

Getting Life Under Control

by Jim Logan

The sermon emphasizes the importance of prayer and living a godly life, using the stories of the Coptic Church and the rugmakers to illustrate the value of integrating mistakes into the pattern and trusting in God's answer to our prayers.

Duration: 55:46

Scripture: Psalm 25:14, Matthew 14:13, Luke 6:12, John 15:8

Topics: "Control"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the passage in Isaiah 6 where the prophet sees a vision of heaven. He describes the scene of a throne, high and lifted up, with beings called cherubim surrounding it. These cherubim are singing the words 'holy, holy, holy,' which the preacher connects to a Baptist church service he attended. The preacher also mentions his own personal experiences with dyslexia and learning disabilities. He briefly mentions his Bible college and prayer ministry, as well as a book on becoming Christ-like that he recommends. The sermon ends with a mention of the book of Hebrews.

Transcript

As I was getting ready to leave the house, the Lord spoke to me to go down and, if you have Bibles, I hope you will use them. Because the only last message I do, next to the last message, is on PowerPoint. But as I was leaving the house, the Spirit of God told me I need to go down and try to find two things.

And I went, my wife says, you're going to be late, you can't go down. But I went down, and it's for somebody here. And I want to read this, and I don't know who you are, but I know that I couldn't go to the airport until I found this to read it, because the Lord strongly said you need to read it.

And it's called Of Weavers and Rugmakers. This is a true story of a man who was looking and doing research on the Coptic Church in Egypt. And the Coptic Church came out of the Ethiopian eunuch, remember, that was baptized and went back, and that started the whole movement, Ethiopian, into Egypt.

So he's going back, looking at the history of all of this, and this is his little writing. In the outskirts of Ben Seif, I came to a village that was entirely Coptic. I was given a tour of the town and the church.

I visited some of the homes and shops. In one of the shops, I stood watching a number of rugmakers at their trade. They spread a shuttle back and forth on Coptic looms, built like those used in Pharaonic times.

It was fascinating, and it was amazing. I came to one of the rugmakers, and I said, what if you make a mistake? The shuttle is going so fast, and you won't see the air in the rug or in the design until you've woven several layers over it. What will you do then? Will you unwind the carpet and remove the layers of thread that you've added? No, said the rugmaker.

That would never do. That would take far too much time. I'll tell you a secret.

The most beautiful rugs with the most... How's that, I asked. Well, once we notice the mistake, we have to integrate it into the pattern. We have to change the pattern to include the mistake and make it part of the new design.

Sometimes the new design is far more complex, far more embellished than anything we could have created ourselves. That's why the most beautiful rugs are the ones with mistakes woven inside. A great deal of wisdom in this Oriental art, perhaps it's like the providence of God, for sometimes people with the deepest wounds and the most serious flaws exhibit the greatest glory of God.

Maybe this was for you. I don't know who it was, but God told me to go get this. Because sometimes, how do we feel? It's all over.

We've blown it, and it's all over, and God can never use me. And that's right out of the pit. I hate to say the word, but Ron Zusak's rather loose with it.

Hell! Right out of the pit. It is. You know, that God can't use me.

I've made a mistake, and I'm not to do warfare, so I'm not. Although I do want to recommend a wonderful warfare book. It's been out for a long, long time, but if you haven't got a copy of my book, you may want to read it, because Bill Clinton was given a copy of my book, and I know that he's going to read it.

A good friend of mine who is in Congress has been pushing Hillary Clinton to get counsel from one of the most conservative Christian counselors I know. It's amazing. When I wrote this book, I never thought that Bill Clinton would get a copy of this, and the fellow giving it to him is insisting that he reads it and gets back to him, and he's one of Bill Clinton's best friends.

So who knows? You never know what's going to happen. Radio, written word, what have you. But anyway, if you don't have a copy of my book, get it.

I'm supposed to sell you some other books before I talk. But I can't sell you these books until I tell you two things. In reading a book, I run a Bible college, and I have some material here.

If you have sons that are that age who would like to go to our school, it's only for fellows, and it's squeaky conservative. I'm squeaky conservative, so is the school. And if your son doesn't make me need to be a little more squeaky than what he is, our school would be a good place for him.

It's down in Texas. We have 100 acres down there. And also with ICBC.

I've been 18 years counseling demonized people. I'm still doing that. I run the Bible school down there and also a prayer ministry.

As I read this book on 100 Christians You Ought to Know, it was very interesting. I read about a woman whose son was in jail, and this Christian woman was just tore up over her son's awful life. And just, where

is he going to go? He's trashing his life.

It's going nowhere. And she was so distraught, she couldn't even hardly pray for him. She went to a neighbor lady and said, I know you're a Christian.

