

The Gift of Tears in Authentic Prayer

by Al Whittinghill

This sermon emphasizes the importance of seeking the gift of tears in prayer, highlighting the power of weeping before God as a form of deep communion and co-laboring with Him. It explores the transformative impact of genuine, heartfelt prayer, drawing examples from biblical figures like Job, Hannah, and Jesus in Gethsemane, showcasing the profound results of weeping in prayer for personal and communal revival.

Scripture: Psalm 42:3, Hebrews 5:7, Colossians 4:12, Acts 20:19, Jeremiah 9:1, Lamentations 2:18, Romans 8:26, 2 Corinthians 5:7

Topics: "The Gift of Tears", "Transformative Prayer"

Description

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Transcript

Lord Jesus I will build my church and the counsels and the plans of hell will not prevail against her. Your house among the nations will be called a house of prayer. We know that your will in heaven is going to be done on earth as it is in heaven as your people lay hold of you in believing prayer and bring thy will in heaven to be done on earth as it is being done there as we together make our hearts available to you to put your song and symphony in us in such a way that it's beyond anything that could ever be of man and those who look marvel and say the Lord has done great things.

Oh Lord put the fear of God once again in the hearts of your people. May the God of Jacob the fear of Isaac and the awesome king of all the earth have your way tonight in us and bring us to a new place. Lord I just sense freedom is just ready to burst forth maybe not like we call freedom but the way you call freedom and that's what we want.

We want the ways of the Lord to be implanted deeply. Our thoughts are certainly not like your thoughts nor our ways like your ways so Lord speak and plant your thoughts and your words in us tonight and may we experience them in the name of Jesus we ask these things. Believing that we have confidence in you that if we ask anything according to your will we know you hear us and if we know that you hear us you say whatsoever we ask we have those petitions in the name of Jesus that we've asked you so we thank you in

advance in Jesus name amen.

Several years ago you might have heard of William Booth who founded the Salvation Army. I was thinking of them today when I saw the great work that the Lord's given you all in your town here to help so many people from all around and the Salvation Army was birthed and and these guys were truly soldiers of the cross. They had a lot of great people in those earlier years especially and they would go into a city and they would minister to the underbelly of a city.

They knew how to go in there and over several years they really honed it down to know what they were doing and Samuel Logan Bringle was one of the top guys with the General Booth that was there and he writes in his book this account and it stirred me because he talked about how they had been in city after city and they'd gone in with campaigns and they'd seen a lot of people come to the Lord and a lot of release of all kinds of prisoners and great blessing in those cities but they went into one northeastern city and they set it up as normal and they went in as they usually do and absolutely nothing was coming forth and they had prayer and they had done everything according to what they did before and it just wasn't coming forth and they were getting discouraged and so they wrote to the general, General Booth, what a man of God, and they told him in a letter what had happened and what had not happened and they didn't know what to do and so the wrote a letter back after he heard all of that and they opened it up and read it and it had two words. You know what they were? They talked about how they had prayed, they talked about how they've done all these things and what to do and the general wrote back two words and here they were, try tears, and they saw it immediately that to them and their work it had become something they were used to, something that was easy to be involved in for them because they loved it and they saw the work but their hearts had not gone into it in the way that the Lord wanted the hearts to be into it. Try tears and they prayed, they got down and the Lord broke their heart and they wept over the situation with the heart of God and God gave a tremendous harvest to them and they learned an incredible lesson.

Well tonight I want to talk to you about that promise to us as well because we live in a day when it's certainly, considering all that's happening around us, they're certainly in order for a contribution of our tears, but where are they? Listen to Psalm 126. This is an awesome Psalm. It has some words about the past, some words about the present, and then a promise for the future, but Psalm 126 it says, and if you have it on, aha, there it is on the screen, okay, when the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, now Zion is God's people in this, we were like those that dream.

Then was our mouth filled with laughter and our tongue with singing and they said among the nations the heathen, the Lord has done great things for them. It's talking about when God turns the captivity of his people. That's odd, isn't it? God's people in captivity? That's not supposed to be, but he turned the captivity of his people and when he did then singing and joy comes and our tongue sings and we have laughter and the people around us notice when that kind of freedom comes and they say the Lord has done great things.

The world notices supernatural joy and the Lord has done great things for us. Yes he has and we're glad. We look at the past and we see what he's done and we have gladness and joy and it's awesome, but then it goes to the present tense.

Turn again our captivity, O Lord, like the streams in the south. That word stream is like the word, it's in Israel, I was down at Masada and there's these dry river gulshes that go up toward Jerusalem, up toward higher land and when it rains in Jerusalem it pours down torrents of water and it comes suddenly and it fills

those wadis and those dried up riverbeds and this guy told me that he'd seen a bus turned over that was parked and it came with such force, but he says turn our captivity like the streams in the Negev down by Masada that this dry sense that's around us, Lord, turn our captivity and make it be like a riverbed that fills up with living water suddenly. That's what it's saying there and turn our captivity, Lord, like the streams in the Negev.

