

# Dealing With Unbelief

by Bill McLeod

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of believing God's promises and overcoming unbelief in order to experience salvation and have a relationship with God.*

**Duration:** 1:00:32

**Scripture:** Hebrews 12:1

**Topics:** "Unbelief"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher shares about a powerful meeting where God's presence was evident and people were moved to invite their friends and family to come and experience it. The preacher recalls a champion of the seminary who ran down the church aisle to pray for Chinese people seeking prayer. The sermon emphasizes the importance of having faith and not allowing unbelief to hinder one's relationship with God. The preacher also shares personal anecdotes about trusting God in difficult situations and encourages listeners to put on the armor of faith to overcome the fiery darts of the devil.

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## Transcript

My text will be Hebrews 3, 12 and 13, two verses. It's a text addressed to Christians. It says, Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief.

But exhort one another daily while it's called a day, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief. You know, when people talk about the problem of unbelief, they don't think it's a sin.

They think it's a problem, but it's not a sin. They'll say things like, Well, I pray all the time for moral faith and nothing seems to happen. I don't want to have all the unbelief I've got, but, you know, I'm doing my best and I'm reading the Bible, and I still have this unbelief problem.

But they don't think it's a sin. The Bible calls it an evil heart of unbelief. It's evil to not believe God.

And you have to look at it that way or you'll never get out of it. You have to look at it from God's viewpoint. He's telling us it's evil, it's wicked.

Spurgeon said that unbelief was the bottom line of all sin. All other sins he thought came from that one sin of unbelief. 1 John 5, there's a verse that says, He that believes not God has made him a liar.

It's a sin that calls God a liar. Remember that. Unbelief.

It should have no part in a Christian's life, but unfortunately in our churches there are probably thousands of people that they sit there as if they're in an icebox or something. You don't think anything's going to happen, and you're never disappointed, you know. So, take heed.

It sends men to hell. He that believes not shall be damned. He that believes not the sun shall he not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.

The fearful and the unbelieving will have their part in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, it says over in Revelation. It sends people to hell, unbelief to all. The least gone are liars.

1 John 5, turns that record. There are 7,487 promises in the Bible. I've got them in a book, indexed and everything else.

That's right, almost 8,000 promises. And I said to myself, how can any Christian worry? What are you worrying about? Don't you know there's a promise in the Bible to make for you? And then on top of that, there are 413 references to the phrase, thus saith the Lord. And there's almost, we're quite close to 4,000 statements that the Lord said, or God said, almost 4,000 times in the Bible.

It's God speaking. And there's no room for unbelief. You know, when Abraham is told, he's 100 years old and his wife is not far behind, and he's told they're going to have a child of their own, how did he handle it? Well, Romans chapter 4 tells us this.

He didn't stagnate the promise of God for unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God, being fully persuaded that what he had promised, he was able also to perform. And it says about his wife Sarah, that she conceived Ciri when she was past age, because she judged him faithful to that promise. The promises don't do anything if you don't believe them.

They only help when you believe them and apply them. It says over in Hebrews as well, that the word preached did not profit some people because it was not mixed with faith, and those that heard it. So the promises don't do anything if you don't believe them.

It makes God a liar. It makes the promise of God empty. It prevents God from working.

In Psalm 78, there's a verse that says, they turned back, they turned back, and they limited God. You know, God is not limited to the faith of his people, but God has during this gospel age, limited not exclusively, but almost so I think, he's limited his activity to the prayers of his people. They limited God.

You limit God by what God can do in your life, in your family, in your church, by your wicked unbelief. It's going on all the time. It's very evil, I say, because it makes God a liar.

What it says about Jesus in Nazareth, his hometown, that it did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief. They were saying, what is Jesus? We know all about him. His dad was a carpenter, and he's a carpenter.

We know all about his family. Who does he think he is? So unbelief took over, and he couldn't do any mighty works there. He did in Capernaum and other places, but not in Nazareth where he had been raised.

And so the Bible makes it very clear that even the Lord Jesus Christ was limited by unbelief. Now in Luke chapter 9, a wonderful thing happens, a strange thing in some ways. Jesus gave the twelve apostles power over all demons.

In the same chapter, and this was quoted in Matthew, Mark, and Luke. In the same chapter, they tried to cast a demon out of a demon-possessed boy, and they couldn't do it. And the Pharisees were leading them.

Christ wasn't around. He was up in the mountains with Peter, James, and John. So they were doing their best, and nothing was happening.

It was so embarrassing. Then Jesus came on the scene, and He took care of the problem. And afterwards, they said to Jesus, Why couldn't we? And He said, Because of your unbelief.

Then He said, This kind, that is, this kind of demon, only goes out through fasting and prayer. But something else happened in the story that's very significant. The father of the child saw Jesus, and said to Him, I brought my son to your disciples, and they couldn't do it.

If you can do anything, have mercy on us and help us. And He said, If you can believe. What He was saying was, It's not up to me.

I've got the power. I have the love and compassion. I want to do it.

I can do it. It's not up to me. Don't throw out this stuff at me.

If you can believe, all things are possible to him that believes. And the father of the child cried out with tears, Lord, I believe. Help my unbelief, that is, build my unbelief.

Faith and unbelief were there. Both of them were there. But faith was in the ascendancy, and the child was healed.

