

Christian Growth

by Gerhard Du Toit

God wants us to grow from truth to experience, allowing the Word of God to wash through every aspect of our relationship with Him.

Duration: 1:24:29

Scripture: Matthew 26:36, Luke 24:32, Acts 1:14

Topics: "Spiritual Growth"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the topic of Christian growth and emphasizes its importance. Before diving into the material, the congregation is encouraged to spend time in prayer and thank God for the work He has been doing in their hearts. The speaker then references the role of the Holy Spirit in convicting the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. The sermon also highlights the significance of being in harmony with God and compares it to a symphony orchestra playing in unison. The speaker shares a personal story about a mentor who exemplified a deep relationship with God through prayer and witnessing. The sermon concludes with a reminder of the transformative power of Christ's resurrection and the freedom from condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Transcript

Hello, this is Brother Denny. Welcome to Charity Ministries. Our desire is that your life would be blessed and changed by this message.

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These messages are offered to all without charge by the freewill offerings of God's people. A special thank you to all who support this ministry. I just want to say tonight it has been a wonderful privilege to be able to spend the last two evenings here with you.

When the invitation came to my own inadequate life to be able to be here for last night and this evening, was there such a sense of agony in my own inadequate walk with God because I realized that what would happen is that I would come in at the tail end of a week in which you have sought the face of God and been waiting upon God and been exposed to some wonderful preaching and teaching. I took days just to

wait upon God in prayer and fasting for these two nights and for the rest of this weekend. I just want to thank you for allowing me to come.

I have a great burden in my heart for the fellowships. I think it was about six or seven years ago when I had the privilege of being here. Then the last number of years I have been able to be at a number of the fellowships.

Every time when I have the privilege of being at one of the fellowships, I go away with a great sense of burden and longing to pray that God will continue to work and to bless. Never ever come to the place where you think we have got it together. Never ever come to the place where you think that we are something.

John Wesley said that God, and George Whitefield said the same thing in a different way, that we need to trust God to move into every generation. I twice in my life have had the privilege of being in the midst of revival. This movement was born out of the move of the Spirit of God.

But God has been stirring my heart the last number of months as I have been thinking of the fellowships and the men's leadership and the Bible school coming up later in the year and other things that is taking place. To challenge you tonight as a movement of God, to trust God to send revival, it's going to cost us absolutely everything. It's only going to come through prayer.

Robert Murray McChane used to say, how can the Holy Spirit in me criticize the Holy Spirit in you? He was the man that used to say, so much of my time of praying is preparing myself to pray. And I want to challenge you tonight to take this burden upon your heart and wherever you go from tomorrow or Monday or Sunday onwards, to trust God to send revival. And what will happen if God will send revival? Twenty minutes of an outpouring of the Spirit of God will do more for us and for our fellowships than years of the things that we have been able to try and do ourselves.

And where does revival begin? Revival begins when you and I draw a circle around ourselves and we humble ourselves before God in that circle and we ask God to pour out His Spirit in conviction of sin and to begin to work in our hearts and our walks of in. We have some of the brothers that are going to give you out material. I want to speak to you tonight about Christian growth.

And it's a subject that is so close and so dear and near to my heart. And we are going to give you material that we want to systematically work through. But I also want us to spend some time in prayer before we do this.

So I am going to ask you to turn around and find two or three people. And God has been doing some wonderful things in our hearts. And I want you to thank God for what He has been doing.

And we are just going to take five minutes or so to pray together and then I will close in prayer. And then we have some brothers that are going to pass out this material and we will turn to the Word of God. Why don't we turn around and we spend some time in prayer.

You can go on your knees if you want. And just let's take some time to pray. Our Heavenly Father, we want to thank Thee this evening for this very precious and wonderful week that Thou hast given unto us.

We want to bow in Thy presence tonight, realizing afresh that Thou didst say to us in Thy Word, Humble Thyself under the mighty hand of God. We want to thank Thee this evening that we recognize afresh and

anew that the ministry of humbling ourselves is not just a discipline, but that You want it to become a disposition. And, Father, how grateful are we at the very last night of these days that we have been together, that we have been exposed to the greatness of that which Thy Word has been about.

And yet, Father, we want to say to Thee this evening that in our hearts is there such a longing and a desire for more of God. We are reminded again that Thou didst say to us that I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and I will pour floods upon the dry ground. We are reminded that the Lord Jesus said unto us, Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness.

And this evening as we come into Thy presence again and again, as we have been doing it this day, do we pray that once more as we open our hearts before Thee, that Thou would come by Thy Spirit and minister to us. Father, we want to pray tonight that that which we have been exposed to during the hours of this week, all the teaching that has come to our hearts and to our lives, as we go back to our fellowships in the coming days, and as we will meet with You in the early hours of the morning, and as the Word of God will wash again and again through the inadequacy of our lives, we want to pray tonight that the Spirit of God will come and witness to the Word again and again. Lord, we confess tonight that You have said to us in Your Word, It is not by might, it is not by power, but it is by My Spirit, saith the Lord.

We want to pray that the truth will come to our hearts, that it will settle into our walks with You. Our God and our Father, we pray this evening that somehow by Thy Spirit that Thou would come and so deeply fertilize this Word, so that it will be able to bring forth the fruit in our lives that we long for in the days to come. Father, we want to pray tonight for those in the fellowships all over the land and the country that has not been able to be with us during this Leadership Week.

We want to pray for the brothers who would have longed to be in these sessions day after day. And God, we pray this evening that as they listen to the tapes and as they listen to the CDs and as they perceive our walks that has been here, Father, we pray tonight in Jesus' name that that which You have been saying and doing during the hours of this week, that somehow that it will flow into every one of the fellowships. We want to pray this evening for our mothers, the mothers of our children, the wives that God has entrusted to us.

Lord, I'm so concerned and afraid of the fellowships that there will come a time that we would think in our hearts we've got this all together, that there will come criticism in our relationships with God, that we will begin to think that we are better than others. God, we know this night that what we long for is an outpouring of the Spirit of God. And tonight we want to commit ourselves to You as fellowships and as a movement that You have risen up.

And Father, of a movement that has been blessed of God, we ask that in the days to come that Thou would visit us with revival. Father, You said in the midst of the years, Revive thy work again. And this evening we pray that You will create the hunger and the thirst and the longing and the desire that You would pour out upon us Your Spirit again.

We ask that You will not allow us to ever become satisfied. We ask that You will never allow us to become stuck in our ways. But God, we pray that times of refreshing will come from the presence of God on a consistent basis.

