

# Holy Desperation

by Michael L. Brown

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*Michael L. Brown's sermon emphasizes the urgent need for holy desperation in seeking God's presence and revival in our lives.*

**Duration:** 1:21:48

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33

**Topics:** "Holy Desperation", "Spiritual Revival"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of repeating and speaking out loud the word of God for better memorization. The speaker shares a powerful experience of witnessing children in a foreign country crying tears of desperation due to their lost state. This leads the speaker to question if believers are truly willing to let God break their hearts for the lost. The sermon then focuses on the story of Jacob in Genesis 32, highlighting his state of desperation and his determination to wrestle with God until he receives a blessing.

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## Transcript

We ask you to do something worthy of your great name. Father, we ask you to do something of eternal significance because that's the kind of God you are. Lord, you don't draw on that which is old and dry and worn out.

Lord, you're new in your mercies and grace every morning. God, tonight speak to us from heaven. Give us ears to hear and hearts to respond.

May not a single one escape your voice tonight. In Jesus' name, amen. Amen.

You can be seated. Before I get into the message, I want to say something very clearly to everyone here. All of us in ministry are used to preaching and teaching and opening up the word and bringing something fresh from God.

But there are times when God speaks with special urgency to us. There are times of unusual clarity and force that the Spirit moves on us. The prophet Ezekiel, when God got hold of him, in Ezekiel the third chapter, God told him, I'm going to make your tongue cleave to the roof of your mouth.

Why? Well, Ezekiel was in the midst of a sinful people and he had seen the glory of the Lord. And it would be very easy for him to constantly be rebuking his people. He had seen the glory.

He knew the sin of his people. The burden was great. It would be very easy for him always to be speaking out of his own heart and not speaking what God wanted to say.

So his tongue cleaved to the roof of his mouth until the fall of Jerusalem in 586. And the only time he could speak was when the Lord moved on him. Picture over visiting Ezekiel.

He's a dear friend. He doesn't say much, but you enjoy his company. And you're over there and you're just sitting there, maybe visiting with his wife before she wants to be with the Lord.

And Ezekiel's maybe nodding and you're asking him some things, and you're feeling okay today Ezekiel? And having a good time with the Lord? The Lord showing you anything? Maybe you're back there the next day, another week, another week, and suddenly he looks up and says, this is what the Lord says. I tell you that would get your attention. Now one time we had some friends over at our home.

My dear wife Nancy is sitting here and she'll verify the story. Of course if she knew what I was about to say she'd ask me not to, but that's one of the advantages of having the microphone. You do it and pay for it later.

But some people were over at our home one time and they wanted to know if God had spoken to me about a particular thing. Has God shown me anything? They really wanted to know, did the Lord speak anything to me about this particular matter? And I said, well no he hasn't, but I'll give you my opinion. And Nancy turned to me and said, who cares about your opinion? Now you see you have to take that in context.

We all have opinions and we exchange opinions all the time, but when someone comes and says, has God spoken anything to you, they're not asking for your opinion. I want to tell you tonight, I'm not giving you my opinion. God has spoken to me and I have a message.

And any time we open the word, we have the word, we have the message. Any time we accurately present what God has said in his word, then we are preaching the word. But I want to tell you tonight that God's given me a specific application and a specific word for the revival, for the school of ministry, for the church here, for the visitors, for those who are hungry and thirsty.

God wants to speak to you. And you're going to get the title of the message very easily. In fact, you'll memorize it right now.

It helps memorization when you repeat something out loud. So for those of you who struggle memorizing even two words, we're going to help and we're going to say it out loud together. And it'll be written in your mind and in your heart.

Say with me, Holy Desperation. Holy Desperation. All right.

Genesis chapter 32. I don't know exactly which way we're going to be ending things tonight. I don't know exactly how God is going to move.

I simply know the direction that he's pointed me and what the end results will be. But if you're here with special needs, we will be praying for everyone. If you're sick and you need prayer, we'll be praying for the sick.

If you need a fresh touch from God, we'll be praying for those who need a fresh touch. If you're away from God, if you're dealing with sin, you'll have an opportunity to get right with God. If someone brought you in here and there's a stirring going on, you'll have an opportunity to meet God tonight.

But I just want you to open your hearts wide and let the wind of the Spirit guide us the way he wants us to go. Amen? Genesis 32 tells us the account about Jacob preparing to meet his brother Esau. Jacob was a man that lived in two different dimensions.

On the one hand, he knew God, and he was a worshiper of God, and he depended on God. On the other hand, he was a conniver. He was a guy that could make a way when there seemingly was no way.

And sometimes it seemed it was the flesh opening the door, and sometimes God opening the door. Sometimes it seemed to be kind of a mixture, but always when it seemed that there was no solution, he'd find one. Just like many of us.

Just like many of us in ministry. We know how to depend on God, but then there's maybe some confidence in our method, or our program, or our ability, or something in us, or our history, or what's happened up to now. And some of us that haven't crucified some areas of the flesh even know how to connive and break the laws without really breaking the laws.

You don't have to say amen to it, otherwise you've just convicted yourself, and you may be sitting next to a policeman. But Jacob is about to come to a turning point in his life, so much so that his name is actually going to change, signifying that he's now a new man with a new destiny. He had parted ways with his brother Esau 20-odd years before, and the last words he heard from Esau were words of anger, that Esau wanted Jacob dead.

He thought, my dad's old, our father is old. When he dies, I'm going to kill Jacob. Jacob has stolen my birthright and stolen my blessing.

I'm going to kill him. That's the last he knows. Now Jacob with his family, with his wives, with his concubines, with his children, with a massive army of flocks and herds, but not a lot of manpower.

Animals, livestock, women, children, not a lot of manpower. Jacob has to cross through Esau's region. Jacob also went on his way, verse 1, and the angels of God met him.