Would you please pray for my son? That neighbor lady knew how to do something that we don't talk about today in our circles. She knew how to pray through. Some of you know.

If you've got a little gray in your hair, you know what I'm talking about. It's how to get a hold of God. Don't let go of it until God assures you your prayer is answered.

And this woman prayed way into the night for this young man in jail. And God all of a sudden gave her a vision that she shared with the mom the next day. She said, I prayed and God said, stop, the burden was gone, and I saw in my mind your son with an open Bible speaking to people.

That son led four fellows to Christ. One of the fellows he led to Christ led his brother to Christ that led me to Christ. That son in jail was Dawson Trotman, the founder of the Navigators.

And I can hardly wait to get to heaven because my salvation is not Dawson Trotman. It was a lady who prayed through and I don't know her name. And I'm going to go around, are you the lady that prayed? So I as an unsaved kid growing up in Los Angeles who would never darken the door of a church was led to Christ by a Navigator in my home kneeling at my bed and asking Christ to save me at almost 20 years of age.

Our story is wonderful. I just found that story and had to share it with you. Well, phone calls... When I see Alexander Graham Bell, if he is in heaven, I'm going to slug him, okay? I'll apologize, but I hate the telephone.

It's just, oh, I had to make 40 phone calls to hurting people just before I came. I had started on Monday with 40 phone calls with 10 coming in a day. And these were all hurting people all over the United States in super trouble, in tragic ones.

Young man slit both his wrists, swallowed pills. You know, the family had called me about him. He's so depressed, so down, and also hearing voices, seeing things, and he tried to kill himself, and they found him on the floor bleeding all over the place.

So our phone calls are really heavy-duty stuff. Well, I got a phone call that was going to change my life more drastically or just as drastically as my becoming a Christian. And it was not that long ago.

I got a call from Dallas, Texas, and they said, we would like you to speak at a prayer conference. You called the wrong guy. You know, I pray.

After all, I'm a man of the cloth. You know, I'm a professional Christian. You know, I do pray, you know, and I even pray over, you know, people.

Name of Jesus. You know, that kind of stuff in the office. So, you know, I do pray, but I'm not a man of prayer.

I've worked with men of prayer. Mark Bubik, right, Ron? What a man of prayer. I mean, Mark, you've got to work.

I mean, he's a guy who starts praying and can pray for hours. And a lot of you have heard him if you come here. Mark is as godly as... I mean, I've worked with him.

Been in his home for years. And I'll tell you, he's a godly man. Neil Anderson said, for the first time in my life, I met a godly man when I met Mark Bubik.

So Mark is just outstanding. So I know all these prayer people. I pray, but I'm not a man of prayer.

And there's a difference. I mean, as a little kid, I prayed lots. Now I lay me down to sleep.

And I hear him at five years old. If I should die. Isn't that a neat prayer for a little five-year-old? It's a wonder I didn't dissociate at five.

What a prayer to teach a little kid if I should die. Before I wake, I'm all going to sleep, you know. I don't have to worry about dying before I wake up.

I didn't prop my eyes up. You know, that kind of thing. And so I told him no.

Well, I'm a little slow on the intake. They called me three times. The board has met.

We prayed. One was the ex-president of Dallas Seminary. The guy must be senile.

And they said, you know, you're the one that God says you're to come down here and to be the speaker at this prayer retreat in Dallas. So, I mean, I'm slow, but I had to say yes. I said, okay, I'll do it.

So I went home. I said, Marguerite, guess what? I said, a year and a half from now, at least I had a year and a half, a year and a half from now, I'm going to be the main speaker and teacher of prayer at a Dallas prayer retreat. And my wife, a very sweet, godly woman, looked at me and she said, they must be hard up for speakers.

It's always wonderful to be married to an encourager. She was right. And I'll take this up on Saturday, but I had to say, why when I had worked with Ellen George, there's a couple here, right over here, that when I was, I was vice president of child evangelism at the headquarters for seven years.

And just as I was leaving, they were coming into the ministry. And he walked up and he said, are you still, are you, you know, you're kind of old. Were you that good-looking young man that was teaching us years ago? And so it was so good to meet this couple that are serving God.

And Ellen George, the president there, was what a man of prayer. And so what I had to do is find out why didn't I pray. And that's been a pilgrimage, beloved.

And I want to share some stuff with you, but I've got to share some of it on Saturday. But I'm the sell books. I'm one that, when I went into warfare, I read the Bible through, I don't know how many times, always a different, you know, a new Bible, always a clean Bible, because you get stuck with what you wrote.

So I have all these Bibles. My wife gets so upset. You bought another Bible.

She says, you got more in the bookstore. But I marked everything in yellow. Satan, demons, whatever God said.

