

Prayer - Fellowship With God

by Bill McLeod

The sermon emphasizes the importance of prayer as fellowship with God and encourages listeners to spend time with God to have a real relationship with Him.

Duration: 59:52

Scripture: Psalm 139:23-24, Matthew 7:7, John 7:38, John 15:15, Philippians 4:13, 1 John 1:3

Topics: "Intimacy With God"

Description

In this sermon, Pastor Bill shares a story about a high school teacher who told a dirty story in the classroom, highlighting the power of God to convict and transform hearts. He emphasizes the importance of seeking God's guidance and dealing with the areas of our lives that He reveals to us. Pastor Bill also discusses the disciples' journey of learning and growing under Jesus' teaching, emphasizing that it was not until they were filled with the Holy Spirit that they were truly ready to fulfill their calling. He concludes by emphasizing the need for genuine fellowship with God, which requires dedicated time spent in prayer and studying the Scriptures.

Transcript

Many years ago, there was a book entitled Social Purposes for Canada. Each chapter was written by a different person. One chapter was written by Pierre Elliott Trudeau.

And this book was outlining how they could socialize Canada, make it a social nation. You know what the plan was? Here's what they said. We can't socialize Canada as long as Canada is strong and united.

We must balkanize Canada before we can socialize Canada. That was the plan. And Trudeau worked at it.

You know, when he was giving millions of dollars to various groups in Canada, he wasn't doing it from the right motive. His motive was to socialize Canada. And that's really what went on.

The average Canadian doesn't know that. I heard about this book, got it at a library, and read it. And I was shocked to see what the plan was and how they're working this plan.

Balkanize Canada. Split it into small groups. Then they said we can socialize these small groups one by one and eventually get the whole country.

This was the plan. Every time I think of it, I get mad. You can't preach if you're mad.

By the way, did you know that about 90% of the evangelical churches in North America have less than 100 members? You know all about the big churches, what they're doing. You know, Akron Baptist Temple, 22,000 members. And other churches, Jerry Fall, I think 35,000.

I was in Jack Hiles' church one time with Gordon Bailey. And we asked one of the guys who was showing us around how many members they had. He said 95,000.

Well, that's the biggest church in America. I think they've got up to 140,000 members in this one church. They have to have staggered services.

So this is what you hear about, all these big churches, you know. But you put them all together, there's not nearly as many people as there is in all these smaller churches that God is blessing around the country. You know, in Winnipeg where I am, there's some large churches and one of them is telling the world God is bypassing small churches.

Come where the action is. We've got all the wealthy Christians in our congregation, they're bragging, you know. This kind of stuff, you know.

You know, it stinks in God's nostrils. But that's what's going on. Some of you have probably heard me tell a short story about Dr. Nesdoli, Sam Nesdoli.

Does anybody remember that? No head? You might recognize it. I just feel for some reason I should tell it before getting to the message. He was a high school teacher, a member of my church in Saskatoon.

He was not there when the Revival came. He left, became a professor in Acadia University in Eastern Canada, and that's where he was when certain things happened. I spoke at Three Hills.

And somebody taped my five messages or four messages and mailed them to him. Now, this would have been fine. But at one time, I found out... See, he was a deacon in my church, and had I known what was going on in the classroom, he wouldn't have been a deacon in my church.

He used to tell dirty stories in the classroom. And one night, a girl went home. She was attending our church, and she told her mother, I will never go back to Ebenezer Baptist Church again in my life.

Mr. Nesdaly told this filthy story in the classroom, you know. Well, at Three Hills, I mentioned this story. I didn't use any names.

I told it in such a way that nobody could remotely guess who I was talking about except the guys, see. So the Lord moved in. And somebody taped my message.

I mailed them to him. Here's what happened. I was holding meetings in the Maritimes in Woodstock, and he came over.

And he told me how one day he was working in the garden, and he said, I didn't hear a voice, but it was almost like a voice saying, go and see what your wife is doing. So he runs in the house. What is she doing? She's listening to one of these tapes.

Guess which tape she's listening to. Guess where that tape was when he walked in the door. I just started to tell the story about the high school teacher who told a dirty story in the classroom.

You know, scary what God can do, you know. And so he said to me, I don't know if you're talking about me. And he never asked me, so I didn't have to tell him.

But he said, when you told that story, he said, you know, God didn't shoot an arrow into my heart. He flung a spear into my soul. He said, my wife and I spent the last three weeks praying the prayer, Search Me, O God.

He said, Pastor Bill, we've dealt with everything God has shown us. Everything. Everything.

And then he said, but that's not the problem. He said, how do you deal with this big rotten self? Remember, self is the factory that manufactures the sin. We're always dealing with the finished product.

God wants to bomb the factory. Now explain that to him. And he could see it in a second.

He saw it. And he started to pray. And oh, I've often wished I had that prayer on a tape.

It was incredible. I mean, he forgot anybody was around. It was like he had both hands on the throne of God.

And he was crying with all his might to God. You know what the prayer was? Kill me. Kill me, God.

Kill me dead. Kill me dead. Now.

Now, God. Kill me. Now, God.

Now. And he went on like this for five minutes. And then he heard him say, Oh, what peace.

What peace. He was flooded with the Spirit of God. And you know what happened? Next Sunday he spoke in a Baptist church, which he often did a lot of preaching stuff.

Halfway through his sermon, a gal got up and she was shaking and said, Can you stop preaching? I have to come to the altar and meet with my God. And he had good sense enough to give him an invitation. And half the church came to the altar and they were weeping before God, you know.

