

(South West Baptist Church 2008) Classic Prayer Books

by Gerhard Du Toit

The sermon emphasizes the importance of prayer and walking in the light, and the power of the blood of Jesus Christ to cleanse us from sin and to bring us into intimacy with God.

Duration: 30:03

Scripture: Genesis 49:1

Topics: "Prayer Example"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker encourages the audience to gather in groups of five for prayer. He mentions the character of Jacob and how his words accurately described the lives of his twelve sons. The speaker also shares his personal goal of memorizing the New Testament by the age of 75, with his wife questioning who would listen to him in a mental institution. He emphasizes the importance of studying the Bible with a notebook and asks the audience to consider what each book of the New Testament reveals about God and Christ.

Transcript

We just want to thank you so much for coming to these two mornings that we are going to spend some time together, not just in sharing with one another about what prayer is about, but also we're going to spend some time in prayer. And I think what will probably happen, because I would love to spend this morning on the Old Testament to a degree, and then tomorrow morning, which is Saturday, on the New Testament, and I suspect it's quite possible that tomorrow morning is just going to flow into tomorrow evening and also possibly on Sunday night. I was yearning in my heart to speak to you on Sunday night on this great subject that is so precious when it comes from a biblical perspective, which is what we would consider as the anointing of God, the Holy Spirit, not from an experiential perception, but from a theological and from a biblical understanding.

I think I said in one of the meetings over the weekend that, you know, Charles Haddon Spurgeon was this amazing man that was so used of God in London and England at Spurgeon's Tabernacle. But he had a tremendous struggle to pray. Prayer was never easy for him to pray on his own.

And there was a man, and if you don't have his life story, you really need to try and get a hold of it, because it's the life story of a man with the name of George Muller of Bristol. And incidentally, just about

four years ago, someone has done the work to bring everything that there was about Muller of Bristol. Muller of Bristol was the man that had 85,000 answers to prayer.

And there were two books written about his prayer life. The first book had the title, 35,000 Answers in 24 Hours. And the next book had the title, 50,000 Answers to Prayer, that took him longer than 24 hours to see God answering those prayers.

And people often say to me, you know, what is it about Muller of Bristol? Are they people that are gifted to have a life in the ministry of intercessory prayer? I think there is a degree of possible truth within that context. That there are men and women that God has called, and they somehow have developed the ability that God has given to them to spend long, extended hours in the presence of God. You know, so much of our reading, so much of our growing spiritually, of course, is depending upon what we read.

And of course, in our relationships with God, the Bible is the most important book. And I trust that you will never have a substitute for the Word of God. But there are some tremendous life stories that have been written about people who knew the secret of what it really meant to pray.

And there are examples like that even in Scripture of individual people that really knew the secret of prayer. But if you can get a hold, in fact, I saw that book the other day in a little bookshop here, I think it is Manor, what is the shop called? Manor. If you go there, you will find there are two copies.

And I was so glad to see them there. It is the life story of a man with the name of Rhys Howells Intercessor. And if you read his life story, you will discover that during the Second World War, that he was a Welshman, that he would go at 6 o'clock in the morning into his closet, the place where he prayed alone, and he would stay there until 6 o'clock at night.

And if you read the history of the Second World War, which I have a tremendous interest in, in fact, we have a friend up in the interior of British Columbia, Heinz and Erika Steinil, where they are Germans, and he used to clean the shoes of Adolf Hitler. And I tell you, he can tell you some stories about this man. I have no doubt that Adolf Hitler was totally demon possessed.

Just the brutality of what this is all about. But, if you read the history of the Second World War, you will discover that the only reason why Germany did not invade the British Isles was because of the preventing of God's hand. And people are saying that one of the men that was a key instrument as they would come against these forces of evil, as it relates to prayer.

You know, prayer is not a weapon, brother and sister. Prayer is a battlefield. And the casualties are high, and the bullets are flying.

That's why the Apostle Paul, I shouldn't say that. That's why, you just got me. That's why the Apostle to the Hebrews said, now you know what I was going to say.