And Father, we ask that as we turn to this great subject of Christian growth this evening, we pray that the unction of the Spirit of God will come to rest upon the world again. We say with the old Puritans of old

again this Friday night to Thee, our God, that we do not just want to be informed with the reality of what Scripture is about, but that we long to be inflamed with the reality of the life of God. And we ask that we would be like those disciples on the way to Emmaus, that when You expound to them the Law and the Prophets and the Writings, and Lord Jesus, when You departed out of their presence, that they were able to say to one another, Did not our hearts burn within us when He spoke to us in the way? Lord, You know tonight there is such a burden in my heart that our fellowships will become, that these fellowships will become houses of prayer, that they will not be a mile wide and an inch deep, but that the leadership will become men sanctified in meat for the Master's use.

And we ask tonight that God in the days to come, upon fellowship after fellowship, will pour out His Spirit. Lord, how wonderful it will be if we would be able to be in touch with one another and to say, Brother, have you heard that God has poured out His Spirit in South Dakota? God has poured out His Spirit in Manitoba? God has poured out His Spirit in Charity? God has poured out His Spirit in Tennessee and North Carolina and Texas and different places all over our land? And so tonight we ask of Thee that Thou would send us revival in the midst of the years. We thank Thee tonight for Thy precious Word that Thou hast given unto us.

Lord, we want to submit under the authority of Scripture. We want it to burn into every aspect of our relationships with You. And we ask that it will become part of our lives.

And we pray that in the days to come, as we move in our different ways and to our different places, that You will give us a passion to memorize Your Word, and that the Word of God will burn into every aspect of our relationships with You. We thank Thee tonight for the place of prayer. God, we are so grateful this Friday night that You do not necessarily answer prayer because we are praying.

We thank Thee tonight that You do not answer prayer, that You are not obliged to answer our prayers. But O God our Father, we thank Thee that You answer prayer because You are a covenant-keeping God. And Lord, it breaks our hearts to realize that You have said unto us in Your Word that this is the confidence that we have, that if we ask anything according to Your will that You hear of us, and if we know that You hear of us, we know that we are the petitions of those things that we are asking of You.

You have said unto us the effectual, fervent prayer of the righteous man. Avail of much, Elijah was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed that he would not reign on the earth by the space of three years and six months. Father, Thy Word said that there was no reign.

Tonight we pray that You will make us a people of prayer. Lord, we say to Thee again this evening, if You will ever visit us afresh with a great outpouring so the Spirit of God in the revival that it is going to come through redemptive praying. So tonight we pray that You will pour out upon us a spirit of prayer, a spirit of prayer and fasting.

Father, Thou didst say to us in Thy Word that this kind can only go out by prayer and fasting. We know tonight that the state of this land is such that God will only be able to move because of prayer and fasting and the hearts of the people of God. So tonight we pray that we will become houses of prayer, that the brothers that have been with us this week, as they were exposed to the Word of God, we ask that their bodies will become houses of prayer, that in our relationship with our wives, precious as they are, that those relationships will become houses of prayer, that in our family worship at home, that it will become houses of prayer, and that Father, in our groups or in our Sunday worship times, that our places of worship will become houses of prayer.

So tonight we pray that Thou would do this in the greatness of Thy mercy and in the midst of the years that Thou would have mercy upon Thy people. And Father, Thy Word is said unto us that we do not have a high priest that cannot be filled with the feeling of our infirmities, but that we were stunted in all points like us we are. But Father, we have a high priest that we can come.

And You said unto us, let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace. So this evening we come to ask that in the days to come, that these men that have been here this week, that they will become intoxicated with the greatness of the presence of God. We ask that they will become saturated with the washing of the Word.

We ask this night that they will be baptized in a spirit of brokenness, and that You will pour out upon them a great spirit of prayer so that we would become a praying people. We bless Thee this evening that Thou wouldst look upon us, that Thou wouldst remember us, that Thou wouldst be able to visit us as Thy people in Jesus' name. Amen.

There are some of the brothers who are just going to come forward and give unto you some material that we would like you to have. And then what we would like you to do is to turn with us in your Bible this evening, and we are going to read from 2 Peter 3. The other thing that we would like to ask you that the children 14 and under, because we don't have enough of the sheets available, so if you are 14 and up, we ask you to take one of those sheets, and they are going to pass the sheets out. And then I want you to turn with me in your Bible to 2 Peter 3. And we are going to read the whole chapter because they are still giving out the material.

2 Peter 3. The second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you, in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance, that ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior, knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens swore of oath, and the earth standing out of the water, and in the water, whereby the world that then was being overflowed with water perished. But the heavens and the earth, which are now by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men.

But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as this one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness, but is longsuffering to us, were it not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief, and the night in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burnt up, seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved.

What manner of persons ought ye to be, in all holy conversation and in godliness, looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless, we, according to his promise, look for a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless in an account, that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation, even as our beloved brother Paul, also according to the wisdom given unto him, hath written unto you, as also in all his epistles, speaking unto them of these

things, in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable rest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness, but grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to him be glory both now and for ever.

Amen. It's amazing, you know, when you and I begin to study the life and the ministry of the Apostle Peter in the New Testament, specifically in the 89 chapters of the four Gospels, and the first 12 chapters are the Acts of the Apostles, and then in the epistles that God has given unto us through the Apostle Peter, that you will discover that from the moment that he was invited and challenged to become a follower of the Lord Jesus, and he was not just challenged to become a follower, but he was also instructed as he sat under the ministry of Christ for three or three and a half years or so, but he was also inspired by the life of the Lord Jesus. And if you study the life of the Apostle Peter, you will discover that if there was one word that dominated the life of this man, then it's the word growth that took place in his relationship with the Lord Jesus.

I so often have looked upon the life of Peter, and I've asked myself the question, why is it in the New Testament that there are such vivid examples of the development of character in the life of the Apostle Peter? One of the reasons is that you will discover that he was such an impulsive individual. He was one of those privileged few that so often found themselves alone in the presence of the Lord Jesus. When the Bible is saying unto us in Luke chapter 11 that Jesus was praying at a certain place, and as he was praying that one of his disciples came to him and asked him and said, Lord, teach us to pray, I often look at that passage and I would say to myself, if I would ever be allowed to wonder which one of the disciples that was, I suspect that it was probably the Apostle Peter.