It's a beautiful story. So if you can do anything, that's not the way to pray. You find a promise, and stand on the promise, and pay the promise back to God, and believe that God is listening.

Let me give you an example. It was in St. Louis, and I preached on faith. And this lady met with God that night.

And a few days later, she went to see me. They both went for coffee. She and her husband, and we had quite a talk there.

And she gave me their problem. And she said, you know, I used to have migraine headaches once every six months. I still get them every month, and I get them every week, and sometimes I get them three or four days in a week, she said.

These terrible migraine headaches. And then she says, my husband, he can't eat anything but soup and milk. He's got such a bad stomach.

And she said, and I've got a girl, a daughter. She's about twelve, and she's never spoken a word outside the house. We've had it for counselors.

And they say there's some blockage there. We don't know what it is. She just doesn't talk outside the house.

And so she said, do you think I can believe God for this problem? I said, absolutely. So she went and shared it with her pastor, and he talked her out of it. He said, lady, you know, I believe in the same thing, but you know, when I pray these prayers and it doesn't work, and then you're going to be worse off than you were before.

And he talked her out of it. Well, I left. I was back in Sicily two years later, and then they invited me to coffee again.

And she said, what happened? They decided just, let's believe God, you know. She pointed to her husband. She said, you know what? He can eat cactus and bad boy enough.

And she said, I've only had one migraine headache since the night we prayed and committed to God, and that came because I started guilt about God. I'm not saying that migraine headaches are caused by unbelief, but that's what she said about herself. And she said, my daughter, you know what happened the next day after we prayed the prayer of faith? She went to school.

She was going to school, and she got up in the class, all in her house, and she repeated the Psalm 23 to the whole class. Been talking longer than ever since. And God died for those things, even today.

What are you saying in your heart? Are you praising the Lord, or just, you've got a big question out there? Watch it. Our text is speaking to Christians, remember. We will take you, brother, lest you be, in any of you, an evil heart, of unbelief.

Very important to know that. Well, it brings evil in men. There's many cases in the Bible.

We won't go into that in detail. But many people in the Bible have failed. Israel wandered for 40 years in the wilderness.

A distance from Mount Herb to Kadesh Barnea was 11 miles, and it took them 40 years to make it. Why? Unbelief. Simple, straight unbelief.

They were looking at the giants in the land, instead of looking at the giant gods. That was the problem. And so they were forced to wander then for 40 years, and went through all that horrible, howling wilderness it's called, scorpions and all the rest of it, just because of their wicked unbelief.

It's in the Bible, dear people, to warn you and me. We run into a lot of problems, too, as Christians, if we allow unbelief to take over in our heart. So we have to watch it.

Take heed, brother, lest you be, in any of you, an evil heart. Remember, it's evil. God hates it.

It's a sin. You've got to call it that. It's not believing God.

It's standing in the promises. Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. Faith works by love.

You know what Spurgeon said about that? He said, Faith is the soul at rest in the love of God. Think it through. I want to talk about faith for a little bit.

We all know we're saved by faith, right? But it surprised me over the years, people I've counseled with, one lady said to me, I have asked Jesus into my heart at least 50 times, and he never came in. So I said to her, and who's lying? You or Jesus? And she didn't like that approach. Well, I'm not.

Or Jesus is? What am I getting at, she said. Well, I said, when you ask Jesus to come into your heart, will you thank him for being there? I can't do that. He wasn't there.

The feeling was there. I said, it's got nothing to do with feeling. You're supposed to believe.

And she'd never seen this before. And so I said, now let's do it again. Ask Jesus Christ to come into your heart, and I'll thank him.

Never mind how you feel, thank him for being there. And she did. And then she said, oh, oh, that's different.

And she had assurance. But how often we go across people like this. Well, one case in Winnipeg, two meetings in 1972, that was revival time.

And this gal came to my wife, and she said, I'd love to be a Christian. I'd love to have faith, but I have no faith at all, and I don't know how to manufacture it. I don't know what to do.

Well, I said, would you mind if my wife and I prayed that God would give you faith? The Bible says faith is a gift from God, you know. And she said, can I do that? And I said, sure. So then through this now, my wife began to pray, and before she was through praying, the girls slapped their hands and cried, I've got it! I've got it! God just gave us faith.

I can't explain that, theologically. But it's God, you know. Faith is a gift from God.

And he did that for her. And I don't doubt it, but it's right. So we're saved by faith.

It's not how you feel. You know, sometimes people say, you know, to be perfectly frank and honest, God's a thousand miles away. I said, what God are you talking about? He fills the heavens and the earth, the one and the Bible.

You're talking about some other God, aren't you? Because He fills the heavens and the earth. No matter where you go, God's there. If you could fly at the speed of light for a million years and get out from some distant planet, He'd be there, you know.

You can't go anywhere where God isn't. He is never, ever a foot away from you. In Him we live and move and have our existence.

In God, when you wake up to that, it has nothing to do with how you feel. It has to do with what He's told us and taught us in the Bible. He is everywhere, always, night and day.

And sometimes people say, well, I think He's given up on me. What God are you talking about? The God of the Bible, He said, I will never leave you, nor forsake you. So that when they boldly say, the Lord is my helper and I will not fear, well, man shall be unto me.

What God are you talking about that forsook me, you think, you know. You see, down the line, people have all kinds of stupid notions, sinful notions about God. We need to get lined up, connected with the

Word of God, what He's told us about Himself.

