

Mark 11, A Call For Prayer

by Carter Conlon

This sermon emphasizes the power of prayer and faith in God, encouraging believers to trust in God's ability to answer prayers, heal, and restore. It highlights the importance of forgiveness as the foundation of faith and the need to confront deception and false comfort in our lives. The message calls for a deepening of faith, a commitment to prayer, and a belief in the miraculous power of God to move mountains and bring transformation.

Scripture: Mark 11:22, Mark 11:25, James 1:6, Matthew 17:20, 2 Chronicles 7:14, Psalm 139:23, Ephesians 6:18, James 5:16, Hebrews 11:6

Topics: "Power of Prayer", "Importance of Forgiveness"

Description

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Transcript

Praise God. Thank you, Lord. Just so great to be here with you, and I want to thank Pastor Randy, Pastor Donna, and Pastor Dan, and others, and the leaders, and all of those in leadership in the church.

You've been so incredibly gracious. We just love you, and you're just a lovely group of people. I want you to take heart, take courage.

The Lord is able to heal and restore. He's able to give strength and courage where all of us need it. We are plan A for this hour in history.

We're not plan B. You are plan A. Praise be to God. I heard even a couple of testimonies when I came in tonight of people here tonight that God just touched you, and you woke up and had a new time of prayer this morning. You heard his voice and suddenly got rid of the need to cross the T's and dot the I's and just talk to him.

It's a wonderful thing to be able to learn to pray like that. I'm just overwhelmed at the generosity of God and the goodness of being here. So, Father, we want to thank you, God, for tonight.

We want to thank you for the privilege every time we can of opening your word. We recognize that only by the Holy Spirit can you make the word alive to us. So we ask you tonight, Spirit of the living God, quicken these words of Jesus Christ to our hearts.

Give us, as Sarah said tonight, the mustard seed of faith that is all you require of us, Lord, to begin to move in the miraculous. God Almighty, you've been teaching us how to pray. Lord, we just ask you for just a deeper revelation of that even tonight as we open your word, as we gather.

And as the disciples once said, Lord, teach us how to pray. And so, Father, we just want to say thank you for the simplicity of your word. Give me the grace to speak this Sunday, the wisdom that comes from you.

My wisdom is worthless. Yours, God, is infinite. So override the frailty of my mind and body, Lord, and speak through this vessel and speak to every heart.

Give me the grace to disappear tonight that you may appear, that the incredible victory of the cross might be fully realized in every life. You are a miracle-working God. So, Lord Jesus Christ, do whatever has to be done in every one of our lives that your name might be glorified on the earth again.

We yield to you, Lord. We yield to you. Here we are.

We can't be any more than you make us into. Lord, so speak to us. Give us the hearts that we need to believe.

And we ask it in Jesus' name. Amen. Mark chapter 11, if you have your Bible with you or any kind of device that you can turn to, Mark chapter 11.

I'm using the New King James Version. Mark chapter 11, beginning at verse 22. Some of the most incredible, powerful verses in the Bible on the topic of prayer.

Now, there's a lot of them that are powerful. But if we just believe what I'm about to read, the prayer meeting would be the most attended meeting in the house of God. We would be praying in the morning, praying in the afternoon.

It would be as natural as breathing. We'd be praying at night if we really just believe these verses. So Jesus, this is Mark 11, 22, answered and said to them, have faith in God.

For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, be removed and be cast into the sea, and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. Therefore, I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them. And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive your trespasses.

But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses. So this is an incredible passage of scripture that you can't literally take verses 23 and 24 without 25 and 26. And what Jesus is saying is this kind of prayer that can move mountains, this kind of prayer that has a faith that says, God, I believe you, and I believe that what I'm asking for, of course, we know that.

James brings clarity to this verse when he says, you ask and receive not because you ask to consume it upon your own lust. If we're asking for the right reason, if our prayer request is about the kingdom of God, if it's about Christ's name being glorified in the earth, if it's about men, women, and children being set free,

if it's about the true ministry of Jesus Christ, when he said, when he stood in the pulpit on his day of being revealed, in a sense, to his generation and said, the spirit of the Lord is upon me, and then gave the reasons to preach the gospel to the poor, to set free the oppressed, to give sight to those who are blind, those people who can't see a way forward, to set at liberty those that have been bruised. That means people who are betrayed, or abused, or wounded, or let down, or abandoned, whatever it was.

And he said, this day, the scripture is fulfilled in your ears. So if the reason we're asking for these things that only God can do is to glorify his name and to see people set into freedom, he says, if you ask these things and you believe, you will have them. But he qualifies it by telling us that this type of prayer stands on a foundation of forgiving and being forgiven.

You see, this is a kingdom of forgiveness. The whole kingdom of God is about forgiveness. The cross is about forgiveness.

The mandate that's given to the church of Jesus Christ on the earth is to make a clear declaration of this forgiveness of God, that whosoever will may come, that sin might be forgiven, that the old things in our lives might pass away, as the scripture says, and all things might become new. There is this incredible beauty of this message, but this kind of faith stands on a foundation of forgiveness. So make sure that you are forgiven.

That's the number one thing. Make sure if you're going to pray like this, that you have come to Christ. You have honestly confessed your sins before God.