And did Greek studies and Hebrew studies on key words. I didn't want to be storefront, pass me or arouse me. You know, that's my concept that people did what I'm doing.

It was way off the wall. But I wanted to know. And then I buy books.

Well, as I started the prayer journey, I went to the Bible, and I marked the Bible, marked every prayer in the Bible. Every time someone talked to God, God talked to them. I did it through three Bibles.

Just to pick up. Do I really understand? I want to know what the Bible says. And then I want books that can help me.

But this is the book. And these are other books. You know what I'm saying? This is the most important prayer book there is.

Because if this doesn't agree with this, forget it. I'm sticking with this. Okay.

The one book that I brought is rather a new book, or at least new for CBD. It's Prayer 101 by Warren Risby. I have over a thousand books on prayer in the deeper life in my library that I've read as I have been pursuing, developing intimacy and a prayer life with God.

And so the prayer ministry we have with men came out of that. But this is for beginners. If you have started and failed and started and failed, you're saying, you know, my prayer life doesn't kind of go anywhere, then this book by Warren Risby is for you or a wonderful book that gives someone who's a new Christian, because he starts out, because it's like 101 is a class, you kind of start out in kindergarten and end up in college as you go through this book.

It's really a real helpful book. But the best book on prayer, and yet I shouldn't say the best book on prayer, the best book on deeper life, if you read it, by far, no book comes up to it. It's this book.

It's very, very expensive. It's \$27.99 by Ken Boah, conformed to his image. And it goes to, when you read this book, you see that this man had collected material for maybe 20 or 25 years before he wrote this book.

It is the most outstanding book. Our guys at the school I run, they have to go through this. This book is now being used in seminaries, so that pastors are getting some training in prayer, finally.

You know, in the past, guys graduated from seminary and had no training in prayer, no training in starting prayer meetings, and so the church has stopped them. There was no training. But anyway, this, I'm telling you, this is the Cadillac of books.

It is very, very expensive. They knew that when they bought it. But Ken Boah, if you've written this, read his stuff, I'm not saying it's hard to read, but I'm saying it's a book on how to be conformed in the image of Christ.

It's a formation book. Anyway, that book is on the back, and I had to do that to sell it to you. They told me, be sure and sell the books that I had them buy.

So you go back, and I'll be telling about other books that are back there. They're all different, by different writers, but this one, some of the pastors already have grabbed, and I don't know how much they have, because it's the most expensive book they've got. It's one of the most expensive books you can get on

becoming Christ-like.

Beautiful, wonderful book. Okay, I'd like you to turn to Hebrews. Ron, am I supposed to be done in ten minutes? Oh, I haven't got started.

I'm looking at my watch. Oh, my watch is upside down. You know, I've solved a lot of heavy questions.

When I went down to Guatemala to work with all the Wicca 5 translators and teach them warfare in Guatemala, which is a good place to learn it, and they came from all the Mayan tribes in the village, the translation center, and they were sitting there, and I was standing on the platform, and I was doing this. I wasn't going to do it until someone said something. They said, what are you doing? I said, rapture practice.

And this is when the new theory came out, the pre-wrath rapture. I knew that these Wicca Bible translators had been arguing. Is the Lord going to come before the tribulation? Is He going to come in the middle of the tribulation? Is it going to be mid-trib, pre-wrath, after the tribulation, or whatever? And I said, I've solved it.

It's simple. They look at me like, how could this guy be so dumb? It's simple. We're arguing about it all the time.

I said, when He's coming, I'm going. And what does the Bible say? Live a godly life. Don't argue it.

What does it say? Look at the context. He's coming. You better live a godly life.

Because you don't know when He's going to come. Are you ready to meet Him? It could be tonight. The other one I told Ron I solved is elect before the foundation of the world, chosen, you know that one? That makes sense to me.

I know that God chose me before the foundation of the world. You know why I know that? He never would have chosen me afterwards. I mean, would you have chosen you? I mean, think about it.

Isn't that profound? If you came here for profound teaching, you better wait till Ron gets up here. I want you to go to Hebrews 7. There's a couple of things I want to share on prayer. I've got to find it myself.

Hebrews 7, verse 25, and then it says, and this is so good, so many of the people that come for counseling, and I counsel lots of teenage fellows that are really messed up bad, and if we can't help them, they're headed for sexual disaster. They're already set on fire. They're already out of control sexually.

Some as young as 12, 13, 14, 15-year-old kids and stuff that come from all over the United States. Just had one kid that came from Florida last week to be helped, and because of what they've done, they wonder, are they still saved? You know, I'm so trapped. I'm so whatever.

