

# The Secret Weapon of Prayer

by Al Whittinghill

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## Transcript

Well, it's great to see you here tonight. And I've met people tonight that I haven't seen in 40 years. That'll shock you.

And you say, man, he looks old. And then you feel like you should say, go look in the mirror. But they've been good years.

And with much praise to God for seeing some of you haven't seen in so long. And great memories. And thank you, Amy, for that beautiful music.

Brought tears to my eyes just singing with you. She's awesome in it. You know, there's a lot going on in the world.

When you have a meeting like this at night, together from all these different places, God's sovereignly bringing each one together here. And we hear the word. Like, I had something nice and all put out for tonight, ready to go.

I felt like I'd been praying over it for a few days. And then this afternoon, we were praying right here for this meeting tonight. And the Lord just broke my heart and said, I want you to talk on this.

I hate it when he does that. But yet, I get excited. Because I know that when you hear God's word from your pastor, or from your study, or in your Bible reading, and the Lord speaks it to your heart, the stakes are high, especially today.

The stakes are very, very, very high. When you meet people every day, God has arranged for us, you and me, to be on this planet at this particular hour. Just like Esther, who knoweth but that you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this.

And people say, I pray for divine appointments. And they say, I wish I had more. You have more than you could ever imagine.

We just walk right by them. We're not really paying attention. So I'm praying that tonight the Lord will speak to us.

I pray he'll speak to me. I've been desperate. Can you feel everything shaking around you? Do you know what's going on globally? I mean, I get calls.

I mean, I've had the privilege of going to a lot of nations and meeting a lot of people. And I get a lot of calls. We had a Zoom call the other night from like six different time zones.

It was Korea, and Malaysia, and Australia, and Egypt. I mean, just all these different, all at the same time. And time was no more.

But you get calls from people. And the same thing that are beginning to make people panic in certain ways around us are happening all over the world because the world is in labor preparing to meet the returning king. And so this means these are not normal days.

It's almost impossible to think about the future without thinking in a wartime mentality. I'm not talking about like in Ukraine. I'm talking about the weapons of our warfare are mighty through God, to the tearing down of things that have been hindering the church forever.

So I believe that we start tonight where God starts, and that is with prayer in our heart to really make things happen. Let me just pray before we start. Father, teach us to pray.

Thank you for the time on the Zoom call we had together with some of these people here, where we looked at, Lord, teach us to pray. You are the teacher. Holy Spirit, you take the things of Jesus and no one prayed like him.

You lead us into them and lead us into the truth. So we pray tonight that you will show us the secret weapon of prayer, and may we embrace this, the secret part of prayer, and embrace it, and may we see the glory of God take place in our own heart, if not tonight, as a result of the seeds you sowed tonight. So we just give you our families.

We give you our churches represented here. We give you our hearts and our life. We ask you to seal your word to our heart tonight as we look at your precious word and hear your call, and we can sense your warning to the world.

Make us part of all of that right in the center of your will. In Jesus' name, amen. You know, God is looking.

His eyes, in 2 Chronicles say, go back and forth across the whole earth looking for a heart that's right toward him that he can show himself strong through. God has chosen in his sovereignty, over and over in scripture, we see him choosing to often limit his workings in our situations to the degree and revelation of the prayers that we really pray. I mean, he knows our needs, but he says you have not because you ask not.

And if you will not call upon me, then I'll let you have your way. So this is what's happening in our nation. Our confidences are being shaken and eroded.

And God is looking for people that he can use to change the world around us in these coming days. And I believe we're gonna see two things before that great day of the Lord. It says in the New Testament, it says, don't be mistaken about this.

Before that day comes, there'll be a great falling away. But at the same time as there's a great falling away, there's gonna be a global harvest. On the other hand, at the same time, and they're gonna be some strange things happening that we can't figure out if we're prayerless, because prayer is the bridge through which God speaks to us.

The first, just think of this, you hear the gospel, you believe the gospel, does that save you? No, you pray in your heart and you get in contact with the living spirit of God and he comes in and you're saved, you're born again. And we know inherently, the new nature has in it like a baby crying to call upon the father and make himself known to us. Well, we talked about Luke 11, when we talked about the disciples are only recorded as asking the Lord Jesus to teach them one thing.

They needed to learn a lot, but teach us to pray. It's a plural, us, not just teach me. Teach us to pray, not how to pray.

Teach me to do what I know inherently is most important, and that is to pray, to open my heart up and listen to the spirit of God and let him speak. And so right after that, the Lord gives them a model pattern for prayer, the Lord's prayer, as we call it, or the bride's prayer, praying to him. And then he gives a parable.

And the parable doesn't seem like it fits there exactly. It's a man who has nothing to feed visitors at midnight. He comes and knocks on his neighbor's door and keeps on coming and asking because of his opportunity and the need to give him some bread. And he did give him bread because of his importunity.

That seems strange to me to include after he says, teach us to pray. But then he goes and he gives a promise. It's a pattern and a parable and a promise.

And the promise is, he says, listen, which of you having, if a son asks bread of you, that is a father, will he give him a stone? If he asks for a fish, will he, instead of a fish, give him a serpent? He's revealing his heart. And he's asking, when we ask to be taught to pray, when we ask to know him, will God, I mean, would I give my son a snake if he says I want a scrambled egg? Well, if I did, I'd be a really bad dad. I'd be a wretch, really? Well, how much more, it says here, if you then, just being fallen, being a fallen man, evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly father, it's not a matter of sonship here, not a matter of being born again.

It's a matter of, it's how much more shall your heavenly father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him? So, Father God wants us to ask him to lead us into the things that take the spirit of God to lead us into. Lord, open my eyes and let me see. So, he wants to give you the spirit of prayer.

It's in the same context here. Teach us to pray. If you ask the Lord for the spirit of prayer, he'll put it in you.

And that's what we're gonna talk about tonight a little bit. But seven chapters after that, Jesus, I think they're still in that learning mode for all of this, of course. And in chapter 18 of Luke, verse one, listen to this, he spoke a parable to them to this end, or this goal, that men ought always to pray and not to faint.

And I think you have there two alternatives for the days ahead for us. You'll either continue and learn from him how to pray and what to pray and really to be expanded in this whole glorious thing. Or you'll end up fainting like the rest of the world for looking at the things coming to pass on the earth.

Man's heart's failing them for fear and for looking at things coming to pass upon the earth. And fear and unbelief are gonna have a rampant time in the days ahead, especially if we're prayerless. But see, prayer has no rival.

In this particular parable here that Jesus gives about a little widow, he says there was a city, a judge there, and he didn't fear God. He could care less. He was secular to the core.

And he didn't regard man. He wasn't feeling sorry for anybody around him. He wouldn't take their case because they needed him.

And there was a widow in that city, and the same came to him saying, avenge me of my adversary. Nobody was taking care of this little woman. She didn't have anybody.

And oh, this judge had everything in his hand. And she came and said, do the right thing. Avenge me of my adversary.

Who's weaker than a widow? And who's more powerful than a judge like that? And so he would not do it for a while. But this is a kind of intensive thing. She kept coming and saying, avenge me of my adversary.

And in the picture there is a little woman with an umbrella shaking at a judge saying, do the right thing, coming out of the courthouse. Do the right thing. Mr. Judge, do the right thing.

And it began to get on this judge's nerves. And he says, listen, though I fear not God, or he wouldn't do anything for a while, but afterwards he said within himself, though I fear not God and I don't regard man, because this widow troubles me. I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming.

See, it's just like the knocking at the door. Continual coming. She wearies me.

