

Encounter With God - Session 4

by Greg Frizzell

The sermon emphasizes the importance of prayer, total surrender, and the transformative power of the Holy Spirit in our lives and churches.

Duration: 1:18:28

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Acts 1:4, 2 Corinthians 7:1

Topics: "Experiencing God"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of making a commitment to prayer and spending quality time with God. He encourages believers to prioritize their relationship with God over other distractions, such as excessive television watching. The preacher also highlights the need for believers to allow God to be the Lord of their hearts and eyes, and to give Him the time and attention He deserves. The sermon references Acts 1:4 and John 15:4 as key passages to support the message.

Transcript

I tell you what, I'm going to miss you folks. I really am. The love of the Lord in this place is incredible.

And I keep thinking about the ministry God has called you to, and obviously this is kind of a, can be a tough area, a lot of strongholds in this area. But you know to whom much is given, much is required, and to me that's a great compliment to you, that God's raised you up in a place where you desperately need churches. And so no telling what His future is, and I'm just so excited for where I see you.

And again, across this country, when I see churches going where you're going in prayer, it isn't long until they hardly recognize themselves often because of the growth they've had. So I'm honored to be with you. This final service really is a special service.

It's kind of like a turning point. It's kind of like pulling everything together so that you have something that kind of to drive a peg in the ground so that really you can be totally different in the days ahead. But I'm going to ask you to take your Bible and turn to Acts chapter 1 and verse 4. While you're finding that passage, I want to give you kind of a testimony of God's greatness.

And I really need to stress this. Remember if God has convicted you about anything that we've talked about or if He does tonight, and He might, remember He's never doing that to condemn you. The enemy is the one that is your accuser.

He's the one that likes to beat you up and put you down. The past is past. God has stamped justified on your forehead.

He's stamped accepted on you by the blood of Christ. And we have every reason to rejoice and be hopeful. But now here's the funny story I want to tell you.

I'm convinced God has a sense of humor, partly because He called me to preach and I'm not a speaker. But He did something really great but also humorous with my marriage. When I was 22 years of age, God gave me a promise that I would have a godly wife one day.

But it was kind of ominous the way He said one day, like I was going to have to wait a long time. And so I went to my first church out of seminary as a single minister. That's unusual to begin with.

And you know, you've heard of churches that have a pastor search committee? Well, our church had the most dedicated pastor's wife search committee you've ever seen in your life. Now there were five women on that thing and they weren't elected, but they may as well have been. That was the most dedicated bunch I've ever seen.

Ms. Minnie Parsons was the chairlady of the pastor's wife search committee. And every Sunday of the world, two things are going to happen. Number one, I was going to face the pastor's wife search committee.

And they were going to say, we prayed another week. Have you met anybody yet? Folks, for 13 years, I had to tell them nothing, nobody, not even a cloud the size of a man's hand on the horizon. I mean, it was nothing, you know.

And the next thing that was going to happen, somebody always had a word from God. Yes, sir, they had a granddaughter or a daughter, but it never was right. So at the 13-year mark, the pastor's wife search committee said, okay, we're desperate.

I thought you're desperate. And this is funny, but it's so beautiful. It illustrates what we've been talking about.

They said, we're going to start fasting and praying together. I said, knock yourself out, try anything, you know. But here's what they said.

We're going to pray that someone out there will take time to really listen to God. And so that's what they prayed, that someone out there, because they said, she's obviously not in this church. We've tried everything.

So they said, somebody's going to hear God and know to introduce you to your wife-to-be. Now I'm going to tell you what God did. There was a pastor in 40 days of prayer.

He lived on the other side of Memphis. And he'd been, he'd done something he'd never done. He'd take the last 15 minutes of his prayer time and he would get very quiet and he'd say, Lord, I want to learn to hear Your voice better.

And he thought, he barely knew me, he knew I was a pastor on the other side of the city, and he thought I was married. He really thought I was married. But when he asked God to speak to him, he said, Greg, your name started coming to my mind like neon lights, that I was supposed to introduce you to my

sister-in-law, who was 38 at that time, who when she was 22, God told her to die to marriage and children, to serve Him only.

And that's tough. But he told her to do that and she did. But he told her, later I'm going to let you have a husband and it's going to be a long time.

Well, he kept getting this thought to introduce me. He thought I was a married pastor. He said, I'm not going to introduce my sister-in-law to a married pastor.

And every day he would say, God, do you have anything to say to me? And my name would come to his mind. He thought he was going crazy. He couldn't believe he thought the devil was interfering with his thoughts.

It got so strong, he finally called the church. He said, your pastor's married, isn't he? They said, he is the only pastor in West Tennessee that's never been married. He said, a hair stood on the back of his neck.

He said, I've been hearing God. I'm glad he didn't tell me the whole story, just scared me to death. But he said, would you take my sister-in-law to lunch? I thought, oh, I've heard that before.

I thought, well, yeah, I'll take her to lunch. I thought, what harm can it do? Folks, within one month, we knew beyond any shadow of doubt, God had moved heaven and earth. Our paths would have never crossed in a million years.

And we were married a year later. Talk about a big event in the church. And it was just so miraculous how God did it.

Now, God doesn't always work that way. But friends, when we wait on him, and there were a lot of times it would have been easy to go ahead and get involved with someone. But, you know, God has a perfect plan.

And sometimes it's later than we think. And he's got a sense of humor. So let him, learn to let him speak to your heart.

He's got a solution. And it's himself. It came to a point where it was okay if I never got married.

And that's what he did in my way. And that's what he's really after, that he be more to you than anything. Then he can do a lot of things in your life.

I hope you got a kick out of that. But God is a great God. He's a merciful God.

And so in this passage tonight, we're going to see what God wants to do in us as individuals and as a church. And, you know, we're going to pray before we read the word of God. So let's bow together.

Father, thank you that your grace is greater than all of our sin and weakness. Oh, God, thank you. You want us to know you so intimately.

Father, you want to use us so mightily. Father, help us not to sell ourselves short. And oh, Father, tonight, get me out of the way that, God, we may hear you.

And Lord, come to a turning point tonight. Help us, Lord, to truly let you take us where you want to take us. Father, thank you for your mercy.

And Father, speak to us and change us. Cleanse us, God. Let it be a turning point before we ask it in Jesus' name.

Amen. Well, Acts chapter one, verse four, really describes the power he wants us to have. And he says, being assembled together with them, he commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the father.

Now that word wait didn't go sit, mean sit and twiddle your thumbs or eat. It meant go pray. It was an expectant word, go expectantly pray for the promise of the father, which he said, you've heard from me.

And here was the promise. John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit. Not many days from now.

That was incredible because look at verse eight, what that was going to look like. Uh, and if you, if you're saved, he's, he lives inside you. You were baptized into his body, but look at verse eight.

He says, you're going to receive power when the Holy Spirit's come upon you. Now that word power in a Greek text is a word called dunamis. It's a word we get dynamite from.

God was literally saying you are going to become spiritual dynamite. Now, did you look in the mirror this morning and say, praise God, I'm spiritual dynamite. Probably didn't do that.

But you know, the truth is dynamite lives in his people, but the truth is it's not really showing up much in many cases. So what's holding back the power, but look at what he said. He said, you're going to be witnesses to me right here in Jerusalem.

Now, do you remember what they'd been doing up to this point? The early church had been hiding. They were scared to death. The Romans wanted to hang them on a cross and they meant business.

So they'd been hiding. They didn't have much boldness. They believed in the resurrected Christ.

They'd seen him, but they still didn't know how to reach their world. And so he said, you're going to be so empowered. You're going to walk right up to those Romans, right up to those Jews, and you're going to tell them about Jesus and the whole world is going to be turned upside down, but credible power.

They were going to lose their fear and they were going to lose their lack of power. Well, we need that today, don't we? But he said something else. He didn't say it's going to be a miracle by the minute and goose bump by the hour.

He said, many of you are going to die. He said, many of you are going to be tortured. And they were, but you know what? They turned the world upside down.

And it wasn't long after that old Peter preached and terrible sermon, but the power of God was on 3000 people got baptized in one, one day. And not long after that, the Bible says that their, their enemy said, here comes those people that are turning the world upside down. Wouldn't that be wonderful in Petaluma to have them saying that about this church that are turning the whole world upside down? Well, folks, that same God lives in us and that same God is doing that right now in India and in China right now.

Well, where is he? Well, he's beginning to work here. He really is. You're headed right where this is going.

But we have to ask the question, what's the secret to the full power? I mean, the flood, the great revivals of history. How could that come to Petaluma? And it could, I'll tell you, I'm so encouraged for you, the way these pastors begin to pray together, that is God at work. The way you're Friday night group is beginning to pray together.

Listen, that's God at work. And that is exactly how he brings the power. And if you're not in that group yet, I'd encourage you to be because it'll revolutionize your life.

It really will. But where does he take us from kind of where we are seeing some blessing, some growth to the explosion in our own life and in our church? There's a little principle here that we have to get, and it's what we're going to try to get tonight. It is the turning point.

They not only prayed in that 10 day prayer meeting. We know they spent 10 days praying fervently, praying together, praying united for the outpouring of the spirit of God. And it came, but there was something else that happened that was the key to the whole thing.

