

# Prevailing Prayer

by John R. Rice

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*The sermon emphasizes the principles of prevailing prayer through obedience, humility, and making restitution, illustrated by Jacob's journey back to Esau.*

**Duration:** 48:40

**Scripture:** Genesis 32:28, Luke 11:5

**Topics:** "Prayer"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the importance of having the power of God to witness for Jesus Christ. He emphasizes the need to both work diligently in witnessing and to continue praying for the Holy Spirit's power. The preacher uses the example of Jacob in the Bible, who initially agreed to go on a journey but then became burdened and desired to return home. He encourages the audience to have a similar desire to go back to their spiritual 'home' and have a personal encounter with God, which will then make witnessing to others easier. The preacher also highlights the importance of faith and the desire to see miracles in one's own life.

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## Transcript

Wonderful truth here in the word of God, we'll get in as much of it as we can. Dear Lord, open our hearts as we open the word, how we need thy blessed spirit, for the word is the sword of the spirit, not my sword, not any man's sword. So blessed spirit of God, open our hearts to the truth, and guide us into the truth, and bring to remembrance what Jesus has said, as thou hast promised.

Amen. In Genesis chapter 32, we have the story of Jacob. You remember Jacob was a boy who had to leave home because he got into trouble.

He had sinned, in the first place, he sold his, he traded his brother Esau a bowl of chili for the birthright. Now that was as big a Jew trade as you ever did see, I think. And then later on he went further than that, and lied and pretended to have venison, deer meat, when he had goat meat, and goat meat just as good, maybe a little better than the deer meat, but he didn't have to lie about it, and he pretended that he was Esau.

And he couldn't change his voice, but he put goat skin over his arms, and his mother helped him deceive, deceive the old blind father Isaac, and Isaac blessed him. And of course Esau, the big red-headed twin, didn't like that, and never did get over it. And so the mother said, you better get out of here before Esau

kills you.

So Jacob went far away from home, and for twenty-odd years, never saw his mother, never saw his father, in a strange land, and married, and had children, and now he's coming back home. The Lord said, come on back home, I want you to go back to your father Isaac. And Jacob said, well Lord, I'm willing to go, but Esau's going to kill me.

He swore he'd kill me as soon as Dad was dead and out of the way, and I'm afraid of him. And he's armed and ready for me. He's held that grudge twenty years, he's not going to get over it easy.

And the Lord said, you go and I'll be with you. And so he came back. Now there's a wonderful, wonderful lesson here in prevailing prayer about this man as he goes home.

I want to read to you first in Genesis 32, begin verse 9. And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the Lord which said unto me, return to thy country to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee. I am not worthy of the least of all thy mercies, and of all the truth which thou hast showed unto thy servant. For with my staff I passed over this Jordan, and I am become too bad.

Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau. For I fear him, for he will come and smite me, lest he come and smite me and the mother with the children. And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the seas, which cannot be numbered for multitude.

And he lodged there that same night, and he took of that which came to his hand a present, for he saw his brother. Two hundred she-goats and twenty he-goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams, thirty milk camels with their coats, forty kine, or cattle, cows, and ten bulls, twenty she-asses and ten foals. He delivered them into the hand of his servant.

They were drove by themselves and sent unto his servant. Passed over before him, and put a space betwixt drove and drove. And he commanded the foremost saying, When Esau my brother meeteth thee, and asketh thee, saying, Whose art thou? And whither goest thou? And whose are these before thee? Then thou shalt say, They be thy servant Jacob's.

It is a present sent unto my lord Esau, and behold also he is behind me. And the drover with every drove, a herdman with every drove, was to say the same. Now he moves over his family, moves over the brook here, and all of his family over, and then the present.

And verse twenty-one, So went the present over before him, and he lodged him that night in the county. And he rose up that night, and took his two wives, and his two women servants, and his eleven sons, and passed over the four jabbars. And he took them, and sent over them over the brook, and sent over that he had.

And Jacob was left alone. And there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh.

And the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint as he wrestled with it. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.

And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel, for as the prince hath thy power with God and with men, and hath prevailed. And

Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee thy name.

And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there. And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel, for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved. And as he passed over Peniel, Penuel the sun rose upon him, and he halted upon his thigh.

I don't have time to read about the meeting with Esau, but really it is not necessary. We find that Esau, with his four hundred armed men who had come to kill, ran instead, and fell on the neck of his brother and wept. Twenty long years of passion and hate were wiped away in a moment, and those tears down his face.

And Jacob had prevailed. He prevailed first with God, and then he prevailed with men. Now, I'd like to talk to you very simply on the things here.

First of all, what this man did before the prevailing prayer, for that has a part in the picture. What Jacob did before the prevailing prayer. That's interesting.

The Lord said, Jacob, come on, I want you to come back to your father's house, and I'll be with you. Well, the first thing that he did was he obeyed. He started a home.