And then this amazing word for the future out of that picture that you just saw, a picture, they that sow in tears shall reap in joy and he that goes forth and is weeping bearing that precious seed, and I believe it means the ones you've sown, you see verse 5 I believe is sowing in tears, sowing in the spirit, in the prayer closet, you're sowing in tears and God says I will give you harvest and joy and so you see them leaving in a picture that prayer closet verse 6, he that goes forth, meaning from where you've sowed in tears, and weeps, he's weeping, his heart's involved, he's bearing these precious seeds to tell the next generation, to tell the young and the old and publish glad tidings, he without a doubt, doubtless, will come back again with rejoicing, bringing harvest or his seeds with him. Well the single greatest factor in fruit bearing is prayer and the single thing that he says is that his house will be called a house of prayer. It's not methodology, Salvation Army learned that, it's not money necessarily, we need money of course we do, it's not men really, but it's prayer and there's a there's the spirit of revival, but we're not talking here about just any kind of prayer, we're talking about a special kind, it's effectual, fervent prayer, and so to be effective many people today go forth and they leave off sacrifice and prayer and weeping and prayer and they come back empty-handed, they come back saying what's wrong and they have little to show and there's no real fruit.

Well I want to just say about tonight we're gonna talk about tears, but not just any kind of tears, there's all kinds of tears in the scripture, he says to some people you cover the altar with your tears but they're like icicles tears, it's like melted water because they're selfish tears, or you come and you lay on your bed and you cover your bed with tears but your hearts are far from me, he says that in some of the prophets, so there's different kinds of tears, tears of frustration, but tears, as I've been to these different countries I can tell you, tears are universally understood in any country, it's the language of the heart, you know it's just amazing because you can go, they speak eloquently when words cannot, you could be in a foreign country and you could be plodding along and suddenly the Lord breaks your heart and you begin to weep and the audience begins to weep with you because they know that the heart of God is now speaking. Tears have no color, they transcend race, they transcend culture, they transcend language, and you can have someone visit someone and they don't say a word but they come in like to visit someone that just lost someone and all you do is see them and you start to weep and they say they understand. We weep with those who weep.

There's a time for tears and tears are the same from all people because they show that the heart is involved. Well it's kind of like the person, if you ever watch Matlock, I like to watch Matlock, it's an old-fashioned show, but Matlock gets this really bad guy on the witness stand and he'll, this guy's really good liar, you know, he's up there, Matlock's asking him questions and Matlock leads him on and this guy, you think, oh he's fooling Matlock but this guy's just really confident and at the right moment, bang, he asks a question, you see the guy's eyes fill up with water and you say, he's got him. You know why you can say that? Because his heart's involved.

Or you can see the preacher who's up and he's trying to bring a message and it's not working and people out there, they're about to go to sleep, you know, and all of a sudden he gets to a point and his voice breaks and he starts to have a choked up sense in his voice and people can say, the preacher's crying,

and they snap away because they know that now the heart's involved. Or the couple that comes in for counseling and they're discussing things and they're talking with each other and they're at impasse and all of a sudden one of them breaks down and cries and everything changes because now we're talking at a heart level. Do you see what I'm talking about? And it's the same thing in prayer.

And just as the life of the flesh is in the blood, the life of the soul is revealed in tears so many times in the scripture, so many times. It's a pouring out of the soul or a pouring out of the heart. When you see that expression, pour out your hearts before me, it's talking about pouring out the inner essence of a person.

I call it liquid prayer. It's love without language. It's the exclamation point of the Holy Ghost so often in prayer, when tears flow and it's maybe silence and there's nothing else.

But have you ever wondered this, like I'm wondering today and the last several months especially, where are the tears? Where are the tears in the church? When Jesus Christ looked over Jerusalem and he wept over Jerusalem, what do you think he was weeping about? I actually asked someone here the other day that question, a young person, and I don't know if they were serious, I hope not. They said there was no television. I just almost fell through the floor and I said, you've got to be kidding me.

You've got to be kidding me. But you see, this is where we are. We have no clue.

But see, he wept over Jerusalem many times. He looked and he saw. He saw for the people that are in captivity, the people that are in trouble and his heart broke and he never changes.

And he looks today and he's the high priest and he's looking at the church and do you think that the problems that bother us don't break his gracious heart? Do you think that he hasn't, do you think it doesn't call for us for a contribution of tears? But my question is, where are the tears and why are our hearts without tears? When the Lord turned the captivity of Zion, that's when it happens. Captivity is when you're under the control of something. It might be your flesh, it might be a habit, it might be a secret sin, it might be a wrong relationship, but it controls you and it really affects how you feel about everything.

But when God changes that, then comes freedom. And here we have God's people in captivity. If our eyes are dry, it's because we're like that wadi, our hearts are parched.

That's worth writing down. If our eyes are dry, it's because our hearts are parched. There's a wilderness going on in there.

And before the church can have a message for the world, for the heart of the world, the Lord must have the heart of his church. Where are the tears in our day? God's will is for us to be prayerful. The devil's will is for us to be prayerless.

And he fights prayer, real corporate prayer, especially on the level we're going to talk about tonight, more than anything else. I debated about bringing this word tonight as I thought about it because it seems almost like you can see it in a sad way. But if you really get what I'm saying tonight, it'll put you on shouting ground.

It'll melt your heart and God will have his way. You see, those torrents, it says here in this verse, it's like the torrents that comes, like the torrents that came and it changes. Torrents is that word for gushing streams that come suddenly and floodgates of mercy and a deluge of deity.

