

# Glad Tidings Spring Convention A1

by David Ravenhill

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*David Ravenhill emphasizes the critical importance of developing an effective prayer life for spiritual vitality and access to God.*

**Duration:** 47:06

**Scripture:** 1 Samuel 13:19

**Topics:** "Prayer", "Spiritual Warfare"

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## Description

David Ravenhill emphasizes the critical importance of developing an effective prayer life, sharing personal anecdotes and biblical insights to illustrate how prayer is essential for spiritual strength and revival. He highlights the alarming statistic that many ministers spend less than 10 minutes a day in prayer, urging believers to cultivate a consistent and meaningful prayer practice. Ravenhill draws parallels between the lack of prayer and the historical context of Israel's dependence on the Philistines, suggesting that neglecting prayer diminishes the church's spiritual power. He encourages the congregation to recognize their need for God's help and to approach Him with confidence, emphasizing that prayer is about building a relationship with God rather than mere ritual. Ultimately, he calls for a return to the foundational practice of prayer as a means to access God's resources and power.

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## Transcript

Cassette number four in our series by David Ravenhill. Tape number four, Developing an Effective Prayer Life. Eight Practical W's.

Presentation given on Tuesday morning, June 6, 2000. Glad Tidings Assembly of God, Abington, Massachusetts. In this series, Turning the Battle to the Gate.

God's People Gathered to Seek Revival. Here is Pastor Paul Taylor to again introduce our speaker, David Ravenhill. It's a multitude, so it doesn't really matter.

But I know Brother Ravenhill is gracious in that area also. As I've talked to him about his ministry and him speaking to me about his ministry, he has purposely kept himself small as far as overhead and all those things. In fact, I asked him, do you drive a Lincoln? And he told me, no, I don't drive a Lincoln.

I drive a Honda. So that, you know, you can tell a lot. As he says, you go into a house, you can tell a lot of a person and what kind of car that they drive also.

He's a very humble man, and I know that numbers are not as important to him. It's just getting the Word and for us to dwell on that Word and feast on it. And it's been great.

And I want to thank you again, Brother Ravenhill. Just the Word has been so good, so good. Good morning.

I want to speak to you this morning on the area of prayer and how to develop an effective prayer life. I find that there are so many Christians that don't really pray. In fact, statistics tell us that the average minister, not the average person in the pew, but the average minister spends less than 10 minutes a day in prayer.

That's tragic, isn't it? And if that is true of the ministry, then chances are that those that are not in the ministry spend even less time. I know that's not always the case. I know there are many that do have a prayer life, but a consistent prayer life is essential if we are going to do what God has called us to do.

And I am very, very grateful for men in my own life. First of all, my father, who set an example in prayer, praying four, five, six hours a day for many, many years, all the way up until his death at age 87. He was still rising in the middle of the night and praying for a couple of hours, and then going back to bed, getting up again, praying during the day, and did that consistently for, I imagine, at least 50 years of his life.

He did that. And then another man that I had the privilege of working with in New Zealand by the name of Peter Morrill, and we had at that stage one of the largest churches in New Zealand, at least by New Zealand standards it was large, and I guess by the Northeast it was large too, about 1,800 people at one stage. And he would say to me, David, I don't ever want you coming into the office unless you've spent at least one hour on your face before God.

He said, I don't care how busy it is, how many people are lined up for counseling, or this or that, the other thing. He said, I don't want you ever coming in to the office unless I know that you've been in prayer. And he understood the importance, again, of praying.

I've established in my life a pattern of prayer that I'm, by the grace of God, able to keep. There are certain days, obviously, when I'm up early and catching a flight and I try and pray a little bit on an airplane. It's not the best place to pray in the world.

But at least God understands that. I'm not being legalistic. I'm not saying if you miss a day or whatever that everything goes wrong.

But we need to cultivate a relationship with God in the area of prayer. And so I just want to share some things along that line with you this morning. Maybe we could begin in 1 Samuel chapter 13.

And I've shared this, I know, at the Awake America, this particular portion of Scripture. But let me go back to it, because I think it's very fitting. 1 Samuel 13 and verse 19, it says, No blacksmith could be found in all the land of Israel.

For the Philistines said, Lest the Hebrews make swords and spears. And so all Israel went down to the Philistines, each to sharpen his plowshare, his mattocks, his axe, and his hoe. And the charge was two-thirds of a shekel for the plowshares, the mattocks, the forks, the axes, and to fix the hoes.

