

(Luke) 33 - Outworkings of Prayer Cont

by Ed Miller

The sermon explores the essence and outworkings of prayer, emphasizing its relational aspect and its role in spiritual warfare.

Duration: 48:27

Scripture: Luke 11:1-26, Luke 11:33, Luke 11:54

Topics: "Prayer Life", "Spiritual Warfare"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the topic of prayer, which is the fifth topic in the teaching of Jesus. The chapter on prayer, chapter 11, begins with the Lord's Prayer, which is seen as the essence of all prayer. The speaker emphasizes that prayer is about relationship with God, going beyond mere words and reaching into the depths of the heart. The parable of the selfish friend and the parable of the evil father are used to illustrate the importance of persistence and faith in prayer. The speaker also mentions the power of Satan and the need for spiritual warfare in order to overcome his influence.

Transcript

A wonderful gospel of Luke and we're not going to review everything but enough to get us back into the flow. Remember, Luke presents our Lord Jesus as the Son of all mankind. And in order to lay that before us, he tells us that Jesus is the friend of all mankind and the teacher of all mankind and the Savior of all mankind.

And that's how we've been going through Luke. We've seen him as the friend of mankind. Now we're in the process of looking at him as the teacher of all mankind.

And as we come to the end of Luke, we'll see him as the Savior of all mankind. In the teaching section, it's true that there will be some miracle. Usually most of the miracles were in the friend of all mankind, where he did, he moved, he was active.

But now in the teaching, we have a lot of parables and a lot of stories and instructions. So in order to make it intensely logical, we've been dividing it up into topics. And the teacher of all mankind, according to my little view of it, is on his fifth topic.

And we've been discussing that now for two weeks. And the fifth topic is prayer. And all of chapter 11 is a chapter on prayer.

And it begins with that wonderful prayer, which we call the Lord's Prayer. Our Father, who art in heaven, so on. We've divided the chapter into two parts.

The first 13 verses give us what we call the essence of all prayer. The bottom line, the foundation, the heart of all prayer. He tells us what it is in the Lord's Prayer, and then he illustrates it with two parables.

The parable of the selfish friend, and the parable of the evil father. We've already looked at that. I won't say much more about that, except to remind you about the heart of the Lord's Prayer.

Because what follows in the book, I mean in chapter 11, is an outworking of that. The essence of the Lord's Prayer, if you missed that and would like the tape, see Lillian, she'll give you that. But the essence of the Lord's Prayer is relationship.

All prayer is relationship. And he wasn't intending so much that we say those words. As he was giving a model, he was going deeper than words.

He was reaching down into the spirit of man, into the heart of man. And he was laying hold of what I call, because I don't know what to call it, the sighs. The real longing, the hungers of the heart that adores and knows the Lord.

In the Lord's Prayer there were four of those breathings. Let me just mention those and we'll pass on. The first breathing was the breathing, the desire to do the will of God.

And you cannot have any prayer without that real deep desire, I want to do your will. Of course the ultimate is how he prays it there. To do his will on earth, the same way his will is being done in heaven.

Just imagine that. How is his will being done in heaven? And if that could be done on the earth. The second breathing is not only for his will, but Hallowed be thy name, that God would be holy, forgive us our debts, forgive us our trespasses, deliver us from evil.

I want to be clean. See that's bigger than any word. That's a heart.

I want God's will. I want to be holy. And then the third sighing is this prayer for the glory of God.

Thy kingdom come, thine is the glory. No matter what prayer you come to, even if it's a table great. And you come to that prayer and your heart is really saying, I don't know how to pray.

I don't know the right words. I don't know if I'm doing it right. But I really want God's will.

And I really want to be clean. And I want God to have glory. See that's what he's teaching us in this prayer.

And then the last longing is for the sufficiency of God. That God is the source of all. Give us this day our daily everything.

Our daily bread. Bread represents provision. That I want to be dependent on the Lord.

And so what is prayer? Prayer is relationship. And when I come to prayer, if I come with the desire to do God's will. If I come with the desire to be clean and holy.

The desire that God will get glory. And then I've begun to learn to pray. That's only the threshold.

There's a lot more. But oh that is a wonderful beginning. The rest of the chapter is where we are now.

