

# Why Should I Pray?

by Gerhard Du Toit

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of prayer and encourages listeners to come into God's presence with a heart that is surrendered to Him and a spirit that is open to His will.*

**Duration:** 1:24:19

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:6

**Topics:** "Prayer Life"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher shares stories of two individuals who were deeply impacted by the preaching of the word of God. The first story is about a shoemaker named Moody who was inspired by a statement made during a sermon and decided to dedicate his life to God. The second story is about a man who had a vision of Africa and felt called to be a missionary, despite being very ill. The preacher also talks about the importance of allowing people to respond to the gospel in their own time and not rushing them. Overall, the sermon emphasizes the power of God's word to transform lives and the need to trust in His timing.

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## Transcript

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For additional cassettes and a catalogue, call 1-800-227-7902 or write to Charity Gospel Tape Ministry, 59 South Croftdale Road, Leola, Pennsylvania, 17540. I would like to speak to you tonight, if I may, on the subject of prayer. And the subject of prayer is a subject that's very close to my heart.

I believe God had one son and he made him a man of prayer. And I don't know if you realize this Wednesday evening that when you and I studied the subject of prayer, that what we would refer to as the doctrine of prayer in the Old and the New Testament is one of the most spoken of doctrines of the Bible. You see, sometimes people come to me and they say, I don't think the Word of God is saying to us an awful lot about prayer.

But I don't know this evening if you realize that there are more than 8,000 references in the Old and the New Testament that is referring to our responsibility in the place of prayer. And the Bible makes a wonderful distinction between what prayer is about in the Old Testament and what prayer is about in the New Testament. If you study prayer in the Old Testament, and I say that for the simple reason of the work

and the ministry of the Spirit of God, I often say to people when we are involved in a conference on prayer that we can't pray in the will of God without praying in the Spirit of God.

And neither is it possible for us to pray in the Spirit of God without praying in the will of God. You see, the Spirit of God always brings us back to the will and the Word of God, and the Word of God and the will of God always brings us back to the Spirit of God. We can't separate these two from one another, as it were, when it comes to the subject of prayer.

But if you and I study prayer in the Old Testament, then you will discover, my brother and my sister, that it's wonderful for us to see in the first five books of the Bible, for instance, that God is speaking to us about prayer in the context of a dialogue. And one of the most wonderful examples of that, in fact, let me mention to you that you remember in the opening chapters of the book of Genesis when God came to speak to Adam and Eve, and the Bible is saying to us that God came to speak to Adam and Eve in the cool of the evening. And the Hebrew word for spirit in the Old Testament is the word ruach.

And that word in Genesis, when God said He came to speak to them in the cool of the evening, the word cool is the word ruach. You see, God came to have fellowship with Adam and Eve in His Spirit. But one of the most wonderful examples to us of prayer in the book of Genesis is in Genesis chapter 18.

You remember when Abraham began to intercede in the presence of God for the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, and there is a principle in that prayer that, if I'm allowed to say that, I believe revolutionized my own prayer life. Because you remember when Abraham came into the presence of God and he began to address God, that he said to God, he said, God, if we will find 50 righteous people within these cities, will You destroy them? And God responded by saying to Abraham, if I find 50 righteous people, I will not destroy those cities. And you remember as the dialogue and the conversation went on between Abraham and a sovereign God, that there was a moment that Abraham said, God, if we will find 10 righteous people within these cities, will You destroy them? And God said to Abraham, I will not do that.

And my brother and my sister, there is a principle there that revolutionized my own prayer life for the simple reason that when Abraham came into the presence of God, that he did not address God so much on the basis of a sin that was so relevant within the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, but he addressed God more so on the basis of the righteousness of God. I don't know this Wednesday night if you realize that when you and I turn to the subject of prayer, that my brother and my sister, God answers prayer not necessarily because we are praying as His people. In other words, God is not obliged to answer our prayers, but my brother and sister, God answers prayer because He is a covenant-keeping God.

You see, God has made a covenant with man, and the covenant that God has made with man is simply this, that if you and I as a believer have learned the secret of what it means to walk in the center of God's will for our lives, and if there is no unconfessed sin in our lives as the people of God, then God is saying to us that the normal pattern of my relationship with God as a believer is that He is in the process of answering prayer for my life. I have seen some of the most wonderful answers to prayer since we have started these services on Sunday morning. I have seen some of the most wonderful answers to prayer as I was thinking back of last night when so many of our hearts were melted and broken in the prayers of God.

You see, my brother and sister, we can't work the power of God's Spirit up. We can't stir it up, we can't bring it down. The power of God's Spirit comes upon us as the people of God.

When you and I began to seek the face of God and the place of prayer, I have seen some wonderful answers to prayer this afternoon as I heard many other men sobbing on the praises of God as we trusted Him to cleanse us and to fill us with His Spirit in our relationship with God. And we're going to see some wonderful answers to prayer as God, by His Spirit, knows of us who have prayed and who have surrendered ourselves to Him, as God, by His Spirit, is going to come and confirm to us from His Word that which we have trusted Him for. If you and I had looked at prayer and what we would consider as the historical books of the Old Testament, then you will discover that quite often does the Bible speak to us about a little phrase when the Word of God is saying to us that they cried unto the Lord or they called upon the name of the Lord.

If you look at prayer, for instance, in the Old Testament prophets and those major and those minor prophets, you will discover a very amazing thing, that quite often those prophets would say, the burden of the Lord was upon me. And we come across the little word as the Spirit of God came upon them and they supplicated and they interceded and they agonized in the praises of God. And you come across the little word, oh, and you're saying something of the deepness or the brokenness and of the burden of God upon the lives of those Old Testament prophets.

I'm concerned tonight about the subject of prayer in the New Testament. And tomorrow night, God willing, I want us to look at the life and the ministry of intercessory prayer. But if you and I would study prayer, for instance, we will discover that there are about 221 actual recorded prayers in the Old and in the New Testament.