Now, this is an unusual portion of Scripture. First of all, I find it hard to believe. I've got to believe it, obviously, because it's in the Word of God.

But systematically, over a period of time, the Philistines went into the nation of Israel and eliminated every single blacksmith shop in the entire nation. The nation of Israel, obviously, in those days, was an agricultural nation. And the blacksmith was the place where the various implements were made.

As it says there, the forks and the axes and the hoes and the mattocks and everything else that you would use to till the soil. And so the nation of Israel then became dependent on the Philistines. Every time they broke a shovel or a pickaxe or whatever it was, they would have to go to the Philistines and have it repaired.

But the strategy behind it had nothing to do with undermining the agricultural effectiveness of the nation of Israel. You'll notice there in verse 19, it says, lest the Hebrews make swords and spears. The blacksmith shop was the place where the swords and spears were made.

He made everything that had to do with weaponry as well as agricultural implements. And their strategy was to eliminate the fighting power of the nation of Israel. And then you come to verse 22, and it says, So it came about on the day of battle that neither sword nor spear was found in the hands of any of the people who were with Saul and Jonathan, but they were found with Saul and his son Jonathan.

Notice, it came about on the day of battle. The nation of Israel was powerless to fight. There was not a single sword or a single spear in the entire nation.

Now again, I stagger over that. I find that hard to believe. But only the king and his son had a sword.

And so the blacksmith shop, again, was eliminated. Now I believe the equivalent of the blacksmith shop, obviously today is the prayer meeting, whether that's in your life individually or whether it's in the corporate life of the church. And I think long ago, the enemy set out to eliminate the effectiveness of the people of God, take away their fighting power by eliminating the prayer meeting.

You can go to huge churches in this nation. Sometimes I do. And you can have two or three meetings on a Sunday morning in order to accommodate the crowd.

You go on a Sunday night, of course, and you can get them all on the front section of the church. But you go to the prayer meeting, and you're down to maybe a handful of people. And the enemy knows what he's doing.

If we don't know how to pray, then obviously we don't know how to tap into all the resources of God. Charles, not Charles Finney, but Charles Spurgeon said, neglect of prayer is the locus, he says, which has devoured the church. It's devoured the church.

It's devoured the effectiveness of the church. And so we have to learn, again, how to get a hold of God, how to pray, how to render heavens and say, God, come down. Meet with us.

We need you. We need you in the community. We need you in our own lives.

We need you in our corporate lives, in the church, and so on. So let's realize, even now, that we're in a spiritual battle. And God, or at least rather the devil, will do everything he can to deter us, to get us away, to distract us, to get us so busy that we don't have time to really pray.

The second thing I wanted to mention for a moment is the access that we have to God. In other words, it's no use praying unless we believe that we can make contact. Some of you have tried to access a phone

number.

Maybe you've seen an ad on television or something and you think, boy, that's a great deal, and so you call up the 800 number only to find out it's busy. And you keep calling, it's busy, busy, busy. Nothing more frustrating than trying to access something only to find out that you can't get through.

And I think many times in our prayers, you know, we really don't believe that God is on the other end, so to speak. That he really is there and available and listening. But in John chapter 14, there is a portion of scripture that I believe is being very much distorted.

I'm not saying it's totally wrong, but I think there's something far greater that Jesus was trying to say in this portion of scripture. John chapter 14 and verse 1, and let not your heart be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me.

In my Father's house are many dwelling places, or mansions, if you have the King James. If it were not so, I would have told you. For I go and prepare a place for you.

Now, we have taken from that single verse that, you know, we have songs. I've got a mansion over the hilltop. And we've got this whole idea that, you know, Jesus is frantically trying to finish off these condos up there.

And he's got his construction crew and Jesus has got his sort of leather belt and hammer and, you know, working frantically to sort of get your mansion ready and my mansion ready and so on and so forth. Well, you know, number one, I don't think there are such things as mansions in heaven. Number one, we're going to have glorified bodies, so I doubt if we need bathrooms.

Number two, there's going to be no night there, so I doubt if we need a bedroom. You know, I don't think there's going to be any kitchen and so on and so forth, so we can eliminate most of the house right then and there. I don't think we're going to be in our own private little quarters, insulated and isolated from the rest of the body of Christ.

And so, you know, we can do away with our little living room and, you know, our den and the television and there's going to be no CNN. You know, what's the use of a house? No day, no night. There's, you know, the glory of Christ himself.