He's a great God. Listen, the Bible says in Isaiah that He has counted all the stars. Do you know what they're telling us now, this Hubble telescope thing? They've been saying up until recently that there are 50 billion constellations, spiral nebula, like the Milky Way.

And they just recently discovered, no, no, the figure's wrong. There are 100 billion like that. And that Milky Way constellation on which we're apart is so vast that if you travel at the speed of light, 186 miles a second, isn't that about it? Some millions of miles an hour, it will take you 100,000 years to cross the Milky Way.

This is the God we're dealing with. How do you think that God feels when you doubt Him and you doubt His promises and you doubt His Word and you're making Him a liar? How the Word of God, how God must grieve that we look so strangely at His promises and His Word. So we're saved not by feeling, we're saved by faith.

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, and thy house, don't forget the little postscript there, and thy house. Believe God, but don't let the devil have any of your kids. If he's got some of your kids, don't give up on them.

Trust God to do it. Believe God for it. God will do that for you.

You have to believe God. I had a daughter that strayed. She walked out of our life.

We came home one day, she was gone. And she used my van to move all her stuff. We didn't know where she was.

We found out. We contacted her. We asked her to come home for a talk.

She came home. She defenselessly, she walked to the door. I mean, just... And so we talked, said, Honey, we want you to know that we love you.

We're sorry you're gone, but if you find a better place, that's fine by us. So we just loved her, and we prayed for her, and we contacted her, and so on, you know. And the years rolled by, and we didn't see anything happening.

When I was in Vancouver with my wife, she had lived in New York, and Montreal, and Toronto. Now she's in Vancouver. No, she's back in Toronto now, but she was in Vancouver then.

And we visited her. And she was glad to see us. We established a pretty good relationship, but she wasn't with God.

And walking from where she lived, one day, there was a big Baptist church, you know. So I said to my daughter, Hey, honey, you ever gone to that Baptist church? Oh, and she said, It's dead. I said, If you've never gone there, how do you know it's dead? She said, Dad, I've walked by there on Sunday.

There isn't a single car parked at the curb in front of that church. She didn't know there was a big parking lot in behind. There's hundreds of cars there, you know.

So I went there Sunday morning to check it out. Wow. There were hundreds of people parked in there.

There was a ballet school, a dance school, a singing school, a music school. The culture was, wow, it was fiery and great. So I told her, Honey, I said, you better check it out.

There's a fire burning over there. And you know what happened? Two weeks later, she checked it out. And she finally said, Dad, he got through to me.

He got through to me. And there's more to this story than that. She's in training now.

We're getting emails from her all the time. And the last email she was saying how she was praying about a certain thing. I don't think she's connected with the church at this moment.

She had something happen in Vancouver. A very personal friend was knifed. And she lost something at that point.

And so we're still praying for her and trusting God for her. But she loves the Lord. And she loves us.

And I said, don't give up on your kids. No matter what Satan's done, don't give up on them. And thy house.

And thy house. Okay, so we're saved by faith. And we're kept by faith.

You can't keep yourself. The Bible says we're kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. Faith is part of just being God.

Don't worry about it. The devil tempts people. Remember a lady one time, she said to me, I won't feel safe until the gates of heaven clang shut behind me.

I said, that's a miserable order there. There's something, that isn't the gospel, you know. It doesn't say, you don't feel safe until you get there, you know.

And so you tremble and shake up. But you know, about 35 years later, she and her husband came to a better understanding and they wrote me a letter and said, well now I know what you're talking about. We're saved by faith.

We're in the hands of God forever. That was good to hear. We're kept by faith.

You can't save yourself. You can't keep yourself out of it. The Bible says, we stand by faith.

It says, we walk by faith. 2 Corinthians 5. You know, that's one of the best texts in the whole Bible. We walk by faith.

It has nothing to do with how you feel. It has to do with what God said and the guidance you're getting from God. We walk by faith.

Now George Mueller, Bishop of England, God raised him up, I am positive, to bring a blessing to the church forever. He had 2,000 orphans, a staff of around 300. He had no organization backing him.

He had no particular churches backing him. He got no help from the government whatever back in those days. He never once told anybody what the need was.

And he had to say, if God knows what the need is, who else needs to know? Hey, think it through. If God knows, who else needs to know? Nobody else needs to know. So he never, he never, no matter what the

need, and he had strange things happen.

One time they had nothing for breakfast. And so, they prayed about this, had all the kids at the table and they prayed for breakfast. And a guy was going by with a milk wagon and something happened to one of the horses and he couldn't go any further so he came in and asked if they could use some milk.

So they had milk enough for breakfast and then a guy came along with a bread wagon and something happened to the bread wagon and he brought all his bread and he didn't want it to go stale. I mean, things like this were happening all through his life. He had 85,000 recorded answers to prayer.

And Charles Spurgeon used to try and spend at least one day a year with George Mueller who said, he's got such a simple, childlike faith it's so refreshing to be with him. He just believed God, you know. No matter what.

He was coming to speak in Montreal, Canada one time and he was sitting at the con in the golf there in the St. Lawrence River in a big fog. The captain was a Christian and so Mueller said, I have an appointment Sunday afternoon at 2 o'clock in a certain church in Montreal and it doesn't look like we're going to make it. He said, what's with this fog thing? And the captain said, well, it could last for 3 or 4 days.

