

The Prayer of Unbelief

by David Wilkerson

David Wilkerson's sermon emphasizes the importance of genuine prayer rooted in faith and obedience, highlighting biblical examples of Moses and Joshua.

Duration: 1:02:15

Scripture: Exodus 14:15, Matthew 6:33

Topics: "Faith And Trust", "Effective Prayer"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the prayer of unbelief and how it can hinder our relationship with God. He starts by describing a scene where people are crying out and weeping in a prayer meeting, but God rejects their prayers because they lack true repentance. The speaker then refers to the story of Moses and the Israelites at the Red Sea, where Moses is crying out to God in panic. However, God tells Moses to stop crying out and instead instructs him to lead the people forward. The speaker emphasizes the importance of having faith and trust in God's plan, even in the face of difficult circumstances.

Transcript

This message is one of the Times Square Church Pulpit series. It was recorded in the sanctuary of Times Square Church in Manhattan, New York City. Other tapes are available by writing World Challenge, PO Box 260, Lindell, Texas 75771 or calling 903-963-8626.

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The Prayer of Unbelief. Now God, I'm asking you to give me the most special grace you've ever given me in my lifetime. I believe I'm preaching what you told me to preach tonight.

And Lord, sometimes the most graceful messages we ever hear are those that reprove us the deepest. Because it's always done in your love and mercy and grace. Lord, you have deeply dealt with me on the subject I'm to bring to this congregation tonight.

You have dug so deep into my soul that everything depends, everything we do for you, everything, all our worship, all our praise, all our adoration, everything comes, Lord, out of this obedience we're going to talk about tonight. My God, we've heard such powerful messages today from this pulpit. Just so powerful,

Lord.

And we thank you that we've been so blessed. But Lord, all that we hear, all that we know depends on what we're about to see and hear from your word tonight. Lord, that everything we've heard will be made real and be added life.

Lord, sanctify me. Let me not speak this out of any kind of human zeal. Nothing, oh Lord, as we heard this afternoon of striking the rack, anything but with compassion, or speaking only to the people from the heart of God.

I pray in Jesus' name. Amen. The prayer of unbelief.

Please pray for me tonight. I need his touch very especially tonight. The prayer of unbelief.

Now, you've heard of the prayer of faith. I'm going to talk to you tonight about the prayer of unbelief. Now, God knows we don't pray enough.

I don't care how much you've been praying. God knows we haven't been praying as we should. God knows deeply that we don't weep as we ought to weep because it's very scriptural that we're to weep before him.

And God knows that when we pray, we often pray in a way that is full of unbelief and often unacceptable to God. In fact, it's possible that our prayer becomes sin in the eyes of God according to the scripture. I ask you a question.

Has God ever said to you, stop praying, get up off your knees? Have you ever heard him say, wipe your eyes, stop your weeping? Why are you crying to me? Has the Holy Spirit ever commanded you to get up off the ground, off your face? And why did he ever ask you, why are you laying on your face before me? Get up. Now, this, there was a time that God told Moses to do just that, to quit crying out to him. Exodus, the 14th chapter, please.

Exodus, the 14th chapter. We'll stay for a while in the Old Testament, then we'll go to the New. Exodus, the 14th chapter.

Do you have an open heart tonight? Huh? I didn't hear it. Exodus, 14th chapter, 15th verse. The Lord said unto Moses, wherefore cryest thou unto me? Why are you crying, Moses? Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward.

Now, look at me, if you will, please. You know the setting of this. Pharaoh is pressing in from the west.

God has led them into this position where there are mountains on both sides. In front of them is the sea. And at this time, the people in total panic.

And all Moses can hear and is ringing in his ears, murderer, you're a murderer. You know, the Bible just says it in two or three sentences, two or three verses, but my goodness, there's so much more to it than that. It's just capsulized.

I'm sure the elders came to him and said, Moses, looking right at his face, man to man, saying, Moses, are you telling us there weren't enough graves in Egypt that you had to come out here to find more space to bury us? To be called a murderer? To walk among them and say, here's the man who called himself a

deliverer and he has brought us out here to kill us? Murderer! What would you do if you had that ringing in your ear? God had brought you to this place and you knew this is a divine calling of God, divine ordinance of God that you were here at this time and at this place. And God had brought you into this crisis. God brought you into this predicament.

And all he can hear now is that you are a murderer. You have deceived us. What would you do? What would I do if this whole congregation stood before me or the pastors and we were in a crisis and we heard these words, you're a murderer.