You have accepted the forgiveness that he offers to you and to me when he went to a cross, allowed himself to be beaten beyond human recognition for the things that we have done, allowed the nails to be driven into his hands. He allowed his clothes to be gambled for, thorns to be pressed into his brow, his back to be beaten to the point where it was hanging off of his body in shreds. And he did that for you and I. He did that as a display, in a sense, of the horribleness of sin, but yet the other side of the cross, it shows us the mercy, this incredible mercy of God and God's willingness to forgive.

Paul the apostle says, how can those of us who belong to God live willfully in sin any longer? It's not possible. If you're a Christian, you can't be comfortable with sin. It's not possible to be comfortable.

Yes, you may fall into traps here and there, but you're never comfortable. And the voice of the Holy Spirit is always, always there saying, my son, my daughter, turn from this, turn into righteousness so that I may be revealed to you. Don't let the testimony of my life within you be marred by this.

Don't let the water that comes from your life be spewed because it comes through a pipe that's not clean. Don't let that be a testimony. Remember, this is about forgiveness.

So when you stand praying this kind of prayer, if anyone, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him. Isn't that amazing? Forgive. If you want this kind of faith, it comes to those who stand on this cornerstone of forgiveness.

I was years ago as a Christian, I was transferred into public relations for a season, maybe a four or five year period in the police department where I worked in Canada. And when I went into the office, there was a guy, his name was Tom. He's about 34, 35 years, an Irishman, fairly stout, big guy.

He was transferred in because he had a fatal illness. He was given a very short prognosis. He wasn't going to actually live that long.

He had a disease in his body and it was kind of a mercy thing. The chief of police knew his family, so he was transferred into our office to answer the phone until he was so incapacitated that he wouldn't be able to do that anymore. He told me his situation right out of the gate.

After being there a little while and just living as a Christian in the office, one day he said to me, what is it that I see in you? I see something in your life. I hear something in your voice. He said, what is it that I'm looking at? And so I explained to Tom the way of salvation.

I explained to him about eternal life through Jesus Christ, God's willingness to forgive him of all the wrong that he had done. If he's willing to be honest with God, to confess it and be willing to turn away from those things that had been part of his life, that forgiveness could be his and the promise of a new life. I remember Tom saying, Carter, I want that in my life.

And right in the office, I led him in prayer to receive Christ as his savior. It was such a wonderful thing. It was shortly after that, I come in one day and Tom is just beside himself.

He's just absolutely beside himself. He said, Carter, I went to the doctor today and my disease is gone. It's gone.

He said, and the doctor told me, Tom, you have had a miracle. The disease you had does not go away ever on its own. It just gets progressively worse till it takes the person's life.

It has it. He says, I have no medical explanation for what happened to you. So I said this to Tom, I said, Tom, what then do you think happened to you? Because we never prayed for healing.

I never prayed for healing. He didn't pray for healing. Neither one of us did.

But here was the testimony out of the mouth of a man who was saved maybe at this point, maybe about a month or so. Here was his testimony. He said, when I was a boy, my father was a mean, evil man.

And he would make me stand in a bathtub full of cold water. And he said, he would take his belt off and he would beat me on my back and on my buttocks. He said, until there were scars on my back and my buttocks, he said, I hate that man.

And I lived to see him suffer. I lived to one day being beside his death bed where he's grasping for air, just a gloat over his death. He said, I so hated that man.

But he said, when I came to Christ, in my heart, I said, God, if you've forgiven me, what right do I have not to forgive my father? And you know, the interesting thing, Dan, is nobody ever taught him that. He just instinctively knew it in his heart. And so here's what he said to me.

I went home one night and I said, God, I forgive my father for everything he's done to me. And he said, with the bitterness towards my father, when it left my life, the disease in my body went with it. That was his testimony.

Nobody coached him to say it. That was his testimony. Remember, he said, if you stand praying and you have anything against anyone, forgive him that your father in heaven may also forgive you.

And we're talking about prayer that moves mountains. We're talking about prayer that moves something that we cannot move in our own strength. There's no way to get rid of it.

There's no way to push it away. It has to be the hand of God. Here's a baby Christian.

Isn't that amazing? Who knows almost nothing doctrinally, who gets a miracle that many of us in the church, most of our lives never see. With all of our study and all the things we do. And is it as simple as forgiving? Is it as simple as forgiving? Somebody, that person that's coming to your mind right now, as I speak, that you'd be willing to go to Africa and just burn out for God, but not forgive him, not forgive her, not let go of that debt, not put away that memory.

You see? But sometimes the power of God that he wants to release in us and through us is hindered. Because Jesus didn't just add that on. He didn't just say, well, that's only three verses.

I got to add something to that. No, he built this kind of faith on the foundation of forgiveness. It wasn't an add on.

He talked about, you can move mountains into the sea, whatever you ask, when you pray, believe and you'll receive it. And then he says, and as a continuation of that thought, when you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him. If your father is in heaven, may forgive you.

So while we're looking at this verse in the scripture, I want to look at the context of this verse. What brought these words about? Why did Jesus say this to his disciples and what preceded it? You know, actually to understand the verse in scripture, a lot of times we have to look at what comes before and especially what comes before, sometimes what comes after. So what is the actual context? What is happening here? We have to go back to verse 12.

Now we know that Jesus is coming into the season where the fulfillment of the will of his father is going to happen in the redemption of humanity. In verse 12, it says, now the next day, when he had come out of Bethany, he was hungry and seeing from afar a fig tree having leaves, he went to see if perhaps he would find something on it. And when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves for it was not the season for figs.

