fellowship, and my children come and say, here, can I have five dollars, He said, let's talk about it, I want to talk to them, I want to be with them, and the same thing for us, you see, He wants to teach you what it means to have fellowship with Him, and to teach you to reign with Him on the throne forever as He teaches you His ways, listen, revival, it always comes, oh, but I forgot about Luke 18, in the last verse 8, Jesus talks about that asking, seeking, knocking prayer, He says, when the Son of Man comes, talking about this little widow who keeps persisting and persisting and persisting and wearing the judge out, keep it on coming, keep on asking, keep on persisting, He says, nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He find that kind of faith on the earth? When He comes and He looks at West Side, will He find that insistent, persistent, consistent, sacrificial, laying hold of God's purposes, no matter what He's implying there, that just like the agape of many gets cold before He comes, so also faith is very precious, and perhaps seeing what God is saying becomes scarcer, a famine for the hearing of the Word of God, because maybe it hasn't been watered in prayer. So, it's what God wants to do, this is the good news in your life and mine, more than anything else, I mean, He wants you to have a glorious communion with Him in prayer, all the time, not, I mean, to pray without ceasing, when you see an ambulance goes by, your heart immediately lifts to the Father for that person, you know, like, sometimes you just have to stop in a restaurant, just pray for the restaurant, I mean, people think you're nuts, but it sure is good, because what God does sometimes, just to let Him be Himself through you.

Being a Christian is not living for Jesus, it's living by Jesus, just like, you see, He lived by His Father, and everything He did was from the Father. So, it's nothing more dear to His heart than you getting, this morning, a new beginning in prayer. He wants it for you.

The question is, will you make, like Mary, the right choice? I used to think that, see, busyness created a time problem, and that time was the problem that comes when you don't pray. Prayerlessness is because, I don't have enough time, but it's not a time problem, it's an attitude and priority problem. That's the real problem, and to deal with it, you've got to deal with it.

You can't just hope it'll go away and try to fit in, you've got to make time, you'll never find it for prayer. You need to come back tonight, to the meeting tonight. Your pastor has said, we're having a prayer meeting tonight, we're going to come together, we're going to worship, and so that's like, I would be here, I would be here, I would be here, because you'll miss it again.

You need to listen to what the Lord is saying. Nothing is more clear in the Word of God, nothing is more evident, when you look at church history, than God hears prayer. In fact, that's one of His names, in the Psalms, it says, O thou who hearest prayer, what a name, O thou who hearest prayer.

He's also called the fear of Jacob. He's got a lot of great names that He says, this is who I am, and I want you to take it seriously. So, according to the Lord Himself, one thing is needful in your life and mine, and that is to sit at the feet of the risen Lord Jesus, and listen to His Word.

He will explain it. The Holy Spirit will teach you and lead you in the things of the kingdom of God, as you listen to Him, you see. It says, Lord, teach us to pray.

Maybe you haven't been learning, because maybe He's not Lord. Lord, teach us to pray. It's not Savior teach us to pray.

See, more important than your ability is your availability. Does He have your heart and ear? Are you willing to give Him time? Lord, I'm available. I really want to learn this.

I want you to control my life. He'll be your Lord before He'll be your teacher. But He says, secondly, teach us to pray.

Teach. See, real prayer is not natural. Even when you say, Amen, a real spirit prayer is from the Spirit of God.

As I said in the earlier service, we learn a lot about prayer from listening to others, and I can almost tell you from different denominations the way they'll pray. You know, like, I mean, whether it's this group or that group, sometimes I imitate them to their chagrin, they do not like it. Since I went through a Baptist year cycle of that, you know, people say, Are you a Baptist? I say, Well, I guess I am, but at least, I guess, I don't know.

But I don't know what I am, but it's, but, but it says, Lord, it's so good to be here in your house today. Won't you lead, guide, and direct us and forgive us of our many, many sins? And for all these blessings, we'll be quick to give you the praise and honor. Or you could say, We are blessed and highly favored.

Hallelujah. Praise the Lord. You see, and you learn how to, I'm not mocking that, but I'm saying if it's taught by man, you find it lasts about one minute, and then it's gone.

But when you get along with God, he'll fill your heart and mind with his longings. And even when you say, even when you say, Amen, or when a person gets up and says, Oh, Jesus, it's like the room is on its knees, because suddenly the Spirit of God is praying through that person. And that's the kind of prayer he

wants to teach us, you see.

And he knows how to teach you. Who can teach like him? He'll take the truth and guide you into all the truth. He is the Spirit of truth.

He will lead you in paths of righteousness, down in the corridors of prayer. He will show you things to come. He'll show you how to pray and what to pray.

That's what he'll do, if you will let him. In this same chapter, a little later, when it talks about keep on asking, keep on seeking, keep on knocking, this is talking about prayer. He's answering there, Teach us to pray.

