

Is God Listening to Your Prayers

by Francis Chan

Francis Chan emphasizes the importance of having a real relationship with God through obedience, faith, and caring for the poor, and encourages listeners to trust in God's goodness and power to answer their prayers.

Duration: 46:16

Scripture: Matthew 7:21, Matthew 28:19-20, John 3:16, John 14:12, James 1:22

Topics: "Effective Prayer", "Genuine Faith"

Description

This sermon by Francis Chan emphasizes the importance of having a genuine relationship with Christ, not just going through religious motions. He passionately urges the audience to seek a deep, intimate connection with God, to experience answered prayers, and to live a life that reflects the teachings of Jesus. Chan highlights the significance of true belief, the power of prayer, the impact of sin on our relationship with God, and the need for genuine faith and obedience.

Transcript

Francis Chan, the reason we invited him, we prayed about who we would invite that would really reflect what it means to be a real Christ follower, not somebody that plays church, not somebody that's just being religious. We are so excited, we're delighted that Francis Chan would decide to come from California here, and we gave him, God gave him California weather, Southern California weather, but we are so excited. I want you to give a lifelike welcome for Francis Chan.

All right, wow, that's a lot of people. Hey, you guys, can we pray right now? You guys excited about prayer? All right. No, seriously, I don't want you just to close your eyes and go, okay, that's how he's starting his talk.

I want you to think about who we're about to speak to, that right now, every single one of us, we are breathing right now because he is letting us and we're about to speak to him right now. So let's come before that God and let's speak to him. God, please, right now, I ask that you would just say whatever you want to say through my mouth.

God, I just want to surrender to you and say whatever you want. God, you know my heart right now. God, I want these people to know you, to really know you, to really love you, to walk like they did in the Old Testament, the New Testament, everything we read in the Bible.

God, we're not seeing it here in America and we want to. We want to see that power through us. We want that kind of security.

So Father, right now, I ask that your Holy Spirit, God, I'm only coming before you because of the blood of Jesus that I have access to you and I'm asking you right now, Father, that your Holy Spirit really would fall upon us and do something right now, God, that this wouldn't be just a sermon, wouldn't be just another talk. God, we've heard so much. We've done so much talking.

Father, I want to experience your power tonight. Please, Father, in Jesus name, amen. You know, I just want to, I don't know if you guys love to pray, but I love to pray and I just want to brag on God for a little bit because to me, there's nothing I love more than answered prayer.

I don't know if there's anything literally on this planet that I love more than when God answers and you know it was Him. Just last week, last Saturday, I live in San Francisco now and last Saturday, we decided, hey, let's put together a conference. We kind of threw it together real quickly, but I said, I'm tired of the conferences where all you do is you sing, you hear the word, you sing, you hear the word, you sing, you hear the word, great things, but I go, why don't we do a conference where we actually do something? You know, what if we get people here in the morning and we'll sing, we'll hear the word, and then we'll send them out for eight hours on the streets of San Francisco and they started washing the feet of the homeless people.

They brought groceries to all the doors of the apartments, they made like 10,000 meals and passed those out, they did haircuts, they were doing pedicures for homeless, they were doing all of these different things, sports camps for the little kids, we did that for eight hours, and then we went back and worshipped some more, and hundreds of people came out. We had to turn people away from serving that day because we didn't even have the room for them. Amazing time.

People were sharing their faith for the very first time in their lives, just sitting there listening to the stories of these people on the street and telling them about the love of Jesus, and it was incredible. We were so on fire by the end of that night. But I gotta tell you, the week before, the staff there, they decided to pray and to fast.

I don't know if you've ever fasted and prayed for a week, but they did this and as they were praying, man, last Wednesday, they said, you know what, we have to make 10,000 meals on Saturday and we have no meat, and we have no money, and they're going, man, we're gonna make 10,000 meals with no meat? But then an hour later, an hour later, the local supermarket, who didn't know anything, they called and they said, our freezers just broke down. Will you take all our meat? I was like, man. It was incredible.

I mean, a full U-Haul filled with prime rib, marinated chicken, I mean, just all of these ribs, everything. We're going, man, Lord, that is incredible. See, I love when things like that happen where you go, okay, you can't tell me that's a coincidence that you needed something, and then an hour later, all the freezers break down at the supermarket and they call you and say, could you use a truckload of meat? You guys, see, that's the stuff I love.