In response, Jesus said to it, let no one eat fruit from you ever again. And his disciples heard it. Now, so this is an account that's being written down by Mark, whether he saw it firsthand or whether it was delivered to him, he's writing down this account.

And it's from the perspective of those who are watching the actions of Jesus. So it's important to understand that when we read this, because in my opinion, it's accurate from the vantage point of somebody who's watching it, but it might not be fully describing what is happening. Now, the next day they came out of Bethany, he was hungry.

He might have been hungry. He might not have been hungry. It was an assumption.

You know, if you and I were there, we're about to record this. We're watching. We're coming back out of Bethany.

We're going up the mountainside as it is up into Jerusalem. On the way, Jesus stops at a fig tree and the writer assumes, or whoever relayed the story, because he was hungry. And seeing from afar off a fig tree

having leaves, he went to see if perhaps he would find something on it.

Now, God is omniscient. That means God knows everything. There's no such a thing as Jesus approaching a tree to see if there's any fruit on it.

He knows if there's fruit on that or there's not fruit on that tree. And when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves for it was not the season for figs. So that even doubles it up.

He's heading to the tree, according to the writer, to see if he would find something on it in a season when it's not the time for that tree to bear fruit. So it's a kind of a double entendre in that sense. So either Jesus doesn't know everything or he's trying to teach something or something is going on here that the casual observer is not fully aware of.

Now he comes to the tree and when he sees that there's no figs on it, he says in response, Jesus said to it, let no one ever eat fruit from you ever again. And his disciples heard it. So the son of God, as they saw it, okay, now just follow me on this trend of thought.

The son of God is coming out of Bethany. He's going back up into Jerusalem. He's about to go into the temple.

On his way, it is supposed he's hungry. He approaches a fig tree. It's not the season for figs.

He finds nothing on it and finding nothing on it, he curses the tree. Now doesn't that make the son of God rather fickle? Doesn't it make him a vindictive little petty in a sense? Oh, there's no fruit on you, curse you. As if he's just throwing around power like just to show you I can curse the tree and I have the power.

And of course, if you look at it and just read it the way it's been recorded, that's the way you see it. But there's something else I believe anyway, at least it's my opinion. And when I say it's my opinion, you can take it for what it's worth.

But this is the way I actually look at this. Now this is a fig tree, okay? And the scripture says he was hungry. So the question is, what is he hungry for? If he was hungry, what's he hungry for? Genesis, in Genesis chapter 3 and verse 7, when Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, okay, the Bible tells us that they were naked and didn't know they were naked.

Why is that? Because they were, in my opinion, they were covered with the glory of God. Remember when Moses came down from the mountain, his face shone. Angels reflect the glory of God.

And Adam and Eve had unrestricted access to God in the Garden of Eden. So the glory of God must have most clearly been not only reflected in them, but it was their covering. That's my opinion again.

They were covered in the glory of God. So when they sinned, the glory of God departed from them. And when the glory of God departed, the Shekinah, in a sense, it was on them.

They looked and they saw that they were naked. So what did they do when they saw they were naked? Genesis 3, 7 says, the eyes of both of them were open. They knew that they were naked and they sewed what together? Fig leaves and made themselves covering.

You know how ridiculous they must have looked? You imagine having had the glory of God and now you're wearing fig leaves? Imagine Adam and Eve with a hat, you know, like it looked like a lampshade on

their head of fig leaves and a skirt made of fig leaves. How ridiculous they would have looked. You know, sometimes religion can make people look like that.

It's just an attempt to cover oneself with whatever's around. And they took fig leaves, which offered a covering of sorts, right? They're kind of a broad, greeny, flat leaf. And they made a skirt and they made probably a hat.

And you imagine how absurd they must have looked in the garden. Losing the glory and covering yourself with fig leaves. And God had come down into the garden for fellowship with Adam and Eve because He hungered for their fellowship.

He hungered. I know God is complete in Himself. I know that.

I know God doesn't need anything because He's complete as Himself in God. But He can make Himself desire us. He can make Himself want us.

But, you know, clearly God can never forget anything. He can't forget a single thing. But yet in Isaiah it says, I will cause myself to forget.

I will remember your sins no more. So He can make Himself desire us. He came down into the garden and He desired fellowship with Adam.

He made a friend in His image. I don't know how else to say it. He desired that fellowship.

I got in an argument one time with a theological fellow from Ireland. He said, I don't agree with you on that point. He said, God is completely self-contained.

He doesn't need us. Because I had made the statement that He passionately needs us. He passionately loves us.

He says, I don't agree with that. God's self-contained. So we agreed to disagree and we were staying in this place.

And I get up in the morning. I said, I have the answer. God gave me the answer.

I said, Jesus Christ died for me because He loves me and He needs me. But He died and He died for you because He felt obligated to. He didn't really need you.

He just felt obligated. I said, so we're both right. Isn't that exciting? So we reached a wonderful compromise.

So Jesus is coming out of Bethany and He's coming up into Jerusalem. Somebody assumed He was hungry, but what was He hungry for? He knew there was no fruit on this fig tree. He knew the besetting sin of humanity in the Garden of Eden was the ingested thought that Satan planted in humanity that we can cover ourselves and that we can be godly without God.

Remember? You can be a judge. You can be judges of what is good and what is evil. Satan was saying, you can be as God is in yourself.

You don't have to live by His rules. You don't have to dwell inside His boundaries He places around you and live by His word. You can be a free thinker.