There's going to be light there. There's no need of electricity and so on. We're not going to be flipping on switches.

You know, so, I mean, I just don't see it. I don't see it anywhere in the Word of God. And I think it's that word mansions that throws us off, doesn't it? But Jesus said, listen, in my father's house, what was the father's house? The father's house was the house of God.

It was the temple in the Old Testament. In the New Testament, obviously, this is the father's house, whose house we are. But in the Old Testament, the father's house was the tabernacle or the tent of meeting.

And that tent of meeting, of course, was made up of various rooms. As it says here, in my father's house, many dwelling places, especially you get into the temple, there were many dwelling places. Places where they kept the utensils, places where they had the storehouse, places where they did this and that and the other thing.

And Jesus said, I go to prepare a place for you. Now, in the Old Covenant, only one man had access into the presence of God. That was the high priest.

And only once a year could he go in to where God was. Oh, the priest could go into the outer court, they could do the various functions that were necessary. The sacrifices were brought to them, of course.

They had to inspect those sacrifices and offer them up on behalf of themselves, on behalf of the people, and so on and so forth. Then they had access into the holy place, the priests, in which to change the showbread and to trim the lampstand and so on. But only on the Day of Atonement could the high priest go in beyond the veil right into the presence of God.

And so it was off limits for 99.9% of the nation of Israel. And Jesus said, listen, I am going to prepare a place for you in my Father's house, that where I am, there you may be also. Now, that sort of puzzled the disciples.

In fact, you go back into verse, chapter 13, verse 33. Little children, I am with you a little while longer. You will seek me in, as I said to the Jews, and I say to you also, where I am going, you cannot come.

Verse 36, Peter, thank God for Peter. Lord, where are you going? And he says, where I go, you cannot follow me now, but you shall follow me later. Now, we automatically, in our mind, put that into the realm of the rapture, into the realm of whatever, you know, your eschatology is, that one day we'll sort of get there, and so on.

And so we sort of, you know, put it into the future. But Jesus said, listen, where I'm going, you can come. And then, again, I go to prepare a place for you.

And you know the way where I am going, verse 4, chapter 14. And Thomas said, Lord, we do not know where you're going. How do we know the way? Jesus said, I am the way.

I am the way into the Father's house. I am the truth, the life. No one comes to the Father but through me.

In other words, I am the key to getting to where the Father is. And you can go on and elaborate on this quite a bit. Chapter 16, verse 16.

A little while, and you will no longer behold me. In a little while you will see me. Some of his disciples therefore said one to another, what is this thing he's telling us? A little while.

And you will not behold me in a little while, and you will see me. Because I go to the Father. And they were saying, what is this that he says? A little while.

We do not know what he's talking about. And Jesus knew that they wished to question him. And he said to them, are you deliberating together about this? I said a little while, and you will not behold me.

And again a little while, and you will see me. Truly I say unto you, that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice. Obviously the world rejoiced.

They crucified him and so on. The disciples were sad that he had gone. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy.

Verse 22, therefore you too now will have sorrow. But I will see you again, and your heart will rejoice, and no one will take your joy away from you. And in that day, so he's speaking about a particular event that's going to happen.

In that day, you will ask me no questions. Truly I say to you, if you ask the Father for anything, he will give it to you. In other words, something is going to happen.

There's a day coming, he says, when you will be able to access the Father and ask him anything. And in that day, he will give it to you. Verse 26 again, in that day you will ask in my name.

I do not say to you that I will request the Father on your behalf, but the Father himself loves you. So in that day, in other words, he's talking about an event that is going to happen. We go over, of course, into the book of Hebrews.

And you've got many scriptures here. Let me just touch on a few of them. Hebrews 4, verse 14, Since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.

Verse 16, Let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. And then we go over into, let me see, jump over into chapter 9, verse 24. For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.

And notice where Christ was going. Christ did not enter into a holy place made with hands. In other words, it wasn't the earthly tabernacle, which was merely a copy of the true one, the real one being in heaven, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.

Verse 19 of chapter 10, Since therefore, brethren, we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus. In other words, because he has made the way accessible, we too now can be where he is. I go to prepare a place for you that where I am, there you may be also.

Not again in the future, but in that day, in just a matter of a few days, a little while, Jesus said. You won't see me anymore, but a little while you'll see me again. And in that day, after I've touched, I've been, and I've ascended to the Father, I've presented my blood there, and it's been put on the mercy seat and so on, and you have access then into the presence of God.

