

Praying for Reviving

by Bertha Smith

Revival is a spiritual renewal that brings people back to God, and it requires humility, recognition of sin, and a willingness to allow Christ to live in us.

Duration: 45:37

Scripture: Romans 12:1, Hebrews 4:12, James 4:8

Topics: "Prayer For Revival"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by expressing a moment of realization and conviction among the congregation. They reflect on their inconsistency in seeking holiness and confessing sin, particularly in their missionary work. The speaker then instructs the congregation to make a personal list of everything in their hearts and lives that is unholy, as a form of self-examination and repentance. They emphasize the importance of being holy enough to pray and give testimonies that are empowered by the Holy Spirit. The sermon concludes with a prayer for the congregation to strive for holiness and live their lives in a way that reflects Christ.

Transcript

When revival comes, people not only see themselves sinners, but they get right with God. They get right with God. Well, how do we get right? In the last chapter of Hosea, we have instructions for getting right with God.

People are out of tune with the Lord, coming back in tune. Take with you words and turn to the Lord and say unto him, Take away all iniquity. Now, iniquity is the general term for anything that's unholy.

And the way to have a reviving is to come to the Lord in sincerity and say, Take away all iniquity. Of course, we've got to face up to what iniquity is before we can even want it taken away. And see how our lives are failing the Lord's purpose for us before we can want something better.

And then what will the result of reviving be? In Psalms 85,6 we have, Wilt thou not revive us again? What for? That thy people may rejoice in thee. The result of reviving is joy in the Lord. Joy in the Lord.

Now, let me ask you, how long has it been since you've seen people just bubbling over with the joy of the Lord? Well, I've got a little more personal. How long has it been since you yourself just bubbled over with the joy of the Lord? Maybe you've never seen anyone revived. Maybe you've never been revived yourself

since the day you were saved.

Well, it's the time to pray for revival. After I'd been in China a number of years, the missionaries all over Shantung Province, where I worked in northeast China, began to pray for revival. We had about 50 missionaries, about 80 churches, about 80 preaching places that were not churches, preaching chapels.

We had 86 country schools where some of them weren't teacher schools, where a teacher taught four grades. The village furnished the building, and every pupil furnished their own desk and stew. And the villagers paid a portion of the teachers' wages.

I couldn't call it a salary, it'd be five or six dollars a month. And then we pieced out what they couldn't pay with money from the foreign mission board, and every year we took back a little bit that we gave and let them give a little bit more. And it was a public school, free for everybody.

And those who could pay something did, and those who couldn't, didn't. And then in several market towns we had six grades of work, two teacher schools. But just imagine the hundreds of youngsters we were reaching with the gospel.

When the Depression came in 1932, all those schools had to be closed instantly, every country school, which was a tragedy indeed, because the villagers were not able to keep them going completely. They would have been in a few years. Well, the gospel was being spread, and we wanted to see a gracious reviving in our churches.

After praying for some years for reviving in the city where I worked, the pastor, I suppose the suggestion made to him by the missionaries, set aside the first day of every month as a day of prayer to pray for revival. And everybody who could went to the house of God at 8 o'clock, stayed till 12 and went back at 2 and stayed till 5. That was a day of prayer. We had a leader each hour, a different leader each hour, not to talk, not even talk about praying.

He only read a passage of scripture, and we chose a hymn, and then we spent the time praying. We prayed for a whole year, and all the Christians who couldn't go to the church knew that the first day of the month was a day of prayer. And as soon as they, any time during the day when their mind didn't have to be on their work or what they were doing, they were supposed to be lifting their hearts to the Lord in prayer for reviving at our church.

We prayed a whole year, no reviving came. The second year, third year, fourth year, no reviving came. We did see, however, greater blessing on our work than we'd had before.

But lo, instead of seeing a gracious revival, China at that time was trying to jump from an absolute monarchy where the people had no voice whatsoever in the government to a democratic form of government. No nation has ever done that, and China didn't either. They fought it out for years and suffered greatly from trying to make such a leap at one time.

People in different places of China wanted their man up in Peking as president. And in the province where I lived, the western end of the province wanted one man for governor, and the people over to the eastern part of the province wanted another man for governor, and all they knew was to fight it out. And it was not long until, and all the common people wanted, I'm for the man who will not let his soldiers march across my little farm.

