

Acid Test Series 8 of 8 - the Heart Cry of Tears

by Al Whittinghill

The sermon emphasizes the transformative power of tears in prayer and the necessity of a broken heart for spiritual awakening and revival.

Duration: 48:08

Scripture: Psalm 126:1

Topics: "Christian Life"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares a personal experience of witnessing someone being set free from bondage during a prayer meeting. The speaker reflects on their own lack of love for the person and how it hindered their ability to pray effectively. They emphasize the importance of tears as a sign of genuine heart involvement in prayer and the need for the church to be desperate for revival. The sermon concludes with a reminder of the longing of the soul for God, using the analogy of a deer panting for water.

Transcript

Well, it's a privilege to be here with so many of you that I would consider friends, and also to just be in the presence of a band of people whose hearts the Lord has touched. It's like coming home. Almost everybody you meet, you know God's been dealing with in the same areas, and you start off at a good level.

So it's a great thing to be with you, and I'm deeply, really humbled to be up here this morning. Let's just pray together. Father, as we bow in your presence, and we look to your word, I would ask that your heart would have freedom with our heart, to unite our hearts, to fear your name, and to love you, and to trust you in the manners you want to speak to us.

We long together that your will be done, as we prayed last night, right here, beginning in the chambers of our spirit, right here, today, in Jesus' name. Well, I was excited last night, because I feel that in the light of what's coming after this, the Lord has an order in these messages. I wish you'd turn in your Bible to Psalm 126, and I want to read one of the songs of ascent that's on the way up into the temple, as they would pray.

They would read this from one of the steps. Let me read Psalm 126. When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream.

Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue was singing. Then said they among the heathen, the Lord has done great things for them. The Lord has done great things for us, for we are glad.

Turn again our captivity, O Lord, as the streams in the south, for they that sow in tears shall reap in joy. And he that goes forth and weeps, bearing precious seed, shall without a doubt come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him. Turn the captivity of Zion.

Well, once General Booth was the recipient of a letter, Samuel Logan Bringle tells of this. They had sent a team of those early Salvation Army workers into one of the cities in the northeastern part of the U.S. They knew how to go into the cities and to reach the unreachable in the deepest part of the city. They'd done it in so many cities, and so they had this massive campaign planned.

They'd prayed, they'd organized, they'd done everything they knew how to do, and they were seeing no fruit, none at all. And so after some weeks of frustration, they wrote the general, General Booth, founder of Salvation Army, a letter explaining the situation. The general went to pray and wrote back a letter that had two words in it, and they opened it.

And here were the words. It said, Try tears. And they realized that in their professional approach to things and knowing how to bring awakening to an area that they had left off the very heart of God.

And so they went to their knees and they began to pray, and the Lord broke their heart afresh and he met them in a great move of his. So here in this song you see in verse one when the Lord turned again, the captivity of Zion, the people of God are in captivity. It doesn't say what they're in captive to captivity to, but we know that it's not right for the people of God to be in bondage to anything.

And the psalmist then says that when when the captivity is turned that the nations notice and they say, wow, the Lord has done great things for them. And then he acknowledges you have done great things for us and we're glad. But turn our captivity again like that, Lord, like the streams in the south.

Now, I want you to look at verse four for just a moment, because he says, turn our captivity, O Lord, as the streams in the south. That word streams is the word torrents and the word south. It refers to the harsh desert just south of Jerusalem.

If you've ever been to Israel down to Masada, that's where it's talking about that area. I was standing on the top of Mount Masada and the guide showed me one of those wadis. It's an abandoned bed which dries a bone.

And he said, now that is what it's talking about. I'd ask him about this song. He had been standing there before and seen rivers of water flood that empty riverbed, that that empty waterbed as it has rained in Jerusalem.

It comes suddenly. And so here we're seeing this picture of here's a dry riverbed. It's like a wilderness.

And suddenly there's torrents of water that cannot be contained or explained by anything. So it's the it's the streams of God's awakening that come and when our captivity is turned. But as long as we're in captivity, there's no water at all.

See, that word suddenly is a revival word as you're in the wilderness and your life is dried out and you know everything you think you're supposed to know. Suddenly, as the showers begin to fall, when the

poor and needy cry out for water and there is none, then there's a overwhelming surge of his presence that comes. And it sweeps everything before it all through the scripture.

It refers to the coming of water like the rain in the latter rain. And that's the picture here. But in verse five, I think is the key to this song to having the captivity turn, verse five and six.