And it really is the missing element that takes us from here to here. And the missing element is total surrender of our heart to his Lordship. You say, well, does it say that in that verse? It doesn't say it, but it certainly shows it because you see, they had to decide in that 10 days, are we ready to walk out there and stop hiding and walk up to the Romans and up to the Jews? And some of us get killed.

They had to decide that. And that's what they decided in that 10 days. And we see that throughout all history.

When God's people come to a place saying, Lord, I want to give you everything. It's then that God can feel the sacrifice. It's then that he can fill you with what the Bible calls that mighty rushing river.

But the problem is we're very good at not surrendering everything. And don't be intimidated. I think, well, I can't do that.

I'm not strong enough to do that. None of us are strong enough, but tonight, if we'll be saying, God, I want to be willing, he'll take you there. It's his grace.

He'll help you to do this. Now there's another passage that is the secret of God just doing incredible things. It's 2 Corinthians 7.1, 2 Corinthians 7.1. And in a moment, I'm going to give you another testimony about a hopeless church in Memphis and a hopeless little preacher, me, that God just did some wonderful things through, but it happened because of this verse.

And this is exactly what it's saying to a church right now. There's a great revival going on in Louisiana right now. I mean the real thing.

It's incredible. A whole town has been revolutionized. It's just incredible.

And it happened by this verse we're about to read. 2 Corinthians 7.1, the Word of God says, having therefore, did I say chronicles a minute ago? I did. Okay.

In 2 Corinthians 7.1, the Word of God says, having therefore beloved these promises and the promises were Christ in us, the grace of God, having these promises beloved, let us cleanse ourselves of all filthiness of the flesh and spirit. So can you cleanse yourself of the filthiness of the flesh and spirit? Well, it says it, but of course we have to understand what he meant by that. He's not saying in our strength.

He's not saying by our, our, our strong will, but he is saying it's all the grace of God. But he's saying you and I have to make a choice. He's saying we have to want to be yielded and clean.

So he says, having cleansed ourselves of all filthiness and that's all, that's a whole life process. We're all a work in progress. He says, let us, he says, literally cleanse ourselves of all filthiness of the flesh and spirit.

Then he says, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. Now here's what's happened in modern America. We're pretty good at asking God for things and we're pretty good at doing a little surface surrender at the top.

Well, when he says filthiness of the flesh and spirit, that gets different. The flesh is things we look at things we say, things we do that we know we need to yield to God, but the spirit, that's a whole different matter. That's letting God go down into the attitudes, you know, maybe the complaining that gets ahold of us going down into the anxieties that really get a grip on us, going down into the jealousies, going down into that, to that bitterness that kind of gets lodged deep down.

And he's saying, I want even that. Now don't panic. He'll help you do this, but he's saying we have to really be willing to open up.

And you know, it's just like going to a surgeon. If you were to go to a surgeon and say, I want you to really change my heart. I want you to give me heart surgery.

But then about halfway when he came to the anesthetics, oh, I'm not going to do that. And I don't really want you to cut me. You know, you wouldn't get your heart fixed.

So he's saying, I want to go all the way down into the very attitudes and he's going to help you do it. And this is the turning point. It really is has to be deep, but we have to want it and he'll help you want it tonight.

And so I want to give you the testimony. Now the church I believe will encourage you. And by the way, you know, better than to pray for experience.

Don't you? That's an awful lot like praying for patients. Be careful when you pray. I know him better right out of seminary.

Oh God, give me experience. Boy, did he ever, uh, right when I was, they were dealing with me with church in Memphis, I was going as associate pastor, minister of evangelism, first church out of seminary. And I turned on the six o'clock news and there was that church on TV, six o'clock news, first of the news, but it wasn't a publicity campaign.

They were leading a woman out of that church in handcuffs said she had sexually molested little children in the daycare. This was 1984. You hadn't even hardly ever heard of such a thing in 1984.

Now the church I'm about to go to is the biggest, hardest, horrible scandal in the history of the Southern Baptist convention. I was terrified and it was on the news. Of course, the first 10 minutes was all about that.

You know how the media is. And so it was just unbelievable. And I was, I was scared to death, but they called and they said, we killed, they said, we're devastated.

We can't call a staff member with all this going on. To be honest with you, I thought, I'm glad you can't. I didn't want to go, but it was just getting worse by the day.

The allegations were awful, but they called back in about a month and they said, you know, we're just devastated, but you know, we still think you're supposed to pray about coming. Would you pray about coming? I said, Oh yes, I'll pray about it. I thought I'm not going.

But I prayed about it and God said, you're going. Well, I went, I hadn't been there six weeks. That thing blew up like an atomic bomb.

They arrested the pastor of the same charges only a lot worse. Now they said he was baptizing children in the name of Satan in the church Baptist street. Six o'clock news every day.

They arrested two other people. Now I'm right in the middle of this. Oh, guess what? The church was also divided right down the middle and they forgot to tell me that on top of everything else.

It was in the most gang infested area of Memphis and Memphis is a wicked city in terms of violent crime. This church is right in the middle of that. The only major business there, big factory moved out and the gangs totally took over the area and the legal bills quickly shot to \$3 million, \$1984.

This church was about 300 on Sunday morning with a big building debt. It was absolutely the worst thing that's ever happened. And that's not my opinion.

History professors said never has anything like this happened in the history of our convention, probably any other convention and still hadn't. It was hopeless. And now it really gets bad.

It's bad enough, isn't it? Within six months on another pastor kid with no experience right out of seminary. This battle went on for five solid years. I'm not exaggerating one out of four, five years.

That church was on the six o'clock news about two or three nights a week. And they, you know how they are. They give the same allegation, show the pastor out of the chair, handcuffs, devil worship, all that.

Now what chance do you think that church has of even surviving much less thriving? Well, it had none. Now I was young and I hadn't had Lyme disease at that point, had all kinds of energy. We did have a strategy.

We could get our hands on it. God and his mercy blessed a little, but that church was going to die. How could it not die? But then God brought me to this passage I just shared with you.

And I was so whipped and folks, I could put on a show, but I was whipped. I was beat. Maybe some of you feel that way.

You're just hurting. I mean, you're tired. You're burned out.

You've done everything you know to do and you haven't seen the miracles in your life. That's exactly where I was. I was moaning and groaning.

I was about to quit. I said, Oh Lord, we'd start a prayer ministry. You know, we'd done everything we could do.

And it got so bad, we even went, last thing we did before God showed me this, and this will apply to your life, believe me. And by the way, don't you feel good about problems you might have in your life right now? Hey, your church is doing great, isn't it? Hey, folks, it don't get too bad for God. What I'm about to tell you is how God took that hopeless mess and turned it into global publishing ministry and a multi-state radio ministry.

God, I didn't have anything to do with it. God did it, but through the people did what you're doing on Friday night. So I'm excited about where you're headed.

Well, right, but it got so bad. I said, folks, if we don't, if we don't reach some people are going to die. And so I said, let's go to 10,000 households.

That's a lot of households, door to door. In six weeks, and those precious little people, they did it in August in Memphis. It was hot.

They went to 10,000 people in six weeks just to try to tell them about Jesus. And folks, after visiting 10,000 people, not one person visited that church. That's it.

Okay, that's it. It's over. I'm quitting.

I'm leaving. I've done all we can do. God said, 2 Corinthians 7, 1, you haven't let me search your heart all the way to the bottom.

Now I had a pretty good little quiet time. And I'd gone through some of those cleansing lists. God was saying, you just think you've let me search you, you really hadn't.

And then he showed me the list that came out of returning to holiness, those scriptures. And he took me on a journey. And he said, let me take you all the way to the bottom.

He started showing me a lot of selfish motives I had. I was more worried about my comfort than God's kingdom. And he showed me some people I really said I'd forgiven but I really hadn't because I'd been hurt really bad during that five years.

And I'd say I'd let it go. But deep down, God showed me you really hadn't let it go. And God showed me some people that I'd kind of hurt their feelings and I kind of glossed over it.

And God started showing me a lot of things that I thought were little, especially the spirit of complaining. I kind of had a complaining spirit and didn't realize it. And God showed me this is really grieving my spirit.

And he's not talking about us being perfect, but he's talking about us just getting totally honest and letting him start working on the stuff down in our attitudes. And he said, you hadn't really done that. And when God got through me in that seven weeks, folks, the church was worse than ever.

It was a mess, but there was a supernatural joy that came. And people could tell it. They said, what do you know that we don't know? Do you know something's coming? But it was just the presence of God.

Then I asked them to do the same thing. I told them, you've got to really do it and mean it. You can't just read these scriptures.

You've got to really let him search your heart and get totally honest with him. And some of them did that. Of course, all 300 said they'd do it.

You know how that goes. But about 25 out of 30 really did it. That's all God needs.

He doesn't need a whole crowd, just a few. What you've got on Friday night is enough to see God begin to move mightily when it goes deep and he's just going there. I'm going to tell you what God did.