When Jacob saw them, he said, this is the camp of God, so he called that place Machnaim. Jacob sent messengers ahead of him to his brother Esau and the land of Seir and the country of Edom. He instructed them, this is what you are to say to my master Esau.

Your servant Jacob says I have been staying with Laban and have remained there till now. I have cattle and donkeys, sheep and goat, men servants and maid servants. Now I am sending this message to my Lord that I may find favor in your eyes.

Jacob is trying through natural means to appease Esau and to humble himself so that Esau will let him through and let his family through. When the messengers returned to Jacob, they said, we went to your brother Esau and now he is coming to meet you and 400 men are with him. This means trouble.

Within a day, Jacob's family could all be killed. Within a day, from the youngest child right through to his wife, they could be dead. Or Jacob could be killed and they could be taken to be wives of others and

slaves and servants of others.

So Jacob hatches a plan. In great fear and distress, Jacob divided the people who were with him into two groups and the flocks and herds and camels as well. He thought if Esau comes and attacks one group, the group that is left may escape.

He's still thinking in the natural. He's still hatching a plan. Then Jacob prayed, O God of my father Abraham, God of my father Isaac, O Lord who said to me, go back to your country and your relatives and I'll make you prosper.

In other words, you're the one that's telling me to go back, God. I am unworthy of all the kindness and faithfulness you have shown your servants. I had had only my staff when I crossed this Jordan, but now I have become two groups.

Save me, I pray, from the hand of my brother Esau, for I am afraid he will come and attack me and also the mothers with their children. But you have said I will surely make you prosper and will make your descendants like the sand of the sea, which cannot be counted. He spends the night there and he divides up all the animals, all the families, and he's got this huge entourage of gifts and gifts and gifts and animals and every possible thing to appease Esau, to appease Esau, so that by the time Esau gets to him, he'll have made peace.

Verse 22. That night Jacob got up and took his two wives, his two maidservants, and his eleven sons and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. After he had sent them across the stream, he sent over all his possessions.

So Jacob was left alone. Stopped there. No matter what Jacob had figured out and planned, something must have struck him that it's probably going to fall short.

After all, Esau has been burning with anger and vengeance for 20 years. There's been no communication and now he's coming with 400 men. And maybe Jacob went through every possible scenario.

Have you ever been in financial straits and you work out money's coming from here, this is from here, I can borrow from here, I can cash in this CD, I can do this and that, and then you put it all on the table and we're still going to fall short. You ever been traveling somewhere and you've got to catch a connection, it's urgent that you get to a particular place and you look at your watch and you think, all right, we drove this fast, get here, get here, all right, we've got to accelerate, we've got to do this, and then you realize there's no way it's going to work. Well, this was life and death and now Jacob is just where God wants him to be.

He can't depend on any of his human ingenuity, he can't depend on his past experience, he can't depend on his fast-talking ability, he can't depend on anybody else, he's alone. And a man wrestled with him till daybreak. When the man saw that he could not overpower him, he touched the socket of Jacob's hip, that his hip was wrenched as he wrestled with the man.

Then the man said, let me go, put his daybreak. But Jacob replied, I will not let you go until you bless me. I will not let you go until you bless me.

The man asked him, what is your name? Jacob he answered. Then the man said, your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel, because you have struggled with God and with men and have overcome. I want to say some things to you and then talk to you about holy desperation.

Many people here in Brownsville, in our school of ministry, visitors, friends, guests from around the world have been crying out to God for the fires of revival to intensify. We've rejoiced in all the good things that God has done, but we've become hungry and we've become thirsty. And things that used to satisfy, I don't mean the presence of God because that always satisfies.

I don't mean seeing sinners converted because that always satisfies. But things that we used to say, this is wonderful, this is enough, now leave us with an empty feeling in the pit of our stomach. They now leave us with a feeling of God, if this is it, something's wrong.

They leave us with a feeling there's got to be more. It's almost like another awakening within an awakening. Another recognition of a need for revival within revival.

It's been rising in many hearts. You know, we've joked about this in the past, but I want to say it again because this cry is rising in many hearts. You know, in the early days of revival, we rejoice when people walk in under their own power and then they're wheeled out in wheelchairs.

Whereas it should be by now that people are wheeled in in wheelchairs and walk out under their own power. For those of you from this area, it should be that after three and a half years of revival, in spite of awesome fruit in the schools and awesome fruit in the community and awesome fruit through the city, it should be after three and a half years that Pensacola looks and smells a whole lot different than it does. It should be that there are not new strip clubs opening up but closing down because there's no business.

And some of you, you're here on repeat visits for the fifth or the tenth time, and God moved six months ago, and God moved two years ago, and God moved three years ago, but you certainly expected to have seen more by now. I want to tell you, friends, that we are not waiting on God as much as God is waiting on us tonight. It is not God's will that this revival nearly goes on.

It is God's will that this revival goes deeper. It is not God's will that the revival merely endure. Praise God, we're into our fourth year.

That's not God's will that it nearly endures. It is God's will that the revival intensifies. It is not God's will that we merely carry on with the work of revival.

It is God's will that the waves of revival carry us away, carry us onward, carry us upward, carry us outward into regions that have not yet been touched or explored. There's more, friends. We become comfortable when it's time to become confrontational.

We become accustomed to the things of the Spirit, but we're supposed to become aggressive. I don't mean aggressive in a negative way with God, but aggressive to the point that we look at a Goliath and say, if no one else is going after him, I'm going after him, and I'm running at him. Some of us, and there's been great sacrifice here in the revival, and there are people, the ushers and the workers and the laborers and the volunteers that are the heroes of all of us here in leadership.

We honor them. I go to other churches and I boast about these men and women who've labored and given. And many of you that have come from other churches, you've labored, you've sacrificed, you've gone the extra mile, it seems.

Some of us, you could say, have even gotten used to the pain of contractions and childbirth. God says it's time to push the baby out. And I want to say something to the students that are here from the School of

Ministry, and I know that many of you are here tonight.