It says those who sow in tears shall reap in joy. And the figure that suggested to my mind is here are a people in a in a private place. They're down before the Lord and they're sowing the word of God before him in prayer, in tears.

And they're there praying and God is breaking their hearts. And as they're in prayer before him, they then get up and leave the prayer closet with the precious seed that God has given to them. And they're still weeping.

And as they go, they're preaching this word and sowing this word. And God says, without a doubt, they will come back with fruit, you see, because it's the heart that makes it fruitful. Now, I want to talk about tears, the heart cry of tears.

And I want to ask you a question. Have you wondered where the tears are in our gatherings, in the church's gatherings? Where are the tears? You see tears here. It's a pouring out of soul.

It is a you might say it's liquid prayer. It's love without language, no matter what country you go to, no matter what culture you're in, no matter what race you're with. Tears say the same thing.

They're eloquent. They speak when language cannot. And they show that the heart is involved.

Here is Matlock interviewing the person on the witness stand and they're carrying off his his questionings with perfect logic. And all of a sudden, Matlock, this is where my wife likes Matlock when he when he asked this question and it penetrates the objection. And suddenly the witness, his jaw begins to tremble and his eyes fill up and tears run down his cheeks.

And you say, now we've got it because tears show the moment of reality has come or the preacher that stands up and has a message and it's polished gesticulation, homiletics, hermeneutics, perfect, but it's dry as a bone. But then all of a sudden his voice breaks and he begins to have tear coming down his cheeks. And suddenly the deacon wakes up because suddenly you see they see the heart is involved.

And people know that when you when you've seen water come out the eyes, that people you're talking to the real person. Well, I believe I would like to make this statement about tears. If our eyes are dry.

It's because our hearts are parched. It's because our captivity has not been turned and God wants to turn our captivity. I don't believe the church has a message for the heart of the world until the Lord has the heart of the church.

And when the Lord has the heart of the church, then you will see it authenticated with heartfelt tears coming forth. You see. So here's the contrast.

Here's the contrast here. Well, first, let me say, Jesus said in John seven, that he that believeth on me as the scriptures say out of his innermost being shall come rivers of living water. Now, I used to think that was verbal.

I used to think that was preaching, and I'm sure that's part of it. But if you trace that term rivers of water through the scriptures, you will find that more often than not, it refers to rivers of water from the eye. Rivers of water run down my cheeks because, Lord, they may void your law, says David in the Psalms.

Now, Jeremiah said, oh, that my head were a fountain in my eyes, rivers of tears that I might weep for the slain of the daughter of my of my father. And so it's it's waters coming out of our eyes. The book of lamentations is about tears that that people should weep and cry out for the children and for the for the captivity people that are around.

But you see, the reason you don't see more tears, I believe, is inherent in verse one captivity, captivity here. The people of God are in bondage and without freedom, something controlling them that is holding them in check. Now, there was another man in the oldest book in the Bible, Job, who was in captivity, the whole book.

And the last part of the book, you read these words, the Lord turned the captivity of Job when when he prayed for his friends. You see, what was Job captive to to the end of the book? I mean, God says three times Job was the best man on earth. He feared God.

He hated evil. And he was an awesome man miles down the road from from almost any of us, I'm sure. But he was captive.

What was he captive to? And I believe the Lord is trying to say to us, Job was captive to his own ideas of what it meant to be righteous, of what it meant to be holy, of what it meant to serve the Lord. And he was so occupied with his own growth and his own deliverance and his own blessing that he didn't have time for others. But when he took his eyes off of himself because he saw God and diminished himself, repented in sackcloth and ashes, then he could understand his friends and he prayed and God turned his captivity.

He was self-absorbed. He was unbroken and he was therefore captive to his own ideas, a dry, barren heart, you might say. But when he was taken to that cross in his mind and saw the Lord and saw himself, he was broken and waters flowed and he wept and he was he we see the end of Job and count him merciful.

So you see, I can't weep for others if all I'm thinking about is my own blessing and my own prosperity and my own ministry and how God can bless me. We've got to be decentralized. That's why I got excited about last night, because you see, that's the place of decentralization.

It's the cross where we come to the cross and we are dethroned. We are decentralized and God gets our mind off of our own puny life. You see, the reason why this kind of prayer is so unattractive to us, the prayer of tears, it's because we've tried to enter the celestial realm of this kind of intercession in the power and strength and the sincerity of the old man.

We put him up in religious knowledge and religious rags and we come in. It's just religious flesh like Job's was for so many of us. The old man cannot wield the kind of prayer we're talking about as a weapon.