This is the stuff I live for. Man, again, I tell you, I don't know if I love anything more than answered prayer. When you do things like that, because then you think, wait, so that God in heaven, like right now, He listens to me.

The security to know that right now in heaven, God looks down at me and goes, man, I love Him. I know Him. I listen to His prayers.

Man, that's so amazing to me. I could sit here all night and just talk about answered prayer and tell you stories like that, story after story about the way God came through, because to me, man, when I was a kid, I believed in Jesus, but it was like, Jesus loves me, this I know. Why? The Bible tells me so, and I still do, and I see it in Scripture, but now I'm telling you, Jesus loves me, this I know, just by watching the way He answers my prayers.

And when He does things like that, I mean, yesterday, yesterday I was working in the front yard, and some Jehovah's Witnesses come by, and they just say, hey, you know, do you know anything about us? I go, yeah, I actually do. And we start, you know, I just started getting into the Scriptures with them. After about, you know, four or five minutes, they said, let's get out of here.

And I said, no, no, no, no, no, I'm not done. I go, let's talk. I go, I, and we got on this topic of prayer, and the Jehovah's Witnesses, they said to me, they go, you know, God doesn't hear everyone's prayers.

I go, I know that. I go, but He hears mine, and let me tell you about some of the things He's done in my life, and I just started naming these answers to prayer, and they said, forget it, and they start to walk away, and so I just walked with them. I did.

I did. No. Out of concern, out of love, I'm like, no, let me tell you this one.

Okay, you explain this one to me. I pray this, and this happened, I pray, and, you know, I just, I follow you, and I come back, and my wife's like, where'd you go? I was chasing after some Jehovah's Witnesses. Because, you guys, I'm telling you, there's such a security, you know that feeling when you pray, and then God answers you? I mean, so specifically, and you just go, oh, shut up.

I just spoke to God, and He listens to me. Do you know how much security that gives you? How much, like, peace, like, okay, so then what in the world do I have to fear anymore? The God of the universe hears my voice. Unbelievable.

And my prayer before I came out here was, man, I know that some of you are listening to this, and you know what I'm talking about, and you've had those moments, but I'm willing to bet that a lot of you haven't. A lot of you, you've done the church thing. Man, and I did that for years, where I would go, and I would attend church, and I wouldn't do anything bad, and I believed in Jesus, but it wasn't like this, ah, this intimate relationship, where He's listening to me, and there's answers to prayer.

I just kind of went through the motions, and all along, I would read this book, and I would go, but God, I see the way they interacted with you in the Bible. I see Elijah standing on a mountain, talking to you, and fire coming down from heaven. I mean, I see, and I've heard these stories of when I was a kid, you know, I would hear those Bible stories of David and Goliath, or Daniel in the lion's den, or Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in that fiery furnace.

I'd hear about the New Testament, and them healing people, and these supernatural things, God, and I'd hear about people hearing your voice, and I'd go, God, I want that now. And it always confused me, because I would read this book, and I would look at the church, and I'd go to service, and I'd go, man, that seems like two totally different things. And my whole life has been about, God, I know this book is real.

You've answered so much, but I want it all. I want to see it all. And when I thought about you guys, I thought, man, I wonder how many of you, you're just here out of coincidence.

Because maybe you grew up in a Christian home, and you went to a Christian church, but you know, inside, you're like, man, I don't know if I really know, I don't know if I have that security, that God really knows you. Are you sure that your relationship with God is really your own relationship with God? Because the Bible, man, I don't know if you realize this, but God doesn't listen to everyone's prayers. I mean, that's the one thing that that lady said that was right yesterday.

She says, you know, God doesn't listen to everyone's prayers. And I go, you know what, you're absolutely right, He doesn't. He doesn't.

He says in the Bible, in fact, sometimes when we pray, and when we sing, God can't stand the noise of it. Like, I thought about this, I thought, man, here's this festival, here's, you know, what, 100,000 of you? That's crazy. I didn't even know there were that many people in South Dakota.

And we could go, oh man, look, we all showed up, these great bands showed up, we made this noise, you know, it went eight miles, they could hear us from eight miles away. But is that the goal? The goal is what? That God would hear, right? I mean, the goal is not that you leave here tonight and go, man, that was really good. The goal of these gatherings is that God would leave here tonight and go, wow, that was really good.