And then, let me see, verse 22, Let us draw near with a sincere heart and full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience, our bodies washed with pure water. So we need to understand, when we begin praying, that we have access right into the very presence of God because of what Jesus Christ has done for us. And we don't have to, we can come with confidence, we can come with boldness, not brashness, but with boldness.

There is a throne of grace, that way has been prepared, the veil has been rent, that which was off limits, if you like, for the Jews of the Old Testament is now accessible to you and I. And that where He is, there we may be also. He's raised us up, He's seated us with Him in heavenly places, right in the very throne room of God, not in the outer court, but right into the holy places, it says in Hebrews. So that's good news, at least it should be good news, it should help us in the area of prayer.

And then Luke chapter 11, verse 1, It came about while he was praying in a certain place. After he finished, one of his disciples said to him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. And he said to them, when you pray, say, Father, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come.

We have an abbreviated version from Matthew's account here, which I'll go to in a moment. But notice, after he had finished praying, one of his disciples said, Lord, teach us to pray. My father used to say, this is the only time the disciples ever asked to be taught anything.

They never said, Lord, teach us to preach. They never said, Lord, teach us to do miracles. They never said, Lord, teach us to teach.

And the reason was, I believe, after he had finished praying, they realized the key and the source of everything that Jesus does comes out of his prayer life. In other words, Lord, if I can access the Father the way you access the Father, then I can have the power that you have. I can have the authority that you have.

I can teach the way you teach, and so on and so forth. And we need to realize that that is what prayer is all about. It's recognizing our need and then recognizing God's provision.

Notice that at the end of this prayer, Jesus gave a story. In verse 5, he said, Suppose one of you shall have a friend and shall go to him at midnight and say to him, Friend, lend me three loaves, for a friend of mine has come from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him. Here's a very embarrassing situation, especially in a sort of Eastern culture like this, where hospitality was far more important than it is for us today.

And a friend arrives at midnight. Obviously, at midnight, everything is closed, certainly in those days. These days, of course, you could possibly find something open.

We have places open 24 hours a day, but certainly not 2,000 years ago. And here, maybe his friend arrives early, maybe due the next day or something, but he gets there early, and he's a friend. But he has nothing to give him.

The embarrassment of that. But then he says, Listen, I've got another friend. And this friend I know has got sufficient.

And he goes to his other friend's house, and he begins knocking, and his friend says, Hey, leave me alone, I'm in bed. Don't you know what hour it is, sort of thing? Just leave me alone. But he is persistent about it.

And finally, his friend gets up, and it says, He will give him, in verse 8, He will give him as much as he needs. Now, Jesus here, obviously, is relating this to prayer. You see, you and I will always be confronted with friends.

Friends that will come to us with needs. Financial needs, physical needs, emotional needs, spiritual needs, whatever those needs are. And what prayer is, it's recognizing, first of all, we have nothing to set before them.

That of myself and by myself, I do not have the wisdom, I don't have the authority, I don't have the understanding, I don't have what it takes to heal you, I don't have what it takes to answer your questions,

and so on and so forth. But, we have another friend. And that friend, the greater friend, has ample.

And we need to come to him, and he will give us as much as we need. Now, that's what Jesus related to prayer. That's what prayer is all about.

And the reason we don't pray, really, is saying, I don't need your help, God. I have the wisdom. I have the ability.

I have the knowledge. And it's an arrogance, it's a pride. It's an independence, again.

You know, well, I've been to Bible school. I've got all the answers. I've studied counseling.

I've studied this. I've studied that. You know, I know all the answers.

I know how to build a church. I don't have to pray anymore. I've been to this seminar, that seminar.

I've got books, and I've read. No, we have got to come to that place of dependency upon God. That is the key to everything.

In fact, Jesus, in Matthew chapter 5, when he talked about the Beatitudes, he said, And that word, poor in spirit, literally, is the word beggar. Blessed are the beggars, for theirs is the kingdom of God. Now, what is a beggar? A beggar is somebody who lives off somebody else's resources.

I was in India about 13 years ago. We were driving through the city of Hyderabad. And if you've ever been to India, it's an amazing place.

Thank you. With all the various contraptions. You have people pulling wagons.

You've got horses. You've got buses. You've got people with sort of rickshaw things.

I mean, every conceivable type of contraption. And here we were, right in the middle lane, or the center lane, and pulled up at a traffic light, and I heard a voice. And I was just fascinated with what was going on around about me.