And they're not from any earthly spring. You don't get it by pumping the feet as we said last night. You get it because it's raining up around the temple and the throne in Jerusalem and suddenly it comes down to where you are at Masada, which is one of the lowest places on earth, planet.

It comes to you and it's amazing what happens. God's people in captivity. They were in captivity in Egypt.

They were in captivity in Babylon. We're captive to the world so often and we're in bondage to the world. You know, Job, it says in Job that he was the best man on earth.

God said it three times about Job. He was the best man on earth. Nobody liked him.

He hated evil. He feared God and he was a great man. But yet he was in captivity for the whole book.

What was he in captivity to? Well, if you read the book, you'll see him, he gets a little bit testy when people suggest that his problems are because of something that might be wrong in his heart. And he says, I'll defend my own righteousness. I know what God's done.

I know who I am. I love the Lord. And he's basically trying for his own sake to not think that he's really wrong with God because he loves God.

And you see him go along and God finally comes in after his friends have come and asking these questions. And God asks him questions and brings him to the end of himself and he has no defense. And Job says, oh, I've heard of you by the hearing of the ear.

That's how faith comes. But now my eye sees you and I hate my own independent life and I repent in dust and ashes. See, the theme of Job is not just suffering.

It's repentance. If I were going to write a book on repentance, I'd take Jack the Ripper or one of the politicians today or something and I'd have them get saved and repent and I'd say, that's repentance. But see, then you'd say, well, I don't need to repent.

I'm not like that. But when God writes a book on repentance, he takes the best man on earth. So there's no excuse for any of us.

And he shows how that Job's captivity was turned. When was it turned? In chapter 42, verse 10. It says, And the Lord turned the captivity of Job when he prayed for his friends.

Those who had despitefully used him. God's heart came through Job when he really saw God. And he prayed for his friends and he was set free from a self-centered self-righteousness.

I think that Job was captive to his own ideas of what it meant to be righteous. And so in this psalm you have a dry and a barren scene and God sweeps in and changes that. So God responds to prayer when the heart is involved.

And it becomes a heart cry, not just an intellectual presentation at all. So we come to him and when captivity has been turned, there's a heart burden and involvement of the whole being. You see Paul's heart in Romans 9 when he says, I tell you the truth and the Lord and I lie not, my conscience bearing witness with the Holy Ghost that if it were possible I would give up my own salvation that Israel would be saved.

You ever thought about that? I'd give up myself to heaven if my brother or sister could come to the Lord. I'd do it. But see that's like Moses that's up on the mountain in Exodus back when the people are sinning and God says get them out of here Moses I'm gonna start a new nation with you.

And Moses said Lord if you take them out of the way then blot me and there's a dash there. Blot me out of your book. We don't even know what that means.

But Paul had this burden. Moses had this burden. You see hot tears don't come from cold hearts however and a cold heart is a captive heart and it's a lukewarm heart.

So as soon as Zion travails it says in Isaiah God brings forth his children. Winners of souls if you're going to be effective must be first weepers. Poor souls.

And it's got to be with the heart and it's got to be sowing in tears as you come and you plant the precious promises of God and the Word of God in real prayer that God initiates in you. The early church had a byword they would say to one another. They said this.

I've documented it. No coming to heaven with dry eyes. No coming to heaven with dry eyes.

They encouraged one another to weep and to really pray and to really believe God. You know in Romans 8 it talks about groanings. It talks about in Romans 8 when it says that all of creation is groaning under the burden of the fall and that's the groaning of the bondage of corruption.

But then it talks about the Christian is groaning as he is under the burden of the bondage of the corruption around him and he wants to be free from the carnality and he's groaning. I want to be free. I want to go to heaven.

But the third groaning is when it says none of us knows how to pray as we ought to know how to pray. The way to pray but the Holy Spirit that is in us he will help us to learn if we'll listen and he will make intercession in us with groanings which can't be put into human words. And so you see the culmination God is saying groanings like that.

This is the groaning that is used for the word that's in Exodus when it talks about God looking at his children in Israel and they were under bondage and they were in captivity and for those years they were crying out to God not with words but their hearts were groaning it says and God heard that groaning. He listens to the prayer of the heart at the unspoken level and it is just amazing you see he helps us with our infirmities. I mean Stephen quotes this verse as he's being stoned.

So this kind of prayer that we're talking about is not worked up by the pumping of the feet it's wrought in you and me by God. He'll give you this it's a gift of grace it's birthed by fellowship with him and it's through the supply of the Spirit of God in Christ Jesus. He that's joined to the Lord is one spirit.

Now I'm telling you not a lot of people are experiencing this kind of prayer but if this church will really hear what we're covering tonight and dare to say yes Lord God will surprise you. The reason that prayer is sometimes feels so unsatisfying and even unattractive to many hearts is because we try to enter into a celestial cosmic realm of spiritual prayer in the sincerity and strength of the old man. Lord lead God and direct us and forgive us of our many many sins and there's nothing wrong with that prayer if it's from the heart but we've learned how to pray from one another.

We learn coin phrases I can tell you how the Baptists pray, I can tell you how the Methodists pray, I can tell you how the Presbyterians pray. Oh father open the window. You know I'm just telling you there's all these different ways that I'm not mocking prayer please don't think that but I'm saying we've got to be careful not to let prayer become disingenuous.