And he gives what we call the Lord's Prayer here. And then he talks about asking and seeking and knocking. And then he says, Listen, if you are fathers and you know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit? And here he's talking about, I believe, the Spirit of prayer.

How much more will he give the Holy Spirit? To keep on asking, to keep on seeking, to keep on knocking, to learn how to pray and what to pray like this, he'll give it, if you ask him. Ask him. Have you ever asked him? Lord, teach me to pray.

Give me the Spirit of prayer. Turn me into an intercessor. There's plenty of interpreters.

There's plenty of interlopers. There's plenty of interferers. There's plenty of intermurals.

But there's not much intercession in the church. But he wants there to be intercession. Learning to pray involves, first of all, an act of will.

Mary has chosen the part that will never be taken away from her. I can't tell you the number of children I've seen that were runaways from a distant land, come to their senses like the prodigal when their daddy, on their knees with us, got down and repented of his own sin. And just like an invisible signal when the dad got right, the umbrella was up in prayer, God began to deal with the child.

I don't know who I'm talking to. I didn't say this in the first service, did I, brother? But I tell you what, when the mom and dad get right, then God will lean on the kids. And I believe this is a principle.

Teach us, not just me. You know the word saint is not even in the singular in the New Testament. Teach us to pray.

It's us, we, them, all of us, together, they. It's plural. And so prayer's promises, the greatest ones that we haven't seen in America in our day, are to the church corporately gathered with one heart, one voice, one mind, lifting up God's own word back to Him.

And He says, at last, what a sweet re-incense to my heart and mind. What a sacrifice that's well-pleasing to the Lord. Tonight, I'm just asking the Lord to make a huge altar fire and let the glory of God come in.

And He goes, ah, beloved, that's what He wants. He wants to smell that coming, and it's not excellence, He just wants surrender. Teach us to pray together.

And teach us to pray, not just how to pray. You see, we want to learn the mechanics. We want to learn the methodology.

We want the information. And God says, you don't need more information. You can write a book already.

You need inspiration. You don't need methodology. You need motivation.

You need obedience. You need to, if some of you approached your job with the same diligence that you approach prayer, you'd be broke or fired. Nobody ever becomes an athlete in the Olympics without excellence.

Oh, I think I'll run in the Olympics. I want a gold medal. You don't just do that.

You see, to be a warrior, to be a soldier of the cross and to work in prayer, it takes years sometimes. But you see, the simplest one, the simplest one, God listens to the prayers of children. Have you ever asked Him how to carry on your life? You see, I believe this, the priority that we're placing upon prayer, if you really look at it realistically, it's really the priority that we're placing upon God Himself.

Because prayerlessness quickly is produced from our own pride and our own ability to think that God is looking for sponsors, but He's not. He's looking for vessels who will let Him use them. So the powers of the unseen realm have been placed at the disposal of the church.

He's let us share with Him the throttle of the universe and fire from our knees, missiles that go undetected and can't be defended against, and they can hit its target perfectly, and they can be time-activated at just God's right time. You can pray, and your prayer is, I'll live you for your children. I've seen a copy of a note that my wife's great, great, I don't know how far back on her mother's side, but it goes back.

This woman that was 23-year-old was dying of cancer. I think it was cancer, but it was years ago. And she prayed for her children and her grandchildren and those down, and we found this years later in her testimony, and I know that we live on other people's prayers.

Who prayed for you? Who are you praying for? It's a glorious, glorious heritage. Nothing is too simple. Nothing is too complex.

Nothing is too big for His power, and nothing is too small for His love, you see. Prayer is the great ministry that our Lord is devoting Himself to today. And when they saw Him praying in a certain place then, they said, teach us to pray.

When you see Him now today praying in a certain place, where is that? Our Advocate, our High Priest, our Lord of heaven and earth, the name above every name. I love that song, Lift Him Higher, but you can't lift Him any higher than He is. Only in your own minded heart can you lift Him up, and that's not talking about praising Him with your lips only.

It's talking about preaching the cross. If I be lifted up, speaking of the manner He died, to have an embracing understanding of the cross that lifts Him up in your heart and puts you down. He increases, you decrease.

Some of us have a cross that's about a half an inch high. High thoughts of self often mean low thoughts of who Jesus really is. And so, I believe prayer is the key of David.

I believe it's the key that it says that He gives to us, and God really uses prayer to put us in the real arena. So, I remember when I first got saved, it was easy to pray. I mean, it was like this little baby and this six week old son over here.

We prayed for him that he'll be a preacher when he grows up already. It was sweet, wasn't it? Sweet time. We laid hands and just prayed that little kid will be a preacher when he grows up and the Lord will save him at an early age.

And you know what? God's going to honor that. He's going to honor that. Not because of any faith that's superior, just because He's the one that gave the prayer.

He's trying to get you in on what God's up to, sister, and make your heart sing with joy. We prayed the other night and something amazing happened this morning because God absolutely just wanted to show I'm God. I don't care if you call it impossible, but nothing is too hard for me.