And it literally says, in the Greek language, he's afraid she's gonna give him a black eye. A little widow. And the Lord said, listen to what the unjust judge says.

He gives in like that. Shall not God avenge his own elect, like his child back in chapter 11? Shall he not avenge his own elect, which cry to him day and night, though he makes them wait a while? Why does he make us wait on big things like this? Because the benefit's not just the answer. The benefit is in the praying and being molded and brought into the understanding of our heavenly Father.

Praying is good for us. It brings us into the heart of God, and God wants a heart that he can use. He says, how much shall not the Lord avenge his own elect, who which cry day and night to him? Not just nighttime, but all day.

This burden is on their heart, and they keep coming and they keep coming and they keep coming, and though he makes them wait a long time. I tell you, God will avenge them speedily. The time comes suddenly.

Nevertheless, when the Son, this is odd to say here. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, shall he find that kind, it says, that kind of faith on the earth? So he's saying it way to the future. In the days when the Son of Man comes, is he gonna find that persistent, insistent, consistent pressing in prayer that will not be put away? Is you as weak as a widow and as powerful as a Supreme Court judge, you keep on coming and you keep on bringing it because God says the time will come that that kind of burden for prayer, I will answer.

You know, I prayed every day for my dad for 26 years. My kids, after they came along, began to say, you think Pop will ever be saved? I prayed every day for him and then they prayed. And one day, you know, my friend, it's a long story, but the Lord saved my friend's father who we'd been praying for him the same way and the same kind of direction.

And I said to myself, I said, Lord, you did that for my friend's dad. Now you gotta do this. We kept praying and I got a phone call when I was in Michigan to come quickly because my dad had a ventricular tachycardia and he was in the hospital in Chapel Hill where I grew up and I had to get on a jet and go down there and all the way, I was saying, Lord, keep him alive.

We prayed for this other guy that Lord would keep him alive just until he could hear the gospel one last time. And I remember my friend, we walked into his dad. He was like a skeleton with rubber stretched around it, laying on the bed.

He'd been in a coma for three days. We said, Lord, keep him alive until he hears the gospel one last time. And the Lord gave me the thief on the cross as the picture of getting down and whispering in his ear the gospel.

And we walked in and Jeff's sister had been a vice president of Coke. And when we got there, they all left and left Jeff and I. He walked in and touched his dad and his dad went like this and he kind of came too. And I got down in his ear and I said, Mr. Williams, Mr. Williams, you've been an unbeliever your whole life but now you're at the crossroads.

You're gonna pass into eternity. And I told him about the thief on the cross and can you just trust Jesus now? Everyone's praying for you that you'll let Jesus have your life. And he went, I got down beside him and he went, Jesus and the room like filled with warmth.

It's all I can describe like water. And we began to praise God. Jeff picked up his dad's shirt and began to rub his stomach and said, dad, I'm so glad you've come.

We wept and we wept and we wept together. And then he said to him, dad, I'll see you later. We gotta go.

We walked out and five minutes later, he went back into a coma and passed into eternity. Well, that's when my dad had that trend. A couple of years later, I said, Lord, you gotta do this for me, same way.

And I went there and he was there, had the head that Braxton Hicks, is that the right word Greg has said? Chainstokes, that's not right, that's the labor. Sorry. We've had so many, we've got 20 grandchildren.

I should know that. But I got down beside him and he was unconscious. And I said, pop, I know you can hear me.

And I began to talk in his ear and I gave him the same thing. And I said, you know, you've been a geneticist and a scientist, smartest man I know, but you've been stupid in this area. You're on your way to hell and you know it's true.

You've seen us all changed by the gospel. And can you just let me know, I'm putting my hand in yours and let me know that you're gonna admit you're a fool and trust Jesus, preach that. And squeeze my hand, let me know.

And it went like this, you know, pulled up like this and then I got excited, but I waited a little bit more and I did it again. I said, do it. And he did it again.

And I said, wow. And the next morning, my wife drove down from, anyway, she drove and we went to see him and my daughters were there and they sang to him. And he was there and my mom was there and she said, I got some water and put it on his lips and he went like this and he looked at me with big blue

eyes.

And she said, she called him Mari. Mari, did you trust Jesus last night? Al said, you trusted Jesus last night. I wasn't even gonna say any of this, but maybe you have a loved one like this.

And he kind of started to fade out again. And I put some more water on and she said, did you trust Jesus? And he reached his hand over like this and got my hand and pulled it over his chest and he did like this with his hand and pointed up. And I said to myself, 26 years of prayer.

He made me wait a long time. And I was preaching that next Sunday up in Dalton, Georgia. And I didn't have time to prepare a message.

And I got up and I said, I don't have time to prepare a message this week for you. I didn't have time, but this week a message prepared me. And here it is.

Maybe you've got loved ones you've given up on. Maybe you've found it to be impossible. George Muner prayed for 62 years for his brother to be saved.

And his brother was saved as they looking down at George Muner's coffin. Because God is faithful to answer that kind of prayer. Prayer is as big as God and nothing is outside the reach of prayer, except what's outside the will of God.

And for you, you need to learn to pray. I need to learn to pray. There's no realm where man is so quickly at the end of himself as in the realm of prayer.

We've not even entered kindergarten to see. I mean, you read these books about people who changed the course of World War II by a small group of people that really got a hold of praying. He can do that here in your church or the church where you go, your prayer meeting.

You can see amazing things happen. It's amazing what God will let you see happen in prayer if you don't publish it and try to write a book about it. Secret, secret prayer, awesome prayer.

And it's so glorious to see it happening. So let me ask you this. If you knew you had one year to live, you knew that, how would you spend it? What would you do? Would your priorities change if doctor said you have exactly one year to live and you knew it was true? Would your priorities change or would you just go on like you are? Suppose on the other hand, the Lord allowed you to be caught up to heaven like Paul was, the apostle.

And you saw the Lamb on the throne and the innumerable company of saints that are there and the angels praising him. And then he sent you back to earth, boring, but he sent you back and you knew. Would that change your life? You think it would change the way you set your priorities every day? I mean, it might not, but would it change your prayer life? Would it affect your attitudes? Would it affect your motives? The way you treat other people? Have you ever thought what your life or mine or your church's life would look like if God had his total way? Have you? His total way.

What if you gave God his total way? How would things change? What do you think would really be the difference in your life? And if you knew that you just were really able to control the levers of the universe in a sense that he shows you. Why do we not see his grace and power moving in our churches in this country? I mean, we do see some things, no doubt about it. But overseas you go there and you see

amazing things happening because they're praying and they're calling on the Lord.

What's holding back God from acting on behalf of the church of the Lord Jesus and on the lost around us? What's holding him back? Why hasn't he taken the field? Could it be because we haven't asked and we don't believe God? Could it be? Because I'll tell you, that's the first thing. The greatest factor in evangelism is prayer. The greatest factor in missions is prayer.

The greatest factor in discipleship is prayer. The greatest factor in Bible study is prayer. It's the foundation and the catalyst for everything that he wants the church to experience in terms of the things of God.

It's the surest way for any person or any family or any church to become truly spiritual and not just activity-oriented and service-motivated, which are good things, but prayer will put you into the throne room of God and you'll come out with orders and the love of Christ, you see. It's the key to church growth, that's prayer. And it's the way into revival.

Revival will never happen nor will it be sustained if we don't learn what it really means to pray, like the models of history of true revival. I hope you know what I'm talking about, real revival. It's a dissolver of doubts, prayer.