The old man is captive to the earth to the flesh to the senses and genuine prayer is supernatural even when you say amen that's a supernatural utterance at the end in Jesus name if you're really praying. But see prayer can't rise above our own selfish interests if we're captive like Job was captive to our own ideas and the monster of selfishness has to be dealt with at the cross and what God is looking for is brokenness in prayer brokenness in prayer and that is what we need to not be afraid of brokenness in prayer. Well I remember when I was in seminary I first began to learn about this and it astounded me it was Christmas time I wasn't married and I was I lived in an apartment just a little old house off the campus and I had as a roommate he was a judge in Fort Worth he was six feet nine inches tall and I was a preacher so we'd go to a meeting together and Brother Raymond Hill was preaching one night he said here come the law and the prophets you know and he loved this we loved him but rather than drive back from Texas to North Carolina I would often for the early days of Christmas spend time with he and his his family he had three brothers and his dad sang and taught music at the seminary and his mother was in our church they were all around church and she was one of those women that had big blue eyes and she was just so quiet and serene and she just oozed the presence of God and when you looked at her eyes you knew she knows a lot of things I don't have a clue about.

She just was a precious Lady Helen I'll never forget her and so I came home at Christmas time we were just you know all in our 20s and everybody was Mr. Williams was out of town and and so if the mother was downstairs and the three of us of the three guys were upstairs and it was the middle of the night we'd had a good prayer time and I thought I would go downstairs and get some water they didn't have it up there so I started down the down the stairs and went around it and I heard when I got to the bottom of the stairs this oh it sounded like you would imagine someone having a heart attack or something else going on a dying gasps of an animal of some sort I don't know what it was and I said I better find out what that is and I ran toward the sound and under the stairs was the entrance I didn't know it to their bedroom and as I rounded the corner I saw in there beside the bed in the light of a little light that was on there by the bedside I saw this woman on her knees with hands out over the bed and she was oh it was like she was having a transition time having a baby you know if you had babies you know what I mean I mean are you think you know travail but yeah trap travail but transition is when you're just getting in the big stuff you know that's when you're going in and or it's he's coming out well I mean it's better but but I saw this and I remember I ran in like this and I saw her there and I went oh and I realized that noise was her groaning she couldn't utter it she couldn't put it into words and I was just like and I walk I think I backed all the way back upstairs all the way I was floored I was amazed I was so blown away because I saw for the first time God using somebody to birth something in prayer there wasn't her immediate need and that's where she lived and that's the answer to what was in her life and her captivity had been turned and she was a magnificent woman of prayer you see because God was trying to teach me wrestling without words and love without language Oh dr. Jowett the missionary to the Hebrides out in the Hebrides by New Guinea and Papa New Guinea and that he said I'd rather teach one man to pray than ten men to preach because he was talking about what we're talking about here that it's real that's what produces it now let me just I'm gonna run through a gamut of things real quick and just say the heartbeat of this kind of prayer is throughout all the scripture tears make the difference and God is mindful of our tears just like Paul said Timothy I'm mindful of your tears it's a priority for him and he keeps our tears in his bottle it says in Psalm 56 and he has our

prayers with tears and pouring out in his vials in heaven waiting for the day of judgment there's not a teardrop that's ever lost there's not a prayer that's not in his book of prayer he's got it all down and so you don't waste time the wasted time is when you don't pray you see it's the cry of the heart so as I said let me just Exodus was when they were in Egypt and the crime their heart rose up it wasn't it wasn't even in words but it was a heart that was crying out and groaning and it says this it came to pass in the process of time that the king of Egypt died and the children of Israel sighed out by reason of the bondage and they cried and they their cry came up to God and the Lord heard their groanings that's the groanings that Stephen describes it that's used there in Romans 8 about groanings which can't be uttered you're in a situation you can't put into words but you're down before God and God like Helen Williamson fills her heart with his feelings in his heart and his obeying and there's a groaning and an expression Oh God Oh God and you can't even go far enough with that and so it's just it's not mere emotion it is the heart agreement with God but you see then you see another time just think of this in first Samuel when Hannah couldn't have a child and it says she wept and then she wept more and then she wept till she was sore she wept and she wept and and she did not eat and and she came to the high priest and he said why weepst thou why is your heart her husband said why is your heart grieved aren't I enough for you you know no she wanted a child and she was weeping until she was just bitterness of soul and weeping sore of a sorrowful spirit I poured out my soul to the Lord weeping and she came to the priest and he was able to say your prayers are heard and she didn't just have a child she had a prophet Samuel who was given to the Lord from the beginning and you see in Isaiah with Hezekiah when Hezekiah is dying he realizes he's dying and he turns in chapter 38 his face to the wall and it says he weeps till he was sore I don't know what that means but he he wept he would he he was praying to the Lord with weeping he didn't have words and the Lord comes and he says it in the scripture I have heard your prayer and I have seen your tears I'm gonna add 15 years to your life I've seen your tears well it was in Ezekiel's day that the Lord comes and he says to Ezekiel I'm gonna judge this place go through Jerusalem and put a tov it's a Hebrew a mark but it's the word tov it's like a cross and the angel went to the altar and and filled up this inkhorn with the altar I think it was full of blood and he went through it says in Ezekiel 9 Jerusalem and he put a mark on the forehead of every person that wept inside and cried out for the honor of God he marked it God did and then he says to the angel after he did now go through Jerusalem and slay utterly everyone that doesn't have that mark and began at the chief head preacher just it's an awesome thing God is looking for a man to stand in the gap before him before the whole land to take the heart of God like Daniel did when he came and he wept and he mourned and he prayed before God and God heard he comes and he says to Daniel in chapter 10 he says Daniel the angel you're a man highly beloved of God from the first day even though it's been 21 days of weeping and and repenting on behalf of the Israel I your prayers from the first day you begin to chase in your own heart and weep before God your prayers were heard God hears that kind of prayer and I've come now to give you God's answers well that's pretty stunning in Nehemiah's day when he was in a very posh position and he heard that Jerusalem his hometown his capital city his precious Jerusalem was in ruins and it says that he fasted and mourned and wept and prayed and it began to be so serious that the king noticed the puffy eyes or whatever with a sorrowful this is nothing but sorrowful of spirit because others notice your burden you won't be the most great joke teller in the universe when you're carrying God's burdens for these kind of things you won't sit around with a group of your peers and just be the one that has the punchline that makes everybody laugh you got to be willing to take the burden of the Lord sometimes and you he certainly is dour why are you like that and you can't tell him you can't tell him but you see his tears were noticed listen to what lamentations or listen to what Jeremiah says let me just read I've got you find where I've got it written down Jeremiah chapter 9 listen to what Jeremiah the called the weeping prophet says oh that my head nine one oh that my head