No, it can't. Mueller said, I have never been late for an appointment in all my life and I'm not starting now. And the captain laughed and he said, you don't know this fog business.

And Mueller said, you don't know this God business. So he said, let's pray. So Mueller prayed and I read the prayer short prayer, just something like this.

Dear God, I'm sure it would please you to lift the fog. Thank you for doing it. Amen.

So the captain began to pray and he stopped and he said, you don't need to pray. The fog's already gone. And he said, you don't know what's going to happen.

So the captain rushes to the door and said, the fog is gone, you know. And this was happening all through his life, you know. So we read these stories.

There's a book on his life that's called Delighted in God. It's a recent book and it's powerful. You ought to get it and read it.

When I was first converted, the only book I had was a book on the life of George Mueller, just legally. It was a tremendous blessing to me. I saw this faith thing right away at the beginning.

I didn't learn it 10 or 15 or 20 years down the road. It was a tremendous help and challenge to me. So we stand by faith, we're kept, we're saved by faith, we stand by faith, we walk by faith.

It doesn't matter how you feel. What does God say? Stand with the promise. You know, when you're reading the Bible, every time you come across the promise, put a big P in the margin.

You'll finally have 7,487. If you read it right, that's what Dr. Herbert Locklear found when he wrote and wrote a book on it. Promises, exceeding, great, and precious 7,487.

And they are there. You'll never, listen, you'll never run into a problem ever in your life anymore, at any time, that isn't covered somewhere in the Bible. That's where you need to get to know it well.

There's something there for you always, any time. Then it goes on to say, the Bible speaks about your work of faith. Your work of faith.

Your work in faith, for God. You're doing what you're doing, trusting God. He's going to bless what you're doing.

You're giving your trust, your blessing, you're believing God. He's going to bless that. You're witnessing the people, you're preparing sermons, whatever you're doing, you're believing, it's the work of faith.

And it's a fight. A fight's a good fight of faith, it says. It's a fight.

The devil will be there trying to knock you down. Remember it says, above all, taking the shield of faith, with which we shall be able to quench, put out all the fiery darts of the wicked. You can't stop the devil from throwing these darts at you, but you can put them all out through faith.

So you need it. Take the shield of faith. Remember, above all, with all the power you have, that's the most important.

Above all, taking the shield of faith, with which we shall be able to quench, to put out. You know, it's a fire. Satan throws fiery, fiery darts.

And you've got to take care of them. The devil climbs on. I remember one time when I was preaching way back years ago, in the Shahnameh mission of logging camps.

And I walked a bunch of 25, maybe 30 miles a day with a pack on my back of Bibles and New Testaments and tracts and stuff, you know. You get to a camp, and if there's an empty font, you can share one of two things. Either it's cold, or it's lousy.

And so, my wife and I made that a matter of preaching. I never brought a louse home in all this time. I was four and a half years in those camps and never brought a louse home once, you know.

We prayed about that too. And I remember being in one camp, and in the morning, the guys around me said, how did you sleep last night? Great, I said. And then they told me this bunk was lousy.

And I didn't pick any lights up, you know. Just a little thing, a big dog, you know. He could do anything.

And sometimes, I remember one time, I was riding 40 below, and I had two roads, a go-down road and a go-back road. And you had to get on the right road because if you got on the wrong road, you'd meet traffic coming your way and there was no way to turn out. And doing that more than 25 miles an hour, but remember, it's 40 below, so you know how cold it is there.

I'm lying on top of this green frozen lumber, and there's a big couple of chains across this lumber holding it down. The only thing I had to hold on to keep from sliding up was a chain. But if the load slipped and your hand was under the chain, you'd lose your fingers.

So I'm riding and the devil got on my back and he said, you stupid fool, you could be, I had to walk out at twelve miles in because there was a fight on the camp. The guards said there's a big island so we have no time for me. So I had to walk out, 12 miles.

So I'm walking along, it's very cold. You know when it's very cold in the bush, the trees will snap, you'll hear them snap, and they're cold at night time. I walked along, the trees were snapping occasionally, and all of a sudden a bunch of wolves hollered behind me.

You know, not more than maybe 50 yards behind. My hair stood straight up my head, you know. I must have jumped about 12 feet, I had one jump.

And then my mind began to play tricks on me, because the trees were coming from this side, or they were coming from this side. I had nothing to defend myself. You see, the book says that they won't attack you as long as you stand.

But I wasn't positive until I read the book. And so, you know, and this went on until I got, I got smartened up. And I stopped and said, hey, I thought that I said, Lord, you said the wild beasts of the forest are mine.

These clunkers, they're yours. You take care of them. I had no more problems.

And I started singing. And they kept hollering, and after a while they quit and they were gone. So no matter what the problem is, you won't run into that type of a problem, I'm sure, but problems like that, trust God.

He allows trials to come to test our faith. We get stronger through trials and we're not weaker. So you learn to trust God and you can trust God for more.

Mueller said, and I'll put it in Canadian dollars, he said there was a time when I had difficulty trusting God for \$5. The time came when I could trust God for \$50,000 with no problem at all. He got to know God.

And he said faith is like a muscle. The more you use it, the stronger it gets, the less you use it, the weaker it becomes. He's absolutely right.

