

(Easter Convention 2008) Prayer in the Old Testament - Part 1

by Gerhard Du Toit

Gerhard Du Toit's sermon explores the significance of prayer in the Old Testament and its relation to faith and spiritual growth.

Duration: 1:32:31

Scripture: Genesis 18:16, Romans 12:1

Topics: "Prayer"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares a powerful story of a man who was completely broken and wept for nine hours before experiencing a transformation. The speaker then challenges the audience to reflect on their own relationship with God and the transforming power of the Holy Spirit. They emphasize the importance of being changed to the image of Christ, which requires giving up everything and having a deep relationship with God. The sermon concludes with a call to action, encouraging the audience to take time alone with God and reflect on their relationship with Him using a set of questions provided.

Transcript

I was reminded once reading about this old pastor in a church in the United States and he and he was never able to get his people to come and sit in the front of the services they always sat at the back and so one Sunday morning he became so desperate that he took the pulpit and he put it in the back of the church and he asked him all to turn around so they walk out of the service with bended backs and bended necks and probably bended minds also for all you know but we appreciate you.

You know because we are involved in different countries on the subject of prayer I sometimes come across some wonderful little things about prayer and I was reading some time ago about this family that would have family prayers every day and they had a wonderful dad every day when the dad prayed there was something that he would thank God for that happened during that day and so the children were always looking forward when daddy's going to pray tonight um when the family prayers what is he going to thank God for for today and then one day absolutely everything went wrong I mean nothing went right that day from the morning the moment that they woke up right through the day until the evening absolutely everything went wrong and so the children were all excited and they said now when dad

prays tonight what is he going to thank God for today because nothing went right and so that day that night when they prayed the daddy said Lord I thank you that every day is not like today so then I was reading about these two elderly men who were praying they used to pray together and the one the one fellow they would pray all over the world and the one man would pray for different countries and his prayer got so intense and so long that the man that prayed with him fell asleep he just couldn't take it anymore and when he closed his prayer the other fellow that was praying looked at him and he realized that he was asleep so he woke him up and he said when did you fall asleep and he said I think it's when you were in India so there you are we mentioned to you last night and yesterday in

the sessions together that we have some great material that we would like to put into your hands and if you have not taken one of these sheets on accountability they really deal with four weeks that you can take five questions every week and just systematically go within in your quiet times and I would encourage you if you haven't taken one to make sure that you take one and we've got quite a group of other material we put them at the back and we would like you to take to take them if you will we've got sheets of this if you are interested when do you know when you have died to yourself you know the apostle Paul said I'm crucified with Christ and he said nevertheless I live yet not I but Christ liveth in me and he said the life which I now live in the flesh how do I live it I live it by

the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me it's quite significant if you go to the life of Christ and you study the teachings of Christ and look at every word that Jesus said and discover how much Christ said about faith and then lay the foundation for the understanding of faith coming from the teachings of Christ exploring the acts of the apostles as it relates to faith and then go to the apostle Paul in his epistles and explore the understanding of faith the general epistles and of course the book of revelation and you will discover three aspects of faith faith to be saved faith to be sanctified and faith for service and when you explore those three aspects of faith you discover the secret of what the crucified life is all about and so the apostle Paul said the

life which I now live live which life is it is the crucified life how do I live a crucified life I live it by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and who gave himself for me and then in Hebrews chapter 11 we enter into what we would consider as the heroes of faith but when you study the New Testament epistles you'll discover that the majority of the New Testament epistles can be divided up into two sections a doctrinal section and a practical application and that's why we are so emphatic in saying to you that when it comes to the Christian life that you cannot go from your experiences to the exposition of scripture you cannot interpret scripture in the light of your experiences because you will isolate the word of God and as you isolate the word of God you'll interpret God's word in

the light of your experience that's why there are movements today they are so experiential orientated and everything is manifestations and experiences and all these kind of things and brother and sister they last for three or four or five years and then they blow up like a balloon and you pick up these psychological spiritual wrecks all alongside the road of the Christian life and it takes them five or ten years to recover why is it because they've interpreted scripture in the light of experience I mean this is my if I may be allowed to say that this is my criticism of books on holiness I mean I probably have every book on holiness that you would be able to find the last hundred years or longer that has been written and of all my books on holiness that I dearly love and appreciate 70 to

80 percent of them are experiential orientated and the problem is you know Christian maturity is not Christian purity when God cleans us and fill us with the spirit of God it's going to take you a lifetime to

develop Christian maturity and my one of my problems as a young as a young Christian worker in Africa was that I listened to people who would speak on the subject of sanctification and they would preach a message that took them 25 years to get there themselves and I would sit there in the inadequacy of my simplicity listening to this and I said okay if I need to trust God to cleanse me today and fill me with his spirit I need to experience that this man is speaking about tomorrow didn't realize that it took him 25 years to be able to get to that place in his relationship with God and

so what what what are we speaking about you see if God is dealing with us in a drastic way and he cleanses us and we surrender ourselves to God when he fill us with his spirit brother and sister that's not a goal that's a gateway you see a crisis without a process is an absence and so in the Christian life you will discover when you study the new testament and we speak about surrender and if I would be allowed to say this and you say why do you do that you know I've made a commitment to my life and I'm not saying this to impress you but I'm passionate about discovering what the word of God is saying and I've made a commitment in my relationship with God and I've asked my wife to hold me accountable but every 12 months I said Janice I want you to help me I want to go through the new

testament 35 to 40 times for the next 10 years and I said after those 400 times of systematically going through the scripture writing the new testament out about every 12 to 15 months to come to grips with what God's word is saying and so that's what the new testament is about you study the word sin you need to ask yourself what is the the gospel of Matthew saying about sin and what is Mark saying about sin what is Luke saying about sin what is John saying about sin you say how do you study this when you when you look at that you study the gospel of Matthew together with a little epistle of James you say why do you do that because James is the commentary on the sermon on the mount those wonderful 105 108 verses and you put them with the 1071 verses of the gospel of Matthew you study them

together then you take the gospel of Mark and how do you study the gospel of Mark those six uh 678 verses you study the gospel of Mark with first and second Peter so why would you do that because theologically speaking uh the gospel of Mark had the the relative influence of the apostle Peter behind it uh you say to what degree because it relates in the greek new testament with first and second Peter that's why the key word in the gospel of Mark is the word uses in the greek language which is the word immediately that's why it's so difficult to analyze the gospel of Mark because you discover how Peter uh theologians are saying to us dictate it to Mark and that's how the gospel of Mark tries study Mark with first and second Peter and and incidentally I study it also with the first 12