When we really embrace this cleansing, that's what we're going to kind of experience tonight. I'm going to take you through just a few little things to help you come to a turning point if you're not already there. And when they did this, his presence became about 10 times more real to all of us than he'd ever been alive.

And we'd seen him do some pretty good things, but boy, it just got so much more real. And that's when people started seeing their kids turn around. And sometimes that takes years.

And don't be condemned if you haven't seen that. Sometimes they're just mysteries. But it's so beautiful what began to happen.

Let me illustrate this for you, the difference that it made. Now, we had a prayer ministry and we had even a little prayer meeting going on, but we weren't seeing the mighty power of God. But when they embraced the deep, total, total cleansing of the heart on a whole new level, this was so funny.

We'd gone to 10,000 people and not one person visited the church and we were going to die. And so, but as they prayed together, they got a promise from God. And the promise was, pray the Lord the harvest that He'll send forth labors in the church.

So I said, you mean, Lord, you want us just to ask you to miraculously send people to join this church? Now, who's going to join a church with all that on the 6 o'clock news? They weren't even coming on the property, much less join the church. But guess what happened? When that group got their hearts really clean and started praying together like that, some of them started seeing their kids get touched and their husbands get touched. But another thing happened.

They got that promise that asked God to send people and nothing happened for a month. But one month later, after that prayer group started and got serious, I walked out on a Sunday morning, I got done for five years, and there were 35 new faces sitting out in that congregation. That's a lot in a church of 300 or less.

You know what I thought, and I'm not kidding you, the only people who visited our church for the first five years, and I'm not kidding, was the FBI and the news media. I'm not kidding. I saw those faces.

It scared me. I thought, what are all these news people doing here? I couldn't believe it. It was just people who had never seen that.

Folks, when the invitation came, seven people walked down the aisle. I sat to practice. I didn't know what to say to them.

I said, why are you coming? I couldn't believe it. I thought, what do you want? I'm not kidding. I almost didn't know what to say to them.

About three of them said, we don't know. I said, what do you mean you don't know? Baptists don't do that, you know. They said, we just felt led by God to come visit this church that's in all this trouble.

Now God's telling us to join this church. Seven of them joined the first Sunday. Next Sunday, he came five more.

Next Sunday, he came four or five more. Within about six weeks, about 35 new people had joined that church. It wasn't a big church split and a bunch of people coming, you know.

It was from different churches that God just told people, go to that church that's in all that trouble. Then he told them to join it. Boy, they were godly people.

Some of them were deacons and teachers. It gets even far better. We had a list of 60 lost people we'd been praying for for about five years, and only three or four of them had come to Christ.

Man, they got their hearts clean. Those people started praying in faith. They started praying in the power of God.

Within four months, 45 of the 60 had been gloriously born again. I didn't have trouble getting any of them baptized. They were changed people.

That same little group, it got to be about the size of your Friday night group, maybe not even quite that big. They kept adding people to that prayer list. They had about 100 lost people they were praying for.

When just a little over a year, 90 of those people had come to Jesus Christ. We've never seen anything like it in our life. He shook that church.

Then he gave the church a global publishing. I mean, gave it to her. Just incredible.

God cleared the church itself, got totally cleared of the charges, totally cleared. The church got proven totally innocent. God got great glory.

It took five bloody years. It don't get too bad for God. So friends, are you interested in a new touch of God? I don't want to mislead you.

It's not always 90 out of 100 every year or two. I don't want to mislead you. It's not.

But it's very powerful if we'll really embrace the total cleansing. Now how do we do that? What I want to do is very quickly, but hopefully thoroughly, deal with just a few little things that are blocking that full explosion of God in most believers in America in our life. And I can look at this group tonight and pretty well assume probably nobody here shot anybody this week, probably nobody here robbed a bank this week.

Those are not the things that's doing it. It's things that have gotten under our radar screen. You know what that means.

If it's on the radar screen, it means it's there but you don't see it or you don't realize how significant it is. And there are three or four things in most Sunday night folks' lives that have slipped under there and we've kind of tolerated them. We've confessed them but haven't really worked on turning from them.

And they really are hindering the full power of God. We see some blessing. We see some answers.

But God is ready to turn the power on. And He's ready. He's looking for a church and for individuals, teenagers, senior adults that He can really begin to move in to the incredible.

So what are these things? What we want to do for just a few moments is kind of let Him take us through three or four things that absolutely is what He did in Memphis, what He's doing across this country in the churches that are really seeing this big turning point and the believers that are seeing this turning point. The number one thing is this and we've talked about it all weekend. It's John 15.4. We have to make a decision that we really are going to abide in Him with deeper prayer, that we're not going to stay where we've been, that we're going to let Him take us into kingdom prayer.

Let me explain that real clear, real simple. What's happening, believers are dropping the excuses we dealt with this morning. You know, well, I don't know how or I don't have time or I'm not good enough or I can't do it every single day, which we probably can't.

But they drop that. They make a commitment that they're going to abide in Jesus the way He means. And they embrace the cleansing of their heart in their prayer time at least a lot.

And that's the one that's been missing. But they embrace that, not legalism, not condemnation, but they just learn how to add five or ten minutes to what they're doing and let God really do that continual cleansing and then the fullness gets greater and greater and greater. But this is a non-negotiable.

We all need this. So they make a covenant and a commitment. They're going to get serious about this and they're not going to make excuses.

Oh, well, I'm beyond that. Pride's the worst thing that happened to us. When we start thinking we're more spiritual than we really are, that really gets us.

So they make this covenant and here's what else happens. Along with this, they start praying for lost people. You know, when all those people started getting saved and then the revival of churches that we're seeing getting turned around, that's exactly what the people are doing.

They're saying, God, tell me who you want me to be praying for that doesn't know Jesus. Some of them are people at the coffee shop, the grocery store, some family members. But they're really adding that to their prayer time and they're getting serious about it.

And then God has given them promises for these people. And when they get specific, it's incredible what God begins to do. And the little book you're going to get on the, on the, how to pray ahead of your protection and how to unite with others to pray for your family.

They're starting to do that. And it is incredible when they take it a little deeper, they start praying in faith. They start praying very specifically for lost people and for strongholds to come down.

And God will give you insight on how to pray for those strongholds. And he wants to give us insight. It really does matter what we pray.

And don't be afraid it's hard or complicated, but, but general prayer is not near as powerful as just that spirit led specific prayer that he'll give you. And don't let any of this sound hard, but what he's calling us to do right now is say, you know what, God, I'm going with you. You know what, Lord, I'm not going to stay kind of in the average prayer.

I'm going to let you take me a little deeper and it doesn't take two or three hours a day. He'll work with you. And they're making this commitment.

And tonight you say, I want you to understand the things you're going to get in the mail this week. These two little, they've got these prayers in them and not magic prayers, but they'll show you exactly how to do this. And so tonight, God is simply saying, would you be willing to say, Lord, I'm going deeper.

I hope many of you, if you're not already in it will say, I'm going to try that Friday night prayer group. Don't be intimidated. You want to pray out loud if you don't want to, but it's amazing what God will do.

And, and they're doing this. People are making this commitment across America. They're just giving God a little more opportunity.

They're praying a little more specifically for lost people. And we're going to send you something you put right in your Bible. It's a thing to just write down those, those people, those that you're praying for.

It is incredible when we get specific and when we let the heart get really clean, the faith gets a lot stronger. And it is, I'm telling you folks, you can become a Miss Polly. You may not say 21 out of 30, it may be just two or three, but Hey, that's pretty good.

Isn't it? Wonder what if half the folks in this room saw two or three come to Christ within a year, that'd be pretty. We'd fill this room again. Wouldn't we twice or more that could really happen? No question about it.

But if we don't make this covenant it absolutely won't happen. And so God is just calling us right now to get serious. And he doesn't want us to remain a child forever.

You know, it's kind of safe to be a child. It's kind of done. It's, it's, it's nice not to grow up.

We can just kind of treat bombard God with our wishlist. He's saying, let's just take it a little deeper and begin to pray for people that are lost or those strong holes to come down. And Oh, he will honor that.

And you will, you'll grow more in six months. You've grown in six years. That's what he's doing tonight.

Would you be willing to say, God, I really will give you the time and I'm going to let you take me deeper in kingdom prayer and in stronghold tearing down prayer and he'll take you there. And it's incredible. But right along with that, the thing he's bringing a cleansing in us in and folks, I just have to tell you, this is kind of a tough one because we are in an epidemic right now of unadulterated, pure filth is coming to us from every angle on the airwaves, on the internet.

I mean, it is unbeliev. I don't know. In the last 15 years, there's been an epidemic that is absolutely unbelievable.

And really what is on primetime TV now, and I'm not talking cable, I'm just talking ABC, CBS, NBC, that would now have been rated R just, just 10 years ago. But, but the problem is, and it isn't that you can't watch anything. There are some things that are okay, but the problem is many believers have not realized that the word of God says in Psalms 101 verse two, we're to set no wicked thing before our eyes.

Now what does no wicked thing mean? That's pretty clear, isn't it? We're not to be looking at anything that's kind of questionable, even if the acting is good, even if it's a good storyline. But a lot of believers have begun to not adjust the channel and the channel has to be adjusted. The Bible says in Ephesians five, four, that we're not even to speak of things that evil people do in private and that we're to have nothing to do with the unfruitful works of darkness.