You've deceived us. You would do what he did. He probably isolated himself on one of the mountains.

They were in between two mountains. And he gets along with God. And he literally screams at God because the Hebrew word here, why, Moses said, wherefore cries that word in Hebrew, why are you shrieking at me? Why are you yelling at me? Now, I want you to tell, I want you to know something closer.

Listen closely. When God called Moses, he gave him a whole plan because he told him, you're going to go and do everything that I've shown you and put in your hands. He didn't have to get up every morning and say, what kind of crisis are you going to bring next? What is the next calamity? God showed that to him.

He said, you show them the miracles and you tell them what I already told you. Have you know what it is to reach a crisis in your life and have a situation that's come upon you that is so dark and so despairing and so overwhelming that you got alone somewhere and you cried your guts out? You really let God have it. I've been there and done that.

You've heard me tell when Bonnie was in the hospital in Texas, being bombarded with cobalt for three days. No one allowed in the room, doctors only in leaden suits. And I tell you, I got out in a lonely place.

I was in a crisis. I was at a Red Sea. And I went out in a lonely road as far as I could go.

And for three hours, I screamed at God. I wasn't mad at God. It wasn't a matter of unbelief.

I was screaming out of pain for her. Because I knew what she was facing, that loneliness where nobody's allowed in the room and saying, God, what's it all about? Mom and then Debbie, then me. Where does it end? Have you ever cried your heart out? Have you ever prayed and just screaming at God? Now, folks, she's a loving God.

The Bible said that Jesus prayed with loud, strong cries. He hears the cry. He's patient.

Mine was not a prayer of unbelief. But this man on the mountaintop had just been told prior to this that he was going to, God was going to open the Red Sea. He was given permission or he was given commandment to stretch out his hand.

God said, I'm going to open the sea. They're going to go on dry land. He knew it.

And he preached a powerful message of faith just prior to this. He said, God's going to go before you preach the powerful message of faith and then gets alone and gives vent to his unbelief. He's crying out to God and you look at this, you said this should be what a wonderful sight to see a man on the mountaintop crying his heart out to God.

Oh, God, what am I going to do? What are we going to do? We're in a hard place. God says, Moses, why are you shrieking at me? Why are you crying at me? I told you what to do. You have my word.

Go stretch out your hand. Why didn't God take kindly to this shrieking and this crying out? Why did he say, oh, Moses, that's enough. It's not said, but God had every right, I believe, to say to this man, you have no right to agonize before me at this point.

There's a time to agonize. But I gave you a clear word. I called you.

I spoke it. It is clear. I've never failed you.

Everything I've told you come to pass up to this point. And I've told you, Moses, lovingly, I love you. I have told you what to do.

This is not a time to agonize. It's a time to act. I gave you my word.

I told you what to do. I gave you well understood promises to stop your crying. I believe when God called Moses, he foretold him because here's the scripture.

And the Lord said unto Moses, when thou goest to return into Egypt, see that thou do all the wonders before Pharaoh, which I have put in thine hand. This is referring not only to the snake and the leprosy of his hand. This has to do with the opening of the Red Sea, the plagues, everything God had shown this man.

Because he said, I want you to tell him everything that I put in your hand. Now, here's a godly man. He's a meek, godly man.

But he had a root of unbelief in his heart. You see, God had told him, you go and your brethren shall hearken to your voice. He said, I'm giving you a voice.

And you go and they're going to listen to you. Moses said, they're not going to believe me. They'll not hearken to my voice.

They're going to say to me, the Lord hath not appeared to thee. Here's God saying, Moses, I gave you a voice. You go.

They're going to listen to you. You're going to bring a great deliverance. And he turns around and says, no, they won't.

They're not going to listen to me. They're going to say, God didn't send you. God commanded me.

He said, go, deliver. I give you a voice. They will listen.

I'll be with you. And here's what he says, Lord, I'm not eloquent. Neither have I become eloquent since you called me.

I don't know if it's been a week or two, but he was waiting for eloquence. He saw all this time, you called me, I was at the burning bush. I'm not eloquent and I'm still waiting to become eloquent.

And since you called me, I didn't get it. I am slow speech and of slow tongue. Send somebody else by the hand of him, whoever you will send.

Now, think of how foolish this is. Here's a man who can take a rod, throw it on the ground and it becomes a snake. And he grabs it by the tail and it becomes a rod.

