

Powerful Prayer

by Edgar Reich

This sermon emphasizes the importance of total commitment to God in prayer, drawing examples from Old Testament saints like Elijah and Moses, as well as the disciples in the New Testament. It highlights the need for believers to forsake all and take up their cross, relying on the power of the Holy Spirit in prayer. The sermon challenges listeners to seek a deep intimacy with God, like the underground church in China, to experience powerful prayers and miracles in their lives.

Scripture: 1 Kings 18:37, Luke 14:26, John 14:16, Romans 8:26, Ephesians 6:18

Topics: "Total Commitment to God", "Intimacy in Prayer"

Description

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Transcript

Good evening again, I greet you in that name that is above every name. My name is Brother Edgar, and we will have a Bible study tonight. And we also welcome the audience on YouTube.

Welcome, may the Lord truly encourage you tonight. The topic tonight is powerful prayers. And I want to start with a short story about Jascha, the best violinist in the world.

And one day after he gave a concert, a lady came up to him and she said, oh, oh, oh, I would love to play like you. And Jascha Heifetz said to her, well, what do you mean with that? She said, well, I would give my life to play like you. And Jascha Heifetz answered her and said, I did.

I did. I gave my life to play like this. And this is the question for us Christians.

Do we give our life to make a concert to heaven, to make a concert to other people in love? Have we committed all and everything to the Lord? You see, when I look at the Old Testament saints and their powerful prayers, what really impresses me always is their total commitment. Their total life is dedicated to the Lord, their God. Everything revolves around God in their lives.

And so Elijah, when he prayed, we all know that fire God and that Israel would return to the one true God. You find that story in 1 Kings chapter 18. The specific verses are 37 to 38.

And then, of course, Moses, he was caught between a rock and a hard place. He was on the ocean side. Behind him were the Egyptians trying to capture them and kill them and so on.

And he prayed. He was on the ground praying. And God said to him, it's time to get up.

Get up. Raise your staff. Do something.

Okay? And then God parted the waters for him. And then Joshua, Joshua was fighting another army. And his request beforehand was a request with God.

And in Joshua 10 verse 12, it tells us that the sun stood still. I wonder what your and my prayer life is like. Do we experience anything like that? And the answer is likely no.

And so there are new theologians now in in the Bible seminaries, and they teach that all of these things really didn't happen. They're not true. Those are lies from the devil.

They're lies from hell, because they did take place. There's actually scientific proof that they did. Okay, praise God.

Thank you. Yeah. Brother Ralph just said there is actually scientific proof that some of these miracles took place.

And we also find that in the beginning days of the church, when the Lord Jesus Christ came to earth, he started a ministry, and there were 12 disciples that followed him. And their requirement was a total commitment to him. A total commitment.

And so I'd like us to turn now together to Luke chapter 14 verses 26 to 35. Luke chapter 14 verses 26 to 35. And I'm going to read it because of the sound for the video, if you don't mind.

Luke chapter 14 verse 26 to 35. If anyone comes to me, this is Jesus speaking, and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters. Yes, in his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

Verse 26 is a comparative statement where Jesus said that we ought to love him so much more in comparison to loving your own family, that it almost looks like hate. Of course, Jesus didn't hate his family. He provided for his mother right from the cross.

There was the Apostle John standing near the cross with his mom, and he told John to take care of his mother. So this is a comparative statement, but he says, you've got to love me with all your heart, your soul, your mind, and your strength. And then love me more than your family, love me more than your own life.

Verse 27, and whoever does not bear his cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. You can't be a follower of Jesus if you don't carry the cross. The cross is hard.

Being a Christian at times is very hard. In persecuted countries, the cross is an actual cross because they're persecuted, they're hurt, even as Jesus was. They go to jail, they're beaten, they're tortured.