Now, if anybody here wants the power of God, you say, All right, Lord, I'll do what you say. It is said about the dear Lord Jesus that when he came into the world, he said, Lord, I come to do thy will, O God. Does anybody want to win souls? The first thing about soul winning is to go after sinners.

Nobody. It's tomfoolery. It's insincerity.

It's hypocrisy. For anybody to pray for revival and pray for sinners, that doesn't go after sinners. I don't want anybody coming and saying, I want you to pray for my lost daddy.

Unless you pray by God's grace, come home and try to win your daddy. You needn't be asking prayer for anybody unless you're going to do your part. Sometimes we pray and say, Oh, Lord, send the Holy Spirit over yonder and convict this sinner deeper than sin ever left the same.

And you could say, Lord, I'm going to stay here and read my newspaper. I'm not caught up on that, but send the Holy Spirit, like a Western Union messenger boy, Lord. Now, God isn't going to do anything of the kind.

What you are, in effect, asking God is to change his whole righteous plan about soul winning. God's plan is the Holy Spirit goes in a Christian and works through a Christian. He uses your hands and your voice and your tears and your bleeding.

That's the way the Holy Spirit works. He dwells in Christians and works through Christians. That's God's way.

And so you needn't be praying for God to send the Holy Spirit out independent and change his plan. No, sir. The blessed Holy Spirit is incarnated in men.

And the Holy Spirit came and was in Jesus and upon Jesus and helped him in power and helps us the same way. I say, if you're going to expect your prayers to get above your head, you say, I'll do the will of God. I'll set out to do the will of God.

I'll do my part. The Lord said, Jacob, go home. Well, Jacob said, Lord, I'm scared.

The Lord said, Jacob, get on over here home to your father Isaac. He said, but Lord, my wives and my eleven children, my flocks, and Esau, and I've just heard about him, he's coming to meet me with four hundred armed men and he's going to kill my folks, my mother, the mother and the children. And the Lord says, go home.

He said, okay, I'm going home. And he got up and came. He's scared, but he's obedient.

Now, you just well make up your mind if you're going to get anywhere in your prayer life, you're going to go when God says go. You go when God says go. You do what God says.

Somebody said, I wish I could leave this place with the anointing of God. I wish I could go from this place with the power of the Holy Spirit. All right, let me give you one of the two rules about the Holy Spirit.

One is, how much more shall the Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him? Another is in, that's Luke 11, 13. The other rule about the Spirit, or at least another rule about the Spirit, is in Acts 5, 32, where the Lord says, listen to it carefully now, Peter preaching, and he said, we are witnesses of these things, and so also is the Holy Ghost, whom God has given to them that obey him. Peter says, I can tell you about this business, and bless God, the Holy Spirit, that God gave me because I'm doing right about it, and doing what he told me.

The Holy Spirit will tell you about it, too, through me. Peter preached, and the Holy Spirit preached, and Peter witnessed, and the Holy Spirit witnessed, and Peter went after people, and the Holy Spirit went after people, because Peter obeyed God. Now, God gives the Holy Spirit, in this sense of soul-winning power, to them that obey him.

Now, the indwelling of the Spirit, God gives to those who are converted, born again. But the power of the Holy Spirit, he gives to obedient Christians. And if you don't go, you're just out of the question.

There are a lot of people praying for the Holy Spirit when they mean tongues. There are a lot of people praying for the Holy Spirit when they mean entire sanctification, and the carnal nature eradicated, and feel light as a feather, and good as Jesus Christ, and getting better every day. There are a lot of people that are praying for the Holy Spirit when they mean this, or that, and the other.

Well, my friend, if you want God to give you the power of the Spirit, well, you better be thinking about what he's thinking about. He's thinking about the Great Commission going to all the world. I send the promise of my Father on you, but tear and juice them till you get power to do it.

Now, if you're thinking about power to witness for Jesus Christ, you go to work in that witnessing, and keep on praying. God gives the Spirit to them that obey him. So this man who got the power of God and prevailed in prayer, he was on good praying terms.

Did you notice this thing? At first he said, All right, Lord, I'll go. And he came up here by the brook Jabba, and they camped, and they staked out, I guess, they staked out the milk cows, or maybe they had a, if they might have had anything that kept close around, and they kept the camels with the foals nearby, maybe, and they had the guards out to take care of things for the night. And then it seems in the night, as they got settled down, Jacob got burdened.

He said, God said, go to home. Well, go over to my father's country again. And here's the brook that is the borderland.

All right, he said, I'm not going to even put my folks to bed here. I'm going to get them up and go over the brook, and God can look down, and he'll see I'm going to do what he said if I get killed. I'm going to do what he said.

So he got up and moved the whole business over the brook, and it's just as much as if to say, Lord, you see, I'm going to do what you said. I'm going on back to Isaac and my father's house, no matter what happens. Now, if you want God to bless you when you pray, be sure you listen when he talks, see? Do what he says.

God gives power prevailing prayer to those who obey him. Now, here's another word. This man, there's a wonderful thing.

