

Polish (2)

by George Verwer

Intercessory prayer is a ministry of people praying for others, nations, and situations, and it is a powerful tool for bringing healing, burdens, and visions.

Duration: 59:38

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Mark 1:35, John 13:34-35, Acts 12:7, Ephesians 6:12, 1 Thessalonians 5:17, 1 John 5:14-15

Topics: "Polish"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of spending time in the Word of God and meditating on Scripture. He cautions against mistaking every thought that comes to mind while reading the Bible as a special revelation from God. The speaker also highlights the need for unity among believers and encourages them to plan their days and be organized in their work. He shares his own experience of waiting on God and seeking wisdom in carrying out a vision, emphasizing the importance of humility and seeking the input of other believers.

Transcript

That's a very big but. But prayer was made without ceasing by the church unto God. One man of God said, if your church is not a praying church, then you can be sure it is a straying church, a church that's going off the road.

And we see that God answered their prayers. Peter was wonderfully delivered from prison. Verse 7 tells us about that.

Billy Graham has written a book on the subject of angels that every Christian needs to read. We have a lot of people now in some countries who are emphasizing demons. They're always talking about demons.

I would warn you about thinking too much and paying too much attention to demons. And then we get people who they want to always lay hands on you and quickly cast out some demon that may be in you. Somebody gave a sneeze in a meeting.

And someone wanted to immediately come and lay hands and cast out this evil spirit of cold. Pretty soon you are looking for demons behind every bush. And actually that kind of thinking causes many psychological problems.

And then people think that is a demon. So in the midst of all the talk about demons, Billy Graham wrote a book about angels. Have you ever heard a message about angels? Yet there are dozens and dozens of references in the Word of God about angels.

People sort of smile, don't they? The intelligentsia that's beyond these ancient beliefs of the 16th century. Yet if you study this subject, you will discover many proofs that there is angelic activity on the behalf of God's people. I don't understand all these things.

With an atheist grandfather, I'm a natural doubting Thomas. I doubt everything at times. I've not only doubted the existence of angels, I've doubted my own existence.

And if you've studied existentialism, you know what I mean. So an angel released Peter from prison. I don't know whether this angel had government permission for this activity.

It's a difficult question. But anyway, there was the deliverance from prison. And look at verse 12.

When he had considered a thing, he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John. Just read verse 12. Does it say where many were gathered together? Pray.

Picture of the New Testament church. People praying. This is not some activity just for super-spiritual people.

Someone said prayer is the Christian's vital breath. I wonder if there are any of you this morning who are not breathing. If you're not breathing, could you raise your hands? Everybody is breathing.

And if we are God's children, we will be learning how to pray. And it will not just be private prayer. It will be group prayer.

At the end of our meeting this morning, we're going to form little groups of five or six, and we're just going to pray here in this great tent. And I hope that small group prayer will become one of the regular practices of your life. And I hope that small group prayer will become one of the regular practices of your life.

When I was running through the woods the other morning, there was a little group up there who were just praying together. So there's no need for me to come here and tell you these things. You already know.

And I hope you will follow that example. Many were gathered together praying. God is calling us to a ministry of intercessory prayer.

We have talked about adoration. We've talked about confession. We've talked about thanksgiving.

We have talked about supplication. Now, intercession. Praying for world situations.

Praying for the leaders of our nation. That's very important. Look what it says in 1 Timothy.

Turn quickly to 1 Timothy, chapter 2. Very strong word from God. I exhort therefore that first of all, supplication, prayer, intercession, giving of thanks, right there, it's all in that one verse, be made for all men. Did you read verse 2? Read verse 2. Verse 2 is a verse of tremendous balance.

Some people don't like that verse. It has been a great controversy in the church. Because it gives the idea that, you know, we should just be willing, whatever our government situation is, to pray for the one in authority and to get on and live a quiet and peaceable, godly, honest life.

I'm not going to get into this particular controversy. But whatever we believe, we cannot exclude 1 Timothy 2.2. I do not have simple, easy answers to some of the complicated problems people are finding in their own country. And sometimes we need a lot more reading and a lot more study before we open our mouths.

That's certainly true of me. I hope you will write the leaders of your nation on a piece of paper and pray for them specifically. And we need to pray for the leaders in the church.