I want to speak to you tonight about Christian growth. I want us to look upon this marvelous subject because, my brothers and sisters, what has happened to us is that we are sat in this week and we have been exposed to the wonders of the Word of God. And the secret of a Christian life is that God does not want you to grow, or rather to go from experience to truth.

But the secret of a Christian life is that God wants you to grow from, or rather to go from truth to experience. You see, that's the secret of biblical interpretation. Because if you are going to go from experience to truth, you will find the possibility that you will interpret Scripture in the light of experience.

And there is the possibility that you will isolate the Word of God instead of allowing the Word of God to wash through every aspect of your relationship with God. When you and I would study the subject of growth in the Scriptures, you will find out that the Bible is speaking to us about growth in a number of different ways. The Bible is speaking to us about growth in the botanical sense of the word when we read about seed in the Word of God.

And as we look upon that seed, we discover that when the seed is planted that it becomes a little plant in a tree that is bringing forth fruit eventually. The Bible is speaking to us about growth in a physiological sense of the word when we read about a newborn babe and we discover how this child is growing up into adulthood and eventually became a man or a woman of God. The Bible is speaking to us about growth in an architectural sense of the word when we read about the foundation of the building that found itself being erected.

I want us to look upon Christian growth. You see the Apostle Peter was a family man. That is why he is saying to us in 1 Peter chapter 2, that as young born babes desire to the sincere milk of the Word of God so that you may grow thereby.

He is using terms to try and explain to us what growth is all about. He is speaking to us about adding unto your faith. He is using the word multiplying.

But in 2 Peter chapter 3, he is coming unto us this evening and he is saying unto us, but grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. I want this evening for us to look at what I would refer to as the dynamics of Christian growth. If time would allow us, it would have been marvelous this night to spend an hour or two on the direction of Christian growth.

You say, Brother Gerard, what is the direction of Christian growth? You see the Apostle Peter is saying unto us, he did not say to us, grow into grace, but he is saying unto us, grow in grace. You see, growing in grace, so the grace of God is not only the unmerited favor of God towards us, but brother and sister, the grace of God is also the unmeasured fullness of God in us. And when you and I look upon this direction of growing in grace, you will discover that it is a downward growth in my capacity to receive the fullness of God.

It is an upward growth in my capacity so that I would be able to perceive the fullness of God. And my brother and my sister, the combination between this downward growth in grace and this upward growth in grace bring me to the place where it becomes an outward growth in my capacity to release the fullness of God. I wonder this Friday night if I may ask you in this gathering, as these men who have been with us this week, my brethren, would I be able to ask you tonight, are you going back to your homes and you are going to grow in the grace of God? You say, how do I grow downward in my relationship with God? My brothers and my sisters, God needs to come and put the sentence of death upon the self-life.

And I wonder if you sit here tonight and if I can ask you this evening, because the reason why we have come together this week is not just to be exposed to some of the great wonders of what God in His Word is about, but the reason why we have come together is because we want God to meet with us. And if you sit here this Friday night as a man, as a husband and as a father, and you have come to be at the leadership this week, and you have not met with God, my brother, I want to challenge you tonight. You can't leave this leadership conference without being able to say that God and His Spirit has met with me in my relationship with God.

You see what he said, Brother Gerard, it is a downward growth. You see, the way up is the way down. J. C. Ryle used to say, if I want to reach high, he said, I need to begin low.

I will never be able not to remember this, because a number of years ago, a friend of mine in whom I am having an accountability relationship, he said, what is an accountability relationship? It is a relationship where we met with one another once a week. And we would spend two or three hours together. And I have put together twenty questions that we would ask one another.

And the first one was, where are you in your relationship with God? And we will talk about our quiet times and the things that God has been saying unto us. And then we would ask one another, what is the areas of your life that you are struggling with? And we will discuss it and we will pray about that. And I remember at the end of the year, I phoned him one day and I said, you know, we have had some great times together this year.

And I said, the year is coming to an end. And I said, can you and I just meet one day for lunch? And we just looked back over the year and we talked about it. And as we came out of this restaurant, we were standing there looking at one another.

And he turned to me that day as we were talking and he just challenged me in my own relationship with God. And as he looked at me, he said to me, Brother Gerard, he said, what was the greatest hindrance in your ministry this last year? And I am so afraid of this word, my ministry. I do not know if we have got a ministry.

We have the privilege of being involved in the greatness of the work of God. And as he asked me that question that day, it was the last time at the end of that year, that somehow he took out the sword and he pierced it once more into my heart. And as he pierced it into my heart, something deep within my soul began to break.

And I turned to him and I began to weep like a child. He turned to me and said to me, Brother Gerard, he said, he said, did I hurt you? And I said, yes, John. I said, you have really hurt me.

And he said, I am sorry, Brother Gerard. And I said, no, you do not understand. Oswald Chambers said, if you are hurt, there is an area in the self like that God wants to do something.

Do you know what happened? He looked at me and he said, I want you to look me in the eyes. And I could hardly do that. And he said, he said, he is a Mennonite.

I said, what did he do? He put that sword and he turned it in and he put it afresh and he turned it into my being. And as I looked into his eyes, he said, what was the greatest hindrance in your ministry this last year? And when I got myself together, I looked him in the eyes and I said, Brother John, you know what it was? And he said, what? I said, it was me. He said, what do you mean? I said, if I could have just got more out of the way.

I wonder tonight if I can ask you here as a husband. My brother, are you in that downward growth? You see, there is the birth of the vision. There is the death of the vision.

There is the resurrection of the vision. Now, listen, brother and sister, the problem with our country tonight is there is a backlog of unconfessed sin. And you can't rededicate it to God, that which has never been dedicated.

And I want to ask you tonight, because this is our last night. You see, I have seen through the years and many of these leadership weeks, not necessary here, but in places where I find myself, that it is so possible that there are some of us, and you know what we are like? We are just like the dark of the blacksmith. That when the man walked into the blacksmith shop, the dark was sleeping under the table.

The noise was unbelievable. The sparks were flying. And the man turned to the blacksmith and he said, why is this dark asleep like that? And the blacksmith said to him, you don't realize, this is my dark.

He said, the first day in the shop, he said, I couldn't get him into this place. But he said, every day he came closer and closer. And he said, the sparks were flying and the noise.

And then the blacksmith laughed. And he pointed to the dark who was sleeping at the table. He said, you know what has happened? He said, my dark has got used to the sparks.