were waters and my eyes like a fountain of tears that I might weep day and night for the people the daughter of my people the slain those that have been judged and then you read in chapter 13 the verse 17 of Jeremiah he said my soul will weep in secret places for your pride and my I will weep till it's sore and run down with tears because the Lord's flock is carried away into captivity you know Jesus had said the one who believes on me like the scripture says to believe out of his inside men will flow rivers of living water but you know those rivers of living water that term is used consistently for tears not just verbiage while it does include living water we share but the verbiage listen to what it says in lamentations chapter three as you read about the living water lamentations chapter 2 I mean verse 18 their heart cried to the Lord wall of the daughter of Zion let tears run down like a river day and night give yourself no rest let not the apple of your eye cease then it says in verse 19 it says arise and cry out in the night like Helen was doing in the beginning of the watches where you're watching and you're praying you're watching you know you're not just praying and praying you're watching you're listening you're getting God's heart and God's feelings and burden and you pour out your heart like water before the face of the Lord lift up your hands toward him for the life of your young children that faint for hunger in the top of every street I can give you so many more of those on that but I'm gonna just go on you know it was Josiah remember they got the young king that died before his time he got randomly struck with an arrow but it wasn't random because God couldn't hold back judgment anymore but when Josiah first realized back in you read about it in second Kings 22 they come and they find the book and they read it to Josiah and his heart is broken and he begins to weep and the Prophet comes to the Josiah and he says God thus saith the Lord because you wept in my presence and because you trembled when you heard those words you wept in my presence I'm putting off the judgment till after you're gone because you wept in my presence David said rivers of water run down my eyes because they don't keep your word your law around he used that expression you see the pages of the Psalms are wet with tears it says the Lord has heard the voice of my weeping I'm not just talking about crying because you're unhappy or crying because you want something to be done Psalm 6 is I'm weary with groaning by night my tears wet my bed in the day I my couch is watered my eyes are failing from grief and the voice of my weeping is coming before God he forgets not the cry meaning tears cry of the humble and so when we think of prayer remember it's not measured just in terms of time it's measured in terms of intensity that's important so my captivity must be turned and this prayer is far beyond just asking for something to happen so tears have a large place in the Word of God I'm gonna have to go quickly through this next part but I want to just say this is beyond tears of repentance when was the last time you wept in the presence of God over anything I'm not talking about just sorry because you did this terrible thing and you're repenting and that's good you should weep over the things we how we've not heard God I'm not even talking about tears of joy I'm talking about tears where God can get your ear and use you you see it says in the scripture we're to sow the Word of God in tears we just read that and that's what Paul did in Acts chapter 20 verse I think they'll put that up there Acts chapter 20 verse 31 he's speaking to them about Ephesus I'll just read it from my Acts 20 there it is he says to the Ephesians therefore watch and remember that for the space of three years I ceased not to warn people day and night with tears he went door-to-door and house-to-house and he preached and he warned every man like Colossians says I preached Jesus and I warn every man I want to present every man I want to teach every man and that's what he did you see he says to the Philippians he says listen there are many in your midst God didn't even use the word sin in the book of Philippians per se it's a book of joy but he reminds them of some people in the church he says I want to tell you this I've told you this before I've warned you and I tell you now with weeping that there are people in your church who are the enemies of the cross of Christ enemies not of Christ but of the cross of Christ and here's how you know them their God is their belly they live for their own desires and what they could eat or drink or just rest and it says they their glory is in their