And here's what he told me later on. He said, You know, I was a high school teacher. I was known as a Christian professor.

In 25 years, no one ever came to me to talk about God. I never sold to Christ. He used to sing.

He had a tremendous voice. He used to sing a lot. I don't know if anybody got blessed through my singing, but after he met with God at Woodstock, he told me about nine months later, he said, I have prayed with 400 people, personally, since then.

Some people have led to Christ. Others who are Christian have led into full revival state. And that university professor began holding revival meetings, no kidding, in the Maritimes.

He said, I know now why God never used me in 25 years. I wasn't usable. I was so alive.

I need to die. And remember, except a kernel of wheat falling to the ground and die, it abides alone. You don't get anywhere.

You don't do anything. But if it die, and that's the one qualification, if it die, you don't have to have a smart personality or a sharp mind. You don't have to have anything, really, if you die to yourself.

And put God first, you know. Let him have his way. He's retired now, living in Detroit, B.C. We phone a couple of times a year.

But he can't forget, and I can't forget either, what happened. So many people met God in nine months, more than had happened in 25 years, you know. But it's a dying part we don't like to think about or hear about or do.

I spoke at Life Action not long back, and there was a guy from New York who was the other speaker. I'm so glad they put us together. We were as different in our public manners and that, you know, as night from day.

It was just incredible. He walked up and down the aisles and preached in people's faces, you know. I don't preach that way usually, but it was good to be with him because of what he was doing.

And he had a thing I want to share with you. It was this. He said, You haven't done it until you've done it.

Does that make any sense? You can talk about it all you want. You can admire it. You can write about it.

You can sing about it. You can talk about it. But you haven't done it until you've done it.

And I read it later on those people. It was great, you know. Just great stuff.

You haven't done it until you've done it. Okay. I want to read from John's Gospel a few verses.

Chapter 15, verse 11. These things I have spoken unto you that my joy might remain in you and that your joy might be full. This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends, if you do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth, which means of course from now on, I call you not servants, for the servant doesn't know what his Lord is doing.

But I have called you friends for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you and ordained you that you should grow and bring forth fruit and that your fruit should remain. That whatsoever you shall ask of the Father in my name he may give it to you.

Why did God make us in his image and in his likeness? Have you ever seen a horse pray? Ever seen a crocodile pray? Ever seen a bird pray? Have you ever seen an animal facing death pray for help? Doesn't happen, does it? Why? Because they're not made in the image and likeness of God and who we are. But why did he do this? We are not animals. In spite of what everybody is saying today you shouldn't kill a cobb because he's one of your brothers.

Well, he might be your brother but he sure isn't mine, you know. He made us in his image so we could have fellowship together. That's why he did it.

Someone said the average Christian does not have fellowship with God he has fellowship with other Christians about God. I think that's right, you know. We fellowship with other Christians we think it's having fellowship with God and oftentimes it really is not.

Let's think about that. I think the forgotten thing in prayer is right here. Prayer is what? I'll give you two extremes one taken from a book I read and the writer said prayer is backing a three ton truck up to the warehouse of heaven and then driving away with a full load.

Now that's an extreme position. The other position is this the guy said, well, you know praying doesn't really get anything since there's no personal God it doesn't get anywhere but it's good, it's kind of spiritual PT it's good for the soul to pray now and then and God's something for you. That's another extreme.

But the fact is this that God wants us to have fellowship with him you can't do it in five minutes, you know. I mean sometimes five minutes is all we have I understand that. But I mean basically to spend time with God means spending time with God.

Charles Finney 500,000 people found Christ through his labors when the population of the United States was probably half of the population of Canada today. Dwight R. Moody saw a million people come to Christ in his work. Both of these men used to rise at 4 o'clock in the morning and pray and study the scripture till 8 o'clock every day of the year.

That's how they started their day. Do we do anything like that? You know, Moody is a young Christian he went to talk to an older Christian because he wasn't seeing anything happen and he didn't know what the problem was and so the older Christian said Mr. Moody, take a deep breath and he did. Let it out.

So he did. Now let it out again. Well he said I can't let it out again until I breathe in again.

That's right. That's your problem he said. That's your problem.

You're not breathing in. How can you breathe out? You know. Remember that saying that the Holy Ghost is like electricity? Did you know that? Because neither of them can get into a man unless they can get out.

People want to be filled with the Spirit so they'll be happy and all this kind of stuff, you know. God doesn't want to fill a person with the Holy Spirit unless we're willing to let the Spirit work through us. He that breathes in me as the scripture said out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water and sometimes not even a trickle going out.

We don't worry about it, you know. Anyway. Christ spoke in the scripture we read He said from henceforth I'm not going to call you servants because the servant doesn't know what his master is up to what he's doing.

But I've called you friends for all things that I've heard of my Father I've made known to you. There's an old song I don't know if anybody here has ever heard it I'll Be a Friend to Jesus Anyone know that song? You ever heard it? It's not in the books anymore. I'll Be a Friend to Jesus It's quite biblical, you know.

A friend. If we treated our friends the way we treat God we wouldn't have any. I mean, time-wise.

I remember a lady, she said, you know I prayed out in five minutes, she said What do you do after five minutes, you know? I said, think of your best friend. She said, okay, I got her in my mind. I said, are you two talked out in five minutes? Oh, heavens no, she said.

