

(Through the Bible) Luke 11

by Chuck Smith

The sermon emphasizes the importance of prayer in accomplishing God's will and purposes, and encourages listeners to be persistent and open to God's will.

Duration: 1:15:17

Scripture: Luke 11:5-10, Luke 11:27-30, Luke 11:33-36

Topics: "Persistent Prayer", "Gods Providence"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker tells a story about a man who goes to his friend's house in the middle of the night to borrow some bread. The friend initially refuses to help, but eventually gives in because of the man's persistence. The speaker then contrasts this with how God, as our heavenly Father, is always willing to give us good gifts when we ask. He emphasizes that we don't need to be persistent with God because He already knows our needs. The speaker also warns against seeking to provoke or accuse Jesus, as some people did during his time on earth.

Transcript

Tonight, chapter 11 of the Gospel according to Luke. Again, as Luke is pointing out, the human side of Jesus. Though He was God, He became man.

He is the God-man. He is divine and yet He is human. The perfect balance.

And whereas John points out the divinity of Christ in his Gospel, which we will be entering into next, Luke points out the humanity of Jesus. And because this is the special emphasis of Luke, he does record more than any of the other Gospel writers concerning the prayer life of Jesus Christ. And so Luke mentions many cases where Jesus was praying.

And again, in beginning, the 11th chapter, Luke tells us, and it came to pass that as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, one of His disciples said unto Him, Lord, teach us to pray as John also taught his disciples. Prayer is something that can be learned, but learned best through practice. I have observed that those men who are engaged in the all-night ministry of prayer here at Calvary Chapel have really learned to pray.

As I am in a group of men and we are praying, as one of them leads out in prayer, I can always tell the men who are engaged in that all-night ministry of prayer, it shows in their prayers. It is reflected. They've

really learned how to pray.

Of course, you spend a few nights in prayer and you really learn. You've got a lot of chance to practice. But it really shows.

It's really a skill that can be developed through practice. And the disciples, one of them asked the Lord, Lord, just teach us to pray. And it's something that we all need to learn.

We need to learn how to pray more effectively. And there is much to be learned on the subject of prayer. Now, Jesus taught by an example.

Giving to them a model prayer. Not one that was to be memorized and recited verbatim. But in the model, there is the basic structure for all prayer.

So Jesus said to them, when you pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Prayer always begins with relationship. If there is not an established relationship, there is no basis for prayer.

The Father's ear is always open to the children's cry. And if you have that relationship with God where you can say, Father, then you've established that relationship that opens prayer for you. Effective prayer for you.

But if you do not have that relationship, then prayer is meaningless. There's only one prayer that God wants to hear from you if you're not His child, and that's the prayer, God be merciful to me, a sinner. And that establishes then relationship and opens this glorious opportunity of prayer for each one of you.

But prayer begins with relationship. Our Father which art in heaven, and that reverence of God hallowed be Thy name, or reverend be Thy name. The name of God is a name that in the Hebrew was an active verb, which meant the becoming one.

How it was pronounced is something that we are not certain of. There are those who say Jehovah. There are those who say Yahweh.

All we have are the consonants, Y-H-V-H. They left out the vowels so that we do not know what was the actual pronunciation. But most scholars conclude that it was Yahweh.

But it is the Hebrew verb, the becoming one. The name of God is significant because in it God expresses what He wants to be to you. He wants to become to you whatever your need may be.

So, the Jehovah, or the Yahweh, was used in compound forms. You had Yahweh t'sidkenu, the Lord has become our righteousness. Yahweh Rafa, the Lord our healer.

Yahweh Yaira, the Lord our provider. And all of these compound forms of the name of Yahweh by which God expresses His nature and that which He wants to be to you. In prayer, it's helpful if you understand that God desires to become to you whatever your particular need might be.

If you are praying for healing, then He becomes the Jehovah Rafa or the Yahweh Rafa, the Lord our healer. He becomes what you need. And whatever might be the need that will be expressed in the prayer is exactly what God wants to become to you, the one who will provide that need in your life.

Hallowed be Thy name. And let me say that as far as I am concerned, the only name that is reverend is the name of the Lord Yahweh. I do not like the title of Reverend Charles Smith.

Whenever I get mail to Reverend Charles Smith, I know that they don't know me because I don't think there's anything reverend about the name Charles at all. And some write The Reverend Charles Smith, which is supposed to be a little more impressive. And I like it that much less.

And then there are those who go all out and write The Most Reverend Charles Smith. Just call me Chuck, please. Hallowed be Thy name.

The reverence due to the name of God. Now, the purpose of prayer is not to get your will done. The purpose of prayer is to accomplish God's will.

So, prayer moves in a cycle. It begins with God, His purposes, His desires, which He makes known to our hearts, which we utter as our prayer back to God, which then God fulfills. And so, prayer moves in a cycle.