shame I mean they say boy look at all this look at all this look what's happening look and if they knew the cross they'd be ashamed of such an attitude of covetousness perhaps or whatever you know yeah I'm blessed and highly favored I hear people say that all the time so I said what do you mean how's God highly favoring you what I'm not mocking people but I'm just telling you we can say things easily and it says their their God is their belly their glory is in their shame and they mind earthly things everything like Lord forgive me I can't come because I've just taken a wife I can't come because I've just started a business I can't come because my dad just died or whatever else and the Lord says no put it first you see it's got to be there you can't be the enemy of the cross of Christ I heard a story about a preacher in England he was a young man preaching his first sermon and he had it right man he'd got everything right and this is one of those high pulpits and he went up into the pulpit like this he was ready to go and when he stood up there he said he preached this all this he went up so proud and elegant upright and he just failed miserably and at the end of his sermon he was just dejected he walked down like this down the stairs and his faithful little sister walked over to him she said son if you had gone up into the pulpit the way you came down then you could have come down the way you went up I like that Paul says in 2nd Corinthians I wrote to you with many tears the Word of God was sown in tears he prayed and he says to Timothy I'm mindful of your tears so the Word of God in power in the closet and you without a doubt will reap so this is message preparation I remember going to Edinburgh Scotland don't be actually where Robert Murray McShane that Scottish preacher preached and they let you tour and I heard a story while I was there about people always come and want to see McShane he was called the weeping saintly Robert Murray McShane and he had such fruit he died at the age of like 29 and a half but he shook Scotland and why did he do it because he was a man of prayer and weeping and so this pastor was touring through there and they could show you his desk and so the the man that was there that was running the tour said to this man sit at the desk here and the man sat down this famous preacher and he said so this is where the famous Robert Murray McShane made his messages he sat here and what did he do how did he how did he sit does anybody know and the man leading the tour said to him okay put your elbows on the desk that's right now put your head in your hands yeah now now weep weep because that's how brother McShane did it this shook this preacher shook him and we were in this tour and I saw then later the pulpit that they took him to it's over in the side it's not gonna say it's very old and he's in this but it was back then this guy stood up he said this is the pulpit that McShane was at the same man yes this is the one well how did he preach what were his gestures like what did he do and she said put your elbows on the pulpit put your head in your hands and now weep because that's how brother McShane did it so the word in tears but it also Paul says serve the Lord with tears you don't just so the word in tears you serve the Lord Acts 20 verse 19 Acts 20 verse 19 it says here that serving the Lord with all humility of mind and with many tears what does that mean and temptations which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews serving the Lord with tears you see you don't just have ministry for the Lord you have a ministry to the Lord you serve the Lord with tears and what does that mean it means I believe it means sharing his heart along with him the fellowship of his sufferings plural it's their plural in the Greek language and in most English translations some fellowship in his sufferings co-laboring together with God like when you have someone bear your burden with you and prayer it ministers to you and you know you can actually serve the Lord and minister when we'd come and if two of you agree on earth but what about if two of you agree with him in heaven is the high priest and you on earth what if there's an agreement there his prayers are always answered if you can come into that heart harmony serve the Lord with tears Oh the fellowship of his sufferings we and they rejoice that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name as sorrowful but yet always rejoicing that's what it says about those who understand what we're talking about so I say we gotta not neglect our ministry to the Lord by co-laboring in prayer communion of the Holy Spirit and getting alone with him and

giving him his worthy due of your heart weeping over what surely he is laboring in prayer over I don't know what that even means but you in the fullest sense except to say in the Gospels you see his ministry on earth but in the book of Acts you see his around the throne it's his unfinished work around the throne and the church is to be part of that serving the Lord with prayer and tears but thirdly supplicate before the Lord in tears listen this is a awesome verse and I'm not even sure we can touch it that much but in Hebrews chapter 5 verse 7 it talks about the Lord Jesus and it says who in the days of his flesh after he had offered up prayers and supplication with strong crying and tears to him his father who was able to save him from death he was heard in that he fear Jesus strong crying and tears and when he came to Gethsemane it says he went a little further and he fell on his face and began to be exceedingly sorrowful and with tears and perspiration that had blood mingled in it and that's going a little further could you go a little further in prayer than you've been could you could we join him to we share his heart and co-labor we share his we share his rejoicing but not his pain so often words seem to be forgotten in our day so this kind of prayer supplicate the whole being praise let me just share another story with you in Sumter South Carolina I went into a Presbyterian Church it was a good church in town there and I was staying with a man named Harold and his wife Harold was one of their elders and as I was there that day I was impressed at how much Harold loved the Lord Jesus but there was something about Harold in the way he talked and the way he acted that excuse me that that did that to me it just it absolutely burdened my heart I felt he had serious problems and so we had a meeting that night and God blessed and I was gonna be with them and they said before we sleep let's pray let's pray together and we went into the family room where the fireplace was and there's three seats kind of in a little circle around like this and Harold and his wife Jean we all held hands and I and I had said to the Lord Lord I'm burdened for Harold show me how to pray for him show me how to how to see him set free I just felt something was wrong I didn't say anything but we were gonna pray before we went to sleep and so we held hands they had my hands and they asked me to start and I said father bless you thank you and then I said Lord I just want to lift Harold to you and it was like somebody pulled me open and poured warm water or something inside of me I don't really know how to describe it except to say I suddenly felt filled with a burden for Harold that I could not contain and as I they had my hands and I was trying to go on in prayer and all I could say I just want to look Harold and I just began to weep and weep and and it just kept on the more I tried not to the more crying came forth and I tried to stop and the more I tried to stop the more I mean I had water running out my eyes I had drool coming out of my mouth I had stuff come out of my nose I probably had stuff coming out of my ears too because I was I couldn't describe it it was like just I was lifting him and I tried to say it but it couldn't be put into words and this went on for 20 minutes and I couldn't get my hands free because they had my hands I was totally messed up and after we kind of went on for a while they said well thank you for that prayer time and we went to sleep and the next morning in a prayer meeting among the elders they were asking anybody anything to share and Harold stood up here's what he said I would like to thank God for setting me free from 30 years of bondage last night in a prayer meeting and I was in complete awe because I didn't have a clue and I got alone I said Lord what what went on there he said Al you said you wanted to pray for Harold but you don't know Harold like I know him and you don't love him like I love him so I took you at your word and I simply borrowed your faculties and I prayed for him through you and by the way Al my prayers always answered he always hears me and so I remember it shook me it shook me and then I thought about Epaphras in Colossians when it says always laboring faithfully for you in prayer that word is agonizma which means it's the word for agony what Jesus was in Gethsemane it was the word for the marathon of 26 miles agony I agonize before the Lord for you says Paul and Epaphras did this for you that you might be complete and perfect in the will of God Paul says to the Galatians he says my little children whom I agonize in prayer the word for childbirth until Christ is formed into you Galatians he says in 4 6 he