chapters of the book of Acts so why would you do that well you see the first 12 chapters of the book of Acts was dominated by the ministry of the apostle Peter and so that's what you mean you study the gospel of Luke 1151 verses with the acts of the apostles which is a 1007 verses and I study that with the epistle to the Hebrews and you say why would you do that well I'm not going to tell you but that's the way I'm doing it uh because let me just say this if you study the gospel of Luke in the greek new testament you know Luke was a physician and there are about 50 technical medical terms in the gospel of Luke and in the acts of the apostles now when you study the gospel of Luke in the book of Acts in the greek new testament and you study the epistle to the Hebrews you discover that in

the greek language there are deeply underlying corresponding concepts that are coming together that is unique in the style of those three new testament books and so you say who wrote the gospel of Luke I'm not I wrote the epistle to the Hebrews I'm not going to tell you but I give you a piece of my mind that I can't afford to lose so remember when I was a student one of our professors said to us I wanted to find out who

wrote the epistle to the Hebrews and so I had 50 arguments now I discover that it was the apostle Paul and the morning when our professor asked us and said um so uh who wrote the epistle to the Hebrews I was a very zealous student you know and I jumped up and I said I know exactly who wrote the epistle to the Hebrews and so he said who wrote the epistle to the Hebrews and

I said I put the arguments it was the apostle Paul and he just pointed his finger at me and said you were absolutely wrong and so I was kind of hurt in the arrogance of my young student days and I jump up again and I said so who wrote the epistle to the Hebrews and he turned to me and he said it was the Holy Spirit he wasn't he wasn't prepared to make a statement I still believe it's Paul you say did he write it in Greek I don't think so you say how did he do that I think he wrote it in Hebrew but someone translated it for him and in the Acts of the Apostles you'll come across the sections you know Luke was the physician of the apostle Paul and from Acts chapter 16 three times she discovered that he speaks of we we we so he said what happened it's obvious that Luke must have been working

and Luke became I think his personal physician and so when you if you have an interest in the Greek language and if you are interested I can give you the Greek New Testament on audio and so and I can give you the Greek New Testament in English you say what do you mean in English we translated they translated the Greek New Testament from Koine Greek into English so that you look at the Greek words and they are spelled in English which makes it really easy to come to grips with it and I like to do this and when I sit in a plane I sit with my Greek New Testament and I sit with the English translation of the Greek New Testament and I listen to it on on audio and it's just wonderful as you systematically you know there's only 5,250 words in the Greek language and there are about 140 of those

words that if you come to grips with it they are the skeleton of the Greek language you know you're all sitting here this morning like a bunch of family I mean Kevin we could only we can honestly give him a an honorary doctorate for looking after all the sheep in the farm for all you know anyway let me tell you something brother history is so rich and you know when you study the scripture it's so wonderful I mean you know it's just precious you take one word the word blood in the Greek language 99 times we find it and you systematically go to the bible and you study it in its context and you will never go wrong in your interpretation of scripture because you always deal with the context of what scripture is the work in the ministry of the Holy Spirit 261 references in the Greek language

speaking to us about the Holy Spirit the word for sin which means missing the mark in its different context in its structures in its tenses and when you come to grips with you discover the fullness of what the scripture is all about and so that's how you study the Word of God and let it become part of your life and when you pray you know what the Holy Spirit does he brings God's Word into your life and you pray the scriptures back to God and you discover what does it mean to pray in the will of God and systematically exploring that what this is all about so how do you know when you've died yourself when you are forgotten or you're neglected when you are purposely set north and you do not sting and hurt with the insult or oversight but your heart is counted worthy to suffer for Christ

that's when you've died for yourself when your good is evil spoken of when your wishes are crossed your advice are disregarded your opinions are ridiculed and you and you refuse to let any form of anger rise in your heart or even defend yourself and you take it patiently and lovingly with silence that is when you die for yourself when you lovingly and patiently bear any disorder any irregularity any impunctuality or any annoyance when you stand face to face with waste folly extravagance spiritual insensitivity and endure as Christ endured it that's when you've died for yourself when you never care to refer to yourself in

conversation or to record your own good works or each other commendation when you can truly love to be unknown that's when you die for yourself when you are content with

any food any offering any arraignment any climate any society any solitude any interruption by the will of God that's when you've died for yourself when you see your brother prosper and you see how his needs have been met and you can honestly rejoice with him in spirit and feel no sense of envy or never question God while your own needs are far greater and in a desperate circumstances that's when you've died for yourself when you can receive correction and reproof from one of less stature than yourself and you can humbly submit inwardly as well as outwardly to that person or to God finding no rebellion no resentment rising within your heart that's when you have died for yourself so are you dead in these last days the spirit would bring us to the cross that that I may that I may knowing

and being conformable to his death so we want to make sure that we are able to put these materials um into introduction the great missionary to Burma it was one of the greatest men in the mission field and they referred to him as the apostle Paul of Burma and so when Judson came back from Burma to the United States and there were many reports written about the great ministry that God gave him and so when he came back from the United States and the ship that he was on came into Boston Harbor when word came out that Judson was on on the on the ship many Christians many many Christians went because they wanted to meet this man that was so mightily used of God and he didn't know what was happening he was just coming home he was old in life he was coming to spend his last years back in the US

and so when people came of a ship Judson was there in his cabin he was preparing and getting things together and people were waiting and somehow we didn't come and they were looking for this man they were looking for some marvelous spiritual giant that was going to come down from the ship and and so we never came it's just a small little inadequate insignificant man and eventually they thought well maybe he's not on the boat and so they found out and they said no he's in there he's just getting his stuff together and he's staying up and so the reporters and Christian leaders were so anxious to see him they began to board the boat and they said we want to go and meet him and we want to bring him down and and they came down and he was in this cabin and they just filled this cabin and they

were all there and talking to him and said oh you are you are the modern Apostle Paul and you are the great missionary to Burma and he just broke in and wept and wept and wept and he wouldn't even look at them and so when they got under the conviction of sin because of what they were doing he began to pray in their presence you know and he began to pray and he said God I never wanted them to compare me with the Apostle Paul but I always wanted to be like the Lord Jesus you know well I tell you I got the night and that you know so brother and sister you know we really nothing don't you ever think listen you know what breaks my heart about the Christian life and I'm so glad you know there's not a ton of people here these days because it's wonderful we can look one another in the eyes but

you know what breaks my heart about the Christian life God don't need any one of us you know you don't need any one of us you need only something God can do his work far better without us you know far better without us so he said why do you think you're doing that the angels would love to do what he's given us to do but God wouldn't give him permission and so we are precious to God and he wants to use us and our lives are important to him don't you ever sit there in the chair and think you know I'm just a little nothing you are not a little you're very very important to God but don't ever come to the place where you think you are indispensable I always smile at the life of Elijah you know there at Mount Carmel after three and a half years of preparation and the fire of God fell upon the