But the cycle begins with God and the purposes of God. It is tragic that there are many people today who look upon prayer as an instrument for the accomplishing of their will upon the earth. Now, God, this is what I want.

And I demand, God, that You do this. And they hold the Scripture up to God and make their demands. Prayer is never intended, was never intended to be an instrument by which man's will could be accomplished upon the earth.

And the primary thrust of prayer is always the will and the purpose of God. And so, it is significant that the first petition in the prayer is, Thy kingdom come. God's will.

God's purposes. That's what prayer is about. Thy kingdom come.

Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth. And so, the purpose of our prayer should be to see the will of God being done here upon the earth. You say, but didn't Jesus give us some pretty broad promises in prayer? Didn't Jesus say, and whatsoever things you desire when you pray, believe that you receive them and you shall have them? Didn't Jesus say, and if ye shall ask the Father for anything in My name, I will do it, that the Father might be glorified in the Son? Didn't He say, ask and ye shall receive? Yes, He did.

But in each one of these cases, who was He talking to? Was He talking to the multitudes? Or was He talking to His disciples? And if you will read the Scriptures carefully, you'll find that in each of these cases, He was addressing His disciples. And what constitutes discipleship? If any man will come after Me, Jesus said, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me. So, whatsoever things you desire when you pray, believe that you receive them.

Who is He talking to? The disciples, who have denied themselves and have taken up their cross to follow Him. Therefore, their prayers will be reflective of the life of self-denial and the purposes of God being wrought. It would be the thrust of the prayer of that person who has denied himself and has taken up his cross to follow Jesus.

Prayer was never intended to be an instrument for the accomplishing of man's will upon the earth, but the instrument for the accomplishing of God's will upon the earth. For you see, the earth is in rebellion against God. The earth is under the power of Satan.

His will is being done upon the earth. Satan is sitting upon the throne, ruling over the earth, the world system. Now it is God's desire to bring the earth back under His government, under His kingdom and His reign.

And so God gets men upon the earth who are aligned with Him, and He establishes through them a beachhead here on the planet earth. And then He uses them as instruments to enlarge that beachhead to take back the world for God. We're in a battle.

And the purpose of the battle is the control of the earth. And we who have come in submission unto God then exercise prayer, that power that God has given to us in order that we might expand the beachhead that God has upon this planet and bring His love and grace and His power and His kingdom into other lives of those around us. And that's why God has you here.

And if you are using your time for any other purposes, you're just wasting your time as far as God is concerned. He has a purpose and a plan for you being here, and that is the expanding of His kingdom upon the earth. But there are many evangelists today that would change this prayer to, my kingdom come, my will be done on this earth even as it is in heaven.

But that's not what Jesus prayed. And that's not what we're to pray. There is so much selfishness in our prayers.

So many prayers for personal gain and personal possessions and those very things that could be extremely detrimental to our walk with the Lord. Having established first things first, then He moves on to the personal petitions. And there is nothing wrong with personal petitions as long as they are in the proper place.

Give us day by day our daily bread. Interesting, isn't it? Lord, give me enough bread for the 1983 that's coming up. No.

God gives us day by day our daily bread that we might live a life of constant trust in Him. As thy day is, so shall thy strength be. So often, God does not give us more than just enough for today.

And you shouldn't be concerned or worried if you don't have enough for tomorrow. For the Lord said you shouldn't really be worrying about tomorrow. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

Give us day by day our daily bread. God took care of us today. And the Father will take care of us tomorrow and the next day and each day that comes.

And we don't have to worry. Forgive us our sins. Oh, what an important prayer.

For we also forgive everyone that is indebted to us. Forgive us, Lord. And Jesus teaches that we will be forgiven as we forgive others.

There is much to be said by Jesus on the subject of forgiveness. Suffice it tonight that we just say it is one of the signs of true conversion. And it is one of the most important things for your mental health that you have a forgiving spirit.

There are a lot of people today who are in institutions who don't have to be there. But there is a bitterness, an unforgiving spirit that has tormented them and has driven them to that point of being beside themselves. It is so important that you forgive.

Now, we've asked God to forgive us. It's important that we be forgiven, but it is equally important that we forgive. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

And so, the model that He established for prayer. Relationship. That purpose of prayer.

The accomplishing of God's kingdom and His will upon the earth. And then, our own personal needs. Now, continuing on the subject of prayer, Jesus said unto them, which of you shall have a friend and shall go unto him at midnight and say unto him, Friend, loan me three loaves of bread, for a friend of mine is on his journey and he's come to my house and I don't have anything to set before him.

And he from within shall answer and say, Don't trouble me, the door is shut and my children are with me in bed. I cannot rise and give to you. Now, it is helpful to understand a little bit about the culture of the Middle East, where hospitality is considered one of the highest virtues and an essential.

