

# Praying in the Closet

by David Wilkerson

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of prayer in times of crisis and encourages the church to call together, pray, weep, and repent before the Lord.*

**Duration:** 48:40

**Scripture:** Psalm 55:17, Jeremiah 3:15, Joel 2:17, Zechariah 12:10, Matthew 6:6, Matthew 14:23, 1 Thessalonians 5:17, Hebrews 4:16, James 5:16, 1 Peter 5:7

**Topics:** "Private Prayer", "Spiritual Renewal"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of praying in the secret place, highlighting the need for individual, intimate prayer with God. It addresses the current darkness and uncertainty in the world, urging the church to seek God in prayer amidst crisis and hopelessness. The speaker encourages believers to find their secret place with God for renewal, comfort, and seeking His face in the midst of personal and global challenges.

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## Transcript

I want to preach this morning about praying in the closet, praying in the closet. I want you to go to Matthew, the sixth chapter, if you will, please. Matthew, the sixth chapter.

Let's start verse six. Very familiar passage of scripture. But thou, when thou prayest, this is Jesus speaking, when you pray, enter into your closet, and when you shut the door, pray to the Father which is in secret, and the Father which sees in secret, shall reward thee openly.

When you pray, use not vain repetitions as the heathen do, for they think they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them, for your Father knoweth what things you have need of before you ask. Then he goes on teaching them the Lord's Prayer.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for truth. We know, Lord, that you called us to this city, and you've raised up pastors to stand with us to preach the truth. We came here, Lord, to hear your Word and to obey it.

And you have raised up a body of people who love the Word. We love your Word in this house. We honor your Word in this house.

And Holy Spirit, without your anointing, the Word has no impact. It does not get into the conscience of men. So Holy Spirit, come now and dig into our consciousness.

Dig into the conscience itself. Lord Jesus, speak freely through my lips. Sanctify these lips and sanctify our ears to hear what the Lord through the Holy Spirit would say to our hearts this morning.

In Christ's name I pray. Amen. I've got a question for you.

In this time of darkness and uncertainty in the United States and around the whole world, when you look back over the past five, ten years, that uncertainty that's in the world and the perplexity keeps magnifying itself and intensifying, think of the tsunami, think of 9-11, think of terrorism, think of the war in Afghanistan and Iraq and then recently in Lebanon. And you think of nuclear weapons in the hands of madmen. You hear the news and you hear the secularists.

You hear even those who are very, very liberal in every sense of the word. And you hear fear, you hear anxiety. And you remember the words of Jesus, the time would come when men's hearts, all men's hearts would fail them for fear of watching those things coming on the earth.

And you see this rapidity of events coming. You see and feel the intensity. When gas prices were skyrocketing, there's fear.

There's fear everywhere. And many have said, well, we've begun the Third World War. You hear all of these things and people are turning it off.

They can't handle anymore because it's just been overwhelming. And my question is this. What can the church do? What is the body of Christ called to do? What can we do? Because most people think that problems can't be solved anymore, that we have reached a place, a zenith of hopelessness, that there's no more hope.

And a lot of young people now are turning to drugs. A lot of people are turning to alcohol because of that hopelessness. What can the church of Jesus Christ do? When we see these things, what do we do? We just sit down and wait for the coming of Jesus and say, well, many priests were not going to go through their tribulation.

I'm not going to get into that. I believe we're going to go through a lot of suffering. But do we just sit and come to church and praise the Lord and thank God that we are saved? Is there no power left? Is there nothing that the church of Jesus Christ is called to do in the worst times of crisis? Do we listen to the devil who says you can't do anything now? Why don't you just thank God that you're saved? And he will use scripture to reinforce that.

But why evangelize anymore? Because the Muslims or the Islamics are taking over the world. So what are you going to do? Because if you preach the gospel in an Islamic country, they're going to cut your head off. And we listen to all of this, and we see the Islamic religion being forced.

I was listening to a news program of a group of young Islamics in London, and this is what they said, and it set a knife in my spirit. He said, we are Muslims. We are not Christians.

We don't turn the other cheek. We'll cut your head off. He said, that's our religion.

I'm not making a comment on the Islamic religion. This is what I heard. This is what the young terrorists believe, that the young militants believe.