altar and when the fire of God fell upon the altar and devoured it and God manifested himself as the God of Israel it's just Elijah thought you know this is it and it wasn't it and he had to search for his life hour after hour after hour and then you know how God took him and took him to this place all on his own and then the voice came and said what are you doing here Elijah and he said I'm the only one left I'm the only one left you know and you know I wish I can translate to you the Hebrew understanding of a statement because you know what God said to him so what so what you know what God said to him you're not the only one left there are many of them who's never bowed the knee to to bail and Elijah my work will just continue the way that it has even if you're not there you

know so don't you ever think that you are that you are indispensable you know I'm amazed that God can use donkeys in scripture I tell you God can use donkeys in scripture and by the way you know when Balaam talked to the donkey the most incredible revelation uh when the donkey spoke back to him I mean he was the donkey because he understood what the donkey was saying to him it was amazing you know but just be you very careful you know we precious to God you're not indispensable you say so so how does God use us you know what God used broken people I've often said to my dear and my precious wife I said to her my darling the day when I lose the brokenness of the spirit of God in my life will you have a courage to nail me in a corner and say to me don't you ever go near ministry again God

used broken people and if you don't serve God with a broken heart you're not going to get far you're going to get so hurt you're going to get so offended you're going to get so upset you're going to become so bitter that no one would be able to get near you you say what are you talking about you need to learn to kiss the hand that is holding the knife and if you learn to kiss the hand that is holding the knife you will never be able to look at people you will always be able to look at people with the grace of God and you will always be able to see yourself without the grace of God and if you see yourself without the grace of God and you see people with the grace of God brother and sister you never will be able to criticize people never never be able to criticize people because why you see

them with a heart that has become broken I wonder this morning you know I tell I'm so it's such a blessing to be in Australia because I know there's a burden of God for this country and it's amazing when I came into Sydney the other day it was just like being here nine years ago because you know we've been praying we've got around more than 500 people in different countries of the world who are praying for every one of these meetings they don't know your faces they don't know your names but I feel these people are praying for you every day and what a blessing to be in this country to sense the burden of God and to ask God to come and visit us with revival so let's spend some time and pray together and then we're going to turn to the scriptures if you are new with us this morning we've

been praying together at every one of these sessions and so this is what we are going to do I want you to meet in groups of five and just get into a little circle if there's something that you really want us to pray about we want you to share it and so what I want you to do is to look at the person and say how can I pray for you it's a family member if it's an issue at your church or whatever it is we want to pray with you about it you know the longest the George Muller of Bristol prayed for someone for 63 years you say when did he become a Christian three weeks after George Muller died the great Andrew Murray prayed around 400 of his descendants into the ministry but you know what happened to Andrew Murray every one of his children found Christ went into the ministry except one he was

the youngest boy he was a rebel all his life never came to Christ Andrew and Emma Murray prayed for him God gave him promises they sought the face of God stood upon the promises of but he never gave his life

to Christ the war broke out in South Africa and when the war broke out this young man in his 30s went to the war didn't know Christ Murray and Andrew and Emma Murray prayed for him and prayed for him went to the war totally lost and you know what happened during the war he was killed and when he was killed Andrew and Emma Murray said we don't understand this that we can't question the promises of God that he has given unto us that our son would come to Christ and that will be born of the Spirit of God and they got the message that his son was killed in the war and for six months they

went through awful darkness they never knew what happened to him they didn't know if he came to Christ all they had was the promises of God no word about this youngest son of the Murray's and you know what happened six months later a knock was at the door of the fast knees in South Africa and Andrew Murray opened the door and a man stood in front of him and he said to him are you Dr.

Andrew Murray and he said yes and he said I need to talk to you and Andrew Murray said about what he said I need to talk to you about your son he said what do you mean he said your son that went to the war and Andrew Murray said come in and they sat down and Emma Murray came in and he said to him what is it about our son and the man turned to him and he said I was in the trenches right next to him when he was shot and he said he was wounded and he said he fell into my arms and he said for the last five minutes of his life I held him in my arms and he said sir I need to tell you I led him to Christ in the last five minutes of his life because I'm a born-again Christian and because say don't you ever give up you know don't you ever give up you know sometimes you know what we need to do we

need to confess and say God I've given up but you've never given up on people you've got family members this morning and they are lost don't you give up you've got children and they are lost don't you give up so why are you saying that the tide goes out and brother and sister the tide turns and comes back and people need to get bottom hit bottom before they turn and things need to get worse before they're going to get better and say so what is it don't you ever give up when it comes to prayer so let's pray break together in our little groups and if you've got a family member that you want us to pray for it'd be a great time for us to do it find four or five people and just break up in little groups and that's what we're going to do okay this is a great time for us to pray for our families

and so why don't you just share about your family or some of your friends and then we pray together oh heavenly father as we as we have bowed this morning and the greatness of your presence has it been a tremendous encouragement for us to know that in thy presence there is fullness of joy and at thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore we thank you that your word has stood unto us that they that wait upon the lord shall renew their strength they shall mount up with wings as eagles they shall run and not be weary and they shall walk and they shall not faint and father we confess this saturday morning that there is nothing that is so valuable to us and there is nothing that is so refreshing to us to be to be able to linger in the presence of god and just to become conscious of the

encouraging blessing of recognizing that the lord is in the people father i was reminded again of solomon in the old testament when when at the dedication of the temple and how your word has said to us that when he came to the place and and he prayed and he said if my people which are called by my name shall humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways then will i hear from heaven and i will forgive their sin and i will heal their land and we are so grateful this saturday morning that we are thy people that we have been called by thy name and father god we want to humble ourselves before you your word said that you you dwell with those who are of the humble and the broken heart and the broken spirit and you said unto us humble yourselves under the mighty

hand of god and father we confess today that and the best of our understanding and our comprehension uh and our perception of what humbling ourselves before god really means is it still so inadequate in that which god really wants us to do lord we thank you that oswald chamber said that we need to learn the secret that to humble ourselves before god it's not just a discipline but it needs to transform itself into a disposition and the lifestyle of an awareness of our inadequacy in the presence of god and father we confess today that we've never learned the art that when you said to us um forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors how we come to the understanding of how far we come short of the glory of god and lord we are not speaking about unconfessed sin but we are coming to grips

with the depravity of sin and the fact that we are missing the mark and that we come so far short of the glory of god and as we humble ourselves before you that the spirit of god is able to come and show us the unbelievable depth of our need uh in the presence of god and father learned teach us the secret of what it means to sit in the dust before you not in a sense of depression and not in a sense of introspection not in a sense of being disillusioned and not in a sense of discouragement but in the consciousness that if you withdraw your presence from us for one split second that we will simply disintegrate it in the greatness of the majesty and the centrality and the supremacy of the life of the lord jesus and god we pray that he will teach us these marvelous secrets lord i i've been so