But here's what's happened. And we didn't even mean for it to, but Jesus can't be the Lord of anybody's heart. If he's not Lord of their eyes, it is incredibly significant what we allow our eyes to look at.

And so as believers have kind of drifted along in this, it's great, the spirit, and we didn't even realize it is quenched the spirit. And so we're sometimes wonder, why don't I have more passion for souls? Why don't I have more faith when I pray? Why don't I have more supernatural joy and why are mountains not moving more folks? What we look at is really significant with God. And so a lot of believers are really realizing this and they're making some adjustments and you know what they say, they say, I had no idea how much that was giving the enemy the right to put those unclean images in my mind.

Now most, most believers, well, I wouldn't want, I wouldn't look at anything really X, but so much now that's on is almost that way. And they're, they're realizing this and getting set free. So can you say that's happened in my life that I've sensed in the last few months that the Lord's led me to make some adjustments or praise God, maybe you never needed to make any adjustments.

Maybe you never drifted along with that. Now remember something we're going to see and hear all kinds of garbage. We can't help it in this life.

God totally protects you there. He really does. But if I choose to go watch something, knowing it's going to be filthy or knowing it's going to show some bad stuff, there is no protection there.

I'm allowing the enemy to put that on the screen of my mind and he will, he will take you up on it. But God's people are getting set free. And it was amazing in that church in Memphis.

This was some of the very things he spoke to some of those people about. Was it with, I didn't even realize it, but they were letting the Lord's spirit be quenched, but they made some adjustments. And again, there was some men in our church that were really having struggles with some bad images because they'd watch some things that run clean.

They'd struggle with that. And for a long time, but the moment they said, God helped me make some adjustments. God worked a miracle in their mind.

He set them, he set them free from that stuff. So tonight he's really bringing us to two things. He's saying, would you be willing? No more excuses.

No more. I don't have time. No more.

I don't know how I'm going to be one that prays for people to get saved. Maybe one that prays down strongholds. I'm going to give God time and I'm going to let Jesus be the Lord of my eyes.

And right along with it is the Lord of our time. And there are a lot of precious people that would never watch anything unquestionable, but we'll watch four hours of the history channel and there's nothing wrong with the history channel. That's great.

We ought to watch it, but you know what? There has to be a balance. Sometimes folks will watch four hours of that and read the word of God two minutes and that gets out of balance. So what God is doing right now, he's helping busy folks to make some adjustments.

And you know, you take a step toward God, he'll take 50 toward you. And again, there's things you can watch and God wants you to have recreation. He certainly doesn't want you to be a stick in the mud, but

right now he's really showing his people, I'm a holy God and I can't be Lord of your heart if I'm not Lord of your eyes, at least reasonably.

And he said, you have to give me a little quality time. And listen, he's revolutionizing their life. Could it be that he's saying something to you right now? With many believers, he does that not doing that to condemn you.

He's saying, I want to feel you. I want to, I want to hear your prayers. I want to, I want to touch you.

I want to speak to you. But he's saying this really does cloud your ears and this really does block my power. So tonight he starts with us to say, would you let me be the Lord of your time and the Lord of your prayer life and the Lord of your eyes? And no, we're not perfect, but he's saying, would you, would you seriously surrender? And when we come to the end of his service, you'll be able to pray just to surrender your heart, all of it to him tonight.

And he'll take you to a whole new level. But you know, he goes, what he's doing right now. And these people that sing great revival and a total new growth, he's starting with their time with him and what they see, what they look at.

And he's moving right into the attitude of the heart. Cause you know, that's really where we get miserable. It's the attitudes that get ahold of us that we don't want them, but they're there.

And so there's three, I'm going to deal with them in one, one, I'm gonna deal with them together. This is setting so many people free. It's the, it's the, the, I call it the triumvirate.

And what it is is the little short fuse has become a pattern where we've got a temper and it keeps erupting. Maybe you can hide it at church, but at home folks see it. Or maybe when you're by yourself, it comes up pretty often and people are really getting free of that or at least victory over that to some degree.

And right along with that is the attitude of complaining where we start kind of, you know, griping and we kind of resent our situations. And we move into a spirit of complaining though. God said, I want you to give me thanks in all things and rejoice in all things.

And that's not easy all the time, but it releases the Holy spirit. But many believers have drifted into the short fuse has become a pattern. And again, God's gracious.

He's not sitting there with a stick ready to get you at least time, time to get a little aggravated because we're human. But if it's become a pattern where it's really, it really pops up, we really get angry. We say, you know, things we shouldn't say, we've got a negative critical attitude.

See, we had no idea in Memphis how big a deal this was to God. Uh, in fact, in Proverbs 6, 19, it says, if someone has a divisive spirit and I'm having to go real fast, this is a 10 hour conference. So I'm going to trust you to go back and look at these scriptures in returning to wholeness again.

And then the prayer life, because we'd be here a long time if we took a lot of time, but please jot down when I give a scripture, I'm going to give a lot of scripture as we go along here. Um, but in, in Proverbs, it says that if someone has a divisive spirit, you know, that we're negative, we're critical. We kind of pick people apart.

God does not call that a sin. We had no idea. God calls that an abomination that that's worse than a sin.

God is real serious about us dropping the temper pattern and the negative, critical, unkind speech. That's big to God. Paul even said he put that in the same category as adultery and said, put that person out of the church.

Now that's, that's God's word, not mine. God is serious about that. And the, the people are realizing that and they're, they're letting God give them victory over that short fuse of that negative tongue.

There was a man in my church named Mr. Randy, and he was the meanest man in the church. And you know what? He was proud of it. Sometimes folks just get proud of it.

He, he was one of these guys and he said, uh, and the enemy gives you all kinds of excuses. He said, well, now I'm just one that says what I think. Now, please don't ever say that.

You know, five times in the Proverbs, the word of God says, the fool says what he thinks. And, and a wise man is quiet and gentle and holds his tongue. Now, sometimes we do have to say what we think when we say in love, but that wasn't Randy.

His face was just kind of stern and he just always negative. But when God spoke to him about this and God showed him that this, this temper pattern he had was not funny and that, that it was big. And so he, he just, he said, brother, Greg, pray for me.

I want to, I want to turn from this. He said, I've confessed it for years, but I've still got it. He meant it.

That man started changing every Sunday, come down the aisle and pray a little bit. And by about the seventh week, usually most people, it's about six or seven weeks and that there began to be real different. His wife came to, you're not going to believe this.

I got a new husband and his kids said, we got a new daddy and folks that lasted. And that man became the sweetest, kindest man, I guess, in the entire church. Total face change.

And it lasted, never went back. And God even used him to bring revival. This is a huge thing.

So maybe you're tonight, you're saying, you know, brother Greg, not many people know it, but I've really got a pattern. And brother Greg, I've been griping in my heart a lot and see, God says we're to give him thanks. And yeah, well, that's a little thing.

Folks murmuring got the children of Israel killed in the, in the, they never made out of the desert because they just kept complaining. I had no idea how big a deal that was to God. God is serious.

And he says, we're to give him thanks and all things. You say, well, why does he do that? Doesn't he know how hard that is? He knows how hard that is. But friends, that's the greatest way we show him faith.

And that's the greatest way we release his spirit in our life, or at least one of the greatest ways. So a lot of believers have short circuited the power of God in their life because we began to kind of gripe about things that, Hey, you said, well, maybe you got some things to gripe about. Maybe your work is really hard, or you got some relationships that are really tough.

God knows that hurts, but when we go ahead and praise him, as James one, two said, even when it's really difficult, listen, you're piling up more eternal reward during that time than you are in all the good days put together. And you're growing like you're on steroids, spiritually speaking. But friends, if we do develop

a pattern of complaining and griping, it really does grieve the spirit if it becomes a pattern.

And if it's really locked in our heart. So God is setting people free from these short fuses and from the negative attitude and from the complaining spirit, because that leads straight into the third attitude. That's this killing the power.

It leads to doubt. It leads to unbelief. And, you know, Jesus said it over and over.

He said, it shall be unto you according to your faith. And he means that it really is important that we, that we expect God to work in our life. And so when we begin to the short fuse is there and we're confessing it, but not turning from it.

And when the complaining spirit is there, it, it torpedoes your faith. And so you start giving up on folks and you start giving up on your situation. Jesus said, it's impossible to, it's impossible to please the father without, without faith.

And so when we start, well, I don't think my husband will ever get saved, or I just don't think she'll ever change, or I don't know that I'm ever going to be different in this area. Well, then you really probably won't because it short circuits God, but what he's doing right now, he's leading believers to say, father, I didn't even mean to, and I didn't realize it, but I've developed, I've been, I've been excusing my temper. And sometimes we'll say, oh, that's just my personality.

That's just the way I am. Lord wants you to surrender that. Or folks will say, when I got a right to complain, you know, really? He says, we're to thank him no matter what.

And that's tough, but he'll, he'll revolutionize your life. And he's saying, when we do that, we can have a faith then that's of the Holy spirit. Have you ever wished you had more faith? Well, we sometimes we face mountains, don't we? Faith is a fruit of the Holy spirit.