And so we are to take up our cross, but we are so afraid, we're even afraid to pass out a tract to someone or to speak to someone about Jesus. We're just afraid, and so we don't do it. Then there are also the waves of political correctness and all of the other things, and so we deny, we deny people the possibility of making it to heaven, because there is a real heaven.

God is truth. God said he cannot lie in a number of places in the Bible, and he's telling us the truth, that he sent his Son, and through his Son we can have that eternal life, and we were to share that. That is part of our cross.

There are 350 million people in North America. They're headed for an eternity of hell, I believe. Who will help them? Who will have love for them? Who will have compassion for them? Shouldn't it be the true Christians? So Jesus said, if you don't take up your cross, you cannot be my disciple.

And then in verse 28, 29, 30, 31, and 32, he gives a comparison, and he said, for which of you intending to build a tower does not sit down first and count the cost? After he has laid the foundation and is not able to finish it, all who see it begin to mock him, saying, this man began to build and was not able to finish, or what king going to make war against another king does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with 10,000 to meet him who comes against him with 20,000. Or else, while the other is still a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks conditions of peace. And here Jesus says there's a cost involved.

Yes, heaven is free for you, but then after you follow me, there is a great cost involved. It will not always go your way. And so Jesus said, in verse 33, he continued, so likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all, all means everything.

And I remember a missionary sister crying out, what does it mean all? This is not possible. That's what he requires, all. That we forsake all, and that he cannot be my disciple.

And then in verse 34, he makes another comparison, and he gives us an understanding that food, when you add salt, food tastes good. And here he talks about Christians. If Christians lose their salt, in verse 34, salt is good, but if salt has lost its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is neither fit for the land, nor for the dunghill, but man, throw it out.

He who has ears to hear, let him hear. That's the kind of commitment that the Lord Jesus wants from us also in this day and age. And it's a very tough commitment that he's asking of all of us.

And it's not easy, beloved. It's not easy. But the disciples in those days, when they walked with Jesus, they had to face this.

And how did they do? They were ordinary men, and they needed help to be taught. And they did not always follow the Word of God, didn't they? At times, they denied Christ. At times, they were fighting among each other who would be the best and the highest pride.

In other occasions, John and his brother, they weren't all that loving. They said to Jesus, shall we call fire down from heaven and destroy this city and these people? And God has patience. God has love.

And so we know that those disciples needed help. And so we need help also to live this Christian life and to have powerful prayers. Because within ourselves, that's not enough.

That's not enough, beloved. Now, then came the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, and Jesus was crucified. And the disciples were terrified.

They were terrified also of persecution. They were hiding in a safe room, in a room of safety, afraid, will we be crucified? Will we be taken to task by the authorities? Will we die? And so they were in this room, and they needed help. And help was on the way first through the Lord Jesus Christ.

He came to visit them in that room. He walked through the wall. He walked through the, well, it doesn't tell us actually how we got into the room, but it says the doors were locked.

So here was Jesus to encourage them. And then he said to them, I'm going to help you. And he had told them before, and it's recorded in the book of John, that there would be a helper for them.

And let us turn to John chapter 14 verses 12 and John chapter 14, 16 to 18, please. And so John chapter 14 verse 12, Jesus made an incredible statement to them, a statement that is very hard to believe for us, especially in the Western world. And there it says in John chapter 14 verse 12, Most assuredly I say to you, he who believes in me, the works that I do, he will do also, and greater work, greater work than these he will do, because I go to my Father.

No! I haven't heard anything like that. Is anyone doing greater works? In the Western world. Now certainly there are those preachers who have preached to many more thousands of people than Jesus did, for instance Billy Graham and some other preachers.

They are godly preachers, and God has also done miracles here in the Western world, but very few in comparison to other parts of the world where the Lord is shining through people and doing an incredible work. And then Jesus explained how this could happen, that the works I do, he will do also, and greater works. How is that going to happen if he goes away? He explains that in verses John 14, 16 to 18, and there it says in verse 16, And I will pray the Father, and he will give you another helper, that he may abide with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him, but you know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

I will not leave you as orphans. You know, Jesus had been with them for nearly three and a half years. He was crucified.