blessed in recent months by this little book by andrew murray on humility and how we astound the humility in the life of christ and how the son of god learned obedience by the things that he suffered and how he said unto us the son can do nothing unless he see the father doing it and how in his submissiveness to his father he said unto us my father work hitherto and so do i and god we confess this sacrament we don't know a thing because of the awfulness of sin and its impact upon our lives and what it has done to us that we do not know a thing about what it means to fast and pray and to come to grips with the hebrew understanding of sitting in the very ashes and the dust before god but i pray that you will teach us afresh this weekend that one of the greatest attributes and one of the

most marvelous aspects of the sanctified life and one of the most beautiful consequences and characteristics are the fullness of the life in christ in us as when you bring us to the place where we will be able to sing with a hymn writer of old when he said nothing in my hands i bring but simply to the cross i cling teach us humility dear god so that out of our purity and the cleansing efficacy of the blood will flow the vision of a christ who submit himself who became conformed to the image of man and who gave himself to us and when you said unto us that we are in his love not that we let god but that he let us and that he gave himself for us and father that we would recognize that the understanding of our surrender to god leads us to the comprehension of our depth of need and humility

and brokenness and transparency and vulnerability and a total abandonment and being sold out to every aspect of what the life of christ is all about god we confess that it's not these times that we are spending with you but father it's these times that you are spending with us and help us never to lose the vision of the possibility that god has promised to us household salvation help us this morning never to lose the vision of the christ that is sitting at the right hand of the throne of god and he's ever interceding for us help us never to lose the understanding that we are not on our own but that you have said unto us my little children these things i write unto you that you say not that if any man's sin we have an advocate to the father jesus christ the righteousness and he is the

propitiation for our sins and not just for our sins but for the sins of the whole world help us never to lose sight of the fact that you say to us that we do not have an high priest that cannot be touched with the

feeling of our infirmities but one who is touching all points just like us we are and yet without sin and help us never to lose sight of the fact that you said unto us let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace and mercy so that we might be able to receive mercy and grace in the time of need and i'm so glad father that the greek new testament is really saying to us that god will step in in the nick of time just when we need it and you have said unto us that no temptation has taken you but such as is common to man but god is faithful that he that he will with a

temptation make a way of escape and he will not allow us to be able to be tempted about that which we are able to handle but that he will whip the temptation that he will make a way of escape god i'm so grateful today that that our understanding of the temptation has been so warped and so understand and misunderstood till the age has gone by and how that word for us so is speaking to us about emotional suffering mental suffering the agony of our weaknesses as it relates to prayer the reality of facing the sin of this world and the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life and that in those five different meanings that god will not allow us to go above that which we will be able to handle but god that he will give us a way of escape and i'm so grateful this saturday

morning that the will of god will never leads us where the grace and the peace of god is not able to keep and sustain us in the christian life and that you have said unto us that i will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed upon me and you have said unto us that you shall hear a voice behind you saying this is the way walking in it if he turned to the left or if he turned to the right and god we are so grateful that we have a passion in our hearts to simply walk in humility with the one that has given his life to us and god the burden of my heart in these days has been that you would come and that you will pour out upon us an unbelievable and an immense spirit of prayer we know all this stuff in the scriptures we know it we know it from cover to cover yet we've never experienced

the reality of it and that you will help us in the practical way to come to the realization that you said to us i will not give you the land at once but i will give you the land portion by portion and that you will help us in step to be in step walking with god and that we will become people intoxicated and saturated and immersed in the greatness of the baptism of brokenness that father will change us for time and for eternity and i'm so grateful i've never come or even considered to come to australia because i've nothing else to do these days lord we could have been in 30 other countries if we wanted to but we have come these days because we really want to go deeper with god and i don't care if it's five or ten or fifteen or twenty or a thousand or fifteen thousand people god numbers

doesn't mean a thing but what you are concerned about is that we will take one step at a time and that we will go so deep in the purity of god and in the understanding of the spirit of prayer that our lives will be changed for time and for eternity oh we thank you for the spirit of prayer we thank you for the freedom that i felt earlier this morning that i would have loved to take that little trailer and park it somewhere out here in a remote area of australia and spend 40 days and 40 nights and a little trailer like that and just seeking god and fasting and prayer and praying for this country and praying for these people and seeking your face and we confess this morning that if we can't go through to god how in the world will we ever be able to get through to the lives of people and so

you need to come to us in these days that we will be together in jesus name we pray amen so um find your chair again if you will and i want you to open your bible uh two passages in the old testament genesis chapter 18 and then one samuel chapter 1 genesis chapter 18 and then one samuel chapter 1 there are 18 classic prayers in the old testament uh that you will discover and i just want us to look at two of them as

we explore the subject this morning and tonight genesis chapter 18 and then one samuel chapter 1 it's time for the reading of god's words we've been sitting for quite some time hmm genesis chapter 18 verse number 16 and the men rose up from thence and they looked towards sodom and abram went with them and bring them on their way and the lord said shall i hide from abram that

thing which i do seeing that abram shall surely become a great and a mighty nation and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him for i know him that will command his children and his household after him and they shall keep the way of the lord to do justice and to do judgment that the lord may bring upon abram that which he has spoken of him and the lord said because the cry of the city uh the cry of sodom and gomorrah is great and because their sin is so grievous i will go down now and see whether they would have done altogether according to the cry of it which is come unto me and if not i i will know and the men turned their faces from thence and went towards sodom but abram stood yet before the lord and abram drew near and said what i also destroy the righteous with the

wicked for adventure there will be 50 righteous within the city where they also destroy and not spare the place for the 50 righteous that are therein that be it far from thee to do after this manner to slay the righteous with the wicked and that the righteous should be asked the wicked that be it far from thee shall not the judge of all the earth do right but the lord god said to abram if i find in sodom 50 righteous within the city then i will spare all the place for their sake and abram answered and said behold now i i have taken upon me to speak unto the lord which i am but dust and ashes but eventually they shall lack of that they shall lack five for that 50 righteous will thou destroy all the city for the lack of the five and he said if i find 40 and five i will not destroy it and he

spoke unto him yet again and said for adventure they shall be 40 found there and he said i will not do it for 40 sake and he said unto them oh let the lord not be angry and i will speak for adventure they shall 30 be found there and he said i will not do it if i find 30 there and he said behold now i have taken upon me to speak unto the lord but eventually there shall be 20 found there and he said i will not destroy it for 20 sake and he said oh let not the lord be angry and and i will speak yet this once for adventure there shall be 10 found there and he said i will not destroy it for the sake of the 10 and the lord god went his way as soon as he had left communion with abram and abram returned unto his place and then if you just turn over to 1 samuel chapter 1 and just for the sake of