And in the midst of all of this, what does the church do? What do we do? And the image of a lot of Christians now, the church has become so weak, it's turned to materialism, preaching the success gospel, and getting rich on Jesus, and making sure you get your Mercedes, and you get your big fancy house. I'm not against any of that, and God does bless people, and thank God for the blessings. But if you watch a lot of, if you see modern television, you see Jesus portrayed as Santa Claus, who's just trying to make sure that you get your part of the American pie.

And it's an abomination in the eyes of Almighty God. And so, really, the world looks on the church as being an absolutely powerless entity now. Let's go back to what the prophet Joel said in a similar time.

He said it was a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of thick darkness that was coming, a day such as there never was seen before in history. And Joel cried out, a day of the Lord is at hand. A time of destruction from the Almighty shall come, it shall come.

So what does Joel say to do in times like these? You go to the Old Testament, you see the pattern for the new. And here's what the prophet Joel said for the church to do. Therefore now, turn to the Lord with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping and mourning.

Rend your heart and turn to the Lord, for He is gracious, merciful, slow to anger. He's of great kindness, and He repents of the evil. Even now, listen to this, even now, who knows if He will return and repent and leave a blessing behind Him.

And I was reading that, and these two words hit me hard, even now, even now in the time of the worst apostasy in the history of the world, now in the time of militant homosexuality, in the breaking down of moral standards, men wanting to marry men and women wanting to marry women, and adopting children, in a time, even now, when the courts are trying to drive Christ, drive God out of society, despising His name, even now, when it seems like the day of mercy is over and God has seemed to have said enough, He said even now, call together the assembly, begin to pray, begin to weep and repent before the Lord. He said even now, when gross darkness covers the earth, even now, when society is losing its moral compass, even now, call on the Lord, even now, listen to what He says, for He is gracious, merciful, slow to anger, of great kindness, and repents of the evil. And even now, who knows, if He will return and repent and leave behind the blessing behind Him.

Folks, we have to beware of what the devil is saying. He's saying the generation is too wicked, and he's going to twist the word of God and say, God has set judgments now, the vials of wrath are coming, and they are. But folks, right up to the last day, the last breath that we breathe before Christ returns, to the very last, the Spirit of God is still here on this earth.

He's still wooing, He's still calling, He's still moving. And God does not take into account anything that comes from any other God, so-called God. Not Mohammed, not Allah, not any of the million gods in India.

God does not take account. His word stands true. And God, all the prophets, and everything that God says through His prophets to the church, is that the darker the times become, the more chaos.

That is the time to press in. That is the time to believe that God says, I'm going to honor my name. No name will be raised above my name.

God honors His word, and He honors His name, and He wants to pour out His Spirit. And the prophet Zachariah said, in a similar day, a similar time as ours, in gross darkness, when it seemed like the world

was shaking and coming apart, he says, God is going to pour out a spirit of supplication upon His people. There's going to be a spirit of supplication.

The scriptures, Joe, by the way, said, blow the trumpet, call a fast, call the church, gather the people, and the elders, and all the ministers of the Lord, come to the altar, and begin to seek me again. And what were we to pray? What is the church to pray in times like these? He said, call the people together. Start seeking God as never before.

Don't get discouraged. Don't believe the lies of the devil, that there can't be an awakening of His Spirit before Christ returns. Don't give in to the despair.

Don't give in to the feeling that one of these days, the Islamic religion, Muslim religion, is going to take over the world, and that they're going to take over England and Europe, and they're going to take over the United States. Folks, that's unscriptural. It will never happen, because God can change things overnight, when hard times come.

And folks, when there's, if there were avian flu, and when all these gods, Allah, and the million gods of India, and all the gods around the world, when they fail, the same thing will happen that happened in Sri Lanka, and in other countries, when the sunami came, they said, where was our God? What happened? And every false god, every god, that people are serving today, folks, I'm not afraid to preach it. I'm not afraid to speak. We don't rail against religions here.

But folks, when we've got a whole, we've got nation after nation of Islamists standing up, saying, we're out to destroy Christianity, they're not going to scare the true Christian of Jesus Christ, the true believers in Jesus Christ. It will not be a spirit of the flesh, but there'll be a spirit of the Holy Ghost rise up in us, and say, enough is enough. The Holy Ghost will move and stop any invasion that would hinder the missionary endeavors of the Holy Spirit in the last day.

So we're not to give in to the fears of this generation. Folks, if you have to, turn off the news. Turn it off.