This man had a contrite heart, and this man was conscious of his failures. Now, we see that several ways, his attitude toward Esau, and see that in the restitution of A. But he said, O God, you said go home, and I am not worthy of the least of these thy blessings. I walked over this brook with a walking stick when I came the first time.

I'm going back, and I've got two bands. I've got these styles of head of livestock. I've got servants, and I've got a big family.

I came over here with a walking stick. I'm going back with two bands. I'm not worthy, O God.

I'm not worthy. You know, God has something for humble people, for people who are conscious of their needs, conscious of their sins, people who are contrite in heart. You're in mighty good shape to get things from God when you say, Lord, this poor old sinner ought to have been in hell.

Yeah, I don't know why he meant so good to me. I didn't deserve it. I need your help, Lord, but I want to confess I've been poor and faulty and frail.

This man confessing his sin and his failure and his unworthiness, that come before prevailing prayer. Did you notice that? A sense of his need. The Lord Jesus said, Blessed are the poor in spirit.

I wonder if you're poor in spirit or you're proud and haughty. Oh, these people who try to pray and have no tears. Oh, these people who try to pray and have no confession.

Oh, these people who try to pray and there's a glimpse. There's a glimpse. You know, I like Moses' prayer when he came to pray and he said, Oh, Lord, these people sinned a great sin.

They've made a golden calf and danced around it drunk and pulled off their clothes naked. It's a terrible sin. Lord, if thou wilt forgive their sins.

If thou wilt forgive their sins. And then there's a great dash in my Bible. I think that's where Moses was crying and couldn't talk.

I don't know. If thou wilt forgive their sins. But if not, then you say you've blocked them out.

Block me out, too. He's not talking about blocking them out of the book of life. Those Jews, a lot of them unconverted, were not saved.

That's not the point. God had planned to make a great nation Israel from whom Christ would come. And he said, Moses, I'll tell you, I'll just fill the pan out with you.

You'll be Abraham's seed. Your family. You from Europe will come to the Messiah.

And Moses said, no, if you're going to block him out, block me out, too. I'm not going to have it. And a broken and a contrite heart God can hear when you pray.

God help us to get off our high horses. Here's a word of which you take home. The way up is down.

Did you know that? The way up is down. He that humbles himself shall be exalted. Humble yourself in the sight of the Lord and he shall lift you up.

So this man has a contrite heart. I'm not worthy of the least of thy favors, he said. I'm conscious of that.

Grumblers, these proud people and the haughty people and grumblers and dissatisfied with what God's done. You don't get anything much from God. This man prevailed.

Notice another thing about this man. Not only his contrition, but he brought the promises of God. That's a wonderful thing.

He said, Lord, you said I was going to have seed as the sand of the sea. And now my brother's about to come over here and kill all the children. He said, you said return to your father's house and I will do thee good.

And the man's coming with 400 army in the face thing. You know, you're an awful good business when you pull God's promises out and hold them in his face. Did you know that? You're sure in good shape when you say, Lord, I got your signed check here.

You're going to have to cash this. This is what you said. Did you know that? It is said that George Muller, the great man of prayer and faith, who prayed down over seven million dollars, seven and a half million dollars, to care of orphan children.

Those days there'd be many, many more millions than that now. In the orphan children care and sending missionaries and free literature everywhere and so on. And it is said that he'd get down to pray in Argon.

He'd say, Lord, I wouldn't let my little girl Lydia go hungry if I had it in my power to keep her from it. Why, he said, Lord, I, my children, I wouldn't. And you said, I'll be a father to the fatherless.

So these orphan children, you're their father and the only father they have. He'd say, Lord, you surely won't let them go hungry, will you? And he'd just argue with God, bring all the scriptures up that God had said. Why, you know, it's a mighty good thing.

It's a mighty good thing when you can say, now look here, Lord, you said so and so and you're going to have to do it. So Isaac said, Lord, you said to me plainly that I'm going to have still children and descendants as the sand of the sea, not one of all my family gets killed tonight. What about that? You said, come home and you'll do me well.

Well, Lord, well, what are you going to do about it? I tell you now, brother, God sure is glad to meet his bargain. And you better bring them up on him pretty often. That's right.

Bring the promises of God. Claim the promises of God. That's preliminary to prevailing prayer.

Here's another thing. This man made restitution. He made restitution.

Somebody said, don't you think that's Old Testament? Doing right is Old Testament. But the God who liked for people to do right in the Old Testament still likes for them to do in the New Testament. Did you know that? Yes, sir.

And if you've done wrong, you just well do right. I was in a citywide campaign with 40 Baptist churches. And I remember that the question came up, shall we go back and pay up the old debt made before we're saved? And the good chairman of the Baptist pastor's meeting said, yes, sir.

I think a fellow saint is going to have to be honest and pay his debt. And I think so too. So he says, you're wrong, he's wrong.

I stole his birthright and I stole the blessing and I robbed him and cheated. And I'm sorry. Well, what are you going to do about it? I'm going to try to make it up to him.