He would be going to heaven, and they were depending on him. He was their whole life. They had given up everything for him.

They were looking to a man who was healing people every day, to a man who was raising the dead, to someone feeding 5,000 and 4,000, to someone who could do anything, like go out on the lake and still a storm. Who is this man? He is the Son of God, the living Son of God, the Christ, and he said, I'm going to go away. And it's like when you were a little child, and your parents would say to you, we're going to go away, and you might say, oh, no, I'm so afraid.

I don't want you to go. And so the disciples did not want him to go, and so the situation is that Jesus promised them another helper, and this other helper was the third person of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit. And the Holy Spirit is somewhat nebulous for us, because we're not taught too much in various denominations about the Holy Spirit, and I'm not telling you to become a holy roller.

I'm not telling you to become someone that shakes, rattles, and rolls. Okay? Because I have seen people who shake, rattle, and roll, and if you're full with the power of the Holy Spirit, then you're supposed to go out and share Christ on the street, because it says when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, you will, you will share my gospel in your hometown, in your, in your state, in your neighboring state. That's what you're going to do.

So whatever spirit sometimes people are possessed by, I'm not sure. But if you're possessed by the Holy Spirit, and then you get up when you have fallen down, and you go back to your old ways, I wonder which kind of spirit possessed you. Because you see, in true revivals, when God comes, when His Holy Spirit comes, there's virtually no backsliding.

No backsliding. Change! Change! Change! And so they needed the Holy Spirit, and here Jesus had promised them the Holy Spirit, and He said, if you, if you, if you wait for Him to come, He will come. He will help you with this Christian life.

He will help you to have a powerful, dunamis Christian life. And so they believed, and then the Holy Spirit came in Acts chapter 2, and then they turned the world upside down. They turned the world upside down.

And I was wrestling with all of these things too, beloved, because I was looking at my own Christian life, and I said, now if this Bible is true, what's wrong with me? Why don't I have this power that the Word talks about? Why don't I do these things that Christ is talking about? What's wrong with me? Lord, help me. Help me understand what I'm doing. Help me where I'm going wrong.

Show me the way, Lord, because this Christian life is not only challenging, but it is also incredible. It is something that is beautiful, wonderful. When you see lives changed, when you see people helped, it's incredible.

And so that's what it's, what it's all about. And so when Jesus left, He said, I will never leave you nor forsake you. And so Jesus, if you're a true Christian, Jesus is with you today.

If you're a true Christian, the Holy Spirit is with you today. But it's also true that if those four statements are not true in your life, love Him more than the family, love Him more than your life, take up your cross and forsake all, if you don't do these things, the Holy Spirit cannot fully fill your body. Okay? Then we are like a leaky bucket.

The water is flowing out the bottom. There are holes because of sin, because of not doing what Christ wants us to do. And there is a solution though, which is wonderful because with the Holy Spirit in them, they went out witnessing and they converted people, they had power.

And the word power in Acts chapter 1 verse 8 is dunamis in Greek. Dunamis is the source word for dynamite. But dynamite is an explosion and destroys.

But the meaning of dunamis is that we have power to achieve through Christ and the Holy Spirit things that we can never imagine. Things that we can never imagine. And so in Luke chapter 11 verse 13, we can ask the Father, fill me up with your Holy Spirit.

And in Luke chapter 11 verse 13, there it says, depending on your translation, if you then being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them who ask Him? Praise God. So He will help you. You have Christ in you.

You have the Holy Spirit from being born again. And now God will also fill you up because Scripture also says that we are to be filled with His Holy Spirit. And then we got to believe it and then we got to act.

So power in prayer today, what is missing? Well, I believe we are not relying on His Holy Spirit power in our daily walk. We are rejecting Him, in fact, because we say we can manage. We can manage.