We could talk for two hours and we're still going, you know. I said, so you're telling me that God is less interesting than your friend is? That you're talked out in five minutes? What kind of a God do you pray to? Who is this God you're talking to? Do you know him? I mean, do you really know him? But, yeah, this is the problem. A friend to Christ.

Now, Jehoshaphat was leading an army they had the biggest prayer meeting in history everybody in the nation was there in Judah everybody, men, women, children, babies, everybody they're all standing before God because when any army had come in they didn't know what to do. When you don't know what to do, pray. That's the thing.

That's why it's there. So they had a prayer meeting and they called on God, Jehoshaphat did and he reminded God, he said, we are the seed of Abraham, your friend. Now he didn't say, we're the seed of Abraham who long ago was your friend.

That's not what he said. We are the seed of Abraham, your friend. In other words, as far as Jehoshaphat was concerned Abraham was still alive and well and rejoicing in God somewhere in the kingdom of God.

That's what he meant. So in Isaiah 41, God said to Israel you are the seed of Abraham, my friend. He didn't say again, you're the seed of Abraham who long ago was my friend.

God spoke as if Abraham was alive and well. Jesus said, your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day and he saw it and was glad. So he's saying the same thing.

Abraham's alive and well in the presence of God. He's still a friend of God's. So in James chapter 2, James said Abraham was called the friend of God.

Does God need friends? Yes, sometimes he does. Do you remember the curse pronounced in Judges chapter 5 upon the inhabitants of a place called Nero's? And God pronounced the curse upon them because he said they did not come to the help of the Lord to the help of the Lord against them. So in Psalm 94, God asks this question.

Who will rise up for me against the evil workers? Who will rise up for me against the workers of iniquity? Who will? God is looking for people to be his friends that he can put to work in his work. And so because nobody rose up to stand with God, you know. There's that old song, it's not in the books anymore.

All the good songs are gone, you know. And when you count up those who love the Lord, count me, count me. When you count up those who love his word, count me, count me.

Count me with the children of the heavenly king. Count me with those who his praises sing. When you count up those who love the Lord, count me, count me.

And God is looking for people to stand up for him and stand with him and be his friend. A friend to God. Now, Moses had a father-in-law who had many names.

There's Jather, Jethro, Ruel, Raguel, four or five different names, you know. Ruel and Raguel both meant the same thing. They meant the friend of God.

He was a very, seemed to be a dynamic, powerful person. You read about him eating before God. You read about him rejoicing before God.

He gave wisdom to his son-in-law, Moses. Gave him some advice. And Moses took it and it helped him a lot.

So not much is said about him. He was a priest also. So he knew things about God.

Where he got it from, I have no idea. But his name meant a friend of God, you know. Did you ever think of yourself that way? Are you a friend of God? When God calls you, are you willing to spend time with God? I've enjoyed so much knowing Brother Detroit, you know, some of the stories.

You know, he's talking about being with these black men. There's a great revival among the Zulus in Africa some years ago and somebody sent me some tapes on it, some videotapes and a book. The book was written by a German fellow.

He'd been an evangelist in South Africa for years. He had seen hundreds of people walk the isles and profess to be saved. He didn't know of one that was walking with God.

He came to a place where he finally decided he was going to give up preaching and just go back in the world. He couldn't find anything real. Then he met some black men and he prayed with these black men.

He said he had a meeting with God one night that totally revolutionized his life forever. And a revival started among the Zulus. They had to build a church seating 10,000.

I saw a picture of the church. It wasn't quite completed. They had an average of 435 people come to them every day of the year seeking help.

They didn't send teams out. They didn't have to. It wasn't a charismatic thing.

The charismatics heard about it and they moved in and introduced tongues and the revival began to drop away and so the leaders had the good sense to stop it and so they did. They were not saying tongues was not a real gift and maybe, and I think is in some cases, but it was not what they needed then. So, here's what was happening.

People sitting in the meetings would be healed of all kinds of sicknesses. There were 10 blind women decided to go down. They heard about this and see if they couldn't be healed.

At the last moment, one of them couldn't go. So nine of them showed up and one night sitting in one of the meetings all nine were healed instantly of their sight. Their sight came back and they hardly waited to get home and they contacted the tenth gal and they contacted her and she said what time of the day did this happen? My sight came back that same time.

Back in the village. See, God gets all the glory for this because there's nobody laying hands on them. You know? It's incredible to read what happened there but his story, he almost went back in the world.

He couldn't find anything real. It wasn't lasting. And then he met with God and things happened.

But Reuel, Raguel, Jethro, Hobab. He knew God. His name meant a friend of God's.

Now it says about Moses that God spoke with Moses face to face as a man speaks to his friend. And there's that word friend again. So they were good friends.

You know, they once spent 80 days together. 40 days on two separate occasions. So I said to my son, what were these two doing up there in the mountain? I mean, 80 days? What would you do if you were 80 days alone in the mountain? Nobody around but God, you know.

Well in one case it says that Moses came down from the mountain after he had been communing with God. Communing with God. They were friends, you know? And they were talking back and forth.

God says, come now let us reason together. He likes you to reason the case with him, you know? To talk with him. You know, one time Spurgeon was suffering so horribly.

It was like, it was bad. His friends were all around praying and he said, everybody leave, everybody leave. So they all left.

And he said, oh God, he said, if I was God and you were me, I wouldn't let you suffer like this. And he was healed instantly. You can ease with God, you know.