That's why the Apostle to the Hebrews, I'll tell you one day why I believe it was him. Anyway, that's why the Apostle to the Hebrews said, maybe if your pastor is here, we never get him back because your pastor is not here. Anyway, that's why, let me get back to this.

That's why the Apostle to the Hebrews said in Hebrews chapter 12, seeing that we are, and it's a wonderful word in the Greek language. The King James Version said we are compassed about. And in the Greek language, it's very emphatic.

It said we are totally surrounded, totally encircled. With what? With a cloud of witnesses. Now who are these witnesses? It's the heroes of faith in the 11th chapter of the Apostle to the Hebrews.

And God said about them that he was not ashamed to be called their God. And so these were Old Testament saints that so ferociously walked with God. And then he said we are surrounded with these heroes of faith.

Brethren and sisters, there is no place where you and I can go where God has not been before us and others themselves. You know, don't ever think that you are on your own. Like the prophet Elijah when he sat under the juniper tree and God came to him and said, what are you doing here Elijah? And he said, I'm the only one left.

And you know the Hebrew text is beautiful in its interpretation of that. And God turned to him in one sense and said to him, so what? Everything else is just going to go on. You know, no one of us is indispensable in any sense of the word.

If we don't do what God wants us to do, he's going to raise someone up to do what he wants us to do, you know. But that statement in Hebrews 12 is so precious. He said we are surrounded with a cloud of witnesses.

And then he made the statement, he said, as a result of that, let us lay aside every weight and the sin that so easily and Paul used amazing terms that he picked up from the Roman Empire. And the weights that he was speaking about was when those athletes were training. And in order to be at their very best, they would put these weights on their feet and their legs as it were, and so that they would be strong.

That's why when Paul said, I punch myself black and blue. Why? So that I would not become a stumbling block. That's what the Greek language is saying to us.

Now, the apostle Paul said, let us lay aside the weight and the sin that so easily beset us. And that sin that beset us, there is a distinction between thoughts of evil and evil thoughts. Evil thoughts is present, you know.

Evil thoughts deals with not the guilt of sin necessary, but the pollution of sin. And so God can cleanse us, brother and sister, from all conscious sin. Not from unconscious sin.

Because if He would cleanse us from conscious sin and unconscious sin, we speak about sin as perfection. And I've heard people, you know, they would come to me and say, God has cleansed me from all conscious sin and unconscious sin. And they said, what do you think I should do? I said, just go to heaven and save us for the rest.

You see, it doesn't work like that, brother and sister. But God is able to cleanse us from the conscious sin. Everything that we are conscious of.

That's why 1 John 1 verse 7 is saying to us, if we walk in the light as God is in the light, what happens to us? He said, the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, is able to cleanse us from all sin. And I love the structure of the Greek language because it's in the present imperative mood. It says, the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, is in its imperative mood.

He said, the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, keeps on cleansing us from every sin that comes to the surface. And that's why Jesus said, if you abide in me, my words abide in me. He said in John chapter 15, I am the vine, you are the branches, my fabric.

And then he said, every branch in me that beareth forth fruit, he said, he purified it, he cleansed it. Why is he doing that? So that it will be able to bring forth more fruit. And people say to me, how does this work? This thing of walking with God.

This understanding of walking in the Spirit. What does it all mean? And I take into the statement in 1 John chapter 1, verse 7. And I said, if we walk in the light, as God is in the light. We have fellowship one with another.

Of course, we have fellowship with God. And the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, keeps on cleansing us from every sin. They said, Gerard, how does it work? I said, listen, it's so simple.

Let me illustrate to you. It's like a stone in the river. If we would take that stone and we put it in the river.

What happens to that stone? There is a process of purification that is taking place in the life or rather in that stone. And so, it's washing the stone. And if you and I would go and we put it in the river and we come back after some time and we take it out.

You would say, well, isn't it beautiful how clean the river has been washing it. The rocks, stones that has been over it and just wash it. And then, you and I would take it out.

And we come back two or three months later and it's so dirty. And you say, oh, isn't that awful? The stone is so filthy again. What has happened? You see, we took it out of the river.