If my crop's destroyed, my children will go hungry. And that's all they knew. With one man and a hundred able to read and one woman and a thousand, you can realize they were not very well informed on government affairs.

Well, the next day after the city of Nanking was burned in 1927, all American missionaries received a message, a telegram from the American consul, proceed to the ports at once. And British missionaries, we had a few Swedish missionaries out there and a few from Norway, received the same message. And we all had to go to ports and pack up.

Those of us in the northern part of Shantung province, 28 of us went out to the port of Chifu. We had a few families on furlough. And the others went down to the port of Qingdao.

We had only two mission residences in Chifu, and there were no houses for rent. There was so much communism in the Chinese city that the American consul requested us not to go into the Chinese city. They didn't call it communism at that time.

They called it the Western atmosphere, anti-West, anti-Western atmosphere. Well, it surely was an era of anti-Westernism because they'd just been stirred up by communism. Well, the city church was out on the main street where we could attend the Chinese church.

They had the Chinese pastor. And we could go to church Sunday and Wednesday evening, and that settled. Humanist speaking, we would have had a very difficult time, packed up 28 people in two residences, children and spencers and couples.

Well, we had a glorious time. We had spiritual sense enough to know that the Lord could take even the work of the devil, even what the devil may have brought about in that war, to work out for good for his children if we committed it to him. And that's surely what we wanted to do.

And we began to meet every morning after breakfast at 8 o'clock to pray together for an hour. We wanted to pray that we would not miss what the Lord wanted to teach us in permitting us to be torn away from mission work that we loved more than we loved our own lives and packed up down the end of Port City where we couldn't do anything. Well, we had one other subject for prayer when we began.

Some of the Chinese military officials were Russians, and others were officers that had been trained in Russia, and they were permitting their soldiers to break windows out of preaching chapels. And we knew if that armor were victorious, our Chinese Christians would be in for persecution. And, of course, we wanted to pray for the Lord to enable them to show Christ in them, and persecution came.

Well, it was not long, friends, until we were praying not from 8 to 9, but from 8 to 10 and 8 to 11 and 8 to 12. And no one was remembering to pray for the Chinese whom we'd left behind. We were all praying for ourselves.

And the Lord just got us away from our work. Now, to show us what kind of missionaries we were, I'm sure that never a more dedicated group ever went to a mission field or got put together than those 50 missionaries in North China. We put in, some of us, 15 hours a day at our work.

We kept long prayer lists. Some got on their knees once a day to pray for those lists, through those lists. Some got on their knees twice a day to pray through those long prayer lists.

And I'll tell you, we were doing everything that we possibly could to advance that mission work and spread the knowledge of our Lord and Savior. But, you know, friends, it's kind of dangerous to ask the Lord to do something for you. If you're not ready for Him to do it, you may find Him doing it.

And that's just what we found. The Lord began to show ourself, friends. We began to see that we were just a crowd of dedicated self, thoroughly dedicated self doing jobs for God.

And we were doing the Lord's work and calling on Him to come and help us do His work. And the Lord has something better for His people than dedicated self doing jobs for Him. And He had to get us away from our work to teach us.

Fortunately for us at that time, one of our number, Miss Jane Lyde from South Carolina, perhaps one of the most brilliant minds that the mission board ever sent out, had just returned from Southern California where she had to come home the autumn before to bring her sick sister, Miss Florence, out. She was not even able to go to church on Sunday while she was there. But during the day, she looked after her sister all day.

They had an apartment and a private home. So there were people there on week evenings. So the only service that Miss Lyde could get to during the week was to a Bible class held nearby in a home where one woman taught one subject all winter.

I don't know whether it was in a home or not. May have been in some little preaching hall. Anyway, Miss Jane, Miss Florence, got tucked in bed at bedtime, and Miss Jane slipped out to that Bible class.

And what do you suppose, what subject do you suppose that woman taught all winter? Christ our life. Christ living His life in us. Christ expressing Himself through our personality all the time.

This old sinful nature not in control anymore. Paul and his epistles called it living dead to yourself. We never heard anything like that.

The best we knew was to dedicate yourself to the Lord and work for Him, and we were ever more doing it. But we surely were not pleased with our work. We had a little handful in our churches who were just on fire for the Lord.

Inside in the big cities perhaps we had ten or twelve like that. Maybe out in the villages we'd have only one or two in the churches. And we wanted all of our church members to be just like that little handful that were just on fire, everywhere they went and telling people how wonderful it was to have a living Lord living inside of them instead of going to a temple to bow down before a dead idol.