It is mighty through God to the tearing down of strongholds. And only God can give you this and give me this. Now, the old man can imitate it, but he can never really lay hold of it.

And he can pretend and he can gather in an empty church gatherings that pray and make tinkling symbols. But as we become in conscious union, as we wait before the Lord and conscious union takes

place, then our praying is transformed. As we come to the cross and pass the verdict of the cross on our own thoughts and our own words, we are set free.

But in captivity, our spirit is bound up and we cannot be free to enter into the emotions of prayer, into the heart cry of prayer for the things that God puts there in our heart. So the monster of selfishness that was in Job that's in me and in you must be dealt with and must be exposed. Christ cannot possess us or cause us to have rivers of water coming out of our eyes as he promised to flow from hearts until we truly are broken.

And this is brokenness in prayer, brokenness in prayer that comes as the Lord turns the captivity of Zion. You know, we read a lot about the death and the burial and the resurrection, and we preach this, that we're identified with the Lord in that. But, you know, we haven't taken it far enough.

Death, burial, resurrection, ascension. Yes, ascended with Christ, seated with him in the heavenlies. But the last is intercession.

We've got to identify with him in his current intercessions, and seldom do we ever hear this, that that is just as much as the crucifixion, crucified with Christ, buried with Christ, raised with Christ and now joined with him in heavenly intercession. You see, the Holy Ghost is not satisfied with the status quo of the prayers of the church. He wants to set our hearts free so we're not captive.

And so we're really walking in what he has to embrace the cross. So God responds to prayer when there's a true heart cry for revival, when our captivity has been turned and the whole being is involved. You know, this is the burden that Paul had in Romans, this kind of heart when he says, I speak the truth and I lie not the Holy Ghost bearing me witness that I have continual sorrow in my heart and heaviness for my kinsmen, according to the flesh.

I could wish that I myself were accursed, sent to hell. If God would save my kindred, my countrymen, this is the kind of burden that Moses had when he went before God and said, Lord, if you don't save these people, blot me out of your book. But you see, hot tears don't come from cold hearts.

And cold heart is a captive heart, a heart that can't enter into this realm. And I'm not up here is one saying that I have friends. I'm simply saying when the Lord turns the captivity of Zion, then then it happens.

And then we can see God opening the heavens and cloudburst waters fetched from the clouds and dry river gullies that once were full of water, filled again with water. As soon as Zion prevails, she brings forth her children. Labor pains.

That's what Paul meant in Galatians for when he says, my little children of whom I prevail in prayer again and again for you until Christ is formed in you. This prevailing, this this entering into this deep, agonizing groanings that cannot be uttered. I remember when I was in seminary, I'd asked the Lord, teach me to pray more.

And there was this couple in our church. Helen was her name and the husband was Charles. And he taught at the seminary voice, marvelous voice.

I was roommates with their son, one of four boys, and he was six feet nine. He was a judge in the city of Fort Worth, a great man of God. And when when spring break, Christmas came, I would often go to their house and spend the time with them.

Helen was a woman of prayer. I'll tell you, whenever you looked at those big blue eyes, you knew she knew something that you didn't know. You met people like that.

It's like you look at her, you say that woman knows something. And you see, I always said, Lord, teach me something through her. Well, I knew that she was a woman of prayer and knew about this.

People would come to her from all over and ask for prayer. They were Mr. Charles is out of town and I was overspending the night. It was about two o'clock in the morning.

The guys, all of us had been upstairs having a great fellowship. Helen was downstairs alone. And as I went down about two o'clock in the morning downstairs to get some water, I heard this animal like noise.

It sounded like a heart attack of someone having some kind of cardiac arrest or something. And so I began to run toward the noise in the darkness. I'd come down the stairs, running back toward the noise underneath the stairs.

And I ran into this open dimly lighted room. And there down beside the bed was not someone having a heart attack, but a woman at two o'clock in the morning down beside the bed with an open Bible and her hands were clasped in front of her. She was groaning and rolling around on the floor, praying with groanings that cannot be uttered.

I ran in and I just stopped like this. I felt like I'd walked in on a most intimate moment. I remember backing out of the room like this.

I think I backed all the way back upstairs because I was so shocked and felt like I invaded something so holy. And I said, then Lord, I don't know much about that kind of burden. I don't know much about that kind of prayer.

You see. So in tears, pour your hearts out before him. The early church had a motto that was repeated and often said, no coming to heaven without tears.