There are about 176 of those prayers in the Old Testament and there are about 45 of them in the New Testament. And if you and I will study the subject of prayer in the New Testament, you will discover that in the Greek language are there five, possibly six, wonderful words that is trying to explain to us the subject of prayer from God's perspective. And as you and I look at those words, you will also discover that those words are found at about 360 places in those 260 chapters of the New Testament in the Word of God.

But what about those prayers in the New Testament? Well, if you look at those 45, you will discover that about 31 of those prayers were prayed in the four Gospels. You will look upon the life and the ministry of the Lord Jesus and you will discover that Jesus himself prayed about 10 times in the four Gospels and there are about 17 references to the prayer life of the Son of God. The Son of God had a life that was saturated through prayer.

In fact, my brother and my sister, what is He doing tonight? The Word of God is saying to us that He is sitting at the right hand of the Father. And what is He doing? The Bible is saying to us that He is interceding for us. And the Word of God is saying to us that if you confess Me before... Jesus said, if you confess Me before man, He said, I will confess you before My Father which is in heaven.

And I wonder this Wednesday night in our Wednesday night service, if the Lord Jesus is sitting at the right hand of the Father and if we have a legitimate reason to turn to His Father and say, Father, I want to intercede for that group of people there because they are in the process of confessing My name before the lives of men. You see, the Lord Jesus was the only one that was ever able to say, Father, I thank You that You always listen to me. There was never ever a time in the life and the ministry of the Son of God, my brother and my sister, when He lifted His voice and His heart to His Father, that the Father didn't listen to Him.

Now we know that there are times in the ministry of the Son of God that somehow when He prayed and it seems to us that the glory of the Father in heaven could not withhold Himself. And it seems to us that if the heavens above open and somehow the voice of God came and the voice of God that came said that this is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Some time ago I was looking upon that amazing passage in the gospel of John.

You remember when the Son of God was standing in front of a grave of Lazarus and you remember there was a moment that He prayed and He said, Father, He said, I thank You that You always hear of me. And as I was pondering upon that passage, I went into the kitchen where my wife was and I turned to her and I said to her, Mommy, I said, have you ever asked yourselves why was it that when the Lord Jesus stood in front of a grave of Lazarus, why was it that He had to say, Lazarus, come out? And my wife turned to me and she said, Daddy, I'm not sure if I know. And I said, Janice, you know what I believe? I believe that when the Son of God stood in front of the grave of Lazarus and as He looked upon the grave of Lazarus and He said, Lazarus, come out, I said, I believe within my heart that if He would have not said, Lazarus, come out, I said the whole graveyard would have turned up.

You see, it was the voice of the Son of God. It was the voice of the Son of God that was able to say, Father, I thank You that You always listen to me. Or else we say, what about all those other people that prayed and the four Gospels? My brother and my sister, you know what I've discovered? I've discovered that every one of those people that came to pray and the four Gospels, they came to pray because there was a specific need within their hearts.

And I wonder tonight if you would allow me to suggest to you that if I understand the subject of prayer in the New Testament, then I need to say to you this Wednesday evening that it seems to me that the New Testament perception of prayer from God's perspective is that when God is looking upon prayer, that from God's perspective is prayer, not necessary confession in the presence of God. Well, you say, Pastor, does that mean that confession must not be part of my prayer life? No, my brother and sister, it doesn't mean that. It means that confession is part of coming into the presence of God, and every day in my own prayer life as I come into God's presence, the very first thing that I do, I allow the Spirit of God to search my heart as a believer.

Also, does it mean that prayer in the New Testament is not necessarily adoration? Although adoration can be part of my prayer life, thanksgiving can be part of my prayer life, but it does not necessarily mean that thanksgiving is the dominant theme of prayer. You say, well, what is prayer in the New Testament? I will need to say to you this Wednesday night, through all these years of studying this subject, it seems to me that about 65% of the references in the New Testament that is referring to our responsibility in prayer, my brother and my sister is saying to us tonight that from God's perspective is prayer asking and receiving. I wonder tonight if you realize that you and I are serving a God.

My brother and my sister, we are serving a God. A God whose heart is so open for us as the people of God to come to Him. A God that wants to give unto us as His children.

I think of that little verse in the little epistle of James. What is it saying to us? It is saying unto us we have not because we ask not. Do you remember for instance in 1 John 5 verse 14 where the Bible is saying unto us, and this is the confidence that we have, that if we ask anything according to His will, that God was hearing us, and if we know that God is listening to us, then we know that we are the petitions of those things that we are asking of God.

I think for instance in Philippians chapter 4 where the Word of God is saying to us, Be careful of nothing but in all things by prayer and supplication. He said, Let your requests be made known unto God. Do you remember in Matthew chapter 7? What is God saying unto us? He is saying unto us, Ask and it shall be given unto you.

He said, Seek and you shall find. He said, Not and it shall be opened unto you. My friends, do you know what the Bible is saying to us? That the structure of attains in Matthew chapter 7 is in a present imperative mood.

In other words, the Lord Jesus is saying unto us, I want you to keep on asking. He said, I want you to keep on seeking. He said, I want you to keep on knocking.

And the word knocked in the Greek New Testament is not a word that is speaking about someone who is standing at the door of my house and is knocking without a sense of respect, but it is a word that is speaking about someone who is standing at the door of my house and is knocking with a sense of determination, is knocking with a sense of conviction, is knocking with a sense of knowing in his heart that as he will continue to knock, that somehow there is a moment that he is going to open that door. I wonder this evening if you would allow me to ask you, when last have you and I come into the presence of God as a believer, when last have you and I learned the wonderful secret of coming into God's presence as a believer and realized that this God that we are serving, my brother and my sister, is a prayer-answering God. He is a God that is listening to his people.

My experience is so many of God's people through the years that I have made to my ministry, there are so few of God's people who have learned the secret of what it means to serve a God that is answering prayer. I was involved in a series of lectures in my own homeland of Africa a number of years ago, and I remember one morning between these lectures, it was in a colored theological school, there are about two and a half million colored people, it's not the black folks of Southern Africa or the white people, but this is a mixed race within the country, and there are some of the most wonderful Christians amongst them. And I remember one of those mornings in one of the lectures, I came out of my lecture room and we came, and we had a cup of tea around 11 o'clock or so with the other lecturers, and one of the lecturers came in and shared with us an incident of God-answering prayer in the life of a very insignificant colored lady.