Dumb idol, never had had any life. Well, the Lord began to show us that the trouble was that He had to begin with us before He could answer our prayers for revival. Miss Jane came back full of her subject.

That meant full of Christ. And she was so different. We all wanted to know her secret.

We wanted to know the Lord like she knew Him. And we asked her to share some of that teaching with us at our morning prayer time. And we learned from this book that that's the secret of the Lord working.

It's Christ living through us, expressing Himself through our personalities all the time. And I had trouble for years over that passage in 2nd chapter of Galatians where Paul said, I am crucified with Christ. Nevertheless, I live.

But it's not I that live. Christ liveth in me. Well, I just couldn't understand why Paul could have an experience like that and I couldn't.

Now, I didn't have Paul's heredity and all of his marvelous Old Testament Bible teaching. I didn't have his great mind. But I had his Savior.

And if Paul could say I'm dead, why couldn't I say I was dead? Birth was always too much a lie. Oh, I could just think of more things to do for the Lord. And my work was being in charge of a girls' boarding school.

And I taught all the Bible and all the English. And they had six years of English. They started English at the 7th grade and went through the 12th.

And where there were no schools in the village, they had to come into the city. Children would have to come in for 1st grade. And then I taught all the Bible, 1st grade up.

Of course, we had Bibles just like we had history. Every day for the younger lower grades and three times a week for the upper grades. And by combining grades, I was able to teach it all.

I led chapel about three times, the Chinese teachers one. We took turns because I knew the Bible better and could give them all what they needed. The Chinese teachers knew that and asked me to do it.

And at night, sometimes after teaching all day and had a lot of preparation to do, I would go into the city, walk two miles, no other way to go unless I rode a donkey. And that wasn't very comfortable. I preferred to walk to a chapel where a Chinese man was a pastor, a preacher.

Our pastor was going in there to preach. And to get the students to come, they asked me to go in and teach an English class. And I didn't know any better than to go.

And the woman that I lived with, that saint from Alabama, Miss Alice, she was an older missionary than I was. Used to say, Bertha, the Lord is not a slave driver. You ought not to go into that city at night.

Well, the only thing I ever did was to take my proper sleep. About seven hours at night. The Chinese don't go around working like Americans to make money and get else's.

They take it easy. They have two hours off at noon from 12 to 2. And of course, schools go the same way because the teachers all had to have their rest after their noonday meal. And so I got my rest and got in another hour.

And I always got in some kind of walk. I always kept up my walking for exercise. That was all I could do.

It was raining, I just walked back and forth across the porch. Till I'd walked about two or three miles. Measured my walking with a clock on a watch.

Well, anyway, I did take care of my health. But I found out I didn't. That was not of the Lord going to that.

But that's just the way we went. And we lived just as frugally as we could out of our \$45 which we had left after we took out the tents for the Lord to put where we thought he directed it. We had a lot of churches to help.

We couldn't help just the city church because we didn't, we were going to the other churches anyway, good deal. And there was absolutely nothing that we wouldn't have done for that mission worth. And yet,

friends, as that moment showed us from the Word of God that we ought not to be living anymore, that the Lord put us in the position of death when we were saved.

Of course, not actually dead. We'd have had to be buried in the dirt of grace. A grave of dirt, not just a grave of water that we were buried in announcing to the world that we had died in Christ.

That we'd taken his death as our death. But the Lord showed us that we had to live in that position of death that the Lord had shown, that the Lord saw us in by counting the death of his Son to us. Well, that was something new to us.

And I'll tell you, that meant live a holy life. And of course, we wouldn't have been there working and had any sin that we'd known about in our lives. But oh, how much began to come out.

Attitudes and attitudes toward each other. And proud of our mission work. Oh, so proud when we went up to mission meeting every year for that letter that was going to be sent, a report on our work for the year that was going to be forwarded to the foreign mission board if we'd had a lot of converse during the World War.

And we didn't know that a lot of them were not really born of the Spirit. Well, the Lord began to show us ourselves and we began to make apologies to each other and get right. And she talked about Christ living his life and all the things that didn't show Christ in us had to come out.

We went down to Chippewa in March. And people go out to war. They couldn't fight in the daytime.