It's just an amazing thing. So, when you first get saved, it's like the instinct of the new nature and it's easy. And people say, well, pray for me.

And you say, sure. And soon you try to get to prayer meeting and your wheelbarrow breaks down because your book with your prayer request is so vast and the wheels fall off. And you say, well, maybe I can serve the Lord better by doing these practical other things.

And the other things are good. They're not bad things. They're good things.

And you become so busy that you never have time for prayer anymore. And along comes somebody like today and preaches on prayer. And you say, whoa, it's me.

And you hear it and you rededicate again to try harder and do more and you fail again. But you maybe never have asked Him to give you the spirit of prayer on the inside that drives you to your knees, you see, because He wants the most conspicuous thing about His church to be prayer as well. So, it's God's priority to give a new beginning to every individual in this room.

I'm sure whether you've been praying a long time or whether you're just brand new at it, some of you are seasoned veterans. I did a funeral for a little Indian lady. And before I did, her family, I know them well, had me look at her room where she spent the last years of her life.

And for 40-some years, she'd been in her room and she had all these little books and they were full of prayer requests. I was going to do her funeral. I was trying to get to know her.

I just cried my eyes out because she had hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of pages of prayer requests that she prayed to the Lord. I think when she died, it might have been as big a loss to the church as if you shot the preacher, a hundred preachers. And her daughter stood up at the funeral and said, Amma, which is what they called her, Amma, has never wasted a moment.

She was a woman of prayer, one of God's hidden ones, secret of the closet. And he says, I will give to you the treasures of the secret place. He wants to teach you about prayer.

Prayer is God's will for me. I want you to say that. Prayer is God's will for me.

Prayerlessness is the devil's will for me. Prayerlessness is the devil's will. That's a little softer, isn't it? Yeah, but it is true because he wants to cut off your supply lines and make you seek to serve in your own strength.

Nothing else you do will substitute for prayer. Bible study, meeting in small groups, serving, all that's good. But prayer is the pulse of your heart, and it tells you what your heart's really like.

And you see, many of us are professing. We're professing Christians, but we're living like practicing atheists. Robert Murray McShane once said, When a man is on his knees before God, that's what he is and nothing more.

And so, I believe a day of reversal is coming, however. Paul preached to the Corinthians, and in that 1 Corinthians chapter 3, he says, he says, listen, you're still babies. He said, I want you to take care of the gospel that I've preached to you.

Take heed, the gospel you've received and the precious reality of who you are in Him as babies. Take heed how you build upon it, whether it's with wood and hay and stubble or gold and silver and precious stones. What does that mean, Lord? Well, I know it means a lot more than this probably, but wood, hay, and stubble are what you get after man are through working, and they're busy, and they're above ground, and they're dry.

But gold, silver, and precious stones are the materials He makes for His temple, and they're made under heat and under pressure, and nobody ever sees when it's made. Take heed how you build upon this foundation of the gospel in your life, because the day is coming that will burn like an oven, it says, and every man's work will be tested by fire to see what sort, not size, sort, quality that it is. I've known little down syndrome people that I'm telling you what, I hope I don't stand before God after they do.

They are so awesome in their love for Jesus. It's just amazing. The other night, we had a precious person in here who was praying, and I could tell they were dealing with things, but my heart was singing, listening to them, agreeing with what was going on.

It was awesome, and they were leaving that night, and I stopped the car, and I just said, thank you so much for ministering to me tonight, because God spoke to me through you. It was just a sweet time. But see, that's what God wants us to learn, how to really listen to Him.

God has an honor role in heaven that is known only to Him. It's His hidden ones, His secret ones. I've met a lot of them.

God wants to teach us, each one, to pray, and if you'll say that to Him, Lord, teach me to pray. The only way to get to where God wants you is to repent of prayerlessness. You can't just try to solve it.

You've got to get before Him and say, Lord, I've been wrong. You're right, and He's not going to upbraid you. If any of you lack faith, come to Him.

He'll give you wisdom. He won't upbraid you, but He will answer. He'll give you speedily, and He'll do more than you've asked or thought.

And you'll look in the mirror one day, and you'll say, How did I ever get to this good place? And you'll hear Him say, I brought you every step of the way. He wants to teach you to be a prayer warrior, to where you

can see things happen on the news that you see, and you say, We prayed about that. Look at that, Lord.

And it was impossible until His people prayed about it. Well, that's what He wants, a newness of life in prayer for the individual. But He also wants it this morning for every family in this room.

He wants to give you a new beginning as families. He wants you to learn about what it means to really pray. Lord, teach us to pray as families.

You've got to pray or you'll be prayed upon in our day. You'll find out that the enemy will take you to task, you see. The greatest team for prayer on earth is the husband and wife together, kneeling at the tree now, the tree of life, the cross, and receiving that eternal blessing of God.

You know, don't spend your time at the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. That didn't work out. But come to the tree of life where Jesus is there.