How could I really be a Christian, you know, if I'm doing this? And I'll ask them this. I'll say, you know, many of them have accepted the Lord. I can't tell you how many times.

So would you like to do it one more time? They go, no. You know, because they get so nervous. They don't want to go to hell, and so they keep praying, keep praying and praying, and I said, do you believe that God answers prayer? Yeah.

I said, do you think God would answer the prayer of Jesus? Oh, yeah. Well, what's His prayer? Wherefore, He's able to save them completely, altogether, forever, to the uttermost, that come to God by Him, seeing Jesus ever liveth to what? Pray for those who trust Him. Can you see that? Why am I going to make it? Because Jesus is praying for me.

That's why I'm going to make it. I've trusted Him. And another thing is you realize that prayer is a heavenly ministry.

This is a heavenly ministry. Look at the 8, chapter 8, verse 1. Now of the things which we have spoken, this in sum, we have such a high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of God, of the majesty of heaven, the minister of the sanctuary, and of the true temple, which the Lord pitched, not man. See, prayer is not doing something.

Prayer is being with someone. We've got to see that. When we do this prayer retreat for men in June, in the north woods, and we limit it, because we had too many men one time, and it didn't work like we liked it to.

There wasn't the bonding. We don't allow the men to pray together until the last night. You say, why? You have a prayer retreat.

The guys are spending hours every day in prayer. They're taught methods of praying. They get a 670 page notebook on prayer out of these 1,000 books, where I picked out the best stuff that people said, in various aspects of praying, in the beautiful north woods of Michigan.

You know, acres and acres of property. You can go out praying all day long and not see anybody. So if you like to shout to God or whatever, who cares? No one's going to hear you.

The reason we don't let men pray, because often when a man prays out loud, he forgets who he's talking to. Oh, God. I don't pray like that.

You know, and so some guy starts out. Here are these guys. Most of them never prayed.

That's why they're there. They just don't have much of a prayer life. That's why they're going.

And they're intimidated. So we don't let anybody intimidate them. You know, if they want to meet together and pray, that's something they do.

But as a group, we don't meet together last night. And the last night, we weep, as these men know how to get ahold of God and start praying for one another. It's the most amazing, unbelievable.

I mean, I never knew how wonderful a prayer retreat with men could be who men were nervous about praying together and get in the last night when they have so much confidence in the Word of God and understand what prayer is all about. Look at Hebrews 4.16. Hebrews 4.16 is a marvelous, marvelous verse. To understand Hebrews 4.16, I do this periodically when I pray.

I need to be reminded of where I am going. Go to Isaiah 6. See, in the Bible, it pulls back the curtain and we get to see heaven. He pulls back the curtain and there's a throne.

High and lifted up. And the one I'm going to is sitting on that throne. The whole temple is filled with smoke.

There are these cherubs, serabims, cherubims or whatever, are there with six wings covering their eyes, you know, covering their feet and so on. Here are these beings. And you know what they're singing? The first time I went to church after this guy led me to Christ in my home was a Baptist church in Pasadena, California.

I went in and I sat down. I was very nervous because I had terrible self-image. I didn't realize I was dyslexic and I don't visualize, so I had learning disabilities and barely made it through high school.

I mean, I graduated, you know, lucky. I think I was getting too big for the desk. I don't know.

I graduated from college. Come lucky, you know. Some have magna cum whatever.

I got magna cum lucky. I'll tell you, we have learning disabilities. College is hard.

Bible college is even more hard. Well, anyway, I sat in that church and the call to worship was what those angels were singing. It was the first time I ever heard those words was in a Baptist church, call to worship.

The choir sang, Holy, holy, holy. I started crying. I'm not a crier.

I thought I was caught up into heaven. I didn't realize that's what they sing in heaven. And you go to Revelation chapter 4 and they have not changed the song.

They're still singing what? Holy, holy, holy. Thousands of years later. And you go to Revelation chapter 4. Then you see the beast with the eyes.

You see the throne on top of glass. You see thunderings and lightnings. And all of these creatures.

And the elders. All of that's going on plus Isaiah. You think of all of that and I can go into the presence of God boldly.

You're invited to go what? Boldly. The Old Testament priests never went boldly into the holies of holies. Read where you're going.

Read the privilege that is yours. To have a heavenly ministry. To walk up to the throne and say, Father, can I lay my heart before you? Father, can I talk to you about this? What I'm going through.

The heartaches I have. The pain that I have. Whatever.

We just had a grandson come back from Iraq. In the Marines. We got him prayed back all in one piece.

And his nutty brother is graduating this week from the Marine basic training to go to Iraq. I don't know. It must be some type of a demonic, what do you call it, generational bug that's hitting my grandsons.