Did you know that for three centuries they said that no coming to heaven without tears? Well, there's a great secret in Romans. You know, Romans chapter eight has more about the spirit of God than any other chapter in the New Testament. And it has the criteria and the demarcations of a believer.

It talks about being led of the spirit. I mean, over 20 times and it culminates and goes up. But the highest mark is when it goes and talks about the spirit himself makes groanings within us.

He helps our weakness with groanings that cannot be uttered, talking about prayer, the highest point. There are three groanings in that chapter groanings as if to educate us what God is trying to say. There's in those first verses, like in verse 22 of chapter eight, when all of creation is groaning, it says the whole creation groans now waiting for the manifestation of you and me when God gets finished with us and all of the heavens are completed.

Heaven creation is waiting for the release from the bondage of corruption, the result of the fall. And then it takes you to a step higher of groaning. It says that we ourselves also groan, as Paul says in second Corinthians, that we groan within ourselves because we have the first fruits of the Holy Spirit.

And when we long for revival, when we long for holiness, when we long for diligence, that that sometimes is out of reach, the spirit groans for us to be completed and be clothed upon with the finality of of all that

God has. So there's a groaning. If you're not groaning, then you backslidden.

Because God wants us groaning and yearning and stretching and pressing toward that completion of what he has. But then it goes on and says that not only is creation groaning to be free from the bondage of corruption, but the Christian is groaning to be freed from the body of carnality. But the spirit of God, the comforter within us is groaning to be free from the binding of captivity.

We bind him up and we limit him to sterile prayers and lists and things that we've intellectually figured out that he wants to do and he needs to do. You see, we've never gone far enough. I'll tell you, I don't have time to go into the lists of scriptural releases when people got to the point of prayer.

But power, as we talked about last night, and tears are eternally wed in scripture. If you go to Jerusalem, you'll see at Fortress Antonio what they call tear bottles. The rabbis used to catch their tears in bottles that that they would keep.

And it goes to Psalm 56, verse eight. My tears are in your bottle. Are they not all written in your book? In the book of Revelation, God keeps vials of prayer.

I don't think it's gas. It may be liquid prayer. I don't know.

But whatever it is in those vials, I believe that God is the prayers, not just measured by time, it's measured by intensity. When we come to a point of true release, who can survey the wondrous cross like last night, really without tears? Who can who who can give out the word of the cross without real tears? If they understand who can look at the lost and what's going on today without tears, who can know God's heart without tears? Because you see the situation as we have it today calls for a contribution of tears. Tears make all the difference.

I mean, you look, this is not hidden in the scriptures, but we read right over it. I mean, it was when the children of Israel were in when they groaned, it says, and they sighed and they cried out that God came and he heard and he says, I know their sorrows and I'm going to deliver them. But the word groaned there is very significant as well.

That word groaned is the same word which is used when it says, well, when it says the spirit of God helps our infirmity, that word help is only used one other time in the New Testament. And it's used when when Martha, strangely enough, comes to Jesus and says, master, my sister has left me to serve alone, bid her that she helped me. In other words, get her hands dirty, get involved.

And it has a sense of when you're carrying something really heavy and you're about to drop it. And I come over and say, let me help you before you collapse. The spirit of God helps.

And he comes like that and runs to the aid to with groanings. The word is the word used only once in Stephen's sermon in Acts chapter seven, when he quotes the groanings of these children in Israel as they're groaning to be freed out from bondage. That same groaning when Hannah wept, God heard and gave her a prophet as a son.

When Isaiah, he saw Hezekiah weeping and God said, I have seen your tears. And he turned his death into life. Nehemiah was weeping and his tears were noticed by the king's swollen eyes.

And God used his tears to deliver the people of God and to build and to build the walls over and over a broken and contrite heart. He will not despise. Verily, Lord, you have heard the sound of my weeping.

And so our captivity must be turned. I only have a little time left, but I want to say the Bible says we're to sow in tears. That's the first.

So the word of God in tears. Remember the apostle Paul when he came and he says in Acts chapter twenty, he says, I have preached to you with many tears. I've been with you day and night for the over three years, and I've been preaching to you with tears.

Acts twenty three one in in act in second Corinthians chapter two, verse four, he says, I have written to you with many, many tears. So he spoke the word of God with tears and he wrote the word of God with tears. And he said to Timothy, I'm mindful of your tears.

The apostle Paul, he he wouldn't preach without tears. So if we sow in tears in the prayer closet, then God gives us what he wants and we go out with a broken heart and then we see the fruit of those promises that we planted in faith. This is message preparation.