She had to go to the city of Cape Town on a Monday morning. She owned one of the dentists in that city about twenty South African rands, which is about ten American dollars or so, and she did not possess the money. And she began to pray about that and said, God, I want you to supply my need, and as she prayed and she sought the face of God, she sensed in her heart that she was getting through to God, and God was listening to her prayer and the witness of God's Spirit came, that God answered prayer, and she somehow said to herself, well, I'm going to look at the mailbox and I'm sure someone is going to send the money.

And every morning she went to the mailbox and every morning there was nothing in the mailbox. Somehow the Monday morning came. That was the morning when she had to pay her last payment to the dentist.

And she did not understand it because God answered her prayer. And she said to herself in simple faith, I'm going to walk towards the station. And as she was walking towards the station, which was about twelve miles outside of the city of Cape Town, and as she came to the steps there was an elderly lady who was climbing the steps towards the little ticket office, and she began to help this elderly lady who was

struggling to climb those steps.

And as she was helping her, the elderly lady turned to her and said, where are you going? And in simple faith she said, well, I'm really on my way to the city of Cape Town. When they came to the little ticket office, the elderly lady, because of the goodness of her heart that she helped her up those steps, said to the man behind the little glass, I would like to have two tickets to the city of Cape Town. And as they came into the train, she began to talk to this elderly lady and she discovered that she was a believer.

And they had a wonderful time of fellowship and sharing with one another. And as the train came into the city of Cape Town, she helped her out of the train and helped her outside of the station. And as they came outside of the station, she turned to her and she said, Madam, will you just pray with me? She said, do you see that building across the road? She said, there is a dentist in that building and I owe him twenty rand this morning and I don't possess the money and I don't want you to give it to me.

She said, God has answered my prayer and I just want you to stand here and pray with me. And right there outside the station, they began to pray. And as they were interceding and praying in the presence of God, something happened.

The wind was blowing that morning and this little lady felt something in the back of her leg and she thought it was a little piece of paper and she grabbed it as they were praying and saying to herself, I'm just going to throw it away. And as they came to the end of their time of prayer, she opened her right hand and there was a twenty rand note. And you know what happened? She crossed the street and she walked into the dentist's office.

And when she came into the office, she said to the receptionist, I've just come to give you the twenty rand that I owe you. At that moment, the dentist walked in and he turned to his receptionist and said, I don't understand this. I can't explain this.

He said, earlier this morning, there was a twenty rand note lying on my desk. My window has been opened and the wind must have blown out of my window. And this little lady just broke down and she wept like a child.

This man looked at her and he said to her, What's wrong? Eventually she got herself together and she said, Sir, and she shared with him her story. And this man who was unconverted turned to her and he said, Madam, I want you to take this money. And he turned to his receptionist and he said, I want you to cancel out this account.

And he turned to this lady and he said, Take the money and buy yourself some groceries and some food. And my brother and my sister, if you ever get into the city of Cape Town, I would be able to bring you in touch with this man because the testimony of this lady brought this man to the place where he gave his life to God. I wonder how many of us are sitting here this evening in this service and you sit here tonight and if you are absolutely honest with yourself, is there a sense in which your prayer life is very, very poor and bankrupt in the presence of God? Maybe you sit here this evening and may I say to those of us who are going to this church Sunday after Sunday, my brother and my sister, listen, you cannot make an assessment where a church is by looking at the attendance on a Sunday morning.

There is a deep burden upon my heart for charity Christian fellowship because my brother and my sister, the only way that you and I know what's going on in the life of a church is to find out how many people

know the secret of interceding in the presence of God. And I wonder tonight how many of our prayer life is just like the little girl who used to pray. She said, I so often say my prayers.

She said, but do I really pray? Oh, my friends, I look at the lives of those early disciples and the Gospels. They knew what it meant to spend five minutes in the presence of the Saviour. But you remember in Luke 11, verse 1, the Word of God is saying to us that they came to Jesus and they almost got hold of the Lord Jesus and the Greek text is so emphatic it almost seems that they surround Him and they almost feel that they could hug Him and say, Lord, will You teach us to pray? You see the reason why there are so few of us this Wednesday night who are involved in a ministry of intercessory prayer is simply because of the fact that my brother and my sister, there is nothing spectacular about it.

No one is going to come to you and say, isn't it wonderful that God has given to you such a wonderful prayer life because it's a life in secret. You sit here this evening and you say, Gerard, why do you think I should pray as a believer? Why is it that I should sit here in a Wednesday night service? Because my brother and my sister, I wonder if you realize that if I do not spend time in prayer as a believer, that I'm sinning in the presence of God, that I'm living an absolute blatant sin. Do you remember Samuel of O? How Samuel, the people of Israel, wanted the thing they saw, the things of their following nations.

And as they looked upon those things, the same desire came in their heart and they began to reject Samuel. And he spent 24 hours in the presence of God. And he prayed and he prayed.

And he stood in the presence of the people of Israel. And he said, if I cease to pray for you, he said, I will sin in the presence of God. If I do not spend time in the presence of God as a believer, I am living an absolute and blatant sin.

So why do you say that? I say that because the Word of God said so. Now my brother and my sister, this North American continent has affected so many lives of the people of God because there are so many things that you and I can do. And we do them so well and we do them so right.

But we do them without the sense of the presence of God. We've lost the art of intercession. Why should I pray? Because God says in His Word I should pray.

Because prayer is the natural response of someone that has been born of the Spirit of God. Oh, you remember in Luke chapter 18 that amazing passage of the publican and the Pharisee. And that Pharisee stood there and he was so proud of himself.

He said, God, I thank You that I do this and I do this and I do this and I do that. But that publican, what did he do? Oh, he trembled in the presence of God. He almost smashed on his breast.

And what did he say? He said, God, be merciful to me a sinner. I mean, that publican was no fool, my brother and sister, because the word merciful in the Greek New Testament, he was referring to the mercy seat and the holiest of all. And that was the place where reconciliation was made for the sins of the people of God.