He's the fruit of the tree of life. And you come together and you receive from Him together. I could tell you so many stories about families that rebuilt their altar that had grown coal.

I mean, they go to church, they're active, they do all these things, you see. It's just crazy. But I could tell you, you know, and this morning a lady came to me and she said, Well, my husband, he really won't pray with me.

What about those of us that are like that? And I said, Keep praying. Keep believing God on your own because we had that in our men's groups. One of our things we do with each other is that we agree we'll hold each other accountable, that if you're going to be part of this group, you're going to be making a real serious heart effort, serious effort to pray with your wife.

It's going to be a disciplined effort to bless your family and your wife and pray with them and teach them. And if we don't do, we have to tell the guys and they'll rebuke us and pray for us and put the arm around us and beat us as needed, you know. But that's what I mean.

It's serious, though. You know, it's serious. And so David, one of the guys came and he said, Well, I've tried to pray with my wife, but she can't pray with me.

She says it makes her nervous. She feels vulnerable, is what the word he said. And we realized and he realized that the reason she felt vulnerable was because he'd been so insensitive to her in so many areas for so long that she had a hard time being vulnerable.

And so we said, David, why don't you just pray for her? Just ask her if you can pray. And you start praying for her every night before they went to bed. He put his arm around her and he'd just pray and thank God for the wonderful life that the Lord had given.

You know, it's hard for a wife to hear that and not have something melt on the inside, if you mean it. And I hear guys say, Well, how can I pray for my wife? And I said, Well, you should have gotten a wife like you deserve. You dirtbag.

No, sorry. Sorry. But I'm just saying, David, he began to pray for his wife.

And after about two weeks of this, she says, Honey, can I pray? Because it melted. You see, because men, people get married for fleshly reasons. Boy, she's hot.

Oh, she's so hot. And after a while, the tingles wear off and you start looking for somebody else to tingle with. And that's just disaster.

That's what's happening. It's all about the outer man. But there's also a soul, you see, that we have that's mental or emotional.

And if you get married only for a soul reason, because she's my best friend, that's good. I'm all for that. But women think differently than men.

Women go, tick, tick, tick, tick, tick, tick, tick. Men go, beep, beep, beep. It's a different frequency.

And you'll spend the rest of your life trying to figure out your wife. And about the time you do, God will let her throw a curveball and you'll strike right out of it. You'll say, I don't know a thing.

And so God says, The way I hold a marriage together is through prayer. A husband and wife getting on their knees together, and I give a revelation of my heart and their heart. And they can trust that while that heavenly sanctification process is going on that takes place in the soul.

God made wives heavenly sandpaper. And they have a piece they can stick down inside where nobody else can get inside. I can be eating supper somewhere, and I can say something, and all my wife has to do is just go.

And it's just a gift from God. It's a gift from God. He wants us to learn to pray together.

So you see, today some of you in this room, you need to make that commitment and repent of prayerlessness. I could tell you of this church in Tennessee where this, I was preaching there before I went in. There's a back wall, back in the big lobby.

And there's all these pictures of couples. Some of them have been, I mean, they've been there since, they've been in church 50 years. Some of them had gone to be with the Lord.

Some of them were widowers or widows. But it was honoring this couple, these couples. And so that night I preached and I talked.

I made this statement. If you're a man here and you're not praying with your wife, then you're not right with God. That's the first amen from back there.

Thank you very much. See if you can say that for this next couple of things. But I said, if you're here today, can you take the courage, both of you, to take one another's hands and come down and fix this.

Repent before God. And after the service, it was just a mass of people down front weeping, snorting. They were getting right with God.

And the Lord did a lot of healing that day. Well, they went home. The next night, after the next night's message, I was down front after the message.

We had great service. And I was shaking hands and talking to people. And I noticed this little lady standing there waiting to talk.

And she was like this. She was so excited. She's probably 85 or maybe older.

But behind her was her husband. You know how husbands are, kind of standing like this. Like, she's embarrassing me just a little bit.

But that was just at first. But she got up there. And I took her by the hand.

She said, Mr. Whittingill, Mr. Whittingill, I want you to know that we did it. I said, what did you do? She said, last night when everybody got on their knees and said they wanted to repent and not pray together. And we did that.

And we went home and we prayed together. I said, do I know you? You look so familiar. And I recognized that her picture was on that wall in the back of the church.

And I said, is your picture back there on the wall? And she said, why, it is. We've been in this church, we're charter members. We've been here 52 years.

And I said, now, now, now, wait a minute. You're telling me that you and your husband went home and prayed together last night? She said, yep. It was the first time.

And it just blew me away. In church for 50 years. But they never really prayed together.

I said, well, that's glorious. She said, yep. And by then he's going like this.

And they've gotten hands and they're going like this. They said, we'll never miss another day. And they walked out.

And I said, yes, sir. He'll put the honey back in the honeymoon. I mean, I'm telling you, he knows what he's doing.