So don't think you can get through life without trials. You can try, but you spend a lot of time wasting time. Welcome anyhow.

We must have much tribulation and hardship in God. The Bible says that. Keep your mind up to it.

Okay, so we stand by faith, we walk by faith, we run by faith. He who kept the cross says, seeing we also accomplished the works of our Lord with so great a heart of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight. And the sin which thou so eagerly beset us, let us run with patience the race that set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.

He started it, he'll carry it on, he'll finish it. He'll be with you all your days. You're running a race by faith.

Let us lay aside every weight. And the sin which thou so eagerly beset us, let us keep our faith, is the sin of unbelief. That's what the book of Hebrews is all about.

Unbelief in faith. Chapter 11, a great chapter on faith. Believing God.

And a great list of heroes of the faith. And by the way, you might be reminded perhaps that Samson is listed among the heroes of faith. Ever think about that? Well, he was kind of a wicked man, wasn't he? He judged Israel for 20 years, and God raised him up to deal with the Philistines, and did a pretty good job on that, you know.

But there's two things about Samson that most people don't know. One is he was listed as a man of faith in Hebrews 11. What did he do by faith? He had this mighty power.

He never had it all the time, he only had it when he believed God in him. He heard about the Spirit coming on him. Three thousand men of Judah came to him and asked his permission to tie him up so he could be delivered to the Philistines, because they were afraid of Philistines.

So he allowed them to do that. Now normally he couldn't have done anything about the rogues. When the Philistines shouted, something happened, and Samson's spirit of God came on him, I am positive in answer to his faith.

And the rogues melted off his arms and he fell into the jawbone of an ass, wasn't it? Yeah. And threw a thousand men. He had to believe God to these things.

The spirit of God was not always on him. Why would it say the spirit came on him, if the spirit was always on him? Faith. He had humility.

He was an extremely humble person. He killed a lion with his bare hands. He never even told his father and his mother.

You know, Spurgeon's comment on that was this. Samson killed a lion with his bare hands. And never even told his father and his mother.

If you're not a Christian, you should kill a mouse, you'd have to publish it in the Gospel Gazette. And you know when he came back the second time on the same path, he turned aside to look across the line, and bees had made a nest in it, and he was hunting, he got this honey, waited down the path for his mom and dad to catch up, and gave him the honey, he never told them they died. Why? He didn't want them to find out what had happened.

He was an extremely humble person. He fell in some areas. And at the end, he committed suicide.

Let me die with Philistine. Let me tell you something. When he died, he killed more than he did while he lived.

Philistine, enemies of God. All the top brass were there. Everybody was there.

Two thousand in the roof, I don't know how many down below. And it was like he was on a cross because he was pushing the pillars up. It's a picture of Christ.

He did more by dying than he ever did by living, you know. And he will do the same so a lot. He'll do more by dying to self, and then living to the glory of God.

And he can do by just living in the flesh, in a carnal way. There's so much carnality in churches today that sometimes you can't be sure whether they're church or what they are. I like this guy Simba.

Some of you have read some of his books, you know, and what's happening in New York. And friends of mine went to check him out. So they went to New York to check out his prayer meeting, and they said it's all true.

They got there at five o'clock. They open at five o'clock. The prayer meeting isn't until seven.

By the time seven o'clock comes, there are hundreds and hundreds of people in there. Some of them praying for an hour and a half already in there. And then finally at seven o'clock, and the place is packed, maybe 1,600 people are there.

And it may go on for two hours or maybe for three hours. And right now his church seats 1,600. Right now he has to have three services every Sunday.

And the place is packed to the door, three in front. I don't know how he does it. I sure pray when I would think of him for him.

We have a book, I think, or two of his on the table. But he speaks, he challenged a bunch of preachers in the states, and he gave him a hard time about prayer. He said, you tell me you can only get 60 people at your prayer meeting? What kind of a church do you have? And he said, he wasn't bragging, he's not that kind of a person.

How come I can get 1,600 and you can only get 60? You've got a bigger church, you've got more members than I've got? What's wrong? What kind of a church do you have? Well, people don't believe in prayer meetings anymore. Oh, really? Come on. It must be real.

They don't believe in prayer meetings? Are they Christians, really? What are they? They don't believe in prayer meetings. You know, a dog's thing, they say, is to bark and eat. And a Christian's thing... Prayer is called the breathing of the soul.

That's taken from Lamentations 3.56. It goes like this. Do not hide your ears at my breathing, at my cry. It's the breathing of the soul.

If you don't breathe physically, you'll die. You don't have to think about it, because when you're sleeping, you're breathing, right? And prayer should be like that. We're praying without ceasing.

We find ourselves talking to God all the time. Through the days, we're awake. We wake in the middle of the night and start praying.

That's just normal Christianity. Faith. We have access to God by faith itself.

We receive the righteousness of God by faith, Philippians chapter 3. We receive the Holy Spirit by faith in Galatians chapter 3. We work by faith. We all have intimated that. You know, there are 24 different things that happen to us Christians through faith.

It's incredible. You study it up sometime. It's a great study.

We have to learn how to believe God and stop looking at the problem and allowing the devil to talk us out of the blessing of God. Paul of God and I were down in Texas one time. We were in a large Baptist church.