Those guys, I actually liked the sound that I heard from there. Because in Amos, Amos chapter 5, it says this, God says, away with the noise of your songs, I will not listen to the music of your harps. He goes, would you guys quit singing to me? He goes, it's noise to my ears.

So there's certain times when God says, I don't like your worship. I don't want to hear, in fact, it's annoying me right now. There's certain times when He doesn't listen to our prayers.

He even specifically says it. In James chapter 4, verse 3, He says, sometimes you pray and I won't answer you. Because of your selfishness.

He goes, you're just praying for your own motives. You're praying so that whatever you receive, you'll use on yourself. 1 Peter 3 says, sometimes I won't listen to you because of your relationship with your wife.

He says in 1 Peter 3, he says to the husbands, he says, you better treat your wife with honor. As a vessel, a weaker vessel, honor her. Treat her as a fellow heir of the grace of life.

It says, so that your prayers will not be hindered. Man, there's times when I'll, I remember early on in my marriage, my wife and I would get into argument. And sometimes she would take like this humble route.

And I would just kind of be a jerk, you know, whatever. I just didn't feel like apologizing, whatever. We laid down at bed, you know, and a lot of times I would just pray to God at that time.

When my relationship wasn't right with her, I wouldn't even pray. Because I knew that verse, I thought God's not going to listen to me. He's going to say, oh, look at Lisa, my little angel, and there's Francis.

Seriously, it'd just be like, so I don't even bother until I get those things right. Because the Bible says he's not going to listen. Man, I think of Isaiah 58.

Isaiah 58, starting in verse 6. See, these people, they were praying and they were fasting. But God says this in verse 5. He says, is such the fast that I choose a day for a person to humble himself? Is it a bow down his head like a reed and to spread out sackcloth and ashes under him? Will you call this a fast? A day acceptable to the Lord? Is not this the fast that I choose? To lose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke. Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, or bring the homeless poor into your house? When you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh.

Then shall the light break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up speedily. Your righteousness shall go before you. The glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.

Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer. Then you shall cry, and he will say, Here I am. I love that.

God says, I don't care if you fall on your face, and you don't eat, and you're trying to pray to me. He goes, if you don't care about the poor. If there's people starving around you, you're not giving them the food.

If they're naked, you're not giving them the clothes. He goes, man, I don't care that you're fasting. He goes, but when you pour yourself out to those in need, then you call to me.

He goes, I'll say, Here I am. What do you want? I love that verse. Man, I told you about that group I was with last week, where we're passing out food and everything else.

The guy that heads it up, I was asking him about his story. You guys, this guy was amazing. He opens up this place, okay? He goes to this apartment, this apartment type housing, in San Francisco, with nothing except a bag of sandwiches.

He's just passing it out to the poor. Then he fasts for 40 days. He and his wife, they fast and pray for 40 days, asking God to give them that building.

On the 40th day, he gets a phone call by a bunch of these Chinese people. They say, Hey, come to our house. And so he goes.

He goes to this house, and they tell him, we've been praying for 20 years for God to send someone to care for the poor in San Francisco. We believe you're that man. And they start giving him checks.

And then he told me, he goes, then there was an old man, it was a bunch of ladies and one old man who was blind. And the blind man calls for one of the ladies and says something to him. And it says something to her.

And she goes in the back room and she brings out this pot and hands it to my buddy. And he says it was a pot filled with gold coins that this old man had been saving and said, you're the one, and lays hands on him and prays for them. They use that money and buy that building.

Crazy. Then, listen to this. Okay, so they buy this building, they start caring for the poor.

And then a strip club opens up next door. And so this guy goes to City Hall, just takes a sleeping bag and a lawn chair, and he just sits there for 40 days. He doesn't eat.

For 40 days, just sits on the steps of City Hall on this hunger strike, praying that something would happen. On the 38th day, I mean, he just slept there. He just stayed there.

He didn't move for 40 days. Finally, the owner of that building goes, you know what, I'll sell the building to you. And he's starting to raise the money.

He goes, I don't know if I can afford it. But during that time, the guy that was going to open up the strip joint, he died. I go, man, you killed him.

I mean, it was so intense. But you guys, right now, I'm so fired up because I found this group of people that just believe in the Word of God. They believe in prayer.