And I believe that Satan, he had the nature of a serpent. A serpent can't hear and lives by its tongue. Do you know that? That's why he's called a serpent.

But I still personally believe he still had his beauty. And he said to Eve, especially, and then Adam, he said, look at me. I'm thinking independently and nothing has happened to me.

And when Eve saw that it was the fruit to be desired and something to make one wise, she partook. And so did her husband of this fact that you can live independently from God and somehow be as God is. And so Adam covers himself and Eve covers herself in fig leaves.

Jesus is coming out of Bethany and He has always longed for a return of fellowship with Adam and his descendants. The hunger was for you. The hunger was for everyone created in the image of God.

The hunger was for communion with those that He had created and breathed into and given life. You know, the Bible says that this love that God has in the book of Hebrews for us is a mystery that the angels desire to look into. They don't fully understand.

And when they look down, He lives in a place of perfection. Every created being that's around Him doesn't need redemption. Everything does His will.

Everything moves according to the slightest whim of His heart. And yet here's you and I, flawed, failing, struggling, fallen, trying to cover ourselves, trying to make our right choices and we make wrong ones. And the angels look over the balcony of heaven and they can't understand, God, why are these people the center of your affection? There's some things I'll never understand, but this one thing I know.

Jesus loves me. This I know, for the Bible tells me so. I know this without any shred of doubt in my heart whatsoever.

And I see Him coming out of Bethany, heading up, because He's going to the cross to get us back. And the fig tree represents Adam and Eve in the garden, and every one of their descendants that was lost because of sin. Everyone who's ever tried to find comfort and covering in those things that do not cover and do not satisfy.

And He walked up and, remember, Satan showed Adam and Eve into humanity that you can be God without the presence of God in your life, without submission to God, without a living relationship with God. And so he walks up to the tree looking for fruit. And there's none, because it's not the season, because it's the season of humanity still covering themselves in their own work.

And then he curses the tree, which is in effect cursing the logic of Satan. Right there it says, no one eat fruit from you ever again. This power that you had to deceive those that are the closest to my heart, and to deceive humanity into thinking that people can be God by their own human effort, and cover themselves with their own coverings.

No one eat fruit of you ever again, because He's about to go to the cross and He's about to destroy. As was prophesied in the Garden of Eden, He's about to put His foot on the head of the serpent. He's about to crush this mind, this thinking process of Satan.

And He's going to have a seed, in a sense, that's going to be part of that incredible victory. And that seed is called the Church of Jesus Christ. So they came to Jerusalem.

And then Jesus went into the temple, verse 15 of Mark 11. And He began to drive out those who bought and sold to the temple, overturned the tables of the money changers, and the seats of those who sold doves. And He would not allow anyone to carry wares to the temple.

And He taught them saying, is it not written, my house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations, but you have made it a den of thieves. You see, the thievery of all this religion that had tried to make coverings for humanity by human effort, is that it had stolen from the people a living relationship with God. A prayerless church is a den of thieves, in my opinion, because it's through prayer, it's through communion with God, it's through living relationship with God that we begin to bear fruit, that we come back into right relationship, that the glory of God begins to touch.

We cast off all of our homemade covering, and the glory of God covers us one more time through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

It's the only time in the New Testament that you see the tangible anger of Jesus Christ, is when He walked into His house, and it ceased to be a place of prayer. It had ceased to be a place because it was in His heart. Remember, when Solomon dedicated the temple of God in the Old Testament, Solomon stood on the scaffold and he prayed a prayer, something like this, I'm paraphrasing it.

Oh God, Almighty God, let Your glory always be here. And when Your people are put to the worst before their enemies, and they call out to You here, answer their prayer. If we've got mildew or blasting or enemies in our nation, and we come to this place and we call out, answer us.

If the stranger comes into this house with questions in his or her heart because they've heard of Your glory, when they call, when they lift their voice, answer them and be God to them. It's amazing when you begin to look and in 2 Chronicles 7, verse 12, the scripture says, the Lord appeared to Solomon by night and said to him, I've heard your prayer and I've chosen this place for myself as a house of sacrifice. And when I shut up heaven, that there is no rain or command the locusts to devour the land or send pestilence among my people, if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, I will forgive their sin and heal their land.

He says, now my eyes will be open and my ears listening to prayer made in this place, for I have chosen and sanctified this house that my name may be there forever. And my heart, my eyes and my heart will be there perpetually. You see what he was saying in Solomon, I heard you.

And when people, my eyes are going to be open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. And I'm going to be waiting and I'm going to be listening for the prayers that are prayed in this place, because these are my people and I'm going to answer them when they call out there. When they come to the realization that they can't deliver themselves, I will be their deliverer.

When they can't protect themselves, I will be their protector. When they can't cover themselves, I will be their covering. You see, you see this temple dedication, the heart of God to answer prayer.

You see, that's why there was such anger in the heart of Jesus Christ when he walked in and it had become a casual place. It had become a place where there's just buying and selling going on. They were, they were making it a place of convenience and taking away in a sense, the sense of awe and the holiness of God.

Historians tell us that in the outer court of the temple, on one side of the outer court was a market and on the other side of the outer court were the dwelling places. And people, instead of walking around the outer court and treating the palace of God or the temple of God as a sanctified, holy place, they were taking the groceries and they were cutting through the temple. That's why he said he caused them when he went enough to carry these things through the outer court of the temple any longer.