So he took 200 sheep and 20 rams and 200 goats and 20 heat goats and 30 milk camels. And he took 40 cows and 10 bulls. And he took the camels with their coats and 20 asses with their coats, with 10 coats.

And he brought them all. And these 550 or 75 animals, livestock, he sent drove by drove. And he said to every one of his servants, he said, now, when you come up here, you bow real low, Esau.

He said, who are these? You say they're from my, from thy servant Jacob to my Lord Esau. And they are a presence to find favor in his sight. And you know, it'd be awful hard for old Esau to have a hard heart after that.

But that isn't what settled it. It'd be awful hard for God to pay no attention when a fellow begins to plank down like that. Did you know that? Anytime you really begin to reach deep down in your pocket for God and sacrifice and give up, you know the Lord's likely to sit up and take notice and say, that fellow may mean that.

I believe he does. Don't you think so? Yes, sir. Already made restitution.

Does anybody here want to see some souls saved? You go pay up back debts. You go make your honest confession. You go to making things right.

I sure like to see people giving up dirty habits. I like to see people making confessions, paying up back debts. I like to see people who want revival do right.

I remember in a certain revival I mentioned a bit ago, we, one night, my advanced man Bill, a man and I, in twin beds in a hotel room. And I tossed through the night a good deal of burden, prayer for the meeting. And the next morning, Bill, I preached the night before on hindered prayer.

And I told how bad debts and other things like that hinder revival. And Bill Mann got up and went to the chairman of the campaign and said, you preachers are going to have to get under this load. Brother Rice

is breaking his heart.

He stayed awake last night, nearly all night, and prayed. And I was there in the room with him. And you preachers are going to have to get under this burden and help pull this load and get this revival going.

And the chairman of the campaign said, you're too late, Bill. I've done, done it. He got up that morning early and went to the doctor's office, where he had owed for two years a bill for \$300.

He said he thought when the bill came, he said, that's too much. The old crook, I'll never pay it. And he said, I didn't intend to, but last night I saw I had to be an honest man.

If I'm going to have revival, I'm going to pay up my debt. And he had the check waiting and presumes the doctor opened his door that morning while there he was with his check for \$300. He said, I've already done it.

We're going to have revival. Three other preachers, three other preachers, among those 40 Baptist pastors, had bad debts that they told us about that they went and paid. How many others didn't tell us about it, I don't know.

But you can expect to have revival when people go making restitution for their sins. Somebody says, oh, I'll try to do better. Do you? I'll see if you will.

If you go and confess that and make right what you've done, I'll believe you. That's right. I'll believe you.

A woman came to D.L. Moody and said, Mr. Moody, I have a fault. I wish you'd help me about it. I want to know how to conquer it and overcome it.

Mr. Moody said, all right, what is it? Well, she said, I exaggerate a little. She said, I stretch things a little bit. I'm sorry about it.

Moody said, I can help you on that. That's fine. She said, the next time you do that, you just go to the person that you talked to and just admit that you lied and you're ashamed of it.

Oh, she said, I wouldn't call it a lie. Well, Mr. Moody said, if you don't call it a lie, you won't quit it. You know that? Well, you know, it's a wonderful thing about confessing it then and facing the one you're wrong about.

Brother, bless God, you sure do mortify the deeds of the flesh that way. Did you know it? There was a fellow that fell from the third-story building, a brick building, and had the green mortar in the wall, fresh and old. A fellow stepped up on the brick wall, and one of those bricks flipped out and it fell.

And it happened that just below, they had the great mortar box where they stirred up the lime and the mortar for the brick, you know. And it landed in that box full of mortar. And my heart scattered.

Got it in his eyes and his heart and everything. Saved his life, of course. Fell from the third-story up there.

And he got up and he said, I never was so mortified in my life. Now listen, if you want to conquer sin in your life, why, you mortify openly. You take sides against it.

You make yourself go pay things back. You face the people you talk rough to and mean to. You admit that old sharp, critical tongue that set on fire of hell.

You go and say, God forgive me, and you people forgive me. Make things right, and God will help you quit your sin. God will help you to clean up.

Yes, sir. And someone said, oh, I've got such a temper. Yeah, I know how to fix that.

Next time you find you've done anything wrong, you go right back and say, I'm a dirty hypocrite pretending to be a good Christian. I love God but haven't lived right. Forgive my sharp tongue.

It's wicked. It's mean. I'm sorry.

I'll make no alibis. I'll make no excuses. Forgive me, please.

And you do that a while, brother, and that old tongue will begin to mind its P's and Q's. It'll get brighter a while. Did you know that? Yes, sir.

I do not believe in the sin spirit of people that plan to do better but don't face the past where they've been wrong. Did you know that? No, sir. These people are going to do better but the old bills they don't pay.

These people are going to do better but they buy things they don't pay for or they mistreat people and don't go make it right or they slander people and don't ever go and apologize and straighten things out. This man, thank God, set out to make things right. Now he's ready to pray.