It's the best classroom you'll ever enter into. It's how to hear God's secrets. It's where vision comes from.

It came to the people in scripture. Passion is born there in prayer. It's a prerequisite before any great move of God in our churches.

It's got to happen, it's got to be so. So it's what the devil hates more than anything else. He doesn't much care how good an orator you are when you speak if he can keep you prayerless.

He's not afraid of our bus ministries and all the other stuff. He's not afraid of our seminaries or anything else, but when the weakest widow begins to pray or write, then he trembles and he hates it, so he'll do more than you can imagine to stop it. So it's your most awesome privilege, and it's also your greatest responsibility to pray.

Can you imagine praying over 20 grandchildren? Can you imagine how confusing that can be and how burdening and how it can destroy? I mean, I told my wife not long ago, I said, you know, I'm having a hard time acting happy, walking around. I don't feel like just sitting down with the boys and just, just because I've got all these pastors calling me and all these people in countries and all these, and they're telling me heart burden, and I see kids getting destroyed. How could I giggle? I mean, I want to understand the burden of God.

Jesus wept over Jerusalem. Why do you think he did that? Why do you think it says in Hebrews, in the days of his flesh, he was heard in his crying, strong crying and tears. He was heard by his father because he feared God.

Why do you think that? I mean, I mean, was he just crying for emotions or I mean, has he changed? So heaven is just as full of blessings as it's ever been. There's not been a depletion. One bit of blessing have been depleted.

God has never changed. He's the same. And the same things he's looking for is what he's still looking for, hearts who will pray.

And our lives and our work are just as dependent, much more maybe in an hour like this, than anybody who admires in history than theirs depended on prayer. The world is more aggressive and more evil and evil has fangs in our day. And it's after your children and it's after your siblings and your spouse.

And the only thing is the weaponry and the arsenal of God. We've got to learn how to use those weapons that God has given us and live in the power. So prayer is God's appointed way of drawing forth.

Everybody's trying to redefine the church. Everybody's trying to get the church to relate to culture. Listen, we're not to relate to culture, we're to confront it with the word of God.

And we don't have to redefine the church because our Lord Jesus said, "My father's house shall be called a house of prayer "for all the nations and I will build my church." So that means he's looking for people that will say yes. You know, you don't just become an Olympic athlete because you watch the Olympics and you like standing on the podium and you wanna do that. You don't just become a soul winner by just reading books on soul winning, you have to surrender to it.

You don't become a prayer warrior just because you wanna be a prayer warrior. I mean, we all say we wanna go to a church that prays and we all want people that pray for us. But the question is, are we praying? If you and I believed in prayer, we would go to prayer meeting.

Don't you think? If you really believe, whatsoever you ask in my name, that will I do. So I asked them the other day, I said, ask yourself about your reputation or your church's. How are we known by people around us? It's not the church saying we're a house of prayer, it's Jesus said that others will say, that's a house of prayer.

I was blessed to be at the Brooklyn Tab and we had a meeting with all the prayer people and we suggested that they go out and have a prayer booth and people walking by, they would ask him, can we pray for you? And they began to do that and they began to pray and more and more of the people began to know, this is where I go to get people to pray for me. And it's a beginning and it was a powerful thing. What is the main consciousness of your congregation? I will build my church.

Well, all of that, I'm sorry to say for you, was just an introduction to where I'm going. I want you to turn in your Bible to Psalm 126, if you will, please. If you have your Bible, Psalm 126, and I want to read with you these verses, Psalm 126.

Let me just say tonight that I believe God wants to do something supernatural in our hearts. It may be quiet, it may not be something you can measure easily, but listen to this. Verse one, and I'm using an old version that you might not like, but I'll tell you what something means if we go over it.

It says, it's a song of degrees. It was one of those that they read on the steps of the temple, there's like these 15 steps and they would read this one and people would say amen. But it says, when the Lord turned again, the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream and that word is rejoicing like with protection of God coming over and making things really beautiful.

So when the Lord turned the captivity of Zion, we were like those who dream. So does it seem normal to think of God's people being in captivity? And if they are in captivity, is it like King Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon? Are there things that can hold us captive that are not necessarily nations? Like Job, it says he was captive, the whole book of Job, but nobody on earth was like him. Father God said three times, there's nobody like Job on earth, he's a righteous man, he fears God and he hates evil, but yet all the

book, he was captive.

What was he captive to? It wasn't until the end of the book when Job got his mind off himself and prayed for, first he'd seen God, then he got his mind off himself and then he prayed for his friends and it says, and the Lord turned the captivity of Job when he prayed for his friends. When we finally dealt with the I problem, when we finally, like Isaiah, see the Lord and I am undone. See, God wants to remove from our hearts the idea that prayer is just to meet my needs, just to meet my church's needs because there's something much, much bigger.

The other night in a prayer meeting, an elder in a church, he held up a prayer list and he said, I've come to see there's much more to our praying together as men than just making a list of things we're asking here. It's much bigger talking about getting down and listening for God's burden in the world and then praying then. Well, I know you're sitting there probably saying, wait a second, read the scripture, let's keep reading.

When the Lord turned the captivity again of Zion, we were like those people who dream, so happy and then when our captivity was turned was our mouth filled with laughter and our tongue with singing. And they said among the nations, the Lord has done great things for them. See, the world notices supernatural joy.

The world notices the presence of God in our life. But it says in verse three, the Lord has done great things for us whereof we are glad. Every one of us should be so thankful.

We were talking about last night about how many things we take for granted that are only being experienced because of the goodness of God to us. But then we get to the meat of it. Turn again our captivity, O Lord, like those streams in the south.

Well, those streams is the word for wadis. It's, I was at Masada and a guide showed me the bus sitting there in one of those, it's a dry river bed, dry river gulch. And there's a bus parked there.

It doesn't normally rain down there. But when it rains in Jerusalem, he said, water comes down that gulch and it swept the whole bus away once I was watching it. So when the Lord turns the captivity of Zion, we were like those dry river beds where floods of living water sweep through the life and change everything.

And it turns things into torrents that were just trickles. Torrents is the word for streams. They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.

What does that mean? Well, may I suggest to you that you think of a prayer closet and you're in the prayer closet, like praying for your dad year after year or day after day or a child or some need and you're praying. And as the Lord has you wait until you're brought into an understanding of how he feels about something and you can pray, thy will be done. But when it finally comes, tears begin to flow and you begin to sow the promises of God in tears in your closet.

You're in there and you're, they that sow in tears shall reap in joy. Lord, I want you to deal with this, oh God. And like, I remember when there's some tragedies in our family, I remember being at night down on the floor and the only thing was just the slivers of light coming through the shade, the blinds.

And the Lord just said to me, lift up the rod. I believe he did say it. And I reached down and I just held up the rod like Moses did.

And I said, Lord, he said, now you tell me what you want. And he showed me and I began to weep and I began to understand it. I also had great fear.

You have to be careful of what you say when God says that. You don't just say, do what I want you to do. You wanna do your will, Lord.

And so he says, you're sowing in tears. You're claiming God's promises in tears. And then it says, he that goes forth and weeps bearing precious seed.

So here's a man that's walking out of his prayer closet and he's got those precious seed, the word of God, the grain that he scatters. And he's going out. He, without a doubt, he's leaving the prayer closet with this seed.

He, without a doubt, will come again with rejoicing, bringing sheaves with him. So you get before God and you wait before him and you claim the word of God and you listen and you let his words abide in you and you abide in his words. And he begins to condition your heart to where you're saying, Lord, thy will be done.