And a preacher came one time, the head pastor, and he said, uh, ever prayed for the sick? I said, yes. I don't have the gift of healing on me, but I pray for the sick. Ever seen anybody healed? Yes, I said, we have.

He said, I've got a tough one for you. And here was a young man, 28 years of age, dying of cancer. His wife was a nurse.

She had him at home on a striker frame. He couldn't stand the weight of a blanket. We went to see him, and she told us, now, he can't, he can just whisper, he can hardly talk.

He just had a pair of shorts on, and his purple-blue lump sticking out all over his body. I mean, if I'd have looked at his body, I would have never prayed. But we had prayed about it, Howard, and we felt God wanted us to go.

So we went and we prayed. On Saturday, and nothing happened. We finished on Sunday the crusade, we flew home on Monday, and later on, I got a letter from the head pastor, Dr. Bass, and he said, the doctor said there isn't a cancer cell left in his body.

So God does things like that. We met again when I was in trans school many years ago, 40 years back, and a gal from my church, she was quite ill, and her daughter asked if I'd come and pray for her mom, and I went in. Her mother was dying of cancer, too, and they'd amputated one leg, and the cancer was still traveling, and they had a real problem.

So I didn't really feel like praying, and I, you know what, it's not freeing, forget your feelings, so I prayed. I spoke to her, she didn't give any response, and so she was moaning from the pain, and I just prayed that Jesus Christ would heal her. And I finished my prayer and walked back to the office.

I had waited three minutes, she was sitting up in bed hollering for the nurses. She had been instantly healed. She told me after, she said, when you spoke to me, I heard every word you said.

But she said, I couldn't respond, the pain, I thought it was dying. And she said, when you started praying, Jesus Christ walked into the room, came right over and put his hand on my body, and I thought he was taking me on to heaven. And she said, he touched me, and I was healed.

I don't have the gift of healing, I just believe God, you know. You have to pray about these things. The Bible says, lay hands suddenly on no man.

I don't go around laying hands on horses and camels and stuff, you know. I don't do that. You know, people pray over their car.

I've done that too, and seen it stop when it couldn't stop, you know, that kind of thing. I mean, faith covers everything, but you don't want to be foolish in this either. So lay hands suddenly on no man.

Ask God for guidance. He'll guide you, he'll want you to pray for this person, he'll show you that. And anyway, brethren, take heed lest there be in any of you an evil heart.

Where are you at now? When you go to church, some of you are pastors, when you go to preach, do you believe God's going to bless what you're saying? Now people, when you go to church, do you believe something's going to happen? God's going to speak? Do you really believe that? Well, if you do, just sit there, hope he doesn't preach beyond twelve o'clock. That goes on all the time, right? When revival comes, watch it. I remember we took a team from Saskatoon to Toronto, and went to a seminar in Toronto.

I had a team of five with me. I had them share, and I spoke, maybe fifteen minutes. And we sat down and waited for something to happen.

If God isn't in town, you're going to be disappointed. We were up waiting in line for fourteen hours. God began to work.

People began getting to a telephone, calling their friends and their family to come on down. God was there, and we had a marvelous time there. A chaplain at a seminary, he came running down the little church in front of these Chinese people, if you want to be prayed for, you come and kneel here, and he did that.

It went on and on and on. This chaplain came. I'll never forget when he prayed.

His prayer was something like this. He said, Dear God, all these rules I've sought and taught the academic, and today I want the spiritual. And God filled him with the spirit.

The following day, he was walking across the campus, he told me this several days later, he was walking across the campus, he had to pass a male student from the seminary, and all he said to the student was good morning. The student said, I heard his testimony, I saw Jesus in the chaplain's face, and I ran back to my room and I prayed for two hours, and I had a meeting with God. In times of revival, things like this become quite common.

But we have to remember, it's Jesus Christ who is at work. Don't get fanatical about it, and don't think it has to happen. Don't try and manipulate a meeting and make it happen when God isn't doing anything.

It comes like that. When you have a meeting, nothing happens. It doesn't mean nothing happened, it means you can't see what happened.

Like Job said, God works in the right hand, I can't say God works in the left hand, but he said this, but he knows the way that I do. So that's enough to know God knows what I'm doing, I maybe don't know. She had one little window that she hated, she couldn't see the sun in daytime and all.

She hated the place she lived, she hated everything, she hated the church she went to, and she was torn out of her soul, but you know what, she got victory. Because she bowed before God, and she was praying, just talking about this. So watch it.

Brethren, unbelieve. How did you come to this meeting to me? Did you come believing that God would speak to you? I hope you didn't come believing that Ben McCarthy was going to say something helpful. That might not happen you know.

But if you pray for God to say something, he will say something, no matter how stupid the preacher is. Do you know how Spurgeon got saved? He was, I think he was 16, he was at 15 years of age, he was walking to church on a Sunday morning, but a buzzard devoured him, and he saw he wasn't going to make it to the church, so he stopped in the middle of a Methodist chapel, so one of the elders took over, he didn't know anything, so instead of performing hollering, look to Jesus! Look to Jesus! Look to Jesus! And Spurgeon said, young man, you sure look miserable, look to Jesus! And Spurgeon said, I could have looked my eyes away, he saw the whole thing. He saw the whole thing.