From verses 14 all the way to the end, 54. We've divided it up. We just call it the outworkings of prayer.

In other words, if I'm praying like the Lord's prayer tells me I ought to be praying. How will that relate to Satan? That's the first part. And then how will that relate to God? That's the second part.

And then how will that relate to the whole wide world? That's the third part. And then how will that relate to my personal walk with the Lord? That's the end of the chapter. And so that's the division.

We're in chapter 11, 14 to 26. How does it affect my relationship? Not a relationship. I don't want to call it that.

As my life relates to the enemy. As it relates to Satan. How does prayer affect that? Last week I introduced you to this section and we'll pick it up here this morning.

Prayer is a relationship. Here's the outworking of that. It's a kind of a relationship that leads to warfare.

Prayer is also warfare. This section was introduced by a miracle. If you look please at verse 14.

And he was casting out a demon and it was mute. And when the demon had gone out, the mute man spoke. And the crowds were amazed.

Some of them said, he casts out demons by Beelzebul, the ruler of the demons. Others to test him were demanding of him a sign from heaven. The occasion of this parable was the healing of this mute man.

Now the mute man might also have been deaf. I say that not because it says he was deaf, but because that Greek word that describes mute can have the nuance of deaf and dumb. Not necessarily so.

We're not 100% sure if he was deaf. But interestingly enough, Matthew 12, 22 describes the same story and tells us that the person was also blind. This is a sad case.

We know he was mute. We know he was blind. A good possibility he was also deaf.

This person was in a tremendous need. Deaf, blind, and mute. I don't know if you have personally.

In our family we have many, many deaf people. One of our sons is deaf. Born profoundly deaf.

And that son married a profoundly deaf person. And Lillian has a brother that's deaf. And they married a deaf person.

And so deafness in our family is very prevalent. Lillian knows all the sign language and I'm learning it. I'm a little slower than her.

I don't know if you've ever met anyone blind and deaf. I have. And it's a very pitiful thing to have to communicate with someone like this.

But all of that is the background for this. Now the issue is authority. The Lord Jesus healed this person who was mute, who was blind, and possibly deaf.

And their response was, by what authority does he do this? Some said, by Beelzebul. Now Beelzebul is the Philistine god of Ekron. We read that in Kings.

The Lord of the Flies. Perhaps you've heard of that word, Beelzebub or Beelzebul. Why he's called the chief of the gods, nobody knows.

You can read all the commentaries and everybody's guessing. So they believe that, that he was this chief of the gods. Others say, we want a sign from heaven.

Prove where you got the authority to do this thing. And so he answers that question, by what authority do you do this? Just as he gave prayer and two parables, the friend and the father, now he's going to give the answer with two parables. The first parable is the stronger than the strong.

The second parable is the house that was swept and garnished. Let's look at each of these parables and then try to get the essence of them, tie it back to how does this relate to prayer and then hopefully the Lord can apply it to our hearts. Let me give you what I think is the essence of both parables.

Glantz in verses 21 and 22 please. We'll read this again, we touched it last week but we'll pick it up here. When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own house, his possessions are undisturbed.

But when someone stronger than he is, he is not disturbed. When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own house, his possessions are undisturbed. But when someone stronger than he is, he is not disturbed.

When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own house, his possessions are undisturbed. But when someone stronger than he is, he is not disturbed. When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own house, his possessions are undisturbed.

But when someone stronger than he is, he is not disturbed. When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own house, his possessions are undisturbed. He attacks him and overpowers him.

He takes away from him all his armor on which he relied and distributes his plunder. In this parable, Satan is described as a strong man, fully armed. And an apt description it is.

Four things are said of Satan in this verse. Number one, that he's strong. Number two, that he's fully armed.

Number three, that he is holding a palace. King James says palace. A house.

That he has a house. And number four, that there's sort of a mock peace. It's undisturbed.

While he's in control, there's a relative peace. Nobody's disturbing his thing. We don't have to have a theological degree from any institution to realize that those four things certainly are true.

Even in an elementary way, what we know about the enemy, the devil. He is strong. And he's fully armed.

And he holds people captive. And while he holds them, there's this mock peace. It's not a real peace.

But there are things go undisturbed. People don't even know they're being held by the devil. According to the parable, Jesus is also mentioned.