But they're all wanting to fight for our country and go out there and support our country and so on. So I'm so thrilled about what Ron and you guys are doing because having one coming back and another going over there. What a privilege.

I don't think we didn't pray for our grandson. But we didn't just pray for our grandson. We prayed for other people's grandsons.

You know, when you know, I mean, yeah, they could get run over by a car or whatever, but over there they could get blown up by roadside bombs. And he was in the Sunni triangle, which is the worst part. And many times bullets zipped right by him and they called him lucky because he declared himself as a believer of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And they always said, take Jeremiah out with you because you'll all come back unhurt. Isn't that something? So anyway, there's many reasons why we pray and sometimes there's more intense times where we pray. But I want you to realize it's a ministry that God has for you.

I'm trying to jump fast here. I've got to jump fast. I'm going to jump over some stuff, but let me go down to this.

And then I'm going to go to the real message. This was the introduction one. So you will find, if you go through the Bible, look at Jesus' prayer line.

That's an eye opener. In fact, we've got a book back there. Hold that book up.

Pray like the Jew, Jesus. It's a little ways up that way. It's in the front.

There's a book there. Let me tell you. Yes.

Pray like the Jew, Jesus. What did Jesus, what kind of prayers did he say in Jesus' home growing up? What kind of prayers would his mother have said? What kind of prayers would his father say? It's all in there. It's just a phenomenal book.

It's not a typical prayer type book. But what was Jesus' home like? Because they know the kind of prayers that they prayed at that time. How many of you saw the Fiddler on the Road? Do you remember that beautiful service where the mom puts the thing on her head and they begin to sing and they do this with the candle so she's lighting it for the Sabbath? And then there's another movie that came out later on, a Christian, not a Christian movie, but Rose White, who is Jewish, and in New York they do this at Friday night.

Guess what Jesus' mother did? The same thing. Jesus saw his mom do that. And just read that.

And in there, because I get so many wedding invitations because working, I've been on so many mission boards and missionaries and taught in two other Bible colleges, I get wedding announcements you can't believe, sometimes four a week. Well, we can't afford wedding gifts. And you know what I've done? I've copied the Jewish wedding blessing out of that book and on parchment and I send it to everybody getting married.

Do you know what the wedding blessing that a Jewish couple got when they got married? Some book. And what, I mean, people wrote me back, that was one of the nicest presents we ever got, a blessing. Most of the people I know have been homeschooled or conservative and most of them understand the importance of that blessing and wanting to be blessed and want God's blessing and their parents' blessing and so on.

I mean, it's so emphasized in those circles. Okay, now, every important event in Jesus' life, we pray. And I'll list some of them and you can write the scriptures down and look at them.

What about these events when Jesus prayed? He began his ministry in the wilderness. Matthew 4, 1 through 11. Jesus went into the wilderness and began to pray.

And when he got alone with himself, he also got alone with Satan. One of the hard things about solitude and silence in prayer is facing your own personal demons. Being still and know that I am God is not easy.

And also, I'll tell you, when you want to begin a prayer life, the enemy will be there. You know, as I'm teaching these young men to be pastors, I said, you know, to me, it's this. If I want to know, my son has been in two mega churches as a youth pastor.

I mean, like, I think he had 300 or 400 high school kids graduate from his, you know, from his high school youth group. I mean, most youth groups don't even have 300 or 400 kids in them, let alone just seniors that graduate out. So he's been in these big churches and the big church in Houston right now.

But let me tell you, the sign of a, in my mind, and my guys know this, that graduate from our school, a sign of a successful church, I want to know how many are attending your prayer meeting. I don't care how many Sunday morning watching the dancing girls. You know? They're all the fall, they're all whatever.

In Sioux City, they came to the conclusion if we could get more people in church, if we gave out free beer. But no one's gone there yet. But, you know, Sioux City's a real beer drinking place.

But, you know, what happened to the prayer meetings? What did Jesus say his church should be called? And the churches in Sioux City don't have prayer meetings. Well, no one goes. Why have one? And I don't blame the people because if prayer is not important to the pastor, it will not be important to the people.

The people cannot rise above the spiritual commitment of their pastor. I hit that with my guys. Basically.

Now, some will, but I mean basically. They'll level off under the pastor. And what he cares about, they'll care about.

Because what's he doing from the pulpit? If a pastor cares about prayer, what's he going to do? Emphasize it. Isn't it? From the pulpit, that's really a burden on his heart. And you want to go and visit a church that prays? Go to the Brooklyn Tabernacle.

On their prayer meeting night, often you can't even get to the doors because people are all up to the doors coming in. They can't even get in the sanctuary because that's praying. The aisles are praying.

You know, if they had a fire, a lot of trouble. But they're praying so hard they'd probably blow the fire out. Phenomenal church.