Whenever you have guests come, you are obligated as the host to set out food before them. And, however, they all lived in one little room. The whole family.

And when they would go to bed at night, they would actually just have mats that they would roll out on the floor. And the whole family would sleep close together for warmth. There would be a little fire in one portion of the room and often the animals would be in the room too.

The chickens and the lambs or whatever. They would be in the one little room sleeping with them at night. And here you'd be all huddled together with your family and someone's knocking on the door.

Now, once the door is closed, it was really considered impolite to knock on a closed door. When you closed the door, that meant don't disturb. When you woke up in the morning, you'd open the door and you'd leave the door open all day long and the people just come and go all day long and get coffee or tea or whatever.

But when at night you closed the door, that was a signal, don't disturb. And so you get ready to go to bed, you'd close the door and that was it. You'd huddle close with your family.

Now, if you get up in that kind of circumstance, the whole family wakes up. Everybody is disturbed. The animals start squawking and it's just a real mess inside.

So, Jesus paints a scene. Midnight. Family's all asleep.

The animals are all asleep. Here's some guy knocking on the door. Your neighbor, your friend.

He said, I need to borrow some bread. Three loaves of bread. I've had some company come.

I don't have anything to give to them. And of course, he was in a bad way because if you have company coming, you don't have anything to lay before them. That was disgraceful too.

And so the guy inside the house says, go away, don't trouble me. Now he said, I say unto you, though he will not rise and give him because he is his friend. Even though you're my friend.

Hey, that's no friend now. Go away, friend. But because of his importunity, now that word in the Greek is because of his continued shameless knocking.

Hey, he's not going to go away until he gets the bread. Waking everybody up. You know that you've had it.

You know he's not going to go away. He continues his shameless knocking at the door. So because of his continued shameless knocking, you get up and you go to get him his bread.

Something you wouldn't do just because he was a friend. But something you do because the guy just won't go away. His continued shameless knocking.

He will arise and give him as many as he needs. Get out of here. Take it, you know.

Now, Jesus is giving us an illustration of prayer. But it is important to note that Jesus often illustrated with contrast. So that the man knocking at the door is a type of a man praying.

Asking for a need of a friend. And this man is persistent. He continues to knock on the door until he gets his desired response.

Now, does that mean that we have to continue to pray until we break God down? Until he gets so sick of hearing us that he finally gives in and gives us what we want? No. Again, we have a contrast. If a man, a friend, will do something because of persistency, how much more will your father... In other words, he's using a bad illustration as far as the prayer was concerned.

Here's a man who is being moved because of importunity. The persistency of the one knocking. But with God, you don't have to be persistent.

Your father knows. We get another contrast down here. Again, if a son asks bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? And if you, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your father... You see, it's contrasting.

If you earthly fathers know how to give good gifts, how much more? So the contrast is intended not a parallel with God in the illustration. And so Jesus said, I say unto you, ask, and it shall be given you. Seek, and you shall find.

Knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asks, receives. And he that seeks, finds.

And to him that knocks, it shall be opened. Now again, on the subject of prayer, Jesus is saying, ask, seek, knock. James tells us that we have not because we ask not.

And that is so often true. People come and they pour out their tale of woe. Don't know what I'm going to do.

Oh, I just don't know what I'm going to do. Well, have you prayed? No. Well, you have not because you ask not.

Now, it is also possible, according to James, to ask, but ask amiss because my desire is to fulfill my will. It's prayer according to my will. I'm trying to do something to fulfill my own desires.

You ask amiss that you might consume it upon your own desires. So, prayer is asking. It is seeking.

It is knocking. And the promise is that if you ask, you will receive. Now, you may not always receive what you asked for.

Sometimes God has something better. And so there are many times that I have asked God for something and He didn't give me what I asked for, but He gave me something so much better. And many times, His answers of no were much better than His answers of yes would have been, as I learned later.

And though I moaned and complained because of the no answer, there always came that day when I said, oh, thank you, God. You're so smart. And I'm so glad that You didn't answer that prayer that I asked You for a while back.

Oh, thank you, Father. I realize the mess that I could have gotten into had God answered that prayer. Oh, He did answer it, but He answered it no.

If you ask, you will receive. If you seek, you will find. If you knock, it shall be opened.

And then, again, another illustration. Earthly fathers. The son is coming to you and he's asking, Dad, I want some bread.

And the dad hands him a stone and says, chew on that, son. Daddy, I'd like a tuna sandwich. And gives him a snake.

Daddy, can I have an egg? You offer him a scorpion. He says, no, you don't do that. You earthly fathers.

You wouldn't do that to your own children. Now, if you, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him? I'm sick and tired of the boogeyman stories concerning God. Of someone who was seeking that God might fill them with the Holy Spirit and they became possessed by some demon.