says God has sent the spirit of his son into your heart crying Abba Father the word crying is crazing which is the same word for the Gadarene demoniac that's used he ran through the tombs crying he was crying out in a in a violent forceful emotional way God puts it all in there for those who want to see it that he wants to put it into our hearts to share with him in his heart burden for those around you for our loved ones that are lost for our enemies who hate us for whatever else the Lord wants to pray through through us you see because your sons God has put the spirit of his son in you that you might cry Abba Father what an amazing privilege that you see it's no longer I but Christ in prayer I remember being in the Nashville Memphis area kind of in that up in that area and there was a dear brother a pastor and we had talked about this about God putting in us as a gift like that with Harold just into us the spirit of his son and suddenly we enter into prayer in a fervent dimension we'd never known and God can pray with tears through us and so we were going to have a prayer meeting as a church we went to a school cafeteria and there were probably I don't know maybe close to over a hundred people there and we got down on these little folding kind of chairs and we got down to pray and the pastor whose name was also Al he was going to start the meeting off and we were going to have time of prayer intelligent ordered prayer for their missions and we got down to get serious about prayer and all of a sudden Al starts off this pastor and he starts to think and the same thing happened to him that happened to me praying for Harold and next thing you know it's it's moaning it's it's terrifying in a certain sense because you don't hear men cry like that you don't hear a moan with weeping and moaning he says come before the Lord and Joel with weeping and moaning let the preachers weep between the porch and the altar and it's a whale it was wailing and this whale you could see people getting nervous on their knees the pastors over there I mean it was serious it was like the best person you've ever known was dead suddenly right in front of you and you could have helped it and she was weak he was weeping and I remember this went on for about 20 minutes again and then it ended and everybody just tiptoed because God had done something I don't know what he planted I don't know what he did but it was absolutely stunning you see I couldn't figure it out the communion of the Holy Spirit may that be with you it says in 2nd Corinthians may the Lord give you this you see Lord my tears have been my food day and night while they say around me where's your God and weeping in Psalm 42 like the deer longs to drink water when it's running that's what my soul is like for you it pants for you it longs for you and there's a weeping while those around me say where is the Lord so see what we're talking about is the yearnings of God those who sow in tears will reap with joy and if you take the promises of God that you've prayed over and he's given you specifically in prayer out and share those by faith not according to just you have the clever answer for someone you're not scalp hunting you're going in to see your prayers answered and you go and share God says without a doubt you're gonna see harvest you're gonna see sheaves coming back home you see so let me ask you have you ever asked God for the gift of tears have you this is not a woman thing it's not a man thing this is a child of God thing I remember I was telling the pastor about a friend of mine named Brian he was a great football player his nose is one that goes in it's got a crease in it from getting hit so many times he's a strong guy you know and I've known him a long long time I love this brother I ask him once I said when you were growing up did you ever get any fights he said I got in a fight one time but but nobody fight me after that you know he was just tough tough guy but I remember he was at a conference we were talking about this and he says this is what I want I want the gift of tears and I said we'll ask God have you ever asked him for it he says no and he got down and we all got down and he prayed said Lord give me this gift of tears let me share in your heart let me shoulder this with you what a privilege to do that and I and we said this may not be right this second it may come when you least expect it it may be would like praying for Harold when you want to you want to maintain your dignity next thing you know you're a pile of tears on the floor well Brian was on the several he was a deacon at this large Baptist Church and he was on the committee of committees he said you