And he gives you your part. And then you get up and you take those words out and you sow them. And God brings the harvest or brings that person to himself in his timing.

You may wait a little bit. I remember when I heard a story about General Booth who started the Salvation Army, you probably heard of him. And the Salvation Army used to be, I don't know if they are now, but they used to be awesome.

They would go into a city after much, much prayer and organization and they learned how to do it. They'd go in and take the gospel to the underbelly of a city like New York. They knew how to do it.

And so they were particularly in a Northeastern city Samuel Logan Bringle writes this account. He was one of the top guys that would go into a city. And he writes about how they'd done everything.

They went into this Northeastern city and they'd done all these things. They'd prayed, they'd organized, they'd taken collections. They had everybody in place and they labored and labored and labored and nothing happened, nothing.

And so they doubled their efforts and began to go out and kept doing more. And nothing was, there's no harvest, nothing. And so they wrote General Booth.

They were forlorn. They said, they told him what had happened and there's nothing in the letter that they could understand why this wasn't happening. And they got a letter back from General Booth.

Had two words, try tears. And immediately they realized that it had been all emotion and all head and not enough heart. They hadn't gotten before God and felt deeply in their hearts what God wanted to say.

The greatest single factor in spiritual fruit bearing is spiritual, is not methodology, it's not money, it's not men, but it's prayer. And it's not just any kind of prayer. You can make prayer lists and all these things, but the question, is it effectual and is it fervent? Is your heart involved? Are you available? And so this is what we're saying about trying tears.

A lot of people today seek to be effective and they go forth and they labor, but they've left off the weeping in their closet and they've left off the sowing in tears. Would you agree with that? I mean, there were 50,000 prayer meetings that took place on the National Day of Prayer, organized ones, two years ago, three years ago. I was in Washington for that meeting with the people there and they reported to us 50,000.

Only God can do that. But you see, all prayer is not necessarily effectual prayer just because we gather to say some prayers or it's gotta be spirit led by the spirit of God. So the picture in the song, if it's right prayer, it's prayers that are involving the heart.

So tears, I would say this, here's where we're going tonight, tears. Tears, you could call it liquid prayer. It's the exclamation point of prayer.

And it's not just activities and service, it's not building buildings, it's not anything else. It's getting your heart involved. And tears are the same in any language.

They're universal. You understand what someone's going through when you see tears. And I mean, you can go overseas and you feel like an alien, but you see someone weeping and you know immediately, you can hear what they're saying.

You see, they transcend language, they have no color, they transcend race, they're the same from all people. And you know what it shows? Tears show the heart's involved. And it shows you've come to reality.

You might say for prayer, it's love without language. It's the overflow of a broken or a tender heart. It's like an exclamation point.

It's used synonymously, just like the life is in the blood, while the tears reveal the soul. It's a pouring out of the soul. Now you know this is true because like here's a person on the witness stand.

You know, if you ever watch Matlock, that'll show you. He's on, this person's on the witness stand and Matlock's asking him questions and he's deftly putting off the answers and giving this. And suddenly when he gets to a certain point, he asks a question and the guy on the witness stand, his lip will start to quiver and a tear will trickle down his cheek.

And you say, he's got him. Cause you know, or here's the pastor in a church and he's preaching this perfect hermeneutic, this gesticulation is just right. The homiletics are immaculate.

And everybody's back there, wake up, dear, wake up, you know, and just this, but suddenly he gets to a point in this well-prepped sermon and he says something and his voice cracks and he starts to have a tear trickle down his eye. And suddenly everyone's awake and they're listening. You've experienced that? I've been on the other end of that when the Lord's let that happen.

So that's what he wants us to understand. And here's a couple who's having an argument or a disagreement or whatever you want to call it. And they're both making good points and they're trying to see each other on one level.

But then all of a sudden one of them begins to weep and everything in the conversation changes and they start to listen to one another in discussion. So I would say this, if our eyes are dry, it could be because our

hearts are parched. Maybe we're like that dried up wadi.

And see, before the church can have a real message for the world, before we can really, really have a message for the world, we've got to let the Lord have our heart. It's more than just understanding or programs or social and media publicity and business as usual or strategic planning, it's a broken heart and a contrite heart over the things. Do you think looking around at what's going on today that Jesus, it's not a time for tears? But the internet and the television have desensitized us so we can see the most horrible things and not even be moved.

But what God wants us to do is have our hearts be made tender. And that's why he makes us wait a while till we can come into the mind of Christ and to the feeling of God. And tithes can build a new sanctuary.

We're building a lot of them. But only tears can bring a sanctuary to life. Only tears will bring a church to life.

And I've been in a lot of churches and I've seen some splendid ones. But what God wants us to understand is when the Lord turns the captivity, whatever's holding us back, and he sets us free from it, then there's a joyous time when we start planting the word of God in real tears. Tears show that your heart is involved.

So I wanna just talk about tears for a moment and say that tears and power are eternally wed. When you're in captivity, you're without freedom. You can't really pray.

You can't pray in public. You're afraid to cry. You're afraid to show emotions.

But God wants you to have a heart for others and it comes to the prayer closet. It was when Zion travails that she brings forth her children. It says it's when Zion, it's a word for childbirth.

It's like, you know, I remember when my wife had, we had five kids and it wasn't a picnic each time. I'm telling you, women, you try to talk about childbirth and they just laugh at you because they just, you know, you're a bunch of sissies. You guys don't understand anything.

I guess the ladies are shaking their head like this, you know, but it's really true. There's no hot tears from cold hearts. And so God wants us to understand what he is speaking about.

You know, there's 700 references to tears in the word of God. Have you ever really studied tears? Have you ever seen them under a microscope? How there's the formation of them. They're different for joy, joyous tears, sad tears.

And they're the same, but not like a snowflake. They're different. And it shows something that's coming forth from that person.

You ought to study it, you see, and let the Lord show you that. Well, I'm going to take you to a lot of scripture now. In Psalm 56, verse eight and nine, it talks about God keeping our tears in his bottle.

Are they not all written in your book? In the book of Revelation, it talks about that he has golden vials, that he keeps the prayers of the saints in. In chapter eight, you see him coming with those vials and it's the incense, sweet odors of prayers of the church. You know, your prayers outlive you.

My wife found a note from her great-great-grandmother. It wasn't to her, it was a prayer. And God, she died at the age of 23, this woman, but yet her prayer book outlived her.

And the children came to the Lord and others and the grandchildren and the great-great-grandchildren and others because she prayed down her family line. Draw near to God and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your heart, you sinners.

Purify your hearts and weep and mourn, be afflicted. What does that mean? Well, that's what Daniel did. When Daniel read in his Bible in Jeremiah 25 or 29, that 70 years would be accomplished for Jerusalem, captivity, he said, it's time up.

70 years is up. So Daniel, he says, I set my face toward the Lord with prayer and fasting and weeping and mourning. And you see him in chapter nine getting down and he begins to confess the sins of the nation.

Nothing bad is said about Daniel in the Bible, but 45 times he confesses their sin as his own and he becomes an intercessor. We'll talk about that probably tomorrow night, what it means to be an intercessor. I mean, this is not the kind of thing that gonna make you wanna get a chair and beat it on the floor as you walk out.

It's the kind of thing that's gonna take inventory, whether we're gonna be faithful and successful in God's eyes in the days ahead, whether we take this seriously. Our prayers outlive us. Sorrow is, in Ecclesiastes, it says, sorrow is better than laughter.

That's what it says. And by the sadness of the face, the heart is made better. The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning.