Keep up, keep in touch if you please, but folks, don't let any of those reports get into you. Keep the calm of the Holy Spirit. God still has everything under control.

Here's what we are told to pray. Let the people say, stop the reproach of your name. Hear it.

Stop the reproach of your name. This is Joel 2.17. Don't let your church be reproached any longer. Stop the heathen from trying to lord it over your church.

I'm paraphrasing. Let it no longer be said about this church, where is your God? Let it never again be said. He said, call the people together and pray that this reproach be lifted from the ministry, that reproach be lifted from the church of Jesus Christ, that it's powerless, it doesn't have any power.

Folks, we have power in prayer. We still have power in prayer. We always did and always will.

Are you hearing anything I'm saying here? You see, we can propitiate this Lord that we serve. We can plead, and God still hears and answers the sincere, effectual, fervent prayer of his believers. Now, back to Zechariah 12, don't turn there, but let me read what, in a similar time, he's saying, I will pour out upon the house of David, that is the church, the spirit of grace and supplication.

The land shall mourn, yes, the land shall mourn every family apart, the family of the house of David, now that's the church, the family of the house of Levi, that's every family apart, and their wives, that's individuals apart. Now, the prophet Zechariah is establishing the fact that God wants to meet his people in three places. Three places.

Now, when Israel went into the promised land, God ordained Bethel, he ordained Shiloh, he had places where he said, I'll meet you, you come to Bethel, you go to Shiloh, there were places that he chose. There are three places that God has ordained through the prophet Zechariah in that time, and I believe that that is a dual prophecy it has to do today. He said, I'm gonna pour out a spirit of supplication, that's a spirit of prayer, and a spirit of grace, and enablement to pray.

And he said, it's going to begin in the house. That's the gathering. He said, my house shall be called a house of prayer.

God's call first is to the church of Jesus Christ to pray and seek the face of God. All history has been changed through the power of prayer in the body of Jesus Christ. All history has been changed.

Nations have been changed. Church is going to Burundi with Pastor Carter and his staff, the staff of this church, and invited by the president of Burundi. And God has put in Pastor Carter's heart and all of those who are praying for Burundi and anticipate going, that God's going to impact that nation.

And it's surrounded by countries now that are being overrun by forces of iniquity. And we believe that God is going to answer that prayer and God has put that in the heart of Pastor Carter and I believe that through prayer, God can save nations. This is about nations, not just about pastors and their problems, but that the Lord will raise up such a zeal and such a faith and such a confidence in their hearts that as they seek for their own country, they rise above their own battles and their own fears and their own situations and their individual churches rise above it and see the greater picture that God is wanting to move nations.

I think our God has been too small for us. Now, I want to talk about this and I want to expand on this. He's saying, I'm going to pour out my spirit and I want to meet you first of all in the house.

The Holy Spirit came first to the house. He came to a gathering of 120 in the upper room. He came to the church.

And the Bible said they continued steadfastly in prayer. Remember in the New Testament church, Peter was released from prison. And how is it? Because in the church, prayer was made continually for the release of Peter.

God releases through the power of the corporate prayer of the church. He releases powers. He releases angels.

He does the miraculous. And that's where this begins. He calls us.

This church has led the leadership of the church on occasion and almost every year, this year included, that there will be three days of prayer and fasting here in New York City, beginning Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. And folks, God answers that kind of prayer. We are called to this corporate prayer.

And there's nothing more beautiful than to be in this church when the spirit of prayer hits, when the spirit of prayer comes from the Holy Ghost and it just lifts us into another realm. It's a glorious thing. We have

prayed for situations and things.

We prayed that God would open Manchuria, for example. And our prayers and others worked, and God has opened wide Manchuria. God opens countries.

We've been praying for Cuba, and Cuba's beginning to open up. It opens up nations. God has answered prayer for individuals that were referred to here at this church, including my son.

And God has done these miracles through the body of Jesus Christ. That is the first call of God to get the church on its knees seeking the Lord. But you see, corporate prayer is limited.

It's limited to schedule. Now, if you came to every service at Times Square Church, six services, I figured, six, seven services at the most, and our services last about two hours. And if we spent one hour in every service for prayer, you would get six, at the most, seven hours of prayer for the week.

And many of us thank God for that. That's wonderful, and that is God's design. That's where it begins.