Well it's good to know that, I say. Well Sam Jones, you know what happened to him, that Southern Methodist evangelist. He used to be an alcoholic, got saved in the ministry and God was using him in a mighty way.

He was a contemporary of Moody's. And anyway, one night in a hotel, the old Westford Liquor returned. And he started, he got as far as the door, he was hanging on the door knob, and he ran back to bed and he helped, and he cried to God for help and he ran back to the door.

He went back and forth about six times, you know? And finally, in desperation, he threw himself across the bed and here was his prayer. Oh God, can't you do a better job than this? And he was instantly delivered. People, we've got a friend up there, you know.

A very close friend. And so Moses, God spoke with him face to face. And later on, you know, when Miriam and Aaron, I think Miriam and Aaron, I say that because God struck her with leprosy, He didn't strike Aaron with it.

Aaron was a weak guy, Miriam was strong, you know. And I think she got it because she had later, anyway. They began talking like this, Hey Moses, who do you think you are? You know, God speaks to us too, you know.

Who do you think you are? And so God heard all this, and said, Come out you three. I can just see Aaron winking at Miriam, you know, or she winking at him. Moses is going to find out now.

So then the Lord asked Miriam and Aaron to step ahead, and Moses left behind. Now they know for sure, Moses is really going to get it, you see. And it went like this.

God said, When I speak to a prophet, I speak through visions and dreams. But my servant Moses is not so. With him I speak mouth to mouth.

Why then are you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses? And she was struck with leprosy, and stuck out of the camp for seven days. And so, Moses, he had no problem spending 80 days with God. That wasn't wasted time.

That was wonderful. Elijah spent three and a half years in the wilderness, you know. Three and a half years, not 80 days.

What did he do? What visitors did he have? He had two visitors twice a day. Ravens brought him food and flesh, you know, twice a day. That's all he had.

Would you go crazy? I've heard people say, If I had to spend three and a half years in the wilderness, I'd go crazy. Why didn't he go crazy? Because he was a friend of God's, you know. And there, man, he could talk to God anytime he wanted, have God all to himself, you know.

And it was great. Anyway, Moses. And then, you know, you read about David, it says he was a man after God's own heart.

What does that mean? Well, I don't really know. A man after God's own heart. I think it would probably mean he was a person who thought the way God thought.

And who did what God wanted him to do. He failed, we know, twice in his life. Once very seriously.

But he came back to God. And Nathan said, The Lord also has put away your sin. You won't die.

He knew he had sinned. And you know his prayer of repentance in Psalm 51 is as thorough as anything can be and a good model to follow when we sin against God. But he was a man after God's own heart.

He said, I prevented the dawning of the morning and prayed and cried. It means he got up before the sun got up to pray. You know, that's what it really means.

Seven times a day, he wrote, do I praise you because of your righteous judgments. Seven times a day, praising God, you know, see. And evening and morning and noon will I pray and cry aloud and he'll hear my voice.

In Psalm 88, he said, Night and day I prayed continually before God. And so he was a man of prayer. He spent much time along with God.

I know in talking with Duncan Campbell, which we did, we had him in our church two years before the revival. And we learned a lot from him personally about the place of prayer and how little time we give to God, how little quality time we ever give to God. We don't do that.

We're so busy. I heard him speak when I was a very young Christian and he said, he was talking about Finney's ministry and then he said, in comparison to what God did to him, a lot of you people think you're busy. You're just plain buzzy, you know.

I have a friend down in Texas. He's a book publisher. He wants to write a story on my life.

I said, brother, listen. Who's ever going to read it? You'll have all these books piled up that nobody's going to buy and you're going to have to give them away. You know, I have a friend like that.

He did that. He had a book on his life and he wasn't able to sell it. He has to give the book away, you know.

So I said, what's the point, you know? But the guy keeps bugging me. He gets on my, he phones me, talks to me on the phone, wants to come up and spend three days with me and talk about it. Well, I've always

said, no, why should we talk three days about no, you know.

But anyway, the guy keeps bugging me. So, I shouldn't put it this way, but finally I prayed about it. And the Lord gave me a green light in a peculiar way.

He told me what the title has to be. The title has to be A Mosquito with a Broken Wing. And that's the title, see.

I haven't told him yet down in Texas. He probably won't handle it when he finds out what the title has to be. But here's what I got to know about this.

This is exactly what my ministry's like. It's just a mosquito. So you see, any mosquito with a broken wing can buzz a little, right? So I can buzz a little for God, you know.

I've been doing some of that around the country. But I just, I got a broken wing. I've never done anything great, you know.

Ran a lot of Bible camps and started some churches and a few little things here and there, but nothing really shaky. So, that's the title. It may never see the press because I don't think he'll go with it, but that's okay.

It doesn't bother me any. But David, a man after God's own heart. John the Baptist.

John the Baptist in John chapter 3, he called himself a friend of the bridegroom. Did you know that? He said the friend of the bridegroom, he hears the bridegroom's voice. This my joy therefore is fulfilled, he said.

So he reckoned he was a friend to Christ. They were cousins. And at one point, although they were cousins, he didn't know that Jesus, his cousin, was the Son of God.

But he said, For he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon him thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remain on him, the same as he who baptized with the Holy Ghost. And I saw in their record that this is the Son of God. But he looked on himself as being just a friend to Christ.

Are you really a friend to God? It isn't a question of how much time, and yet in a sense it is a question of how much time do we give to God, you know. We rush in and we rush out. And we do a lot of things that amount to nothing.

