

National Day of Prayer Address

by Franklin Graham

Franklin Graham's sermon emphasizes the need for America to repent and seek healing through faith in Jesus Christ amidst moral decline.

Duration: 20:47

Scripture: Matthew 8:1

Topics: "National Repentance", "Faith Restoration"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of repentance, faith in Jesus Christ, and the need for America to turn back to God. It highlights the story of the leper in Matthew chapter 8 as a powerful example of seeking cleansing and restoration through Jesus. The sermon addresses the prevalence of sin in society, the consequences of turning away from God's laws, and the hope found in Christ's sacrifice for forgiveness and redemption.

Transcript

Thank you, my friend Ricky Skaggs, Shirley Dobson, Dr. Dobson, members of the executive, the legislature, the judiciary, our armed forces. We come today, and I come today as a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ. And I know we have people here today of other faiths.

And I certainly want to say that I love you. But please allow me to speak today as a minister of the gospel. And I don't want to be offensive to anyone.

But I only know how to pray and only know how to preach the way that the Bible instructs me. And so the past few months, we have all been touched by the scenes of devastation from the earthquake in Haiti and a few weeks later from that of Chile. We've been touched by the scenes of the destruction of the tornadoes in Mississippi and the Midwest and this last week, the floods along the Cumberland in Tennessee.

We've been touched by the people that fled into the streets and for their cries to God for help. As people dug through the rubble looking for loved ones, we heard their prayers and we were touched. The United States, America gave and continues to give.

More than any nation in the world, America gives when there's hurting around the world. Regardless of what the people believe, regardless of what nation, America historically has just poured out its heart and it

has given. And I've often wondered why.

I think it's because when our nation began, this is a nation that believed in God and in His Son, Jesus Christ. And when the first settlers came, they didn't have much. They were poor and they just shared with one another as the early church did when we read in the Gospel of Acts.

They shared with one another. But that tradition of sharing and giving in time of crisis and in time of need has continued to this day and how grateful and how thankful we are to this great nation that we call our home, the United States of America. I want to look at a prayer in the Bible.

And it's a leper's prayer. And it's in Matthew chapter 8. Jesus has just finished preaching on the mountain. And He's coming down.

And there's a multitude of people that are following Him. And it says in verse 1 of chapter 8 of Matthew, when He came down from the mountainside, large crowds followed Him. A man with leprosy came and knelt before Him and worshipped Him and said, Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean.

Jesus reached out His hand, and He touched the man. I'm willing, He said. Be clean.

And immediately, He was cured. Jesus was coming down the mountain. And the multitudes were following Him.

And you know, the multitudes today are still following. Today, 2,000 years ago, there's still millions upon millions across the face of this earth that are following the Lord Jesus Christ. And I am so grateful that when I was 22 years of age, I got on my knees one night and I confessed my sins to God.

And I prayed a prayer. I said, God, forgive me. I have sinned against You.

I believe that Your Son, Jesus Christ, died for my sins. I believe that You buried Him, that You raised Him. And I know that He's at Your right hand.

And I want to invite Him to come into my heart and to take control of my life from this day forward. Never regretted that prayer. That prayer changed my life.

And it'll change the life of each and every one who prays that prayer and trusts in the Lord Jesus Christ. He'll never leave you. He'll never forsake you, no matter what storms you go through in life.

The earth may shake. The ground may crumble. But He won't leave you.

And we all go through storms in life. And here was this leper. And he prays this prayer.

And behold, a leper came and he worshipped him, saying, and this is his prayer, if you're willing, you can make me clean. In the Bible, lepers were separated from society. Still today, there are leper colonies.

We work in Africa, been to Africa many times. And we've worked in leper colonies. We still have leper colonies today where lepers are separated from society.

It's a horrible sight. And of course, for this leper, when he comes to Jesus Christ, they were banned and separated from society. And for this leper to approach the Lord was highly unusual.

Normally, when a leper would approach people, would throw a rock. They would shoo them away. Of course, they were afraid that they would catch it.

But this leper comes up and he worships the Lord. But leprosy in the Bible is also a picture of sin. And you see, there wasn't any hope for this leper because there was no Mayo Clinic.

There wasn't a Bethesda Naval Hospital or Walter Reed or a Johns Hopkins where he could go for treatment. There was no hope for him. There was no cure.

And the only hope that this man had was the Lord Jesus Christ. But you see, for us today, there is no hope. There's no hope for this nation.

There's no hope for you apart from the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. You see, we cannot be cleansed from our sins apart from Jesus. The Bible says no man can atone for one's sin.

You see, leprosy infects the whole body. Sin has infected our entire body. Leprosy started small, slowly spread through the whole body.

The sin started small. Through the act of one disobedience, that one act of disobedience, sin came into the world and has infected the entire human race. The Bible says in Romans, therefore, justice through one man's sin entered the world and death through sin, and thus death is spread to all men.

This is the problem that we have in America today. The Bible says we have all sinned and come short of God's glory. I am amazed, though, in the Bible how few people today know the Bible or understand the Bible and how few people understand or comprehend what sin is.