My son went there just to see what a praying church looked like. It's amazing you have to go to Brooklyn, New York, to see what a praying church looks like where people really have got a burden to pray for each other and what have you. The second thing, when Jesus chose his disciples, he spent the whole night in prayer before he did that.

Luke 6, 12. When John the Baptist died, what did Jesus do? He spent time alone with God. Matthew 14, 13.

Before the glory of the transformation and the darkness of the cross, we find Jesus what? Alone in prayer in both places. It's very, very interesting. Look at John 6. John 6, 31.

An interesting invitation by the Lord Jesus. Pardon me, Mark 6. That doesn't look right. I'm not embarrassed anymore when I look at stuff and I can't read it now that I found out I'm dyslexic.

That helps. My wife said, you really guess at the signs crazy. I started painting a bad picture of my wife.

If you met her, she's a saint. Anybody that lives with me would be a saint. She really is.

She's a very godly, godly woman. But in Mark 6, 31, Jesus said unto them, Come yourselves apart unto a desert place and rest there. Invitation.

Come on. To a desert place. Come apart and rest.

And what was the response in 32? They departed into a desert place by ship privately. That invitation is still out there today, isn't it? The Lord is inviting us to come apart and rest. Rest at His feet.

Rest in His presence. Why did Jesus, or what's He teaching us when He went into the mountains and went into the desert and all of that? If you want to have a pure life, you've got to deal with the distractions. You've got to deal with the distractions.

That's why He went into the mountains. To get away from the distractions. Why? If you will get away from the distractions, you'll begin to hear the Lord's voice.

My sheep what? Maybe they don't. Maybe that's not true. Maybe that is an error by the translators.

You know what I'm saying? Okay. I want you to go to Psalm 51.6. This is where I wanted to go. The other was just warming you up to get there.

But Psalm 51.6. God says, Behold, God or thou desires truth in the inward parts. In the hidden part you'll make me to know wisdom. What does God desire? God desires truth in the inward parts.

This is the opposite of religious externalism. You know how to dress. You know how to hold your mouth right.

You know how to carry a Bible. You know how to do all that stuff. But Jesus is looking what? Not on the outward, but on the inward.

He looks for inner honesty and sincerity. Three questions. Are you open with God? Two.

Are you transparent in your relationship with Him? And do the words I speak really express what I feel in my heart? You know, you can tell God you're angry. You can tell God you're upset. You don't think He knows? That's not a thought I have already.

I think God would like me to own it. How many teenagers have deep bitterness towards God? Christian teenagers. Because He didn't answer their prayer.

He didn't do what He said. And this kid that came up, this 15-year-old boy that had a learning disability, we bonded. Because I did too.

And he had given up on God. Because he asked God to remove him. What 15-year-old boy wants to have a learning disability? He can read the Bible better than I can.

But he can't comprehend it. There's a breakdown of comprehending what he reads. And his family is all beyond him.

The brothers and all this stuff. And I said, do you know the Apostle Paul? You know, he had some disability too. And he prayed and asked God to take it away.

And God said, no. I'm going to give you power in your ministry. And I told this kid, the anointing of God is on your life.

He almost died twice. Once in childbirth, once later on when he was bit by a dog. Everything went wrong.

And I said, why didn't you die? Do you think you're worth it? And God spared your life. God has something great for you to do. I said, if you went back to the Bible college I went to, I'd have been the least likely to do anything.

To teach in a Bible college? To be head of a Bible college? It's ridiculous. You know, he barely graduated from here. I think you can spell his name.

You really, I'm making light. I shouldn't be doing what I've done. And it's God.

Totally, completely God in a life of someone with pretty severe learning disabilities that I have. And I know that God is going to use that kid. He didn't leave bitter anymore.

He asked God to forgive him. Because he needed to see his situation from what? God's perspective. Not from the human's perspective.

His dad's weeping in there. He said, my son is just seeing things in a whole new way. You know that often our minuses, you know what they are? God's pluses.

Do you know that? Your minuses are God's pluses. It keeps us from living and walking in the flesh. Being an old man.

The Bible says they dream dreams and stuff. But you know what I do? I look back over my life. And I started serving God in 1960.

Full time. I had served him before that. My wife and I have been married over 50 years.

And I can tell you this. The first 50 years are the hardest. My ministry is encouraging people.

Okay. See. Let's look at the second part of this verse.

He desires truth in the inner part. But in the hidden part. He'll make you to know wisdom.

There is a hidden wisdom of God. Designed for the hidden part of man. The wisdom is imparted to those whose hearts are totally unreservedly open to God.

Let's go to Psalm 36. 7 and 8. How excellent is thy loving kindness, O God. Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.