We spend a lot of time doing things that amount to nothing. And then we wonder why. God has been blessing.

I've been in foreign countries. I've seen Christians in churches there. Joanne Shetler in the Philippines, 30 years ago, she and another American girl flew in to an allocation.

They got to this village. They didn't know that the local custom was if a woman shows up in a village or a man and no one adopts them into the family, they can be murdered, they can be raped, they can be robbed. They didn't know that.

So they're wandering around through this village and a man came and he spoke to them and he explained to them. He said, I want to adopt you into my family. And then he explained why.

And so they gladly accepted his adoption. And then after six months, one girl quit. She got chicken and she went home.

And Joanne stayed for 25 years. And she got the local language reduced to writing. She got the New Testament completed.

She was in a helicopter crash one day. I flew into that allocation with a friend of mine one time and we talked to a little church she'd started. It was really something to see.

But she'd been in this helicopter crash. It was a work helicopter loaded with cement bags. And the thing crashed.

And it was hours before help got to them. It was a very hot day. The cement bags broke open.

She was lying there sweating and the cement on the sweat and she got burned badly from that, you know. And she hurt her back. It never did fully recover.

She's in Winnipeg right now in the Grant Memorial Church, by the way. Yeah, that's what I heard the other day. But she gave her testimony at Urbana.

You know, it's a place where they have every three years or so where they have all kinds of missions get together. She gave her testimony. Somebody sent me a tape of it.

Just having been there. When she was through, that crowd went wild. They were clapping.

They were cheering. They were whistling. They were shouting.

I never saw anything like it. I heard this story. The faithfulness of God.

He found someone who was a friend to God, you know. And she just stayed with it. No matter what.

Because we know He never forgets, never forsakes. He's never had a problem in His life. God hasn't, you know.

And so, we can trust Him and we should trust Him. But He said, You're My friends if you do whatever I command you. And that's where the problem comes in.

We let things, we let people, and sometimes we let plans, which might be quite orthodox in themselves. We let these things crowd us. I see Henry Blackaby, I heard him say in a meeting a while ago, he said he used to get up at 6 in the morning and that didn't do it.

So I started getting up at 5 in the morning and that didn't do it. So I started getting up at 4 o'clock in the morning and that did it. That's his style.

That's great. That doesn't work for me. God doesn't do it all the same, you know.

So, I think it's great what he's doing. But it goes like this. Lord, long ago, right after Revival in Saskatoon, I thought we've had a touch from God.

We need something great going from coast to coast where hundreds of thousands might find Christ as their Savior. So, I started rising every night to pray for Revival in Canada. And I'll just share this with you.

I don't think I've ever shared this publicly before, but at one point we were talking, the Lord and I, and I took Canada and I draped it over the throne of God. And I told God, Lord, I'm putting Canada, all of Canada, across your throne and it's staying there until you do it. I keep reminding God.

Almost every time I pray, Lord, Canada on your throne, remember? All of Canada. And maybe you can get into that too and pray that way. He'll do it.

I don't know when or how or through whom. That isn't important, but he'll do it. I know he's faithful.

Anyway, I get up whenever he awakens me. It might be 1230. It might be 1300.

It might be 3300. It might be 4 o'clock. Whenever I get up and pray for 15 minutes, it may be up to an hour on occasion, up to an hour and a half.

I know sometimes God has laid such a burden on me for the world, I pray for every country in the world. I probably miss a few. The big countries are easy to remember, but there are smaller countries, some of them only 20,000 people, and sometimes I forget some of those.

Anyway, God's field is the world. And everybody's got 24 hours in the day, right? So what do we do with it? What are we doing with our friend that we give him so little quality time? And we're so afraid to let him have his way, for fear he might ask us to do something we don't want to do. So the flesh isn't dead yet, you know.

This is the problem. All right, John the Baptist, he's not the only one. You remember the apostles? It's an incredible thing when you stop to think.

Twelve men, three and a half years, in the best Bible school in the world. Christ the only teacher. It was theoretical and practical teaching constantly for three years to three and a half years.

They had all of that. Then after the resurrection, they had 40 days alone with Christ. When he spoke to them of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God, he told them what they had to do and how to do it.

For 40 days. And still they weren't ready. They were still not ready.

It wasn't enough. And it wasn't enough until they were filled with the Spirit of God. And then it was enough.

Then they could do it. And they did. You know, I was in India.

Southern India. There's a church there called the Marathoma Church. They have about 40,000 people scattered amongst them, churches.

And they claim that the Apostle Thomas started this work. And I think, well, the Indian government has acknowledged that claim. They struck a stamp commemorating the arrival of Thomas to India.

And then these churches have an annual conference a couple of times a year. They get together. And I spoke at one of those conferences.

There were several thousand people there. Such a delight to be there. But you know what happened? Thomas started six churches in Southern India.

And he was spirited up. And the Christians all chickened out. India could be a Christian nation today.

If those churches had done what they should have done. They stayed in Southern India. When I was there, you know what happened at that conference? For the first time in their history, they passed a motion that they're going to try and start 12 churches in other parts of India.

It's too late. It's all Hindu. Almost.

Not quite. In the North, there's two states. Nagaland.

It's called the only Baptist country in the world. They're all Baptist. And they're 95% born in India, you'll see.

And in Israel, I think it's called... It's the most Christian state in the world. These are small states. Like Nagaland maybe has a million and a half.

And the other state has less than a million. Maybe a hundred thousand or something. But you know that Israel, they have sent out 2,000 missionaries.