In verse 22, it says that Jesus, is it 22? That's stronger than the strong. When a stronger than the strong. Satan's a strong man.

Who's Jesus? One stronger than the strong. Well, we ask this question many times. I'll ask it again.

If Jesus is stronger than the strong man, fully armed. I ask, how much stronger? Ten times stronger? A hundred times stronger? A thousand times stronger? Sandy has it. Infinitely stronger.

I like to apply that. Every chance I get, I always ask, how much stronger? You know, in 1 John 4, it says, greater is him that's in you. Remember that verse? Than him in the world.

How much greater? Ten times greater? A hundred times greater? A thousand times greater? Infinitely greater is him that's in you, than him that is in the world. And it's important to know that. Because we just sort of read this, la la la.

Satan's a strong man. We get scared. Oh my, the arm of the enemy.

Then we look at our own arm. Oh my, my own arm is so weak. We need to see the arm of the Lord.

Did you know that expression, arm of the Lord, it's a messianic title in Psalm 53. It says, to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed, he shall grow up like a tender shoot. Jesus is the arm of the Lord.

So when you get scared at the arm of the enemy, and then you get frustrated at your own little arm, then you look away to the arm of the Lord. The stronger than the strong, infinitely stronger than the strong man, is our Lord Jesus. Four things are also said about the Lord Jesus in this verse.

Number one, he's called the aggressor. He's the one that attacks the strong man. He's the one that takes the initiative.

And then he overpowers him. And then he strips him of his armor. And then he sets the captive free.

That's the stronger than the strong. Spoils his good and distributes the plunder. Now even apart from the connection to prayer, that's a wonderful parable.

It's a wonderful parable. Satan's a strong man, but Jesus is stronger. And Jesus comes in and overpowers him and sets his prisoners free and spoils his good.

That's wonderful standing by itself. But it ties into prayer. Now that parable was introduced to answer the question, where did Jesus get the authority to do this mighty miracle? Jesus based his answer on the principle that division weakens.

Glance if you would at verse 17 to 20. He knew their thoughts and he said to them, any kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and a house divided against itself falls. Now Matthew adds one more thing.

Matthew says, and the city divided against itself falls. So you have a kingdom divided, a house divided, and a city divided. Verse 18, if Satan is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? You say I cast out demons by Beelzebul.

If I by Beelzebul cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out? So they'll be your judge. But if I cast out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. His argument is that anything divided is going to fall.

There'll be a civil war and it won't stand. Now his illustration is a kingdom divided or a house divided, but you know that would be true of anything. A church divided, a marriage divided, a family divided, a baseball team divided against itself.

Anything divided is going to be weakened. The question naturally arises, is that a strong argument for Jesus to use? By whose authority does he do this? Jesus said well it can't be Satan or I'd be by Satan, then Satan would be divided against Satan and it would fall. That seems to be his argument.

But couldn't Satan use that as a ploy? Couldn't he use that as a trick? In other words, if I were Satan, I'd speak as a fool, but if I were Satan I might say to people and then they'll think I'm really from God. We know that's possible because in Matthew chapter 7 verse 22, Jesus describes the end judgment and some will stand before God and some will make this comment. We cast out demons in your name.

And he said I never knew you. You did that by the power of the devil. So it's possible to cast out demons by the power of the devil.

He can feign an exorcism in order to trick you. So to answer that possibility, Jesus gives another parable in verse 24 to 26. When the unclean spirit goes out of a man, it passes through waterless places seeking rest.

Not finding any, it says, I'll return to my house from which I came. And when it comes, it finds it swept and put in order. Then it goes and takes along seven other spirits more evil than itself.

They go in and live there. And the last state of that man becomes worse than the first. Much confusion has come by just lifting this parable out of its context and just looking at the parable.

Because at a first glance it looks like it says the Lord can do a mighty work in a person's life and save them and drive out the devil and the enemy and so on. But then afterwards Satan can return and cause a great turmoil and it'll be worse than it was at the beginning. That's what it looks like it says.

But here's the difference between the two parables. In the first parable, the stronger than the strong man came. In other words, Jesus came into the house.