want to go to something dead go to the committee on the committees and and and and and he was around this table with a lot of deacons and he was sitting there and he says he just says they're going around he said I just am so burdened for our church and all of a sudden he was gripped by the Spirit of God on the inside and he had to get out of his chair and get on the floor he's laying on the floor praying for the church weeping weeping and here's these guys in the committee may just looking down at him like what is going on what's going on next thing you know the Holy Ghost had reached up and grabbed some of those boys and they're all on their faces praying before God for the church and the next Sunday you wouldn't even believe what happened because God answered the prayer of tears you see it's when you make yourself and your faculties and your heart your you make them available to the Holy Spirit and I'm not talking about trying to cry more or try to be more tender I'm talking about being available in prayer to the Holy Spirit for him to give you words and heart and maybe groanings that can't even be uttered the yearnings and passions in the mind of Christ he he plants it in us it's the communion of the Holy Spirit and you share the burden of the Lord does that sound good or bad it sounds good but it might be hard but it's worth it it's worth it and you fellowship with him in his present tense suffering and we express the inexpressible and the Holy Spirit takes possession of your heart and mind but then you can you can expect his kind of answers I gave this word to 1,200 pastors in Fiji and there were women Salvation Army people and all those and I gave something like this there about the gift of tears and after it was over this dear woman came up to me her face was swollen from weeping during the message and she says to me she said thank God for this message I've always thought something was wrong with me when I get down to pray all I could do was weep and cry I've always thought something was wrong but now thank God I understand that I'm more available she finally understood but the question is are you willing you can grieve the Spirit you can resist the Spirit like we said the other night you you got to know you're in covenant you must be available and holy to him and fill with the Holy Spirit and you come to the throne of the Lamb of God this is the path we've been on and then you realize that it's not by human effort it's not by Job's goodness it's by the bowing of the knee it's by that the supply of heaven and how God comes and gives and it won't happen unless our hearts are clean if you're in captivity tonight you can't pray like this if you're centered around everything about yourself and just getting God's blessing to make you successful or wealthier happier whatever else delivered you see you got to get free from that and say Lord I'm here for one reason that's the glory and honor of your name and I want you to be able to pour in to me your heartbeat and you know like when you go to a man's meeting somebody stands up and gives a testimony and starts to cry and they said I'm sorry I'm sorry listen don't apologize for your tears you got to be terrified if you don't have tears I won't apologize for my tears anymore I may explain them but I won't apologize we ought to be embarrassed that we get more excited at sports matches then broken before God we've got to be willing welcoming tears of the first drops in the ship showers of revival the tears of the church it won't happen unless we're clean so this is the kind of prayer that will change the world around you in the Appalachia area a brokenhearted father a weeping high priest a tender yearning loving Holy Spirit and he'll share with you his heart the love of Christ constraining it's a great mystery but what a blessing it really is would you ask him tonight for the gift of tears in a moment we're gonna open up the altar here at the front and if you want to come and ask him give me the gift of tears look this is the way to get back and beyond where you were three years ago it was delicious what happened it was great but now are you willing to enter into the what'll make it go on and continue and grow and make you a catalyst if you go forth bearing those precious seeds I can give you dozens of testimonies and impossible situations when people were brought into the real heartbeat of God and began to weep and mourn like Daniel and like Nehemiah and others and they began to pray for the small things and they didn't tell anybody and God just suddenly did these amazing things that were amazing indeed you weep with the Spirit's heartbeat and it is indeed

an amazing privilege you see so I'm just asking you tonight are you afraid of this are you you'll never see real revival not big time until the church is desperate the Bible was written in tears and in tears will heal God will open up the best messages to your heart and scripture so in a moment we're going to open the altar up to you and to come and to say yes Lord who can survey the wondrous cross without tears only the person that's a captain who can see the needs in Rogersville I've been walking on the streets praying looking looking in stores seeing the expression on people's faces and you know twice walking the streets my heart broke it broke my heart after that young girl gave me that answer no television she may have been kidding but it just was so breaking of the heart and what God wants our people that he can entrust his burdens to when you go to Korea they've got a mountain there they've cut caves into like a honeycomb and they have a rule you can't go in there and stay for more than 40 days without coming out and you can walk by those rooms and you can go up there and you can hear the mountains are crying out because they're people in Korea in mountains praying like in a beehive honeycomb instead of you hear oh and it is terrifying and exhilarating at the same time well I would just say this my dear brothers and sisters the situation in our day calls for a contribution of tears the question is will you say yes to this it changed a lot of things but you will see new things brother you want to open up the front here to those of you who would say and you can come for other reasons too but I'm saying tonight tonight this is the last word how can I leave this word with you because this is the key for everything in the future it's how it'll be sweet and continue and get deeper and bigger and glorious the heart of the church being brought into the heart of God and it won't just be all hallelujahs and jumping up and down saying things are great it'll be brokenhearted before the Lord and caring with what he's caring for father in Jesus name we bow before you I pray for these dear people I pray for myself that it'll be realistic consecration that will say yes to you for the things that you want us to say yes to that we will be people that know their God and can weep before you and be broken and be palatable in your hands and that you will put in us your yearnings your longings your communion your co-laboring and so in the name of Jesus you come come like we did at the first flood this altar maybe you don't even know what you're asking Lord fill me with your spirit in this matter these groanings I'm asking you specifically tonight give me the burden and the gift of tears in real prayer will you come we'll wait on you you come just get up now and come I want you to go ahead what you do I wanna just piggyback just briefly on what I just said in Psalm 62 twice in the first few verses the psalmist says I wait on you Lord so what I want you to do tonight I want you to put everything outside I don't want you to think about tomorrow's work or tomorrow's school would you be willing right now to wait on the Lord to give you those tears you come find a place maybe the altars kind of filling up you find a place here wherever you need to do if you need to lay prostrate before you do that whatever that looks like would you wait tonight till God gives you those tears

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