Do you look around and you wonder where the word repentance is in the churches of our day? Do you think, I mean, the last thing we have recorded that Jesus said from the throne was to, six times he says to five of the churches, he's speaking in the first three chapters of Revelation, he says, repent, I love you, but be full of zeal and repent. What does that mean? Quit smoking, quit drinking. Well, no, that's not what repentance means there.

It means that your mind's been going this way, man's way, your way, and God says, bring your mind into an agreement with mind. And it'll change everything about you if it's real. It'll bring forth fruit that's real.

So he says, repent. So you've left your first love. People always say, you lost your first love.

Doesn't say lost. If I put my Bible on top of Roy's car, as we leave here tonight and we get back to where I'm staying and I look and my Bible's gone, I've lost it. I don't know where it is, somewhere on the road between here and there.

But if I get home and say, my Bible's not here, and I realize, oh, I left it there on the front of the pew down in the church. If you wanna get it back, go back to where you left it. And God never says you lost your first love because he won't let you lose it, but he'll let you leave it if you don't really want the things he wants.

And see, prayerlessness will mean powerlessness. It'll put you to a place where you'll have voices that influence you more than him. So who can give out the word of the cross realistically? Without tears.

Who can survey the wondrous cross without tears? Who can ride through downtown Memphis? Who can stand out in front of the hotel and look at the people standing out there without going upstairs and weeping

and saying, Lord, we need power to make it known to them what's going on. So you figure this, I just want you to see the power of tears, the heartfelt prayer, the kind of prayer that God is waiting for with the little widow and he wants to give to us. In Exodus chapter two, the children of Israel cried out and they sighed and they groaned and it came to pass in the process of time that the king of Egypt died and the children of Israel sighed by reason of the bondage and they cried, they cried out, they wept before God.

And their cry came up to God and the Lord heard their groanings and had respect to them and said, I've heard their cry. The whole deliverance from Egypt came because they wept in the presence of God. It was when, I'm just giving these quick references, you can look at them later, but Hannah was a woman who couldn't have children and Samuel, first Samuel, and she wanted to have a child, not just any child, but a man child and she prayed and she went to the high priest and it says she prayed and she prayed for a long time because her adversary, this other lady was calling her names because she couldn't have kids and she got before God and she wept and she wept until she was sore and she wept some more and she kept knocking and she kept asking with bitterness of soul, she prayed and my heart is grieved and she didn't eat.

Sorrowful spirit, I've poured out my soul before God and God heard her prayer and gave her, not just a man child, but a prophet, one of the greater ones, Samuel, awesome. In Isaiah 38, when Hezekiah, that godly king, toward the end of his life, the last 15 years, he let some things slip, but he got sick and the Lord said to him through Isaiah, prepare your house, you're gonna die. Prepare your heart, you're coming to me and Hezekiah turns his face to the wall and he wept and wept and wept until he was sore and the Lord says to Isaiah, go tell Hezekiah that I have heard his prayer, I have seen his tears.

I've seen his tears. That's what Paul said to Timothy. Timothy, I'm mindful of your tears.

And God said, I'm gonna add 15 years to your life, Hezekiah. And he did. It was in Ezekiel's day that in chapter nine, when they were in a mess like we are and they had all these things going on, even preachers were corrupt and God gives Ezekiel a vision of a man with an ink horn that holded liquid.

And he says, this angel went to the altar and I think he filled it up with blood from the altar. He says, go through Jerusalem and mark everybody with a tov, it's like a cross, a red cross in blood on their forehead. That's the mark perhaps that God puts there that's against the mark of the beast in the days ahead.

Who knows, who knows? But I'm just saying that they went through and they marked everybody. Go put a mark on the foreheads of those who weep and who sigh out and cry out and are sorrowful because of the iniquity that's being done in the city of God. And they did.

And then after they were through, God says, now go through Jerusalem and slay utterly everybody that doesn't have the mark and begin with the head preacher. Ezekiel nine, read it, it'll make you wonder. Begin with the senior elders.

It was Nehemiah's tears as he wept over Jerusalem. He was the cupbearer for the king. He had a very secure job.

He couldn't be hurt at all, you know? But the king one day said, Nehemiah, he saw the puffy eyes and the tears. He says, Nehemiah, you've been weeping. Why is it? And he says, how can I be happy when the people of my people are in such bondage and our city is desolate? And the king heard his tears and God answered his tears and gave him the right to go back and build the wall.

It was in Lamentations after Jeremiah that listen to what he writes about the people of God. In Lamentations chapter two, verse 18, it says, you say, where are you going with this? Their heart cried to the Lord, O wall of Zion, let tears run down like a river day and night. Give thyself no rest.

Don't let the apple of your eye cease crying. Arise and cry out in the night. In the beginning of the watches, pour out your heart like water before the face of the Lord.

Lift up your hands toward him for the life of you young children that faint for hunger at the top of every street. And he goes on to say in chapter three, verse 48, my eye runs down with rivers of water for the destruction of the daughter of my people. My eye trickles down and ceases not without any stoppage until the Lord looks down and beholds from heaven.

So you see, it's not just in a few places. You read Psalm 119 when it says, I cried with my whole heart. I cried to thee.

I cried all night. I pleaded. It says, the Lord has heard the voice, another Psalm, of my weeping.

Go through and mark cry and weep in Psalms, the book about prayer. You say, this is getting a little much. Well, in every true revival, you can look back from all three major and then maybe a fourth that we might not really be a revival in the fullest sense.

But for 200 and almost 40 some years now, we've had three times or four times where the Lord has moved in in power, but it's been now over 125 years since there's been any national repentance over half of our days. We're cruising on yesterday's momentum and we look and see what's happening with the child trafficking. And in the Memphis airport, they're saying, we're against, or in the Atlanta airport, sorry, I heard, said, we're against child trafficking.

If you see something, say something. But they're one of the leading cities in the world for child trafficking. And you see, we say all these things and we do all these things, but does it make you wanna go weep? See, if you get what God's thinking, it will, it will.

He forgets not the cry of the humble. So just remember, when God looks at prayer, he doesn't just measure it in terms of time. He looks at it in terms of intensity and reality and how real it really is.

But we can't really enter into it because our captivity's not turned. And so let me just give you a large place in the New Testament. Number one, sow the word of God in tears, like we read in Psalm 126.

We've gotta learn to sow the word of God in tears. That's what Paul did. He prayed for people with tears.

That's what Epaphras did. You read all through the New Testament. That's what Timothy did.

And so Paul wept while he warned. It says, to Ephesus, it says, I wanna remind you that for three and a half years, I ceased not to preach the gospel to you and from door to door and warned you with tears. You ever noticed that? That's what made his gospel effectual.

He told the truth with tears. You know, I remember going to Dundee, Scotland to where Robert Murray McShane was pastor. He died at the age of 30.

He was the saintly Robert Murray McShane. He changed a lot of Europe by his preaching and his praying especially. And people go there, there's this church that he had called the Church of St. Peter in Dundee.

Dundee, they say Dundee. And we went and they said, you can go there and you can see where McShane was. And we went and we knocked on the door.

They let us in. They said, can we see these things? And they let us in and said, there's the pulpit that Mr. McShane preached at. And we saw all these things.

She told us of this other person that had come by and he said, oh, is this the pulpit where McShane preached? And they said, well, yes. Is this the desk where he studied? And all these, yes, this is where it was. And the pastor sat down behind the desk and he began to sit like this.

Is this how Mr. McShane did it? And the lady said to him, no, that's not how he did it. Now put your head in your hands. Okay, that's it.