He'll bring it together. He'll bless your heart together. And you'll realize why you got married in the first place.

And it'll be sweet. It'll transform homes. And then you can pray for your children.

I could tell you a lot more about couples that started praying together. Missionaries on the mission field, been there serving their heads off for 39 years, risking their life, but they hadn't been praying together. And they stood up in a conference and said, this conference has changed us.

We've started praying together. And, uh, and our marriage has been saved because they were thinking about separating. It's unbelievable.

I could tell you about, I mean, all over different places. It's just amazing. But what he wants us to learn is to pray with our children.

I'm going to tell it. Do I have time to tell these stories, brother? About when my kids were young, I've got five grown. My youngest is 31.

By the way, he's the, he's the drummer for the passion, uh, passion group in Atlanta. And he loves to worship the Lord Jesus. It's an awesome thing.

All my kids love the Lord. It's awesome. And we have this grandkids, but when they were first young, Jonathan, the oldest was about six.

Elizabeth was about four and a half. And she had prayed to receive the Lord. And she would, she would cry when she prayed sometimes.

And she really had repented of sin. And Catherine was just about, uh, some months, wives can tell you exactly how many months. I can't ever, it's just, I, I lose my mind trying to remember birthdays sometime with 18 grandkids.

It's, it's, it's bad stuff, but I mean, it just shows weakness, you know, but, but she, little Catherine was young and, and, uh, she would just kind of, uh, she'd go along like this. But what I did was I wanted them to get a vision for the world. And I got a map of the world and I would lay it on the floor and I would read from that book by, uh, by P.T. Johnston called Operation World that tells about China and all the countries.

And so I would read them about a country and we would put our finger on that country and pray. I mean, one day I got a call from Catherine's teacher. She was barely able to talk and all these little three and a half year old standing around holding hands at this Christian school praying.

And she says, what are you teaching those kids? I said, why? What do you say? Catherine yesterday said, Lord, send Holy Ghost to Afghanistan. And I said, yes, you know, she's learning. But, but we were down, it was the time when Ethiopia was being starved by the communists years ago, over 30 years.

And, and, and, uh, they had made a blockade and were keeping out food like they did in Ukraine in 1934 and starved the population into submission. So Ethiopia was, there's an alert sent out about praying for them. So I got this book and I read them about Ethiopia and I told my kids about the situation and I said, we're going to pray for them.

And we're getting down like this and getting down ready to pray. And Elizabeth says, Daddy, doesn't Father God have all the bread in the world? And I said, he does. And she said, well, why don't we ask Father God to send bread? He will send bread to eat to Opa.

That's what she said, eat to Opa. And I said, great. You lead us in prayer, darling.

So we got down, put our fingers on Ethiopia and here she started praying. Father God, Daddy says, you have all the better in the world. And, and I noticed, and would you, would you send the bread to Ethiopia? And I'm sitting here, what does the father's heart do when you hear your daughter praying like that? I'm saying, amen, go, go Lord.

And, and we're running down that road together and here's where I trip and fall into the ditch. And she runs right past me, believe in God. She says, and Father God, we want you to do it right now.

And I remember, I remember Lord, please have mercy on her. Don't let her be disappointed by this. Don't let this ruin her faith.

Don't let her be, she doesn't understand this stuff. It takes more time. And so she got through praying.

I said, Elizabeth, that was a wonderful prayer. And I gave her a big hug. She says, thanks Daddy.

And she walked off and I was praying for her as she left. It was 40 hours later. I was waiting for a doctor friend of mine.

We were going to have lunch together and I was in his lobby, seeing his last patient. And I picked up a newspaper and on page two or three or something, there was an article that had a black thing around it to kind of highlight it. And it said, I was reading along like this, largest shipment of bread gets into Ethiopia.

And I go, what? What? I'm just blown away. I'm just blown away. And I, and I, and I, I even said this, I said, no way.

And the Lord said, yes way. And unless you become as a little child, you'll never see the nations change. You need to believe in God like she believed the Lord.

It changed me that moment. Fast forward. Elizabeth was about four and a half then.

She's older now, but it was in the year two, uh, that was years and years, 25 years ago or something. But in the year 2000, I was in South Africa when 9-1-1 happened. I was in the middle of a meeting preaching and a woman walks in the back and she said, Mr. Whitting Hill, Mr. Whitting Hill, they're running airplanes into the buildings in America.

And we thought it was in every city because when we turned on the radio, we didn't have a TV there. And all we heard was sirens and screams. And we hit the deck praying.

It was awesome. And the Lord left us there for two, well, about a week and a half Europe gridlocked and shut down. And we prayed our way.

There's a couple of us that were there throughout the book of Isaiah praying. Finally, we did learn what the situation was and we were relieved that, that it wasn't more extensive, but, but the Lord taught us he'll use these things to teach you. And so I was in a conference the next day and I was preaching.