I don't know it because God gave me a word of knowledge. I know it because you're everywhere. This is what we call support the president.

I want to say to all the students here and those that are thinking about coming in the future, we constantly are looking at the student body and trying to think how can we help more, how can we minister more, how can we meet needs more. It's a constant conversation among all of us in the school and the leadership. How can we make this a little easier? How can we simplify this? How can we relieve a burden here and there? That's a constant concern to us because you are why we're here.

But I want to say this to you plainly. The Glasgow Revival School of Ministry may never become a normal school with all the facilities and comforts and benefits that a normal school could offer. And if schools have that, wonderful.

I rejoice. I pull up to places and see huge facilities and sports facilities and massive libraries, and I thank God if those things are being used to prepare labors and to create an environment that's good for people, wonderful. I rejoice in it.

And if God gives that to us, fine. But we may never ever have that. We may always be stretching, always be growing, always straining, always moving.

What do you think life was like for the twelve disciples in the early church? Revival, friends, means movement. I said all that to say this. I believe we are at a point where God is ready to do wonderful and radical things that we haven't yet seen.

I believe God is ready to stoke and turn up the fires of revival beyond what we've yet seen. I believe it's time for Pensacola to be impacted. I believe it's time for fire to spread like we've never seen throughout America and to the nations of the earth.

And I, for one, by the grace of God, don't want to be right in the thick of it, not in the last move, not in the last memory, but today, running at top speed in the glory of God, caught up in His presence, seeing His power. Last week, it was last Wednesday night, something happened in the service. The Friday and Saturday nights before have been powerful.

Good crowds. People coming from all over. Steve had said it felt like summertime.

Busloads of people coming from all over. Large youth groups. Seventy, eighty people, I think it was, just from Tallahassee, young people.

People weeping and getting right with God at the altar. Wonderful baptismal testimony. Sunday morning was a wonderful service in Brownsville.

Overflow packed with people. Wednesday night, something just happened in the service. It wasn't because things were bad or things were wrong or people weren't coming or the Spirit wasn't moving.

To the contrary, we were all in an encouraged state of mind. But something just happened in the service. And I believe it's the fruit of secret prayer and people crying out.

And all night prayer. And people seeking the face of God and fasting. And young people soaking their bed with tears.

I believe God's been hearing and watching and looking. I sat in the service Wednesday night and something just hit me. It was out of the blue.

It could have been the most wonderful night in the history of the revival. But something just hit me. I thought, what in the world am I doing here in church? Something's supposed to be different.

We're not just supposed to be having a revival service on Wednesday night. We're not just supposed to be having a moving of God. Something is supposed to break out.

I turned to the brothers, to Pastor and Steve. I said, I feel like something's just supposed to break out tonight. I was going to get up and speak, so I began to speak.

And they began to sense something happening. I made some announcements after I was done. Talked about the need to get back to normal.

Talked about the need to break out and see the real things that God wants to do. And sat down and Pastor and Steve, it sensed God wanted to do something fresh. Pastor got up and said, we're just going to pray.

We feel we need to go in a different direction. And we turned this night, this service, into a time of prayer. And crying out and going after God.

And seeking the face of God earnestly. Saying, God, you've got to come in power. What we've seen has been wonderful.

What we've seen has been glorious. But there's got to be more. And we're at a place of desperation.

We're at a place that we can't live the way we're living anymore. Genesis 32 with Jacob. What happened? He got to a point where he could not go on the way he had been going anymore.

And it hit suddenly. I don't know at what point he realized what was coming. But it hit suddenly.

And I want you to recognize the state of desperation in Jacob. The push, the hunger, the desire that was within him. You've got to understand something.

For those of you who've ever wrestled. For those of you who've ever been in that kind of heavy physical activity. You can't keep it up for long.

It's not like some show on television. It's a so-called wrestling match with performers. If you've ever seen Olympic level wrestling, the rounds are short because the energy that's put out is so great that you can only go on for a few minutes and that's it.

And Jacob wrestles through the night. Why? Because he had no alternative. Because he had no other outlet.

He had no other way. And all he could say was, I won't let you go because I can't let you go. If I let you go, I die.

If I let you go, my family dies. That's holy desperation. The desperation that won't let go because it can't let go.

Friends, we in America get so settled in. We in America and from the prosperous nations of the world, we get so complacent. We get so lethargic.

We learn to rely on our resources. And even in a heaven-sent revival like this where there's not been a single service, where anyone ever tried to concoct anything, where anyone ever tried to work anything up, where anyone ever tried to create an atmosphere other than what God was doing. Not a single time and a single service.

Still, we can get used to revival. And we can just keep thinking, well, God's going to move more. God's going to move more.

America's going to be shaken. My city's going to be touched. My church is going to be touched.

My loved ones are going to be saved. Healing power is going to come. But friends, unless a change comes in us, it's not going to change out there.

Moses had one of the most awesome encounters with God of any human being, probably of anyone who lived up to that point in history. He had the most awesome encounter with God of anyone. And he had an experience that most of us could not even relate to in our wildest dreams.

Think of it for a minute. He went up the mountain with God at Mount Sinai. God spoke to him out of the mountain.

He replied. All Israel saw it and heard it. And he spent 40 days alone with God.

Consider it. He didn't eat. He didn't drink.

It was supernatural. He lived in the glory for 40 days and 40 nights. He came down and saw the sin of his people.

Came down and saw that they couldn't wait for him to return. And instead they had made a golden calf. And now his judgment was on his people.

And he had to move outside of the camp. He said to Moses, If I stay in the camp, the people won't die. I'm going to have to judge them.

So there was a tent that was set outside called the Tent of Meeting. And if anyone wanted to meet with God, they'd go outside the camp. They had a breakaway.

They'd go outside the camp, and there the presence would be. And when Moses would go outside the camp, it says the cloud would come down on the tent. And all the Israelites would stand at the door of their tent and watch.

It was amazing. Look at this. Moses is going out there.