And you see if I'll praise him, even when it hurts. And if I'll get honest about the temper and start working on it, and we're not perfect, but when we do that, you know what he fills you. And then the faith comes and the faith releases the power of God.

So he's bringing a cleansing and he's setting people free when they'll say, God, I'm going to give you a little more time in prayer. And I'm gonna let you help me pray your way. I'm going to let you, I'm going to add cleansing to my prayer life.

And Lord, I'm going to, I'm going to let you be the Lord of my eyes. I'm going to make some adjustments. And it's almost like magic when people do that.

It really is amazing how much that grieves God's spirit when we don't. And they said, Lord, I want to give you the Lordship of my attitudes and Lord, I don't want to be confessing this same short few, six months from now, I want to at least be better. And it will be better if you mean it.

And then your faith starts increasing because his voice is a lot clear. I don't know how to say this any clearer that when our heart gets rid of yield, especially our attitudes, your hearing clears up. And when your hearing clears up, you don't have any problem with faith.

Faith comes by hearing, hearing by the word of God. And man, when you, when your faith is right, then he says, mountains start moving. And again, some take a while and there's still battle.

I don't want to tell you it's pie in the sky all the time, but listen, it's powerful. And God's not kidding. He says, you're going to be my witnesses.

You're going to turn the world upside down and lost his power. And if he's not moving, if the fruit's not flowing, then something's wrong with the abiding. It's just that simple.

He's not impressed with our education. He's not impressed with our personalities or money. It's all about saying, Lord Jesus, I'm going to give you my attitudes and man, he'll revolutionize you.

And then it great as he does this, he doesn't condemn us. He's not beating you up. He's so gracious.

But that brings me to the third area and really the biggest area of all, where he's just setting people free and bringing a cleansing. And there is no question in America. In fact, four years ago, I was asking Lord, what is the biggest single thing that's hindering your spirit from really moving and changing lives and growing churches, changing this nation? You know, it shocked me.

I thought the Lord would say, well, it's immorality or well, it's this. The Lord said it was relationships. Um, you know, with God, it's all about relationships.

It really is first commandment. Love him with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. Second, love your neighbor as yourself.

And he said that the first, the second is like the first, that means they're tied together. Nobody can really love God fully and really hate somebody else. And so the Lord is doing a mighty work.

In fact, tell me if I've got this scripture, right? Um, the Lord Jesus said, the world will know that you are mine by your brilliant strategies. Amen. By your impressive education.

That's good. But by your incredible buildings, by your worship, by your style, by your music said, the world will know your mind by what? By the way you love each other. And then in John, John 13, uh, 34, he said that in John 17, 21, he said the world will know that God sent me.

In other words, they'll believe your message by the way you're one with each other. Do you know that's a miracle that's happening in your church? There's a one is here. That's not in a lot of churches and that's God at work.

That's why I know your future is going to be awesome. But folks, this is really important and what he's doing. He's taking us to a whole new level of this.

Um, cause sometimes we can be pretty good here at church and yet in other areas of our life, there's some pockets that hadn't really been healed yet. And that's what, that's exactly where the Lord touches. So let me give you the two places is absolutely setting people free.

I worked in a Christian counseling center while I was at seminary and it was one of those kind of like an intensive care place. It was a really bad one. I mean, people came there that are usually gone to a lot of the places and they weren't getting any help.

And I was just an intern there, but what it was, it was a learning experience, but here's what set those dear people free more than anything else. And it shocked, it shocked us. It was Matthew 5, 23, Matthew 5, 23.

It is so vital. And yet so many believers live as if this weren't even in the Bible. But boy, this is not on the Bible.

It's central. Jesus said, and you remember this, he said, if you come to the altar to bring your gift and you remember there that your brother has out against you, he said, Oh, go ahead and put it on the altar. Ask God to forgive you.

It's no big deal. God will overlook it. Is that what he said? Not on your life.

He didn't say that. In fact, what he said was very strong. Remember the altar symbolized the presence of God.

So this would be a lot more than just bringing a gift. This will be to come to pray, come to worship, to come to the presence of God. He's saying your relationship with me is going to be hindered.

If I knowingly, willingly hold on to still wrong. Now don't panic. That doesn't mean we all got to have perfect relationships.

That doesn't mean everybody's got to like you. That won't happen. But it does mean if I know there's somebody in my life, maybe a brother, might be a sister, might be somebody at work.

I know I've offended them. And it's real. It's not some little, nothing.

It's real. There's a wall there. Listen to what the Lord said.

And this is so strong. He said, don't put the gift on the altar. You know what he was saying? He's saying, I don't want it.

He was saying, I can't really receive it. He said, put it beside the altar. He said, first go.

Boy, this is not gray. This is pretty black and white. He said, first go be reconciled to your brother.

He said, then you can come and bring your gift. Then we can be clean and right. Now don't panic.

Some people hear this and they get a sinking feeling in their stomach. Man, I'll never be right then. God's gracious.

Remember that. But he's serious about this. Now here's what he's saying, because I know how the enemy works.

He'll tell you, oh, well, you couldn't do that. They don't want you to come. So you can't go.

Now, if they tell you not to come, you have to honor that. And God won't hold you responsible in that case. Or you may go and you may say, would you please forgive me for what I said or my attitude? You say, what if they don't forgive me? Well, that's between them and God.

Now you don't give up on them. You still try, but God doesn't hold you responsible there. So see, this is not undoable.

But many times we'll make excuses. We'll say, oh, I don't really need to go. It wasn't any big deal, but we know good and well it was a big deal to them.

Our flesh gets real tricky at avoiding this. Oh, we're very, we're hard targets to hit. We'll come up with all the reasons why, well, that really doesn't apply to me.

But in many cases, it really does. Now, folks, we're talking about a significant thing. You know, some little bitty nothing doesn't amount to anything.

Don't let the devil beat you up about stuff like that. But what we're seeing and what we saw in that counseling center, that precious Christians, and this was a Christian center. These were mostly saved people, but they had ignored this.

And here's what they had done. They'd said, Lord, does anybody I need to go to? I didn't think so. Here's my prayer list.

You know, they did that. They did that quick thing. Or they said, Lord, is there anybody that I've offended now or in the past that I really need to go to? And Lord, you have 15 seconds.

They did that jazz and it's never real. So we said, Lord, we said, just tell us, is there anybody that you think of you need to go to that you've ignored this? And the reason we ignore just plain old pride, most of the time, we just, well, we just don't want to go and admit I was wrong. Or what we'll do is we might, some go, well, this is a mistake.

They'll go and say, well, yes, I was wrong, but you were wronger. That'll start World War III. That's not what he's talking about.

But the moment those people got honest, they'd say, well, there might be two or three. It's okay. I don't stop there.

Take the next two or three weeks. And we told him, have a good quiet time. I said, you really asked the Lord to show you if there's anybody at all.

And you know what happened? I mean, every time they'd come back in about three weeks. And some of these were pastors that were, had really gotten broken hearts and they were in trouble. And you know what they said? They said it wasn't two or three, brother Greg, it was 10 or 12, but then they would smile.

He said, man, why did he smile when he saw all that? They said, the moment I got honest with God, his grace was all over me. The moment I quit ignoring it, his spirit just became more real. And most time by that time, some of them had gone to one or two of them and maybe they didn't have phones back then.

Some of them were a long way. They'd already call one or two, but they hadn't necessarily gone to all of them, but they were in the process. They'd surrendered it to God.

He's not going to beat you up. He'll have to give you wisdom about how to go to some. And there may be some that they tell you not to come.

You have to honor that. But the moment they surrendered their relationships to Jesus and drop the pride, the spirit of God got all over them. Friends, this is really important.

It really is. I've seen so many revival start, not down the aisle, but across the aisle. When some believers just went to each other, you know, brother, you and I've had a thing between each other.

And you know what? That doesn't mean we have to agree on everything. Husbands and wives don't agree on everything. A lot of things we don't, but we still love each other.

He's not saying we have to agree or even like everything, but we don't have to like the same music, but we have to agree to not hold anger and to love each other anyway. And so oftentimes in the service right now, I'll ask people, and it's amazing after the service, how many times people will tell me this. I'll ask them now, as we've been talking about this and read that scripture, have any faces come to your mind? I've had a lot of people say, brother, yeah, two or three did.

And what so many say is, you know, four years ago, I knew as well as I knew my name, God wanted me to go to somebody and ask them to forgive me, but I made excuses or I put it off. I said I was going to, but I didn't. And here it is.

And now that name comes to mind and listen, I can promise you, if there are some names that have come to your mind, I can promise you, I didn't put them there. I can promise you that, you know, who did probably the Holy spirit. Sometimes the devil will beat people up about this and it's not even a real issue.

But most of the time in a service like this, if there are a couple of names, it's most likely the Holy spirit. And he is not doing that to hurt you. He's not doing that to condemn you, put you down.

He loves you. He's saying, this has been hindering my spirit. This has been robbing your joy.

This has been blocking some of the power. And he's saying, I love you. I want to be real to you.