And then there was a lot of people in this big auditorium. And so after it was over from the very back, I saw her walking down the aisle as a woman with the red dress on dignified, elegant, carried herself. You know, you knew she, she was a woman that was had dignity.

And she came up to me and she said, I walked out to meet her and I took her hand and she said, Mr. Whitting Hill, I wanted to tell you, thank you for that story about Ethiopia, because you see, I'm in the Ethiopian parliament now. And I wanted to let you know, I was there when that happened. And it was like the many people were praying.

I know this, it wasn't just Elizabeth, but let me feel like it was just her. And it was like the curtains pull back and supplies started coming in. And, and we were changed by the bounty of God.

And she said, and I want you to go back, please. And thank Elizabeth for praying. It wiped me out.

See, that's what it'd be like after you're gone for your kids, when you pray for them, that the Lord will harvest your prayers. He'll harvest your prayers. And, and the Lord said, I want you to change the nations.

I want you to be available to me. So what he wants, you see, is for us to really learn to pray as couples. But the last thing is to learn to pray as churches.

He wants to have a new beginning in this church in prayer. The question is, do you believe all this stuff? Will you be at prayer meeting tonight? You see, your pastor changed his anniversary departure to be at prayer meeting tonight. We didn't even know why.

We didn't know we were having a prayer meeting, but he changed it. And the Lord said, I want you to have a prayer meeting. He's going to blow, you know, you know, that, that picture of Marilyn Monroe with the Arab going up and she's like this, you know, she's surprised.

I just have this, I'm sorry for that word picture guys, but that's how, that's what I see the church of the Lord Jesus is like. She's walking into prayer meeting and the Lord goes, whoa, it's just amazing what God's going to do. I'd like to say, I'm going to blow our dress up.

I don't know if, whatever, maybe you say, we're not listening to him anymore. There's a call going out to the church, you see, every single member in the body of Christ in that early church was enlisted. There were, you know, prayer, the church was a prayer meeting and it had other meetings, but it was the heartbeat in the body of Christ.

And through that came every, the power of the blood and the life that was in the blood, the oxygen that would go to all the waiting body, every member, each, every, all. And so you see that it was this number one priority. There were thousands that met in Solomon's porch.

The first six chapters of Acts take about twelve years. And there's thousands, they're learning to pray in the, by the name of Jesus. He'll teach the church to pray if we'll give him time and be available and learn together.

And you can come and you can say, Lord, Leona Valley, Leona Valley, and God will burden, like in Acts 4, one person's heart and somebody will utter that and there'll be a heart embracing of it and he'll change the whole valley. I've seen this happen in towns, Hot Springs, Arkansas, and in Athens, Texas, when a few pastors really got together and prayed. I mean, I'm telling you, it broke the devil's back of the occult services.

It was the leading methamphetamine and abuse and everything else in Texas. This town was changed forever by this. And now the churches are walking through the town and praying.

If I told you about it, you'd say, tell us again, because it is awesome. It made national news, what happened, because God did that in answer to the church really praying. Prayer's not just a ministry, it's the ministry of the church that all other ministries rest upon.

And the church in our day, as you heard me say before, brother, is dying on her feet because she's busy, because she's not living and receiving on her knees. I was in Australia at a place called Murray Bridge and there were 19 pastors for this one day. And I said, I got a challenge for you.

You want to know the secret to church growth? You get you a group of praying men, find some praying deacons if you can. Find some, sorry, you didn't catch that. Find some praying deacons if you can and come together and weep.

Let him make you weep and bring you together over your, and then take a clipboard and go out and knock on doors and go and say, we're here from the church over here. We're not here to have your money, not here to get you to come to church. We don't want anything except to know if we can pray for you because we, we believe we're responsible for our neighborhood and pray.

We want to be known as people who pray for our, because we care about you. And so you may have some doors slammed in your face. You may have them open the door and say, pray for my mother.

But then you come back after you've written it down and you pray together and God will give you words. And you go back and say, look, we just wanted to tell you that we were praying and here's the scriptures we want to encourage you with that God gave us for your mother. We saw amazing things happen in our own town.

But I said to these guys, you do that and watch what happens in your church because my father's house is to be known as a house of prayer, not preaching, although we do that, not singing and worship, although that's good. And we don't, but that, what's your church known for? What's the community say? Not what you call yourself. I mean, that's really, honestly, we got to look at it that way.

But, but we want to be known as a place where people can meet God in prayer and reality. And that those people in there, they've met God and they talk to Him and pray and we can take our needs there, you know, and we can come to them and they can help us. They're priests.

They know the living God. And, and so I said to these guys, you go home and you do that. And six of those churches that did it, in the next year, their membership tripled, each one tripled.

In another place in Melbourne, am I over now? I'm over. In Melbourne, I went down there, it was on New Year's Eve. And they said, we want to have a service that honors the Lord.

And so the Lord told me there, make all things new in prayer, like, just like today. It's kind of weird. And I remember I preached on prayer.