And you sit here tonight and you say, I know Him as my personal Savior and He has come into my heart and He has saved me. How were you converted? You prayed. You got on your knees before God.

Ah, maybe you sit here tonight as a visitor and you are absolutely lost in the kingdom of God. And you say to yourself by this time, Oh my word, I should have never come to this service tonight. But listen, God has

brought you here and if you are lost, God wants to save you from your sins.

How did we come to Him? We asked Him to save us and we prayed. I think of a life that amazing man Saul of Tarsus. And do you remember what did he say when God suddenly stepped into his life? And God said, You've gone far enough.

And God said, You have smashed him to the ground and he was lying on his face before God. And what did he say? He said, Lord, who art thou? And the Lord said, I am Jesus and thou persecutest. And do you remember his second prayer? What did he say? He said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? Do you remember when God said to Ananias, I want you to go to this man, Saul of Tarsus? And Ananias was frightened to death.

He said, God, you haven't heard of this man? You don't know of the things that he has done? God said to Ananias, Ananias, Behold, he is praying. My brother and my sister, I would like to make a statement this evening, and I take full responsibility for it. The reason why we so many times today find people that are confessing the acts of sin and not the state of sin, and when you begin to speak to them about accountability and discipleship and the place of prayer and the word of God, you find them running like rats.

The reason why there are so many spiritual abortions today, my brother and my sister, is simply because of the fact that the people of God have lost the art of praying through. I spoke to a group of pastors out in the west coast of Canada a number of weeks ago. We had a conference center which God has given to us in a miraculous way.

We prayed for five years. My wife, myself, without anyone knowing about it, that God will give us a place where we can invite people to come and seek the face of God. And where they will not be entertained but have encounters of God.

And where they will not be amused but be affected by the presence of God. And our house is down in Crescent Beach and a mile up the road was a church that met on seven and a half acres of property. There is sanctuary that seats around 300 people and an office block and a preschool and rooms that can facilitate for about 55 people and everything you need.

And seven and a half acres and the property goes right down to the beach. And that church ran into difficulty and people left and there were 29 people left and they called me in one night for consultation and counseling and I knew the church and quite often preached for them. They called me in and I sat down with them and they turned to me, the leadership, and they said, Gerard, look at your vision.

And I mean if you ask me what is my vision you need to give me nine hours. Because my vision determines what I do with the character of God as it is revealed to my soul. And I came in that night and I poured out my heart for a vision of people seeking the face of God.

Because I've been in revival twice and I know that the only way that revival comes, it comes through prayer. And after I shared with them my vision, they said to me, are you interested to buy this facility from us and develop it into such a place? And I said to them, we are an organization that's got a no-debt policy. We are an organization that don't solicit for funds.

It's never a question of money. It's a question, is it the will of God? And I said, I need three weeks to pray about it. And for three weeks I sought the face of God and I can take you to the little spot because my wife

didn't like it because the carpets was messed up with my tears.

When I ran out of my study into the kitchen one morning, I ran into her arms and I said, God spoke to me. She said, what did God say to you? And I said, my darling, God said to me, the glory of the latter house is going to exceed the first. And she turned to me and she said, Daddy, do you realize that the value of that property is between three and a half and four million dollars? And I said, Mommy, that's God's problem.

And I went back to the leadership of that church and I got them together and I said, gentlemen, I said, I can only tell you that God spoke to me. That's all I can tell you. And then they turned to me and they said, are you interested that you just take over the mortgage and pay other debt in this property? And because of the integrity of the organization that you stand for and the fact that we know that you are serious of God, they said, as long as you just pay other debt, we give you this property that's about three and a half or four million dollars worth.

And I said, what is the debt? And they said, Gerard, if you could come up with 166,000 dollars, it's yours. And a year prior to that, our organization sold the house in the province of Ontario and it brought in about 176,000 dollars. We've had people there that spend 40 days in prayer and fasting.

I remember a group came in one weekend to pray and the Tuesday, my wife walked into the kitchen and she came into my office and she said, Daddy, she said, there's a bad smell of gas in the kitchen. And we got the gas man in and he walked into the kitchen and he said, he said, if anyone liked a match here, he said, we're all blowing apart. And he just cancelled out his stove which was 25 years old.

That was the Tuesday and he said, you can't use it. He said, throw it out. And I got my staff together and we got on our knees and I said, we've got 60 dollars of the balance in the bank.

I said, we can't buy a stove. I said, but we can pray. And we sought the face of God.

Next day I received a phone call from a lady who was a wonderful Christian about an hour and a half away and she said to me on the phone, she said, Gerard, she said, my husband and myself before he died we established a fund that we wanted to buy something for the Lord's work. She said, I heard about your need. She said, I wanted to go look for a new stove and I turned to her on the phone and I said, Mary, I said, it's a commercial stove.

I said, they are very expensive. She said, well my boy, just go and look. And I covered all my bases and the cheapest one I could come up with was 4,360 dollars and 50 cents.

And I phoned her the next day and I said, Mary, it's bad news. She said, what is it? I said, the cheapest stove I can get is 4,360 dollars and 50 cents and she said, well, let me go and check the fund. She came running back to the phone.

She said, did you say 4,360 dollars and 50 cents? I said, that's what I said. Well, she said, in the account is 4,361 dollars. She said, Gerard, I need 50 cents to keep the account open.

You see, my brother and sister, God is a prayer answering God. You say, why should I pray? Because God commands it in His word. Do you remember in Luke chapter 18 verse 1, the Bible is saying to us that men ought always to pray and not to faint.

In 1 Thessalonians chapter 5 verse 17, the apostle Paul says, pray without ceasing. What is he speaking about? He's speaking about the spirit of prayer. I don't want you to misunderstand me, but I've been concerned about the level of emotion in this conference and I'm afraid that when all our emotions is going to filter out and the joy of being together is going to filter out, my brethren, I wonder what is going to be left.