And I want you to hear my voice. But he's saying, I'm serious about relationship. Nobody can be fully right with God and stubbornly wrong with somebody else.

And so tonight, would you be willing to just at the end of this service, say, Lord, I'm going to give you everything. Lord, I'm gonna give you my relationships. Don't panic.

Don't think you can't do this. He'll take you step by step. And if you'll just start, he'll do the rest and don't be afraid.

So tonight he's, he's, he's doing a wonderful cleansing work right here. But I got to tell you, there's one other, even bigger than this. And probably there's a lot of people in this room.

There's nobody you need to go to. Probably a lot of, a lot of you, maybe you've already done this a long time ago, but I can tell you one thing. Probably everybody in this room has been hurt really bad in your life.

In fact, probably many of us have gotten hurt in the last two weeks by somebody, some situation. Some of us are getting hurt every single day of our life at work, at school, maybe even in a relationship. God really knows that, but he also knows that it is vital that we not let the root of bitterness and anger take, take hold there.

And it happens so easily. So just a little over from Matthew 5, 23 and Matthew 16 and 14, Matthew 14 and 15, Jesus said this now, now hang with me. I know you've been here a little while, but hang with me.

We're coming to a real important turning point here tonight at the end of service. We just want to really truly say, Lord Jesus, I give you everything. And he starts us on a new journey now in this passage.

And it's a little complex because we have to apply grace to this, but it's still a principle. It says, if we will forgive men, their trespasses, the father will forgive us our trespasses. But if we will not forgive men, their trespasses, neither will the father forgive us our trespasses.

Now as a saved person, that doesn't mean you're going to lose your salvation because some of us have begun to struggle with some unforgiveness, but certainly in us that are saved people, that the grace of God is in us, the unforgiveness and the anger that takes root. There's this very little that'll block the joy, block the power, hinder our prayers like that does. And yet it's epidemic.

We are in an epidemic of hurt and anger. We're an angry society. You've heard road rage.

We got truck rage, bus rage, plane rage, elevator rage. I mean, there's just a lot of anger in folks' heart. And Jesus said, this is so important.

He said in Matthew 18, 35 and 36, that we must forgive people. And he threw that little phrase in there. That's the key to the whole thing.

He said, we have to forgive people from the heart because he knows us and he knows what happens. We say we've let it go, but we haven't. We say it with clenched teeth or we say it and there is a little way you can know that if there's a root of bitterness.

If you really do have that speech that you'd like to give to certain people and you're human, you're going to, you get hurt. You're going to feel it. It's going to rise in your mind.

God doesn't condemn you there. But if I start dwelling on that and I let that take root and I start really thinking about that, I start practicing that speech when I'm by myself, then I really crossed the line into really harboring the anger and God wants to set you free of that. But the problem is many times it's hiding on us.

And we don't even realize we haven't really let it go. And tonight all across this country, he's taken people to a point of just letting it go. And it's God's grace.

Let me give you a great illustration. You remember the woman Corrie Ten Boom, great woman of God, one of the best Christians of the last century. She was imprisoned by the Nazis during the war and tortured.

I mean, saw women die right and left, saw her sister die in that awful place. And there was one guard, I mean, that was the meanest of all. And they were all wicked.

But this guy was like the devil himself. He was so cruel. John, never forget his cruelty.

But after the war, those those guards were either dead or in jail or on the run. A few of them had escaped. And that guy was one of them that escaped.

And she was speaking one night in a large church in Germany. And she thought she'd forgiven and let she tried to let that anger go because she was human. She had some anger at times.

And but she couldn't believe it. She got to give her testimony in the back of that church, kind of hiding behind two people. She saw that evil face.

It was that very guard in that church couldn't believe it. But what she really couldn't believe was the anger that exploded in her heart. She thought she'd let it go.

But when she saw him, well, that anger came and she couldn't already speak. She had to close her eyes and they didn't know what she was doing. She just prayed and she couldn't look at him.

She kept looking away and she went ahead and spoke that night and God used her. But after the service, people were down front talking to her. She kept noticing he was hanging around the back, kind of looking at her.

And she said, as I talk to people, I could sense he was moving around by the side of the aisle, side of the church. And she said I could see him out of the corner of my eye. And she said he kept moving down toward the front of the church.

And he was nervous, you know, just looking around and afraid somebody recognize him. And she said soon I could sense he was at the very front of the church. And then she said, as the people in front of me began to thin out, she said, he just stepped right in front of my face, got right in my face real quiet.

And he said, he said, looked around, he said, you know who I am, don't you? And she said, I know who you are. And she was angry. She felt almost, hey, there she was a woman of God.

And his face just kind of, he just, like he just collapsed almost. He said, I knew you'd recognize me. He said, I know you'll probably turn me in.

But he said, I want you to know why I've come. He said, the man, his face, literally tears came to his eyes. And he said, Miss Corrie, he said, I don't know if you'll believe me or not, but he said, I really have become a Christian.

And he said, I've come tonight to ask you, is there any way you can forgive me for what I've done to you and all those women? And folks, she'd been hurt so bad. Some of you've been hurt so bad. And she felt the anger.

She was human. She saw her sister die in that place at his hands. And she didn't know what to say.

She still felt the anger. See folks, we don't have the strength to let go like that. God does.

And like she often did, she just closed her eyes and began to pray silently. And so for a long time, and she opened her eyes and she looked at him. And she said, sir, she said, I cannot forgive you.

But do you remember Corrie Ten Boom's face? If you ever saw Jesus on this planet, you saw it in her face. There was a love. There was something in her eyes.

It was so different. And that love came back. And there was a person standing around and saw this happen.

And she said, I cannot forgive you. But then a smile came. And she said, but as I prayed a moment ago, she said, I realized the one who lives inside me can.

And when she closed her eyes and said, God, what do I do? I'm so angry. And God gave her a mental image of Jesus hanging on that cross. And do you remember what he was doing while they crucified him,

while they blasphemed him? He looked at them and he said, father, forgive them.

Friends, we can't do that. We can't let it go. It's too much.

God understands the hurt you have. But tonight, if you and I will just get on and say, Lord, I really haven't let it go, but Lord, by your grace, I want to surrender this to you tonight. And Lord, I want to, I want to make a step and I want to choose to forgive.

Forgiveness is not a feeling. You may still have some feelings. Corrie said in that moment, something changed in me.

I still had to wrestle with it, but she said it was different. She said, I thought I'd really let it go, but I really hadn't. I'd fool myself.

So tonight it may be that some of us in this room realize, yeah, there's some speeches we still hold on to. And there's some folks we have, we say we've forgiven, but tonight God's saying you have to really, really, really let it go. But you say they don't deserve it.

They hadn't asked for forgiveness. Friends, do we deserve forgiveness? You say no matter what anybody has done to us, it's nothing to what we've done to Jesus on that cross. And he will help us to let it go.

He's bringing us to a turning point. He really is. And it's when we simply come and say, Lord, I can't, but you can.

Well, Lord, I want to get honest with you. I've held on to some things. Lord, I've, I've, I've watched some things.

Lord, I've been shallow in my prayer. I haven't given you time. And tonight he's saying, would you be willing just to say, Lord, I surrender that to you.

No more excuses. No more, no more. That's not my thing.

And I promise you something. It's not my promise. It's God's promise.

If you seek him with all your heart, you'll find him. If you surrender your whole heart, your attitude, your relationships. No, we're not perfect, but he can take that surrender and he can do a whole new work.

Now we come to the final thing. Now, the greatest thing of all, what he wants to do is give us a supernatural passion, a love, an excitement. Have you ever tried to work up excitement? You can't do it, especially when you're tired and beat up and all that.

But God will give us a passion that's supernatural and it'll, it, we're not perfect. It'll, it'll ebb and flow a little bit. But you remember in revelation, Jesus said to his church, he said, there is a sin that makes me nauseous.

He said, I'll spew you out of my mouth. It's when we get lukewarm. And to a church that was very active, they were even under persecution and still witnessing.

We'd have been hanging medals on that church. But he said to them about to remove your candlestick. I'm about to take my power off your life because you've lost your first love.

The worst thing that happened to us is that we lose the passion, the desire. We kind of just start floating along. And, but you say, God can, God can transform that.

That's the greatest blessing God gave me. When I had Lyme's disease, I had to learn to surrender my heart and trust him for supernatural passion. Because if I don't have supernatural passion, I have none.

If I don't have supernatural joy, I have none because I have a lot of pain. But you know what? He'll give you supernatural passion. If you're ready to surrender and admit, I've got some lukewarmness.

You have to admit I'm lukewarm. I'm going to close with this illustration because this is exactly where he's taking us. There was a little nine-year-old girl in Texas, a pastor, a minister named Manly Beasley saw this happen.

Went to this church to do a meeting. He was an evangelist. And on one night he was going to speak to the children and youth in a big, big, big church in Houston, Texas.

And it was a little nine-year-old girl that had been Christian about two years. That little girl loved the Lord. She was growing and she had a pretty good prayer.

Our pastor was preaching on prayer and she, the little girl was excited, believed God could do anything. And so she had a group of friends in school, about 30 of them that weren't Christians. In fact, they were, this was unusual in the Bible Belt, but they didn't go to church.