And when kings go out to war, that means they go out in the spring in the east. They have nothing but one blanket they carry on their shoulders and no tents and no heaters. And they would die, freeze to death out in the winter in North China with one wrapped up in a blanket lying out in the field.

So the war is over in the middle of November. And then that's what they call they get home before the big cold comes. And then they come back after Easter and pick up again right where they left.

And one army in our city that spent the winter there came out the next spring with different insignia on their collars. They'd change sides during the winter. Came on back to pick up where they left off.

So we had to stay in Chippewa while they fought. And then we were able to go back to the west. Well, we'd spent most of the summer way up mid-August just getting right with the Lord.

Getting right with the Lord, missionaries, preachers. And we surely thought we were right with him. And now we did start a mission work with the American Navy.

When the American Navy goes up the 7th Fleet from the Philippines up to the northern ports, all the destroyers and the flagship to Chippewa and the submarine carriers down to the port of Qingdao. And there's nothing for the U.S. men to go to there. They did have a YMCA building, but the men didn't have any confidence in the YMCA secretary.

He borrowed too much money from them and couldn't pay it back. So they didn't care to go there. And we rented an empty preaching hall and rented some little cheap handmade wooden chairs, folding wooden chairs.

No, they didn't fold them yet. They weren't that clever yet. And so we had services every night.

And in the afternoon I gave the teaching Bible to those that could read it and those that wanted it, Christians and those that loved the Bible and wanted more of it. And then every evening we were there. So we got busy after a while.

But anyway, at the time this lied, it shared a good deal with us on Christ our life. And we were confessing everything as we went along, as the Lord showed us things that were not like Christ. As I said, most of it attitudes.

Sometimes something we'd said to another missionary, but most of the time it was inner feelings of pride for ourselves. And it certainly came from the devil. The Lord didn't make us like that.

Well, we had among our number a woman who'd had a terrible eye malady, Mrs. Charles Tupper from Texas. And she'd suffered a number of years. Occasionally she'd have an attack to that eye, a twitching uncontrollably so, and the twitching accompanied by such excruciating pain that it tore her nerves to pieces for days.

And our mission doctors could do no more for her. They asked her to go to Peking, where John D. Rockefeller, Jr. had built a university combined with what was supposed to be a mission university. All the missionaries that did mission work in Peking went in together.

And he built a wonderful hospital in connection with the medical college. And it was a great deed of social service. That's what the Baptists called it.

Other people talked about it being John D. Jr.'s mission work, but they called it his social service. But it was great training doctors for time. And John D. went all over the world and got the leading specialists in every field and sent them out there to teach in that medical college and practice in that hospital.

The eye specialist at that time was a leading one from Vienna, Austria. And he told me his tailpaper that he couldn't do it, that eye couldn't take any more treatment. She would lose it in a period of from three to six months.

And no doubt the good eye would soon follow. And she came back knowing that she was facing blindness. If that man couldn't help her, nobody in the world could.

She didn't even tell us. She just said the doctor couldn't do anything for her. Didn't even tell us she was facing blindness.

And no, when we'd been there in Chifu about three months, that eye didn't start up again, have another attack. And we knew there's no human being in all the world that could help her. Well, we loved her devotedly.

And she was a wonderful missionary, and her husband was one of our key men. He was head of our educational institution, which had just hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of high school students that had come from all over that part of the province. And we had a college, a junior college, and our seminary, and a business college, and a teaching college, training teachers.

And we just thought we couldn't spare him. And she was a wonderful missionary herself. And we just couldn't bear the thought of losing him.

And we decided we'd just get holy enough to call on the Lord to perform a physical miracle and heal that eye. Now we knew we'd have to be holy. You see, we would have to have faith.

And faith is produced by the Holy Spirit in cleansed hearts. Now you know yourself, right after a meeting, when you've been gloriously revived and gotten your sins forgiven up to date, why, you just have faith for anything. And then you get cold, and you know that you're not living to please the Lord, and your faith's gone.

You want somebody else to produce the faith. You're calling on somebody else to do the praying. Well, we knew all of that.

Of course, we never called on somebody else to pray. We kept in praying tune. But we knew.

We just believed that if we were right enough with holy God, that we could call upon him in a case like that and expect him to perform a physical miracle. By that time, our 28 had come down to 18. And some had gone on furlough.