All right, now he comes to pray and the angel of God, he got his family all over and he came back and wrestled with God and there came the angel of God, rather, and wrestled with him. A good man, you think? And I am inclined to think that this is a pre-appearance of Jesus Christ. Theophanist, some people call him.

That is that Christ here appears, the angel of the Lord. You know, Jacob one time spoke about the angel when he went down to Egypt and he said, the angel that always went with me, the angel that guarded me. He's talking about God.

And Jesus is other times sometimes called the angel of the Lord. So maybe it was Jesus, I don't know. If it was not, it was an angel with the power of God on him and with wisdom from God and instructions from God and there came an angel and wrestled with him.

And they wrestled all night long. All night long. And the angel said, let me go.

Jacob said, I'm not going to let you go. I'm not going to face Esau by myself. I'm going to have this settled.

I'm not going without the blessing. You've got to bless me. And the angel said, let me go.

He said, it's getting daylight. And the angel said, good night. An angel is not supposed to be down here wrestling in broad daylight and everybody looking on.

That's a spectacle and a scandal. Turn me loose. I've got to get on back to heaven.

And Jacob said, you're not going anywhere. You're going to stay right here and bless me. I'm not going to let you go until you bless me.

And the angel touched the heart of Jacob's thigh. And his thigh muscle shrank. And his leg was out of joint.

His thigh joint, which I understand is the most painful thing. And Jacob said, I don't care. And he never got over it.

He'll let the rest of his life. But Jacob said, I don't care. You may break my leg or you kill me.

But I will not let you go. I'm not going out here without victory. I've been defeated and whipped and 20 years I've had in the back of my mind that I was a liar and a cheat and a schemer.

And I've got to have this fixed. I'm not going to meet my brother Esau who's angry. I wronged him and he knows it and he's planning to kill me.

I'm not going by myself. I'll not let you go. And he prevailed with God.

Now, I wish you'd learn this business. We can have everything God has if we mean business and hold on to God. Oh, this matter of holding on to God, prevailing with God.

How much there is in the Bible about. In Luke chapter 11, Jesus said, They said, Lord, teach us to pray. All right, he said, I'll teach you to pray.

Which of you shall have a friend and go to him at midnight and say to him, Friend, lend me three loaves. For a friend of mine on his journey has come to me and I have nothing to set before him. This is manifestly a picture of a Christian saying, Lord, I want the bread for sinners.

Here, Lord Jesus, you've got the bread. Father, you have the bread. Give me bread.

This somebody ought to win, but I don't have anything to set before him. Lend me the bread. So he comes and knocks on his neighbor's door at midnight saying, Lend me three loaves.

And he from then answers and says, Trouble me not. The door is now shut. My children are with me.

I cannot rise and give thee. But listen, he says, I say to you, though he will not rise and give him because he's his friend. Not because he's premillennial.

Not because he's separated. Not because he's quit the movies. Not because he doesn't smoke cigarettes.

Not because he gives his tithe. Not because he has a family altar. Not because he believes the Bible from cover to cover.

No, he'll not do it because he's his friend, but because of his importunity he'll rise and give him as many as he needed. And I'll tell you the lost secret and the lost chord, the lost note in our prayer life is that holding on to God, I'll not let you go. I won't quit.

I'm going to have it. I'm not going to quit. I've got to have this.

And so that's the secret of intercessory prayer. And by the way, that's the secret of the power of the Holy Spirit. And that's exactly what Jesus is talking about in that passage in Luke 11.

For immediately after he said, he said, If ye then being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit, not his indwelling. That didn't come then for anybody no matter how they felt. That's a powerful testimony.

That had already come on many. And anybody could have it the same way can now. The Holy Spirit's power is bolder.

He said God will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him. And the word ask is in the present tense. Keep on asking.

It's an opportunity. Keep on asking. And here again, we have this thing illustrated in the story in Luke chapter 18.

Jesus said, Speak a parable to them to this end that men ought always to pray and not to faint. Somebody said, I think prayer is a privilege. Okay.

Yeah, it's a privilege. But that isn't enough reason. It's still your duty to pray.

And whether you take it a privilege and whether you feel like it or not, God's commanded people to pray always and never give up. That's the command of God. Men ought always to pray.

Men ought always to pray. And it said there was in a city a judge which feared not God, neither a guarded man. What's that old hard-hearted judge? Who does he represent? Who does he represent? And he feared not God, neither a guarded man.

There was a widow in that city and she came to the judge and said, Avenge me, my adversary. And for a time he would not. But then he said, Though I fear not God, and I don't care what he'll do to me, I'm not scared of God.

And I don't care anything about widow women and orphan children. I'm not caring about that. But lest she weary me, and the Revised Version says, Lest she wear me out with her continual coming, I will avenge her.

And she's just in my hair all the time. I can't get her off my mind. She just insists and butts into the courtroom.

And she follows me home and she cries and begs. And good night, she's running me crazy. I'll have to attend to this business to get it off my mind.