And I'm not really interested in those 350 million going to hell. I don't really have love for them. So why are you bothering me? Well, Jesus said, I came to seek and save that which is lost.

And then He said to His disciples, if you follow me, I will make you fishers of men. I will make you fishers of men. Praise God.

He will help you. The Holy Spirit will help you to do that. So now the question is, could I play the violin like Jascha Heifetz did? Would that be possible? No, what I would do is I would sit next to Him and listen to Him and I would be a bystander.

I would be an observer. I would be looking at this beautiful orchestra and Jascha playing his violin and I would be on the outside. But what did Christ do? What did the Holy Spirit do? They came.

They came into us. They came into us. Are you sure? Are you living that way? I gotta live this way too.

I gotta believe it. If I'm full with this power, then I can do the things that Christ did. Is that possible? Well, I don't know much about this Western world, but the question for many Christians in North America and especially in the United States is, does Jesus really live in you? Does the Holy Spirit live in you? Are you filled again by Luke chapter 11 verse 13? What is happening in your life? Well, I'm sinning.

I'm living in sin. It's okay. Grace is there for me.

Lie! Jesus taught time and again, repent. Then he went to the seven churches and to five of them, he said, repent. So if you live in sin, beloved, repent.

Do what Jesus says. Then follow him what I said in the outline. Follow him and he will help you.

He will help you to live this Christian life. Now, are there Christians in this world that have this total commitment? What does their prayer life look like? And I want to read a story from China, and it's about a Canadian pastor who went to see an underground church in China. This is the first account I heard from China.

It was related firsthand by a Canadian teacher whose specialty was how to experience and to be led by the Holy Spirit. He was invited to help teach the underground church in China. There the church suffers much persecution.

While the government tolerates public Christian churches, the three self churches, they still greatly persecute the underground Spirit-led churches. We all realize the reason, of course, is because they are the only church threatening Satan's kingdom. When Bill, this was the Canadian preacher's name who went to China, when Bill attended his first underground church meeting, which was held in a house filled with people during the worship or introduction time, his interpreter leaned over to him and told him, Do you see the seven old ladies sitting in the front row? Each of them has been used by God to raise the dead.

To raise the dead. He said it rather matter-of-fact, but the impact on Bill was immediate and it was acute. What did he have to offer believers mature enough in the Lord to be raising the dead? He testified that over the following weeks he was taught far more than he ever was able to teach.

The account of his first morning prayer meeting went something like this, and they do this seven days a week, okay? They assembled in a home at 4 a.m. and simply began worshiping the Lord. There was some prayer during this time, but mostly seeking the Lord and his presence. Finally, at about 5 a.m., Bill thought he should start to say something, being the Western teacher and all.

He no sooner opened his mouth that the old lady put her fingers to his lips and told him, We don't speak now. Just listen. We listen.

From 5 a.m. until 9 a.m., that is exactly what this underground Chinese church did. They listened to their Lord in quiet prayer. They asked the Lord, What is it that we are to do this day? They experienced the Lord and they grew in the knowledge of the Lord.

This is how they conducted church every day, seven days a week. Out of this intimacy comes the knowing to be able to withstand terrible persecution and misery. Out of this intimacy comes the maturity which sees the dead raised.

The old lady told Bill how she first raised a dead person. She said it did not begin with raising a dead person. It began with months and years spent getting to know the Lord.

This knowing came out of the prayer life described above. One day during a prayer time, the Lord told her to go next door and to pray for a sick neighbor, which she did, and her neighbor was healed. These types of encounters continue over the years until finally one day he told her to go to the local hospital and attend a certain room where she would raise a dead person.

She obeyed and much to the surprise of all who were present, they witnessed a person who was dead was indeed raised back to life. The secret of seeing these great miracles does not come out of running here and there, laying hands on every sick or dead person she encounters. The secret is the four hours she spends daily listening to what the Lord is saying.