What is that declaring? Exactly the opposite of what Jesus said was the case. It's saying that our heavenly Father is evil. That someone was asking for bread and He gave them a stone.

They were asking for fish and He gave them a serpent. Not so. That is a blasphemous concept of God.

The Bible says that God delights to give good gifts to His children. I've heard people say, Oh, you better be careful how you open yourself to God. You just be careful.

You never know what's going to happen. Again, boogeyman stories. And they are blasphemous because they condemn the very nature of our righteous Holy Father.

Let me say this. I'm not afraid one iota of anything that God has for me or God wants for me. I want to always be totally open to God and my only fear is that I might not be open to something that God is wanting to do in my life.

I'm not the least bit afraid of anything that God may have for me or want for me. I'm not concerned that God's going to make some kind of a fool out of me. I'm perfectly capable of doing that for myself.

What I am fearful is that I might have a closed door somewhere to God and that He cannot do for me what He is wanting to do for me because of my limited faith or my presuppositional ideas that have limited that work that God is desiring to accomplish in my life. I want to be totally open. I want everything that God has for me.

I need everything that God has for me. And I don't want to have any closed doors when I come to God because I know that my Father loves me so much and His desire for me is for the very best for me because that's the way He loves me. And thus, I'm not afraid at all of any work that God is seeking to accomplish in my life.

Now, as Jesus was casting out a demon, the demon had taken over the motor functions of this particular person's speaking apparatus and caused the person to be dumb. I am in total disagreement with people who see demons in every malfunction of the human body. There are people that have gone overboard on this demon bit.

And it's dangerous. There are demons. I recognize that.

They are powerful. I recognize that. They are able to possess a human body and to distort the motor functions.

I recognize that. But every malfunctioning motor function of the body does not indicate demon possession. And that is a very sad and tragic concept that has hurt a lot of wonderful people.

In this particular case, the person's speaking ability was hampered by the demon. And so it came to pass when the devil was gone out that the dumb spake and the people wondered. But some of them said, he cast out devils through bells above the chief of the devils.

And others, tempting him, sought from him a sign from heaven. But he, knowing their thoughts, said unto them, knowing that they were suspicioning that maybe he was doing this by the power of the devil, he showed the inconsistency of the idea. He said, every kingdom that's divided against itself is brought to desolation.

A house divided against itself falls. And if Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? Because you say that I cast out devils through bells above. And if I by bells above cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore, they shall be your judges.

Now, they did have exorcism rites according to Josephus that were handed down from Solomon. They say that Solomon in all of his wisdom did devise certain drugs and all and incantations for the exorcising of demons. And there were those in those days, according to Josephus, who using these ancient rites of Solomon, were able to exorcise demons.

And Jesus was probably referring to these widely practiced and totally accepted exorcism rites of which Josephus spake. And he said, if I am casting out demons by bells above, then who are your sons casting them out by? They'll be your judges. But if I, with the finger of God, am casting out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God has come to you.

He's just asking them to use their reasoning powers. Jesus is reasonable and He asks you to be reasonable. They're making a ridiculous accusation.

He's casting out devils by the power of the devil. Jesus says, hey, that's ridiculous. If that's going on, then Satan's kingdom is divided against itself.

It's going to fall. You better be rejoicing at what I'm doing. But that's not the case.

If I am casting out devils, I'm doing it by the power of God. Then you better realize that the kingdom of God has come among you. And when a strong man, armed, keeps his palace, his goods are in peace.

But when a stronger than he shall come upon him and overcome him, he takes from him all his armor wherein he trusted and divides his spoils. Now, here we have a very important lesson concerning prayer. The strong man in this case is Satan.

He is armed. He's keeping his palace, his domain. But thank God we can come against the domain of Satan in the name of One who is stronger than Satan.

In the name of Jesus Christ. And we, through the power and the authority of the name of Jesus Christ, can spoil the stronghold that Satan has in people's lives. I am amazed at the control that Satan is able to exercise over people.

I have seen people's lives who are so bound by the power of Satan that they do not possess good common sense. They're irrational in regards to spiritual things. And there are those that when you listen to them talk, you observe their habits, you see the power of Satan manifested in such a strong way, we oftentimes just sort of back away and say, man, there's no help for that person.

They're really gone. But that is because we are so overawed at the power of Satan to take hold of a person's life that we fail to realize that there is One who is stronger than Satan. And the Bible says, greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world.

And God has left us here in order that we might exercise that authority and power of the name of Jesus by destroying the work of Satan in the lives of those people around us, by binding Satan's power in the authority of the name of Jesus, setting them free from that terrible hold that Satan has upon them and giving them the opportunity without that coercive force and power of Satan perverting their reasoning processes, let them make a reasoned decision concerning their relationship to Jesus Christ. And so, when one that is stronger comes, he overcomes him and takes from him all of his armor. Satan's armor has been stripped.