Not just laying out an outline, but getting our hearts and minds before God until we can sow the word of God in tears. Oh, I wish I had three hours to talk about this, but not only so the word of God with tears, but serve the Lord with tears. The Bible talks about in Acts twenty verse nineteen.

It says Paul says, I have served the Lord with many tears. What does this mean? Well, I don't think I know fully. I really don't.

But I'm sure that it means part of this. You know, there are 18 words in the language for weight. Talking about waiting upon the Lord, 18 different words, we only have one in English, so we think it means just tearing a long time, but one of them means to get in God's presence with utter grief and and with an inward wail and God meets you like what we're talking about.

Only one of the 18. There are four major words that are used, but this to serve the Lord with tears is to minister to him and to suffer along with him. You know, if you've had something terrible happen in your life and someone comes to you and sits down and just cries with you.

Does that minister to you? Well, I believe in the same sense where we get with the Lord and we wait upon him and we weep with our heavenly father's heart. We come alongside and we enter into his burdens. Then we share his heart.

We co-labor together with him. It says in the New Testament co-laborers with God. We we want his power, but we don't want his pain.

Fellowship of his sufferings. Plural, plural, you see. And so Jesus was always as sorrowful, but yet always rejoicing.

And so that's what God has for us. Those early disciples rejoice that they were counted worthy to suffer for his name's sake. How how have we lost this? This beautiful waiting with the Lord's presence on us where we can enter into his heart burdens and serve the Lord with tears.

You see, I think in our ministry for the Lord, we must not neglect our ministry to the Lord. Ministering to him, him, just belonging to him and entering into his heart sharing. So the word of God with tears, serve

the Lord with tears.

But the one that we're majoring on today, supplicate before the Lord with tears, pour out your soul before him. You see, before the spirit of God is poured out on by God, the soul must be poured out by the church. We've got to pour our souls out before him, before he'll ever pour the spirit out on us.

It's got to be real. I remember looking in the scriptures and being shocked at some of the words that are used there that we have forgotten. There's words like Pimpus, which means a broken and contrite heart in the Greek language, a a a flowing from the heart and soul, a sympathy with God cut to the heart, broken hearted.

There's words like solicitude. When was the last time you heard that word solicitude? But it means to feel along with the Lord. Have we done this in prayer? I mean, in our gathering here, as we get before the Lord, have we taken time to really listen to him and say, Lord, we're available, we're available to you, unable to speak, sometimes only groaning.

See, this is the dimension of prayer, heart crying for revival. I remember I was in South Carolina once, and when God really began to teach me about this, I was spending the night with a lovely couple, an elder in the Presbyterian church and his wife and preaching in his church that night. In the next couple of nights, we met and talked that day.

And this was a dear man, but he's one of those dear man that you meet, you meet and you know something is wrong. You've met people like that. There's just something holding them back on the inside.

And so I began to pray for Harold. I said, Lord, show me how to pray for Harold. I don't know how to pray for him.

There's something there amiss. I had no clue that night. We went to the church, had a wonderful meeting and came back.

And before we went to the bed that night, I said, why don't we have prayer together? So Harold and Shirley and I sat down in their den and began to hold hands like we did last night. We were going to pray. And right in the middle of our time, I just opened my mouth and I said, Lord, I want to lift up Harold to you.

And without any emotions, without any real feeling of entering into my own human feelings for Harold, it was as if just sorrow invaded my being. And as I was holding their hands, I began my voice began to break. And I thought to myself, what's happening here? I said, Lord, I want to lift up Harold to you.

And my voice began to waver. My eyes began to water. And the more I tried to compose myself, here's this visiting preacher whining and crying in prayer.

And I said, Lord, what do they think? Didn't care what they thought. And suddenly, the more I tried to gain composure of myself, all I could say was Harold, Harold, and my eyes began to water. Water was just streaking down my cheeks.

Water was coming out my nose. Water was coming out my mouth and dripping off my chin. Humiliated.

I couldn't let go with my hands because they were holding onto my hands, snorting, trying to all I could do was saying, Lord, Harold, Harold. And after this went on for 10 minutes, I was absolutely. Finally, all I could do was say, you have to excuse me.

I just don't know what's happening. Just like that, Harold said, I know what's happening. We went to bed the next morning.

It was a prayer meeting. Harold stood up in that prayer meeting. He says, I want to thank God for setting me free last night at a prayer meeting for 30 years of bondage.

And I was in complete awe. And I went off and got along with the Lord. And I said, Lord, what in the world are you trying to teach me? What's going on? He said, Al, you said you wanted to know how to pray for Harold, but you don't love Harold like I love him.