But many people, you ask them to a prayer like this, come from three days of fasting and prayer. Yes, I pray. But you see, there's another invitation.

There's another place God said, I want to meet you. And he set each family apart. This is the two or three that gather together in my name, Jesus said.

This is this unity prayer of having somebody to pray with. Now, let me tell you, if you're a believer and you love to pray, if you have someone that you pray with, of like spirit, you're one of the most blessed persons on the earth. If you have someone you can get on the phone with, or someone that you pray with, that's a miracle.

God has done a wonderful thing. It's family. And folks, I believe that every family should have prayer time.

Gwen and I pray every day. We pray for years for our children, that not one would be lost. We pray for our grandchildren.

We have prayed away girlfriends and boyfriends that we knew could destroy them. I'm working on a couple of grandsons right now we're working on. We prayed them away.

We prayed some girls away. We prayed some boys away. I'm not going to get off on that.

Are you too busy to pray with your mate? You know, I grew up, I'll tell you why I'm standing here. I grew up with family prayer meetings. Every day, whether we're playing, it was either before school, and then in the summertime we were playing, mother would go to the front door, David! Prayer time! Jerry! Juanita! Ruth! Dawn wasn't born yet.

Prayer time. Everybody in the neighborhood knew. And sometimes I hated it.

And sometimes I would gripe and groan. I wasn't a preacher then, I was a kid. But you know, something happened in those meetings where the call of God was moving, and God did great things through those prayer meetings.

See, there is such a thing as this unity prayer of the one or two, two or three that are agreeing together. Folks, most of the intercessors that I have met in my lifetime comes in twos or threes. Twos or threes.

And that is one of the calls that Christ talked about. God said, I'm going to pour out my spirit of grace. And it's not enough to just have a part in corporate praying in the church.

It has to be praying in the home. You say, well, my husband is not saved, or my wife is not saved, or my children are in rebellion. Have your prayer time right there, because that's your house.

Did you hear me? Your child doesn't own your boy. I don't care if he's 18. He doesn't own the house.

He doesn't pay the bills. You pay the rent. And you have every right, not in rebellion, not in kind of any putting your face thing, but just get your Bible out, kitchen table, sit there, and bow your head and pray.

And when they see and hear that prayer time. But now I come to the heart of my message, and that is the closet praying. The individual.

This is what Zachariah said, and I read it again. I will pour out my spirit. I will pour out the spirit.

It begins with the house, Zachariah said. And then it extends, here it is, every family apart, and every wife apart. The wife representing the individual.

God said, then I will pour out my spirit. And God can't pour out his spirit until he finds individuals waiting upon him upon which he can pour that spirit that's been promised. Now, Jesus said, when you pray, let me find it here in just a minute.

But when you pray, enter into your closet. This is the text that I gave you, Matthew 6, 6 through 8. Enter into your closet. Now, folks, let me stop there for just a moment.

In the oriental house at the time Christ was giving these words, in the center of the house, the oriental house, there was a room called the storage room. A small room where they stored goods, and that was in the center of the house. And it was this select place.

He said, you enter into the closet, and when you have shut the door, pray to the Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees in secret shall reward you openly. Now, folks, listen to me. God's been speaking to my heart.

We're in New York, and the apartments are small. And for a number of years, especially since I came to New York in the past 20 years, when I got to this, these words of Jesus, I just backed away from them more or less. And I've been preaching.

I look over some of my old notes and say, well, you don't have a private place. You can't find a secret place. So, whether you're on the bus, whether it's subway, wherever you're at, just make that your secret place.

But, you know, the more I walk with God, the more he, see, I'm 75, and I'm still being trained. I'm still being taught. And the Lord kept telling me, go back to this.

And so, in my own life, I've had to do this. It's not just, I have prayer walks. Yes, and I do that, but, you know, every time I've walked, I've been interrupted.

I don't have that special, uninterrupted, quiet time. And he said, go into the closet and shut the door and pray to the Father in secret, and the Father's teeth in secret. And I've been saying, well, that's okay.

I'm afraid sometimes I've eased up. I have not made it clear what Jesus is saying because I didn't practice it and see it in my own life as I should. That's all changed.