our time let's uh read from uh verse number nine one samuel chapter one verse number nine and so hannah rose up after that eaten and shallow and after a drink now eli the priest sat upon a seat by the post of the temple of the lord and she was in bitterness of soul and she she prayed unto the lord and she wept sore and she bowed around and she said oh lord at host if i will indeed look upon the infliction of my handmaid and and remember me and not forget on handmaid but will give unto thy handmate a man child then i will give him unto the lord all the days of his life and they shall not raise her come upon his head and he came to pass that as she continued praying before the lord that eli marked her mouth now hannah she spoke in her heart and only her lips was moving but her voice was not

heard therefore and eli thought that she had been drunken and eli said unto her how long will thou be drunken put away thy wine from thee and then answered and said no my lord i i'm a woman of a sorrowful spirit i have drunk neither wine nor strong drink but i have put out my soul before the lord do not count thy handmaid for a daughter of bilio for after the abundance of my complaint and grief have i spoken hitherto then eli answered and said go in peace and the god of israel granted thy petition that and that that i was asking and she said let thy handmate find grace in thy sight so the woman went away and did eat and her

countenance was no more sad and they rose up in the morning early and and worshiped before the lord and returned and came to their house to ramah and elkanah knew his

new hannah his wife and the lord remembered her therefore it came to pass that when the time was come about after hannah conceded she bear a son and she called his name samuel saying because i've asked him of the lord and the man elkanah and all his house went up to offer unto the lord the yearly sacrifice in his vow but hannah did not go up for she said unto her husband i will not go up until the child be weaned and then i will bring him that he may appear before the lord and there abide forever and elkanah said to her and elkanah her husband said unto her do a sinister good tally until thou is weaning and the lord established his word so the women abode and gave a son sat until she weaned him and when and when she had weaned him she took him up with her with three bullets and one ephah

flower in the butter of wine brought him into the house of the lord in shaloh when the child was young as she slew a bullock and brought the child unto elai and she said oh my lord as thy soul leather my lord i'm the woman that stood by thee praying unto the lord for this child i prayed and the lord hath given me my petition which i asked of him therefore i have also lent him unto the lord as long as he left he shall be lent unto the lord the lord and he worshiped in there you may be seated you know the medical profession is giving unto us a wonderful example and an illustration and they are saying unto us that when a child is born in a house that during the first six months of the life of his child is it possible for us to say that this baby would found itself being exposed to many many

thousands of different noises and sounds that is taking place in the average household and they would say that during the first six months of the life of a child is it possible to say that for approximately 16 or sometimes 18 hours of the day will that baby be able to be exposed to all the voices that is taking place in the average household the noises of animals music and radio and the news and and that first six months of the life of that child is there that that process that is taking in that place in the life of the baby and then they are saying to us that after that period of six months that child will be able to respond to those different voices but the first two words that will come from the lips of that baby will be the words mommy and daddy why is that taking place because the

mother and the father are the two that will spend the most time with that little life and so what is taking place is that a process has taken place in the life of this child and this process that has taken place has brought this child to the place where he will be able to begin to respond and utter the names of the mother and the father as you see my brother and sister if a baby is born in the house and and you and i would be able to say that during the first six months of the life of the child is not going to be any sound that is taking place and we would anticipate that after that period of time that way baby will be able to say mommy or daddy if there has been no sound in that house it's just not going to happen but there is a process that is taking place in the life of that child and

the medical profession has given that process a definition and they refer to that as the process of saturation that child has been saturated and those voices and those noises and the combination of all of that which has taken place has brought that baby to the place where he is able to utter those first two words that would come from his lips why do i use this scenario with you this morning you see when we are speaking about prayer and when we come to the place where you and i as a christian wants to learn the language of prayer my brother and my sister the only way that that is going to take place is when god would bring us to the place where that which he's saying to us is word about prayer when that becomes part of my relationship with god and when that becomes part of my relationship

with god that brings me to the place in my work with god when i pray when i don't feel like it that brings me to the place of a relationship with god where prayer becomes almost like breathing and when the apostle Paul comes to us in the new testament and he said unto us pray without ceasing is he not saying to us that he developed or cultivate a life of prayer where he spent 24 hours a day praying to god but where he has developed a lifestyle where upon his relationship with god is there a spirit of prayer people often ask me and say how do you know when there is a spirit of prayer resting upon your life and i would say to them one of the ways that i know that is when anyone come anyone can ask me any time of the day or the night to pray with him and i will not feel uncomfortable and so

you see when we begin to study the scriptures in fact if you if i may be honest here this morning and i won't be anything else but to me brother and sister prayer is like breathing you know the reason why you and i are breathing this morning is because of the fact that there is pressure that is upon our lungs and that pressure that is upon our lungs because of the atmosphere in which we are you and i do not have an option but to breathe but i mean you didn't come in here this uh little gathering this morning and turned to me and said you know gerard i've had such a difficult time breathing today didn't do that because it's it's just natural you know our daughter monica and myself when she was younger if you ever come to western canada we are uh and what we would call the switzerland of

the country of canada is a large marvelous country if you want to drive from the east to the west you need about five six seven days of driving between seven and ten hours every day so we are living on the west coast of canada and because of that we don't get all the snow that they get in the province uh the other provinces in canada uh down at the coast where we are with tons of rain but then if you go into the interior of british columbia we are dealing with the rocky mountains and when you go through the rocky mountains there are brutal avalanches every year i mean people are getting killed uh uh with these avalanches on a consistent basis and as a result of that we have tunnels uh through the mountains sometimes and man-made tunnels that we have made so that when these avalanches come

down that it doesn't destroy the vehicles and the people but it comes over these man-made tunnels and it goes down into the valleys and if you drive up to the city of calgary you go through numerous of these tunnels you know when monica was younger she and myself we had this game that we used to play when we go through the tunnels and i would we would come to the tunnel and i would turn take my watch off and i said to it's time for us to play our little game and so my wife would sit next to me i would be driving and the game that we played was we were trying to find out who was able to hold this breath the longest and so we would come to the entrance of this tunnel and i would slow down as much as i possibly can and i would look at my watch and i would say monica it's time to start and

she would be at the back seat and i would look at her in the mirror and the moment when we come to the tunnel we would take all the air that we can in our lungs and we close our noses like this and i would slow down as much as i can and so then we would be able to see who's able to hold our breath the longest now because of the fact that i was doing the doing the driving i was looking in the mirror to see a who come from behind i was slowing down and i all those other responsibilities there were moments that my one nostril was open and i took a little bit of air but man i wish you could have seen my daughter i mean you know brother and sister she's just a block of absolute determination i sometimes say to my wife you know i think monica someone will say to her one day the only reason why