They shall be abundantly satisfied. If you take refuge under the shadow of his wings. That is where you can drink of God's pleasures and delight.

I want to tell you something that thrilled me. I got so excited about this. I didn't know what to do.

I'm not a really emotional person. But I almost got emotional. When I read verses.

I look up the Hebrew words or the Greek words. Where the truth of that verse revolves around it. I never looked up the word pleasures or delights in the Hebrew.

I know what they are in English. So I thought I'll look this up in the Hebrew. Because I really want this.

I really want to drink of God's pleasures and delights. They carry the thoughts of secrets. We'll use a verse maybe some other time in prayer.

One of my favorite verses. But it's also, that word for secret is also the word for Eden. The garden of Eden.

The same word. The place where God walked and talked and shared his heart with Adam and Eve. That's where we're invited to go.

Did you have a garden of Eden experience today? I love this song. I come to the garden alone. For he walks with me and he talks with me.

And his sheep I need to learn to hear his voice. Then I won't follow the hireling. And you know who he is.

That would love to get me on. Abiding under a shadow of his wings. What you're invited to do.

There are five benefits. Write them down. If you will abide.

Go to the Gospel of John. Look at abiding. So much in the Bible of abiding.

The first one is Psalms 25:14. That is one of my most favorite verses in the Psalms. And we teach our young men to do Lectio Divina, the divine reading.

And how to do Lectio to the steps and so on. And I love doing Psalm 25:14. But that's the place where God can share his secrets.

In fact, this word secrets there is confidential speech in Hebrew. God wants to share truth with you. And literally, it goes on there in the Hebrew.

That you may not be able to share with anyone else. Because there will be pearls before the pigs. Have you ever had something wonderful from God? And you share it with somebody and they go, oh, yeah.

Oh, thanks. You know, give me my pearls back, you pig. I want you to be excited with me.

You know, this is opened up. Okay. The second one is John 15:8. It's the place that we abide will bring forth fruit, much fruit.

Our fruit will remain and God will be glorified. These are promises in the word of God. Just do a study on abiding.

If you will abide, God promises this will happen. It goes with what Ron is saying. He's saying that a hundred people would what? For one person to reach a hundred people.

Well, let me tell you, if they're abiding, what are they going to have? The people they reach will have lasting fruit. Because they will teach them how to abide with the Lord. Okay.

John 15.16. That's the place where God answers prayers. Has God been answering your prayers? He says, if you abide in me and my words abide in you, you ask what you will. And I promise I will give you what you pray.

Why? Because you're abiding. You'll be asking according to the will of God. The more scripture you can put in your prayers.

I probably have six or seven books just on how to pray scripture back to God. And we wanted to get one here, and it's out of print by Lloyd Ogilvie. Who was chaplain in the senate.

Phenomenal book. And it is gone. And they're not going to print it again.

Why? Well, people aren't interested. And it shows you how to pray scripture. And it gives you 30 days of praying scripture back to God.

It's a phenomenal book. We have it at our office. I'd like everybody that goes through our counseling, get this book.

Develop your prayer life. Develop your walk with God. And I'll never see you back here again.

And that leads us to the next one. 1 John 3.6. God says, if you abide in me, I promise you, you will have victory over sin. So when guys come and they're all messed up in sin, whether they're pastors or missionaries.

I've had people from Russia fly over for counseling. We've had whole mission fields of missionaries fly in and stay at a motel that we could work with them. From a whole field in Africa and South America and so on.

I mean, we really have a really exciting ministry in nowhere, Sioux City. But I know that if you are struggling with sinful behavior. I'm not talking about sinless perfection.

I'm talking about you're dragging ball and chain in your life of sin. And you can't get rid of it. I know you're not abiding.

Because God has promised, if you will abide, what? He sinneth not. We've got to deal with this stuff. That's why we've got to encourage people to abide.

They'll have more victory in their life than they've ever had before. When they're walking with God. By the fear of the Lord, men depart from evil.

I could do one of Ron's stuff, but I won't. You know, like a real story. But, you know, like I saw one of the guys here opening a woman's purse to take out the wallet.

And I walked up slowly. And I looked down and saw my foot. He decided not to do it.

Because he became aware of my presence. And the fear of the Lord is walking in the presence of God. Thou, God, seest me.

If I walk in the presence of God, my life would really change. And how can I do that? By developing a prayer life? By talking with Him? You know when it says pray without ceasing? I thought, how do you do that? Maybe I need to buy a rosary, you know. How do you do that? Do you know what that means? Literally, pray at every opportunity.

I also looked at Paul's prayer life. All the time he prayed. What did he pray for? What did he pray about? All his instructions on praying.