I heard a voice, and I looked, and there, right down beside the jeep that I was in, was a little boy, maybe 10, 12 years of age. His body totally twisted. I mean, his hands all twisted, his legs all twisted, and he was a beggar.

And as he was begging, I realized what Jesus meant there, where he says, Blessed are the beggars, for theirs is the kingdom of God. You see, that little boy knew long ago, really from the moment that he could understand, that he could never earn a living. He didn't have arms and limbs that could move.

He was incapable of holding down a job. He was incapable of doing any sort of manual labor. And so, the only way that he could derive a livelihood, was to live off somebody else's generosity.

To beg, and to say, Listen, help me. And that's what Jesus said, the very first law of the kingdom of God. Before we learn anything else, we've got to learn that you and I are crippled spiritually.

We're beggars. We don't have it. We don't have the wisdom.

We don't have the strength. We don't have the ability. And so, we come to God, and we beg, and thank God Jesus said, Theirs is the kingdom of God.

Not will be. Not some future thing. But all the resources of God's kingdom are available to the one that begs.

And so, this portion of scripture again, in Luke 11, here is a man that's begging. He goes to his friend. Listen, I need something.

I don't have it. I recognize I don't have it. I need bread.

You've got bread. I need bread. You know, give me bread so that I can give it to my friend.

And that's again, the basis then, of prayer. Now, in Matthew chapter 5, we have the longer version, Matthew 6 rather, of the Lord's Prayer. Verse 5, When you pray, you are not to be like the hypocrites for they love to stand and pray in the synagogue and on the street corners in order to be seen by men.

Notice the first thing we've got to do is check our motives. Why do I pray? Why do I do the things that I do? Winky Prattney, I mentioned him last night, said to me many years ago, he said, David, when we stand before God, he will not ask us what we did. He will ask us why we did it.

Sort of scary, isn't it? But Lord, I built a huge church. I wrote books. I mean, I was on television and so on.

But David, why? Well, don't ask that, Lord. That's embarrassing. No.

You see, it's not what we do. It's why we do it. The Pharisees prayed religiously day after day after day on the street corners, what? To be seen by men.

And Jesus said, you have your reward. Your reward is the applause and the praise that comes to you because men think you're spiritual and you're not spiritual at all. You're just wanting attention.

And so, we need to make sure our motives are right in order to be seen by men. Truly I say unto you, they have their reward in full. Notice, there's nothing coming after this.

But you, when you pray, go into your inner room and when you've shut the door, pray to your Father who is in secret. Your Father who sees in secret will repay you. Now, that's the test again.

You know, how much time do we spend alone in prayer? Not to be seen of men, but to get alone with God. Shut the door. Shut out the distractions.

And shut the door also so people can't see you. And then get alone with God and begin to pray. And when you're praying, do not use meaningless repetition as the Gentiles do.

And notice the emphasis there is not on repetition because we've just looked at Luke 11 where it says, because of your persistency. But it's meaningless repetition. You know, some sort of mantra, if you like, that, you know, the world would tell us in new age, just say this word over and over and over again sort of thing.

You know, it's meaningless repetition. There's nothing wrong with repetition in the sense of perseverance and keep on asking, keep on knocking. You know, it's that sort of persistency that is important, but it's the meaningless, you know, repetition.

So, do not use meaningless repetitions as the Gentiles do for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words. Therefore, do not be like them for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him. Pray then in this way, Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we've also forgiven our debtors.

Do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Now, obviously, when Jesus gave this prayer, He was not saying, listen, memorize it and just sort of rattle it off by rote. Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come.

And then, that's all you need to do. I mean, that's your prayer life. You know, jump out of bed or into bed or whatever the case may be and it's all done for the day.

You know, that's... No, obviously, these are the ingredients, if you like, that make a prayer. We need to look at this and break it down and I'm not going to spend a long time. Let me give you an outline that you can work on yourself because I want to move on to some other things.

But, most of us can say this prayer with our eyes closed. We've been saying it, if you've been in church for any length of time, you know, ever since you were a toddler almost. But, we need to break it down and so, let me break it down for you and give you about eight or nine things here.

First of all, His person, our Father. In other words, we need to know who we're praying to. What sort of a Father? In other words, it's a thing that endears us to God is who He is.

We're not praying to, you know, a judge in that sense. Our Father. And there's all the different scriptures about God as a Father.

He is a compassionate Father. He's a kind Father. He's a merciful Father.