Furlough was nearly due, and they went on early. Some had a furlough due. And about a half a dozen of those saved, thoroughly dedicated, hardworking, love the Lord, missionaries, said, Why, we can't expect the Lord to perform physical miracles in this age when we have doctors and when the Bible is complete.

He worked physical miracles through his apostles as an evidence that he was alive and seated up in the heaven and working through his apostles. Now that the Bible is completed, we just can't expect physical miracles. Well, about a dozen of us agreed with him in theory.

But we had something to add. My God shall supply every need of yours. And this is a definite need that no human doctor can do anything about.

And we were just convinced if we would get holy enough, we could call upon the Lord to perform a miracle and heal that eye. And we began to search our hearts. And Ms. Culpepper went through a week.

And I'll tell you, the Lord began to bring to that woman everything that she'd said that didn't please him, and not everything, but a plenty. A plenty. All the way back to the time she was a young woman that she'd never diagnosed as sin.

Now she was always saying something cute and clever to the delight of all of us. And she's just one of the prettiest women you'd ever see anywhere. We took turns there in each house.

The women each took turns being head of the house. And we planned the meals. And, of course, everybody helped with the work.

But one was the head and planned the meals. And the one that planned the meals sat up at the head of the table and served the meal. And the sitting up there at the head of the table, just looking so perfectly lovely and charming, she said something to me or she said it to the group about me.

I've forgotten which. Now, we lived in the same city and loved each other devotedly. But she's just going to be cute, you know, and make people laugh.

Well, what she said was cuddly. It wasn't cute, it was cuddly. Now, she didn't mean it to be cuddly, I'm sure.

She just meant to be cute. Well, everybody laughed at me. I suppose I had a grin on the outside of my face, but there wasn't any laugh inside.

There was no call for it. And it didn't do me any good. Now, I didn't hold it against her.

I forgave her immediately. I knew she just wanted to make people laugh, and she didn't know any better than to attract attention to herself, to make somebody else laugh. And she didn't know then that every time we attract attention to ourselves, we grieve the Holy Spirit.

We're supposed to be magnifying Christ through our personalities and be living in a position of debt to this old self, but she didn't know that then. Well, did you know that last week when we were getting ripe enough to call upon God to heal that eye, the Lord just showed that woman that it didn't please her to say things about other people that didn't do any good, or to them. Didn't do any good.

And she came into my room with the tears just rolling down her cheeks, begging me to forgive her for that thing she'd said. Well, she still says just as cute things as ever. But I've never heard her say anything cuter since that day.

She was cured. And the rest of us were searching our hearts. And the Lord showed me two, three little things.

One I especially remember, I went over to another missionary, and I said, I don't know why the Lord sent me over here to confess this to you, but I'm trying to get it right enough for them to pray for Ms. Culpepper's eye. And when I told her what it was, she said, I know why he sent you over here. I said, well, that's just one of my sins.

That's one of my sins. The Lord wants you to come over here and remind me of my sin that I've got to get right. Well, we got on our knees and called on the Lord to deliver us from whatever it was.

And when it came time, and when the Culpeppers couldn't think of anything else to be made right, they called us in. And I went into that room, friends, right with the Lord. I wouldn't have dared gone otherwise.

Ms. Culpepper sat in a chair in the middle of the room. We all stood around. Dr. Culpepper read from the 5th chapter of James about calling for the elders of the church when anyone was sick and anointing them with oil.

And the admonition is made, confess your false one to another. And then the promise is, the prayer of faith shall save the sick. Well, he didn't give that oil any significance.

We all have olive oil in our pantries. That's what we use for company when we want some mayonnaise. It's shipped out from pure olive oil from southern Europe out to the port cities.

And we keep a bottle of it on hand because we don't have anything else that we can make salad dressing from. Well, he was just not leaving undone anything the word of God speaks of. And after he put the oil on her head, he said, we'll all come up now and put our hands on her head and pray.

Well, Doctor, I was younger than most of the missionaries at that time. And of course, as a young person should, I stood back and waited for all the others to go up. And I went up the very last one and put my hand on Ms. Culpepper's head.

Friends, I had to bring my hand back. There stood just opposite me a dear old woman, 68 years old, who had had charge of a girl's boarding school in her early mission work. But for about 25 years she'd gone from village to village teaching the old women who didn't know one Chinese word from another about the Lord.

And she'd get them saved. And then she'd even teach them how to read, that funny language. And many of them she taught after they were 50 years old because they wanted to learn to read the Bible.