And now weep, weep. Because that's how Mr. McShane did it. This shook this pastor and he went into the other room and there was a pulpit there and he got behind it.

Is this where McShane preached from? And they said, yes, it is. And so he said, well, how did he move? He said, well, put your elbows on the pulpit and put your head in your hands and weep. Because that's how Robert Murray McShane did it.

And this is how everybody that you read their books, they change nations and that's how they did it. You will not find a tearless, powerful preacher. Not really.

He may be successful on one level, but so the word of God in tears in the closet and you go forth and you have his heart and you preach. You see tears before the Lord, before truth to the world. This is message preparation.

This is Sunday school preparation. This is discipleship preparation where you have a group of men, especially in the church that will become bound together in prayer. Y'all getting tired? Because I've got some stuff I've still got to say.

Number two, serve the Lord with tears. Again, to Ephesus, Paul said, I served the Lord with many tears. Do you realize that you're not just serving men? You're serving the Lord.

He's using you to work through your life and through your heart and he wants, he's ordained it that his church would share with him in his heart the way that he feels for the people that live in your neighborhood. Walk your neighborhood and ask the Lord for his heart for how he feels about the people in your neighborhood. We want his power, but we don't want his pain.

You see, in the book of Acts, they rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. The fellowship of his sufferings as sorrowful, but always rejoicing. We're sorry about all these things, but there's a rejoicing heart, you see, and that's what he wants us to understand.

Then thirdly, supplicate before the Lord in tears. Pour out your soul before him. Because you see, before the spirit can be poured out or will be poured out by God, our souls must be poured out before him.

We can't trust ourselves even. I remember when this first came to my mind when I was in seminary and I had a roommate that I was at where we lived, and he was a lawyer. He was a judge, actually, in Fort Worth, and I was a preacher.

We'd go into a meeting and somebody'd say, oh, here come the law and the prophets, you know, and we'd walk in, and he was six feet, nine inches tall. But at Christmastime, rather than come home from Texas back to where we lived, I would stay with his family. And his mother was one of those women that is just a holy woman of God.

She'd look in her eyes, she had these big blue eyes, and every time she talked and you looked in her eyes, you felt like she knows a lot of things I don't know. She'd open her mouth and you'd want to listen. His daddy was a singer, a worship leader at the seminary, well-known, and so I remember I was upstairs with his brother, Steve's brothers.

I was spending the night over this time, and Helen was a woman of prayer. This we knew, his mama was a woman of real prayer, and I was so intrigued by her, I wanted to know more. I remember it was late at night, it was about 12 o'clock, and I had to get up and the kitchen was downstairs.

I was gonna go down the stairs and get a glass of water because I was really thirsty. And I started down the stairs and I started hearing this, ooh, ooh, it sounded like, I mean, somebody in dire death throes. It sounded like someone had been just having a, at the point of having a baby.

It was just unbelievable. And I knew, whatever it was, it was serious. And so I ran down the stairs and I ran under the stairs.

It was a doorway, and I didn't realize that was his parents' bedroom. Now, Mr. Williamson was out of town, Dr. Williamson. And so I ran in like this and I just stopped because there was Steve's mother down beside her bed with a little light on.

Her Bible was there, and she had her hands out like this. She didn't know I was there. She would go, ooh, ooh, ooh, ooh.

She was moaning and weeping before God in prayer. And I just stood there. And I was completely blown away.

And I remember, I don't think I even, I backed out like this. I think I backed all the way back upstairs because, I mean, Williamson, and I sit there and I just said, Lord, I don't know a thing about that. But I want to know about it.

Well, a couple of years later, I was down in South Carolina doing a meeting and there was this man named Harold. I was staying in his house with his wife and he. And Harold was a nice guy, but something about Harold really bothered me.

I don't know what it was and I couldn't pinpoint it. But I remember, I began to pray for Harold. And so we had these meetings in his church.

He was one of the elders. And I remember that particular night after the meeting, God did a great things there. And we came back home.

And before we went to sleep, his wife said, let's have prayer together. So we went into the den and we sat down there in kind of a semi-circle, two chairs and a couch. And we held hands, three of us, like this, praying.

And we began to pray. And as I was going to pray for Harold about this, whatever it was, I didn't know. I remember I'd said, Lord, show me your love for Harold and show me how to pray.

And I remember holding hands like this and said, Lord, I want to lift up Harold. And it was like somebody just opened me up and thrust inside of me, these emotions and feelings. And I remember I began to go, Lord, I want to pray for him.

And I couldn't even talk. And I began to weep and I began to weep. And soon water was coming out of my eyes.

Something was coming out of my nose. And I think I was drooling. I could have had water coming out of my ears because it was coming everywhere.

And I, they had my hands. I couldn't do anything about it. I couldn't get, I couldn't even reach my shoulders.

And I'm sitting here for 20 minutes weeping. And all I can say is, Harold, Lord, I lift up Harold to you. And I'm just weeping and crying.

And I said, this is so weird, I can't stop. And the more I tried to stop, the more I couldn't do anything. Well, the next night in the public meeting, Harold stood up in the meeting and he says, I want to give a testimony tonight.

I want to thank God for setting me free last night from 30 years of bondage in a prayer meeting. And I said, well, what happened, Lord, what happened? He said, Al, you don't know Harold like I know him. And you don't love Harold like I love him.

And you certainly don't know how to pray as his need really is. So I just simply took you at your word. You said you wanted to learn how to pray for Harold and you wanted to pray for him.

And I decided to borrow your faculties. I borrowed your mouth and I borrowed your heart and I prayed for him through you. Oh, what a secret in prayer, what a secret in prayer.

The gift of tears that God gives you, gift of tears for others. And as this began to happen, and the Lord said to me, and by the way, Al, my prayers are always answered. And my mouth dropped again.

And I said, Lord, I gotta know. And he began to send me to these men that were men of prayer and others. And I began to understand and see what's right there for you and for me to learn to pray like this.

And what are we missing by chasing the other stuff on the outside, you see. Paul said, my little children of whom I travail in prayer again and again, in Galatians, until Christ is formed in you until you're a disciple, I'm gonna pray for you. I'm gonna weep over you.

I'm gonna, like a pathless, always laboring fervently for you in prayer that you might stand perfect and complete in all the will of God. The New Testament is full of it. You've been very good listeners, and I thank you for listening so well.

This is a gift that God gives. He'll give it to you if you want it. I remember I spoke at an orphanage in Fiji, and there was this woman after that would come over.

And she says to me, she says, thank you for sharing on that. I thought there was something wrong with me because every time I get in a prayer closet or a prayer meeting, all I can do is weep. And everybody would look at me funny, and I felt so bad, but I don't realize.

I said, Lord, teach me to pray, and all I can do is weep. And today I leave here knowing that God is using my prayers and his word in a wonderful way. It was powerful.

I remember another man who's in, I won't tell you where he's from, he's too close to hear. But he was in a prayer meeting, and he asked the Lord, give me the gift of tears. I remember we went with his church, about 200 people into a cafeteria.

We got down on our knees to pray, and he was gonna lead the prayer meeting. And he says, give me the gift of tears. He heard these things.

We studied them in the words a bit. And he started the meeting off, starting to start the meeting off to pray. And all he could do, he said, Heavenly Father.

And he began to, I mean, it was fearful. It was dreadful. I mean, it was the kind of thing you don't hear a man do, moaning like.

And he was moaning before God, down on this chair. And I kept saying, I hope you'll quit this soon. He's gonna scare some people.

And it kept on. It went on 20 minutes, 30 minutes, 40 minutes. And everybody's down on the floor going like this, and they're praying like this, you see.