He got saved right from the start. He never could remember the name of the church, and none of the biographers apparently know exactly where it was situated, but who cares about that? You think a man with the kind of intellect he had, you know, he could read 3 or 4 books, 400 pages each in an hour, I didn't quote whole pages, page 64, 125, they tested him and he was never wrong. He had a marvelous intellect.

You think you have to get somebody with a book, that's not what's needed. I'll give you another example like that, it was in Minneapolis, and we were at a preacher's conference years ago, and it happened this way, this pastor led those two preachers, they both had big churches in Minneapolis, and one always gave altar calls, the other never gave altar calls, and he was telling us why they were doing it, they were doing it. And the guy that gave altar calls said, I do it because it gets results, and the other guy said, I don't do it because I don't need it, I get results without altar calls.

And we were good friends, you know, we had a good time there. And the guy who never gave altar calls, he told us a story, and I never forgot, it helped me a lot. A banker, a very wealthy banker began attending his church.

So he told his guys, don't bug this guy, he's very, you know, very self-conscious, watch it, don't say anything, just greet him, shake his hand, don't say anything about God to him, he's coming. So he kept, finally the preacher prepared a sermon just for the banker. He said, I preached that sermon, I could see the guy moving forward on his chair, I was really getting through to him, and then the devil moved in, he thought.

A kid in his congregation, ten years of age, totally without any brain, went over to this wealthy banker and said something to him, and the guy shook his head. He was totally angry and strung out of the meeting room. And he said, God, aren't you in control? Why did you let that happen? And one of these guys got a hard time asking him, why did you let that happen? So that night, ten in the morning, his doorbell rang, and most of the day, the banker said, Pastor, I got to get saved, I got to get saved.

So he went into Christ, and he said, what part of my sermon was it that reached you? Your sermon? I don't remember anything you said. What does that count? Well, what did he say? He said, do you want to go to heaven? I said, no, he said, then go to hell. That was it.

So, that's why we have to believe God, not the preacher. We're weak and we don't know much, we do our best, but you've got to ask God to speak, and God can use anybody. And we have to be prepared for that.

Do pray for your pastor every day, I hope you do. Hold him up before God, ask God to bless him. You know, Robert Chapman became a world-famous evangelist.

You know how he started out? He passed the Lord's Presbyterian Church, and one day, the man had a woman who said, you know, Pastor, you can't preach whether hell or heaven. That's what they told him. That's what they said they were going to pray for him.

It became such a great preacher, they lost him, and he became a world-famous evangelist. They prayed him into that. Look into that for your preacher, you don't want to lose your preacher.

It's not the way to preach, you're trying to lose your preacher. But anyway, you know what I'm saying, I hope. Okay, so, brethren, take heed.

Christ said, I have not found so great faith, nor not in the whole of Israel. He was a Gentile, exercising faith. He was right from doing that.

That's why Christ said, the kingdom of God is going to be taken from you and given to a people that have been taught the fruits of that. But they heard it, they said, God forbid it happened anyway. But it's because of their anger.

They're wandering still, people say they're back in Israel, 12 million still scattered around the world, 7 million in the United States of America, they're still wandering because there's only 8% of them today that are orthodox of belief. And they're standing rebuke, I mean, they're telling us what unbelief does. And we need to listen to that, and get on the victory wagon.

The Bible says we are more than conquerors to Him who loved us. We're more than conquerors. Thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Make up your mind through the glory of God and by the grace of God that you're going to become a Spirit-filled, humble Christian that will believe God until the day you die. You can be that, you can do that, God will work with you in that if you're asking to help you be that kind of person. But you've got to make time for God.

You can't give God five minutes a day. You know what I did after I got to Saskatoon in 1962? We had a lot of people, 175 people, maybe 200 depending on Sunday morning. And one Sunday morning I gave them some little things to fill in.

Questions like, how much time a day do you spend in prayer? How much time a day do you spend in Bible study? Have you ever wanted to sell to Christ? Do you try and win people to Christ? Do you retire your income? Questions like this, I could hardly wait to get those things back. When I got them back, I wish I'd never done it. I mean, I just sat there and cried.

I said, what are they doing? Many of them are Bible school graduates, or maybe five minutes a day Bible study. One guy put down 30 minutes in his conscience, smelled them, so he shook it up and put a big goose in it. Bible study or prayer.

Then I saw the need for revival. But nice evangelical people, as I said before, they believed in evangelism and didn't do it. They believed in missions and never supported it.

And that's the way it's like in our churches today. We believe in a half-hearted sort of way. We don't believe with all our heart that God's going to do it.

Now, Dr. Virgil Brock, he was the song reader, 85 years of age, when God broke the crusade in 1971. His voice was cracked. He was off key sometimes.

Who cared? He was so full of God. And I said to him one day, Dr. Brock, there's an older man than you, 96 years of age, living across the lane from our church. Would you go with me and try and win him? Sure, let's go, he said.

So we went, and I'll never forget it. This guy sat here, and Brock sat here, and I sat there listening, and Dr. Brock explained the gospel. Then he got up and stood in front of this man and put his hands up and said, Now, sir, you have heard the message of Jesus Christ.

You know now what the gospel is. Will you stand to your feet and take my hand and say by that, I am receiving Christ as my Savior? The man looked at him and said, Sure, I will do that. And got to his feet and took his hand.

That was Virgil Brock, you know. He loved the Lord with all his heart. And I might share one thing that happened in his life.