He's a forgiving Father. You know, and so on. You can look up all those references, numerous references to what sort of a God we are praying to.

That immediately then draws you in to the presence of God. Why? Because He's loving. He's compassionate.

He's kind. He's forgiving. He's tender.

And so on. And He's a Father of lights with whom there's no variableness. In other words, He's not a moody God.

You know, we've got to sort of catch Him in a good mood, you know. Otherwise, you know, He might zap us one. And so on.

No, there's no variableness with Him. There's no shadow of turning. And then His position.

First of all, His person. You see, His person comes before His will. In other words, we've got to know something about this God if we're going to pray His will be done.

Imagine if we were to pray, Oh, Hitler, Thy will be done. You know, terrible. You know, we've got to know something about who we're praying to.

Hitler's will, of course, was to eliminate the Jews and eliminate, you know, everybody else and establish a, you know, Aryan race and so on and so forth, you know. So we need to understand the nature of God, the character of God, before we start praying, God, I want Your will to be done. But the second thing, His position, which art in heaven.

Now, for many, many years, especially as a little boy, I always had God sort of way up somewhere in the wild blue yonder, you know, sort of totally inaccessible. You know, sort of the heavens and the heavens of heavens cannot contain me. And Lord, you know, here I am, you know, saying my prayers and you're a million, million miles away.

That is not the concept that Jesus is trying to get across here. When the Bible talks about our Father which art in heaven, heaven is always referred to as the throne of God. Swear not by heaven, why? It is the throne of God.

We sang this morning, our sister mentioned, heaven is your throne, the earth is your footstool. And time after time, Old Testament, New Testament, heaven is always the place of God's throne, the place of His authority, the place of His power. And so what we're doing now, we're praying to a Father who has the ability and the authority and the power to answer our prayers.

That's what Jesus is trying to get across here. It'd be like two kids playing in the street. And, you know, here they are, maybe in the middle of, you know, Boston, and a little kid complaining, saying, wouldn't it be nice if we had a park around here, you know, and a ball diamond and a place where we could play instead of just these crowded streets and so on and so forth.

And the other little kid says, well, you know, that's a good idea. You know, I'll ask my dad about it. And the other kid says, you don't even ask your dad about it, you know.

What can your dad do? I mean, I've told my dad I'd love to have a park and he just laughs at me and says, listen, we live in Boston. There's no parks around here. And the other little kid says, yeah, but my dad's the mayor, you know.

In other words, my dad is in heaven, so to speak. My dad has authority to demolish a few buildings and establish a ball field type thing. That's what Jesus is saying.

Our Father who is in heaven, the place of His dominion, the place of His throne, the place of His government, and we have access to the very throne of God, the throne of grace. It's a throne. It's a place of power.

And so again, we need to understand His position. Hallowed be thy name, His preeminence, the name of God. Understand, if we understand the names of God, we understand the nature of God.

You see, God cannot be confined to one name. You know, we have the name, you know, Tom, Harry, Susan, Mary, whatever it is. It doesn't really say a thing about us, but names in the scripture reveal a person's nature, a person's character.

The closest we can come to that these days is nicknames. Nicknames are far more descriptive than ordinary names. If I say, listen, my friend Big Red is going to be here tonight, you know, what do you expect? A great big, you know, flaming redhead Irishman to walk in, you know, sort of, and so on.

If I say, listen, my friend Shorty is going to be here tonight, you know, you expect some little tiny guy. If I say, my friend Einstein is going to be here tonight, you think, boy, this guy's bright, you know, and so on. You know, nicknames, aren't they? They're far more descriptive than normal names.

And God cannot be confined to one name. You see, the more names I give somebody, or the more titles I give somebody, the more you know about that person. For instance, if I say, I want you to meet my friend John, John doesn't tell you a thing about that person.

But if I say, I want you to meet my friend Doctor John, all of a sudden, you say, hey, this guy's pretty bright, you know, he's a medical doctor. If I say, I want you to meet my friend Pilot John, you say, hey, this guy's a pilot. I say, I want you to meet my friend Lawyer John.

You see, the more titles I give him, the more you know about John. John can not only fly a plane, but John is a medical doctor, and John is a lawyer. I say, I want you to meet my friend Father John, or something.

You know, he's got children, and so, you know, Judge John, you know that he's a judge. And so, the more titles I give him, the more you know, boy, this guy's a brilliant guy. I mean, he knows all about medicine, he knows all about law, he knows all about aeronautics, he knows how to fly, he knows how to do this, and, you know.