This church was a flagship church of the Baptists in South Australia, Melbourne. And it had a lot of people that were there that Sunday night, New Year's Eve. And, and their pastor was there.

He had had cancer. He'd gotten very weak and he'd just had a heart attack that doubled that weakness. They'd had financial problems.

They had all these squabbles in the church. They were worried about if their church could even go on. And so that night we talked about prayer to them.

And we talked about getting on the face and repenting for prayerlessness. And a major, major thing happened at the end of that time when I opened up the altar like I'm going to do today. So get your heart ready.

They came forward, maybe 400 of them. The carpet was wet with tears. It really was.

And, but as they came forward and were there, the pastor came up like this and kind of moved me out of the pulpit. And he said, I want to say something. Yes, sir.

And he said, most of you in here know my condition. You know that this may kill me because they were really worried about him. But he says, I'm going to be in the sanctuary, the main auditorium every morning this week from seven o'clock to eight o'clock to pray.

And I wish you'd join me. We got to see, we've heard about this. We've known about these things, but we just haven't done it.

And now I'm going to, I'm calling us to prayer. And so I went on to Adelaide after that and preached the next week. And then I call back and they said, oh, oh, we had 40 people there.

It was awesome. And, and we called on the Lord for an hour. So it was such a blessing.

We're going to go another week. And so they went another week and I called them back when I got to the States, talked to the associate pastor. And he said, we had about a hundred people there and, and it was awesome.

And it's so awesome. We're going to extend the rest of the month. And we've added a half an hour on the front and the back.

And it's two hours now for all who come and numbers are growing and it's great. At the end of the month, I called at the end of the month. And I said, how was it? How was it? He says, it's glorious.

I mean, people are getting saved. Things are changing. We can sense the presence of God.

Our church is being moved and we're going to go another month. So at the end of that second month, I called him. He says, brother, we're going the whole year.

And they went the whole year. And after the end of the year, the chairman of their elders wrote me a letter and he says, praise be to God, that he's a God who hears prayer. Prayer has saved our church and glorified the name of Jesus.

Our pastor who was a dying man is now, he's a dynamo. No one can figure it out. He's not dying anymore.

In fact, we beg him to take a rest and our finances are up. People are getting saved and people actually love each other here now. And he says, our church has been changed forever to the glory of God.

And so, I mean, I can tell you about a lot. I mean, I'm not trying to cut up. I'm trying to hurry here.

I'm trying to guard your time too. But the church of the Lord Jesus in these last days is going to be a glorious church. So don't put up an umbrella, but look up and get together.

Keep your eye and heart on Calvary and keep your eye on the throne and get on your knees before him and let him speak to you. You are blessed. You people, you have good leaders here and you have, I respect so much Shane's heart and integrity and Morgan, just the way they want to hear God.

And I can tell because I've seen a lot of things in these countries and all these churches, the good, the bad, and the ugly. And you are blessed. And let me tell you something.

If you decide to say, Lord, we want this, then you better put your, you better gird your loins because he is going to bless you. Some of you say, well, we don't want that. We just want church like we have.

We like it like it is. Well, that's what you'll end up with. But see, he went without faith.

It's impossible to please him. I could tell you so many more stories. I wish I could.

I will tell you about Catherine, who was three and a half. She wanted to get in on some of this stuff that Elizabeth was praying. And we were praying, my wife and I, for her friend, Molly, who lives in Singapore and Catherine so much wanted to enter in, you know, and she, she was just young and she couldn't, and she, she's a real fashion.

She loves fashion from her earliest days. She just loves, she's such a girl. I mean, seriously.

And, and, and it's awesome. I love it. I mean, I'm sure he's had his other way around.

I mean, that's being honest. This is California. Don't say stuff like that.

But she's down on the floor, three and a half years old, and she's trying to pray for Molly. So she says, send Molly a red dress. And she does her lips like this.

You know, that means she's really thinking. And I'm sitting here trying not to just roll over in laughter. And she'd say something else and go.

And you know what? I began to see God sent Molly a red dress. We got this email that said she got a red dress from her sister. I said, no way.

And, and then we started seeing other things happening. So I said, could it be, is it possible? I get, Heavenly Father, maybe we think it's just moving your lips that makes prayer work. I, the Lord, look on the heart.

He saw her heart and he wanted to teach her something. And he wants to teach you to pray. He wants to encourage you today.

He wants to, to honor his word. And he wants you to see it's never a waste of time together with the saints and pray together. And so I just want to encourage you that prayer will put you in the real arena and you won't have to keep asking what's happening and get others.

It's a privilege, you see. And a right relationship with God is the, is the key to prayer. If you abide in me and my words abide in you.

And he wants to surprise you. He wants to do more than you've asked or thought. What's the hardest thing you could ever imagine? But you see it lines up.

You'd honor God and it's his word. Then come together with other Christians and write it down and begin to get them to pray with you for it and watch your Lord surprise you. Because he wants to ravish your heart.