Because, see, when my son became sick and doctors couldn't find him, but it demanded of me, not just taking it by faith, even though I had a promise from the Holy Spirit, not a promise from the Lord, that God had everything under control and that God was going to bring healing. The more God said that to me, the more I wanted to go in alone with him and keep pressing in until I saw it and felt it and knew it was in my hand. It's not enough just to take it by faith.

Let us just do that. We're going to take it by faith. And we use that as an excuse from having this secret time with the Lord alone.

And we excuse it by saying, I don't have the time. I don't have the time. I don't have a place.

And thirdly, I don't know what to say. I can't endure more than 10, 15 minutes. But folks, even if you gave the 10 or 15 minutes, let me show you what Jesus said.

And in the morning, this is Jesus practicing what he's preaching here. And in the morning, rising up a great while before daylight, he went out and departed into a solitary place. And there he prayed in Matthew 14, 23.

And when he sent away the multitude, he went into a mountain apart to pray. And when evening came, he was there all alone, all alone. One of the great writers of the Puritans, one of my favorite writers, one of the godliest writers ever in the history of mankind.

I believe that with all my heart. I have a set of 17 of his books, and I devour them. Brother Thomas Madden said, we seem to have no time to pray secretly, yet we have time for everything else.

A time to eat, to drink, time for children, a time for our careers. Yet we don't have time for the one thing that sustains all else. We say we have no private place.

But Jesus found a mountain. Peter found a rooftop. The prophets found a wilderness.

And if you truly love someone, you will make sure you find a place alone. You will find a place. You see, God often allows afflictions to bring us into the secret closet.

David said, before I was afflicted, I went astray. But now I keep your word. He said, before I was afflicted.

God never afflicts or allows affliction except as an act of love. He never hurts one of his children. And sometimes he allows afflictions to bring us to our knees and to wake us up.

I know from the letters I receive from around the world, people that are under affliction, many of them, have told me later, God was trying to get my attention. David's acknowledging that there was something in his life. You see, when times are calm and things are serene and everything is going well, the Bible says we're bent on backsliding.

There's a temptation to just ease off in our prayer life. There's a tendency not to carry the burden of Joseph for the nation or to get involved more and more in prayer. In fact, when things are going smooth, when you're not in affliction, that's the time to begin to seek him alone and get closer to him than you've ever been in that time.

So that you have the resources, you have the power, you have the authority when the enemy comes in like a flood. So many people are surprised and they're shocked. They're not ready.

They've not been shut in with the Lord. Folks, thank God for the prayer of this church. Thank God for corporate prayer.

Thank God for that one or two gather together, those of you getting in smaller circles. Folks, the prayer meeting in this church, the Thursday night prayer meeting is the heart of this church. It's the heart of any church.

I don't know any church that on the face of the earth where I've traveled, where God is blessing, that didn't have a vibrant prayer meeting. And it's vital that you be a part of that because if you're there, you know that you have been praying secretly with the Lord. You've had your time.

It's one of the evidences because you want to be with the body so you can express what God has shown you in private. Before I was afflicted, I went astray. John Calvin, one of the great commentators said, We never give obedience to God until we're compelled by chastening.

We don't fully obey his commands until we are compelled by chastening. C.S. Lewis said, God whispers to us in our good times, but he shouts in our pain. His test is a megaphone to wake up a deaf world.

Pain removes the veil. He said, In good times, God speaks quietly, but there comes a time that he's got a megaphone in his hand. Wake up, seek me while I may be found.

In Jeremiah, the third chapter, I've got to rush on right now. Jeremiah is speaking to Ephraim in a time when there was total darkness and there was confusion, just like ours. And they were praying, there was grief in their hearts, and God came to them and said, I feel your grief, I hear your cry.

And when they heard that from the prophet, Listen to me closely because this is a key section of what I'm trying to put across to you today. Ephraim is being chastened by the Lord. They're under great affliction.

They're asking why. And they come to this conclusion on their own because the Spirit of God had moved on. Ephraim represents Israel.

They said, God, you have chastened us for a reason. We were like a young, untrained bull. But after I repented, then I received instruction.

Get this, please. The prophet said, you've been like a wild bull. God had a purpose for you, he had a plan.

A wonderful plan for your life, a future for Ephraim. But when I put you in school and I allowed some afflictions and I brought the rod, because when you're under the old-fashioned schooling like I had, they had a rod in school. Now, I know that's not politically correct anymore to have a rod.