You see, what is happening these days, we are sitting under the under the communication of the truth of God's word. The word of God is coming to us. God is saying some very, very specific things to us.

And the Holy Spirit of God comes and what does He do? He fertilizes the seed of God's work in my life. And my brethren, my sisters, the combination between the communication of the truth of the word of God and the fertilization of the seed of God's word brings into my life the manifestation of the life of the word. And do you know what is that manifestation? That manifestation of the life of the word.

When I meet you in six months or six years from now and you were in conferences like this and you sat in a meeting like this and God spoke to you about your prayer life and God said, it's time to get serious with me. It's time to get disciplined into your system. It's time to realize the importance of prayer.

And you took it to heart. And do you know what Jesus Christ said? He said, He that willeth to do my will shall know of the doctrine that I'm speaking of. Do you remember the Bible is saying to us in John chapter 2 that there were many, many people that believed in the Lord Jesus.

And what does the Bible say? The Bible says that Jesus did not believe on him because he knew what was in him. It's exactly the same Greek word. And one of the greatest concerns in my heart for this conference and I believe before I came to this conference and before all the other speakers came and before you came, I mean for days there were people who sought the face of God in prayer.

There was a prayer meeting that went on here for a number of days every morning since the prayer advanced from five to six. There are some of you men that have come to fast and pray this week. But my brothers and my sisters I'm deeply concerned because I'm concerned that we can be so taken up by the hype and the emotion and the blessedness of being together that you and I can bypass the word of God.

And I don't know tonight if you realize that you and I are born of personality but God is in the process of building up Christian character and He's using the infallibleness of His word. I mean I saw it in the presence of God about thirteen days ago in my prayer time one of the mornings as I was just praying about the word of God and this year in my quiet time I'm reading through the New Testament every month and I found myself looking at the New Testament and reading it and studying it but the Spirit of God began to convict me and say, Gerard, how much of this word is really becoming part of your life? And it's almost as if God said to me, listen, if this is not going to become part of your life why don't you just throw this against the wall? He said, because you will just be a hearer of my word and not a doer. And my brother and my sister believe God is speaking to us through His word and He's saying unto us that men ought always to pray.

But He's saying unto us, you remember those early disciples when they came to the Lord Jesus and they couldn't cast out that evil spirit and they were in absence. I mean, they tried every trick in the book and they tried every possible plan of casting out that evil spirit and it just didn't work and they came to the Son of God and the Son of God just looked upon that demon possessed man and just spoke a word and Satan went. They came running up to the Lord Jesus and they said, why couldn't we do that? And Jesus looked at them and He said, He said, this kind of evil spirit can only go out by prayer and by fasting.

They said, Pastor, what is fasting? Fasting is praying without word. The Hebrew word for fasting means to humble myself before God. People say to me, well, fasting is an Old Testament habit and practice.

Can I say to you this evening that there are 29 references to fasting in the Old Testament and there are 27 references to fasting in the New Testament and there are three times as many words in the Old Testament as in the New Testament? Would you allow me to say to you this evening, my brother and sister, in Matthew chapter 6, the Lord Jesus, and we are going to look at that, the Lord Jesus said, when you pray, He said, go into your closet and pray to your Father which is in secret and He said, your Father that is in secret shall reward you openly and a few verses later, what did He say? He said, when you fast, He said, you're going to fast in secret and He said, your Father that is seeing in secret, your Father is going to reward you. The concept of fasting is on the same balance of the scale of prayer. I think one of our problems in our North American culture is that we are digging our graves with our teeth.

A friend of mine and his wife, just came out of the 40 day fast and Brother Denny sent me the other day on the phone, you want to fast this week and I said, you know, I would love to but if I fast during a conference when I preach, I so much pour myself into the preaching that if I don't eat, I totally lose my voice. A friend of mine and his wife just came out of the 40 day fast and I said to him, I said, Mike, how are you doing? He said, I've lost 35 pounds. I said, you better remember those suspenders because your trousers are going to drop to the ground.

I said, tell me what God has been saying to you. He said, Gerard, God has been saying to me we've been caught up in a terrible society. Why should I pray? God commands us to pray for all men.

Listen to this. I want you to get this state. Listen to this.

I exhort therefore that first of all supplications and prayers and intercessions and giving of thanks be made for all men. God commands us that the armor of God can overcome and it can only be effective when you and I realize that prayer is not a weapon but it is a battlefield. Listen to what he said in Ephesians chapter 6. He said, praying always of all prayer and supplication in the spirit and watching thereunto and supplication for all saints and for me.

God commands us to watch and pray. Three times in Matthew chapter 14 verse 38 and Luke chapter 22 and verse 14 and verse 46 he said to them, he said, watch and pray Five times the apostle Paul asked people to pray for him in Colossians chapter 4 verse 3 and 1 Thessalonians 5 25 and 2 Thessalonians 3 1 and Hebrews 13 18 and Ephesians 6 19 God wants us to pray you see. One of the greatest burdens and the desires of my heart because my brother and my sister, listen, whatever you are trusting God for these days is those things that you and I are trusting God and I am speaking to myself because I don't go through any conference without meeting with God in my own heart and I want to tell you something, if I arrive back in British Columbia next Monday night and my wife and my daughter pick me up at the airport and I come home on Monday night and we talk about Pennsylvania and I tell them about all the horses and the buggies and show these wonderful things that I have learned, my dear wife is going to look at me and say, Daddy, what has God done for you last week? Good night.

Dare I not being able to say something? God commands us in His Word to pray. My relationship with God demands me that I should pray. I wonder tonight if you realize my brother and my sister because whatever you and I are going to trust God for these days is you are not going to saturate and soak it in prayer.

We, there are some that are going to do it because if you are trusting God, these men that are trusting God this afternoon, my brethren, if you are not going to pray this thing through and say, Lord, I need a word from Yourself. I want to live a life in the fullness of the Spirit of God. I am sick of messing around in the wilderness in the flesh of carnality and if you are not going to be serious and say, God, I am going to seek Your face.