And the river became the means of keeping it clean, washing it. And brother and sister, isn't it wonderful that if we have learned the secret of what does it mean to walk with God, to abide in Christ, to allow God to deal with us and to speak with us. There is this process of cleansing that is taking place in our relationships with God.

I'm spending a year. You know, one of the things I've been doing for probably almost 30 years now. And there's two things that I do in my relationship with God.

And people think, you know, that's absolutely ridiculous. Why in the world would you do that? And you know what I've been doing for more than 30 years is to write out the scriptures by hand. If you write out 15 verses of the Old Testament on a daily basis every four years, you've written out the whole Old Testament.

I'm getting pastors in North America to do it. The average pastor in North America spent about three to five minutes alone with God, three or four mornings or three or four days of the week. And I don't say this with a critical spirit because we are mentoring these men and developing a personal private prayer life.

But I'm getting them all over the country to write out the scriptures. One of them said to me some time ago, he said, you have no idea what this has meant to me. He said, I didn't realize I don't know a thing about the Word of God.

Not one simple thing. He said, I studied theology, but I missed it all. And it was all what people said about the scriptures and not the scriptures.

And if you write out 15 verses of the Old Testament every day, I'm at the end of the book of Genesis this morning in my choir time, and Jacob is just blessing his sons. And you know Jacob was an incredible character because everything that he said about those 12 sons of him is a perfect description of their lifestyle, their character, the way that they lived from the day that they were born. And I've been doing this for many years.

So every four years you can go through the whole of the Old Testament. If you write out 15 to 17 verses of the New Testament, there are 7,957 verses in the New Testament. If you do that every 18 months, you will be able to plow through the New Testament.

My wife often said, so why are you doing this? I said, well, I'm trying to memorize the New Testament by the age of 75. And then my dear precious wife turned to me and she said, listen daddy, when you are 75 and you have done that, who is there in the mental institution who you think will listen to you? And you know, she's a typical Canadian. And I would say to her, well, I think there's going to be four with me.

And she said, who will those be? I said, well, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. And she said, who is the fourth person? And I said, my darling, it's going to be you. And she said, why would I be there? I said, well, the Bible says that that which God has joined together, no man will separate it.

And I said, welcome to humanity. We're going to have a great time. But you know, it's just the Scriptures, brother and sister.

I tell you, it's incredible. I have a commitment to go through the New Testament so many times every year. And last year when I came to the end of November, I was through it.

And all the times that you would make. Because we sit in airports and planes for 80, 90 days of the year. And if you spent two to three hours every day in the New Testament, just sitting in a plane, sitting in an airport and those kind of things, you are able to go through the New Testament 40 times every year.

It's tremendous, you know, just the value of God's Word and the Spirit of God fertilizing the seed of God's Word. And last year at the end of November, I was through the times that I wanted to go with the New Testament. And I said to Janice, I've got four weeks.

Four weeks that I can just do what I want with the New Testament. And so she said, what are you going to do? I said, you wouldn't believe what I'm going to do. She said, what? I said, I'm going to go to the first book of every book of the New Testament.

The first chapter of every book of the New Testament. And so you say, what did you do? I went through every first chapter. Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, through Paul's epistles, general epistles, Revelation.

You will not believe how the first chapters correspond with one another. It is unbelievable, brother and sister. And I ask myself a question.

I never study the Bible without a notebook. I trust that you have notebooks. You need to write down what God is saying to you.

And I ask myself a question. What is this first chapter of this book saying about God? And so I would go to my Greek New Testament and explore God. You know, I could have come up with five or six hundred pages of material of the Revelation of God just in the first chapter of every New Testament book.

What is it saying about Christ? Is there a lesson to learn? Is there a command to obey and just allow it to become part of my life? And once I've done that, you know, there are four New Testament books. It only has one chapter. So when I did it the second time and went through the second chapter, I only dealt with twenty-three books in the New Testament.

And so then there are books in the New Testament that only has three chapters. Titus has only three chapters. 2 Thessalonians, only three chapters.

And so there are books with only three chapters. And I systematically work myself through. Revelation, twenty-two chapters.

The day when I spent with Revelation, there was no one else to spend with. The day when I spent with the Gospel of Luke, there are twenty-four chapters. There was no one else to share it with, you know.