His authority has been stripped. We have authority and power over him in the name of Jesus Christ and we need to exercise that authority and power. Then Jesus said, He that is not with Me is against Me.

There is no neutral ground. What do you think of Christ? Well, I don't know. I think He was a good man.

He was a pretty good philosopher. Are you for Him? Oh, no, I'm neutral. No, you're not.

Jesus said, If you're not with Me, you're against Me. If you're not gathering, you're scattering. Two types of people, the builders and the destroyers.

Those who gather, those who scatter. If you're not gathering, you're scattering. You can't be neutral concerning Jesus Christ.

He was a radical. You can't be neutral concerning a radical. You've got to have an opinion.

You've got to form a decision. And not to be for Him is to be against Him. Now Jesus, having cast out this demon, teaches a little bit concerning demons.

And He said, When an unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walks through dry places seeking rest. So there is the intimation that demons, when they are not inhabiting a body, are restless. They seek to find a body to inhabit.

And so, when an unclean spirit is driven out of a body through the authority and the power of the name of Jesus Christ, they wander through the wilderness areas restless, seeking rest, seeking a body to inhabit. And finding none, He said, I will return to the house from whence I came out. Now, evidently, there are certain conditions which open the doors for demons to enter into a person's body.

There are other conditions which prohibit a demon from entering into a person's body. Jesus teaches that they look for a body to inhabit. Evidently, there are things that can restrict their entrance into a body.

And I believe that that which can restrict and does restrict is the will of man. I do not believe that a demon can enter into a person against that person's will, whether the person be born again or not. I do not believe that they can violate the free will of man as far as taking possession of a body.

But people are often getting involved in the occult into those areas of spiritism where they are opening themselves to the entrance of demon entities. And by dabbling in the occult, by playing around with Ouija boards or any of these things that have an occultish aspect to them, you are opening the doors for these demons as you are seeking them to somehow mystically guide your destiny with the movement of the marker or with some other type of manifestation. And I believe that when you start getting into these areas, that you are beginning to open the door for demons to come and begin to advise you, begin to direct you.

They can inspire people in writing interesting detective stories. They can bring you fame and the spirit writing. And all of these things are doors by which you can open yourself to being possessed by a demon entity.

And so, I cannot warn you too much against the dangers of dabbling with those areas of spiritism, contacts with spirits and all, because it is in those areas where you can open the door that demons can come in. I do not believe that they can come into a person against that person's will. As God honors the free will of man, I think He forces Satan to honor the free will of man.

So, Satan comes in by guise. He leads you into the areas of dabbling into the occult where gradually you become open to these things. Several years ago in the little chapel, we had a young man come into the office.

And he sat down and he was obviously troubled. And he introduced himself to me. He said, my name is Dave Hunt.

And he gave me a Time magazine that I had read. A Time magazine that dealt with organized crime and dealt with Lucky Luciano. And in this particular Time magazine, it had one of these little insert articles and the picture of this young man, Dave Hunt, and said, the mystery man, the associate of Lucky Luciano.

And this young man told me his story of how as he was growing up, he had an intense fascination for power. And when he was 19 years old, he determined that he was going to possess power at any cost. And he said as he looked at society, he realized that one of the strongest powers in society was the mafia.

Stronger than our judicial system because it had bought off the judicial system. It had bought off the government leaders. And so he theorized that Lucky Luciano at that time was the most powerful man in the world.

And because his ambition was for power, he decided that he was going to get next to Lucky Luciano and learn the secrets of power. Which, somehow, he was able to get in and become the associate, the constant companion of Lucky Luciano. And it was written up in Time magazine.

This mystery kid, young man. Where he came from, nobody knew. But he was constantly with Lucky Luciano and was the protege of Lucky Luciano.

And he said he enjoyed the power and all of the money and the power that he had through these associations, the control over people, over circumstances. But he said then he began to study the reign of Hitler. And he realized that Hitler was one of the most powerful men in the world.

And he learned that Hitler was being guided by men who were involved in what was known as the White Magic Fathers. Men who were into the occult. Men who were in contact with demons.

And so, he decided to go down to Peru where at the fall of the Fifth Reich, many of these men, the masters of the White Magic who were guiding Hitler, fled to Peru at the end of the war. And he decided to go down and to look them up and to learn from them the secrets of power. And so, he went to Peru and he got hold of these white masters and he began to sit at their feet and learn the White Magic.

He began to dabble into this area of Spiritism. And he said he was in his hotel room and he was going through these incantations and all when suddenly this Presence came into the room. He said he was very aware of it.