They believe in caring for the poor. And we're just seeing how God answers and answers and answers. And again, I'm telling you, there's nothing I love more than that.

And I know, see, when I heard the story of that guy, and as I got to know him, I go, man, you seem like you walked right out of this book. That seems like what one of these guys would have done. And so for so many years, that's what I wrestled with.

I go, man, I'm not seeing this in our country, in our world. You know, God may not be hearing some of your prayers. And sometimes it's because of sin.

You know, I was reading Judges chapter, not Judges, Joshua chapter 7. And I don't know if you ever read that story about Achan. Achan was a guy, they were about to go to war, and Israel's about to go to war, and they win all of their wars. Joshua, they win everything.

But they lose. And 36 of the Israelites get killed. And so Joshua's like, Achan, what the heck? Something like that.

He goes, well, why? We never lose. Why would you let us lose? They mocked us. And God says, because someone sinned.

And they found out that one of their guys had actually taken some of these sacred items and stole them. Things that God says, I didn't want you to touch. And he took them and he hid them.

And so the people stoned this guy to death. They kill him. And then God blesses them again.

And I read that story. Every time I read it, I go, God, that doesn't seem fair. I mean, why would one guy, the 36 that died, they didn't sin.

Doesn't that seem unfair? I mean, wouldn't you think, like if you were God, wouldn't you have just had that one guy die? You know, give him measles or whatever. Do something. Measles.

Does that even kill you? But with something. Give him something. But why would you have these other people die? And you know, as I read that, I realized that God was making a statement that, you know what, your sin affects more than just you.

It affects the people around you. It affects the church. The New Testament teaches that we're a body now.

And just like Israel, that whole nation was affected by this one guy's sin. The New Testament says, we're a body now. And your sin affects me.

My sin affects you. What if, what's his name again? Alan. What if, is it Alan? Okay, what if Alan came up again and said, hey, you know, we're stalling because we found out that Francis Chan had an affair.

And so we're trying to find another speaker. Would that affect you? Would my sin then affect you? Would that kind of just bring the level of the evening down a little bit? Yeah. And in the same way, isn't it terrible when you try to share your faith with someone and the guy you're sharing with goes, oh, I know a Christian.

I've seen the way that Christians have treated me, or I've seen them try to rip me off, or I've seen what they did to my sister. I've seen this, I've seen that. And they talk about the hypocrisy.

Why? Because we're a body now. Your sin affects me. My sin affects you.

And our sin affects our prayer life. And I want you to, I share this stuff because, man, what I want, man, I want nothing more than everyone here to know God in a real way, where seriously, when you pray, you have this absolute assurance of, wow, he hears me. I just asked for this, and he actually listened to me.

You know, the Bible says also sometimes he doesn't listen to us because of our doubt, because we don't believe. Let me ask something. How many of you believe John 3,16? Just raise your hand.

All right. Most of you. It says, For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

Do you believe that? So anyone who believes will have eternal life. Do you believe that? Seriously? Okay. You know, there's another time in John when Jesus uses that same phrase, whoever believes in me.

In John 14,12, Jesus says, whoever believes in me will do the works that I do, and even greater things will he do than these because I am going to the Father. Do you believe that? I mean, he says, whoever believes in me is going to be able to do the same things that I did when I was on that earth. In fact, you'll be able to do even greater things than these.

It's that same phrase, whoever believes. And so, man, see, when I read that in the Bible, man, and I look at the church, I go, wait, if we say we believe in him, he says whoever believes in him is going to be able to live like Jesus did. We're going to be able to do the things that Jesus did and even greater things than these.

Man, if 100,000, even if 1,000 of you lived that way where you were able to do what Jesus did and even greater things. Can you imagine the impact that would have on the world? So my question is, is our faith, do we really believe him when we say it? Let me tell you the stupidest thing I ever did as a pastor. I left my church about a year ago.

God called me to San Francisco now and I've got so many things I'm so excited to get involved in. But the stupidest thing I ever did as a pastor, one time I brought a balloon to the church. It was about the size of my fist and I taped it to the wall.

The wall was probably about where that screen is, about that far from me. And I had a BB gun and I said, hey, how many people think I can hit that balloon from right here? It's a little balloon. And about 75%, maybe 80% raised their hand.

I go, wow, thank you. And I go, how many guys believe so much that you would hold it up there? And there was still, I don't know, maybe 10, 20 people that said they would do it. Wow, that's awesome.