Sometimes it's easy to criticize. But very few people understand sometimes the complexity, even within the church, of carrying on the work of God. In my own ministry of intercessory prayer, I have about ten different practical methods to pray for people, for nations, for situations.

Number one, I use maps of the world. I have a map of the world. I pray for almost every nation in the world.

I have then a set of little cards with about 60 nations. 60 nations, one nation on each card. The front of the card is information about the country.

The back of the card are prayer requests for that country. The third method, I use all correspondence that comes to me as a source of information for prayer. Even when I'm here, you may see me sitting there in the back of my bus, not my bus, it doesn't belong to me.

But often I'm reading letters and praying as I read for the prayer requests that person is giving in the letter. It may even be a letter from a relative. Any piece of paper that comes across my desk usually there's something to pray about.

Number four, I use photographs. Wherever I go, I take pictures of people. For my prayer book, I have my prayer photo book.

And I go through that book and I find it so helpful to remember the person's face as I am praying. Number five, I collect people's business cards. I have a little business card, I don't have them with me right now.

Mine is a little calendar on the back and my address and some gospel verses on the other side. I'm sure some of you business people, maybe some of your parents have a little card. Do you have business cards? I have 25 years of business cards.

And in the course of six months, I generally pray through all of those cards. The ministry of prayer is the ministry for people. Another method I use, I don't know if I could get, I make use, number six, I make use of magazines and the newspaper.

Different magazines. Somebody once asked me, he said, when are you preparing for your next sermon? When do you do your preparation? Let me tell you my secret. My whole life is preparation.

Always reading, always praying, always looking for new truths, new ways to present the word of God. And so I read many magazines, many books and the littlest item can challenge me to pray. I read something about Clint Eastwood becoming the mayor of his town.

I always wonder if people, whether people have heard of some of these characters like Clint Eastwood. You read in your own newspapers some of your favorite singers. You can even write in a letter.

The ministry of prayer and the ministry of letter writing can go hand in hand. Diana and Prince Charles. Some years ago, she was going to have a baby.

They were making such a big thing, she was going to have a baby. Everybody's having babies. I sent her a little letter, a Christian baby book, how to have a Christian baby.

We have a lot of, we have a lot of funny books in English. I pray some of them will never be translated into Polish. Anyway, I got a nice letter back.

Here am I, an unknown nobody. I can get a letter in a book right into the parish? So a year later, I sent a letter to Martha. Margaret Thatcher, the prime minister.

A copy of Loving God by Charles Colson, a great book. It's called No Turning Back. So you can pray for people.

The Lord may lead you to do something. It's a great thing that helps me in my practical intercessory ministry. Number seven, I pray for people just as I see them.

Sometimes I'm just walking down the street. Somebody catches my attention on the other side of the street. I don't have to kneel down and have a special prayer.

I can just sort of shoot a prayer at that person. Of course, I don't shoot it at the person. And I ask God to do something.

And I have seen God do something. So many possibilities for praying and interceding for other people. Television is another way or the radio.

We hear something. We see something. When the program is over, we can spend some time in prayer.

Pray for Nicaragua. Pray for Campuchia. Pray for Northern Ireland.

Sports games going on in Moscow. Did you know that there are hundreds of sportsmen coming to know Christ as their Savior? One of the great moves of the Spirit of God today in the world is among athletes. The next Goodwill Games, they said on Radio Moscow last night, will be in the United States.

Different sportsmen mixed together. Some are coming to know the Lord Jesus. So that's another way we can intercede through what we hear on the radio, what we see on the television, on the news especially.

Then, of course, when we're reading God's Word, we can ask God to bring directly to our minds things He wants us to pray for. I'm reading a new book right now called The Healing of Memories. Some of the present struggles we have in our Christian life are because of difficult experiences we have had when we were children.

And God is able to bring healing to our memories. Memory is a powerful thing. So as we are waiting upon God, and that is a whole aspect of prayer that I want to mention.

We're going to get to that. That's the next slice of this little pie. As we're waiting upon God, He brings burdens for prayer.

It was when I was on a day of prayer in the mountains in southern Germany, God gave me that burden and that vision to see something big and wonderful happen in Europe. In prayer, that God gave us the

idea of getting an ocean-going ship for world evangelists. Intercessory prayer is one of the greatest ministries and adventures in the world.