I mean, he was on his own there. The day when I came to Matthew chapter twenty-eight, there was only one book in the New Testament that was willing to share that day with me. One chapter in that was Acts chapter twenty-eight.

And you systematically, now you say, can you build a doctrine in that? Not in your life. Because the verses in the chapters only came into being about twelve hundred years after Christ, you know. And so the verses in the chapters are not inspired.

That's why, let me tell you. I mean, I don't want to make this complicated. It may be so complicated already that you've lost me ten minutes to go.

Anyway, let me explain. I don't want to make this complicated. But listen.

I forgot his initials now. Wust wrote an expanded translation of the Greek New Testament. And so what he did, he's a marvelous Greek scholar.

K. W. Wust and W. E. Vine and Robertson are the three men that gives us the greatest insight into the Greek language as it relates to scriptures. And so what he did, he wrote an expanded translation of the Greek New Testament. And what he was able to do, brother and sister, he was able to divide the New Testament up into 1461 passages that fits the best within the structure of the sentences and the paragraphs within New Testament scripture.

And I have just thoroughly, thoroughly enjoyed what it means. You say, does it take anything away? Oh, no, it's tremendous. Just the blessing of that.

I want to encourage you this morning. Let me come back to Hebrews 12. Let us run with patience the race that is set before us.

That word patience is a wonderful word. It's a military term. What does it mean? It means to courageously stay on course in the midst of what the battle is all about.

So I want to encourage you this morning. We're going to mention some books with you. I'm spending this year, Andrew Murray wrote approximately 48 books and leaflets.

And I'm spending this year with 10 of the classics of Andrew Murray. I have read most of them through the years because of our traveling and stuff. Most of them through the years on cassette and download them

and then you can listen to them.

Here is a little book that is next to my Bible by Andrew Murray. The Power of the Blood of Jesus Christ. I've never come across anything so emphatic, so emphatic that gives me such practical insight in the ministry of the blood.

Reconciliation through the blood, the umbrella of redemption through the blood, and then under the umbrella, nine aspects of the ministry through the blood. Cleansing through the blood, reconciliation through the blood, dwelling in the presence of God through the blood, union with Christ through the blood, victory through the blood. You remember Revelation said they were came in by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony.

And when you study this subject in the New Testament, 99 references in the Greek text to the efficacy of the blood of Christ. And then the Apostle Paul, here I am again. Then, I think I'm tired.

Then the Apostle to the Hebrews, your pastor really is going to believe now that I think Paul did it. Anyway, then the Apostle to the Hebrews said in Hebrews chapter 9 verse 14. And let me just say this to you.

If you study the Apostle to the Hebrews, brother and sister, do it with the book of Leviticus. Now, I know once you come through Leviticus, you're going to be covered with blood. But once you've done that, and then the Apostle to the Hebrews comes in chapter 9 verse 14.

And this is what he said. He said, how much more shall the blood of Christ through the eternal spirit. No, the blood witness to the spirit and the spirit witness to the blood.

And he said, how much more shall the blood of Christ through the eternal spirit. Cleanse or purify your conscience from dead works to serve a living God. And you say, what is my conscience? 32 times in the Greek New Testament you come across this word conscience.

When you study it in the New Testament, you are confronted with 12 different kinds of consciousness. A New Testament scripture. And you say, what is my conscience? Andrew Murray said, my conscience is not just a judge that bears down upon my actions, but in my conscience it bears testimony with my relationship with God and God's relationship with me.

And Murray said, once the conscience has been cleansed, he said, so is the heart. And so the apostle Paul said, I am serving God with a clean conscience. And I wonder this morning if you would allow me to ask you, you know that little still sensitive voice that is so tender and so sacred and the depth of our intimacy with God is referred to as our conscience.

So, I want to encourage you to read. Oh, brother and sister, you need to explore this thing of renewing the mind. Because, you see, I can't grow spiritually if I don't expose my mind.

And you say, do you just talk about reading? No. I'm talking about reading on your knees, you know, and just really take time. And when something grabs you by the throat and advances upon your soul, wait for the Spirit of God to dissect it and to apply it.