And he says, it is written, my house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations, but you've made it a den of thieves. Now in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots. You see what's all happening leading up to this.

From the fig tree, cursing the fig tree into the temple, overthrowing the tables. Now it's morning. They're going back again.

They've been in Bethany perhaps overnight. They're going back into the city again. And as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots.

And Peter remembering said to him, Rabbi, he said, look, the fig tree which you cursed has withered away. You see, and then he says, have faith in God telling the disciples, but not only the fig tree, but the mountain. The fig tree is that which represents the false coverings that we try to place on ourselves or the, may I put it this way, the efforts of religion, trying to sanctify ourselves through human effort, trying to bear fruit that can only be borne by the indwelling presence of God, trying to be godly when we're, we can't be godly in our own strength, failing to yield, not being in a place where we're just abandoned to God coming into his house and saying, Lord, help me please.

I need your help, God. Trying to still do it ourselves and trying to put on our own fig leaves. They pass by.

It's withered away from the roots. And he says, have faith in God, for truly I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, be removed and cast into the sea and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done. He will have whatever he says.

Therefore, I say to you, whatever things you ask for when you pray, believe that you'll receive them and you will have them. You see, we have the power in Christ to curse all of the false comfort, all the false things that have offered us comfort, but they don't come from God. We have the power to curse everything we've we've looked at, we've put in our bodies, every thought we've allowed in our mind, every everything that we think is going to bring us comfort, but it's not coming from God.

We have in Christ the power to look these things in the eye and say, I curse you in the name of Jesus. I curse your false comfort that you offer me, whether it's pornography, whether it's alcohol, whether it's just a mind that's given to fiction, whatever it is, whatever place of comfort that is not found in the living relationship with God, we have the power to curse these things. And it's so important that we win these personal battles in our own lives.

That's where it all begins. That's where mountain moving faith starts. Mountain moving faith starts with me winning my battles that nobody else but me knows about.

David, the young king, he won the battle with the lion and the bear before he went into public ministry and took on the giant. And we've got to fight and win our personal battles in the wilderness where nobody but God knows and nobody but God sees. But I challenge you, if we're going to learn to pray, we start by saying you, whatever that you is, you have no power over me anymore, and you're not going to, you're not

going to deceive me by offering me comfort that doesn't exist because there is no fruit in you.

We can stand, we have the power in God to stand before our own fig tree, whatever that fig tree is, the illusion that you're going to win the lottery one day. You shouldn't be playing the lottery, but if you are, remember to tithe here to this chair. I'm just kidding.

But the illusion that the lottery is going to satisfy one day and you're going to get your ship is going to come in and all the rest of this stuff. And you have the power to say, I withstand you in the name of Jesus Christ. In the name of Jesus Christ, you can't deceive me any longer.

In the name of Jesus Christ, I'm going to get free from your deception and the lack of fruitfulness and the false covering that it puts on my life. In the name of Jesus Christ, I'm done with pretending I'm victorious in the house of God if I'm not coming in with fig leaves and covering my fruitlessness. No more, I'm not going to do that anymore.

And once we've had this personal victory, then we can start speaking to that, which is trying to cover our children. What's out there trying to cover, trying to offer false hope to our sons and daughters and our spouse or our grandchildren or whatever it is, anybody in our family. We have now authority in prayer because we started where we start with ourselves.

No more false covering, no more illusions in my life. Now we start to pray for our children. Now we can, as Jesus did, we can stand and we can pray and say, devil, I come against you in the name of Jesus Christ.

And this false covering you're giving to my daughter or my son and thinking that marrying an ungodly person is going to satisfy them. I stand against it in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Whatever it is, whether it's the internet they're on, whatever it is, we have the power in Christ.

We do have the power to make a difference. We have the power to pray. We have the power to come into the presence of God.

It doesn't have to be in a church. It can be in your bed at night. We have the power to pray.

Remember he said, whatever you ask for in prayer, believing you shall receive it. Now that's either true or that's a lie. You can't have, there's no other, there's no middle ground in this thing.

He either meant it or he lied. And then we come to the mountain. Now the mountain is where it gets interesting.

You know, brother Dan, the only, I've been there a few times. The only mountain, if you're coming in from Bethany, is Jerusalem. It's the entire religious system that's giving a false covering to the people.

Isn't it amazing? Not just the fig tree, but it's a grove of fig trees on the mountain. And it's the entire system. And he says, you can say to this mountain, be removed and be cast into the sea.

And if you don't doubt. And when he went to the cross, how long was it before Jerusalem was cast into the sea? 70 years. The whole system was cast into the sea.

And Jerusalem, the Jews in a sense were dispersed shortly after. And so he was, the only mountain he could have been speaking about was Jerusalem itself. It's the highest point in the whole area.

Not only to this fig tree, but to this mountain. You see, because he was going to go to the cross and the cross was going to defeat the mountain and the mountain represented fig leaves. That deceptive covering.

If you say, well, was it really that deceptive? It says in verse 18, the scribes and chief priests heard it and they sought how they might destroy him. But they feared him because all the people were astonished at his case. See this, this fig tree religion wanted to kill him because Satan was at the core of it.

And the whole thing was a false covering. That's why he went to the Pharisees and he said, you, you adorn yourself outwardly with wonderful robes. And he said, but inwardly you're full of dead men's bones.