I believe the greatest sin perhaps of the church in America is prayerlessness, at least corporate prayer for sure. That's why so many preachers are falling. The secret of all failure may be the failure of secret prayer.

It may start right at the closet door. Watch and pray so that you don't enter into temptation. You see, man fail in private before they fall in public.

Whether it's in the pastor or whether it's in the pew, whatever it is, you'll, you got to stand brother with your brothers and let, let this birth hope in you that your heavenly father longs to spend time with you and he wants to teach you to pray and he means business. Heavenly business, not earth's busyness. Oh, I wish I could just open you up and put inside.

See, do you see this? Do you see this? But I'm just saying that's what will happen if you come tonight. I believe this. God's going to do something awesome in our midst.

You see his ears are open to our cry and he wants to change us forever. How is it with you and your prayer life? Well, I want to just ask you that and I'm going to in the name of Jesus, open this front up. You

know what for? If you're here and today, no matter where you are, you want a new beginning in prayer, a new beginning from God, not just your own dedication.

You're looking for a miracle. You're looking for him to do something and he wants to and you're willing to say, I'm available. Lord, teach me to pray.

But you first got to say, forgive me, Lord, for my prayerlessness. You got to confess that because it's not just a mistake. It's become sin to us and you get before him.

You confess your prayerlessness and your sin, just you and him. That's the first individuals, but also maybe just as big and just as big couples that are here and God has spoken to you today and said, I want you to restore the family altar. I want you to begin to pray together.

I'll show you how. You know who I'm talking to and you put your hand over and say, honey, let's go down there and repent of our prayerlessness. He's not going to condemn you.

He's not going to fuss at you. He's going to say, I wanted to get that out of the way. Now let's go on with real prayer together and you're going to see fruit in your family that you can't even believe as you eat together at the foot of the cross.

And so you come today when the altar is open as couples and repent before God for prayerlessness and receive from him, ask him to teach you to pray. And thirdly, the church, the church. I heard your pastor say what it did to his heart.

He loves you that you bypassed one opportunity. I understand that. And I'm not even, I'm not even in that emotionally.

I know how it feels, but think how it affects the Lord's heart when your children don't do when, when you want. And the Lord says, I want the leaders. I want every leader, every teacher to be a person of prayer and be part of the prayer meeting.

And if you're here and you're not there yet, you're just, you're just in the church and that's awesome. Then you say, I want to be part of the church's prayer life when she comes together and I'm going to teach others what I learned. And I'm going to be part of that.

Then you should come and repent and be part of what the Lord wants to do in prayer in this church. Is that right, brother? So let's bow for prayer. Father, I thank you for the attention of this wonderful group of people that they've listened and it's been not easy every moment to receive what I've said.

I know this, but I believe it's not what I've said. I believe it's what you're saying too, that you want to teach your people to pray. You want us to learn and be available.

You want to break down barriers as we pray. You want to open doors as we pray. You want your will to be done and your kingdom to come and your name to be made holy in our midst.

And so we pray for the people in this room that they won't just repent, but they'll receive, that they will dare to consider the character of their father in heaven, if they're yours, and come and fall before you and say, I want to make the main thing, the main thing. I'm tired of giving you leftovers. I want to prioritize.

I want to fix my attitude. I want you to use me and teach me and I'm available. I will be available by the grace of God.

You will enable me. Make it so, Lord. I repent of prayerlessness.

Our family repents. We ask you to fill us with your will be done. So if that is your prayer today, we're going to open up this altar for you to come and do holy business with the king.

You come, couples, individuals. You know, you're coming. Let me tell the story.

She's not here at the first service. Yeah, you guys can continue to come down at the first service. A couple of days ago, Al prayed for a lady for her prodigal daughter.

And you have prodigal daughters or sons. We got up, we as a group, we prayed for that prodigal daughter and she was on that altar at the first service. God will answer your prayer.

So come, come up, get up and come forward and don't let pride stand in the way. We've got to humble ourselves. And don't be afraid of emotion.

You guys, let the Lord break your heart. Pour your heart out before him. He already knows everything.

He wants a broken heart. So don't resist that. Couples, dare to let God give you a new beginning in prayer.

Confess your prayerlessness. Be specific. Just give me Jesus.

Give me Jesus. Give me Jesus. You can have all this.

Lord, just give me Jesus. When I am alone. Lord, just give me Jesus.

Give me Jesus. Give me Jesus. You can have all this.

Lord, just give me Jesus. Just give me Jesus. Just give me Jesus.

Just give me Jesus. Just give me Jesus. Just give me Jesus.

Lord, when I come to die, oh, just give me Jesus. Just give me Jesus, just give me Jesus, just give me Jesus, we all need Jesus, just give me Jesus. Stop short, make a full end of it, go all the way down, let him lift you all the way back up to the beginning.

I could just sit and wait for all your goodness, hope to feel your presence...

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