He puts his hand in his vest, pulls it out and it's leprosy, puts it in again. It comes out pink, as healthy as it can be. To me, that's the height of eloquence.

If he came to this church, I pictured this coming out here with the rod and standing here and he throws the rod down and it starts wiggling. I'm going to tell you, Pastor Neil would be screaming, running out the door. If Moses sticks his hand in and says, I was sent by God, he pulls it out and it's white as snow and he puts it in.

He comes out and says, Brother Wilkes, I forgot to shake hands with you. I'm going to tell you, I'm going to have the fear of God in me. It better come out pink.

I'm not trying to be a Caesar. I'm trying to tell you that he had demonstration and power of the Holy Ghost. Paul said, I didn't come with eloquence, but I've got something else.

I have got the Spirit of God upon me. I speak through the Spirit. Brother, this man, I don't care if he's stuttered.

I don't care if he's tongue tied. I'll listen to this man because he's got the power of God. And the angel and the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses.

In the original Hebrew, God was enraged against Moses. A man he loved, he's enraged against him. Not that he wasn't loving him, but God's saying in essence, no more of this false humility.

No more of this, I'm not capable. I'm not good enough. I'm not smart enough.

I'm not educated. I'm mentally slow. I don't have the right stuff.

You see, God would not let him get away from his calling. God would say no excuses. He's saying in essence, I knew all about you, Moses, before I called you.

I knew about your lack of eloquence. I knew your proneness to self-deprecate yourself, compare yourself with others, and not think you measure up. I know all about it when I called you.

That incredible moment you had with me all along, when I spoke to you, when I appointed you, I want you to know, Moses, that was a calling before you were born from the foundation of the world, when you were still not even a thought in any man's mind. It was a thought in mine, and I called you. You think for one moment that a call that I gave you in eternity, I'm going to let you abort? I knew all about your weaknesses.

But you better face it, Moses, you're it. You're it. I'm not going to choose somebody else.

I'm not going to let you out of the choir. Because I gave you a voice, and I gave you a voice, you're obligated before a holy God to use it. I've called you.

You're not going to sit there and say, well, maybe somebody can sing better. God said, I knew how much you could sing when I called you. I knew exactly what your voice would do.

You know, the things in the church, people just walk away from their jobs in the church, and the work of God saying, God, bring somebody more capable than me. God called you because he wanted you. I won't get many amens out of this.

See, all God wanted to hear from Moses was, Lord, I believe what you told me. Get my eyes off my weaknesses and myself, and let me turn to you. See, at the Red Sea, Moses preached this powerful faith message.

Fear not. Stand still. See the salvation of the Lord, which he will show you today.

Now, that implies very clearly that he knew God was going to do exactly what God was going to do. The Lord is going to fight for you. You shall hold your peace.

Now, you see, Moses is going to become one of the great men of God in prayer. He's going to be a man so intimate with God that he can spend 40 days and 40 nights on a mountaintop along with him, and come with his face aglow. A man above all men who knew how to pray and have total intimacy with God.

He was going to come to that place, but God had a lot of things to teach him first. When to pray, how to pray, when to get up, when to act, and how to use the power of his prayer. To pray at this time was unbelief, because God had told him to stretch out his rod and open the waters.

I don't believe he had unbelief in God. It wasn't that he had fear that God wouldn't open the waters. He was afraid that there was going to be some failure on his part.

The unbelief is that God could really use him. That somewhere, Lord, I may fail in my faith, and maybe there's something that will hinder this. Your plan will be aborted because there's some weakness in me.

And he's really crying out of a fear. He's shrieking in a fear in his own heart. If God has called you, and we're all called, when the time comes when God needs somebody to stand up and live out what they preach and teach, he'll not let you off the hook.

He'll not let you go back to some wilderness. He'll not let you go back and say, well, all I want to do is be alone and pray. I'll pray.

I'll be an intercessor. You can pray and be an intercessor, but you're also going to be what God told you to be and do what God told you to do in the process. I'm not mad.

I'm talking like this because I just feel so strongly. Do you want me to smile while I do it? I'll smile. God will not let you walk away from what he's called you to do.

He'll never let you walk away. Now, prayer becomes sin when disobedience is involved. Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward.

Lift up your rod, stretch out your hand, and go into the sea, and it will divide. Quit your whining. Stop complaining.

Stop crying all night over your fear of failure. Get your eyes off yourself. I told you to take spiritual authority, and I am going to do what I promised you to do.