And God is that way. That's why God can't be restricted to one name. And then when you run out of all the names to describe God, he has one sort of final big name, I Am.

And according to Rotherham's translation and others, that is an incomplete name. When he said to Moses, Moses says, well, Lord, who am I going to say he sent me? He says, I am. And the margin says, or at least Rotherham's translation says, excuse me, I am becoming.

In other words, it's I am, blank. I am whatever you need, fill it in. I am your peace.

I am your joy. I am your security. I am your this.

I am your that. I am, you know, I will become whatever you need, you see. And so, there's all the names that describe God.

Hallowed be thy name, your nature, God. The Lord is my shepherd. The Lord is a great physician.

He is a judge. He is a father. He is a king.

You know, he's my righteousness. He's my peace. You know, and so on.

It's just studying all the names of God tell us something about the vastness, the manifold, not only wisdom, but manifold majesty of God himself, you see. And so, here as we begin to pray, we need to muse a little bit on the name that God is. I mean, there are times we need him again as our shepherd to guide us, to lead us.

There are times when we need him as our physician. There are times when we need him just as our peace. There's times when we need him again in another realm.

And so, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, his power. All power and resources of the kingdom of God.

Thy will be done, his purpose. As it is in heaven, his pattern. In other words, he says, I will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

He gives us a pattern of what things are like in heaven. You can study the sort of pattern of heaven. God is in control.

All the angels are there as ministering spirits just waiting to be sent forth. And he's, you know, I mean, he wants that sort of reign and rule on earth. And so, he gives us a pattern.

Give us this day our daily bread, his provision. And so, thank God that we can pray again for the provision. You'll notice that this prayer begins, our father, not my father.

I had a friend in Kansas City who worked in the inner city and worked with the derelicts and the homeless and so on. One night, he had a dream. And in this dream, he saw two sort of bums basically sitting and they were both asking God for bread.

They were hungry, you know, derelicts, sleeping under the bridges and so on. And they were both praying saying, God, give me bread. And all of a sudden, he said, in this dream, out of heaven tumbled two loaves of bread and landed in one of these men's laps.

And the man that was having the dream sort of complained to the Lord. He said, Lord, why did you answer this man's dream or this man's prayer and you didn't answer this man's prayer? And the Lord said, I answered both prayers. See, our Father, which art in heaven.

In other words, the other loaf was for his friend. And many times, we pray selfishly, don't we? And God meets our need and maybe gives us more than our need and we need to know what it is to share with somebody else. You see, our Father, not my Father.

It's not a sort of a selfish prayer that we get into. It's praying again on behalf of brothers and sisters many times. And then, forgive us our debts, his pardon.

And I may minister on this tonight a little bit, the area of forgiveness. And then, lead us not into temptation, his protection. God can protect us.

And finally, for thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, his praise. Now, if you break it down that way, and you can break it down numerous ways, I've heard all sorts of outlines and I like mine the best. But, but you can just take it and muse on each of those things and realize there's so much in this prayer.

If you begin to just take one of those things and then go through the word of God and sort of embellish it in the right sense of drawing and so on. It's an amazing prayer that we are to pray. And God needs to give us understanding on it.

Now, before we get into some specific areas of prayer, we need to realize that there are things that hinder us In other words, it's no use spending an hour in prayer or two hours in prayer or whatever it is, or fasting

for two or three days only to find out that at the end of that period of time, God has not listened to you. I mean, that would be terrible that it's all being wasted. And the Bible does talk about wasting things.

We can waste our praise and our worship. I think every song leader needs to study Malachi chapter 1. Malachi chapter 1, you've got God complaining and he says this, if only somebody would shut the gates that you might not uselessly kindle fire on mine altar. In other words, here are the people bringing their sacrifices, the altar was ablaze and the priests were putting their sacrifices on and the smoke's ascending and the, you know, everything else and God is just saying, listen, shut the gates.

It's useless. What you're doing is not not doing a thing. It's not doing a thing for you.

It's not doing a thing for me. Why? They said. He said, because you bring that which is defiled.

You bring the lame, you bring the sick, you bring the blemished and he says, I won't accept that sort of sacrifice. In other words, they were not bringing an acceptable sacrifice. Oh, they were bringing the right animals but they were not bringing the best.