And the cloud comes down. Everyone just says, Look, look, look. Moses and the Lord.

And the Lord, it says, would speak to Moses face to face as a man speaks to his friend. And you know what Moses prayed? He'd been on Mount Sinai 40 days and 40 nights. He'd been the one that had the encounter with God at the burning bush.

He'd been the one that raised the rod and saw the seed split. He'd seen the miracle power of God like no one else who ever lived. Now there's something in him in the midst of the glory, in the midst of the blessing, in the midst of the moving.

There's something in him crying out for a greater revelation of God. There's something in him that has to break out and take hold of God. He can't live where he is any longer.

He can't stay back any longer. And he says, Oh God, show me your glory. I've got to have you and know you and experience you in a way beyond what I have here.

Friends, that's what it's going to take, that heart cry rising up to the throne of God. Listen to what John G. Lake said. I love to quote Lake and teach on Lake.

Just last week in our school of ministry, I taught our first year class, Giants of the Faith, where we look at the lives of different ones, God used through the ages, revivalists in the past, and missionaries, and those used in healing, the power of God. We talked about John Lake, a man mightily used by God to heal the sick, a man used by God in an extraordinary way in South Africa at the turn of this century, with miracles the likes of which haven't been seen since the days of the apostle. But Lake came from a family, he was one of 16 children.

His mother and father were healthy and strong people. But Lake's family had a curse of sickness and disease on them. By the time he was in his 20s, eight of his brothers and sisters had died.

Sickness, disease. One brother had suffered 22 years with a severe blood disorder and was an invalid on the edge of death. Another sister was dying of breast cancer.

Another sister was terminally ill. Lake's wife had a degenerative heart condition that was going to kill her. Lake was sick and his child was sick.

And it was at that point that the cry of his heart went out to God for healing. It was at that point after seeing all the destruction that had been wrought in his family. It was at that point after seeing the devil steal and kill and destroy, that a cry rose up in him that was so intense that it had to receive an answer.

And when the answer came down, it came down with a manifestation of power through his life the likes of which very few of us have ever seen. And we just want to sit back and skip a day of food and maybe pray for an hour and read our Bibles a little bit here and there and turn off the TV maybe once or twice a week to meet with God more. And we think the glory is going to come down.

Friends, let me ask you a question. How much room is there for God in your life? How much capacity is there for God in your life? We're not talking about save room for dessert, friends. We're talking about holy starvation.

Listen to what Lake said. God's purposes come to pass when your heart and mind get the real God cry and the real God prayer comes into our spirit and the real God yearning gets hold of our nature. Something is going to happen then.

No matter what your soul may be coveting, if it becomes the supreme cry of your life, not the secondary matter or the third or fourth, the fifth or tenth, but the supreme desire of your soul, the paramount issue, all the powers and energies of your spirit, soul, and body are reaching out to God and crying to God for the answer. It is going to come. The hunger of a man's soul must be satisfied.

It must be satisfied. It is a law of God in the depths of the spirit. God will answer the heart that cries.

God will answer the soul that asks. Can you really say, God, I'm desperate? Can you really say, oh God, I can't live without the blessing? Not for some selfish thing, but so that God can touch us so we can touch others. I was with some dear folks.

We were doing some outreach in Cleveland one time, and a dear brother was praying. Before the meetings, we were praying for the lost, and he said, Lord, give me souls or I die. And I said to myself, I really appreciate his heart, but I wonder if he really means that.

And I wonder if I prayed it, if I would really mean it. Give me souls or I die. Whitfield used to pray, give me souls or take my soul.

John Knox prayed for Scotland. Give me Scotland or I die. John Hyde, the great intercessor, prayed with such intensity that when he came down sick in his 40s and was taken to a doctor in Bombay, he was an American missionary in India, they found that literally his heart had moved to the center of his chest cavity.

So much broken hearted anguish in his soul going up to God that actually affected him on the inside. I ask you again, how much capacity is there for God in your life? How much room is there for God to visit? How much room is there for God to use you, my friend? Are you desperate? Holy desperation is a driving, insatiable, dominating hunger. Holy desperation is the only way to receive real treasures from God.

Holy desperation is the only thing that will make us fit and able to receive from God. Many of us know the words of Psalm 42 as the deer longs for streams of water, so my heart longs after you. We talk about being hungry for God, but we know very little about hunger, friends.

We know very little about real hunger, starving hunger that drives people to do desperate things. It's an unimaginable thing, but Deuteronomy 28 talks about a curse for disobedience where the famine will be so great that women will boil and eat their own children. It's impossible to conceive of it.

I guarantee you, every mother in the world would sign on a dotted line saying that could never possibly happen, and yet desperate starvation will drive people to do desperate things. When it's turned toward God, friends, desperate hunger and starving hunger for the glory of God can shake whole nations. Thank God for churches working together.

Thank God for unity. Thank God for denominational barriers coming down among true believers. Thank God for prayer meetings where people come together, but I tell you, beyond all that, see, we may think if we can join hands with enough people and hold hands with enough people, the glory will come down.

Friends, it doesn't work like that. It could be one person shut up alone with God that won't come out of their room until the glory comes down, and that could change a nation. I remember Leonard Ravenhill saying to me one time on the phone, Mike, a man only needs to be anointed one hour in his life and he could change history.

God just came down and got hold of us, friends. Desperation is more than normal hunger. It's hunger at the point of death, the hunger of survival in the midst of famine and drought.

The Hebrew word used there in Psalm 42 for the deer that's panting for streams of water is actually an audible hunger. It's a craving that's so loud that it would actually give utterance to a sound. Those of you sometimes that have been so desperate and you just find yourself, oh, just crying out like that.

When John Lake heard about the baptism in the Spirit, he had seen his brother healed on the verge of death. The invalid, 22 years, he saw him instantly healed. He saw his sister with breast cancer healed.

He saw his other sister die and come back from the dead. He saw his own wife healed. He himself was healed.