rome wasn't built in three days is because she wasn't around i mean she's just an absolute block of the termination and she would hold the air as much as she can and those little cheeks would be like apples

and and she would turn almost blue in her face and and i would slow down as much i think the record was about a minute and 10 seconds so my wife would turn to me in agony and say daddy you're gonna kill her you're gonna kill her you're gonna kill her and then we would get through the tunnel but you know brother and sister prayer to me is like breathing you see it's just it's a it's a relationship that we have with god and so as you explore the scriptures and you know i wish we would have been somewhere out here in the mountains i guess there's not many mountains in australia but we

would have been able to find them and we go for a week and all that we were to do is for me to be able to spend a week with you in prayer and day by day all that we will do is to systematically go through the scriptures and ask god to teach us how to learn the language of prayer how can this how can that which god is saying to us in his word as it relates to prayer because god is building up christian character and and he's using his word how that will be able to become part of my relationship with god and so that when it becomes part of my relationship it's a relationship where i don't spend these times with god but brother and sister where a transformation has taken place where god is coming to my christian life and i and god is spending time with me i remember those six black african

pastors that i learned to pray with and they became my mentors and they will go to this little mountain in our farm and spend 40 days in prayer and fasting and all that all that they would do is to take a canister of water and a blanket and their bibles and they would spend days lingering in the presence of god and in the inadequacy of my ignorance when i began to pray with him and i would say to them how do you spend 20 days 21 days in prayer how do you learn this how do you do this thing how do you cultivate a spirit of prayer and and and then i would ask him and say to them how many hours and do you spend on prayer and they returned to me in agony didn't want to answer those questions and and in the ignorance of my zeal as a young evangelist i would pursue it and say how many hours do

you spend in prayer and they returned to me and they would say to me we have no idea how many hours we spent in prayer but we do know that we very seldom would go through an hour without praying you see brother and sister that's what's the difference now you see what is the bible saying to us about prayer let me just give you a little bit of an insight and then i want us to launch and the rest of our time today and this evening into four aspects of opium in prayer if you and i would have had time to explore this you and i would have been able and if we were this morning in the bible college or in a seminary one of the things that i would have done is i would have taken you to 11 words and the old testament that is speaking to us about prayer and the hebrew language and i would have been

able to put every one of those 11 words down like this and i would be able to say to you allow me to take you to the old testament and step by step we are going to discover how many times this word is found in the old testament and we will step by step go through those 11 words and we will look at the five books of moses we will look at the 12 historical books in the old testament we will look at the books of poetry in the old testament and we will look at the major prophets and the minor prophets and i would be able to take you to that one word and we will explore the whole of the old testament now this is the problem if i would be able to take one of those words and say let's just look at this word you will discover that from that one word in the hebrew understanding of prayer and the

old testament sometimes my brother and my sister there could be five or six or seven other hebrew words that found themselves flowing from this one word they are not directly speaking to us about prayer but they are interlinked interrelated to this word and it gives you a network it's like a river that fills many little streams and creeks as it would develop itself into the language of prayer and so when you take those 11

words and i would take you through all those 39 old testament books you and i would be able to explore as many as 800 to a thousand possible old testament passages that is relating to the concept of prayer that's just one aspect of old testament prayer you say what else he said that you would be able to do with me gerard i would be able to take you to those 16 moral

imperatives of god as they relate to prayer and we will discover that he is the one that initiates prayer and we will discover his righteousness as it relates to prayer we will discover his holiness as it relates to prayer we will discover the attributes of god as they relate to the understanding brother and sister you say is that all that we will discover no no i will be able to take you to the different kinds of old testament prayer and there are five different kinds of old testament prayer and we will systematically be able to explore what they are all about and then i would be able to take you to all those prayers in the old testament and there are more than 400 of those old testament prayers and i would be able to say to you listen when you study those prayers in the old testament

you will discover every aspect of the life of god and you will discover every aspect of the will of god and you will discover every aspect of of interceding and what it is in the old testament you will discover what it means to persevere in prayer you will discover what it means to prevail in prayer you will discover what it means to agonize in prayer as you and then we will be able to say to ourselves we discover three things we discover what god is saying about prayer we discover how it's affecting man as he was praying we will discover the consequences you see brother and sister when you study the 18 classic old testament prayers one of the mistakes that we make in our understanding and our studying of prayer is that you and i go to those prayers in the old testament and brother and

sister we study them and you would come to me you would say isn't it an amazing blessing to study those prayer and i will be able to turn to you and say listen you missed 75 percent of the vote and you say to me what do you mean that i miss 70 i say listen if you want to understand this old testament prayer first of all you need to go back into the old and you need to discover the relationship that those people that pray those prayers had with god and when you discover and when you study their relationship brother and sister that they had with god you will discover that the consequences of that relationship was simply because there was a revelation from god and when they had this revelation from god this revelation from god brought those people to a moment when they had a personal

encounter with god and when they had that personal encounter with god something happened to those people and the consequences of the revelation that they had with god and the personal encounter that we've got brought into the place where they had a burden and they wanted to do something for god and when you study those three aspects of what that is about it brings you to their prayer and when it brings you to their prayer in their prayer you know what their prayer does brother and sister their prayer takes you back to their revelation of god that prayer that they pray takes you back to their encounter and experience with god that prayer that they pray takes you back to that which they accomplished for and it gives you the full understanding of old testament prayer i don't have time this

morning but boy i tell you i would have loved to do it the prayer of the prophet elijah and one king stopped at 18 when james would come to us in the new testament and what did he say to us he said the prayer the official fervent prayer of the righteous man obeyed of much and then he said to us elijah was the man just like us we are so what did he like to the bible says he prayed what happened when he prayed brother and sister the bible said for three years and six months now the old testament doesn't say that but the new testament said for three years and six months the bible said there was no rain then the bible says elijah

prayed again and so when the bible says elijah prayed again there was rain and then the bible comes to us and he says the prayer of faith shall save us and you

discover the prayer of faith now how do you understand the prayer of those 56 words in the hebrew language in the old testament you know what you need to go right back into first uh and into first king and you discover the revelation of god to elijah and when god revealed himself to elijah he took him from one place to the other for a period of three years and six months and brother and sister when he brought that he brought elijah to where he gets something for what did he do he brought the people of israel together he built the altar of god he he brought those prophets of baal and he got that and after he did everything he prayed and so after he prayed the fire of god came in his heart you see the immensity of this is absolutely unbelievable you know and so you find all these prayers in