I want You to speak Your Word to my heart that You have filled me with Your Spirit. If you and I are not going to do it, I would say that in the days to come I am not sure if you want to be my thing because those meetings would remind you of something of the greatness of the conviction of the Spirit of God. And I would like to encourage you this Wednesday night.

You know what I believe in my heart and in my being and my soul? I believe and many of us, many of these men you sit here and you don't realize what is really coming to you. But I sense in my heart and in my spirit that God, the Holy Spirit who brings us to this wonderful world is in the process of doing a tremendous deep work and many of our lives and there are some of these men and they are going to go back to their wives and their children and your dear wife is going to look at you as some of those men in the beginning of last year who came back from a prayer advance that we were involved in and their wives could not believe what happened to them because their lives were totally transformed. That's why I hope on Friday night when we come to the final session together and we've heard so much of God's Word, these men would be willing to spend a half night in prayer.

I'm going to challenge you for that. I mean it's so important to me that I would say I'm not willing to preach on Friday night. If you say Gerard it's going to cost me too much.

You say why do you say that? Because my brother and my sister I have long passed the stage where I run from one church to the other just to speak at one conference after the other and I've learned the lesson from an old friend of mine that whenever they ask and say do you want to come and speak and the phone rings and all these men who are sometimes not in touch with God and they just want to fool the schedules of their churches and they phone and they say can you go and get your schedule for ninety nine to seven and I say why do you want me to do that? They say well we want you to give us a week to preach. I say no it doesn't work like that. They say what do you mean? I say we need three or six months to pray about it.

What? I say why do you have services? Well we have services because it's a tradition may God save us church from having special services for the sake of special services. My brother and my sister there are some times that I believe the sovereign God is vomiting when he sees these meetings where people just meet for the sake of meeting. I don't think I've got anything to say but I ask him and I say you know we need three or six months to pray about it to find out if it's the will of God and then in my insignificance do I turn to the pastor and say to him on the phone and if I do come to your church I said I'm not prepared to come unless we're going to spend two or three hours in prayer together every day.

The man said to me just last week on the phone when I told him that well he said he said I can't do that he said I've got 750 people and I said so what? He said I can't do that he said I can't give you two or three hours and I said well then we're not going to do it. I mean I'm sick of seeing God meeting with dear and precious people in a church and the pastor sit there like a lollipop and he thinks he knows it all and the spirit of God doesn't get through to his heart and he doesn't get into blessing during the conference of the crusade and next Sunday he stands up and has that same old dried stuff and people sit there and they bore to death and they get so agonized that oh God is just made of me and then they get out of the

churches and then people blame me. He said why should I pray? I should pray because God commands it and I should pray because my relationship with God demands it.

You can't take people further spiritually than that you are yourself. You can only impart to people what you personally possess and I want to unite my brother and my sister if you would allow me to ask you what is the reason for your existence as a believer? Why did God save you? Did he save you to sit somewhere in a little village somewhere amongst 30 or 40 or 50 people and just be satisfied like a passenger in the bus? Oh I think of D.R. Moody that amazing young man who was a shoemaker who sat in a service just like this and there was a man preaching the word of God and as he was preaching the word of God the man made his statement and he said God will show the world what it's going to do if a young man is willing to sacrifice everything for God.

D.R.

Moody stood to his feet and he said by the grace of evening a man who was 57 years old or rather 54 years old when he came back from China God gave him a vision of Africa and he saw those millions of black even people in Africa and his heart began to burn but he came back from China such an ill man and as he came back and he wanted to apply to the mission field there was no doctor in the British Isles who would give him permission to go to the mission field who was so sick in fact they called in the man who was the museum of diseases one day one of those doctors which went up to him and said why do you want to go to Africa he said I want to go to Africa because I want to see God walking around in black body maybe you sit here this Wednesday night in this service and you don't have any

vision for souls the lost the sovereign God in heaven needs to come and maybe take some unconverted individual out of his meeting and lift him up on his ankles and hold him over the eternal flames of hell and see the agony and see him crying for mercy and realize that it is the grace of God that is not letting go so that we can get a vision for souls I was involved in a series of meetings in Africa and it was a series of evangelistic services and we very seldom if ever oh my what why is this clock running so fast can I turn it back half hour shall we take up a vote we were involved in a series of evangelistic services and we very seldom if ever make an invitation before the 14th or the 15th night before we allow people to respond to the gospel you say well what happens if I die prior to

that God knows all about that you know but I remember it was the 14th night when the spirit of God broke into the service we used to have a saying amongst ourselves when the unsaved people that we so deeply love and care for would sat there on the deep conviction of sin but they only convicted they are only convicted about the acts of sin they haven't seen that they lost because God is saying that I was born in iniquity and in sin that my mother conceived me dare you interfere with the work of the spirit of God when it seems that they are ready but they are not desperate we used to have a saying amongst ourselves when people began to get under conviction of sin we would weep for them but we say God will you please help us to let them lie in the frying pan for another few nights the 14th

night the spirit of God broke into the service and every night prior to the service we had a prayer meeting and every night in the prayer meeting there was a lady and her husband they were two most spiritual people in the town wonderful people but the night and they prayed every night and the night when the spirit of God broke through every heart was smashed in the presence of God I mean you need to be pretty dumb not to be broken when God comes and you're properly unconverted but we just sobbed and wept prayed and that lady prayed she was a wonderful Christian probably the most spiritual woman in the town

and she prayed and the moment when she prayed I opened my eyes because I didn't know what was going on and she prayed a prayer and she said God is it possible that you ever will be able

to forgive me and I opened my eyes because I thought there was a spiritual woman in the town it was this lady and she got up and she ran out of the meeting she never came back to the services for two nights three nights I should say and the fourth morning I felt the pull of God's spirit in my soul and said I want you to go and see her and I went to the house and knocked at the door of the house and she opened the door and when she opened the door I looked into her face and I could see the dark black swollen marks under her eye of sleepless nights her eyes were all swollen I knew she was sobbing and I said madame I said can I come in and she said please come and we sat at the kitchen table and I said would you allow me to ask you what is wrong she said you know I'm a Christian and I said

yes you are she said I sat in the services every night with a smile upon my face I prayed in the prayer meeting and I said yes you did she said Gerard about three and a half years ago one morning in my choir time she said God spoke to me how did you know God spoke to you she said I explained to you she said God spoke to me about an elderly man in the other side of the town his name was Mr.