And you don't know Harold like I know him. How can you pray for Harold? You said you want to learn how to pray for her. And I simply took you at your word.

I borrowed your emotions. I borrowed your heart. I borrowed your words.

And I prayed for Harold through you. You entered into a dimension of prayer. You know very little about the spirit of God made intercession through you with groanings you could never put into human words.

Too great, too awesome. And you couldn't really do it. And I borrowed your faculties.

And oh, by the way, Al, the father always hears my prayers. I said, Lord, is this is this a possibility for us? Can we move into this? And then the Lord began to show me like a papyrus, a papyrus in the book of Colossians, when it says that word always laboring for you fervently in prayers, that word laboring is the word agon. It's the same word used for the Lord Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane.

He being in an agon, it's the word used for the Greek marathon of 26 miles. It's the same word that Paul used when he says in Romans 15, he says, listen, I want you to strive together with me in your prayers to agonize together. But where's the agony? Where's the agony in? We're like Job here.

I'm just telling you what God is saying to us is to get beyond where we are in prayer, to wait before him until our hearts break until we are ushered into that cosmic realm. Let me tell you, it'll make our prayers cosmic in scope and we'll see something amazing happening. This is a gift from God.

And it doesn't just happen unless we ask in Galatians chapter four, verse six, it says, because you are sons, God has sent the spirit of his son into your hearts crying father. I'd always read that and thought it was this little father. You know, that's how we preach it sometimes.

But that word father crying, that word crying is crazy. It's the same exact word that's used of the gathering demonic who cried out in the gospel of Mark crying out as he ran. And so what that verse is saying is that as we get before God, the spirit of the mature son is sent into our heart and we cry out.

It's a languishing and burdening of heart. No longer I, but Christ in prayer. We talk about no longer I, but Christ in our daily life.

But when was the last time you really thought about no longer I, but Christ in prayer. I hope this doesn't seem presumptuous me bringing this word because I do not know this dimension. Please don't think I'm arrived up here.

I'm just saying I want to learn this. I want to learn this to answer the crowd that's been in my heart for years, the revival, the Lord. You look through history and you see in these great revival instances that we

study, it is when tears came to the church and brokenheartedness that God rendered the heavens when they rendered their hearts and they wept before him.

You see, this is this is not just crying repentance. This is not just crying before the Lord for joy. This is far beyond that.

Most people never weep in repentance, praise God when they do or they don't weep for joy. But this is beyond that. This is entering into the fellowship of his sufferings in the communion with the Holy Spirit, praying with the spirit.

What is this? It's when I make myself and my faculties available to the Holy Spirit. I become like a riverbed, a wadi, and God pours out his spirit and suddenly through this dried out person, there comes a torrential flow of his presence. And we begin to see with his eyes and feel with his heart and long with his desires.

And his breath becomes our breath. This is never worked up by man. It is brought in by God.

You can't work this up. I can wait a hundred hours before God and it'll never happen. This is the gift of tears and you have to ask for it.

I'll tell you, I guess you always have to ask for it. God knows when we need it. But I've seen men, I've seen strong, tough guys that would never cry for any reason.

And they've said, Lord, I agree with this. I ask you for the gift of tears. I remember one of my friends, Brian, he's a godly man, but he had his nose broken about seven times playing football.

He is a tough guy. He would never cry for anything other than the Lord. But he hadn't been crying in prayer.

He said, Lord, I want the gift of tears. A week later, he was sitting in a nominating committee meeting in his church. He said to me, Al, nothing is more boring than a nominating committee meeting.

He said, all I said was I said, Lord, I am so burdened for our church. I said that to the other deacons present. And all of a sudden it was as if my inwards begin to tremble and I could no longer stay in my chair.

And I fell on the floor and I began to weep and cry out with agony for my church. And the other deacons were looking at him like this. What is going on? But soon the Holy Spirit reached up and grabbed their hearts.

And soon all the deacons were down weeping before God for their church. There's a pastor here today who in his church, we shared some together in this kind of thing. And during the prayer meeting that followed, God came upon this pastor.

And for one almost solid hour, there was 100 people on their knees. And all that happened was this pastor wailed and wept before God, burdened for the church. And people left that prayer meeting like this.

They had the glory of it because they'd never seen such a burden or heard such a thing. You see, we've got to share in the burden of God. We we can't carry his burden if we're just concerned in prayer about our burdens only.