I told you that I'm going to split your problem in pieces, and I'm going to let you go forth in peace. I'm going to set your feet to dancing. God said, do what I told you to do.

Take your spiritual authority and move on. I've not forsaken you. You have no right to scream at me now.

You have no right to agonize. Rejoice that I've called you. Rejoice that I've given you direction.

Do it. Joseph spends an entire day agonizing in prayer and weeping to no avail. Please go to Joshua 7, if you will, please, to the right.

Lord, give me grace to preach this with love. And verse 2, we'll start reading, and we'll read until I stop. This is Joshua 7. Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai.

Now remember, they had just defeated Jericho, a great victory. Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is beside Beth-Avin, on the east side of Bethel, and spake unto them, saying, Go up and view the country. And the men went up and viewed Ai.

You know the story. They came back and said, It's a small town. All we need is two or three thousand men to go up and we'll smite Ai.

Don't let everybody get involved. There's just a few. They went up, people, about three thousand men, and they fled before the men of Ai.

Men of Ai smote them, about thirty-six men. They chased them from before the gate even to Barim and smote them into going down. Wherefore, the hearts of the people melted and became as water.

Joshua rent his clothes and fell to the earth upon his face before the ark. Now, the ark represents the presence of God. This is all done in the presence of the Lord of holiness.

The ark of the Lord, even to the eventide. He and the elders put dust upon their heads. Joshua said, Alas, O Lord God, wherefore hast thou at all brought this people over Jordan to deliver us into the hand of Amorites to destroy us? Would to God we had been content and dwelt on the other side of Jordan.

Now, folks, look at this. If you had come on this scene and you didn't know the whole story, you'd have thought this was some revival meeting. Come on, everybody's weeping.

Everybody's crying. They're throwing dust in the air. Here are the women, their faces in their hands.

And the men are laying on the ground. And all the pastors, all the pastors are crying out and weeping and tearing their clothes. And if you walked into this, you'd say, My, what conviction, what repentance.

What a prayer meeting. And God would have nothing to do with it. Verse 8. O Lord, what shall I say when Israel turn at their backs before their enemies? For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land shall hear of it and shall environ us around it and cut off our name from the earth.

What wilt thou do unto thy great name? That sounds so spiritual. Here's a man saying, Lord, this is all about your name. What are they going to do? Your name will be disgraced.

It sounds like a defense of God's name. And it sounds very spiritual. But read the next verse.

The Lord said unto Joshua, Get thee up. Wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face? He stopped the meeting. Get up.

Israel has sinned. They've transgressed my covenant which I commanded them. They've taken the accursed thing and have also stolen, dissembled also.

And they have put it even among their stuff. Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies but turned their backs before their enemies because they were accursed. Neither will I be with you any more except ye destroy the accursed from among you.

And that implies stay all night, stay all week, stay for a month on your face, cry all you want, pray all you want, throw as much dust as you want. But until the sin is dealt with, you're going to fall before your enemies. And I'm not going to hear your prayer.

They did this before the ark, the scripture says. Look at chapter 7, verse 1. Until the visual committed to trespass the accursed thing, for Achan the son of Carmi of the tribe of Judah took of the accursed thing, and the anger of the Lord was kindled against the children of Israel. The Lord was angry against the children of Israel.

This meeting was really a blame God meeting. God, why didn't you give us the victory? Where are your covenant promises that you've made to us? Where was the power that we needed that we were promised? They had heard the messages of God's grace and power. How God was their deliverer.

God, where are those promises? Why did you let us fall on our faces? Why are we down? Where are your promises? What happened? Where are your covenant promises to us? You made us wonderful promises and they failed us. Where were you when we needed you? This spiritual warfare overwhelmed Joshua. This pastor, this godly pastor is absolutely flabbergasted.

He couldn't understand coming from such a victory from Jericho, now to be defeated by such an insignificant enemy. And the Lord said unto Joshua, get thee up. Wherefore or why are you lying on your face? Israel has sinned.

They've transgressed against my covenant. Let me talk to you plainly about what I believe the prayer of unbelief is. It's to pray, worship and praise God, taking into account only the grace of God and not his severity.

The Bible does not say behold therefore the goodness of God. The Bible says behold therefore the goodness and severity of God. God said you are helpless against all your enemies until you remove the accursed thing.