And they'd walk miles to a church and give their testimony to the church and be baptized. And she'd just built up a great store of illustrations from the weaving and the spinning and the hatching of the chickens and all of that in their country life that illustrated the gospel. And the boys' school there in the port of Chifu had been neglected for years.

Mr. Moore was head of the school, mind you. And his evangelistic field was 14 counties, villages and towns in 14 counties and 14 county seats. Well, of course, he didn't have any time for the school.

His wife taught English. And a Chinese had to teach the Bible who hadn't had much training. Well, because I was a school person, I'd majored in education in college.

And by that time I'd had 10 years of teaching experience. I was asked to take his place at the school when he became infertile. And, no, the open school, middle of August, would just give a short time.

And I just arranged to put all the Bible together that I could for the lower grades and taught all the English and all the Bible. And Mr. Moore had to go home, too. Now, that was a pretty big task.

But I did it all. And then I suggested to the Chinese teacher, head teacher, who planned the worship every day, that we have one person lead a week so they could build up a message in a week. There was only one Christian in the senior class which was going to finish the following July.

Another one had been saved, but his parents wouldn't let him be baptized. Well, I'd never let a graduate get to the senior high school in my room, I mean a Chinese, without getting him saved. It's a very interesting gospel.

I didn't have room for him anymore after they'd heard it. That was my plan, but I never did have to send anybody home because they didn't know I had that plan in my head. But I did.

I wasn't going to keep anybody and make an educated tool for the devil. I thought the devil could use them better educated than he could ignorant. I'd leave them in ignorance if they're going on serving him and resisted the gospel after they'd been taught it and heard it.

Well, anyway, I asked that old lady, suggested her to the head teacher, and he invited her to lead chapel for a week. And if she didn't come down there and treat those poor city young men just as if they'd been those old Chinese women and gave all of her illustrations, because they'd never been to the country in all their lives out in a village and probably never would, and they didn't know what she was talking about, and they just took it to be a joke. Well, I sat there just so wanting those boys saved, and I thought the gospel had to be presented to them relatively.

They were not those old ignorant women. Why couldn't she give them? If she couldn't paint any illustrations, just take some from the Bible. I thought she surely could have found some illustrations in the

Bible of difference in people being saved and what the gospel did for them.

Well, I couldn't wait until Friday. And if Monday morning here she didn't come, I'd go through another week. Well, it was harder on me that week.

And a third week and a fourth week. You see, somehow she understood that she was to lead chapel, period. Well, I knew then since I'd gotten her out, gotten her in, I had to get her out.

And I didn't know as much then as I know now about dealing with people. So she was living with Miss Lyde, and I just told Miss Lyde to tell Miss Hartwell that her time was up leading chapel. Well, if I'd gone over there myself and told her, I don't... I hoped she wouldn't have been hurt, but she was hurt.

And hurted me. Well, you know I wouldn't have hurt that old soul for the world. But, you know, I just didn't have a particle of patience with her being hurt.

Well, I just thought that old fogey ought to have more sense than to present the gospel like that. I know. When I put my hand on Miss Culpepper's head to call upon Holy God to stretch forth His holy hand and touch Miss Culpepper's eye, blessed did that woman just opposite me.

I shall never cease to praise the Lord that He made me bring my hand back. I got my hand off of that woman's head in a hurry. Now, it would have been so much easier if the Lord had convicted me of that sin when I was pleading with Him in my room on my knees that morning.

Show me anything else that needs to be right before I pray for Miss Culpepper's eye. I could have gone over to Miss Hartwell's home and called her out over to the next house and I could have begged her to forgive me and the rest of the missionaries wouldn't have known I ever had an attitude of disgust toward her. Well, the Lord knew that and He had to put that pride out of me.

And right there before all those missionaries I had to say, Miss Hartwell, she's in the glory now. She'd love me to share this with you. I didn't have the right attitude with you about that school affair.

I begged you to forgive me. Well, then she begged me to forgive her. Now, friends, I really believe had I kept my hand on Miss Culpepper's head after I was convicted of that sin, Miss Culpepper would be a blind woman today.

Now, sin hinders prayer. And the promises of those who are of one accord, one accord, one accord, and I wouldn't have been in one spiritual accord with Miss Hartwell, nor she with me. Well, I put my hand on Miss Culpepper's head again after I'd prayed, after I'd confessed that sin, and we prayed.