The Holy Spirit takes possession of the mind and heart and it becomes no longer I, but Jesus in prayer. And friends, I just want to say this. This is very unnatural.

And one thing I've seen about us, we believe in the supernatural, but we want it to be on our terms. Don't we, brother? I wasn't trying to single you out any more than you were me when you said these flowers looked good today. Anyway, see what happens.

You get in the men's group and somebody sharing and somebody stands up and all of a sudden he starts to weep and he says, you have to excuse me. I don't mean to cry. I said, brother, don't apologize for your tears.

Just explain them. Never apologize for tears, only explain them. We we can grieve the Holy Spirit.

You know, we're in a man's group and a church group and something intimate, wonderful happens in tears and somebody feels they have to tell a joke to relieve the pressure. And immediately there's a grieving, a quenching of the Holy Spirit. And there's this back to church as usual.

See, this will never happen unless our hearts are clean. It'll never happen unless our captivity has been turned. But when we come before him as a living sacrifice, presenting our bodies to him available for him to be as a riverbed to pray through, Lord, use me to pray through this kind of prayer will change the world.

It is cosmic in scope and it is awesome indeed. And it's Christ in us praying. And there's a great mystery to it.

I don't begin to understand it. And there's a great majesty to it. And oh, what a ministry we have.

So the word of God in tears, serve the Lord with tears, supplicate before the Lord with tears. But the last one that I leave with us is seek the Lord and I'll bet you, you'll hear more about it in the next session. Seek the Lord with tears.

You see, the Bible was written in tears and to tears. It will open its very best treasures with my whole heart. I have sought thee.

Oh, God, if you go outside and look up at the sunlight and tears don't come to your eyes, you know what will happen to your sight. You'll go blind. And the person who studies this Bible and has everything figured out and comes to the best meetings and gets truth that's radiant and bright without tears will become a Pharisee, blinded priesthood.

They didn't even know Jesus when he was in their midst. We've got to have tears. Tears actually improve your eyesight.

I've just been talking to doctors about tears and trying to study more, but there's never been revival. Those of you who know this better than me, many of you, there's never been revival until the church is desperate. Are we desperate? Is the church desperate? Well, it's got to start with us.

Am I desperate? Or am I captive? You know, that wonderful song that we sing as the deer pants after the water, so pants my soul after thee, oh God. And there's that beautiful song. I love that song that says as the deer pants for the water, so my soul longs after you.

It's lilted and precious and orderly. And I just love that song. But I was reading that song as the heart pants after the water brooks, so pants my soul after thee, oh God, my soul's thirsty for God, for the living God.

It's like a dry wilderness. My soul is I need the waters. When shall I come and appear before God? Do you know what the next verse is? My tears have been my food day and night while they say to me, where is your God? See, that's not a person say as the deer.

No, it's not like that. It's a person that can't eat. They can't do anything else day and night.

They're in before God saying, God, render heavens move, oh God. And the tears are the only thing they taste. And they're crying out with agony.

That's what must happen in our midst and in the Lord's church before revival will ever come truly. Unless God decides to do it a new way, which he can do, and I hope he does, because I don't see a lot of hope for the church to get to this point easily. That's what it means in Joel.

Thank God for all the emphasis on the solemn assemblies. But one thing that it says in Joel chapter two, it says, let the priest, those are the ministers we actually says whale. And it's a command.

It's not a suggestion to whale continually between the porch and the altar between the altar of prayer and the porch where the people are intercede in wailing prayer, come before God like that. So you see, that's the burden of the Lord. And this was the activity of the upper room at Pentecost for 10 days as they were doing what Joel said.

And then he could stand and say, this is that prophesied by the prophet Joel. And this is the activity that they were doing at Hebrides for months. And finally, one man stood and read that scripture that Byron referred to in Psalm 24 and said, are our hearts broken? Are we really taking God seriously? And God broke them and supernaturally, simultaneously, spontaneously right there.

He sent the waters suddenly filling up the dry valleys in that nation and God broke out. That's my understanding of it. So my question to you is, do you want this gift of tears? Because I believe this morning, if we will ask the Lord for the gift of tears, he will give this to us.

Will you let me give you my heart so you can truly cry heart cry for revival? Because there's no such thing as a heart cry for revival where there's no tears. Ultimately, may God authenticate this message in our experience, Lord. He says to me, will you let me give you my heart, Lord, but your heart is broken.