He saw his child healed, and he still hadn't been baptized in the Holy Spirit. And an old man came into his office in Chicago. Lake was a prosperous businessman at the turn of this century making \$50,000 a year.

Not the equivalent of \$50,000, but at the beginning of this century making \$50,000 a year. And an old man came into his office and talked to him about the baptism in the Spirit. And Lake said, there's something in God that I don't have and I want it.

And he began to hunger and he began to thirst and he began to go after God. And he said, for nine months, he said, I believe I was the hungriest man for God who ever lived. Longing for God.

He said he'd go walking down the street sometimes just unconsciously, just a street full of people after work. And he'd just say, oh God. And people would look at him.

It was that hunger that had to have an outlet. Panting, thirsting after streams of water. Friend, are you panting after God? Are you thirsting after God? Like an animal would be in the desert that's going to die if it doesn't get the water.

You're hungering for souls and for the glory of God. Or someone would be hungering for food and famine. Or would you really like to see the Lord do more? And would you really like to see the Lord send revival? And would you really like to see your nation touched? And would you really like to see the blessing of the Lord in your life? Friend, you know the difference.

You know the difference. I want to speak to the teenagers here, the young people. You may not know this, but I've talked about you guys in different parts of America and different parts of the world.

I remember it was a little over a year and a half ago. It was May of 1997. I was praying in the back there for people at the end of the service.

And one of the young ladies, faithful in the revival, just looked downcast. She was crying. She'll be crying often during an altar call.

But I'm used to seeing her bubbly smile. Instead, she was crying. And I said to her, what's the matter? She said, there are only three weeks left of school.

And I'm afraid God's not going to do anything else. And I said, what do you want to see Him do? She said, I want to see revival. And she just fell to the ground, sobbing and weeping.

I've prayed with some young people here in the revival. I've joined hands with them as they're praying. I always go out of my way to pray for them when I see that hunger in their heart and soul.

And I pray that they're hysterically saying, Jesus saved my school. Friends, sometimes we pray, and we pray, and things go so far, and we get accustomed to it. I'm telling you, it's going to take more tears.

I'm telling you, we may have gotten within an inch of the breakthrough, but we can't stop now. We can't settle for things being the way they are. They may have been exciting two years ago.

And I don't mean the presence of God, and I don't mean souls getting saved. That's always exciting. And Steve gave a strong word, a message from God, the end of last week, last Friday, urging us to recover the awe and the glory of God.

The awesomeness of Him. The wonder of Him and of His works. But I tell you, it may have been exciting to see certain breakthroughs in the schools.

Maybe you're a visiting youth pastor. Maybe you're young people down from Canada. It may have been exciting to see God break out in your church a certain way.

But now it's got to go beyond that. What was wonderful a week ago and a month ago and a year ago is not wonderful today because the needs are still there. Because the sick are still there.

Because the bound are still there. Because the oppressed are still there. Because our nation is still going to hell all around us.

Something's got to change. I remember when I first met Don Wilkerson about nine years ago. I was going to be speaking the first time over with Times Square Church in New York, and I had the pleasure of speaking there about 40 or 50 times over the years, early and mid-90s.

And I was going to be doing a Jewish outreach. Don Wilkerson said to me, Mike, David Wilkerson's younger brother, heads up Teen Talent International. Don said to me, Mike, what's the greatest need in Jewish ministry today? And I gave him the answer from a Presbyterian pastor about 150 years ago.

I said, the greatest need is more tears. It's not a method. It's not a program.

I used to talk to my friends in New York, and I said, you know, if someone said, here's all the money you need for Jewish ministry, go ahead and do it. All the best tracks, all the best materials, all the best workers, it's not going to make it happen. There's a veil that has to be lifted.

There's a hardness that has to be broken. And it can only be broken by God. And it can only be we, the people of God, who cry out to Him for the breakthroughs.

But I tell you, we're stopping short. I tell you, we're trying to satisfy ourselves before the breakthrough comes. Sometimes it just hurts too much to carry the burden.

Sometimes it's just too overwhelming to think of people going to hell. Sometimes it's just too discouraging to look at a sick person that's not healed. But I say, look at it, feel the pain, feel the burden, and then go after God till He uses you to set the captives free, till He uses me to change history, uses us to change a generation.

Listen to what David Brainerd said. Died at the age of 28, I believe. Missionary to the American Indians.

A man who was introspective, a man who was melancholy, a man who many psychologists and psychiatrists would tell us today is not fit for the ministry of the mission field, but one of God's choice servants in history. People that have read his biography would talk about, there he is, out in the forest by himself, freezing, waking up in the morning absolutely freezing. The winter weather, the northeastern United States, America then, before it was the United States, early 1700s.

There's Brainerd praying his guts out, coughing up pieces of his lungs, dying of tuberculosis. One time he went out in the snow, I believe it was up to his shoulders, and he went to pray and he got so caught up with God that he forgot about his surroundings, and when he stopped praying, all the snow had melted right around him. Intensity of hunger and desire for God.

And he saw God move among the Native Americans after a period of time, the breakthroughs came, he saw God move in power, but then his journal affected this one and affected this one and affected this one, continues to touch lives today 250 years later. Listen to what Brainerd said, When I really enjoy God, I feel my desires of Him the more insatiable, and my thirstings after holiness the more unquenchable. Oh, this pleasing pain, it makes my soul press after God.

I remember when I first started bringing videos back from the revival as God graciously called me to be part of the leadership team about one year into the revival, completely out of the blue, unexpected to all of us, and yet we all knew it was God. And I began to bring back key videos so Nancy and I could watch them back in Maryland and show it to our teenage daughters. I remember watching one video, little Whitney Lane, one of the daughters of Van Lane, wonderful children's pastor here in Brownsville.

Little Whitney, eight years old, just began to talk about her burden for the Lord, and the pain she felt as they were sinking down at the house. She couldn't talk anymore, she just felt a little cry. And I'd be driving in my car later on, and the reality of that, the period that bird just hit me, I'd break down crying in my car.