He took the strong man by the nap of the neck and threw him down on the floor and overpowered him, stripped him of his armor, set his captives free and kicked him out of the house. That's what happened in the first parable. The stronger than the strong.

But look carefully at the second parable. This demon was not cast out. He just left.

You see, that's a trick. And he's going to come back. And the idea is that the house is called swept and garnished.

The house has been tidied. It's been all cleaned up. But it's not the Lord.

It's empty. The Lord didn't come in and do it. The person, see Satan left and the person tidied up the house.

And that's why it's called swept. A broom, you know, can sweep away some dirt, but it can't touch grime. A broom can't get down and cleanse.

It can only take away the surface. And the idea is, this is a person who has been reformed, turned religious. Maybe they added some religious things to their life.

Start reading the Bible or praying or going to church or, well, be careful because reformation doesn't work. And when this evil one comes back, he finds the house empty. It's not a matter of getting rid of the devil.

It's a matter of bringing in the Lord. That's the point. And it's when we bring in the Lord that we're saved.

But just tidying up and quitting this and stopping this and starting this and having all this religious change, that doesn't mean a thing if our heart is empty, if our house is empty. The glory of the house is that the Lord's in the house. And what he's saying is, if you just have reformation, but you don't have the Lord, if you just tidy things up and stop doing things and look like a good person, but the Lord has not really filled the house, that'll be okay for a while.

But in the end, that's going to be worse than it was before you even started. Because reformation doesn't work. And that's the point of that parable.

It teaches us that reformation without Christ is nothing. In the first parable, Jesus did the work. He cleaned out the palace.

In the second parable, it was just a trick of the devil. He left for a while to make you think that everything was fine, but then he came back in full form. Well, let's get back to the question related to the subject of prayer.

The original question is, by whose authority does he do this? How does Jesus do these things? Some say by the devil, some say, so at the time we'll believe if it's from heaven and so on. Jesus gives the answer in verse 20. If I cast out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of heaven has come upon you.

Now what a graphic expression that is. The finger of God. Now what does he mean by the finger of God? You glance at Luke 11 20, while I read Matthew 12 28.

It's the same story, only Matthew tells it one way, Luke tells it another. So you look at 11 20, and I'm now going to read you Matthew 12 28. But if I cast out demons by the spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

You see the difference? Luke says the finger of God. Matthew says the spirit of God. If I cast out demons by the spirit of God, what is the finger of God? And the answer is it's the spirit of God.

It's the spirit of God. How did he do this? And the answer is the Holy Spirit. That's how he did it.

How does a strong man cast out the demons? And the answer is by the Holy Spirit. Now don't forget, the spirit of God is another expression for the life of God. Just like your spirit.

You don't have a spirit. You are a spirit. You are.

That's you. The real you is the spirit. And I know you are a spirit.

I see you looking out those eyes. Your spirit's in there just looking out at me. You are a spirit.

God is a spirit. God is a spirit. And when you receive the spirit of God, you receive the life of God.

That's what it's all about. You know, say, I have eternal life. Some people think that's just duration.

Life that goes on and on and on. Eternal life's not duration. Eternal life is quality.

When you say, I have eternal life now, what you're saying is, I have the life of the eternal one now. God lives in me. His life is in me.

The spirit of God is in me. The finger of God. In Exodus 8, remember when Moses was doing all those miracles and the plagues? He threw down the rod and it became a snake and he turned the river Nile into blood and so on.

How did he do those mighty miracles? There were two magicians at the time and every place Moses went, they would come and they would do it also. He would do something. You know, there's a way, they say, to hold a snake by the head and the eyes and it'll straighten right out like a rock.

And they would do the same thing. So the Egyptians said, ah, that's not a miracle. That's just a trick.

And then Moses would turn the water into blood and they would have some kind of a, by the way, in the Old Testament, we don't know their names, those two magicians. But somehow Timothy knew and Paul knew and in Timothy, 2 Timothy 2, he called them Janice and Jambry. If you ever want to know the names of those magicians, I don't know why you'd want to know that.

But there you have it. 2 Timothy 2. And so they kept doing these tricks every time Moses did something. Then God told Moses to take the dust of the earth and throw it in the air.

And when he did that, he threw it up and it all became lice. Every place was lice and they tried to do it and they couldn't do it. And they said this, they went to Pharaoh and the Bible says, they said to Pharaoh, this is the finger of God.