He was a man of faith. His wife had died. He was on the circuit.

He decided he would stay single the rest of his life, unless God indicated otherwise. He was in a church somewhere, singing and all this kind of thing. He went back to his hotel that night, and God said, Virgil, I want you to marry the priest.

The man said, You aren't going to believe that. And he was telling us about it. Because that's exactly what happened.

He said, I didn't know her name. She must have been single. God wouldn't say this.

But he said, You know, I didn't even like the looks. He said, I struggled all night. My pillow was wet with tears.

But when the sun came up in the morning, I said, God, if that's what you want, that's OK by me. You know what he did? He phoned the pastor to get her phone number. And he phoned her about 8 o'clock in the morning or whatever.

And he said, Virgil Brock, I didn't come to see you. She said, Well, 10 minutes, I'll be over in 10 minutes, he said. He said he heard her gasp on the phone.

So when he got there, she had her hair in curls and was wearing a housecoat, you know. And so she said, Well, she said, Did you want to come in? What's on your mind? He said, Well, the Lord told me to get in there to talk about the baby. So she thought he was a nut, you know.

So he explained, No, I'm serious. I'm very serious. And she said, I have to pray about it.

He said, Listen, sister, pray all you will. I know what the answer is going to be. So he gave her his phone number address.

And two weeks later, he got a letter from this girl. And all it said was yes. But she was really stubborn, you know.

She'd never tell him she loved him. So she shared it with him anyway, but she'd never say it. So he composed a song that she sang at the wedding.

And she didn't know about this. And so, Holy Radia just played the piano and he sang this song. It was about a woman who would never say, I love you.

And each verse ended the same way with the words, And she would never say, I love you. So he sang the last verse and just stood there and waited. And everybody waited.

They all knew what was going on, you know. And nothing happened. And she kept scooping her feet and looking down until the place exploded, you know.

And then he found out one of the reasons why God gave him this woman. God was giving him new songs all the time. And God gave her the music.

He didn't give her the music. God gave her the music. You know, they wrote a hundred and fifty songs, Sing and Smile and Play the Clowns Away, The Longest Sunset.

That's one of his songs, you know. But as a man of faith, he loved God with all his soul. He just walked with God.

At 85 years of age, so what? And he just didn't know quite a year behind, three months behind that. So they were trying to be like him as well. Now, let me tell you something.

I feel like a mosquito with a broken wing. Any mosquito with a broken wing can do a little buzzing. And I've been doing a little buzzing for God for 61 years now.

And that's the way it is. That's the way I really feel, you know. You know, God's really hard up because he can't find many people who walk on faith.

When I first went preaching, little church, ten or five people, they said they'd pay me \$30 a month if they could afford it. And sometimes they couldn't. I could hardly wait to get there.

After six months, I found a girl as crazy as I was, and then you have two of a sudden to run \$30 a month, you know. And I had a wonderful time just believing God. You know, so what? God doesn't run away.

You tell God and right away something happens. Like it or not, they'll help you. And potatoes and stuff, you know.

I wish I'd kept it. You know, we never, and we started tithing right away. Tithe and offer, right off the top.

And you know what? We were there about eight months and God sent a revival and 75 people were converted. And numbers of those people went to a mission field. Some to South America.

As a matter of fact, a guy named Sam Hines went to South America. And one of his sons, two of his sons are missionaries in Argentina. Because this happened over 60 years ago, you see.

Anyway, listen. Oh, what else can I say? Trust God. Love Him.

Trust Him. He'll never do anything wrong. He may do some things that you don't like.

There's always a silver pot for the cloud. You may not see it now, but down the road you will. He's a great God.

He's a gracious God. I've worked in His presence too, you know. But we're not on sins and failures.

There are other things in the churches or whatever, you know. And God always listens. And He wipes our tears away.

The Bible says He puts our tears in His bottle. And His broken-hearted tears look like prayers. Maybe He can't even utter a word.

He just cries. And God understands. He's a gentle, loving Father.

He says, you know, the truth is the soul at rest in the love of God. You can walk with God all your days once you understand that. You're at rest in the love of God.

He is love. Give us these almost 8,000 promises and you just say, my child, believe me, trust me. Trust in the Lord with all your heart and don't leave to your own understanding.

That's the last thing I have to say as far as the message is concerned. Why don't we pray? And while we're in the attitude of prayer with nobody looking you on, let me ask you a question or two. How many of you can honestly say, now don't respond to this to make me feel good, but how many of you can honestly say you have been helped through this conference with me? Thank God, yes, God bless you.

There may be some of you who are here for the first time who don't expect you to raise your hand. Let me ask another question. Perhaps you realize you really need a personal revival or awakening of some kind.

You're not really where you ought to be. And you'd like to do something about it. Would you raise your hand? Yes, yes, I see those hands.

Yes. Are there others? Thank you. Finally, thank you for those who have been helped.

Thank you for those who have asked you, dear God, to guide us in that. And that's the sessions tomorrow. We're nearing the end of this, dear God, but we're not nearing the end of what you're doing in our hearts and lives.

These wonderful texts that help us, dear God, to establish us. So we're trying to be like Abraham, who didn't start with the promise of God, but like his wife, who believed she trusted you, dear God, and so she was blessed. Soon we will be blessed as well.

Thanks again, Lord, for this evening.

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