Paul wrote a lot of instructions on what we ought to do in praying. And the last one is 1 John 2.27. That's the place where one abides in me. He will reveal truth to me.

I'd like you to go to Psalms 91. This is Mark Bubeck's psalm. Any of you know Mark Bubeck? This is his psalm.

It is so beautiful. When Mark quotes this. And I tried memorizing.

I couldn't figure out why I couldn't memorize. You know why I can't memorize very good? I don't visualize. I can't type.

You know this. I have six 3-inch notebooks. Six of them.

Full of pages typed out of prayer under all types of things. And I do it with two fingers. Because I didn't see the keyboard.

I just thought it was dumb. I memorize verses. I have to do it.

I don't see words. I didn't know people saw words. My wife and I are going to memorize Matthew 5, 6, and 7. I was on Matthew chapter 5, verse 2. And she finished chapter 7. That really helps your esteem.

When you don't have much to start with. Okay. But now I understand why.

So I just read scripture over and over and over and over and over again. And kids say, but you quote scriptures. They're canceling.

I said, I know because I read it so much. But it's not from sitting down and trying to memorize word after word after word. It takes me forever.

And I miss so much scripture. Psalm 91, verse 1 and 2. Maybe there's someone here that struggles that way too. As I do.

He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. All of a sudden, I looked at that. And there was a lot of changes.

Dwelleth and abided. Dwelleth, the Most High, abideth with the Almighty. What is God trying to tell me in one verse? So those kinds of things just jump out at me.

Why? What's he saying here? Okay. Dwelleth in the Hebrew. It talks about right now we're dwelling here in this room.

It means to sit. To be there. Dwelleth.

In the secret place is the hiding place of God. Sitting in the hiding place of God. Of the Most High.

Remember, the names of God are significant. That's one of the things I had to do to develop a prayer life. I had to go back and to learn who the guy I was talking to.

And learn the names of God. And that's part of the thing we give in this notebook. The names of God have significant meanings.

And when God wanted to reveal new truth to Israel, he revealed a new what? Name. One of the names you guys know is a counseling outfit. Rapha.

Right? Rapha? You know Rapha? And remember the children of Israel went into the desert. What do you need in the desert? Not camels or whatever. Water.

And they didn't have any. They drank the water and they threw it up. It was brackish.

And so God directed Moses to throw this wood in there. He did. It healed the waters.

After he healed the waters, he said, my name is Jehovah Rapha. The God who heals the bitter waters of life. His name is significant, beloved.

And we can cry out to that name. It says the name of the Lord is a strong tower and the righteous run into it are saved. Do you know his name? We need to know it.

Really understand the names of God. There's two good books on that. One is, we got one of her books back there.

Lord, I Want to Know You by Kay Arthur. Because you work in it. The other is Elmer Townes, My Father's Name.

But you don't work in the book. When you work in it, it causes you to interact with it. So I think her book is better.

But we need to know the guy we're talking to. And if you don't know him, it's not by accident. It's by satanic design.

So you don't know who God is. Okay. Now we go down to the second three things.

Shall abide. Abide is live, remain. It describes secure, peaceful rest of one living close to God.

I have to dwell first. But dwelling is not the same as abiding. Under the shadow, that is protection and refuge.

Of the Almighty, that's El Shaddai. The God of strength. The powerful one.

God's warfare name. Omnipotent divine warrior. And El Shaddai is made up of two words.

Wonderful words. Who and enough. In the Hebrew.

He's all I need. That's what it's saying. He's all I need.

Whenever you talk about the Almighty, what am I saying? He's all I need. That's all I need is the Almighty. We're going to break here.

I'm sorry. I went over a couple of minutes. God desires truth in your inward parts.

And God desires that you abide in that secret place with him. Everybody needs to have their place. Jesus said, I go to prepare what for you? A place.

God put a desire in your heart to have a place. Do you know that? You've got that. It's a God-given thing.

That's why he called heaven a place. And one of the most difficult people to be is a displaced person that has no place. Where's your place with God? If you don't have one, mine's in the basement where I get alone with God.

And it has to be really quiet. So what I did is I bought one of those bowls where the water squirts up. It runs over the rocks.

White noise. And that cuts out anything else that may be. Because I get to the office every day at 5 o'clock in the morning.

So I wake up. If I sleep in, I sleep to 5:10 on Saturday and Sunday. So I can get up and have hours with God alone.

And I told my daughter, I said, this is what I do. And I plug this thing in. And she said, Dad, that's terrible.

I said, what's terrible about that bubbling thing? She says, Dad, it sounds like a leaky toilet. So whatever you have to do, whatever place you have, try to get a place where you can get alone and be quiet with God. And we'll talk some more about prayer as the next couple times I talk on prayer.

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