the old testament and every single one of them are based upon the revelation of god every single one of them are based upon an encounter with god every single one of them are based upon exploits that men and women did for god and every single one of them when they came to the prayer it was the building up of those steepings and if you want to understand their prayer you need to understand what god did for those people so what you know it works like that in our lives i only need to spend five minutes with someone in prayer and i've got an absolute clear idea where he is with the christ absolute clear idea what's going on in his relationship with god because brother and sister the way that we pray is an indication of my revelation of god the way that we pray is the consequences of my

experience of god the way that we pray is a reflection of the things that i've been doing for god and it brings me to this concept where i study what that which is prayer about so you say what about it's absolutely incredible now let me tell you something if you study everything that the old testament is saying to us about prayer listen i mean everything the distinction between prayer and the first five books of moses and the historical books of the old testament and the books of poetry in the old testament and the prophets and you bring all of it you know what you discover everything that the old testament is saying to us about prayer brother and sister was manifested and fulfilled in the life in the ministry of the lord jesus you say how do you know that i tell you if you and i would

have had time to explore it it will become one of the greatest blessings and revelation of your own relationship everything that the old testament is saying was manifested and fulfilled in the life of god why because he became the word of god he became god manifested in the flesh and brother and sister when christ came and may i say to you this morning you will never be able to understand the teachings of christ as it relates to prayer if you've not come to grips with his prayer life you will never be able to understand it but when you study his prayer life and you go to those 19 active references in his prayer life in the four gospels and then you study his teachings you know what you will discover in his teachings it's unbelievable there are eight principles that are coming to the

surface and the teachings of christ and brother and sister when you study those eight principles you know what you would realize those eight principles are based upon eight hebrew words in the old testament and those eight hebrew words are based upon the understanding of waking upon god and so the life of christ as it relates to prayer was a life where he was lingering in the presence of his father that's what he disappeared now i'm not sure if you're still with me and if you're with me i will if you are not with me i will not blame you because sometimes i'm not with myself either okay let me encourage you this morning because we're going to go deep here get those cds and systematically listen to them brother and sister not because it's me i mean i'm just a poor poor little finger but

listen just explore the greatness of the scriptures so let me take one or two aspects of old testament prayer you know um prayer is initiated by god see what do you mean god is the one that initiates prayer brother and sister forgive me this sounds maybe this sounds terrible for me to say this to you but i'm going to tell you i need to tell you something this morning god has got a far greater interest to spend time with you than you would ever have an interest to spend time with god far greater you see why do you say that because we are his creation that's why he said in the book of genesis let us make man after our image and after our likeness and so you remember when he created adam and eve what did he do he placed him in the garden of eden and he he gave him a responsibility you know

and he said to him you can eat of any of the tree any of the fruits of the tree but you're not i don't want you to eat of it of the fruit of the tree of life you see because when that happens you're going to die spiritually now before sin came into the world what happened in the garden of eden well you know god came god came how did he come he came in the cool of the evening and as he came in what did he do he had communion with adam and eve brother and sister the the closest that you will you and i will ever be able to understand this is when you study the prayer life of christ in the gospel of john that's the closest yet that you will be able to understand it when you discover the life the relationship between his son and the father that's the closest that you will be able to understand

the relationship that god had with adam and eve before sin came into the world and so god came in the cool of the evening i love that word you know it's the word for the word spirit it's the word ruach and so god came and he was the one that initiates prayer he was the one that came to his to spend time with him he was the one that came to her why was it brother and sister they were his creation you see he had a responsibility he created him he created him after his image after his likeness he he put him in the garden of eden and and i could sense the the desperateness and the longing of the heart of god if i would be allowed to take into the realm of that uncertainty of the intimacy of spirituality and this this this sense of of god coming and he came and he had fellowship with with adam

and eve and so he did he's the one that initiated prayer so what happened they were walking with god you remember the old testament this marvelous example that we find that it's known in genesis and and his name was enoch and uh in fact i was with a group of pastors out in western canada and they threw me in from vancouver to the city of calgary just for one morning i mean that's what they do in that country got on the plane and sat for two hours in this plane came into the city of calgary was picked up at the airport and spent the whole morning with a quite a large group of pastors and they wanted me to speak to them about prayer and i got up that morning and i said to them gentlemen i said i've got the 90 minutes that you have given me and i'm going to take the next 90 minutes to speak

to you about the prayer life of enoch and the old testament you know these poor guys just because first of all they don't know a thing about the scriptures and secondly they hardly heard about enoch and i could see the wheels turning and they must have thought you know which translation of the bible is he trying to pluck this out and i said we're going to spend 90 minutes on the prayer life of enoch and i began to explore it we prayed together and i took him to this word in the old testament enoch walk with god it is the hebrew word halak and i brought him to the new testament eight references to enoch in the scriptures and brought him into the new testament because the official to the hebrews made the statement and said by faith enoch was translated that he should not see death because

god translated him and before his translation he had this testimony that he pleased god and i said now let's explore this why was it that this man walked with god why was it that the bible said god took this man

because he woke up what is the understanding of this word halak and the old testament and how does it relate to the life of christ and the new testament and brother and sister for 90 minutes in fact we probably could have had three hours and still wouldn't have been able to get through but for 90 minutes all i did was exploring this understanding by faith enoch was translated and we began to explore the biblical doctrine the theology of being changed by god in prayer and we discovered that this word translated it's the same word that we found in the life of christ that at the

mount of transfiguration we need to peter and john after the mount of transfiguration and the bible said that christ was transfigured christ was transformed and as he was transformed and he spent time with moises who represented the law and elijah who represented the prophet and we talked about this transformation and then i took him right into the new testament again and i took him to romans chapter 12 he was saying unto us he said i beseech you therefore brethren by the mercies of god that you present your bodies as a living sacrifice holy and acceptable to god and here comes the word again in the greek language he said and be not conformed but be transformed by the renewing of your mind so that you may prove what he said good and perfect and the acceptable world will of god and then i

took him into second corinthians chapter three when the apostle paul in second corinthians chapter three give unto us the life of moises and he's explaining about the glory of god upon the life of moises and how moises when he came down from the mountain that that they had to put a veil in front of his face because because god um that the glory of god was so relevant and he was transfigured and he was changed and he did not know that his face was shining because of the greatness of the glory of god and then the apostle paul came and he made the statement and let me translate it to you from the greek language if i would be allowed to do it this is what paul said in second corinthians chapter three he said ask me in a glass or in a mirror but why did he use that illustration brother and sister

he used it because the women at corinth made these little mirrors with their hands and the apostle paul took the language or rather an example and an illustration and he said to them you know how these women make these mirrors and he used that illustration and he said to the corinthians he said actually in a glass or in a mirror are in the process it's in the present imperative mood are in the process of beholding the glory of the lord he said we are changed and this is what it says in the greek language we are changed again expressing imperative we are changed from one degree of glory into the another as by the spirit of the lord and you know for 90 minutes we explore the ways that god is able to change us as it relates to prayer can i ask you this morning you know uh we there's a sense