She's living with Jesus. She's living what he says. There's a lesson here for all of us in the Western Church who think we have it all figured out.

Now the whole church in China, they consider it their number one task to be to seek and save that which is lost. Once you become a Christian in a Chinese underground church, they give you three days of training in the basics of Christianity. Who is God? Who is the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ? Who is the Holy Spirit? And they teach them some of the principles and then after that they're told now you go out and you win people for Christ.

Go from door to door. Ask whether you can pray for the sick in a particular house. Just ask whether you can pray.

And so 80 of a hundred million of the first hundred million, 80 million who came to the Lord in China came because a miracle took place with them or in the house. There's evidence in other countries that God is still the same today, yesterday and forever. So what are some of our problems? Where do walls go up in us, okay? And the walls that go up are theological walls because some teachers say no, the miracle gifts

no longer exist in our time.

It's a lie! It's a lie! And I testify to it because I have seen so many miracles in my own life. I've been in a room full of mosquitoes and prayed and that the mosquitoes would not bite me and a whole swarm came to settle down on me and I said go away in Jesus name and they went poof! For three days, they didn't bite me in that room. I had a poisonous thorn go through my foot and and I did not die.

I should have died because even cows in Maasai territory die. I had water coming through the ceiling and in a rain shower and I said no Lord, tonight you had me make a commitment. This is your problem, not mine.

Please stop it. And I went away and Satan came to me. Are you out of your mind? You're a businessman! The people underneath are going to lose their apartments because you didn't take care of this water.

I said, but I did take care of the water. And the water stopped. When I got home, there were little droplets and by Sunday morning the ceiling had ceased.

When I called up the building people, they checked the roof and they said there's no leak anywhere in the roof. So how it happened, I don't know. But we have a great and incredible God.

And so theologians say to us, no these miracles don't happen, but it's a lie from hell. And then we have a denominational walls where we deny often the power of the Holy Spirit because we see extremism in some areas. And so we deny the power, the dunamis, from the Bible in our Christian lives.

Denominational differences. There are no denominational differences in this book, beloved. There's nothing in this book about differences.

Follow the book. You'll be all right. Follow the book.

And then the third part is actually the hardest part perhaps, and this is personal unbelief in us. Where we're not really interested to follow Jesus the way he's telling us to, and we're not really interested to make a commitment to get up at 4 a.m. every morning to pray. A bit too hard on us, a bit too inconvenient for us.

And when I meet people from other countries, there's also the situation where the differences lead to opposition, to difficulties getting along with people, and so on. We don't like that. Beloved, I believe that the powerful prayers that happen in the Old Testament, I believe that the powerful prayers that we read about in the New Testament are also possible in our time in this Western world.

We need the power of the Holy Spirit also in our prayers. And in closing, we're going to look at two passages, Romans chapter 8 verse 26, and Ephesians chapter 6 verse 18, and Romans chapter 8 verse 26. Romans chapter 8 verse 26 Likewise, the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses.

By the way, he's our helper. He can also help us with drinking, with drugs, with cursing, with any other sin in our lives. He can help us.

And then he also helps in our prayers, for we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And then the next passage is in Ephesians, Ephesians chapter 6 verse 18, and there it says, Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit. Ask the Spirit of God to help you to pray, and I also need to do the same, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.

And so, beloved, if you have watched this and you are a non-Christian, the first step is to make things right with God through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. You can repent of your sins, ask Him to forgive you, ask Him to save you, ask Him, and He says He is at your door to knock, open your door, let Him come in, let Him save you, because you need to receive and accept a free gift. If you don't, then you're not saved.

So Christ will come into your life and help you in this life. And then after you are a Christian and you are not yet turning the world upside down, draw near to God, draw near to the Holy Spirit. Use both of these verses to involve the Holy Spirit in your prayers.

And to walk close with God, and I believe you will turn the world upside down. Thank you for listening. The Lord bless you.

Thank you.

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