And so this year I'm spending time with ten of Andrew Murray's books. Power of the Blood of Jesus Christ, The Blood of the Cross, another great classic by Andrew Murray, Abiding Christ, a tremendous little book, a marvelous little book on humility by Dr. Andrew Murray, a great little book on With Christ in the School of

Obedience, The Ministry of Intercession, With Christ in the School of Prayer, The Holy Spirit, The Power of the Holy Spirit by Andrew Murray. And do you know what you will discover? If you take those ten books, and they're not huge books, you know, it's probably, I would say, a maximum of about 3,000 pages.

And if you take those ten books, you discover Andrew Murray as you will discover the Apostle John. You say, what do you mean? The Apostle John was not a man with a tremendous vocabulary. And if you study the 879 verses of the Gospel of John, the 404 verses of the book of Revelation, the 105 verses in 1 John, 13 and 14, 2 John, and brother and sister, you bring all those chapters and those verses together, you will discover that the Apostle John, because he wasn't a man with a great vocabulary like the Apostle Paul, the Apostle John used 40 to 50 words.

And he builds his whole understanding as he was moved by the Spirit of God around the centrality of the life of Christ. And if you come to grips with those 40 or 50 words in the writings of the Apostle John, and you put them down there, and you study all those other verses, it's amazing how you see how this falls into place. And so, it's just great and a tremendous encouragement.

So, I just mentioned to you this morning, and I trust that you will read. You say, why do you write out the Scriptures? Do you know why I write out the Scriptures? Because I don't have enough brains to give me a headache, you know. I really, I mean, you know, my wife Janice is the brilliant one in the family, and our daughter somehow inherited, and she's doing great at school, and she said to me the other day, Daddy, I don't know how I got what I, how I've been able to do what I'm doing.

Because she said, sometimes you're so slow to pick things up. I'm a slow learner. But listen, brother and sister, once I've got it, I've got it.

The only way you're going to get it out of me is to put a bullet through my head. Once I've got it, I've got it. And so, it just takes time, you know, and just to let it part of life.

And we're going to give you, I don't think I brought it with me, but we have about 50 classics on prayer. I've collected books on prayer for 30 years now, about 800 in my library. But we've got 50 classics on prayer that we say to people, you need to try and get a hold of these books and what they are all about.

Let's pray together. And what I want you to do, let's meet in groups of five. And if there is something that you want to share that's dear and near to your heart, I want you to share it in that little group as we're going to pray together.

And then we spend some time in prayer. And I will bring our time of prayer to an end. And then I'm going to get us turned to the Scripture.

Let me just say to you this morning, there are many things that we are not going to be able to cover. And people are asking me about these things because we dealt with them, some of them at the camp. And I said, and tomorrow when we look at the Old New Testament, we will do that.

I said at the camp that when you study the prayer life of Christ, there are eight principles that comes out of the teachings of Christ and prayer. And those eight principles are based upon eight Hebrew words in the Old Testament that is speaking to us about waiting upon God. And I have with me one of my classics.

I will not sell this book for \$100 although I paid \$1 for it. Don't test me with \$200 because you say, what will I do? I go and try and find another \$300 that I can buy. So, it's good investment, isn't it? But, there's 24

pages in this book by Dr. Thompson.

He was a Hebrew scholar and a scholar and a master of languages. And there are 24 pages in this book that deals with those eight Hebrew words that is speaking to us about waiting upon God. And I know we will not be able to get to them.

But, brethren and sisters, we can make copies of that chapter and then we will be able to somehow. So, you need to let us know and then we can see if there is a way that we will. And then someone else has asked me because in the Old Testament there are 11 Hebrew words that speaks about prayer.

And all you need is an Old Testament Hebrew concordance and you can look those words up and see where those words are found. And we will be able to give you a list of those 11 words. So, let's spend some time in prayer.

Find four other people. So, we're going to be in groups of five. So, there are five of us there, maybe five of us there, five there, another five here.

And let's pray out a little bit and find a place where you can sit and put your chairs. Maybe one group here, another group there. And we spend some time in prayer.

So, can we do that please? So, find four other people including yourself.

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