That was the fig tree. You offer fruit, but there is no fruit in you. And so I speak to you.

And he did. No one will eat fruit from you forever. In other words, I'm going to the cross and I'm going to destroy your power.

And he's speaking now eternally. You will, you will, you will be proven to be bankrupt. You will be totally destroyed.

I'm going to go and I'm going to be victorious over you. I'm going to step my foot on your head and I'm going to have a bride that's going to do the same. Hallelujah.

There is liberty in Jesus Christ. There is life in Jesus Christ. And there's no need for any fake covering in the kingdom of God.

No need to play games. Why would you play games when you can have the real thing? Now think it through for a moment. You can have the real thing.

Why would you want to pretend you have the real thing when you can have the real thing and you can have it for free on top of that? You know, it's as dumb as a man counterfeiting money in his basement and his next door neighbor is giving out free money in the front yard. You're producing a false thing and right next door is the real thing for free. Isn't that, isn't it, it's a wonderment what we become without God when we bite into the lie.

The good news is you have the power to curse the fig tree in yourself and your children, and then you can take on the mountain. In your case, it's Kaiser and everything around here. That's your mountain.

The whole system that deceives young people and wants to take their lives. The whole system that's telling young people, just take drugs and you're going to be happy, or just have more sex and it will fulfill the longing in your heart. The whole system of deception can be cast into the sea by believing people.

This is red letter in my Bible. That means it's truth. Well, the whole thing is truth, but this, this is, this is truth truth.

Because it's red, it makes it truth truth because, and I think it's red because it's blood, it's blood truth. You know what I mean? You, it can't be contravened. It is truth.

And I remember the first days when I began to, I began to realize these things and lay hold of them and begin to pray and begin to believe and, and, and realize that, hey, if I'm going to be a Christian, I don't have to fake it. I may have to faith it for a while, but I don't have to fake it. And, and just like, just like with Sarah, the, the promise was there, but it took what? Eight months from the time the word of the Lord came

to you, it took eight months.

And then you stood on your feet and the miracle was complete. It doesn't all happen overnight. You know, the fig tree, the roots dried up, but it was still standing.

It just dried up and the fig tree could do all, all it, all it wanted to prove it was still alive, but it was dead. That's why the scripture says, if we're in Christ, we'll become a new creation. The old things in our lives pass away.

They might stand for a little while, but they're passed away. It's like a dead man. They're still standing.

They just haven't fallen over yet. And all things, not something, all things come new. I've lived it.

Oh God, I've lived it. Oh God, it gives you a thirst for him. It gives you, it gives you this insatiable thirst for him.

I feel like the, I feel like the guy in the back of the room, you know, that the talent's taken away from the man who won't use it. And he's the guy in the back that already has a pen and says, give it to me. Give it to me.

I'll use it. You know, give me, give me one more ability. Give me one more talent.

Give me one more opportunity. Give me, give me one more moment that I may glorify you. Give me one more ounce of faith to believe you God.

Give me everything that I need because I can't bear fruit without you. And I have been bearing fruit because of you. And so father, I just want to thank you tonight, God.

I want to thank you for these precious people, oh God. And I love the fact that, that we are your plan A. We are not plan B in the kingdom of God. Oh Jesus Christ, we're not any more deficient than anybody that's ever come before us.

Thank you, Lord, that you made a way, you absolutely made a way that we can be a people of faith and that our prayers can actually matter. Would you help us tonight to forgive? Would you help us to be built on the foundation of forgiveness? Would you, would you help us to deal honestly with the things that we thought were going to give us comfort and they don't? Would you help us to put away our own efforts to be holy and to just trust you that abiding in you, we will bear fruit? Would you give us the faith to believe for our sons and daughters and for our grandchildren and to, and to, to command these, the deception that is just rampant in this world to, to lose its hold on them, its false promises of bearing fruit and offering covering? And would you make us warriors in your kingdom that we can stand and by faith, by faith, tear down this kingdom of darkness that lives all around us and see the people set free. By faith, we can see a spiritual awakening as, as people leave that mountain of delusion and come to the place where Jesus is.

God, I ask Lord for, that you might take my life and use it for greater glory in the future than I've ever known in my lifetime. And I recognize it's not by might or by power, but by your spirit. Lord, help me to deal honestly before you and before people.

Help me to have faith, God, for my wife. Help me to have faith for my children. Help me to have faith for my grandchildren.

My God, make me a warrior. God, I pray that my prayers would have weight and faith that you would use my life and my own family to make a difference, God. Jesus, thank you, Lord.

Give me the grace, Lord, to forgive when I need to forgive and forget what I need to forget. Give me the grace, Lord, for I need you in this. I can't forgive without you, Lord, but with you, all things are still possible.

Hallelujah. You know that song, Draw Me Close to You? Draw me close to you. Never let me go.

Draw me close to you. Never let me go. I lay it all down again.

To hear you say that I, you are my desire. You are my desire. No one else will do, cause nothing else could take your place.

To feel the warmth of your grace. Help me find a way. Bring me back to you.

You're all I want. You're all I've ever needed, Lord. You're all I want.

Help me know you are near. Sing that chorus again. You're all I want.

You're all I've ever needed, Lord. You're all I want. Help me know you are near.

I want to give an altar call tonight. I'm going to sing that again. It's just for people to say, God, I've heard you.

I've heard you, Lord. I've heard something from your heart. I want to be a person who has the power in prayer to curse the fig tree and all it represents in my life and my family.