And she began to pray real hard. They'd come that night and give their hearts to Jesus. And so she began to pray for them, had their names all on the list and she'd pray for them.

So she went and asked them if they'd come and they were pretty honest, kids are, and they said, well, we don't go to church. In other words, we ain't coming. And it really burdened her because she wanted to see them saved so bad.

See, she had a passion for God and she kept praying and said, God, what'd I do to get them to come? And you know, God will speak to you. And she remembered her church had a pizza supper about six months early for the football team. And a lot of them had come to get, this was about 35 years ago and pizzas were a really big deal.

And so that little girl got the idea. What if I offered to buy everyone on a large pizza out of my own allowance? She said, that'll impress them if I'll do it. And that was going to be about her whole life savings, about all she had.

And she was really going to do that. And she went to school and she made announcements. She said, I'll buy everyone of your large pizza out of my allowance.

If you'll just come one time in about two weeks. And there were two mean little old boys that said, let's make her do it. Let's all show up at that church and make her buy every last one of us a large pizza.

You know, God can even use mean little old boys sometimes. And boy, they began to pump that up and it was working. She said, are you coming? I said, yes, sir.

We're coming to get that pizza. That little girl believed that's how God was going to get on there. You know, God can use children.

Well, she kept praying real hard and she got so burdened for him. About six of them said, we're not coming because we don't like pizza. And that little girl wanted to see him come to Jesus so bad.

She was concerned so much that she, that bothered her. In fact, the morning that of the Thursday, the mother found the little girl's list by her bed and the thing was soaking wet. It was really wet.

And she thought, what'd she spill? Where'd all this wet come from? And then she got to realize it wasn't a glass of water. And she, and she realized this, my little girl has been crying over this list and it scared her. She thought she's going to have a nervous breakdown.

She's taking this way too serious. This is weird. She had a family doctor friend, almost called the doctor and says nothing wrong with my little girl.

And there was two little old indentions in that mattress where the little girl's elbows were. The Bible says something about the fervent prayer of a clean heart avails much. Our old casual prayers sometimes don't do much, but God will give us this passion.

Not that you have to cry every time you pray, but he'll give you passion. He'll give you excitement. Well, the mother blew that off.

And she, she was in church. She was in the choir on two or three committees. She was always there.

And she was in the choir at seven o'clock. The husband brought the little girl and at seven o'clock, that back door opened and little girl came and just placed like a lighthouse, renting the ear to ear. And then she saw why behind her, that door started up and boy, it kept opening.

It kept opening. And those kids just kept coming. She couldn't believe it.

They actually showed up, but they were, these weren't church kids. They were making noise. They were throwing airplanes.

I mean, people were frowning at them and she thought, well, they're couldn't, they're here. They're really here, but they're not going to listen. And they all sat down back in the corner and little girl just sitting there praying.

And when this guy got up speaking, he was a very soft speaker. He wasn't dynamic at all. But she said, when he started speaking, those kids got like statues.

She said, they were just riveted. And she said, it wasn't long. She said, it wasn't an emotional message, but she said, those kids got under conviction.

She said, they started sniffing. They started kind of tearing up. And she said, God was doing something in those kids.

And she said about, and the guide said, if you want to give your heart to Jesus, you don't have to wait till the end. These people will pray with you. And a little old boy walked down the aisle, right in the middle of the church.

And you could tell, I want to give my life to Jesus. And then a little girl came. These, these kids were, they were broken.

They were really under conviction. And when the invitation came, she said, here, they all came. Only God knows how many of them really got, gave their hearts to Christ.

But she said, it looked like they were serious. Those kids were broken. They were, they were weeping.

They're about 10 years of age. And she's, I sat in that choir. And as far as I could tell, watch my little girl's whole class get saved.

And then she said, I was the next one down the aisle. And this is where it really gets interesting. She went up to old Manly Beasley, and he was a great man of God.

And she said these words, brother Manly, there's nothing wrong with my little girl. And she said, but there's a lot wrong with her mother. She said, I know I'm a Christian.

I know I've been saved. But she said, brother Manly, I'm just dry. She said, I say my prayers.

But she said, brother, I just don't have that passion. I've lost that joy. I've lost, I don't, I don't have that earnestness when I pray.

And she said, we're not really, I'm not really seeing many answers to prayer. And she just got honest. Her marriage is cold.

And she said, how can I have what my little girl's got? What's wrong with me? He said, ma'am, tell me about your quiet time. She said, well, I have a little devotion. Don't have it every day.

He said, what do you do? He said, well, I'll read a little devotion. I'll say a prayer. He said, ma'am, do you really let God search your whole heart? At least some every now and then.

She said, I don't know what you're talking about. And he gave her a long list of those scriptures like you've got. He said, ma'am, you take the next few weeks and you really let the Lord, especially your relationship, especially any anger, just whatever he shows you, he's not trying to hurt you, but you've got to let him do this or he can't fill you.

And she said, okay, I'm going to do it. He said, ma'am, I don't know when, but God will give you what your little girl's got. Well, he went back to that church five years later and that woman walked up to him and she said, brother Manley, do you remember me? And he didn't have been to hundreds of churches, I guess in five years.

And she'd changed. And he said, well, you'll have to help me. And she said the nine-year-old girl and called her names.

I'm her mother. He remembered that nine-year-old girl who said incredible miracle of all those kids coming to Christ. And this is what she said.

She said, brother, man, I want you to know I got it. He said, ma'am, what do you mean? She had to remind him. She said, brother Manley, there were some things in my heart.

I really hadn't yet. I thought I had, but I hadn't yielded. And she said, brother, man, I can't tell you what God's done.

She said, we've seen so many, I've seen so many answers to practice in my marriage is different. And she, I want to introduce you to three people have led to Jesus leading up to this revival meeting, which he walked away. The pastor said, that woman has changed our church.

So that woman's brought about 40 to 50 people into this church over the last five years. It's just incredible. She's, there's nobody in church like her.

And listen, that's where God wants to not that you may see all that that's it's, it's not, and you're certainly not always going to say a whole class gets saved and in six weeks, but he's saying, I want to fill you with a real, a real passion. And he's saying, it's up to you. So tonight he's bringing us to a place of saying, will you surrender everything? And he'll, he'll give you the grace to that.

We're not perfect, but we have to be willing to say, Lord, I'm going to give you everything. What we're going to do. And just for a few moments, we're going to have a time of prayer.

And during this prayer time, I'm actually going to just kind of, I'm going to mention a few, just a few things. And, and this is, you know, this is all between us and God tonight. If he's put his finger on some things and most, most time in service like this, he shows us some things we need to yield, but I'm just going to ask you, would you really pray tonight? And especially husbands and wives, if you're not praying together, at least some tonight, especially, would you be willing to say, Lord Jesus, we're going to take a step in that direction.

We're going to learn how to pray for our kids with, with effectiveness and pray ahead of protection. Folks, I got to tell you, they're in trouble if we don't in this day and time, but you can do, if you're a single parent, you can do this. So tonight, God loves you so much.

He is not, if he's shown you anything in your life, he wants to help yield. He's done that to lift you up, not push you down. So I'm going to ask right now that we would stand with our heads bowed and eyes closed, just, just in a spirit of prayer right now.

And I would ask that our instrumentalists would just softly play for just a moment. We've come to this night to say, Lord Jesus, I really want to go deeper. And I'm going to ask you just to pray about several things and focus your mind right now.

Don't let your mind wander right now, just for a few moments. We're going to really seek to surrender everything to the Lord. But right now, has God tonight possibly said to you that maybe there have been some excuses that your time in prayer and in the cleansing part has just really been kind of short.

And maybe you've made some of those excuses and didn't even realize they were excuses, but tonight God's helped you see, and he wants you to say, Lord, I really will give you a little more time. And I'll let you take me deeper in praying for lost people, for a hedge of protection. Lord, I want to go deeper.

And you've got the things going to be right in your hands to help you do it. It's simple. A child can do it.

But tonight, would you say, Lord, no more excuses. Lord, I really commit by your grace. I won't be perfect, Lord, but I'm going deeper.

Would you be willing in a moment to pray about that and just surrender that to God? Maybe you're here and said there's some adjustments I might need to make in some things I watch. I don't know that's

between you and God. Or it may be tonight that you'd say, Lord, I want to really give you my heart attitudes.

Lord, did just some, I need to really not just confess, I need to turn from. I need to yield. If there are, you know that.

And God loves you. Tonight, it may be that I really believe there's some people I may need to ask to forgive me, and there may not be anybody, but would you be willing tonight to say, Lord Jesus, I don't want to resist you. Lord, I'm willing to give you my relationships.

Maybe there's that point of hurt. You've been badly hurt. Tonight, you want to say, Lord, I want to make sure that I've really let this go, that I'm not holding on to it.

And he'll give you the grace to do that. Especially tonight, husbands and wives, that maybe you'd like to recommit, to pray a little bit more, maybe a little deeper. And if you're a, you say, well, it's too late.

My kids have grown. It's not too late. God's merciful.