From that tiny little state. And both these countries are evangelizing from the Northern part of India. We need to pray for them.

But what would have happened had those people in Southern India caught the fire? And not chickened out just because John happened to get spirited at. Or something happened and the flame went out. I saw where he was spirited at.

And I talked to one of the pastors. His name was Chandapura. He's a great preacher.

I heard him preach in his own language. I heard him preach in English. One of the greatest preachers I think I've ever heard.

And here's what he told me about those preachers in the Marthoma Church. He said, Brother Bill, I've arranged a meeting with you and these pastors. We must pray much about this.

He said, these men... Here's what he said. These men live like devils. That's what he told me.

And so I thought, I don't remember the message now. I dealt with the self-life, but I don't remember what text or whatever. Some of them were very unhappy.

You could see that. They didn't like this at all. But some did, you know.

And I think maybe one or two got touched by God. It's the same all around the world. We have to make up our mind to do it and remember you haven't done it until you do it.

You can admire it. Isn't it a great brainer to spend sometimes eight hours a day praying? Praying hard in India, eight or ten hours every day praying. Isn't that wonderful? Oh, that's great.

We should frame that and put it on the wall, you know. Because that's what we really do. We think it's great, but we wouldn't think of emulating this, you know.

Because we don't have the time. We think we don't have the time. God is waiting.

The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth. They're showing themselves strong on behalf of those whose heart is perfect towards Him. In other words, God is searching.

He's searching here. He's searching everywhere, looking for people that will give their hearts totally to Him. You see, when God called me, I knew I couldn't preach, so I just laughed.

I thought that's the stupidest thing. Well, they didn't call God stupid, but I knew I couldn't because I was the shyest person in Canada. I was so shy that if I was walking down the street in Winnipeg where I lived at that time, and I saw somebody coming, I'd cross the street.

I traveled all back lanes in west Winnipeg where I lived. I couldn't stand to meet people on the street even. In school, I sat in a cold sweat for fear the teacher might call my name and ask me to read something or say something or do something.

It was awful, terrible. And I went to work in bush camps because the trees didn't have eyes and they didn't talk, you know. I like that.

But I was in a bush camp that God called me. That was an awful night, and I kept telling God, but God, You know better than that. I can't.

There's no way I can preach. But just before this, a day or two before, He gave me this verse in Philippians. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

Every time I said I couldn't, He just gave me the verse. He killed me with it. And before the sun came up, I said, OK, God, I'll do it.

Well, this is going to be awful, but I'll do it. And you know what happened about a week later? Someone asked me to speak in a church in Winnipeg when I was home. And I didn't know what to say.

What am I going to do? I've never preached in my life. But I read the Bible a little. So I said yes, and I picked 1 Corinthians chapter 12 because it was a long chapter.

I thought if I get persecuted in one verse, I can flee to another, you know. Kept it going. You know, I kept it going for 20 minutes.

And you know, when I was walking home that night, I was leaping off the sidewalk and I was hollering, Hey, God, we did it! We did it! We did it! Well, I was just a mosquito with a broken wing, and that's what I am today, you know. There's no different today, you know. But at least, people, we can do something for God.

We've got to learn to prioritize our time and give God time. Make time. Wake up early in the morning.

Whatever you can do, do it. People say, when I ask God to wake me through the night, then I sleep all the next day. Well, I don't.

You don't have to. George Miller, that famous man of faith and prayer from Bristol, England, remember he had 85,000 answers to prayer? He used to take 15 minutes after dinner just to rest, to kind of rest and sleep. He said, one day the Lord told him to stop, you don't need to do that.

You don't really need that. I can give you the strength you need. You don't have to wait for 15 minutes, you know.

So he quit doing that. And he said, I have no problem after that. I'm not telling you to be fanatical.

I don't think... I'm just telling you what he said. Anyway. People, we have to make time to be alone with God.

We're friends to God. He wants us to talk with Him and share everything with Him and listen to Him and pray over verses you don't understand. Read the Bible.

The Lord nearly said he read his. He said, I read the Bible the way I eat fish. If I come to a bone, I don't stop eating fish.

I lay the bone on the side of the plate and go right on eating fish. So do the same. If you come to something you don't understand, don't stop there.

You wait down the road, you'll understand. God will help you understand through someone else, maybe through your own study. Maybe read a book or something, you know.

And if you buy a book and you want to have it and it's not on sale and you tell God you want it, you'll get it. I remember a book I won one time. Nobody knew where I could get a copy of it.

I didn't give up. I just said, Lord, you know where there is a copy of that. You'll get me one.

So I was down in Ontario in meetings. I was in the preacher's office. And he says, hey, I've got two copies of this.

He threw me a copy. And it was this book, you know. So thanks for it.

You know the hand of God is in it. And this stuff goes on all the time, you know. And you get really walking with God.

And I feel God, too, many times. You know, sometimes an opportunity comes. You don't take it.

You feel condemned afterwards. Anyway, you're my friends if you do whatever I command you. So he made us in his image and his likeness, so that we could communicate and fellowship with him.

1 John 1.3 says, John said, Now what did he say? I've got to think a minute before the verse becomes clear. Those things which you have heard and seen, we declare unto you, that you also may have fellowship with us. And truly, our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ.

Truly, our fellowship is with the Father. So we can be in a big meeting, be very happy, great singing, great preaching, great all this kind of stuff. But did we really meet with God? You know, I get discouraged sometimes.