Wilson and God said to me Mary I want you to go and talk to Mr. Wilson about his soul I said how did you know God spoke to she said it grew stronger and stronger she said I was so impressed by it she said I couldn't get away from it I said did you go and speak to him about his soul and she said I didn't so I said what happened she said three mornings later I had my quiet time God spoke to me again I said about what she said God spoke to me and said Mary I want you to go and speak to old Mr.

Wilson about his soul and I said did you go and she said no I didn't I said why not she said because he belonged to a different church I said so what happened she said she said Gerard the next morning the phone rang on the other side of the phone was my friend in the town and she said to me Mary and I said yes and she said Mary do you remember old Mr. and she said when she said to me do you remember old Mr. she said something cut into my soul and I said yes I remember him she said you know that there was nothing wrong with him he was a healthy elderly man yeah she said I know that full of life and she said Mary last night suddenly old Mr.

Wilson swept away into eternity she threw her arms in the air and she said Gerard she said it was old Mr. Wilson that God spoke to me about if I did not know the power of the efficacy of the precious blood of Christ she would have been in a mental institution today I wonder tonight if I can ask you my brother and my sister is there somewhere in your life an old Mr.

Wilson you see sometimes the Lord Jesus comes to us in ways that you and I do not expect him to come I think of the elderly man who had a dream one night and in his dream the Lord Jesus disappeared onto him and said to him I'm coming to your little shop tomorrow and the next morning he rushed to his little shop and he cleaned everything out and everything was spotless and he was waiting for Jesus to come and visit him in his little shop and around ten o'clock the door opened and there was an old beggar standing wanting to come into the shop and as he was coming the elderly man turned to him and said no, no, no you can't come in today and the old beggar put out his hand and he said do you think you can maybe just give me something to eat for today and the little man said no, no I can't

because I'm expecting a very important visitor about three o'clock the afternoon the door opened and no one else came in and at three o'clock the door opened and as the door opened there was a crippled little lady and he looked at her and she said do you think you've got a few pennies to spare today for an old

lady and he said no you can't come in I'm expecting a very important visitor today six o'clock came and Jesus never came and he closed the shop and he didn't understand it and that night he had another dream and Jesus appeared to him again and in his dream Jesus said to him old little man I've been to your shop twice today but you never recognize me you see them in their horse and their bodies and you see them as trees walking you see them as hard unbending men and night or Amish

and you sit here tonight and you say they've got no interest in God but in the darkness of their house at night when there is just a candle or when they sit with the candles around a dead body and there is the atmosphere of death deep in the heart is there a longing do I really know God I want to tell you tonight something my brother my sister you are a very unique group of people I mean I don't know what my wife is going to do next Monday when I come off the plane like this and I don't have a tie on you are a very you know very unique want to tell you tonight and I mean I just long in my heart that this arrow would shoot right through your soul the only people that are going to reach them are the people that are sitting in His service they maybe do think that you've left them but maybe

deep in their hearts they say to themselves maybe they are something and every night there have been visitors here why are they here because they want to see what's going on and you sit here tonight and you've had many many tears that you shed for things in your life that needs to be straightened out and you've trusted God but it's time to ask God to break your heart for people you say what does it mean it means for God to give me a heart and my relationship with God demands that I pray can I share with you a secret I'm almost ashamed to say it it sometimes takes me 45 minutes in the presence of God to really make sure that my life is in line with the Spirit of God you say why sometimes because of the pressure upon my physical system because of being emotionally drained because of being

just tired you say what is the most important aspect of the ministry of the Spirit of God in prayer listen to this the Bible is saying to us we do not know how to pray and we do not know what to pray but the Bible is saying to us that the Spirit of God comes and what does he do he intercedes for us with groanings that cannot be uttered and he that searcheth the heart know of what is the will and the mind of God and he intercedes for me according to the will of God God's first prerogative is that you and I when we pray know that we are in touch with God I wish I could take you to a little place yesterday morning a tennis instance has got a barn they say oh come on anyone who has got a farm has got a barn well they have got a very unusual barn their barn is the place where he makes picnic

table and I have been praying in that barn I mean it is pretty cold but you walk yourself warm there is no excuse and yesterday I began to pray yesterday morning and I and I prayed and I prayed and I found myself struggling in prayer listen 60% of my prayer life is determination and 40% is desire because if it is 60% of my prayer life would be desire and 40% would be determination I will pray whenever I feel like it reverend my brother and sister I pray because God is saying in his word I need to pray and there is a certain time every day when I look at my watch and I said it is time to pray and there was I was standing there in one spot and praying and I felt Lord I am not getting anywhere and I sense a lack of the spirit of prayer in my life and I lift my heart to God and I said God

your word says if I who are evil know how to give goodness unto my daughter how much more will you give your Holy Spirit to those that ask you and I said God I just lift my hand up and said God will you give me a spirit of prayer and it was right there and boy I just got going all day oh you say you know that is unique no no that is biblical and I pray for these men that they will this week listen my brother I pray by the grace of God that you will make up your mind this week that you are going to become a man of prayer you

say Gerard you don't understand I need to work 8 or 12 hours listen I want to tell you that you can have a relationship with God where your relationship with God have an effect upon your circumstances and your circumstances will not have an effect upon your

relationship with God and why should I pray because my relationship with God demands it my responsibility before God demands that I pray sure I mean you talk about responsibility you say what is responsibility responsibility is my response to God's ability I mean God wants to do it God wants to do it God wants you to respond to that I want to close to this you know I work with a man in what is called Deutsch Africa and he was a Scotsman and before we start anything anything in the year we spent in prayer you said how did you pray 16 days I don't know we did it there was a conference center in the middle of a province and Mr.