We've taken God out of our schools. And yes, when I was going to school, we said the Pledge of Allegiance and we said the Lord's Prayer and we had the Ten Commandments, but we don't have these today. And young people today don't understand what's right and wrong.

They have no idea what God's laws and what His statutes are. You see, God said, thou shall not have any other gods before me. In our society today, we have so many gods.

Our businesses become gods. Our careers become gods in our life. And we just shove God off to the side and we now have other gods and other alters.

The Bible says thou shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or the earth beneath. Or the waters below. And I think of how many idols we have, sports idols, music idols, film idols, that young people worship.

Now, I have to admit, I do watch American Idol. I kind of like Simon Cowell. He's so arrogant.

And so direct. It just crushes some of these wannabes. But then, he's usually right.

He's not going to be on the show next year. We'll miss him. But we think of idols.

And yes, we are guilty of idol worship. Thou shall not take the Lord's name and thing And how many times do we hear every day people take God's name and thing? We're breaking His laws. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.

I remember growing up, there were a few restaurants that were open and maybe a gas station here and there. But the malls were closed, the stores were closed. But today, it's business as usual on Sunday, isn't it? Everything's open and we rush to the malls and we buy this or that.

Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. And as a nation, we have turned our back on that. Honor your father and mother.

So many young people today don't honor their parents. I've been in restaurants or in stores or in public places where children are yelling at their parents, screaming at them. It's a shame.

My mama would have beat me to death. Thou shall not murder. Well, what can we say about that? Our nation commits mass murder every year.

We abort the unborn. And we call it a woman's choice. God will judge this nation for this horrible sin.

He will not turn His back. He will not. He will bring judgment.

Thou shall not commit adultery. Our entertainment industry in this country glorifies adultery, promotes adultery. God will judge us for this.

Thou shall not steal. Driving here, went through some neighborhoods and I noticed the bars on the windows. Why do we have bars? Why do we have our police forces? Why do we have to have all this security here in Washington today? Because people will steal.

Why do we have alarms on our cars? I've been in some hotels where two in the morning somebody grabbed a door handle somewhere and a car alarm goes off and nobody shuts it off. And for the rest of the night you lose your sleep. That's because people steal.

Thou shall not give false testimony. And how many times we have witnessed false testimony. Thou shall not covet.

That's what their whole business is all about, about creating desire in our hearts so that we will want and covet things that we don't have. But the point, none of us can keep God's standards. We have broken them, each one of us.

And even if you had kept all of them, you're still a sinner because you were born into sin. Franklin Graham is a sinner and I'm guilty. And here comes this leper and he bows down and he worships him.

You see, God had a plan. And the Bible says, For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. My friends, this is our hope.

I'm guilty. Our nation is guilty. But our hope is in the Lord Jesus Christ because God so loved the world.

He so loved America that he gave his only begotten Son, that if America would repent, if America would turn and by faith receive Christ, God would forgive our sins. The Bible says in him we have redemption through his blood. The forgiveness of sin according to the riches of his grace.

Jesus Christ came out of heaven to take our place. He came on a rescue mission to take our sins. And when Jesus Christ went to the cross, he carried our sins to that cross.

He shed his blood on the cross. He died on the cross. He was buried for our sins.

But God would not allow his Son to see decay. On the third day, God raised his Son to life. Jesus Christ is alive.

And now we come to this leper. And he comes and he bows down and he worships the Lord. Why would he worship him, this leper? I want to read in Colossians 1, verse 15.

It says that he, speaking of Jesus, he is the image of the invisible God. He is the firstborn over all creation. That's why the leper came.

For by him all things were created, things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities. All things were created by him and for him. He is before all things and him all things hold together.

And this leper knew it. And this leper comes. And he bows down and he worships him.

My prayer is that America will once again worship the Lord Jesus Christ. My prayer is that America will trust him once again. You see, there was only one thing this leper wanted.

Lord, this is his prayer. If you are willing, you can make me clean. It wasn't, can you make me clean? He knew he could.

It was just, Lord, if you're willing, you can make me clean. And here's what the Lord did. Remember, this is a leper.

They would usually throw rocks at him, shoot him away. And usually the leper would run for cover when he saw a group of people coming because he knew what they would do. And what does our Lord do? Our Lord looks at this man and the leper comes down and he bows down and he's worshipping.

And he prays this prayer. And Jesus said, I'm willing. And he reaches out his hand.

And it's probably the first time this leper's been touched since he was a baby. And the Lord reaches out his hand and he touches him. He said, I'm willing.

And the leper was made whole. And what the leper received was a touch from the Lord Jesus Christ. And, my friends, that's what America needs today.

You see, your life can be made whole. You can have a new life and a new beginning. You can receive that same touch.

America, you can receive this touch. Jesus said, I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to the Father but by me.

You see, if we confess with your mouth Jesus is Lord, the Bible says in Romans, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you'll be saved. This leper, he had a prayer. Lord, if you're willing, you can make me whole.

And my prayer for my nation, the country that I love, and for you chaplains. I love you guys. And I back you and I support you.

And I thank you for the ministry that you chaplains have been to my son. But my prayer is, Lord, if you're willing, make our nation whole again. May we turn to you and worship you and acknowledge you and live by your laws and your standards.

God bless America.

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