I ask people often in meetings, Before you came down, how many of you people prayed? And sometimes another hand goes up, you know. And one fellow put his hand up. People were praying church and evangelical circles constantly everywhere.

And we don't know it. God knows it. That's why God isn't blessing.

What right does any Christian to go to a Christian meeting and not pray first? Does he think we preachers are miracle workers or something? We're not. We're very ordinary people. And if you don't pray, nothing's going to happen.

And so I hear, you know, sometimes preachers complain they had this big evangelist come or something. Nothing happens, so they blame the evangelist. You can't do that.

When people pray, you know, the book *Flames of Freedom* is a great book talking about the Canadian Revival. There's one weakness in the book, though, it doesn't talk about the prayer life of our church before the Revival came. I got so fed up, you know, with the way things would go when you had a team come in and nothing happened.

So I decided to wait on God for Revival. I started praying. I got my ten deacons to pray.

We had a special deacons prayer meeting every Saturday night five years before the Revival. We started praying for Revival, deacons prayer meeting. And I used to tell the people, don't ever miss the prayer meeting.

Anything else, okay, be Sunday morning, Sunday night, but don't ever miss the prayer meeting. So our prayer meeting grew from 25, got up to 50, got to 75, got to 100, got to 150, got as high as 170. We only had 175 members in the church.

And the prayer meeting was a red hot. It wasn't Revival, but it was next door to it. And people were having answers to prayer and God was really doing things.

And then we started having children's prayer meetings. Finally we had anywhere from 20 to 40 kids in two separate prayer meetings. And the kids ran their own prayer meetings.

They loved it. That meant more parents could come. And so that's part of what we did.

Then we had a prayer wheel thing where people took 15 minute slops. Some of you have heard this before. And pretty soon we had a whole 24 hours taken up with people from our church praying for Revival.

And then we didn't, by the way, I say this to warn people, we didn't lay this all on the people at one time that was never taken. As the spirit of prayer developed and began to grow, we gave them a little more. Because in Zechariah it speaks about the God pouring on His people the spirit of grace and supplication.

One translation says the spirit of grace to supplicate. Then he called it the spirit of prayer. He said, if I ever lose the spirit of prayer, I can't converse effectively, individually or publicly, if I ever lose the spirit of prayer.

I know exactly what he's talking about. God gave the spirit of prayer to our people. And people were waking at night.

And God was leading them, praying some of them an hour a night or maybe two hours in a night, you know. As God laid this burden on them. Then we started cottage prayer meetings all over the city, you know.

That didn't take as well as some of the other things did. All the other things seemed to work so well. But we prayed.

I have a brochure sent to churches to pastors who are having me come for meetings and I outline some of this prayer stuff. And I get there and I say to the preacher, what did you do as a church, the way of prayer preparation? Oh, blah, blah, blah, two extra prayer meetings. And I just said, oh no.

Oh really, two extra prayer meetings. There's a church in Northern Ontario, the fastest growing church, I think in the British Isles. A friend of mine went there and had an interview with a pastor, the head pastor, and sent me a copy of the tape.

They're a hyper-Calvinistic church, if you know what hyper-Calvinism is. They're hyper-Calvinistic. But the winning souls were right in the lap.

You see, Spurgeon was Calvinistic. He led 15,000 of Christ's in his own church. Apart from street meetings and all the other stuff he did.

Anyway, here's what he did. They found their prayer meeting was dying. And the reason it was dying was because there were so many people who couldn't find the landing field.

You know, they're praying and they can't find the landing field. They keep on praying about this and praying, praying, praying. The same prayer every time they pray, you know, the same kind of a prayer.

So they stopped that and they said, in the prayer meeting nobody can pray longer than two minutes. And they had to go and stand by a mic and pray into the mic so everybody could hear. When they started doing that, the prayer meeting got transformed.

And the prayer meeting became the biggest meeting of the week. And 10 or 12 or 15 times a year they'd have a whole week of prayer. And in the week of prayer, they prayed about one thing.

God, what do you want us to do next in evangelism? God led them to rent a football field where they could seat 5,000 people. They thought, well, this is going to cost us a lot of money. Where are the people going to come from? But God said, go.

So they did it. And the place was packed of people. I think he said, yeah, that day it rained and people came with umbrellas and the place was packed.

They preached the gospel, gave an invitation. 150 people came forward to be saved. Another time they rented a building seating 10,000.

They were really a little bit uptight about it because of the rental thing, you know. And the place was packed that night. 300 people came forward to accept Christ as their Savior.

Remember, a hyper-Calvinistic church. But they got it right about prayer. They got it right about prayer.

We don't know how to do it, people. We don't know how to pray. We fool around, you know.

You know how to pray when you get in trouble? Yeah. Everybody knows how to pray then. But apart from that, we don't know how to pray.

Revival, if it doesn't issue in praying people, it's not real. If people don't learn how to pray through revival, it's not revival. In my opinion, at least, it isn't.

I mean, how can it be? I know many of you have read books on revival and so have I. And it's so challenging to read Scotland, Ireland, Sweden, Norway, Finland. Do you know that Finland has a higher ratio of missionaries than any country in the world? I mean sending out missionaries. It's not the United States.

It's Finland, little Finland. But they've had some powerful revivals in that country, you know. And God has raised up praying people in the national church and outside the national church as well.

Well, prayer, fellowship with God. People after God's own heart. People who don't put God in a time straitjacket.