There's something we need to be honest about. Many of our prayers don't say that. I am committed to honesty.

I told you about what happened in my school. I could keep you here all day just sharing one answer to prayer after the other. Many of my prayers this is a whole separate James says, you have not because you ask not or you ask just to satisfy your own selfish will.

We have people now they're just claiming they don't like their old car they're just claiming a new car in the name of Jesus. I don't think we should all start praying the same prayers. Now we have a thorough people to give their testimony and I have a great success story.

We have businessmen's meetings and we get the businessman in and he gives his testimony. Almost always it's a successful businessman. I will tell you many people in business in England, America, Germany many people are not successful.

And eventually they lose all their money and they lose their business. That's very common. The story usually goes something like this.

Ten years ago I gave my business to God. A pastor came over to my house and we had prayer. He told us to give 10% of it to him and we prayed.

And God just gave me all this money. A businessman comes up today I don't have any business. Sometimes we have the same thing when it comes to healing.

Miraculous healing. We get people give their testimony sometimes in these big tent meetings. They maybe had cancer or they had some illness and they prayed and hands were laid on them studying this little subject.

It's a great special gift. We have seen people healed in our ministry. We usually see several who are not at least miraculously instantly healed.

A dishonesty in this area of ministry are really hurt because they have got into extremism in this area where they insist God always wants to heal everybody all the time in every situation. Many foolish things take place. We have had people come on fellowship who are epileptics.

They take this medicine One church taught that 60 people dead in that one church. Very big church. They believe all doctors were from the devil.

No one should go to the doctor. Just pray. Bang! A miracle! 60 to 70 people dead mainly children.

And this was in the newspaper all over the nation. Then the parents of these children took them to court. Do you know what just happened? They also teach you cannot and you do not need to die until you are 70 years of age.

But in the midst of this legal proceeding this extremist pastor suddenly died. I think that church now is coming into slowly a little balance. You know as we follow Jesus Christ there are mysteries.

There are things we do not understand. Why God heals one and does not heal another is a mystery but we must leave with God Himself and trust Him. Peter was miraculously delivered from prison.

But what about Stephen? He was preaching in the open air. Surely when the stones came people started praying yet God allowed that young servant to be stoned to death. And if you want more proof you read the last verses in Hebrews chapter 11.

There is much to learn subject of prayer. Be discouraged. We will still pray and pray for people to be saved.

Pray for people to be set free. Pray for the gospel to penetrate every part of the world. Pray for the church to be established in every nation and in every people's group.

Pray for our parents. Somebody once asked me why do you spend whole nights in prayer? When we finish our nights of prayer than what we have prayed for. So ten minutes for intercessory prayer before you came here five days ago.

How many of you had at least ten minutes a day in prayer for others? Intercessory prayer. Even just ten minutes for others. How many already have? Nobody can see.

I can just get an idea. It is my sincere prayer that by this time next year we can reverse that statistic and that ninety percent sitting here in the morning will know something about intercessory prayer as the Bible teaches. And you know one of the side benefits of intercessory prayer ministry? Many people that I have they are involved in what I call operation introspection.

Always looking into themselves. Oh, I am such a... digging up the old bodies. Sometimes people actually are doing that in their minds.

They are digging up old memories, old failures, old sins from a year ago. Lots of people are living in the syndrome of vain regret. Vain regret.

They are sorry that they did that a year ago, two years ago. In sexual sin. Not easy to blot out the memory of a sexual failure.

We fail, we do not easily recover. Past sin has bringing you into regret. Regret is one of the most form of self-love.

Go under the blood of Christ once and for all, even at this very moment. You start to forget those things that are past. Move toward those things that are ahead.

Go for those things that are ahead. Let us go on to the next ten minutes. Meditation and listening.

Ten minutes. Now this means going back into the Word of God. This is the time for memory.

This is the time to take one passage of Scripture and meditate on that and listen to the voice of God to your own heart based on His own making of thinking that everything that pops into your head when you are reading the Bible is necessarily some special revelation from our churches in other countries we know. It is amazing. God has told me I believe we must change all the chairs in the tent.

I get a vision of the chairs being in a different form. We should not be looking up here at the platform. We need to look at one another together.