Isaiah, please take your Bible, Isaiah 59, chapter 59 of Isaiah, verses 1 and 2. Behold the Lord's hand is not short that it cannot save, neither is your ear heavy that it cannot hear. God hasn't changed. He's still a God of love.

He's a God of mercy. He's a God of covenant. But your iniquities are separated between you and your God.

Your sins have hid his face from you that he will not hear you. Your hands are defiled with blood. He said there's sin and I can't hear you.

Folks, there have been many, many people who have given up on prayer. They don't pray anymore. They have truly prayed sometimes for hours and for days about something and they've even stayed up all night and God doesn't seem to hear.

Keep going to Psalm right now. Just turn to Psalm 66 please. Verses 17 and 18.

Psalm 66 starting verse 17. I cried unto him with my mouth and was extolled with my tongue. And he was extolled with my tongue.

If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me. But verily God hath heard me. He hath attended to the voice of my prayer.

Now folks, in the original Hebrew, and the best rendition for me is Helen Sparrow's Old Testament Hebrew. And here's what it is in the original Hebrew. I called upon him with my mouth with a song of exultation under my tongue.

If I had regarded iniquity in my heart, the Lord would have not heard me. But behold, God did hear me. And he listened unto the voice of my prayer.

Blessed be God who has not removed or ignored my prayer. He said, if I had had iniquity in my heart, the Lord would not have heard me. But you see, he said, I saw the iniquity in my heart.

And he said, I dealt with it to read the context. I dealt with the sin. I went to the Lord.

I got my cleansing. And God's hearing me now. But if I had held to my sin, He would have not heard me.

He would have listened to my cry. I've got a question. Does a Christian who's unfaithful to his mate really expect God to hear him answer his prayers? Or her prayers? If you're living in adultery, do you believe that you can go in the secret closet and you pray for your unsafe children? You pray about your job.

You pray about your finances. Do you believe God's hearing you? Listen to what Malachi has said. Don't turn there.

Malachi 2, verse 13-14. God says very clearly, this is what you do. You cover the altar of the Lord with your tears, with weeping, with crying out, insomuch that he regards not your offering any more.

He receiveth it not with goodwill at his hand. Yet you say, why? Because the Lord is witness to the treachery you've been guilty of against your wife. You have wearied the Lord with your words.

You say, how have we wearied Him? Because you see, evil is good now. You take your evil so lightly, you sin against your mate, and you believe God still delights in you. You see, the longer you play with your sin, the easier it is to eventually find something good coming out of it and turning that which is evil into light.

In other words, my wife is not a prayer warrior, but my girlfriend is a prayer warrior, and when with her, I really touch God. I heard a preacher say that. He said, my wife, all she has is material things.

She talks about curtains and drapes. But I have a friend, and when I talk to my friend, and this was his lover, she's a prayer warrior. And I feel much closer to the Lord when I'm with her.

The very words. Now listen closely. If you're involved in some kind of adultery or fornication, Malachi warns you, the longer you hold your sin, the easier it's going to be to accept it.

You may be able to get away with it for a long time. It happens in the ministry. It's happening right now as I speak all over the country.

You can still hold your good name for a season. You can still teach and preach and witness, and you can put on a good show. But 1 Peter 3, 7 talks about husbands who mistreat their wives.

He said, be careful lest your prayers be hindered, and the Greek means cut off. In other words, are you going to come to church, and the whole week you mistreat your husband or your wife, call each other names, and you build up something in your heart that there's a resentment, that there's something there that is not Christ-like. And what you're saying to each other and the way you're behaving with one another has nothing to do with the spirit of Christ.

It has a spirit of the enemy himself. Satan has crept in. And then you come to God's side, you're going to go pray and believe God's going to answer you.

Of course, the scripture said, be sure your sin will find you out. Now, he's not just talking about exposure. Where your sin really finds you out is when you realize that there is a brass heaven.

It finds you out when you understand that God really isn't working with you. He still loves you. He's not damning you.

It doesn't mean that you're going to go to hell because He loves you. Somewhere along the line, He's going to challenge you. He's going to get a hold of you if you have an open heart, or you have one ounce of desire to walk in His covenant.

And He's that merciful. But God means what He says. God means what He says.

And when I talk about this prayer of unbelief, it's those who don't take God in His words, they don't believe God means what He says. They take His promises and run with them, but they won't take His warnings. You say, that's Old Testament, that's Old Covenant.

We're under the New Covenant. We're under grace and mercy. I'm going to tell you something.