What's the finger of God? It's the spirit of God in Exodus. And it says that God, his holy law with the finger of God, that doesn't mean that God's finger is etched into the stone. It means that the life of God wrote, it was the spirit of God.

How does the stronger than the strong man cast out the strong man by the finger of God, by the finger of God. Now let's tie it into its context. What did Jesus say just before he healed the mute? Just before he healed the blind mute? Glance if you would at verse 13.

If you, being evil, know how to give to your children good gifts, how much more will our heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him? See now it's tied into prayer. Who gets the Holy Spirit? Those who ask him. You ask the Lord and he'll have it.

That's all, that's how easy it is. But what's the Holy Spirit? It's the finger of God. How does all this tie into prayer? See when I go to prayer, what am I really doing? I say prayer is warfare, but I need to understand it's warfare, but it's not my warfare.

I am not going to fight Satan. Give up on that. He's stronger than you and more experienced than you and you'll be wiped out.

Don't you try to fight Satan. What can you do? When you pray by the finger of God, you engage the one who is stronger than the strong man. Jesus goes to war for you.

Jesus goes to war for me. I'm not about to fight Satan, but I can by the Holy Spirit in prayer, I can ask the Lord to fight for me. And he's promised that he would do it.

And that's how that ties into prayer. You see when I live by the finger of God, that's the purpose of these two parables. What he's saying basically is there's only two ways to live.

You can live by the finger of God or you can live by the Lord's power or you can live by your own power. If you live by your own power, it's going to be worse in the end than it was in the beginning. It's not going to work.

And so when I live by the finger of God, I have victory over the devil. When you live by the finger of God, you have victory over the enemy. Not by fighting him, but by engaging the Lord to fight for you.

Now don't answer this question. Just think about it. There's no explanation for that life except the Spirit of God.

It's so wonderful to see a Christian go through a trial or through some hard time. And the unsaved, those who don't know the Lord, you know they scratch their heads. How in the world can they still be happy? How can they still be content? How can they, where do they find their strength to go through that? And in their heart that's testable.

And they're saying this is the finger of God. This is the finger of God. And so that's a side of prayer.

Unfortunately, I think few experience, I wish that we could go forward in that where we would just understand that the battle's not mine, it's the Lord's. The battle's not yours, it's the Lord's. And at any moment in your life, you can come in childlike simplicity and come before the Lord and say, Lord, you said at any moment if I would ask you to give me the Holy Spirit, the life of God.

And I'm claiming that right now for this problem, for this trial. And I'm just claiming the finger of God. The strong man's holding me.

Jesus, you're stronger than the strong man. Go in and spoil his goods. Go in and bind him and set me free.

That's wonderful to pray that way. And God, he doesn't mock us, you know. He writes these things so that we'll do it.

And when we do it, oh, we have that kind of victory. But don't forget, now come back to the Lord's prayer. What is prayer? It's just relationship with him.

That's all it is. It's just sign, I want your will, I want to be clean, I want your glory, I want your sufficiency. When you come to the Lord that way, he'll fight for you.

He'll be the mighty warrior that Zephaniah says that he is. Now before we leave this, why did Jesus summarize this section with these words in verse 23, he who's not with me is against me. And he who does not gather with me scatters.

I think his point there is there's no such thing as neutrality. I'd like to, you know, sort of stay out of it and just be neutral. You can't be neutral.

You can't be neutral. And what that means in terms of this context is what I've already stated. Either I'm living by the finger of God or I'm not.

I'm either living, no in between, no middle ground. I'm either living by the power of the Lord or I'm living by the power of Ed Miller. If I live by the power of Ed Miller, it might look tidy for a while.

But at the end, it's worse than the beginning. And if you live by your power, you'll find the same thing. So we need to live by the power of the Lord.

Why don't more people have victory over Satan? It's so simple. They haven't learned to come in prayer to the Lord in this simplicity. It's such a beautiful thing.

You say, well, I'm so afraid of Satan. I'm not afraid of Satan. I wouldn't dare tangle with him, but I'm not afraid of him because I have the stronger than the strong.