But we got spanked in school. We had a rod. And she'd tap you on the shoulder, or rather on the wrist, with the little ruler, we got the rod.

And the Bible talks about being instructed by the rod. And you see, we're like wild bulls, young wild bulls, full of energy, full of life. We want to win the world.

And sometimes we rebel against that. And this is what happened to Ephraim. He said, we were like young wild bulls, and we went our own way.

In other words, we saw the affliction. We said, we don't have to take this. Why is God doing this to us? This is Ephraim.

We're God's people. We're chosen, we're called, and yet we're being afflicted. And the Holy Spirit had to reveal the reason for your affliction, and sometimes incredible affliction in your home, in marriage, wherever it may be, in career.

These things come at us. And the Lord's saying, I'm trying to take the wild bull out of you. I'm trying to take this thing out of you that runs every time there's something that comes into your life that you don't understand, and say, I don't have to take this, I give up.

And folks, the only antidote I know, the only antidote of that, you see, the wild bull runs away. And what they said, when we came to the rod, when we came to affliction, we ran. But we have returned, and those are the very words Ephraim said.

We returned, and we submitted to the rod. We submitted to correction. And we didn't ask questions anymore, we didn't even accuse the devil or anything else.

We just said, Lord, we submit to you. And then we started learning. We started receiving instruction.

And I know that's how God deals with me. And now, rather than fight it, I submit. I don't want to be a wild bull running around doing my own thing, making my own decisions, and the only antidote is to be alone with Christ in a secret closet, and waiting on Him until I get the anointing of Jesus, until I have replenished my spirit through intercessory prayer, worshipping.

If you can't do anything, go into the secret closet for 15 minutes and just say, Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah. Glory to God, glory to God. Praise Him.

If that's all you can do, get alone. If the kids are at school, take time. If you have to get up in the morning a half hour early, whatever it is, get alone, get alone, get alone.

I'm going to close in just a minute. I don't know any other way than to be replenished and get my resources from being shut in with God alone. Not with my wife, not with any prayer warrior.

There's a place for that, and I do that, but there comes a time. We just got word last week, a bishop friend of ours, he was with us in Israel a month or so ago, and we got an email about 10 days ago from this bishop. He's bishop of the Pentecostal movement in Budapest for the whole nation of Hungary.

He's a good, dear friend of mine, and he sent us an email about 10 days ago. He was cooking at his grill, and his clothes caught fire. He got dangerously burned, terribly burned.

I got an email about 10 days ago, and he said, Pastor Dave, I'm not feeling well, and told about what happened. The church prayed, and they thought it was all well, and he went to the hospital last week to have them remove the bandages and died suddenly of blood clots. The whole Pentecostal movement in Hungary right now is broken before the Lord.

Now, we sent money to that wife, but what does money do? She's got a whole denomination praying for her, but that's not going to heal her. She's got a loving family around her, but that's not going to comfort her, and I'm going to send this message to her, and I'm giving her word now publicly that we will pray with her and stand with her, but her only hope, you see, the comforter, when he comes, does one thing, and this is his purpose. When the Holy Ghost comes, he brings to remembrance everything Jesus said to us, and what did Jesus say? When you pray, go in the closet and shut the door.

He said, I'm going to reward you openly. What that is, a countenance of peace. Rest with the Holy Spirit.

There's no other hope. There's no psychiatrist, no psychologist, nobody. You have to come to that conclusion, and some of you need to hear this now.

You're not going to get it from somebody else. You're not going to get it from husband or wife. You're not going to get it from a counselor.

You're going to get it alone in the secret closet with Jesus. He's going to come and appear there, and you'll come out of that place renewed. At the same time, in Honduras, there's a precious pastor and his wife.

They have an orphanage in Honduras, and we help support and measure. They have about 17 in that orphanage now. Five years ago, they found a baby, two years old, worm-eaten, half dead, and they brought the baby to the orphanage, and that little five-year-old boy became the prince of the orphanage and more or less adopted by this pastor and his wife.

Two weeks ago, the children got in the van with one of the staff, and they had to stop for a moment, and some of the children got out, and this little five-year-old boy was evidently in the front seat, and an elbow hit the gear shift, I guess, and the car went in motion. The little boy fell out, and a car ran over and killed him. And we sent Dr. Smith, who has been in this church, and he's one of our full-time missionaries.