I go, how many of you believe, of you 10, 20 people, how many of you believe so much that you're willing to stick it between your teeth? And this one guy still had his hand up. And I was hoping someone would do that, okay? Because I just wanted to scare him. And so I had like a medical release form, a waiver.

And I said, come up here, please just sign this, just sign this, and then go over there. And I just wanted to scare him, thinking there's no way he's going to do it. But he walks over there, sticks the balloon between his teeth and just goes like this.

I thought, no way, I'm going to scare him to death. And I raise up the gun and point it right at him, right at the balloon. And he didn't move.

And then the stupidest thought went through my mind. I thought, I could hit that. And I pulled the trigger.

And I hit the balloon. Yeah, yeah, no, no, don't clap. My church didn't clap.

I, I mean, my heart is just pounding, right? You know, I can't believe I did that. I can't believe I hit it. I'm all excited that I hit it.

You know, no one's clapping for me, which was, I was just, and then after service, like all these people from my church, like attorneys are coming up going, do you realize what could have happened? Do you realize you risked the whole church just so you could show off? I go, no, I wasn't showing off, it was, it was just there. You know, and they're just like, what are you, 12? I mean, what are you thinking? You know, so please don't take that and go, oh, I'm going to try it at my church. No, don't, don't.

Dumbest thing I ever did. Okay, but since I have done it, I can use it as an illustration now. The point, the point I was making to the church was this.

I would say, I said, so how many believers were in the room? Was it the 80% that raised their hand saying I could hit it? Was it the 20 of you that were willing to hold it out like this? Or was it just that one guy that was so sure that he was ready to stick it between his teeth and go, okay, go ahead, go, because I know you're going to hit it. How many true believers were in that room? And my question tonight is, yes, there's 100,000 of you that showed up for this, this Christian festival and these bands and everything else, and probably 95% of you raised your hand saying, yes, I believe John 3, 16, but I'm just going, man, I wonder how many of you will actually stick this thing between your teeth. I wonder how many of you are actually living like Jesus where people look at your life and they go, wow, man, the way you love people, the way you care, you're doing the same things Jesus did.

I wonder how many of you have a prayer life where you talk to God and he answers you and the people at work, the people at school are going, man, who is this God of yours? Man, you pray to him and he answers, what the heck? You actually have a relationship with him because the Bible says, Jesus said to himself, if you believe in me, you're going to do these things because I'm going to the Father and you can ask me for anything in my name and I'll do it. See, I just think some of you, you're hearing this and you know it's been a long time since you've prayed to God and you've really had that intimacy with him and you've actually seen him do the supernatural. Some of you struggle the way I did years ago where I would look at that book and go, man, my life doesn't feel anything like that.

Church doesn't feel anything like that and it's been driving you crazy and you want it all and I'm going to pray for your faith again because Jesus says, you know, in James, he says, you know what? If you doubt, you're not going to receive anything. Look, here's what I want to do right now. Look, I know that some of

you guys are here and I wrestle with this because I know you're here.

You're like, okay, Francis, okay, go on, you're done. You know, bring on 10th Avenue North. You know, we came here for a Christian concert and you're up there preaching at us but you guys, man, I talked to the band guys already.

They're like, yeah, it's a concert. They're more concerned about your souls. Man, and last thing I want to do is like ruin your night but you know what? Concert will come and go and you'll forget about it.

I mean, as good as they're going to be, you'll forget about them. My thought is, honestly, some of you, I'll be looking you in the face a hundred years from now and I'm thinking right now what is going to matter at that point? What will I care that I said to you? Some of you, I'll be looking at you a thousand years from now and I want to be able to look back at this day and go, man, remember that day when we were out there? Maybe some of you would say, man, that's the night where, I don't know, man, you prayed for me or something but I got it like, I'm not really following that God. Because you remember that that group of people that God was speaking to in Hosea where he goes, man, I can't stand the sound of your music.

He goes on in that passage, he goes, why are you looking forward to the day of the Lord? He says to these people, you should not be looking forward to the day of the Lord. He goes, it's like a man running from a lion and then he gets eaten by a bear. Because, man, yeah, life is tough right now but wait till Christ returns.