And so he avenged her. And Jesus said, And shall not God avenge his own elect that cry unto him day and night? Who did that old judge, that old hard-hearted scoundrel? Who does that represent? That represents God as he appears to be sometimes when you start praying. So do you quit? No, sir, you're not supposed to.

Sometimes you try to pray and God seems to say, Let me alone. I'm not innocent. Get away from my door.

I'm not going to give you anything. Did you ever pray and God seemed not to be around at all? Did you ever pray and God just seemed not to pay a bit of mind in the world? Did you? Did you ever pray and God seemed to say, No, you want revival. God said, I don't care about revival.

Or seemed to say, I want that lost man safe. God seemed to say, fool me on that. I'm not innocent.

Did you ever pray and God seemed not to be innocent at all? Did you? So what do you do? Don't be fooled about him. Don't be fooled about him. If that woman could get that judge by just pleading and

pleading and pleading and pleading, God was going to hear you too.

But he wants to see you serving. He wants to see you begging. You see that? And shall not God avenge his own elect? If that old wicked judge would hear, Don't you know that a good God would hear the ones he's chosen and loves when he doesn't feel any answer and keeps on ringing on the telephone? Oh, how Jesus is grieved when people don't insist and insist and pound on the door and ring the bell again and keep on waiting.

Don't you see? Some time ago in the night a telephone rang and it took me a little time to get awake and then I got on my house shoes and turned on the lights and rushed to the telephone and just as I picked up the receiver, it quit ringing. Yet lots of times, lots of times, you rung God's telephone and you didn't give God time to answer. You quit and went on when God was ready to do it.

But you lost time. You lost time. Keep on praying.

Prevailing prayer. You remember the story of the woman of Canaan? The Canaanite woman. And there came a woman of Canaan and cried after him, saying, Lord, have mercy on me for my daughter, for she's grievously vexed with the devil.

And Jesus paid her no mind. I know what he was thinking. I think of this.

He said, these hard-hearted old, oh, these, these, these hard-hearted old denominational minded Baptists, I mean Jews, the Apostles he's talking about here, they don't care about this woman or anybody else. I'm going to teach them a lesson. You watch me, he said to himself.

So he said, he just paid her no mind. And she followed Jesus around and said, Lord, help me. Lord, help me.

And he just paid her no mind. And the disciple said, Lord, send her away. She just hollers around after us and cries and begs and she makes us nervous.

Tell her to go away. And Jesus turned to the lady and said, he said, don't you know, I'm not sent to Gentiles? I'm just sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. That's all.

That's the only kind of people I care anything about the prayers or anything else. I don't care about saving Gentiles or answering the prayers of Gentiles or anything like that. I'm just sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

You see the irony in it. You see he's, he's repeating for the benefit of these Apostles their own thought. That's what Peter thought.

That's what James and John thought. So he said, and she said, and she said, Lord, help me. She didn't quit.

Lord, please help me. And Jesus said, that wouldn't be right to take the children's bread and give it to dogs and you're nothing but a Gentile dog. And that's what all the Jews called him.

That's what these Apostles thought too. Some of you people are converted. Still talk about a Jew as a sheenie.

Some of you people are born again Christians and still, still call people niggers. Yeah. For whom Jesus Christ died.

Yeah. Yeah. Aren't you? Yeah.

Some of you people are Christians and you call Mexicans greasers. Born again people. So Jesus said, don't you see? It wouldn't be right to take the children's bread.

Jews are my real children, you know. And the Gentile dogs like you wouldn't be right to take their bread and give it to the dogs. And I know what the woman said too in her heart.

She said, he can't fool me. Maybe these good-for-nothing Baptists, I mean Apostles, excuse me. Maybe they don't know he came from the whole world, but I know it.

Maybe they don't know he has a tender heart for anybody in trouble, but I know it. Maybe they don't think he loves me, but I know he does. He can't fool me.

And she said, true Lord. She said, it wouldn't be right to take the children's bread, give it to the dogs. But she said, the little dogs, the pet dogs have a right to the bread from their own master's table.

And I'm your dog and I'm going to stand to the table until I get what I want. You know, she said, I wouldn't mind being a dog. I'm going to be Jesus' dog.

And you know what happened? Jesus got angry, didn't he? The dog left her alone, didn't he? Or did he? Huh? Huh? What did Jesus say? He said, oh woman, great is thy faith. What faith? Faith is believing what God said. And she knew what kind he was and what he had said he would do and she took him up.

And he was only reflecting the unbelief of these wicked apostles. You see? He did all the time he loved her, didn't he? All the time he wanted to hear her, didn't he? Sure. Listen.

If God ever seems to say no when you pray, you just go on. And if you're on the right track about getting people saved and having a revival and having the power of God, you just say, Lord, you can't fool me. You may not seem to be paying attention, but you maybe got the blinds down, but you're peeping out a crack at me.

And maybe you pretend you're not at home, but I'm going to keep on knocking. I know better. And you may pretend like you don't want me here, but I know you're just tickled because I'm begging and I'm going to say you had to open it and while you open it, put your arms around me and say I'm so glad you've been there.