And so do you. Let's look at the next relationship as an outworking of prayer. How does prayer touch our relationship to the Lord? Verse 27 and 28.

If I have the attitude of prayer, what can I expect? While Jesus was saying these things, one of the women in the crowd raised her voice and said to him, Blessed is the womb that bore you and the breast at which you nursed. And he said, On the contrary, blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe. My, how Protestants have ruined this passage, I think.

They love to take this verse and beat Roman Catholics over the head with it. And those who are inclined to venerate Mary and they say, Ah, look here, right here. Boom, boom, boom.

That's not the point of this verse at all. That's not what Jesus was giving us this passage for because some might have an unhealthy relationship to the issue is blessedness, not Mary worship. That's a question all its own, but it's not dealt with here.

A glance again at verse 27 and 28. This dear woman, well, I don't know her name, but she blesses my heart. She's not numbered with, don't forget the question.

By what authority did you do this miracle? And there's some that by the power of the devil, he did it. And others say, give us a sign from heaven. This woman was not in that group.

She didn't say he did it by, by Satan. She didn't say, give us a sign and I'll believe. She looked at Jesus and said, my, my how blessed your mother must be to have a kid like you.

See, that was her idea. And she's, she's actually for the Lord Jesus here. This isn't against that kind of thing.

She was receiving Christ and thought the most blessed person on the earth must be the mother of this person. It just has to be the one whose womb carried him nine months. How blessed must that person be? Whose breasts nourished that little baby when he was first born.

You got to get into the heart of this woman. I don't think she's fallen into some unholy relationship with the Virgin Mary. She's just saying of all the people on earth, I can't think of anyone more blessed than Mary.

And by the way, God in the whole Bible uses that mother child relationship to illustrate bond and oneness. There's no greater woe mentioned in the Bible that I know of than Rachel weeping for her children. When he wants to show sadness, he just has his mother bond relationship.

When he wanted to show security, he said, shall a mother forsake her, her own child? And then he said, they'll forsake their children before I'll forsake you. When Jesus was on the cross and God wanted to describe what that was like, he used childbirth. He was in travail on the cross and saw the end, his seed.

By the way, that's such a beautiful picture because it pictures Jesus on the cross as a mother in labor giving birth. And guess who the baby is? It's the church. It's us.

And so he gave birth to us. But he keeps using this mother child relationship. So the point Jesus is making is not that Mary's not blessed.

Of course she's blessed. Of course she's blessed. Here's his point.

As blessed as Mary must be, because she was given the privilege to bring Christ into the world. As blessed as Mary must be, guess who's more blessed? And then the next verse, those who hear the word of God and do it. That's his point.

He's not saying Mary's not blessed. He's saying, think of how blessed Mary is. You're more blessed.

How much more blessed? Ten times? Twenty times? He said, on the contrary. He made it look like Mary wasn't even blessed compared to those who hear the word of God and observe it, who appropriate it. And that's the point that he's making.

You see, first he talks about the finger of God, the spirit of God, then he talks about the word of God. When my heart is poured out in prayer, I have victory over Satan because of the finger of God. When my heart is poured out in prayer, I have blessedness because of the word of God.

Mary was related to him in the flesh. I'm related to him by the word of God. And so prayer's relationship, now he tells me how.

How am I related to God? And the answer is, by the word of God. I don't want to get into this whole thing about Mary. I know there have been some abuses, but let me give you a principle.

This idea of admiration for another, it doesn't have to be Mary, it can be admiration for any. You know how Jesus always sort of digs in and says, you know and gets right to the bottom and he says, he that lusts after a woman has already committed adultery in his heart. That lust contains the seeds of adultery.

He that hates his brother is a murderer because hate contains the seeds of murder. He that is stubborn is as the sin of witchcraft because stubbornness contains the seeds of witchcraft. He that covets is as the sin of idolatry because covetousness contains the seeds of idolatry.

Just so admiration contains the seeds of worship. And it's one thing to admire somebody, but you know that thing it depends on how much you admire them. It's always dangerous to admire anybody.

Now of course that was true with Mary. They admired and then they began to venerate and then they began to worship and so on because their admiration was so great. I only call attention to that so that we keep our eyes focused on the Lord.

Don't admire. Admire the Lord who has gifted people. Admire what God has done for them.