Can I ask you this Friday night, have you met with God? He said, what is it? It is a downward growth. It is a downward growth in my capacity, so that I can receive the fullness of God. That is why in Romans chapter 6, the Apostle Paul made this statement.

What did he say? He said, knowing this therefore that our old man is crucified with Him. Why did he say that? He said, so that the body of sin might be destroyed. You see, where does Paul come with this concept? He is speaking that out of the Roman government of that day, my brother and sister.

Where did he get that from? I can tell you where he got it from, because in the times of the Romans, when someone was guilty of committing a murder, and they found this dead body. Now they were looking for the murderer, and there was a day that they find the murderer, and they are keeping this body, and when they found the murderer, and they have got this dead corpse, they are tying the two, one to the other, and they take this murderer with his dead body, and they throw him out of the city. That is the way he is going to die.

And the Apostle Paul came and do you know what he said? He said, knowing this therefore that our old man is crucified with Him. Why? So that the body of sin might be destroyed. Can I ask you this Friday night? Has God dealt with sin in your life? My brother and my sister, are we still afraid of sin? It is a downward growth, you see.

That is why the Apostle Paul is saying to us in 2 Corinthians 6, he is saying unto us, Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, sayeth the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing. And you see, I think it is possible this Friday night, that there are many of us who sit here, and you say, Brother Gerard, I am really separated from this world. But my brother and sister, can I ask you tonight, do you really know what it means to be separated unto God? The Apostle Paul came and what did he say? He said, I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God.

Do you know what Paul said? And I love this, oh, I love, I love, I love this word. In fact, in my own quiet times in these days, I am listening through the Greek New Testament on a CD, with my little Greek New Testament, and it is so precious, because I love His Scriptures, and I was looking at this word, reasonable. Do you know what the Apostle Paul said? He said, This is your reasonable service.

Do you know what he said? It is in the light of your understanding of the mercies of God. He said, I beseech you therefore, by the mercies of God, and when you come to grips with the mercies of God, when this just becomes reasonable, you don't have an option. Let me ask you tonight, have you presented your body as a living sacrifice to God? I was so, so broken up, and I guess this young fellow didn't realize that, but before the service started tonight, there was a young, tall lad that came to me, and we were just talking away, and I said, What's your name? And we got talking, and I began to ask him some questions about this walk with God, and as we were talking, I said, Listen, how old are you? And he said, I'm 20 years old, and my heart is broke, because I look at my own life, I'll be 50 in May of this year, some days I feel like an old man at 70 years old.

I mean, the work of God takes absolutely everything from you. If you can't follow God with all your heart, don't follow Him. But I look at that young, 20-year-old life, and I just felt in my heart, if I could take Him, and just say to Him, Listen, you've got one life to live.

Live it for Christ. May I ask you this Friday night, is your life on the altar for God? I don't think you will appreciate me sharing this testimony, but I want you to get the message of it. When I was in my homeland of Africa, I was a chaplain.

I didn't want to do it, but it was the law of the land. There was a war situation going on. Communistically inspired terrorists were coming into my country.

Three months every second year, I had to preach to these young lads that were facing death. And because I was a chaplain, I could go wherever I want to go. And I would hear, sometimes two or three o'clock in the morning, I would hear these Bedford trucks coming in, and as they were coming back to the base, and then what happened, they killed these communistically inspired terrorists in combat, and they would take their bodies and throw them in the back of these Bedford trucks.

And then they would bring them into the hospital, and these young surgeons and doctors would be there, and they would do an autopsy on the bodies. And I, because of what I did, I was allowed to go wherever I want. And there were times that three o'clock in the morning, I would stand next to an operation table, and here is the body of a communistically inspired terrorist lying on this table.

And these young surgeons would come, and they would cut this body open, and they would cut the stomach open. And as I would stand there and look at that, and when they open the stomach, and they open it up, and there was green stuff in these stomachs. And I would stand there, and I would say to them, what is this? And they would turn to me, and they would say, Padre, you don't understand.

I said, what is it? They said, it's a drug. I said, why is it? They said, these men, before they go into combat, they got this drug, and they chew on it. And they said, what they do, as they chew on it, it brings them to the place where there is no fear to die.

And my heart had just been torn apart, and I would walk back to my office, and follow my face before God. And I would say, God, do I know anything about that kind of a Christian life? These men are serving Satan. Can I ask you tonight, brethren and sisters, is your life, and my life, and the altar for God? I think of our children.

Many of us, we've got maybe five, six, seven, eight, ten beautiful children that God has given to you. We only have one daughter. But you know, the fear in my heart is that there would be a morning when she'd come past my study, when she'd wake up, and she comes down, and she's getting dressed, and she'd come past my study, and out of my study is not flowing a sense of the greatness of the presence of God.

The altar of God. You say, Brother Gerard, what is the altar of God all about? You know what's the altar of God about? Slaughter. That's why Evan Roberts often used to pray in the Wellesley Bible, and he said, God, he said, bend the people and say the world.

You see, there is a concern, there is a burden upon some of our hearts. We came from different fellowships all over the country. You're going to go back, maybe three, or ten, or fifteen families, and you've been here this week.

Now you need to go back. My brother, I'm going to ask you tonight, is your life on the altar for God? It's a downward growth. It's not just a downward growth, but you know what I've discovered? It is an upward growth in my capacity to perceive the fullness of God.

You see, the Bible has got a wonderful balance. When God begins to reveal the areas of my life where He needs to deal with sin, and in a moment we're going to come to this greatness of the spirit-filled life, that the spirit-filled life is not a goal, it's a gateway, that there is the possibility that God can cleanse me from all conscious sin. But you see, this direction of growth, it's an upward growth in my capacity to perceive the fullness of God.

Ah, you say, what is the Bible saying unto us? Let me give you a number of passages. You remember 2 Corinthians 3. What is the Apostle Paul trying to do? He's bringing unto us the life of Moses. You remember those two marvelous statements in the Old Testament? One of them is a staggering statement.

What is it? It came out of the life of Samson. What is the Bible saying unto us? Samson wished not that the Lord departed from him. People often say to me, Brother Gerard, what went wrong in the life of Samson? And they say, oh, I think I know what's the answer.

And I say, well, what is it? Oh, they say, it's when he committed those brutal sins of adultery and the things that he did. And I just look at him and I say, you know, you are so wrong. Oh, they say, that's what he did.

They say, wasn't that bad? Oh, I say, that was awful. They say, so what is it? I say, no, no, no, no. It goes a lot deeper than that.