McLeod and his wife and I was the only evangelist in Deutsch Africa with him and 9 Christian farmers and their wives came together for 16 days of prayer 3 sessions every day up in the morning Sunday you threw Mr. McLeod stopped us and he said it's time to thank God he said God gave us the burden we prayed for 3 days we threw I didn't know what it mean what that meant but after those 16 days we went back to the city and he came into my little room at the headquarters and he turned to me and he said to me Gerard he said I want you to go to the town of office bay I said Mr.

McLeod why do you want me to go he said well we prayed we prayed for 3 days and we prayed through we touched the throne of God for the town he said Gerard I can't give you money for fuel and for gasoline but I can give you a little car and I want you to use your allowance and I want you to go to office bay to do an evangelistic crusade and I said why Mr. McLeod he said because we prayed through Gerard I said where will I stay he said I got the address of a Christian lady in the town and maybe you can stay there and then he looked at me and he said we prayed through and we prayed for 16 days and he said you go into office bay and I want you to stay in the town of office bay until the spirit of God broke through and I was a young evangelist and I thought I mean what does that mean and I remember I drove up about 450 miles to the town of office bay and I drove up and I thought God what is going to happen here this is new to me I am just a young evangelist I came into the town of office bay and I couldn't find the address of these people and in my desperation I stopped the little car and I thought I better just ask people and I stopped and got out of the car and walked to a house and knocked at the door of the house and a lady opened the door and I said madam I said I am an evangelist and I am looking for the house of mr. and mrs.

Newman were the names of these people and she said you know I am a Christian and I thought boy this is wonderful and I said what is your name and she said my name is Lydia and you talk about the bible and I said do you know the Newman's and she said yeah they are just living around the corner and I said oh thank you so much and I said you know you can come to these evangelistic services that's all I said and I went across to the Newman's house and I was sitting in the house and I met this mrs.

Newman and when I began to talk to her I found out that she was suffering from a nervous spoke to my husband, my husband is a German and my husband she looked at me and said my husband is not a believer but she said you know we have an apartment in our yard about 20 or 30 yards from our house and I asked my husband if you can come and stay there and my husband said you can come and she wanted her husband to be saved and I thought thank God he gave me a place to stay and the four little African boys we had 4,000 notices pamphlets and we got the school hall in the town of Walthers Bay and

we walked from house to house didn't have a lot of gasoline in the little car we walked from house to house and gave people these little pamphlets and would you come to the evangelistic crusade of the faith mission and I mean you know how people you know and know how people are and so and then the first day night was the first service and I spent the first day in prayer and fasting and God gave me a message.

I still remember it was in Luke chapter 9 about the mount of transfiguration and this little message was burning in my heart and fasting and praying all day and tonight I'm going to the service in the school hall and I mean the place is going to be loaded and packed with people because Mr. McLeod said we prayed for three days and we prayed through. That night I got to the school hall and at half past six and I put my books out and we were selling Christian books and I put the hymn books out and put the chairs to sit around 400 people and I thought well I just put maybe 50 or 70 or 90 chairs out and I put the chairs out and the service system was supposed to start at 7.15 and 7 o'clock not a living soul turned up and 7.15 not a soul I mean not even a cat. There was no one and 25 people half past seven I said to myself we prayed for 16 days.

I spent the day in prayer and fasting and God gave me a message and I did something which I've never done in my life before and I've never done it since but I had a service that night. I made the announcements and I talked about my books. I thought well I'm going to practice anyway and I sang the opening hymn and I prayed the opening prayer and I sang another hymn and I read the scriptures and I preached my sermon because God gave me a sermon and I can honestly say that I was not discouraged.

I closed the service and I put the books in the suitcases and I put it back in the little car and I drove back to the apartment and I was in the little apartment for about 5-10 minutes and there was a knock at the door and I opened the door and there was this big German standing, brilliant man, he worked with a great scientist Wernher von Braun in Nazi Germany and fled the country and came to Deutschland, Africa. He stood in my door and when he followed the door, this big man, he looked down at me and he said my wife said you should come in for a cup of coffee and I said thank you Mr. Phillips and I would never forget I was following him in the little pathway like this and as we walked like this there was a moment that he just stopped and he turned around and he looked down at me, I mean he was a big fellow and he said by the way how did it go with that service tonight and I looked him straight in the eyes, I mean that's what you do with Germans you know, ask me, I'm one. I looked him straight in the eyes and I said Mr. Phillips, God was there tonight and he looked down at me and he said how many people came and I looked him straight in the eyes again, I mean you do it twice with Germans you know and I said Mr. Phillips, there was no one tonight.

I thought afterwards I was kind of stupid you know, I should have said to him there were four, the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit and me. I said Mr. Phillips there was no one tonight and boy I never forget, I mean this German he just stood like this and he looked at me and he said so what did you do and I looked him straight in the eyes, you do it three times with Germans you know and I said Mr. Phillips, I preached tonight to you there were a hundred people and I'll never forget it. He just turned around like this and he just shook his head and I could see him saying this guy's got Anthony at it, I mean the elevator is not going to the top, but I went because you know what happened that night Fred Phillips couldn't sleep and around midnight he woke Lydia up and she set up and she said Fred what's wrong and he said I can't sleep Lydia and she said why can't you sleep Fred, he said it's this man, she said what about this man, he said this man preached when there was no one there, she said what do you think Fred, he said I think we should go, this is what I'm talking about.

Friday night I had two people in the service and God came from heaven and saved Fred Phillips and it was the 13th night of that crusade and we had about 70 people in the services and this is what I'm trying to get at, when God the Holy Spirit came and broke in that service and in that service that night there were 35 people converted and I didn't cancel one single one because God came to church that night and it got people's attention. Today I don't remember my name, I hope not, but they will say to you that that church was born in 16 days of intercessory prayer. My brother and my sister, I think it's time for us to get serious with God and I know the service is on but I'm going to challenge you tonight.

It's one week that we are like this together. I mean, who cares about the time? Next year you have forgiven me by that time. But I'm going to ask you tonight, if you sit here and you have not spent time in prayer, if you are one of those people who say, I spent just a few minutes here and a few minutes there, I'm going to ask you tonight to go down to the prayer room and make a commitment to God in the place of prayer.

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