Friends, that's what's going to be going on in our children, that's what's going to be going on in our lives if we really want to see the harvest reap. I've prayed with our dear brothers and sisters in India, we work with them every year, and Nancy and I will never forget it. One of the times there just watching the children, about 75 children in the children's home, it's about 300 now, about 75, mainly orphans, as they're on their knees praying, we were about to go out into five different cities throughout India and hold major rallies and do village evangelism in the daytime.

And Jesus Paul and the brother we work with began to lead them in prayer, said, let's pray for the cities, let's pray for the places we're going. Of course, I didn't understand any of the telling and praying, but every so often I could understand as they mentioned the names of the cities. And we watched these kids, it was unforgettable.

We watched them with tears beginning to stream down their cheeks, five years old, seven years old, ten years old, weeping from the loss. One little girl, five years old, we have it on video, just an unforgettable sight. I asked Jesus Paul afterwards, how did she come into the home? He said, she's only been here for about a month or so.

The mother became a Christian, the husband's a Muslim, he kicked the whole family out, the wife and the daughters, so we've taken the daughters in. She's brand new. And she has tears streaming down her

cheeks because of the reality that her people are lost.

I wonder, are we really willing to let God break our hearts? It struck me a couple of years ago that the burden that drove Jesus to the cross, and the burden that drove missionaries to the ends of the earth, doesn't even drive us to our knees. Something's wrong. Something's missing.

How many times has it been spoken from this pulpit? You call for potluck dinner and get the whole church to show up. You call for a fast. You call for prayer meetings.

Who comes? I was at a church one time, in the midst of what I understood was a powerful move of God that had been touched by the fires of revival. In fact, there had been an outstanding miracle of healing that had taken place. And yet the pastor said to me a few weeks ago, our night service was almost empty.

That's not hunger. That's not thirst. That's convenient Christianity.

There's nothing casual, my friend, about the cross. It was Jesus Himself who said, Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they'll be filled. Jesus Himself who said, If anyone thirsts, let him come after me.

Let him come to me and drink. Desperation is a hunger so intense that it is all-consuming and dominating. A hunger so powerful that it says to an angel, Even though it's exhausted and bone-tired, I won't let you go until you bless me.

God is seeking a hunger that will not let go because it cannot let go. A hunger that cannot quit because to quit is to die. That is God hunger.

That is spiritual desperation. That is the key to revival. I wonder, my friend, are you willing to get desperate? I want to say a few more things, and we're going to respond.

You say, what does that mean? You want to say a few more things, and then you're going to respond. Who in the world knows it's just something preachers do to give you a feeling that we're moving somewhere and that we're going to end sometime? But I want to say this to you here that may not have a personal relationship with God. You may have grown up in church.

You may call yourself religious. Or you may be a bonafide, full-blown, true-blue pagan. Whoever you are, if you don't know God, if you are not sure that if you were to die, you'd go into His presence, sure that your sins are forgiven through the blood of Jesus, I want to say something to you.

God is not obligated to do anything for you. If you're listening on Internet, if you're watching this at home, God is not obligated to do anything for you. You may say, well, I had a crisis some years ago.

I had a terrible situation some years ago. And I made a deal with God, if you'll help me out of this, I'll serve you the rest of my life. Friends, who gave you a contract with God that said when you live your whole life however you want to, then in a crisis He's obligated to help you out? Let me also tell you that God has been around a long time.

To be precise, He has been around forever. And He knows that prayers prayed like that have about the lifespan of a breeze blowing by. How many vows have you made and when the problem left you forgot the vow? I still remember having root canal one time and I couldn't quite get to the particular nerve.

I don't know how many shots I had to give him, but it was hurting. You ever been climbing out of your skin while you're there in the dentist's chair? God bless dentists, we appreciate dentists. Dental surgery has come a long way.

We're glad that you don't just come and pull the tooth out. Sometimes dentistry can hurt a little. And I remember one time, about 15 years old, 16 years old, it was a bad one, it was hurting.

And I remember, I wasn't a believer, but I remember just saying, God, if you'll help me out of this, I'll never have another candy bar the rest of my life. I next remembered that vow later that afternoon while eating a candy bar at the beach. That was about 4,000 candy bars ago.

I'm 43 and I only did it from 16 to 19. I haven't, no, I better not. You may be here and say, well, God knows where I live.

Well, that's a mighty revelation. You better write that down. Students, we've never taught you that.

Write that down. God knows where we live. What's that supposed to mean? He can come and get me if He wants to.

He's not going to. He said, you seek Me and live. You join near to Me and I'll join near to you.

He sends His Son to die for you and for me and our sins and our miserable pride and rejection and malice and mocking Him and cursing Him. He sends His Son to die to pay for those very sins. Then He lays it on people's hearts to pay for us and His Spirit's wooing us.

Friends, it's up to us to come. It's up to you to come. And if you don't know Him, if there's sin in your life, if you're a slave to sin, whatever that sin may be, be it hatred, be it pornography, be it alcohol, be it lying, be it a traditional religious spirit and judgmentalism or homosexuality, whatever it is, if you'll cry out to God and say, God set me free.

Whatever the cost, whatever the consequence, I want to live for you. Set me free so I can be yours. Friends, He will set you free.

And if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. Amen. In 1988, I was going after God as much as I've ever gone after Him at any time in my life.

I'd gone on a 21-day water fast just seeking His face. And as a result of that, God, He put me through a deep, deep purging. Friends, if you don't want purging, don't ask for revival.

One of the things that the fire does is it brings all the junk and the muck and the mire up to the surface. I can't believe that was in me. There's a whole lot more.

God just skins it off. But the refiner's fire was being applied to my life. I was going after God.

I was seeking Him as much as any other time in my life. But He was purging me and purifying me. And I pulled these notes up from my diary.