So we will change the chairs. It might be a good idea that we get a revelation. God gives us a revelation directly from Him that we must change the chairs in the church.

When this man shares his great revelation those chairs in that direction for 100 years. Interested in this young man's revelation soon there will be a boxing meeting in the elders' meeting. There will be the change the chairs group.

The change the chairs crusade. And there will be the we will not change the chairs group. Soon you will have two churches where you have one church.

These kind of things are happening. When we are in prayer before the living God we are still weak, vulnerable human beings. And we can make mistakes and our own thoughts can get mixed with God's thoughts.

And so we need a lot. We need to learn. We know that there is a great need for meditation.

We know that God can give a vision. God can give a burden. But then we have to talk about that and pray about that with the other believers in an open and honest way.

God gave me that vision. Me, that was weight upon God. I wrote a paper explaining the sense and the logic.

I did a lot of research by visiting. And then God gave us unity as a fellowship. In my 22 years did God give us some other men including a ship captain to help carry the vision.

Four years more of prayer and nights of prayer God gave us the ship. And all during that period He was teaching me that His work was people not objects. And often it's when we are willing to let it go that God can come in and do what He wants to do.

As you grow in spiritual maturity you will not just be having 10 minutes of meditation and listening. You will go away for whole days half days at least to weight upon God and to be brought into the power and the energy of what God is doing. That has been my regular practice since I was 17 years of age.

Half days or days of prayer and fasting in the mountains, in the woods that God did a deeper work in my soul and in my spirit. Now we're getting toward 10 o'clock and we have 5 more minutes of intercessory prayer. Because of the meditation and the listening we will want to pray.

We will want to pray for people that God has put upon our heart. Then in the final 5 minutes we have just the time of considering the day that is ahead of us. We want as much as possible to plan our days.

We should have a notebook when we have this time especially that time of meditation and listening meditating and praying this morning. God just gave me a whole outline of a message that I know I have to share with some of my Christian leaders that I work together with. So you can write these things down.

Give thought to the things you have to do during that day and maybe practical things. I wish I could speak to you for an hour on organizing your private world. We have a new book in English on this subject it is the greatest book I have seen in the last 3 or 4 years.

Maybe you don't have this problem in Poland. So many Christian leaders they are disorganized. They are never on top of their work.

The work is always on top of them. And they are living in frustration and confusion. They get somebody's address and they lose it by the next day.

And some of them are driving their wives crazy. The wife says when you come home from the office today please pick up the potatoes. He doesn't write it down.

And of course the wife says did you bring the potatoes darling? Potatoes? When she tries to say anything sometimes the self-life really locks into action. In our countries the male ego is stronger than the female ego. And so we get such statements.

Don't you know how busy I am in the work of God? Do I the Lord's servant need to buy the potatoes? For the women I am called to the church. And I will tell you there's much confusion in the work of God. So it's good to have those five minutes to write practical things down you need to do.

On top of the list show that the spiritual. We want a wedding. The man of prayer to the day his head is in the clouds.

He won't stay in one particular meeting. He has to preach. They're driving down the road.

Billy Graham wrote a booklet called Highway Safety A Spiritual Problem. And he said many a man who's an angel in the pulpit is a devil behind the wheel of time. Spiritual people don't mean we are super.

There is a time to pray. Well, you have that control. You can change it.

Pray that you will have a definite practical time each day with the living God. This is not the end. This is the means to the end.

The end is knowing God. Being used of God this is the means to the end. Though part of it, worshipping God himself, that in a sense is the end.

That is the great calling of all Christians. When I was a young Christian through the whole New Testament I marked every single verse and I was surprised. Then I studied the prayer life.

If God needed to spend a night in communion with his Father how much more we should be spending more time before God in prayer. We'll never and I can share with you as a feeble struggler disciple of Jesus I have known reality in prayer every day. God is real.

And we can talk to him. It's as simple as that. Let us pray.

Our God, we thank you for your Holy Word. We believe many of us will never be the same because we have been exposed to your Word this morning. Guide us now as we had some time in prayer together.

Help us to open our mouths. Maybe we've never proved before. Oh Lord Jesus, we repent of our lies.

Let us seek your face together. Our laziness, our unbelief. And we believe you accept us.

You forgive us. You cleanse us. You renew us and you're sending us forth.

We pray this in Jesus' name.

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