We sent him down last week just to counsel them, and while Brother Smith was there, he fell and broke his hip. And you see, these people, these dear people have been inconsolable, and the children all saw it happen. Inconsolable.

I'm asking you, what hope is there? Who can get through? What can you say? You can't start quoting scriptures to people that are going through this kind of pain. We said, well, here's what the Bible says. Here's what the Bible says.

Yes, it does. But folks, I can only say, and again, I send this message, and we'll send it out tomorrow. We're pledging, and I want this couple to know that this church stands with them in prayer.

And at the close of this meeting, we're going to pray for these two occasions. I'm not trying to be sensational. I'm trying to make a point.

First of all, to have you pray for these dear people and to let them know that I can't write them a letter with any scripture. I can't give them anything from 50 years of preaching. I can't touch that hurt, that pain.

I can't touch it. And I'm saying to them, get along. Dear sister, go to your own place.

And to my dear brother, go to your own place. And just sit there in his presence. I know you have.

But folks, that is the only hope. That's the only deliverance from pain. When you're in a bad marriage and you've tried everything.

I opened a letter yesterday. There's a beautiful young Christian girl, fell in love and married a young man who was in partial ministry and everybody admired him. Great Christian, gets married.

She's expecting a child now. And she just found out he's a pedophile. And she said, Pastor Dave wrote, she said, I have to divorce him.

I don't want him to attack my own child. She said, I don't know what to do. And I'm sitting at my desk.

And I said, my God, what do I say to her? What can you say? Who on the face of the earth can walk into that situation and say, well, here, I've got an answer. No, only Jesus. I take everything to him.

I have a place. And everywhere I go, the first thing I do, I look for my place. I look for that twisting spot with nobody.

Because you see, when you're praying in the church, you're not liable. That's not the venue where you're going to confess everything out loud. Are you? You're not going to say, Lord, I've had a battle with lust today.

You're not going to say that in church. You're not going to say it when you're two or three. You're going to say that alone.

You're not going to unburden your heart except when you're alone. And I'm asking God that there be every Christian in this house and every believer that came here visiting for the first time, that you make a pledge, I'm going to find a place. You'll find it.

It's being too busy. Nobody was busier than Jesus. He couldn't find time to eat and hardly sleep.

And yet, he got up before the daylight, and he found a mountain. He found a place. That's where I am now.

This hunger and this thirst to just seek his face in his presence. And then when I come to the prayer meeting, I'll come with a little bit of fire burning in my soul. And I won't need Pastor Neal to drag me out of my blues or drag me out of the pit.

I'll come, and I'll be blessing this man, and I'll be blessing those in charge of the prayer meetings. I'll come to every service renewed and having resources to add the fire, fuel to the fire of the Holy Ghost here. Will you stand, please? I'm going to make an invitation that I hadn't planned to.

Visitors and those who call this your church home, listen to me closely, please. I'd like everybody to stand at attention, please, for just a moment. We'll let you go in just a moment, but please hold still.

I want everybody in the annex watching on the screen and here in the main auditorium. I named three cases here, very serious cases. And you're here, and you're going through something very, very serious in your life.

You're going through, I mean, a life-and-death crisis right now. I don't know if it's the death of a loved one. I don't know whether it's news that you received recently from somebody that just pains your heart.

Telephone call, but you're in a real crisis, and you need the prayers of the saints. I invite you to step out of your seat and come here, and we will pray with you in this church. We'll pray, and we will believe God to turn things around.

We'll believe the Lord to comfort you, and you'll walk out of this church renewed with resources. If you don't know Christ, if you have backslidden, you've turned your back on the Lord, or you've just drifted away, your heart's grown cold, I invite you to get out of your seat, get up on the balcony, come, and even in the annex, if you can just step back to the lobby, the ushers will show you how to get into this auditorium. You come down the aisle, we'll pray with you.

But listen to me, please. I don't know how to do this, Holy Spirit, unless you give me direction. I don't know how to do this.

I don't want to put anybody on the spot. I don't want to embarrass anybody. I'm just going to have to open up these altars.

For those who want to make a public confession before the Holy Ghost, I have not been praying. I don't have this continual communion with the Lord. I don't get alone.

And then you remember that scripture that says, my people have forgotten me days without number. He said, they've forgotten me. I want you to step out of your seat and say, Pastor David, it's been so long.

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