And I wrote down September 7th, 1988. I wrote this down. I'm humble and almost humiliated by the lives of those who have gone before me.

Why can't I live like Wigglesworth? I mean, Smith Wigglesworth, great apostle of faith. Or Finney, Charles Finney. Or Lake.

Do I really want to be totally dominated by God? And do I really believe that it's the anointing alone and not Mike Brown or his ways that bring revival? I'm convinced that the Church of America is asleep and deceived. We are like the Church of Sardis, as one scholar called it, the perfect model of an inoffensive Christianity with a reputation for being alive and yet dead. Where is our passion for souls? This was written almost 11 years ago, 10 and a half years ago.

Where is our conviction of sin and with that our power to convict of sin? How can we be burdened for the lost when we don't truly believe that they are lost? Then I had this in bold. Oh God, I must continue to pass through your fires until you have completed your present pruning work on me. God, I must come out a totally different person.

You must really remake me in Jesus' image. I cannot tolerate anything less. I am not hungry, I am starving.

Hear my heart and catch me up and visit me for your glory and for your glory alone. Friends, I believe that should be the normal expression of every one of our hearts. God, I'm not hungry, I'm starving.

Let me give you an example from Scripture, an example for real life, and then I'm going to bring us to a place of response. I'm speaking to everyone here. You know I'm speaking to you.

You know I'm not just talking to some minister out somewhere or some drug addict out there. You know I'm speaking to you. You know God's speaking to you.

Students, you know God's speaking to you. One of my favorite passages in the Bible is in Judges 6. We're getting in as an encounter with the angel of the Lord. The Israelites had sinned and were under judgment.

Because of that, they were given over to the hand of the Midianites. And the Midianites would come in swarming like locusts, massive numbers of people, swarming in on horseback or camel and just raid the whole country. And if they saw you harvesting crops, they'd be there to take them.

And Israel's in a desperate situation, and Gideon is threshing wheat in the winepress for fear of the Midianites. Do you understand that? He's threshing wheat in the winepress for fear of the Midianites. It would be like you're in the closet at work, the broom closet with a little flashlight reading your Bible there for fear that the other workers are going to tell that you're a Christian and get you fired from your job.

Maybe in some communist country or some Muslim country. And he's in the winepress threshing out the wheat, and the angel of the Lord appears to him and says, The Lord is with you, mighty man of valor. Here I am in the broom closet with a flashlight reading my Bible for fear of what's going to happen to me, and the angel comes and says, The Lord is with me, mighty man of valor.

Now I often, in describing my background, my wife and I, we're Jews from New York, and sarcasm just runs in our blood. It's now sanctified sarcasm. Before I was saved, it was vicious, ugly sarcasm.

Now it's holy, sanctified sarcasm, unless for a split second, a split moment, I get in the flesh. You say, what's a split moment? That's what a preacher says for emphasis after a split second. I would have taken that answer or that statement from the angel, I didn't hear the tone of voice, but that could almost sound

sarcastic.

The Lord is with you, mighty man of valor. But this was really the angel saying it. And you know what Gideon says? Because see, he's an Israelite, he's part of the people of God.

If the Lord is with him, the Lord is with the people of Israel. And he says, if the Lord is really with us, where then are the miracles and the signs and the wonders we heard about when our forefathers said, surely it's the Lord who brought us out of this. If the Lord is really with us, where is he? Where's the power? Where's the demonstration? Where's the glory? Friends, it's wonderful that we have lovely services in our church buildings, but it's not wonderful that ten feet out our door, people are dying without God.

It's wonderful that we sing about the power and experience a degree of the power, but it's not wonderful that the people who need to touch the most often receive it the least. If the Lord's really with us, God loves that kind of talk. We've been in the midst of revival.

It's the real thing. It's genuine. It's the real McCoy.

But I believe God would be pleased if we said, if this is really revival, then what about this and what about this and what about this? You know what the Lord says to Gideon? Go and this thy might. Hebrew's just three words, clusters of words together. So simple.

I believe just the way he translated it with King James and other versions, go and this thy might. Go in the strength that you have. What strength? Well, some say it's the next sentence.

Surely I have sent you. I don't believe that. The way I read it, the way I understand it is this.

God's saying to Gideon, the strength you have, Gideon, and the strength of which I'm sending you out to change the nation is this. If the Lord is really with you, things would be different. If the Lord is really with us, then the schools would look different and the community would look different and our families would look different and our prayer lives would look different and our country would look different.

Oswald Chambers, many of you know him. To this day, his devotional, my utmost for his highest, is the best-selling devotional in the world. I've been around the world and seen it in people's homes, translated into different languages.

You know, he didn't write a word. He only taught and spoke and taught and spoke. And his wife, he got married.

He was a little bit older when he got married. His wife had been sickly when she was younger. Couldn't do the things that other kids did, so she learned shorthand really well.

And she took down every teaching of his when he taught his students Bible college. She took down every word when he was a chaplain in the military in Egypt. Just took down every word.

Just wrote down everything. And then after he died, she put it all together. Oswald Chambers is speaking to more people every day than probably the best-known televangelist in America.

And I don't say that in any disparaging way. He's probably spoken to more people than the greatest preachers and teachers of our generation. He, being dead, continues to speak.

I just want to share with you a crisis that he had. I put this in a chapter, a book I wrote that came out in 1991 called Whatever Happened to the Power of God? That asked the question, is the charismatic church slain in the spirit or down for the count? I put a chapter in there called Is Christianity a Fraud? And that chapter had the greatest impact of any in the book. That's because it had the words of Oswald Chambers in it.

One ministry made it available to people and they said we keep getting these calls. People get to that chapter and they break down weeping. And they call us on the phone weeping.

There was something about the experience of Chambers. Listen to what happened. When he was a boy, he said that he enjoyed the presence of God, the conscious presence of God, wonderfully.

He enjoyed the presence of Jesus Christ wonderfully. Now he's a grown man. He's in his 20s.