This Spirit. And he said the Spirit began to enter into his body. And he said, somehow I realized that if this thing enters into me, I'll no longer have power.

I'll become its slave. I'll be under its power and control. And he said, I became extremely frightened.

And he said, though I'd only been to Sunday school a few times when I was a kid, I began to cry out, Jesus, Jesus, help me Jesus. Because he said, I knew that if this thing took over I'd be lost. And he said, I immediately packed my bags.

I ran down to the airport. Got a cab to the airport. And he said, I waited at the airport for the next plane out of Peru.

And he said, I checked in. Got back to Texas. I checked into a motel.

And he said, I was so shook I didn't call anybody. I didn't let anybody know where I was. He said, I was just so shook over this experience.

And he said, as I was sitting there in the motel just thoroughly confused, he said the phone rang and the fellow on the phone called him by his name and gave him a cryptic message. And he recognized that these white masters spoke in these cryptic messages and so he was figuring out the message. And he just about had the message all figured out, but there was one part that the fellow gave to him that he couldn't remember.

And he knew that if he could remember that, that he could put the whole message together. And so he was just sitting there thinking, oh, if I only knew that one part, if I only knew that one part of the message. And the phone rang again.

And the fellow said, the part of the message that you can't remember is this. And he said, wait a minute. Who are you? He said, hey man.

He said, I don't know what's going on, but you guys are weird. He said, what do you mean? He said, who are you? He said, I'm a guard over here at Fort Hood. He said, I'm on duty here and some old man came by and gave me a hundred bucks to call you and give you this message.

Gave me the number to call, told me your name, and gave me this message to give you. He said, what did he look like? And he described the white father that he was under in Peru. And he said, he came back a few minutes ago and gave me another hundred bucks to call you back and say that this is the part of the message that you can't remember.

And this kid as he sat in my office was shaking, visibly shaking. He said, they follow me everywhere I go. I can't get away from them.

He said, they won't let me go. He said, I became too involved. And he said, they're right here.

They're right here right now. They know what's going on. And I said, yes Dave, I know that.

But I said, they'll never follow you out of here. And according to the Scriptures, we took authority and power over those forces of darkness, these fathers of the white magic and their spirit forces, because a stronger than Satan dwells in us. And he has destroyed the armor wherein he trusted.

And we were able to spoil these principalities and powers. And we were able to set this young man free. Not because I have any great spiritual power.

I'm just a child of God like you. But I know the Scriptures. I know my position.

I know where I stand. I know the authority that I have in the name of Jesus. I got a letter from Dave a while back.

He's now an evangelist. Preaching the Gospel. And of course he shared that he has not been troubled since that day.

Spirit forces are real. They're not to be messed around with. It is possible for you to open the door by dabbling in the areas of the occult.

And there will come a time when with Dave, they will seek to take over your very body. Now Jesus said, they wander through these dry places looking for a place to rest, a body to inhabit. And if they find none, they say, well, I'll go back to the house from whence I was driven.

And when he comes, he finds it all swept and garnished. And then he goes out and he takes seven other spirits that are more wicked than himself. And they enter in and they dwell there.

And the last state of that man is worse than the first. Now, Jesus here is giving a very solemn warning concerning those people who have been set free from the power of Satan. You don't let a vacuum exist.

You've got to replace. There's more to just driving Satan out. There has to be the moving in of the Spirit of God to take residence within.

And just to go around delivering people can be the most harmful thing you can do for a person. People oftentimes come to me and say, oh, pray the prayer of deliverance. And I say, no, I'll pray the prayer of entrance.

The entering of the power of Jesus Christ into your life. When He enters, the darkness has to go. Light and darkness cannot coexist.

And so rather than just praying deliverance for someone that the powers of darkness be loosed and sent forth, I would rather pray that the power of God come in. The other is a foregone conclusion when that happens. But there's real danger for a person just coming to God just for the help that they might get coming just for healing rather than the healer.

Just for deliverance rather than the deliverer. Because you can end up in worse shape than you ever were if you don't substitute or replace that power within your life. That empty area.

And so it came to pass as He spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice and said unto Him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee and the breast which you have sucked. Here is one of the first attempts to worship Mary. And what did Jesus do with it? He said, yes, rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it.

Now she's attempting to worship His mother. Blessed is the womb that bare you and the breast from which you nursed. Yes, but rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it.

And so when the people were gathered thick together, He began to say, this is an evil generation and they seek a sign. You remember back in verse 16, others tempting Him sought of Him a sign from heaven. And there shall no sign be given it but the sign of Jonah, the prophet.

For as Jonah was assigned to the Ninevites, so shall the Son of Man be to this generation. How was Jonah assigned to the Ninevites? He was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale and he survived. He came out alive.