Admire how God has used them and so on. But keep focused on the Lord or else we will fall into this problem. Let me just introduce the next one.

We will pick it up next week. Our relationship to God in prayer. We pour out our hearts to the Lord and if we do we have victory over Satan by the finger of God.

We have blessedness with God by the word of God. What's our relationship to the world? Now what in the world is the sign of Jonah? Listen as I quote Matthew 12 and verse 40. The sign of Jonah is tied in to resurrection.

Jonah three days and three nights. Jesus three days and three nights and he was resurrected. The sign of Jonah is resurrection.

Now you probably have met people in the world who say I'd believe in the Lord if I had a sign. I want to see. I remember even growing up before I knew the Lord.

You know if you blink the lights and all that kind of thing. Jesus said that a wicked generation seeks a sign. If I had some miracle.

If God would prove it somehow. Some sign or some wonder or some dream or some vision or some angel show up. If there could be a proof.

Jesus said the only sign. Not many. One sign.

The only sign I'll give is the sign of Jonah. Then he applies it to Christians. What is that all about? Now glance in verse 33 please.

No one after that. So that all who enter may see it. You're familiar with Matthew's approach to the light.

That we have the light in us. And let your light so shine before men. And a city on a hill cannot be hid in all of that.

You know the story of Jonah. Remember he rebelled against the Lord over Nineveh and he went down into the belly of a fish and down the bottom of the sea. And then finally got smart enough to quote the Psalm 3. David's Psalm when he was fleeing from Absalom.

And he said salvations of the Lord. And then the fish spit him out. There were witnesses.

The mariners saw him go down. The mariners saw the fish eat him. The mariners saw him go down to the bottom of the sea.

And the mariners did not see him come back up. And they went back and they said there was a prophet on the ship and we had a storm and you would not believe it. A fish came up and ate that guy and he is gone and he's down and he's finished.

Three days later here's Jonah on the shore. No wonder they listened. This guy came back from the dead.

And he came back and he was resurrected. He didn't have to say a word. He just shows up and they go whoa who is this guy? Because he came back from the dead.

Same thing happened with Lazarus. Remember after Jesus raised Lazarus and it said that he just sat down to eat. And people flocked around.

You know why they flocked around. This guy was dead and he's alive again. And that's a testimony.

What he's saying is this. When I come before the Lord. When I just pray as a little child relationship.

When all I want is God's will and God's glory and God's sufficiency and I just want to be clean. When I come before the Lord there is a light in my life. There's a light in my character.

There's a light in my behavior that other people see. He calls it the sign of Jonah. Resurrected people.

People that are alive because the Lord is in them. And when I live this way. Jesus said that's the only sign that the world is going to have.

Christians who have the light of God in them. And so we'll touch on the rest of this. I'll develop it next time.

But if I'm really pouring out my heart to the Lord. What can I expect? I can expect the word of God and a blessedness in my life that exceeds. Infinitely exceeds the blessedness Mary must have felt when she gave birth to her son.

If I really pour out my heart to the Lord as a little child. What can I expect? I can expect God to come into my life with resurrection power in such a way that the whole world who watches me will have the only sign that God's ever going to give them. The sign of a resurrected person.

It's a marvelous thing. That's God's name. That's God's reputation on the earth.

Christians alive with God in them. It's a glorious thing. And that's how it affects the world.

We'll develop that and then we'll see how it affects us. Next time Lord willing. Comments or questions? Well let's commit our time.

Father thank you again for these realities. You've inspired them so long ago. Put them in the Bible thousands of years ago.

And yet you want us to enjoy these principles this very moment. So whatever you inspired the finger of God to mean. Would you make that real in our life? Whatever you inspired the blessedness that exceeds the blessedness of the Virgin Mary to mean.

Would you allow us to have such a relationship with you through the word of God that we would know that? Whatever it means to be the sign of Jonah. Would you work that in our lives? Thank you that you're going to do it. You're doing it now.

And you're going to continue to do it in an ever rising tide of blessing in our heart as we pour out our hearts. And I thank once again. Let's close in the spirit and in the words of the Lord's prayer.

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 trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/15/SID15133.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/ed-miller/luke-33-outworkings-of-prayer-cont/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net