And, friends, heaven just came down. It would just be impossible to ever share with anyone the thrill of our souls. Now, we didn't have to wait to see if she was going to have another attack.

Everyone knew in our hearts she would never have another attack. Well, now you just imagine how we acted. We didn't act very Southern Baptist, but I assure you we were quite biblical.

We just started walking around in that room, waving our hands to every one of us, praying his or her prayer out loud, just praising the Lord at the tops of our voices. We were literally on a mountaintop of ecstasy. Now, I don't know how long we went on.

We went on. The dinner was put on the table, but nobody ate. And, lo, in the midst of all of that glory, God, holy God, had heard the prayers of human beings such as we were and had performed a miracle and healed that eye.

Now, everyone knew it in our hearts. Well, right in the midst of all that joy, I had to be the door killer. It just occurred to me how inconsistent we had been, and I couldn't but speak of it.

I said, Prince, what kind of missionaries are we? Here we've gone through a week humbling ourselves, a special week after we've been confessing sin all this summer, to be sure that we are right enough with holy God to hear our prayer and heal the physical eye of one of our own number. And we've not gone to all this much heart searching and humiliation to be sure that we are right enough with God to hear our prayers and open the spiritual eyes of the blind Chinese to whom we've been sent. And when that came out of my lips, everyone came down on the floor on our knees, and we just began to weep before the Lord that we'd gone along so carelessly, just supposing that we were the people that the Lord could use.

Why, the Lord wanted rivers of living water to be flowing from us to other people, which is the truth of this book made quick and powerful by the Holy Spirit. If the Holy Spirit was grieved with us, what could he do? I don't know how long we were up there. I don't even remember whether we ate supper or not.

We might have just gone on. I know we just couldn't get over how we had failed the Lord by not being holy enough for him to hear our prayers. We couldn't get over it.

But, Prince, we got up from our knees when we did get up with a new message. What was that? The tragedy of sin in the life of a saved person. The awful tragedy of permitting anything that came from the devil to remain in our hearts where the Holy Spirit dwells.

And he will never leave us. Sin just pushes him back in a corner. And he's just grieved.

The tragedy of sin. And we went back. And, Prince, that great revival in North China came as a result of our being brought that low before the Lord and getting holy enough for him to hear our prayers.

I'll tell you some more about that the next hour. Now, I'd like to know now. I asked the pastor not to give an invitation this morning.

I said, I want to give the invitation. And if you have anyone who want to join the church and confess Christ, they'll keep until next Sunday. He agreed that they would.

Now, my invitation is you go home this afternoon after your lunch. If you come back the next hour, you'll have to wait until after then. You just get a good big sheet of paper and put numbers down the left-hand side, one, two, three, four to the bottom.

Turn over your sheet and continue your numbers. You get along with the Lord. It's possible.

Don't let anybody see this paper. This is going to be your secret between you and the Lord. I don't want to see it.

Don't you let your wife see it or anybody. And the Lord already knows it. And you'll be the only one to see it.

And you list on those sheets of paper everything in your heart and life that is unholy, everything you can think of. And just keep adding your numbers as you need them. Don't let anybody see it now.

Don't destroy it. That's your first lesson. I'm going to have homework these days.

And those of you who want to get holy enough to pray and know you're holy enough to give a person a testimony and expect the Holy Spirit to use it, and you want rivers of living water to begin to flow from you to other people, which is His Word made quick and powerful by the Holy Spirit, and you stand by me and you do this. And I'm going to expect you to do it if you're a Christian. I'm going to expect Christians to follow this.

Now I use this everywhere I go, and I'm here to share with you the very best I know. And this is the very best I know. It's what I've tried and proven for years.

Everybody that goes through with me and my homework is blessed. And I want you to be blessed, and I know you want to be blessed. And all God's people said, stand for a word of prayer.

Father, your Word is indeed sharper than a two-edged sword, piercing us under our hearts, showing us the holiness of you and the sinfulness of man. I thank you, Lord, for this dear saint that you've sent our way. I pray that in these days ahead we may learn, we may apply, most of all, Father, that we may come to the place of getting absolutely right with you, that we may so live our lives that Christ lives through us.

Now dismiss us, Lord, from this place into our Bible study hour. Then you can bring us back at the 11 o'clock hour as we lean upon you, trust you, and praise you. In Jesus' name, amen.

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