You know what happened in the life of Samson? There was a moment one day when he killed the lion. Nothing wrong in killing the lion. But you remember when he came back with his mother and his father.

What did he do as they were going back? He turned away and he came to the carcass of the lion. What did he find in the carcass of the lion? The Bible says he found honey in the carcass of the lion. And do you remember what he did? He never told his mother and his father.

But what did he do? He took the honey and he brought it to his mother and his father. Do you know what he did? He broke the Nasserite valve. He touched the dead animal.

Can I ask you this, Friday night, my brother and my sister? Have we lost the presence of God? You know, it's an awful thing when you are involved in a Christian life or a relationship with God and everything seems so fine. And you and I can sit in little gatherings like this, my brother and my sister, and we are not even conscious of the depth of our need of God. You say, Brother Gerard, what needs to happen? God needs to come and take the scales.

It's like the layers of an onion. One after the other, God needs to take them off so that we can just see ourselves. But you know what happened? We have a great statement in the Old Testament.

Moses. Moses. Oh, the man that I love so.

Have you studied the prayer life of Moses? 104 times in the Old Testament, God spoke to Moses. Only half of those times, Moses had the courage of responding to God speaking to him. Twice in his life, 40 days and 40 nights, he was in the presence of God.

And do you remember when Moses came down from the mountain? Do you remember what the Scripture is saying to us? The Bible says, his face, it was saturated, intoxicated with the Shekinah glory of God. That it prevailed in front of his face. So what happened? It was the glory of God.

And the Apostle Paul came in 2 Corinthians 3 verse 18. You know, I've been plowing through that passage for the last week, and I have not been able... You know what he said? He said, but we all with an open face. Open face.

I look at that word this morning in my Greek New Testament, this word, open face. Open face. And I was drawn back to the life of Christ when He stood in the presence of His Father.

And He was the only one that was ever able to say, Father, I thank You that You always listen to me. But Paul said, we all with an open face. And then he used the word, we behold, we behold the glory of God.

And then he used another word, it's a marvelous word in the New Testament. He said, and we are changed from one degree of glory into the other. And I ask you a question tonight, brother and sister.

Have you lost the vision of Christ? The beauty of what the life of Christ is all about? You see, He's not going to leave me there, and the degradation of my consciousness, and my need of cleansing. But He's going to take me up, and He gives me the vision of Himself. And the beauty of biblical interpretation is this understanding that He's putting the sentence of death upon the self-life.

That as I find myself there, here the reality of the resurrected life of Christ is coming. Do you know what He said? That He said, for now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit. For what the law could not do in that, it was dead through the flesh.

God sent His Son. What did He do? He sent His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemn sin in the flesh, so that the righteousness of the law might be. And then He made this great statement.

He said, for the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set us free from the law of sin and death. You say, what is it, the truth of the Word? You see, brother and sister, life never becomes static. Life is an ongoing process.

And life presupposes, growth presupposes life. You say, brother Gerard, what does it mean? It means that I need life before I can grow. Can I ask you this Friday night, do you have life? We sometimes sing that great old thing, life, abundant life in Jesus.

The communication of the truth of the Word. We spoke a few minutes ago about consecration. Surrender to God.

My reasonable service. The mercies of God. That which God in His Word is saying to us about surrender.

My brother and my sister, may I say something this Friday night? It's not what happened 10 or 15 or 20 years ago. No, that's not the issue. It's what God has been doing this week in my heart.

Consecration. Cleansing. The fullness of the Spirit of God.

Oh, I was there today in my own inadequate life, in my niece, in the room there at brother Denny and sister Jackie's house. Staying in the same room where I stayed 6 or 7 years ago. And then took those long walks and those country roads up and down.

And just seeking the face of God. And thinking of this beauty, of this reality, of this communication of the truth of the Word of God. You see, I can't grow spiritually without the Word of God.

That's the communication of the Word of God. Listening through the New Testament today, my little walkman as I'm walking now, and just realize, this is the Word. That's why the Apostle Peter said, he said, you are not redeemed of corruptible things as silver and gold from your vain conversation.

He said, but you have been redeemed with the precious blood of Christ as a lamb without blemish and without spot. He said, been born again not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible howl through the Word of God which liveth and abideth forever. The Apostle Paul said, Christ loved a church.

And then what is he saying to us? He loved a church so, and he gave himself for it. Why did he do that? So that he might sanctify it through the washing of the Word. Our sanctification, brother and sister.

It was the reason for the sufferings of Christ. Because Hebrews chapter 13 is saying to us, he suffered, that's why he suffered, without the gate, so that he can sanctify his people. And so I wonder tonight if the communication of the Word is something which is so precious in your heart and in your relationship with God.

The Spirit-filled life. May I say to you something tonight, brother and sister, and you know I find this so precious and so wonderful. Do you know this evening, my brother and my sister, just as absolutely confident as you can sit here this Friday night and you say, brother Gerard, I know that I've been born of the Spirit of God.

I know that God has come into my life. I know you say, how do I know that I've been born of the Spirit of God? I know that I've been born of the Spirit of God. Because of the witness of the Spirit of God.

Can I share with you something tonight? To that same degree, to that same degree, is it possible this Friday night, that you know, that you can know, that you can know, that you can know, that you can know in your heart that you're living a Spirit-filled life. You say, how do I know it? The witness of the Spirit. I sat down with someone not too long ago, and as we were talking, he said to me, can you explain to me the Spirit-filled life? And I turned to him, I said, well, you know, we need about two or three hours.

And he said, well, if you have time to explain to me how to live a Spirit-filled life, how I can know in my heart that I'm filled with the Spirit. He said, what will you do with me? I said, well, this is what we will do. We will take the Scriptures.

We will find out what the Bible is saying about sin and the life of the believer. And he said, so what will that mean, Brother Gerard? I said, well, we will go to the acts of sin, and we will go to the state of sin. And we will see what the Bible is saying to us about the guilt of sin.

And what the Bible is saying to us about the pollution of sin. And he said, oh, that's wonderful. I said, now, we will come to the place where we separate the Scriptures to the degree that we say all these passages are dealing about sin and the life of the unbeliever.

And he said, well, that's interesting. I said, now, we're going to go to the New Testament, and we're going to go systematically through the New Testament, and this is what we will do. We will find out what the New Testament is saying to us about sin and the life of the believer.