I want the power because you said not just the fig tree, but the mountain. God, we need people with faith to move this mountain of deception that's in this generation. Mountains of deception in our schools and among our youth, Lord.

I want to be one of those people. I want to forgive God. I know I can't in my own strength, but you can help me.

You can forgive through me, Lord. I can't cover it up any longer. I can't pretend I'm forgiven when I haven't.

Lord, this kind of faith is built on that foundation. So God, I pray for the grace, Lord, that I need tonight. So if that's you, just slip out wherever you are and just come.

Just come to this altar and come and just you can either stand or kneel before God, whatever you choose to do, but just come and we're going to pray together tonight. You're all I want. You're all I've ever needed, Lord.

You're all I want. Help me know you were here. You're all I want.

You're all I've ever needed, Lord. You're all I want. Help me know you were here.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Thank you, Jesus.

Thank you, Lord. We love you, Lord. We love you, Lord.

Thank you for first loving us. Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Jesus.

Thank you, Jesus. You call me out upon the waters to the great unknown. Where my feet may fail, and then I find you in the mystery of oceans deep.

My faith will stand. And I will call upon your name and keep my eyes above the waves. When oceans rise, my soul will rest in your embrace.

For I am yours and you are mine. Your grace abounds in deepest waters. Your sovereign hand will be my guide.

When oceans rise, my soul will rest in your embrace. For I am yours and you are mine. Where feet may fail, when fear surrounds me in oceans deep, my faith will stand.

And I will call upon your name and keep my eyes above the waves. When oceans rise, my soul will rest in your embrace. For I am yours and you are mine.

Spirit, lead me where my trust is without borders. Let me walk upon the waters. Wherever you would call me.

Take me deeper than my feet could ever wander. And my faith will be made stronger in the presence of my Savior. Spirit, lead me where my trust is without borders.

Let me walk upon the waters. Wherever you would call me. Take me deeper than my feet could ever wander.

And my faith will be made stronger in the presence of my Savior. And I will call upon your name and keep my eyes above the waves. When oceans rise, my soul will rest in your embrace.

For I am yours and you are mine. You may remember this old hymn. Let's sing a hymn tonight.

Lord, lift me up and let me stand on faith on heaven's table land. A higher place. That I have found.

Lord, plant my feet on higher ground. Lord, lift me up and let me stand on faith on heaven's table land. A higher place that I have found.

Lord, plant my feet on higher ground. Sing it to me again. Lord, lift me up.

Yes, God. And let me stand by faith on heaven's table land. A higher place that I have found.

Lord, plant my feet on higher ground. I love you, Lord. And I lift my voice to worship you, O my soul.

Rejoice. Take joy, my King, in what you hear. Let it be a sweet, sweet sound in your ear.

I'm just going to sing that very, very softly for a moment. And as we do, I would encourage you to begin to pray along the lines of what you heard tonight. Whatever you find in your own life that needs to be withstood and put away, whatever you, your family, your children, take authority, take authority, take authority.

If you need to forgive, forgive by the grace of God and by the strength of God. Just acknowledge that God will have to give you the strength to do this. And now, when you forgive somebody, it doesn't mean what

they did was right.

It just means that you choose to forgive because you want to be a person that can pray and make a difference. And some are going to be led to pray for the mountain that's in this community, that's around your neighborhood, that you just see, you see it out your window every day, see it in the workplace. You realize that Jesus said, I give you authority to cast this thing into the sea, to break its power.

Hallelujah. God, would you help us to believe? Help us, Lord. Help us.

We feel like the man with a child that came to you and said, I believe, Lord, help my unbelief. I believe as much as I can. And you have to take me beyond that, Lord, because I can only go so far.

And I recognize I can't fake this. This has to be real. But God, I want to believe.

I want to believe. Everyone here wants, we want to believe, Lord. We want to believe that we have the power over these things that have offered deception to us and those around us.

And so, God, we come to you tonight and we bring to you, as a little boy brought his little lunch and you fed 10,000 people with it, God, we bring the little bit of faith we have and we say, multiply it, Lord. Multiply it and feed thousands through it, God. Lord, we will give you the glory.

We can promise you that, for we know what we are. We know who we are. But, oh, God, may you help us to understand who you are.

You didn't speak in vain. You didn't just throw these words on a page to tease us. You spoke the truth, Lord.

And you told us that whatever we ask believing, we would receive it. God almighty. So we take you at your word tonight.

No apologies necessary. We take you at your word. There's no asterisk and no fine print on the bottom of the page.

You meant what you said. God almighty, thank you. Thank you for making it clear.

Thank you, God, for bringing us back to center again as your people. Thank you for giving us faith in our prayers, Lord. Thank you, God, for showing us how mad you were when the people had stopped praying.

It's in your heart to answer us, God. Oh, Jesus, Jesus, Son of God, increase our faith, my God. Help us to believe, Lord.

Take us where we need to go and make us into what only you can and give us an inheritance that can only come from you. God, help us to lift our voices tonight, God, and to pray for our families and to pray for our communities and our neighbors and our marriages, whatever it is, God, to lift our voice. So everybody now, everybody, just as I've done, would you lift your voice to God unashamedly, unashamedly.

He waits to hear your voice. Lift your voice to God tonight. Be part of the prayer tonight.

Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah. God, these prayers are like a sweet incense coming up before your throne. And you can look down and say, how I've longed to hear this.