If God ever seems to say no about a good thing you're begging, don't you believe it? You know what he's saying? He's really saying, do you really mean it? Do you really mean it? Yeah. Did you ever see a dog that, now we've got a little dog we like very much. We like Flicka very much.

But sometimes I have a tit-bit and she has to walk on her hind legs for us. You know that? Did you ever have a dog and you'd make him sit up and bark or something? Okay, God says that's okay. I don't mind giving you good things, but I want you to sit up and bark.

Are you ready to sit up and keep on barking? Say, Lord, I'll bark or walk on my hind legs or anything else. I'm going to have this. Listen to me.

Do you know a lot of people say, yes, Lord, I want the power of the Holy Spirit. Lord, give it right now. Right now, Lord, easy.

And the Lord says, yeah, you want it easy. It took me 30-odd homesick, heart-sick years, lonely, away from heaven to get people saved. It took me the bloody sweat and Gethsemane and the kiss of a traitor burning on my cheek and a spittle in my face, beard plucked out, vinegar and gall on my parched mouth and stripped naked to dying shame and mocked while I died.

And you want it easy. Yeah, you want the power of God. And just ask one time.

You don't want a night of prayer. You don't want to confess your sins. You don't want to weep in the tears.

You don't want to change your habits. You don't want to quit the picture show. You don't want to renounce your large oath.

You don't want to pay any kind of price. You just want it. Give me this.

Give me this. Give it easy. I'm not going to wait.

My brother, you can sit up and wait or you don't get it. Prevailing prayer. Jacob says, bless me.

I've got to have blessing. I'm going overseas. And he saw.

The angel said, nothing does. Apparently. So Jacob went away and said, well, I guess it wasn't God's will to have a revival.

The church was blessed and built up the church. There were many invisible results. Well, you people are laughing about you.

Are you laughing at me or at you? Yeah. Do you see the point here? No, so Jacob said, I'm not going to let you go. The angel says, let me go.

No, I won't do it. I want you to notice this wonderful thing. Here's one wrestling match.

Here's one wrestling match that wasn't quite on the level. Here's one wrestling match where the best man didn't win. Did you know that? Here's one wrestling match that was framed.

Did you know that? The angel says, let me go. I've got to get on back to heaven. I'm a minister on here anyway.

I've nothing to give you. Let me go. Is that really the way the angel felt? No.

He said, turn him loose. Let me go. But inwardly the angel said, I hope he doesn't turn him loose.

I've got it in my pocket. I've got it ready for him. The Lord told me what to give him.

If he kept on hollering. The angel said, turn him loose. I tell you, don't you see it's getting daylight? And Jacob said, I won't let you go.

The angel said, I hope he means it. If he just holds on a little more, I'll give it to him. I've got it ready for him.

I want him to do it, but I want him to mean business. Isn't that a wonderful thing? That angel said, turn him loose. But he could have tucked him with one finger and killed him or knocked him down.

Does anybody really believe that angel couldn't get away? Huh? Does anybody really believe the angel couldn't get away? If you had an angel and he wanted to go back to heaven, do you think he'd keep him from it? No. It'd be worse than that colored man that had a goat by the horn and called for somebody and said, come here and help me turn this shit and he will lose. No.

The angel could have gone, but wouldn't go. He said, turn him loose. But he didn't want loose.

He just wanted Jacob to mean business. Didn't he? That's what God wants you to do. That's what Jesus meant about the unjust judge and the widow.

That's what Jesus meant about that Canaanite woman just kept following him around in Holland. He pretended he didn't care because he wanted to enforce the issue and prove that he would do it anyhow. Lots of times God may say no or seem to say no when what he's really saying is, do you really mean business? Well, what about that little thing I talked to you about the other day? You think you could pick that up if we, uh, you think, yes, Lord, I'm going back home and I'm going to do it different.

Now, do you think this time that you listen to me about this and so on and so on? You know, if you really mean business and keep on praying, you can prevail with God. That's right. It takes time to be holy, speak often to thy Lord, spend much time in secret with Jesus alone.

It takes time to pray through. If you don't have time, then that really means you don't have a heart for prayer. You know, I've prayed for some things and got them right now.

I've asked God for some things right now and knew it was coming and thank God for it, went on my way. And there are other things and particularly it's been easier about daily bread and some immediate needs of fiscal matters. But I'll tell you about revivals and about keeping the sword of the Lord going and about getting subscriptions and about these conferences.

There are things I have to plead with God for months and months and months and keep on praying. And you'll never get anywhere with God till you learn to prevail in prayer. So the angel said, What's your name? He said, My name is Jacob the schemer, the trickster, the horse trader.

That's the kind of guy I am. I've rode my own boat. I've been handling my own canoe.

I didn't need any help and I, by hook and crook and scheming I've got along. That's my name, Jacob the schemer. And I've done wrong and it's haunted me twenty years and I've got to face it now.