See, we've got this funny idea in the New Testament that when we talk about sacrifice of praise, the word sacrifice to us means that we're really giving something up. You know, miserable day outside today, I could have slept in but you know, I sacrificed to be here this morning. I mean, we sort of use it that way but that's not the way the Bible uses sacrifice.

The way the Bible uses sacrifice is the Old Testament concept of sacrifice. Every sacrifice had to be perfect. It had to be the very best.

In other words, if you were a farmer and everybody was in those days, you went to the flock and you didn't choose something that was, you know, sort of limping around and thought, boy, this thing's not going to last till the end of the week so I better get something, you know, I think I'll give it to the Lord. You know, that will be sufficient. You know, after all, it's going to be dead by the end of the week anyway.

No, you had to take the very finest that you had and then not only that, it was inspected again by the priest. He went through it and I mean, every single part of that animal had to be perfect. And so, when the Bible says we offer to God a sacrifice of praise, it's not like, oh, I had a rough night last night, but, you know, I want you to know this is a sacrifice, this one.

Now, you know, I mean, I'm sure there's a measure that that will get you by, but no, it's got to be the very best, you see. And in the book of Malachi, they were bringing the lame, they were bringing the sick, they were bringing the blemished and God says, listen, just shut the gate, you know, shut it. It's not doing you any good, it's not doing me any good, it's not making sense, you know, close the gate.

And I think sometimes in our prayers it's like that, you see. That we pray and God says, listen, I'm not listening. So we need to find out what is it that cancels out prayer.

The first thing, of course, can be selfishness. James 4, verse 3. They say, you ask and you have not because you ask with what? Wrong motives that you might consume it upon your own lust. So, once again, what's my motivation? Am I just simply asking selfishly? Now, that doesn't mean that we don't have needs that are, you know, needs that pertain to us, but that we're selfish because we just want to consume it on our own lust.

And then, of course, sin. And all of these are sin in one sense, but, Psalm 66, in verse 18, it says, if I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me. Now, what does that mean? Does that mean if I have sin in my life, God won't hear me? No.

Because, obviously, we all came to Christ as sinners. And we knelt at an altar or knelt by our bed or, you know, somebody led us to the Lord and we confessed our sin and He heard us. If we confess our sin, He's faithful and just to forgive us our sin, cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

So, that's not what it's talking about. I think the key here is if I regard iniquity in my heart. Now, we don't use the word regard that much anymore.

It's not a sort of common expression. But, you know, let's say when I go back to Texas, I meet somebody and they're saying, you know, I'm going up there to Boston. I say, listen, if you're running to Paul Taylor, you know, give him my regards.

What am I saying? There's a friendship that's been established. Give him my regards. You know, there's a joining together there.

So, if I regard iniquity, in other words, if I've got to, as the Bible talks about the secret sins in the light of your presence, God has been dealing with me about a particular area. And, I still cherish, that's the word regard, to cherish, to have a favor for. And, I've got that thing and I say, God, I'm not going to give that thing up.

God says, okay, I'm not going to listen to you. And so, we've got to make sure that we come, again, with what? Clean hands and a pure heart. That we're not regarding sin.

There's not an area of our life that we're refusing to deal with and the Holy Spirit's been highlighting that time after time after time and we won't deal with that thing. You know, I want you to go and put something right with a brother or a sister and so on and so forth. God says, until you do, you know, heavens are closed.

And then, submission. 1 John 3, verse 21. It says, whatever you ask, we receive because we keep His commandments.

In other words, we are submitted to the commandments of God. We ask and we receive. Why? Because we are walking in the light of God.

We're walking according to His commandments and according to His truth. Another one is spouse. 1 Peter 3, verse 7. Live with your wives in an understanding way that your prayers be not hindered.

And I'm sure it applies the other way around that, you know, live with your husbands. I don't think God is, you know, sort of just picking on the men here. But, but both.

There's something about our relationships together as husbands and wives, especially. I speak a great mystery. I speak concerning Christ and the church.

And if we are at odds with one another, then our prayers, again, are hindered. And, so we need to make sure. There's been many a time I've got down to pray and then I've had to go and put something right with my wife.

I've realized, listen, I'm not going to waste an hour in prayer and then, you know, find out. Darling, I'm sorry. You know, I don't know what we should have done there or whatever to do.

We're here at the end of side one of this tape. A brief stretch break and David Rodenhill will continue on side two of the eight W's of prayer including work, worship, warfare, and support and teaching on the effective prayer life. Please turn your tape over now at this point to side two for the continuation of this presentation.

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