How I've longed to hear these words. How I've longed for fellowship with those I've created. Oh, God, thank you, Lord.

Give us the courage to open our mouths. Give us the courage to boldly, boldly declare we believe you, Lord. Hallelujah.

Take a moment, just pray. Take a moment, just lift your voice to God. Don't wait for the person beside you.

Lift your voice to God. Go ahead, go ahead, unashamedly, unashamedly, unashamedly. Lift my voice to worship you, oh my soul.

Rejoice. Take joy, my King, in what you hear. Let it be a sweet, sweet sound in your ear.

Pastor Don, I felt that the Lord, the Holy Spirit was on you tonight during the worship. And would you come and lead us in prayer? Could you please? Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Jesus. Dear Heavenly Father, we come to you tonight, Lord, with great force.

Lord, I thank you. I just want to give you praise first. I want to give you glory.

I want to give you honor for all that you've done, but not just what you've done, but Lord, what we know you're going to do. You're an amazing God. You're an awesome God.

And we have lived in your goodness. And Lord, we have yet more to see of what you're going to do. There's so much in our communities right now, and maybe even standing here, the people that are here tonight that need you in ways that we don't know.

And maybe they don't even realize what they need right now. But God, I ask in the name of Jesus that you'll come down and meet those needs right now. Every single one, Lord.

There's no distance in prayer. Whatever we have tonight, Lord, you can meet that need. You can meet every need tonight, Lord.

Every need. We don't have to leave here like we came. Lord, we can leave far better than we ever came knowing that, God, you are meeting.

And we can have that strong faith, even if it's the size of a mustard seed. Lord, we can have that, the faith that we need to receive what we need tonight. And not just for us, but for our families, for our community, for this area, for our schools, for our teenagers.

God, you see these for our families, for our grandchildren. God, thank you. Thank you for all that you've done.

I just want to give you praise for all that you've done. Give you glory because you're so good. You're so good.

Lord, the power that you have, we don't even realize. I thank you for the message that you've given us for these both days and tonight, Lord, that all that you've given us, Lord, that we can take and we just need to take it and we just need to chew on it. Lord, we just need to just glean from this and just gather what you have for us in our lives tonight.

God, bless us, help us, and keep us by your power. Cover us with the precious blood of Jesus right now tonight. God, cover us, cover us right now.

Lord, that we will just go from this place tonight, just continuing to give you praise and glory and honor for who you are and what I know, Lord, what I know that you're going to do. You're going to answer prayers that were sent up tonight, God. Prayers that are sent up tonight will be answered, and I thank you for that, Lord.

I thank you for that. We will give you praise and we will continue to praise you. Yes, we will.

Lord, we ask it all in the precious name of Jesus. The precious name of Jesus. Amen.

If you take a moment, just the last moment, and just two by two, pray for each other. Women with women, men with men, and husbands with wives. Just take a moment to pray for each other.

Would you do that right now? Just find a friend and pray. Just pray for each other. If you can't find somebody, join two and make it three.

Hallelujah. Just let your voice for the person beside you. God is hearing us tonight.

God is answering tonight. Hallelujah. Thank you, Lord.

Thank you, God. Your house is a house of prayer, Lord. Thank you, Jesus.

Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Jesus. Lord, I just ask you to release healing in this room, Lord.

God, as people are praying, the prison doors would open, blinded eyes would see a way forward, wounded hearts would be healed, marriages would be restored, backslidden children would suddenly have a thought in their heart to get up and come back home. God, thank you, Lord. Thank you that when your people pray, suddenly life comes.

Suddenly things move away. Suddenly the power of darkness dissipates. Father, thank you for this room.

Thank you for everything. The miracles happening here tonight, God. They are miracles, and we declare them to be so.

They are miracles, Lord, of deliverance, miracles of healing, transformed minds, changed lives. This is what your kingdom is all about, God. Lord, let an explosion of grace come from this place tonight, God, and spread throughout the churches in this area and into this community, my God.

Lord, we ask you to dissipate the darkness, God, that's all around this community, Lord. Push hell back into the sea, my God, and let the power of heaven be released, O God. Let people's minds suddenly clear up.

Let there be a sudden insatiable hunger for God, Lord, even tonight. Tonight, Lord, tonight. You said whatever we ask for, believing we would receive.

So tonight, God, start putting thoughts about eternity into people's minds. Give people a restless night who are living in sin. Don't let them sleep.

Let them find no comfort, no comfort in any sin that they're involved in. Let it not blind them any longer. Let it not offer a false fruit any longer.

God Almighty, we pray, Lord, for conviction of the Holy Spirit to rest upon this community. Break the backbone of sin and delusion and deception, my God, and let life and light begin to come into people's hearts. God, I ask you, Lord, for the pastors of this community for a new unction from heaven, a new anointing from God, a new authority, Lord, to stand in the pulpit and declare your word, God, in a way that penetrates people's hearts.

God Almighty encourages them to believe, sends them out as missionaries and ambassadors of a victorious kingdom. God, thank you for what you're going to do. Thank you, Lord.

Thank you, God. Thank you, Lord. Thank you, God.

Thank you for moving this mountain. Thank you, Lord, for all that is being accomplished this day. We give you praise and we give you glory for it in Jesus' name.

Can anybody just shout hallelujah? Oh, come on. Can you do better than that? Can you shout hallelujah in the presence of Jesus? Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah.

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