And after it was over, his church was changed forever. I don't understand it, but I know this, that Jesus borrowed his faculties and prayed through him. Because, Galatians 4.6, because you are sons, God has sent forth the spirit of his Son into your heart, crying, Abba, Father.

You know what that word crying there is? It's the same word that's used in the Gospels when it talks about the gathering demoniac running through the graveyards and crying out loud. It's called krazein, K-R-A-Z-E-I-N. God sent forth, because you're his Son, he sends forth the spirit of his Son into you, and he cries out, Abba, Father.

Abba, Father. And he's praying for people, and he'll give you as much as you're willing to walk in, you see. He takes possession of your heart and your mind and your spirit, and he begins to pray.

I remember one of my good friends, he played football in college. He's a tough guy. His nose had been broken about four times.

This kind of goes in like this. And his name's Brian. He's a good friend of mine.

And we were at a men's retreat, and we began to talk about this. And I told him the secret about the gift of tears. And Brian was so melted by it.

Maybe, I mean, maybe you're not hearing it tonight. I don't know, maybe you are, maybe you're not, but he was melted. And he says, God, give me this gift of tears.

And I told him, I said, it might come when you're least expecting it. Well, he's a deacon at this huge church in Atlanta, and they were having a deacon's meeting. He prayed sincerely, give me the gift of tears.

And so they're sitting around this table, and they're talking about deaconing stuff, and they're praying, and Brian just simply says, I am so burdened for our church and God's heart to have his way in us. And all of a sudden, whomp, in that came to him. And Brian fell out of his chair onto the floor and began to weep and weep and weep.

And he is a tough guy. Let me tell you something. I asked him once, do you ever get in a fight growing up? He said, only once.

Nobody else can fight me. But I mean, he's tough. He's on the floor weeping for his church, and the deacons are kind of looking at him like, what is that? And soon the Lord reached up and grabbed the other deacons, began to pull them down to the floor, and they began to weep together for that church.

And that church, God fixed a lot of stuff. You see, here's the thing. I will never apologize for my tears again.

I will explain them because it's unusual. This is scary, especially in a men's group. You get the guys together and they start standing up and they're giving a testimony and they have a burden to their heart and they have tears coming out, and they say, well, excuse me, I'm sorry.

Don't apologize for tears. God may take them away. But thank God for the privilege of entering into what he really has, you see.

It won't happen unless your heart's clean. If you have a clean heart before God, if your conscience is clear and you get before God, you say, Lord, I want you to use me, not just to cry more. I'm not saying, Lord, I'm not just saying make me more emotional.

That's not what I'm asking for more emotions and not to cry more, not even to be more tender, but to be able for you to use me as a channel of your will to come that I can lay hold of it. And when you have two or three people together that are fervently together in agreement in that kind of prayer, nothing can stop it, even a hostile government. I'm telling you, God's will will come in power.

Lord, use me to pray through. Use me to pray through. This is the kind of prayer that will save the world, change the world around us.

This is the kind of prayer the church needs for the days that are coming just ahead of us. You haven't seen anything yet. You see, we keep trying to think that if we can just solve this problem and that problem, we'll get back to normal, but God said that is never gonna happen again.

I'm just telling you, it's just not gonna happen. You're gonna start seeing big stuff happening on all sides and men's hearts even more are gonna faint for fear. And the only people that are gonna triumph are the people that do know their God.

And if you know your God, you're gonna have his heart burdened. He's gonna let you experience this joy. It seems unnatural.

We're intimidated by it. We can sense how much bigger it is than what we're punitively laying hold of. It's huge, it's huge, but it's a supernatural dimension of being joined inwardly.

Do you know that it says that by the divine nature, we partake, excuse me, by these precious promises, 2 Peter 1, three to six, that by these precious, exceeding, great and precious promises, we become partakers of the divine nature. Being a Christian is not living for Jesus. I mean, living for Jesus, oftentimes we look back at history and we're grateful for all the things he's done and we should be grateful for his death on the cross and his atonement and all those things.

He finished that work. But when he ascended to heaven and took the throne of the universe, now he's on the throne and he's got the name above every name and he's given us the word that can't be changed. And he wants us to respond and commune with him and cooperate and consecrate.

All the words to me come together. That's what he wants. But we look back at history and say, well, because he did that so much for me back then, I'm gonna do my best to live for him today.

How's that working out for you? Because nobody can live for Jesus without living by Jesus. You've gotta, I've got to belong to him in such a way that he has the access to come through me. Nobody can live for him until they live by him.

And he's not calling you to live for him. He's calling you to let him live through you. That's what he wants.

And he wants to surprise me with that. He wants to really make it powerful. I remember going to Korea and hearing this place called Prayer Mountain.

They've drilled into that mountain like honeycombs in there and there's all these little, there's prayer chambers. They have a rule. You can't stay in there for more than 20 days without coming out.

They actually have that rule. And you can walk up and you can hear the mountain. Whoa, whoa.

People in there weeping and praying as they pray toward the north, toward North Korea. And it's just stunning. It's crazy.

And the mountains are crying out. Well, I've gone too long tonight. But I do believe that sowing in the spirit is letting the Holy Spirit sow through you.

You know, maybe we've prayed for our kids for a long time. Have you ever gotten before God and said, Lord, show me your heart, how you really feel about my child. And the goal is not to pray with tears.

The goal is to get God's heart. The goal is to be a channel. The goal is to sow in freedom and lack of captivity in the presence of God alone.

So I know this has been hard to follow. I know that we've talked about liquid love and we've talked about flood tides and joy and all these things that are out there. And I could give you dozens and dozens of illustrations of people that I've seen brought to a whole new place in their Christian life.

As they say, Lord, I'm available. Guys think it's not very smart to cry. But I'm calling you tonight to ask the Lord, Lord, would you give me the gift of tears? I don't want to just be a crybaby.

I don't want to just have more emotions. I'm not gonna be weak, some sissy, five wussy face. But I want the things that break your heart to break mine.

I want to feel about a lost man the way you feel about him. If I'd seen the Apostle Paul before he was converted, I'd have hated him. I'd have prayed for God to kill him.

Lord said to me, if this person, I'm thinking of a person that I didn't like in government at all. If he sat across the table from you, could you preach the gospel to him in grace and love? Could you feel about him the way I feel about him? Or would you be like Jonah in Nineveh, the reluctant prophet who just couldn't tell them what God really said about the love, but God did it anyway, as he preached judgment. But I'm just saying, can I feel about things the way God feels about things? I'm excited about traveling.

I'm excited about going out, because everywhere I go, I mean, it's so important just to listen. And you'll find all kinds of things happening to you that if you make yourself available, I'm gonna tell one last story. I'd prayed to the Lord, I said, Lord, anytime, anywhere, in any circumstance, with any result, you just give me the go ahead and I'll share, let me hear you.

Tell me to open my mouth wide and you'll fill it. Because I wanna share the gospel with every breathing creature. And I remember I came home from a really hard trip and went home and I went upstairs into my bathroom where we are and I looked down and oh no, that little silver hose that goes from the tank to the water thing and it was dripping and it had a leak in it and it has water pool on the floor.

And so I cut the water off down here and I said, I gotta go to Home Depot. And I undid that hose and I ran over to Home Depot. And as I'm sitting there at the wall, there's all these little hoses there, different lengths, different colors, types and that.