Start now. He can give back years off when locusts have eaten away, but you have to start. Tonight, you'd say, Brother Greg, I just, I just need a greater passion, Brother Greg.

I just sensed that somehow the busyness, I've lost the joy. I've lost the heart hunger for Jesus. Well, you know what? If we just admit that he'll give it back, he really will.

So we're just going to take a few moments now and your pastor will be standing down front. And you know, this altar is open. If you want to spend a moment, this altar, especially maybe husbands and wives or whatever, and just yield your heart to the Lord.

And that's between you and Lord, what that would be. But I know one thing, if you're serious, he's serious and he'll take you deeper. So tonight we're just going to have a time of prayer.

And if you need to pray for a moment before God to surrender your heart at this altar, do it. If you need to pray with your pastor about something, there's power there. Just do it.

Brother Tom, if you would just stand and nobody's looking around right now, but if you need to pray with him, if you need to spend a moment, this altar is, oh, father tonight in this place, Lord, I'm giving you my whole heart. I want to go deeper. You know what it is.

God knows what it is tonight. Give him everything. Now we quietly wait right now.

That's right. Just slip out and come. If you need to pray with your pastor, you need to talk to God, this altar, you take five good steps toward God.

He'll take 50 towards you, but you do have to take the five and he loves you. Your healing can start tonight. Your new beginning can start tonight.

That's right. Just slip out and come to the Lord. Just do business with God.

Nobody's looking around. It's not a show. Grandparents, it's not too late to go to a whole new level of prayer for your grandkids and your kids, but he'll take you there tonight.

Just say, Lord, I give you everything that he can fill a heart. That's that's willing to surrender, but he can't. If we're not, he won't make you.

He won't take you over like a robot. He won't force you, but he convicts you. He said some things to you tonight.

And I'm always convinced when God speaks to your heart, deep down, you know it, you know it. If there's some programs you just need to turn off, you know that right now. Don't argue with God.

Just yield it. He loves you. He'll give you the strength to have a clean mind.

Just yield it. There's some faces came to your mind. Don't argue with God.

Just trust him for the grace and he'll he'll cleanse you. He'll touch you. It'll astound you how you can heal.

And many, many have come to pray and do business with God and with their pastor. If you yet need to come, you can or you can pray right there where you are. We're not trying to get anybody to do anything.

It's just between you and God. But don't let pride stop you. The most filthy thing we have is pride.

We worry about what someone thinks. We have to drop the pride. Tonight you said, Brother Greg, I've had this temper for years.

It just keep popping up and I really want to let it go tonight. I don't want to just keep confessing it over and over again. Brother Greg, I really, I want to repent.

He'll give you the grace to do that, but you have to admit, Lord, I've been tolerating it. And there'll be things we have to deal with that we're not perfect. But when it's set up as a pattern and it's not getting any better and it's been there for months and years tonight, God's saying it's time to get serious about that and he'll give you the grace.

Maybe there's been that bitterness of complaining and you've been you've been hurt and you maybe maybe you didn't understand why God let something happen, why a prayer didn't get answered. Friends, there are times we just don't understand that. There's a mystery there.

But with many, resentment has set up toward God. We just have to be honest. You say, God's big enough to handle that.

If you just say, God, I've doubted you. I've had some resentment, Lord. Lord, would you help me let it go? He'll help you.

He loves you. Your whole new life starts with a whole new surrender. Whole new closeness starts with honesty.

Maybe you've given up on someone, on yourself even. Tonight, God, just admit to God, Lord, I've doubted you. Lord, I've given in to discouragement.

And Lord, would you help me to have a mountain moving faith? He'll help you. And he's gracious. Oh, how he loves you.

Surrender your whole heart. He said, Brother Greg, this is tough. This is difficult.

He never hurts you to put you down, to lift you up. Yes, there's a little pain at first, but it ends in joy. It ends in power, if we let him do his work.

Tonight, you would say, I want the passion back, Brother Greg. I don't, I don't ever pray for souls. I don't, I don't ever witness.

Oh, just let him have your heart. He loves you so. People are doing real business with God.

The worst thing could happen tonight be that you'd resist the Holy Spirit. I'm convinced if he's spoken to you, you know it. If there's somebody you need to yield, you know it.

If there's a habit you need to change, you know it. If there's something you've been confessing over and over and over and over, but it's no different tonight, he's saying, just, just let it go. Brother Greg, I've tried, I can't.

He'll help you. He loves you so much. If he didn't love you, he wouldn't convict you.

He really wouldn't. He's not doing this to hurt you. He wants to set you free.

He wants to hear your prayers. And he loves you. Just let him be Lord of your heart.

And he'll heal you. He can bring a healing where nobody else can. You say, but my spouse doesn't love me.

People around me don't love me. God understands that hurt, but he can give you a love that's even greater. He really can if the heart is yielded.

Oh, how he loves you. Now, people all over this room are really doing business with God. Please understand he's doing this to set you free and start you on a new journey.

These are the things that have been under the radar screen. They've been hiding on us. We say we've let them go, but we really haven't.

So tonight, take his spirit as it's a joyful thing. He doesn't wound to hurt, but to heal. Just surrender to him.

Oh, how he loves you. And don't be afraid of failure. And don't let the devil condemn you.

Some people are so, they feel so guilty. They think I failed my children. I failed my children.

Listen, God doesn't want you to think that way. God does not want you to think that way. God is so forgiving.

He's gracious. Just start now. It's amazing what he'll do if you start now.

He's so gracious. He didn't want to beat you up. It's the enemy that's accused of the brethren.

We've all failed in many ways, but he starts with you right now. It's amazing what he can do in children and grandchildren and marriages. It's the old brother Greg.

I've blown it so bad. Listen, he's great at fixing broken things, and he'll never drag your sins up ever again. He's buried them in the deepest sea.

You can start totally new with God tonight. Oh, how he loves you. And people are doing deep business with God tonight.

You see, you and I can't even repent without his grace. We really can't. Maybe you're afraid that I just, Lord, I don't have enough willpower.

I just am afraid I'll fail you. Well, trust him for the willpower. He said he'd be the will and doing in you of his good pleasure.

You can just be honest. Say, God, I don't have enough willpower. Well, he knows that.

Ask him, Lord, would you do a work in my will? He'll do a work in your will. And remember, he's with you every step. He said, what if I struggle and fail tomorrow? He's not going to leave you.

Every step along the way. It may be tonight there's somebody in this room you need to go to and just put your arm around. Maybe you've had a little problem between you.

You don't have to agree on everything, but if you just put your arm around and say, you know what, I want you to know I love you. I don't want there to be anything between us. If there's anybody, you know that.

Just go. Now, God's doing a deep work in people's hearts. And you see, it's a lasting work because now you know what to do tomorrow to let it continue.

Your time of prayer will be deeper. This is not just a little service, not just a little emotion of the moment. This is a new beginning.

This is a new lifestyle. And you're going to have in your hands exactly how to do this. He loves you.

There's nobody that loves you like Jesus. And no matter what's wrong in your life right now, if you know the Lord, one day it's going to be all right. He's going to dry every tear, every tear.

And He's going to touch your heart in ways that only He can. You really can become a Miss Polly. You really can become a Mr. Addie.

You really can. And oh, what God can do with the rest of lives. I've seen senior adults that have never even had a quiet time, that have never hardly ever prayed for their children, make a commitment.

And it's incredible what God does in the last five years of their life. They see some incredible things. Our God is a good God if we're serious with Him.

But if we play games with Him and try to treat Him like a JCPenney catalog, there's a lot we'll never see. But tonight, if you get serious about giving Him your heart, He'll get serious about filling that heart. And oh yeah, we still struggle.

We're not perfect. But He's bigger than all of our failures. He really is.

Our Lord is doing a work. And I never want to rush the time. If you need to sit down, please do.

But just don't let the enemy distract you. Now, your pastor's available again now. He's finally, if you need to pray with Him, He'll pray with you about something.

There is power in praying with someone. Oh, how God loves you. And what He said to you, that's between you and Him.

But tonight be determined, Lord, I'm going deeper in prayer. I want you to be more the Lord of my eyes than you've been. I want you to have my attitudes, Lord.

I don't want to tolerate some things that I've just, I've tolerated. Lord, I want you to do a work in my relationships. And for some of us, that's going to be a real journey.

That's going to take a while. But you take that one step, God will do the rest. The only time His Spirit's agreed is if we resist Him and argue with Him.

But if you just say, yes, Lord, I'm going, He'll take you there. He really will. And He'll love you every step of the way.

And He'll accept you every step of the way. We're all a work in progress. He just wants us to stay in progress.

And He'll do the rest. Oh, God, thank you for your grace. Thank you for your Spirit.

You've spoken specifically. You've put your finger on some things. Lord, some of them we didn't even know were there.

Lord, some of them we knew, but we hadn't really yielded. Lord, some of them we said we'd yielded, but tonight we realized we really hadn't. But Lord, tonight, heal hearts.

Lord, encourage, discourage people. Lord, grant faith and hope where there's been guilt and hopelessness. Oh, God, thank you that with you, all things are possible.

Praise your holy, holy, holy, matchless name. In the mighty holy name of Jesus.

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