And he said, oh, and I said, once we find out what that's about, we're going to find out to what degree God is able to cleanse us from sin. And oh, brother and sister, you know what's a wonder tonight? You sit here tonight, and maybe some of us, we come out of terrible things that we've done in the past. I want to

encourage you this evening.

You see, God is not just able to forgive me and to cleanse me from the guilt of sin. All those brutal things that has happened. And there are times that the enemy will come to you, and do you know what he will do? He will have almost this big bucket, this garbage bin, and he will come and he will dump it in front of you.

And he will look at you and he will say, this is all yours. But then the Scriptures come, and do you know what God said? As far as the east is from the west, I've removed thy transgressions from me. Micah is saying to us in the prophecy of mine, he said, God said, I will put thy iniquities in the depth of the sea.

Do you know what they say to us? The sea at its deepest place is seven miles deep. And do you know what happened? You need to quote that verse, and then you need to put a little sign on the beach, and you would say, no fishing. It's gone.

But ah, you sit here this Friday night, and there is indwelling sin. There are some things that has happened in the past, and you say, oh brother Gerard, listen, God has forgiven me from the guilt of sin. My sins has been forgiven.

And now I'm walking with God. And he said every now and again, this thing comes, the temptations are coming. And you see my brother and my sister, what is temptation? It's an amazing word in the New Testament.

It's the Greek word paraso. And the Bible is speaking about the definition of temptation. The Bible is speaking about the process of temptation.

The Bible is speaking about victory over temptation. And you say, what is the definition? Oh, what is it? You see, you can't be tempted with something that you are not conscious of. So God, it comes to the mind.

Now you sit here tonight as a husband, or maybe as a father, and there in your past there has been some sexual impurities. And there are some things that has happened. And as those things has happened, and the places where we sin, where you sin so grievously before God, and you say, now brother Gerard, I've come to Christ.

But there are times when these things are trying to come back. And you say, how does it work? It comes to the mind. And when it comes to the mind, from the mind it goes to the heart and the emotions.

And from the heart and the emotions it comes to the will. When does temptation become sin? When I surrender my will. You say, I know I'm a Christian.

I know that I'm saved. And yet I sit with these terrible, evil thoughts. And you know what? God has promised cleansing.

You say, can you theologically explain this to me? I would love to. You say, how would you do it? You know what? When God created Adam and Eve, and I want you to listen carefully. When God created Adam and Eve, how did He create them? He created them after His image and His likeness.

They must have been the most beautiful people that ever lived on this planet Earth. He created them. How did He create them? He gave unto them a perfect human nature.

If I would have had a big brush of paint this evening, I would have been able to draw a line and say, God gave them a perfect human nature. They were honest. They were sinless.

But you remember what happened in Genesis chapter 3? There was a moment when Eve took the fruit. Now you say, Brother Gerard, can you explain something to me? Why is it that Romans chapter 5 is saying to us, Therefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passeth on all men. For all have sinned.

Why isn't the Apostle Paul speaking about Eve? I tell you why. Because you see, when she took up the fruit, and she died spiritually, Adam was standing right next to her. He watched her.

He saw what happened. And he took a deliberate decision of the world. And he said, I am not going to let her die on her own.

Therefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passeth on all men. For all have sinned. And the moment when they sinned, you know what happened to the human race? Every single one of us tonight, we sat with a crooked human nature.

Every one of us. And some of us, we have been pretty messed up by sin. Now you know what happened? We come to Christ, and God saved us.

And you say, oh Brother Gerard, that's wonderful. And you know what happened? Sometimes after we come to Christ, we say, some of these things try to come back. And they try to come back.

And they try to come back. That's why the Bible is speaking about a spirit-filled life. That's why God is saying unto us, He is giving us a command.

He said, be not drunk of wine that is in excess. He said, but be, be full to the Spirit. That's why in Acts chapter 2, my brother and sister, you will go to the Gospels and those early disciples, oh they were followers of Christ.

Jesus prayed in John chapter 17, and He said, Father, I thank You that You have given them to Me out of this world. They came back rejoicing. And look, chapter 11 and in Matthew chapter 10, and they were followers of Christ.

They were disciples. And they came back and they were rejoicing because He sent them out. And there was a marvelous thing that happened.

And Jesus stopped them and He said, don't rejoice about that. Rejoice that your names were written in the Book of Life. But you know what? They weren't full to the Spirit of God.

Do you remember at the end of Luke's Gospel, the Lord Jesus Christ turned to them? And this is what He said to them. He said, I want you to tarry in Jerusalem until you have received the promise of My Father. What was He speaking about? He was speaking about the Holy Ghost.

John chapter 14 to 16. He spoke about the Holy Spirit as a person. He said, when My Spirit comes, My Spirit will be with you and My Spirit will be in you.

He said, when My Spirit comes, My Spirit will become your teacher. He said, when My Spirit comes, My Spirit will testify of Me. He said, when My Spirit comes, My Spirit will convict the world of sin and of

righteousness and of judgment.

But He said to them, wait. Do you remember what happened? Forty days, fifty days. And on the day of Pentecost, do you remember what the Scripture says? When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

All that word, one accord, is a marvellous word in the classical Greek. He said, Brother Gerard, what is the picture that the classical Greek is giving unto us? Do you know what it is? It's marvellous. It speaks of a symphony, a symphony orchestra.

And the conductor is standing there, and the curtains are closed, and now they are tuning their instruments. And there is a moment when the curtains open and the conductor and the presence of the audience bow, and then he turned around and he stopped, and they all fall in unison. I want to ask you a question tonight.

Your relationship with God, are you in unison with God? You see, it will cost us more to miss the will of God for our lives than it will cost us to find it. I wonder tonight if I can ask you, that's why we give out this little pamphlet and these passages, and I trust before God that you will go through them systematically on your knees. You say, why do you say that? Because of my heart, deep down in the adequacy of my soul and spirit, I have a conviction that in the days to come there is going to be a moment when God is going to come and visit our fellowship.

Our fellowship brothers and sisters, and God is saying unto us, prepare to meet thy God. So the Bible says they were all of one accord. We have a policy at our campground and our conference ground out there in British Columbia, where we are, because you know, so often we are guilty of slandering.

You say, brother Gerard, what is slandering? It's when I say something behind someone's back and I can't say it in his face. And so often we are guilty of flattering. You say, what is flattering? It's when I say something in someone's face and I can't say it behind his back.

Now listen, you are what you are under pressure. It's not our actions, it's our reactions. And what's inside come out.