And there's another guy here right here, he's looking at it also. And he's looking up and I'm looking up and we're looking at each other saying, what in the world? And he says, boy, there's a lot of choices, aren't there? And I said, I'm so glad that most choices are like this and not the one that's so, there's some choices we gotta get right. And he said, what do you mean by that? And I began to share the gospel and I got on track and took him through it.

And soon I had tears coming down my cheeks and I was sharing with him the gospel and he had tears coming down his cheeks. And he says, can I have another one of those books? I could have led him to the Lord right there. But he says to me, I wanna take this home to my wife tonight.

We wanna look at this together. And we're both gonna receive the Lord Jesus. We're gonna pray tonight.

And I said, that's good. And I gave him a big hug and prayed for him. And then he left and I left.

And I remember walking out to the car, I was crying. Here's this guy walking out of Home Depot with a toilet thing crying. I said, what is wrong with him? And so I get halfway to the car and I said, Lord, this is amazing.

Even at Home Depot, you've arranged for a divine appointment like that. This is awesome. And I start my car up and he says, Al, you say even at Home Depot? Listen, you have so many appointments you walk by.

If you had been listening to me, like I want you to learn to listen to me, I could have said to you, arise and go to Home Depot. Because I have a person there who's ready. And I want you to be a channel of my love and grace and tell them about me.

But you're not listening to me like I long for you to listen to me. So I had to give you a leaky commode to get your rear end over there. Do you realize every day, the one who moves all the little algae and the fish and feeds them all on the birds and he did never tired and never in trouble.

He does it without effort. Then you think that somebody like a person that you meet that that's by accident, you need to learn to fish. You need to learn to pray and I need to learn to do it.

And that's what the days ahead must be. You can keep us from meeting in church. You can keep us from, you can cut the internet off, but you can't silence the church from preaching even in jail if that happens.

So I'm just calling you to a sobriety tonight. And maybe tonight before you get in your bed, you'd get down and you'd say, Lord, if anything that Al said tonight is something that I need to know, if you're really willing for this, I want to know this gift of tears. I want you to be able to entrust to me your heart burdens and we can co-labor together Lord and I'll join you as a royal priesthood.

We'll talk about that tomorrow night. But wow, time flies when you're looking at the word. Maybe not for you.

I mean, I just, I'm almost apologetic for having you sit here for so long. But if it's just for two or three people that say, I want this gift of tears and I don't understand much of all he said, but I do know this, that my heart is dry and I don't feel the burden of God when I look at people walking in the airport. They're like cattle to me.

I see men as trees. I want to see with the heart of God and I want to be driven to my knees, prayer to the Lord of the harvest that he will thrust out laborers into the harvest. The thrust without that on a jet, you'll never get airborne.

It's this wind of God pressing us and he gives it to us as we learn to pray. Now, I'm just asking you for a new dimension and you'll be glad you did. If you say, Lord, give me this gift of tears.

It'll change. I mean, several people came to me tonight that I met 30 years ago. We hadn't seen each other since.

And they said that message at this place, I still remember those things. And they testified giving glory to God for that moment that they said yes to what he said to them in one meeting, one meeting. And he can do it tonight too.

If you say, yes, Lord, I want you to bless me with divine feelings, with burden from God. I want to carry this with other like-minded believers as an effectual pray ministry. And then I can go forth with your seed and sow it and see your results in your season.

You may make me wait for a while, but I'm waiting on God. And you said I'd renew a strength in you as I do. Well, maybe we could just bow our hearts for prayer before him.

And you would be willing to say to him in a moment, to him, to not be afraid, but to, he says, my child, will you give me your heart? Will you ask me for this Holy Spirit, this unction, this importunity in prayer? Will you ask me for this that keeps on keeping on and doesn't give up and walks in faith and can dare to believe me? For you can ask, yes, you can sink, that's digging. You can knock and let the importunity and the burden of God drive you into faithful effectual prayer. Drill deep enough, you'll strike water.

And he that believeth on me as the scriptures say, out of his innermost man will flow rivers of living water. You know, those, that term rivers of living water is used a lot more for tears than anything else in the scriptures. I don't think it means only that.

But Father, we bow before you now. I thank you for the attention of these dear ones. I know for some it might have been hard to even listen to, but I pray tonight that your Holy Spirit will just get ahold of every heart that's here.

Even the ones who maybe don't wanna necessarily enter into something like this. I pray that you will give us the freedom to really say yes to you tonight. Not just to say yes, but the desire to be used by you in this evil, perilous time when the whole world is looking for real answers.

Show us that the battle is on our knees, first of all and foremost, and that we march forward in agreement of heart in real prayer and break our hearts, may it not just be something that is in our brains, but may our hearts have the issues of your life flowing out of them first, starting with real divine feeling and burden, emotion that lifts up fervent prayer and then obeys. Would you tell him right now? Lord, I want this. Mark this down, Lord, I say to you, yes.

I don't have the feelings for it. I'm afraid of it. But if it's from you, don't let me take a counterfeit.

But if it's from you, I say yes to the gift of tears and you send it when you want this and let me know it's from you and bring me into a whole new dimension of praying. Can you tell him that? He's yearning to spend time in real intercession. He ever liveth to make intercession for the church, for the people of God, according to the will of God, saving from the bottom all the way to the top.

Lord, seal this to our hearts and we pray in Jesus' name, amen. I know you find this hard to believe, but I left off a lot of what I was. Before I came tonight, I jotted down a bunch of stuff.

I left off a lot, so you can thank God for that. But I would love to talk to you one-on-one if you have any doubts about what we're saying. There's plenty more in the Bible.

But if I were you, I'd look up tears. Just start looking through tears. Get the electronic version, put tears, and then put crying, and then put, there's all kinds of words we read right over, like penthos, which is a sharing of unction of heart.

And there's all these words in the original language that we just say, I'm gonna pray for you. But there's all these words that show emotion and unction and brokenness, and we never hear anything about them. And Charles Finney went to a prayer meeting in church the Wednesday after he got saved, and he said it was so dry.

He said, I thought about renouncing the faith, because it was so dry. It was just the same thing. But see, that church hadn't seen what we're talking about tonight.

Wouldn't you like to be able to change a cabinet in the government by praying? You can do it, you can do it. It may not be the kind of change you thought, but you can change it. Everything, whatsoever you ask in my name.

If you're right with him and your heart's clean, and you got the word of God, you can see it. Well, I thank you tonight for your attention. I guess it's too late to do anything else.

I've gone over, I've abused you tonight. But you know what? I mean, I wasn't gonna talk on this until this afternoon. And so, I mean, a lot of times I try to be one, two, three, and make it easy to remember points and all that, but I couldn't do it tonight.

And I dreaded getting up here more than you dreaded sitting here all this time. But what I'm interested in, Lord, do you have my ear? Do you have my heart? Can you trust me with one of your heart burdens? And if you say yes to that, you're fixing to enter a new dimension, and you'll come back after you've took the seeds out, harvest them, you'll come back with a harvest, and you'll be so happy. And God will use you in your church, and he'll use you in your family, and you'll be amazed, and you'll say, I never thought I'd see this kind of stuff happening.

How could this be? Well, it's because I'm using you. You're letting me pray through you. You're in the prayers of the high priest.

His finished work is in history, but his ongoing work is the book of Acts, and it started then in the day of thy power. When he took the throne of the universe and was given thee name above every other name, then he gave you authority. And I wanna ask you, have you ever really entered into that? So that's what I want you to leave with tonight, saying, I wanna learn to pray like that, but I can't just lay hold of it.

Lord, you surprise me, bring it on. Get down by your bed, say, Lord, give me the gift of tears, and start praying, and you watch what happens.

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