And the angel said, Oh boy, oh boy, we'll change your name. Instead of Jacob the schemer, we'll call you Israel a prince, for like a prince hast thou prevailed with God and with man and hast prevailed. Now here I want to call your attention to one thing before we close.

He prevailed with God first then there was no trouble of Esau. Oh, you say, brother Ike, my community is so hard I just can't reach my community. No, that's not the one you can't reach.

You can't reach heaven. Yeah. Some woman here said, brother Ike, my poor lost husband, I've just tried and tried to win him twenty years and he won't listen to me.

He's not the only one who won't listen. God Almighty don't listen to you either. If you ever got God to listen my brother, your husband, he has ways and means.

The Lord has. The heart of the king is in the hand of the Lord. Did you know he has ways he has ways and means to turn the stubborn? Did you know that? No, where you really failed was with God.

If you ever meet the angel of God in the secret place and he blesses you, brother you can go and meet Esau. And he knew it too. He walked out of there that morning and he left and had a walking stick, but his head was high.

He said, I have met God face to face in my lost reserve. Wait, how do you know? You haven't seen Esau yet. He may still be mad.

He said, don't you worry about Esau. The Lord's taken over about old Esau. Yeah.

The Lord's taken over about Esau. Listen. Daniel's problem was not the lions.

His problem was the God of the lions. Did you know that? Did you know that? Huh? The three Hebrew children, their problem was not the fiery furnace. It was the son of man who came and walked in the furnace with him.

If you get him in there, brother, furnaces of fire don't bother. Did you know? Did you know that? Yes, sir. Yeah.

Did you know when Elijah was on Mount Carmel? His problem was not the 450 prophets, 400 prophets of Baal, the 450 prophets that ate at the king's table. His problem was not Ahab and Jezebel. His problem was just to get the fire down from heaven.

Then, brother, he can have them falling on their faces and saying the Lord He's God. He tried preaching to them first, and that didn't work, so then he got down to the power of God, and then it's picked up. Yeah.

You preachers say, well, the people in my community just can't get them out the church. I know. You haven't got somebody else out the church.

That's your trouble. You get the Lord out the church enough, you're going to have somebody else there. Yeah.

Prevail with God first, and then then. God forgive us that we think human means are enough. God forgive us that we think the things that are seen are the important things, the unseen things, and the supernatural things.

You know what I wish everybody here knew as we go home? I wish you'd say what Gideon said. The Lord said, Go, Gideon, you mighty man and feller, the Lord's with you. And you know this fellow was fit to be a captain.

You know what he answered back to the angel of the Lord? He said, If God be with me, I'll ride for all the miracles our Father's been talking about. I'd like to see some of them myself. Isn't that a good answer? Isn't that a good answer? He said, The Lord's with you, old boy.

You're going to have success. He said, Okay. Put up or shut up, God.

If I'm going to have, I want to see some miracles. I've heard tell about them. Now I want to see them myself.

Would it be good if everybody go back and say, I'm going to, I'm going to make sure I have something happen between me and God, and then between me and sinners, brother, it'll be a pushover. You see the point? See the point? Let us pray. The head's bowed.

I wonder how many people here have been up against a stone wall, and somebody you ought to win, and you couldn't win them. How many have been up against a stone wall in the community that seemed hard as stone, and you didn't know what to do with it? How many here had burdens and problems about a habit, or or about circumstances, or about financial resources, or talent, or whatnot, and you just simply didn't have the answer, and didn't know where to get the answer. I wonder how many have been up against a place you've got a knee sore to face, and you didn't know how to face him.

And you've been stymied. You've been defeated. You've been blocked off.

And you'll say, God help me. I'm going to wait on God till I get the answer, till I prevail. I wonder how many just have a confession, and a acknowledgement of our need, like Jacob.

How many said, I've been, I admit I've been licked. I've been defeated. I've had my problems I couldn't face.

I've had things I didn't know what to do about. People off to win that didn't know how to win. Let's see, there's one.

There's another. All right. All right.

Thank you. That's right. Oh, yes.

How many? How many? Yes. Thank you. Oh, God, teach us to prevail.

Lord, there's nothing I can give these people if they'll have some great emotional crisis, and then the problem is all settled. I pray they'll make the minds, I'll go along with God and get it settled every time I need it. I'll go there and wait on God and say that till the answer comes.

Let people shall not be discouraged. If God seems like an unjust judge that doesn't regard man, doesn't fear God, then right, I'll still go. If Jesus seems to answer me scoffingly like he did the Seraphimician woman, I'll believe in his goodness and his promises and keep pleading with him and be willing to be his dog and get the crumbs, but I'll stay there.

Lord, let people like Jacob say, I'll not let thee go. I can't do it alone. I've gone twenty years in the memory and the haunting conscience of my sin.

I can't go. I can't face Esau. I'm going to have your power.

I'll not go without it. Lord, help thy people. Oh God, fill us with the Holy Ghost from heaven.

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