And we have a policy. You say, what is the policy amongst our staff? I say to our staff, listen, if you've got a problem with anyone on staff, another brother or another sister, I say, the moment when you go to another staff member and you begin to criticize, or you begin to gossip, or you begin to say things, I say, if I find out about that, there's going to be a problem. So they say, what do you want us to do? I say, the Bible says, if I see my brother doing a sin, which is not unto death, I need to pray.

So you say, brother Gerard, what happens? If I see something in the life of my brother, I need to climb underneath the burden of his life and I pray. And I pray it through. But you know how I pray it through? God begins to break my heart for this brother.

And there is a day when my heart is so broken that I go and come alongside him. And I say, brother, do you think you and I can pray together? And we begin to pray together. And then he would turn to me and say, you know, is there something you want to talk to me about? And I open my heart.

I think that's what John means. And that's what I say to our staff. So that kept the unity amongst us.

And I really, I don't know the fellowship. I don't know the fellowship that meets here or the fellowship that meets at charity or the other places. But I want to ask you a question tonight.

Are you living in a life of purity in your relationships with your fellow brothers and sisters? You know what happened to me one night? I came back. I was in our home. We are a very private little family because I'm so much away.

And we had dinner together and we had family worship as a little family together. And then we were just sitting in our living room, my wife and myself. And a little one was going on their way, going to bed.

And I began to talk about someone on staff. And I turned to my wife, Janice, and I said, you know, my darling, I said, you know, Jim, today he was doing this and he was doing this. And I said, I just don't know why he was doing this and that.

And so I got talking. Do you know what happened? I crossed the line. You say, which line? The line that went from a constructive assessment to that which became destructive.

And I crossed that line. Do you know the awful thing that night? I didn't even realize what I was doing. I went to bed that night and the next morning early I got up to have my quiet time.

And there in my little spot where I meet with God, and we were still in our old house, the downstairs, and I was there on my knees. And, you know, I got into the Scriptures and I began, I love to write out the Bible. And I write it out in 4 by 6 cards, verses, because I'm trying to memorize the New Testament by the age that I'm 75.

And He said, how are you doing? I said, I'm not doing well, but I'm at it and trying it. And I was just trying to let the Word of God... But, you know, that morning I opened the Bible and I was on my knees and began to spend time with God. And everything was closed.

I couldn't hear the voice of God. It wasn't speaking to me anymore. Something wasn't right.

And I began to search my heart. And for about 45 minutes I was searching. I said, God, something is wrong.

You're not here this morning. It's great when you get up in the morning and this is longing. And you come in here and you can't wait because it's sweeter than honey.

It's sweeter than a honeycomb. It's precious. And that morning it was dead.

And after about an hour of soul searching, God whispered into my heart and said, Listen, you know what happened? It's that statement that you said last night. And I just broke and wept and wept and wept and wept. Because I don't want to live a Christian life where I try to rededicate it.

God thinks that it's never been dedicated. And when I got through to God, it was about half an hour, 45 minutes, and I knew heaven was open. And I got up and I went up to our upstairs.

And by that time my precious wife was up and she was having her quiet time. And I just came and she was in the living room. And I just came and I knelt right next to her.

And I look at her and I said, Mommy, I need to talk to you. And she just looked at me and she said, What is it, Daddy? I said, Mama, it's this statement I made last night about Jim. And do you know what happened? She just broke down and wept and wept and wept.

And so when I asked her to forgive me, she said, Ah, Daddy, I've been struggling for the last 45 minutes to an hour to get through to God. She said, Daddy, I can't get through to God because of the statement that you made about Jim. Can I ask you a question tonight? Is there a oneness? Can I ask you tonight, you sit here as a husband, as a father, as a brother, you're part of one of the fellowships, is there a spirit of criticism? Listen, dear people, it's not what you come to receive on Sunday morning.

That's not the issue. It's what you bring into the service. That's the issue.

So what did the Bible say? When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all of one accord and one place. And do you know what happened? The Scripture says, And suddenly there was a sound from heaven like as a rushing mighty wind. Do you know what the Bible is saying to us? And they were all full to the Holy Ghost.

And what did they do? The Bible said they spoke in 16 known different languages. You say, Why do you say that, Brother Gerard? It's the Greek word, it's the word *dialectos*. You say, Why did they spoke in those languages? You know why? Because they say there could have been about a million people in and around Jerusalem who came from different parts of the world to worship.

They didn't preach the Gospel. They were speaking about the great and glorious things of God. They never did that ever again.

That was the manifestation. But you know what happened? There was a work of cleansing that took place. I'm going to close, but I want to ask you a question tonight.

You see, the dynamics of Christian growth is the communication of the truth of the Word. It's the Word of God. It's the fertilization of the seed of the Word.

You say, What happened, Brother Gerard? When the Word of God is sown in my life, the Spirit of God comes. And what does the Spirit of God do? The Spirit of God fertilized the seed of the Word in my life. And brother and sister, do you know what's the consequences? The communication of the truth of the Word, the fertilization of the seed of the Word, and here comes the reality, the manifestation of the life of the Word.

Communication, fertilization, and it manifests itself in my life as a Christian. My time is gone and I want to close. And I can't remember if I ever shared this in the past, but God has been bringing this afresh and afresh to my heart today.

It's about a man. You say, What was his name? He became my spiritual father in Africa. His name was J.B.B. Friend.

I was saved at the end of my first year in Bible college, and beginning of my second year in this Bible college where I studied, I needed a mentor. You see, I was the only one saved in my family at that point. The last 30 years, God has saved every one of them, except for one brother, and he's getting so close because he just lost his wife through cancer.

And he phoned me the other day and he said, God is working in my life. But I went to this man who was the vice president of our school, and his name was J.B.B. Friend. And he was a godly man.

He was a man that walked with God. In fact, if you were at this Bible college where I studied, and it wasn't the Bible college where you mess around. If you mess around, they would throw you out.

But if you study at this Bible college, every morning at 3.30, you would see the light go on at J.B.B. Friend's apartment, where Mr. and Mrs. Friend was. And every morning at 3.30, he was on his knees in the early hours of the morning, and he was seeking the face of God. And he would pray for the students.

And every afternoon at 3.30, when we would study as students, you would look out of your window, and you see Mr. Friend's apartment. And he would come, and he was just a small, thin little man. And he would walk four or five miles every afternoon praying for the students.

And he always had gospel tracts with him. And he trusted God to help him to witness to someone every day. And I needed a mentor.

I needed a spiritual father. And I went to Mr. Friend one day after class. He was lecturing on the Acts of the Apostles.