God was just as merciful. He hasn't changed. He was just as merciful in the Old Testament as He is in the New.

We're not under the law as a way of salvation, but we're under the law as a moral guide. And it's all mercy. Let me show you how seriously the Lord takes it under the New Covenant.

Go to Matthew 6, please. Matthew, the sixth chapter. Sixth chapter of Matthew.

Folks, before we read this, would everybody look this way in the annex and wherever you may be? I'm telling you, I told you, I feel like a cop standing at the bus saying, stop. Now, you have heard these verses over and over again. And I'm telling you as a heartbroken, loving pastor, because I have to stand before God and answer.

He's dealt with me about this and He's going to deal with you about it tonight. I'm going to tell you, if you don't deal with it tonight, you're not even saved. You don't believe God's Word.

You're praying in unbelief. And it could cost your soul. I want you to read, if you have King James, I want you to read out loud with me.

This is the sixth chapter, verses 14 and 15. Verse 14, read out loud if you have a King James. For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. Now, that's either God's Word or it's not. And if you don't believe that, every prayer you pray is a prayer of unbelief.

Who is it you're not talking to? Who is it that you have been broken away from? The Lord says, go to the altar, yes. Bring your gift, yes. Bring your gift of praise and sacrifice and thanksgiving.

But while you're there at the altar and while you're worshiping and praising God, and you remember that there's someone that has something against you, leave your gift at the altar. Stop your praying. Stop your shouting.

Go make it right. Then come back. Then come back.

Don't come to my altar until you make it right. I had a man in my office two weeks ago, a wonderful godly pastor. And he said, I'm here because there are two ministers, friends of mine, that had a big squabble and one sued the other and one of them won the case, a multi-million dollar case.

He said, I know these two men, I've been working with them. And they respect you, Brother Dave. And I'm asking you to go with me to them.

I want to set up a meeting. I'll bring them here to New York. And I want you to be the man who would help reconcile them.

Because they told me both that if you were there, they would, they want to make things right. But they've been fighting for years. Bitterness.

He said, but there's a problem. The couple who lost the case, she's so bitter. She said, never, under any condition, will I ever forgive them.

Ever. She's doomed. She's lost.

Still preaches. Still teaches. Still prays.

Look you right in the eye, he said, as cold as ice. Never. I'm telling you.

You better hear it. Because it comes from the throne room of God. I don't care how long you pray.

I don't care how much of the Bible you read. I don't care how, what revelation you have. If you're sitting here tonight, and there's somebody you don't talk to, you are not reconciled to.

Somebody that's hurt you and grieved you and mistreated you, and you know you did right. Bible said, you know to go to them. There are others of you that are sitting here right now.

You have heard this over and over again. And the Lord said, you just wearied me. You wearied me with your tears.

You go ahead, cover my altar with your tears, but you wearied me. I don't want to hear it anymore. You go make it right.

Listen, I'm going to tell you something, I'm going to talk right out of the gut. I've been feeling it for a week. We call this a Holy Ghost Church, with 103 nationalities at the last count.

But I want you to know, God showed me there's racial prejudice in this church. No, no amens, no clapping. If you come to this church, and you're a white man like I am, and there's something down inside of you, and you've been listening to black jokes, and you laugh and you tell them, that's out of the pit of hell, and that is prejudice, and it's going to cost you your soul.

If you come from a part of the country where it's the thing to do to refer to blackies or to Polacks, and you have these ethnic jokes, and you tell it and it gets into your system, that's a prejudice. And you're here right now, you see, and I'm a white man, and somewhere along the line, some black brother's done me harm, or there's some black political figure that I've disliked, and I allow that to get into my heart, and I stand here. I can't apologize to the whole black community when God deals with me, but there's a black man standing next to me, and I can turn to him and say, look, I've allowed some prejudice in my heart, and I want to hug you and tell God I'm sorry.

You may be a black person here, and you may have gotten it from your childhood, you may have gotten it from something that was taught to you, you may have allowed something to creep into your heart against somebody else, you may be in this church, and you've seen a Korean, you've seen a white person, you've seen somebody else, drive a nicer car, wear nicer clothes, and you say, I have been so put down, and I'm a black person, and you may say, I have no prejudice in you, but there's a seed in there. Now you can't apologize to the whole white race, but you can put your arms around a brother next to you, because you do it when you sin against the whole body, and you can say, I've got something in my heart that's there, and I want it out, and I want to just hug you and say I'm sorry. You may be an Indian, American Indian, I've been robbed of my country.