So Jesus said he would be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. So the same kind of a sign of Jonah will be to this generation as Jesus rises from the dead. Now the queen of the south shall rise up in judgment with this generation and condemn it.

For she came from the most parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon and behold, a greater than Solomon is here. The men of Nineveh shall rise up in the judgment with this generation and shall condemn it. For they repented at the preaching of Jonah and behold, a greater than Jonah is here.

This verse totally discounts the idea of reincarnation for the men of Nineveh will rise in the day of judgment with this generation. You see, if reincarnation was a process by which men were gradually evolving into perfection, then in the day of judgment they wouldn't be the men of Nineveh. They would have been in their developed state along the line of reincarnation.

But here the men of Nineveh will be arising with this generation in the day of judgment. This precludes the idea of reincarnation. Well, might the men of Nineveh speak out in the day of judgment against that

generation because they repented at the preaching of Jonah who was angry, who hated them, and who had one monotonous message.

No hope in the message of Jonah. No grace in the message of Jonah. No love in the message of Jonah.

Just a message from a hateful prophet saying forty days and comes destruction. And yet they repented. Now here was Jesus bringing the love of God, preaching the grace of God, extending to man the mercy of God, and they did not repent.

Oh, I'll tell you, the men of Jonah will have a good case against this generation. No man, when he has lighted a candle, puts it in a secret place nor under a bushel, but on a candlestick that they which come in may see the light. Now the light of the body is the eye.

Therefore, when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light. But if thy eye is evil, then thy body is full of darkness. The entrance into man.

The eye gate. And again, that which you are planting into your mind through the eyes. Whatsoever man soweth, that shall he also reap.

If you sow to the flesh of the flesh, you're going to reap corruption. If your eye is single towards God, then your body is full of light. But if your eye is evil, looking at evil things, then your body is full of darkness.

Take heed, therefore, that the light that is in thee, the body is the eye, so take evil that the light that is in thee be not darkness. For if thy whole body therefore be full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light as when the bright shining of a candle doth give light. And as he spake a certain Pharisee, he sought him to dine with him, and he went in and sat down to meet.

And when the Pharisee saw it, he marveled that he did not wash his hands before dinner. Now, this is referring to the ceremonial washing of hands, which they had an elaborate ceremonial washing of hands, which Jesus asked. You know, just good enough.

But they had to have one log of water. And you'd hold your hands outstretched in front of you in an upright position. And they would pour the water over your hands as you rubbed your fingers and your hands together.

And you had to be careful that the water didn't run down your arm, but dripped straight down because if it ran down your arm, then your arm would be unclean because the water that was cleansing your hands was coming down. The uncleanness from your hands was coming down your arms. So they had a way of holding your hands out here and pouring the water.

And then they would take, and you'd hold your hands down and pour another log of water over with your hands in a downward position letting the water drop off. And they would do this several times during a meal. Jesus, you know, didn't fuss with that kind of nonsense.

And so this Pharisee just sort of shocked that he didn't go through this little ceremony of washing. And so, the Lord said to him, now you Pharisees make the outside of the cup and the platter clean. But the inward part is full of ravening and wickedness.

Ye fools, did not He that made that which is without also make that which is within? But rather, give alms of such things as you have. And behold, all things are clean unto you. One of their little customs, if you just

give alms of that which you have, everything is clean.

But woe unto you Pharisees, for you tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs and pass over the more important things of judgment and the love of God. Now, it wasn't really required in the law that you pay tithes of your spice gardens, but these guys did. And of course, you women know what your little spices are like.

You've got your rosemary and your cumin and your various spices. Well, they all had their spice gardens and they would shake out the little seeds, poppy seeds. And nine for me, one for God, you know.

Nine for me and one for God. And they were so careful, you know, give God the tenth of His seeds. Very meticulous.

Give God His due. And yet, they were omitting completely the important things of judgment, of love and all. Exacting in the small matters which really didn't count and completely skipping over the important matters.

Woe unto you... Well, then Jesus said, interestingly enough, talking about tithing, Jesus said, this you ought to have done. Jesus confirmed that they ought to have done that. But He said, you shouldn't leave the other undone.

Woe unto you, Pharisees, for you love the uppermost seats in the synagogues and the greetings in the markets. Woe unto you, scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites, for you are as graves which appear not, and men walk over them and are not aware of them. Now, one of the purposes of whitewashing the graves in those days was to keep people from walking over them because if you walked over a grave, you were considered then to be unclean and for seven days you couldn't go into the synagogue.

You had to go through a rite of cleansing because you touched a grave. But Jesus said, you are like graves that don't appear. You're defiling men and they don't even know it.

Your influence on men is that of defiling men. There are those people whose very influence is a defiling influence, but the bad part is that men don't even know in their contact with it that they're being defiled by it. Then answered one of the lawyers and said, Master, in saying that you're reproaching us too.