And in two years' time, he got to Acts chapter 4. I didn't matter, because the man was so saturated with God. And I went to him one day, and I said to him, I said, Mr. Friend, I said, I want a mentor. And he looked at me, and he said, what do you mean? I said, Mr. Friend, I said, I want you to become my spiritual father.

And he looked at me, and he said, you know, that's a very hard thing to ask. And I said, sir, I'm aware of that. And he just looked at me, and he said, let me pray about this.

And he began to pray about it. And you know, I thought I will never hear from him again. And I don't know how long was it after that.

A number of days, maybe a few weeks. One morning after class, you needed to know this man. I mean, he was just a man so full of God.

You know, as students, we used to say, if Dr. Friend died, we used to say, there won't be a funeral, because God would just take him. I mean, he walked with God. I mean, we didn't have our theology straight enough, but that's the way we thought of him.

But you know what happened? One day after class, he just pointed to me, and he said, I want to see the toy. And I stood there, and I thought, oh. And after the class, he said to me, I want to see you in my office this afternoon at 2 o'clock.

And this afternoon, the afternoon at 2 o'clock, I went into J.B.B. Friend's office, and I sat down, just this young theological student, and I was just in fear and tremble. And Mr. Friend, he had thick little glasses, and he would look through those glasses, and he'd just look at me, and he said, you ask a very, very strong thing of me. I said, yes, sir, I know.

He said, you ask me to become your spiritual father. I said, yes, sir. He said, I've prayed about this.

I said, I appreciate that, sir. He said, I'm willing to do that. He said, but I need to tell you something.

I said, what is it, sir? He said, it's going to cost you absolutely everything, and I wanted to hear that. You know what happened? Every Friday afternoon at 2 o'clock, I walk into the office of J.B.B. Friend. There were days that I, I mean, this man walked with God.

There were days, he was a walking Bible. There were days that I felt I just want to sit at his feet, and I would just say, sir, just talk to me. And he became my spiritual father.

I finished my studies. J.B.B. Friend, by that time was 70 years old, and it was time for him to retire. And Mr. and Mrs. Friend went to retire in a little cottage in the farm of a Christian farmer in the province of the Transvaal.

He prayed for me every morning. He prayed for me every afternoon. And he would write to me a letter every few weeks and ask me questions, and I would write back.

And one day I was about three or three and a half hours away from this little cottage, and I had this yearning in my heart. I wanted to spend time with my spiritual father. I wanted to spend time with my mentor.

And I got, and I stopped at the phone booth, and when I stopped at the phone booth, I picked the phone up, and I phoned him, and Mrs. Friend came on. And I said, Mrs. Friend, I said, is Brother Gerardi Toy? And she said, Oh, Gerardi, she said, we've been praying for you. How are you doing? And I said, Mrs. Friend, I'm doing fine.

I said, but I've got a longing to see Mr. Friend. And she just said, well, come along. And so I got back into my little Volkswagen, and I was driving, and there was this yearning.

I'm going to spend time with my mentor, my spiritual father. And for about three or three and a half hours, I drove to this little cottage. And you know, I got to the cottage three o'clock in the afternoon, turned the car off, and I got out, knocked at the door, and when the door opened, there was J.B.B. Friend and Mrs. Friend standing there.

And I stood there, and they said, Oh, Brother Gerardi, we're so glad to see you. I mean, I loved them. And they took me, and they just were loving me to death, you know.

And they took me in this little cottage, and I just went, and we were in the living room, and Mrs. Friend sat there, and J.B.B. Friend was sitting there. And I didn't sit in the chair. I just came, and I sat on the floor.

And I said, Mr. Friend, I want you to speak to me. And he just began to pour out his heart. You see, he was praying for me twice a day.

And he was just pouring out his heart. And I was just sitting there like a sponge, just drinking it in. But you remember what I said? Every morning at 3.30, he was praying.

Every afternoon at 3.30, he would go for these long walks to pray. And I got there at 3 o'clock, and I sat at his feet. And he began to pour out his heart.

And the most amazing thing happened. 3.30 came, and I will never forget this. He just looked at his watch like that, and he just said, Now, Gerard, he said, I can't stay any longer.

He said, I need to go now. I drove three and a half hours. He said, I need to go now.

And I remember it was time for him to pray. And he said, You're going to stay for dinner tonight. We've got an extra little room.

I want you to stay because I want to pray with you. He said, Well, I need to go now. And he just got up, and he just began to walk out of his little house.

And I look out of the window, and there he was, walking those little farm trails. And he was praying, seeking the face of God, climbing underneath the burden of God. And do you know what happened? I still sat at the carpet.

Mrs. Friend sat there. And she was embarrassed. She didn't know what to say to me.

And I sat there, and I couldn't look up. I mean, I drove all those hours, and he spent 30 minutes with me. And now he took up, and he walked up.

And she didn't know what to say. And she didn't look at me, and I didn't look. We just sat there and stunned.

And I don't know, it could have been 10, maybe 5 or 10 or 15 minutes. I don't know. Time just flew in moments like that.

And after about 10 or whatever minutes, I look up, and Mrs. Friend looked down, and our eyes connected. And I look at her, and she looked at me, and she didn't know how to say this. And she just said to me, Brother Gerard, I guess he hasn't changed, has he? Ah, come on, you laugh.

I wept. I looked at her, and I said, Mrs. Friend, I don't want him to change. He walked with God.

You're going back to your home, my brother. God wants you to walk with Him. It's going to cost you absolutely everything.

I don't want him to change, because he walked with God. Do you want to walk with God? Let's pray. I'm going to ask you to stand.

Father, we've come to the very last night of this leadership week. God has been speaking to us, and God has been dealing with us. Tonight we want to pray that You will put in our hearts an unquenchable passion so that we can become men that want to walk with God, so that our mothers and our wives can walk with God, and our children walk with God.

Brother and sister, we're going to open the altar at the end of this last night, and I'm going to challenge you again tonight. I'm going to ask you to come and spend time with God. And so we open the altar, and you just come and find a spot, and you come and seek the face of God.

Would you like to do that? Just come. Wherever you want to come, find a spot somewhere. Some of us are old Christians.

We've been walking with God for 30 years or 40 years. And we've lost the brokenness of the Spirit of God. And you stand here tonight and you think you've got it together, and God needs to smash you into a thousand pieces.

I'm going to challenge you to come and spend some time with God. You just come. We just wait.

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