God, you've got five minutes to speak. Make time, get along with God and let Him speak and listen. And if He's asking you to do something, then do it.

And you'll have some astonishing experiences. One time, the Lord led me to go to a place called Stony Point on the east shore of Lake Winnipeg. It was a place that had a terrible reputation for drunkenness and stuff, you know.

And so I got on the train. There was no other way of getting there. There was no road in there at that time.

And I got off the train at a little town. It wasn't a town. I mean it was just six shacks.

And there was not a station. There was a boxcar sitting here. So I get off.

I knew I had 12 miles to walk to get to this place. But there was a fellow sitting there with a horse and a buggy. So I went over to talk to him.

And he says, Who are you? And I said, My name is Bill McClellan. I'm a preacher. And the guy began to laugh.

He said, Where are you going? I said, Stony Point. He roared with laughter. He says, Hop in.

You can ride with me. That's where I'm going. Great.

So we're driving along. He keeps looking at me and chuckling. And I said, What's the big laugh, you know? He said, God waked me early this morning and said, One of my servants is coming down here on the train.

I want you to go and meet the train. He was a white guy married to an Indian gal. They're the only Christians in the area.

And I stayed with him. I had a place to stay and everything, you know. So when God says, Go, you got to go, because it's going to work out, you know.

And many times, because of our wicked unbelief, it doesn't work out, you know. And we stop short. And we give up.

And we've got to stop doing that by the grace of God. I think, you know, I pray more about the power of the Spirit in my own heart and ministry than our fellowship, than anything else I can think of. Because it's God, the Holy Spirit, that does it.

It's not us. I don't know how we've missed it for so long. I think the basic problems in our Bible colleges, they don't talk about that usually.

I mean, how to be filled with the Spirit. I've had Bible colleges phone me, wanting me to come down because they had a demon case. They didn't know what to do about it.

I said, well, I've had people phone me from Vancouver. I've had people phone me from Oklahoma, wanting to fly me down to deal with a demon case. Well, isn't God the Holy Ghost in business down there, too? And one time they phoned from the States, and I said, well, who's dealing with this gal with the demons? Well, the guy said there's three paths for three of us.

And I said, you don't need money. You just need God, you know? But I hadn't a ghost of an idea what to do. So the fathers in the schools are not saying anything about it.

The ministry of the Spirit of God. What can we do apart from the Spirit of God? We can't do anything. You can get people to pray a prayer.

I sat with a guy down in Texas, Brownville, Texas. And we sat side by side, and an Air Force guy, a very young, he didn't look to be more than 60. He looked so young, sat beside him.

So I knew this guy was going to witness to him, so I wanted to see how he did. So he asked about his family, and where he was stationed, what he was doing in the Air Force. And then he says, listen carefully, here's what he said.

He never preached the Gospel. And I said, what about the Gospel? And I said, what about Christ? He just said this. Don't you think it would be a neat thing just to pray this little bitty prayer, Jesus come into my heart? The kid says, yeah, I guess that would be okay.

Well, say it, say it. So he says, Jesus come into my heart. You say it, brother, say it.

And he whacked him in the face. What would you say? And I just about fell on the floor. I mean, what had God to do with that? Nothing.

So on the plane, he was flying in the same flight I was. I was sitting next to him. He never had a clue.

Well, what did I do down there, he says. What was that I did down there? But that kind of stuff goes. And that explained to me why the pastor, he had 500 or 600 people Sunday morning.

He had about 60 people Sunday night. He had about 40 people Monday night and Tuesday night and so on. He didn't have a praying church.

He just had a collection of people, you know. This is the problem. What can we do about it? We can pray until.

It says about Moab, it would come to a sanctuary to pray, but God said he will not prevail. And sometimes we pray and we don't prevail with God and nothing happens. We've got to stay with it.

There was a preacher in Texas. He had a little church with 40 members. Nothing ever happened.

For two or three years, not a soul got saved. And he didn't know what was wrong. Couldn't figure it out.

He was trained and all that, but nothing ever happened. And then his father, who was an alcoholic, died unsaved. And that brought him to face the reality of his name.

So after the relatives were all gone, he went to his father's grave, which was in a secluded place where people couldn't see him, and he threw himself across his daddy's grave and he prayed this prayer. He said, God, I won't move from this place. I won't eat.

I won't drink. I'll die here if I have to, but I will not move until you touch me. People, he lay there for three days and three nights.

All he ever said was, God, touch me. He went back to his church and preached the gospel. The first time he did, 18 people got saved.

Then he went to Hammond, Indiana, and started there with 800 people. He lost 400 people quite quickly. They didn't like his preaching.

And pretty soon it turned around. And I'm talking about Jack Hiles. And I know he had a little cloud of his life towards the end of his life.

I don't know what fire that was there. There was some problem there. But certainly God used that man in marvelous, marvelous ways.

And he said this, Whenever I sense the power is gone, I fast and pray again. I get others to fast and pray with me. And the power comes again.

We've seen that happen in meetings too, you know. We fast and pray and get a few people to do the same. Then God begins to work.

One crusade I was in, I'm going to close in a minute, but nothing happened. We had good crowds, hundreds of people attending, nothing happening. So we had a day of fasting on Thursday.

And Thursday night God broke in. And we had a wonderful time following that. So we know the way.

Let's be a friend to Jesus. Curse ye, Mero, says the angel of the Lord. Curse you bitterly, the inhabitants throughout, because ye came not to the help of the Lord, but to the help of the Lord against the mighty.

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