It's not actually a good thing for some of you. He says, others of you, it's like you ran into the comfort of your house, you put your hand on the wall and a snake bites you and kills you. What are you running from? And he goes, man, I wonder, I mean really how many of you tonight would say, I actually hope that in the middle of this concert, I hope that it's the day of the Lord.

I hope Jesus Christ returns in the middle of this concert. See, I think some of you guys are cheering for that and everything else but I wonder how many of you in the pit of your stomach are going, man, I actually, I'm hoping that doesn't happen tonight because I'm not, I'm not at peace right now with him. Guys, this isn't a game to me.

Man, I didn't fly out from California this morning to give a speech. Some of you guys know I wrote a book just a few months ago about hell and I was, when I studied the topic, I was kind of hoping that I'd find something new and that maybe the hell that I thought I believed in didn't really exist. I mean, honestly, in my heart, there was so much music, man, I hope I can find stuff but the more I studied, the more I go, man, it's real and man, Jesus warned and the biblical authors, they warned and man, I went through a depression.

Man, I just wasn't myself for a couple months going, man, God, some of you are headed there. I mean, seriously because you're just going through the motions. It's not really your own.

Jesus says, man, there's going to come a day where there's many people where I'll say to them, they'll say to me, Lord, Lord, and he'll say, depart from me. I never knew you. Man, I knew your mom.

I knew one of your brothers. I knew those people in your youth group but I never knew you. I mean, you and I didn't have a relationship.

When you spoke to me, I didn't listen to you. We didn't have a relationship. I never knew you.

Man, and that freaks me out. That's why I come out here. I don't get paid for this.

I don't care about any of that stuff. Man, I seriously think, man, if I were, man, I just want to sit here and beg and go, please, please, please, but I know in my heart, man, I can't make you love God. I can't make you believe this stuff.

All I can do is tell you, man, I love him so much. I have all of my security in life is because I know that he hears me right now and he loves me and that he saved me. I see the answered prayers.

I see when I reach out to the poor, how much he blesses my life. I see everything in that book that's true, man, and I want you to get it. And so tonight, if you would honestly say, man, I don't have that kind of peace.

I'm not sure when he returns if I'll be with him. I want to give you an opportunity to respond right now. And again, I know this maybe wasn't what you were thinking when you came tonight, but man, I wasn't about to fly home without at least just saying it and begging you.

Guys, God is so good. He is better than anything this world has to offer. He really is.

It's better than money. Man, I got a beautiful wife and five kids. As much as I love them, man, they don't compare to my relationship with God.

He really is that great. He's that good. And I want you to know him because there's nothing like answered prayer.

And I want him to hear you. And I want you to have the security and peace that I do. And that's why I came out.

And so what we're going to do right now is, there's some guys in the crowd, right, with papers or something for you to fill out if you want to, I hope. Can you raise your hand if you're one of these people that I'm talking about, if you really exist? Okay. Okay, yeah, there's guys walking around and people amidst the crowd.

Here's what I want to do. We were going to try to get you to go to a station somewhere, but it's so crowded tonight that that's just going to be impossible to move. But right now, if tonight you just want to say, you know what? If I'm honest, I don't want Christ to return just yet.

I'm not sure that I have a relationship with him. And I want to get that right tonight. I'm going to ask you to raise your hand right now when someone's just going to hand you.

Good, thanks. And if you keep your hands up. Thank you.

And then the people with the cards, if you guys could make your way around. We've got a bunch up here. Just keep your hand up and they'll get to you.

Or so I'm told. And then also, just keep your hands up. It may be too, you know, the prayer tent is, is that the prayer tent? Yeah, okay.

I wasn't sure. Okay, there's a prayer tent there. There's a cross somewhere too.

So there's a cross over there. There's a cross over there. You guys, if you're just going, you know what, I think I need to talk to someone right now.

Like this can't wait. Then yeah, make your way over to the prayer tent or if no one comes to you and you've been raising your hand forever and you're losing circulation. Go to one of the crosses or go to the tent.

In fact, right now, if someone has their hand up, those of you that are around, I'm going to pray for those, those, those who tonight to say, you know what I want this. I want this power you're talking about. I want it all.

I don't have that type of relationship with God. Just raise your hand. I'm going to pray for you right now.

And those around him, lay your hands on them. Pray for your brothers and sisters that are asking for prayer right now. And you guys believe in this moment.