Yes, and so are the hearts of all of those that are truly mine, a broken and contrite heart through which I can release my spirit, the ultimate being in intercession as a person comes before me in their prayer closet with an open Bible and they take the promises of God and by the Holy Spirit through the Lord Jesus, who searches the hearts and knows the mind of the spirit, he makes intercession for us according to the will of the father, by the spirit, through the Lord Jesus to the father, it says in Romans 8, 27, and then God the father hears like he heard in Exodus. I know their groanings. I know their sorrows.

We are way too stiff. We're too afraid of feelings. Another word for that is captive.

Captive, closed up in the prison of self and what others will think of us. I'm the same way, but it's time for us not because we just enjoy tears. I'm not talking about just crying more.

I'm not saying, Lord, make me more emotional. I'm saying, Lord, give me the privilege of entering into the very prayers of the Godhead. Let me enter into this dimension of prayer.

Turn me, oh God, and I shall be turned, turned by captivity. You see, oh, that God would pour out his spirit of grace and supplication, as it says in Zechariah. But then it says, then shall they weep and mourn.

There's a lot of talk about revival being the laughter, falling on the back and laughing almost out of control. I made the statement to one dear brother. I'm sure he was a dear brother.

I said, brother, the next great move of God is not going to be men falling on their back and laughing. It's going to be consciously falling on our face and weeping. That'll be the doorway and God will usher us in to all that is in his heart.

But see, it's got to be personal. It's got to come right where we are. So are you willing to like Jesus? It says he went a little further and he fell on his face and he prayed.

I'll tell you, when I read that, the Holy Spirit said, are you willing to go a little further than you've been? And are you willing to fall on your face and really pray? And he being in an agony prayed. And that's what God wants to teach me. Doesn't matter how much you learn or know about prayer already.

It's what he teaches you now, what he wants us to learn now in this hour of the church, in this hour of history. And when we do this, the floods will sweep through our personal life and sweep through our families and clean out the things there, sweep through our churches and sweep through our land. And it'll be an awesome thing.

But it's not without prayer, not without prayer. So will you let the Lord break you? He will hear the cry of those who call upon him day and night. In the day that I cried, you answered me, O Lord, and strengthened me with strength in my soul.

I wonder if you can sense kind of a deep excitement about this word down deep, maybe a little fear, maybe a little bit of I'm not too sure about this, but I believe the Holy Spirit, let him do it will authenticate if this is indeed the word he's saying. But I know of no one else that I could meet with. And I was more intimidated by getting up before and sharing this than you people who many of you know more about prayer than I will ever learn.

But I believe the Lord wanted me to share this word with you about broken hearted intercession, getting before him and waiting until he breaks our hearts and then the rivers flow out. I was in Fiji and I shared this word. And afterwards, this woman came up with tears running down her cheeks.

And she said to me, she says, Oh, Mr. Putin, thank you so much for sharing this word. And she said, I've been praying for months and all I could do was cry. And my friends thought I was losing my mind.

They thought I was insane and I thought there was something wrong with me. But now I have God's nail to hang my head on and I'm going to get alone with him in the closet and let him weep through me. I said, thank you, Lord, thank you for ministering to that sister, a sister whose captivity has been turned.

This is not a gender thing. This is not a woman thing. This is a spirit thing.

And, sir, if you can't cry, it's because your heart is a wilderness. I need to let God break my heart. Well, let's bow for prayer.

Lord, today we we want to take inventory. May each of us ask you this question. When was the last time, Lord, you saw my heart truly weeping before you? Weeping for all the things that bring burden to your great heart.

Father, we are reluctant to enter into this cosmic realm of prayer. I don't know why we're so reluctant, but Lord, I pray this morning you will deal with the reluctance in each of our hearts to go beyond where we are, to be learners, to be disciplined by the Holy Spirit, to be brought into no longer the Christ in prayer. Yes, we know that we grow within ourselves.

We know this groaning to be free from the limitations of time and the visible. We sense this. We feel our own mind groaning and we see nature under such duress, the bondage of the fall.

But Lord, we don't even know much about how you've promised by your spirit as he groans within us to express himself and his burdens, to latch on to our human hearts and personality and help us in our inabilities and usher us into that perfect prayer, perfect before the heavenly father, as the Lord Jesus interprets those groanings before the father. And you have promised that we will always be answered and always have fruit as we pray in your name. Take away the fear of this Lord and give us intelligent capacity to receive such a holy gift.

And may we be very careful to walk circumspectly in the light of this word. Show us how to pray, teach us to pray and Lord, bring us into that promised land of prayer. Oh, there are many giants, but Lord, you've overcome them all.

Bring us in to the promised land of prayer.

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