And Jesus said, I haven't started on you yet. Woe unto you also, ye lawyers. Now, he was not talking about the common practice of attorneys today, but these men who were lawyers as far as the Mosaic Law and the interpreting of the Mosaic Law to the people.

Woe unto you also, ye lawyers, for you load men down with heavy burdens that are grievous to be born, and yet yourselves will not touch one of the burdens with your little fingers. You're laying heavy trips on men. And boy, when you read how they interpreted the Law of Moses, you read what a heavy trip they laid on men.

Thou shalt not bear any burden on the Sabbath day. What constitutes bearing a burden? Do you have false teeth? It's bearing a burden. Can't wear your false teeth on the Sabbath day.

Do you have a wooden eye, glass eye? Bearing a burden. Got to take it out on the Sabbath day. Do you have a wooden leg? Bearing a burden.

Pull it off on the Sabbath day. And yet they had silly rules. You could only walk two-thirds of a mile.

A thousand yards. But, if you ran a rope from your house onto the end of the block, then that extended your house to the end of the block and you could walk a thousand yards from there. And, if the day before you would set your lunch a half mile away, then that constituted the border of your house and you could walk to where your lunch was and then you had a thousand yards from there to go.

And, if you carried things under your arm, you could carry whatever you wanted. You couldn't hold it with your hand. Or, if you would carry it with the upper part of your hand, you know, loop the thing over the upper part of your hand, then you could carry it.

Or, you could carry it under your arm because that didn't constitute bearing a burden. Now, you could not tie a square knot or a sailor's knot, but the women could knot their girdles. So, if you wanted to put a bucket of water down into the well, you couldn't tie a square knot or a regular type of a sailor's knot on it, but the women could tie their girdle to it and let the bucket down and pull the water up.

Now, God, when He said, Thou shalt not bear any burden on this Sabbath, they didn't have any of this junky stuff in His mind. But, just let a bunch of lawyers get hold of something and they can make something complicated out of the most simple case. I want to sell you my pen.

I'll take a dollar for it. Very simple transaction, isn't it? Take it to a lawyer. Let him draw up an agreement.

And, you can see what a complicated issue they can make out of the pen. When I sell it to you, then there's no recourse. You can't sue me in case you should happen to fall and this pen would jab into you and all.

And, you know, I've got to protect myself in this sale because you never know what might happen to this pen once it becomes in your possession. And you can always come back on me because I sold it to you. And these fellows were great at complicating issues.

And so, Jesus gets on their case for complicating the issues. And then He said, Woe unto you! For you build the sepulchers of the prophets and your fathers kill them. You build sepulchers for them, but your fathers kill them.

Truly, you bear witness that you allow the deeds of your fathers. You agree to the deeds of your fathers for they indeed kill them and you build their sepulchers. Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles and some of them they shall slay and persecute.

In other words, if a prophet comes to you, you'll kill him, but yet you build sepulchers for those prophets that your fathers killed. That the blood of all the prophets which was shed from the foundation of the world may be required of this generation from the blood of Abel who was killed by his brother Cain unto the blood of Zacharias which was one of the last of the prophets to be killed in the Old Testament period which perished between the altar and the temple. Verily I say unto you, it shall be required of this generation.

Why? Because they are going to kill soon the one of whom the prophets promised. Woe unto you, lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge. Ye enter not in yourselves and them that were entering in you have hindered.

I think that this is very appropriate for many of these professors in our theological seminaries today who cast doubt on the Word of God, who, as Jesus said, have taken away the key of knowledge, claiming that they alone really understand the Scriptures. Only they really know which Scriptures are inspired and those

which are not inspired. And they will not enter into the kingdom themselves.

But the problem is they would hinder people who would enter the kingdom of God. And they try to stand in the way of people who would enter into the kingdom. There are many churches that have taken an active opposition against any evangelistic efforts.

Churches that are opposed and find fault with any endeavors of evangelism. They will not enter in themselves, but they would also go one step further and hinder those who would enter in. And He said these things unto them, and the scribes and the Pharisees began to really bait Him.

They urged Him vehemently and they sought to provoke Him to speak many things, laying weight for Him and seeking to catch something out of His mouth that they might accuse Him. Well, we've really slowed down. We'll try and take three chapters.

I don't know. Let's go 12 and 13 next week. Well, maybe 14.

Try it. Read it. It won't hurt you.

And so be it. May the Lord be with you. Bless you.

As you fight the crowds to return the merchandise that you can't use. You'll find it is more easy to buy than to return that which is boughten. But may the Lord strengthen you and keep His hand upon your life and fill you with His love and His Spirit and draw you into an ever deepening relationship with Him that you might be enriched in all things in Christ Jesus walking in His love after the Spirit to the glory of God.

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