You guys, Jesus in heaven. He says, look, you can pray for me and I'm going to listen to you and I'm going to believe that he hears me right now. Father, I pray that you would change the church here in America, starting here in South Dakota.

Those who are raising their hands, those who lifted their hands, Lord, they're saying they want the real thing. They want you to hear their prayers. They want to repent of their sins.

They want to walk with you. They want to really know you. They don't want it to be their parents faith or their friends faith or their youth group thing.

God, they want to know you and know that you're here from heaven. And so, Father, I pray that you do something supernatural right now. And I pray that your Holy Spirit would really come into their lives, enter into them, God, and have them do the things you did.

God, you promised, you promised in your word that if we believed in you that we would do the same things that Jesus did. And so, Father, I pray for true believers here tonight that those who raise their hand, God, that your spirit really would come into them and that they'd be different from here on out. Right now, we just think about the cross.

We thank you for the cross. Would you guys all just look up at me one last time? This is really weird. I mean, I was getting ready to just walk off the stage and I just feel like I need two more minutes just to explain the cross one more time to you.

Do you understand that God created you? That you're not here by coincidence? Do you get that? We're in this world that's spinning at a thousand miles an hour, flying around the sun at 67,000 miles an hour and you and I are sitting here and it shows that there's a God, okay? That doesn't just happen. It's not like, oh, there's another earth. There's a God who made you and that you and I, we've done things that are offensive to that God.

We've sinned against Him. We've broken His commands. I've lied, stolen, lusted, done all these things that God hates and so I should be punished and God would be perfectly just saying, you know what? Just like when He flooded the earth, I'm just going to kill all of you.

He could have done that and He says, no, you know what I'm going to do? I'm going to have my son take the penalty for you and He has His son come down onto the earth, take the form of a man and be nailed to a cross and while He was on that cross being crucified, He was paying for all of your crimes. You understand that? See, no one explained that. No one told me that.

That on that cross, Jesus was paying for my sins and that's why the Bible says if you believe in Him, then He pays for it for you and so then He dies. He's buried. Three days later, He comes back to life.

He comes back to the life and freaks everyone out. All the disciples cannot believe their eyes and He says, death and sin and then He looks at them and He says, now, I want you to go and I want you to make disciples of all the nations. I want you to tell everyone about what you just experienced and I want you to baptize them in the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit and you teach them to obey everything that I commanded you and lo, I will be with you always even to the end of the age and so, there was a point in my life when I believed that message that Jesus died for me and I went to the church and I got baptized and that was a symbol of me dying to my old self and saying, I'm going to live a new life and now I spend the rest of my life out making disciples, telling other people about what Jesus did, baptizing them and telling them to obey everything that Jesus commanded and I felt like the Lord just wanted me to end on that gospel message and just remind you of the cross and now let's worship Him for it.

Guys, the Bible says that apart from Christ we go to a place of eternal punishment and separation from Him. Francis has made it very clear tonight what a relationship with Christ means. Many of you need to have that relationship, many of you in your hearts whether you raise your hands or not, many of you said, yes God, I want that real relationship.

The next thing that has to happen is there's no power apart from His word. In that prayer tent we are giving Bibles away, giving Bibles to anybody that needs a Bible. Maybe you made a commitment tonight and you said God this is it, I want this to be real or maybe you said I just need to plug back in and recommit myself to you.

Sometime tonight go to that prayer tent say I want a Bible and there's people in there that will give you a Bible and pray with you and they'll help you in your walk with Christ. Thank you so much tonight, thank you for giving Francis the attention but mainly thank you for listening to how the Lord spoke to your hearts tonight because He is speaking to every one of us. Let's pray.

Father, we have gathered in this field in the name of Jesus and we know you're here because you promised that wherever we gathered in your name, in the name of Jesus you would be there. Lord, forgive us as a people for neglecting you and putting you aside. Lord, there are many nations where we would not even be able to speak the name of Jesus without persecution and yet we have these freedoms.

So I pray for each and every person this entire crowd I pray Lord that you speak to them individually because you have a plan for each and every one of them and Lord, we look forward to that day where you say well done good and faithful servant. We give you all the glory for anything that happens here. Lord, we know this is not about a music festival it's not about any of us but it's all about you.

So we praise you and we give you this in Jesus name. Amen.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/6OZwGjrsDfE.mp4>

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