But folks, I didn't rob you. No laughing. I wasn't guilty.

I'm sorry about that. But if you have prejudice in your heart, you've got to hug me and say I'm sorry, and I've got to hug you so I'll do the best I can to help you. But this is between you and me and Jesus.

I want nothing in my heart to hinder my prayers. You've got kids that are going to hell, some of you. You've got to have God answer prayers.

Some of you need jobs. Some of you need families that are saved. All kinds of prayers that need to be answered and you wonder why the heavens are shut.

Have you gossiped about your pastors? Have you been to work in this church and there's somebody else in your department, or you may be a department leader and there's somebody that's displeased you and you've got that little grudge in you? No. Get to them tonight. If you have to get up and go over and hug somebody and say I've got something in my heart, do it.

Do it now. But why are you praying and wearying God? And all the shouting and all the tears God said, don't say it, don't listen to it. It's going to get worse, folks.

Riots are coming. The devil is going to shake. God's going to shake things, but the devil is going to come and try to use that time to bring barriers between Christians of all races and all ethnic groups.

These are ethnic wars that are happening all over and there has to be something happening and the Holy Spirit says I will not allow that into my life because I know it's going to hinder my relationship with God, it's going to shut down my prayers and I'm not going to have anything left. Folks, I told God, is it just because I have a nature that looks on things dark? Am I a doomsday kind of preacher? Maybe they're right. You know, folks, if we talk in this church about getting serious with God, how do you expect to listen to a message on patience and let God answer that prayer and give you patience if you have a grudge against somebody and you're not obeying the Scripture? How could anything Pastor Carter said this morning make any sense or be applied to us until we deal with these fundamental things here right now, Lord? I don't want my prayers hindered.

I want to obey Your Word and if I'm going to pray and there's sin in my life, I'm going to ask You by covenant to keep Your covenant to put the want in my heart that I want to be delivered. I want the covenant. If I'm lacking the desire to be delivered from these things, give me the desire.

God will, by covenant, give you the desire. And He'll set you free. Matthew 5. I'm going to close now.

21 and 24. I just want you to sit again. Let's start at verse 22.

I send to you that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger. The judgment, whosoever shall say to his brother Rocca shall be in danger. The counsel of whosoever shall say thou fool shall be in danger of hellfire.

Now folks, that's Jesus talking. Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar and there remembers that thy brother hath thought against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar. Go thy way.

First be reconciled to thy brother, then come and offer thy gift. First go, be reconciled. Some of you need to go before this night is over.

Some of you need to make a quick telephone call. Would you give me two minutes? Daniel 9. And then I will close. Here's the grace.

Daniel 9. You know the context of this. Daniel's reading Jeremiah. And God said that after 70 years there's going to be freedom for Israel.

They're going to leave captivity. And he realizes the time has come. And verse 13.

Daniel 9, verse 13. As it is written in the law of Moses, all this evil has come upon us. Yet made we not our prayer before the Lord our God that we might turn from our iniquities and understand thy truth.

He's saying we know why God wasn't listening to us. Yet we still didn't make it a matter of prayer. We knew we didn't deal with our sin.

Verse 3. I set my face unto the Lord to seek my prayer and supplication with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes. I prayed unto the Lord my God. And what did He do? I made my confession and said, O Lord, the great dreadful God, keeping the covenant mercy to them that love Him, to them that keep His commandments.

We have sinned. We've committed iniquity. We've done wickedly and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and thy judgment.

Neither have we hearkened unto the sermons of the prophets which spoke in thy name. If you read on, he said, Lord, you have every right not to listen to us, not to hear us. Look now at verse 19.

You see, he's confessed his sins now. And you know, look at me please for just a minute. He wasn't a preacher that said, here's what you need to hear.

He said, here's what we need to hear. This is our problem. You see, I'm telling you, God was dealing with me on this first.

But now, he's confessed his sins. He's seen it. He said, I know now what's hindering.

I know why we haven't had the favor and blessing of God. This has been sin. Verse 20 now.

He's dealt with his sin. While I was speaking and praying and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, presenting my supplication before the Lord my God for the holy mountain of my God. Yea, while I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I've seen in the vision of the beginning, being caused to flash with me, touched me at the time of the evening oblation.

You see, the moment acknowledged. First of all, the prayers are not being heard. God has been faithful in judging us because we harbored sin.