in which we don't know one another i saw um we saw some of us here we saw one another nine years ago um i went kangaroo hunting one night with bruce out there and and the booger booger down to the boonies of the sticks of the farm and i went back to canada and told the canadians and i mean they just about were ready to throw me in prison because of of the animal activists and i said to them you come with me and you jump like a guru and you get a bullet for your own if you just watch it and i remember that night when i was with bruce and you know this poor kangaroo i mean this thing didn't know what hit him i'm so glad he didn't know what hit him because otherwise he would have remembered it you know we didn't know what hit him and uh and you know we we were together nine years ago many of

us hey i need to ask you a question you know have you been changed for nine last nine years are we closer to god this morning than we were nine years ago you know has god been working in our lives or or you know has the christian life been like this up and down and up and down that's not how god wants it to be brother and sister i mean there are times that we go through difficulties but the valleys can't be more

than the consistency of growing in our relationship to god god is able to change us you know he's changing us and so when when when when the writer to the evil said by faith enoch was translated that's the basis of understanding the transformation of god when it comes to this place of prayer if you know anything about communism in eastern europe you know uh number of years ago in

in uh hungary there was a man with the name of thomas boras and you say who is thomas boras uh when communism came into hungary uh he was against communism and you know what happened he was uh about 20 years old uh when they threw him in prison in hungary and thomas boras went to prison because he was against communism and you know what happened to thomas boras he spent 50 years in a cell in hungary locked away for 50 years and 50 years after 50 years communism fell apart in hungary and thomas boras spent 50 years in prison and when communism fell apart they found this man who went to prison when he was only 20 years old and now he was 70 70 um 25 years old now he's 75 years old and he spent 50 years in prison and when they found him in the cell he couldn't speak the language anymore and

you say what happened he was not able to communicate or they gave him food and all this kind of stuff and for all those 50 years he sat in prison and all he was able to do brother and sister all he was able to do he was able to speak a gibberish it was a kind of a hungarian dialect and they all think that this man is a total mental disaster and the best thing that they can do with him now 75 years old the best thing that they can do with him is that they can put him in a mental institution for the rest of his life and you know what happened in hungary there was a psychiatrist and he said to the government he said uh he said i want to see this man and he went into the cell with this man who's been in the cell for 50 years and he said there was nothing he couldn't speak the language anymore

but this psychiatrist came out and he came to the government and he said i want to spend time with this man and they said you know there's no hope for him and he said no i don't believe that and they said what do you want he said i just want you to give me 90 days for him and they say what are you going to do he said we're going to keep him in his cell but i'm going to go into his cell and i'm going to spend time with him on a consistent basis and you know what happened brother and sister he went and he spent time with this man thomas buras and slowly but surely as he was spending time with him he was bringing him back into what society was all about and he was figuring it out and they said what about this gibberish what is he doing they said no no i know exactly what he's doing he's

speaking an hungarian dialect that's all that he's able to do but he said give me time and he spent 90 days with him and they slowly began to bring him out and after 90 days he was ready to come back into society he was able to come back into the language he was come back into everything and you know what happened after 90 days they they did everything they can for him and they brought thomas buras now remember this he went to prison when he was 20 years 25 years old now he was 75 years old and here was this man who came up and you know what brother and sister for 50 years he never saw himself in a mirror never you see what happened when they brought thomas buras out and when the psychiatrist brought him out and they were all these psychologists and psychiatrists and hungry and then there

was the general public and the cameras and and all those kind of things and they brought this man out now he went to prison when he was 25 and so for 50 years he sat in a prison cell and he never saw his face and when he sat there the psychiatrist said to him in a hungarian language he said to him thomas buras he said yes he said how are you he said i'm fine he said how are you doing with the language he said i'm fine and he had a conversation with him and everything was fine and he said thomas buras what

is the greatest desire of your heart what is the thing that you would really would like to do right now and thomas buras turned to him in the hungarian language and he said to him my greatest desire is to see a mirror a mirror he hasn't seen himself for 50 years and they were astonished

and so they brought in this mirror it was about six feet by about 24 inches and someone brought in this mirror and they said thomas buras we brought the mirror and they said what do you want to do and he said i want to see my own face that i haven't seen for 50 years and they brought this mirror and he was sitting in his chair like that in front of all these people he was sitting like this and they brought this mirror and they put it in front of him and the psychiatrist said thomas buras there is the mirror in front of you and he looked up and for the first time in 50 years he saw his own face and the moment when he saw his face the last time he saw himself he was a beautiful young man of 25 years old now he was 75 years old spent 50 years in prison and the moment when he looked up and he

saw his face he just collapsed and for nine hours he was weeping they couldn't do a thing it was like a bundle of flesh and bone who disintegrated into a corner and he sat in that corner and he wept and he wept and he wept for nine hours and he got up and he said i'm ready to go back into society he hasn't seen his own face for 50 years do you know i've met christians just like that they've never seen themselves in the light of the greatness of God's Word and so let me ask you this morning do you know anything about the changing transforming power of God the Holy Spirit as if he has transformed becoming more like the Lord Jesus Christ discovering the greatness of what the life has got discovering the fragrance discovering the brokenness discovering the submissiveness discovering the

purity discovering the passion discovering the power discovering the fullness discovering Christ sitting on heavenly places with him he said what is it is being changed changed how to the image of Christ what does it cost cost you absolutely everything and your relationship with God i'm going to close in prayer and i know we're only scratching the surface but there's something that i'm going to ask you to do and what i would like you to do is we're going to give you some material and i want someone to stand there at the door and what that person is going to do is to give you two sheets like this and on these sheets there are questions that i want you to look at in your relationship with God as questions one right through to 23 and i want you to take these two sheets like this and i want

you to go and find a place alone with God i want you just to try and forget about lunch for an hour or so for a beautiful place here and maybe you can take a time chair and go and sit under a tree and all i want you to do is to look at these questions one one two twenty three just take your time read through the passages and i want you to answer them and that's the way we're going to close this morning session as we will be together so i wonder on if you could help me want you to stand there at the end and you need to get questions 1 to 23 so it's pages like this you'll see the first and the second so everyone needs to get to in this i just wanted to go and take some time and spend some time alone with God so why don't we close in prayer while Ron goes and as you go out take those two

pages with you Heavenly Father we thank you for the greatness of unfolding of your plan and i know as we spend this day trying to explore the understanding of prayer and the possibilities of what all this is all about there is so much and yet God you've been working in our hearts maybe there are only 40 or 50 of us here today and and those of us who are dear God i want to pray that as we do this that God the Holy Spirit will just come and minister to us and break our hearts and search us in every aspect of our relationships with you and we thank you for that in Jesus name amen

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