And even though we knew it, we knew that was it. We still didn't change. Now, you know it tonight because I've preached it.

But he said we still didn't make any changes. But he confessed his sins and sins of his people and immediately God sent Gabriel. Immediately prayer was answered.

Back in covenant with God. He's a loving, merciful father. But he means what he says.

God has been saying that so strongly to me. So, what I've been doing in prayer lately, I've been saying, Holy Spirit, if there's anybody, show me. If there's anything I've said that is grieved or hurt or wounded, I ask you, God, to give me that kind of heart.

I want nothing to hinder my prayers. If you're honest before God, he'll show you. When he said, go to the altar and leave your gift, and you remember, you remember somebody, you remember something that happened.

And I want to tell you, if you want that to happen, the Holy Ghost will give you, he'll remind you. He's faithful. He doesn't play games with you.

He gets direct and he gets honest with you. You get honest with God, he'll get honest with you. He'll tell you right on the spot.

He'll just give you that fear. And he does it out of love. Now, God wants to answer every prayer that you pray.

I believe that with all my heart. I believe he wants to answer prayer. He wants to bless you as you've never been blessed.

He wants to save your family. He wants to put a wall of fire around your family. He wants to protect you.

He's a loving God. Just because he's God, he's not going to abandon you. I'm not saying he's going to abandon you.

I'm not saying God's going to walk away from you. I'm talking about getting your prayers answered. Getting your prayers through.

I don't even know how to close this. Because if you're under conviction, I'm telling you, I am. I'm under conviction of the Holy Spirit.

And that's the most loving thing he can do for me. Because I love reproof. Because I know that's going to bring healing to my soul.

Would you stand? Lord, I ask you to forgive me if I've spoken anything in flesh. Anything out of just the heatedness in my soul. I pray God you deal with all of us in your great love and compassion.

And you remind us that these were your words. They're red-letter words. The words of Jesus Christ, our Savior.

And Lord, I know you love us. But whom the Lord loves, he chastens. Out of love.

And I know I've preached my heart out of love tonight. But Lord, don't let us get away with it. Don't let us shake it off.

Folks, I want to tell you all. Behind me, and in front of me, and in the annex where you are. If God's spoken to your heart, don't you leave the service.

And maybe some in the choir need to hug somebody else and go straight to you. Straight to them. If there's been jealousy or envy.

Anything at all. Confess it. Or if you felt somebody has said something against you, you feel they have fought against you, you go to them and just tell them lovingly.

I want to know if I've wounded or hurt you, because I want to make it right. If it's been to husband and wife, make sure you don't go to bed tonight, till you make your confession. There are some of you need to get to somebody else in this church tonight, before you walk out the door.

In the annex in here, some of you to go directly to. If you've had some prejudice in your heart. Now folks, nothing can kill a move of God's spirit more than racial prejudice.

Tell you for the most part, we have found nothing but love. But there are seeds. Seeds in the heart.

Some of you have had that since childhood. It was put into you by some prejudice, mother, father, grandfather, grandmother, white, black, whoever it may be, Chinese, Korean, whatever the group you may be. Somewhere along the line, you've got it planted in your heart.

God deal with it tonight. So that when you put your arms around somebody, it's not playing a game, it's not a facade. It's from the heart.

Something God has done in you by the Holy Spirit. And then I'll tell you when we lift our hands, I'm not saying that what we've seen in the way of worship prayer, God was here tonight in a wonderful way. God blessed.

But we're so far from what he wants to do. The shout that he wants to give, the shout that the pastors believe is coming. It's going to come when we can stand here before a holy God.

He said, I've kept his word. You have the power to do exactly what he asked you to do by just simply asking the Holy Spirit for it. Now, Holy Spirit, give us that determination, that will tonight to obey you.

Do you need to get something right? I'm going to open the altar. I'm going to tell you something. If there's a racial thing in your heart, you're not going to come here and ask God to forgive you.

You ask God to forgive you right where you're at. You can't confess to a whole race. You confess to one.

You'll be surprised what good confession does for your soul. Yes. Lord, help us now.

Even while I'm praying. Do you have the courage? If you have this to turn to your neighbor and just make a confession, do you have the courage, Becker, just to go to somebody right now? Right now. Right now.

Upstairs, downstairs, in the annex, in here. Forget what people say. This is life and death.

Are you willing to turn to somebody next to you, black, white, or somebody else and say, would you pray for me? Whoever you are, get it right. We are one blood. This is the conclusion of the message.

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