He's a tutor at the noon college in Scotland. Tutoring philosophy. And he hears F.B. Meyer speak about the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

He hears him speak from Luke 11, 13. If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him. And he just said, God, I want to be filled with your Spirit.

I'm almost done here. I want you to listen. I want everyone to give me your best ear.

Chambers said this. From that day on, for four years, his own words, nothing but the overruling grace of God and the kindness of friends kept me out of an asylum. God used me during those years for the conversion of souls, but I had no conscious communion with Him.

The Bible was the dullest, most uninteresting book in existence. And the sense of depravity, the vileness and bad-motive-ness of my nature was terrific. I see now that God was taking me by the light of the Holy Spirit and His Word through every ramification of my being.

Four years, no sense of the presence of God. And all he can see is his own sin and vileness. You hear what he's saying? The Bible became the dullest and most uninteresting book in the world to him.

The last three months of those years, things reached a climax. I was getting very desperate. I knew no one who had what I wanted.

In fact, I did not know what I wanted. But I knew that if what I had was all the Christianity there was, the thing was a fraud. I'm about to finish.

I want everybody to stand with me. Please, no one move around. No one stir.

Prayer team, stay right where you are. God said through Malachi in Malachi 1.10, when His people Israel were corrupted in sin, He said, oh, that one of you would shut the temple doors so that you would not light useless fires on My altar. God sometimes says enough is enough.

Enough is enough. Listen to what happened to Chambers. He finally can't take it anymore.

He said, those of you who know the experience know very well how God brings one to the point of utter despair. And I got to the place where I did not care whether everyone knew how bad I was. I cared for

nothing on earth saving to get out of my present condition.

They're in a service. They sing, Touch Me Again, Lord. And He says, I felt nothing, but I knew emphatically my time had come and I rose to my feet.

I had no vision of God, only a sheer dogged determination to take God at His word and to prove this thing for myself. And I stood up and said so. That was bad enough, but what followed was ten times worse.

After I sat down, the speaker who knew me well said, that is very good of our brother. He has spoken like that as an example to the rest of you. Up I got again.

And said, I got up for no one's sake. I got up for my own sake. He wasn't just making a pious confession of hunger and need to help others come in.

He's speaking for himself and no one else. He said, either Christianity is a downright fraud or I have not got hold of the right end of the stick. And then and there I claimed the gift of the Holy Spirit and dogged committal on Luke 11, 13.

I had no vision of heaven or of angels. I had nothing. I was as dry and empty as ever.

No power or realization of God. No witness of the Holy Spirit. But something happened.

He said, if the previous years had been hell on earth, these four years after have truly been heaven on earth. Glory be to God. The last aching abyss of the human heart is filled to overflowing with the love of God.

Love is the beginning. Love is the middle. And love is the end.

After He comes in, all you see is Jesus only. Jesus ever. You know what he said about the baptism in the Spirit? The baptism of the Holy Ghost does not make you think of time or eternity.

It is one amazing glorious now. It is no wonder that I talk so much about an altered disposition. God altered mine.

I was there when He did it. And I have been there ever since. A.W. Tozer asked this question.

He said, the average Christian is so cold and so contented with his wretched condition that there is no vacuum of desire into which the blessed Spirit can rush in satisfying fullness. How great is the vacuum of desire in you? Those of you who have been slaves to sin, if you will cry out and say, God, I'm through with this. I never want to touch it or go back to it again.

If you will cry out and put your faith in His delivering power, do it. The blood of Jesus sets us free from sin. He not only died, He rose from the dead.

And the same Spirit that raised Him against all the forces of hell and darkness that would have kept Him down, the same Spirit that raised Him and set Him at the highest place in the universe, is the same Spirit here in our midst who set the captives free. He's here. Pastor, I wonder, are you desperately hungry? I didn't ask if you can work any harder.

Some of you are working yourselves to the bone. I didn't ask that. Youth workers, church leaders, evangelists, missionaries, young people, long-time believers, brand-new congregants, are you desperate?

Then I don't see how we can walk with God in this world and not have a holy desperation about it.

You read about losing God in the past. As I'm speaking, move the chairs, please, to the left and the right. But listen as you're going.

God's about to break through in our midst. Something's going to happen. I tell you tonight, the greatest and most wonderful and glorious and exciting and awesome days of this revival are yet ahead of us.

They are on the immediate horizon in front of us. About a quarter of you believe that. About two-thirds of you hope what I'm saying is true, and the rest have no clue what I mean.

You read about losing God in the past, friends. They don't just fall like ripe apples from trees. We're there, and we're going to learn the law of gravity because it hits us on the head.

We learn about revival because it just touches us. You read about the Welsh revival and the hunger and thirst of Evan Roberts. Going after God, going after God with that prayer.

Bend the church, save the world. Bend the church, save the world. And God came down.

The power that came down the Azusa Street spread around the world to the tune of a half billion people believing in the gifts and power of the Spirit around the earth today. There was a heart cry in William Seymour. For two and a half years, he was praying five hours a day.

The hunger, the thirst. You can be on your job working and hungering and thirsting. You can be home taking care of kids, but there's that heart cry going up.

You can be a student in school. You can be a computer programmer. You can be laying in a bed of sickness, and that same hunger can go up that prayer, Oh, God! The prayer that's got to be satisfied.

The prayer that's got to be answered. That vacuum of desire that Tozer spoke about. Seymour gets to Los Angeles.

He said, In there, the hunger was not less but more. I prayed, God, what can I do? The Spirit said, Pray more. There are better things to be had in spiritual life, but they must be sought out with faith and prayer.

Some of us think now's the time to kick back. Now's the time to enjoy life. No, friends, now's the time to press in.

Now's the time where it either breaks for the glory of God or we lose all hope of revival. Now's the point where we either seize the moment or look back with everlasting shame that we missed. I'm telling you, the Holy Spirit's speaking.

There are better things to be had in spiritual life, but they must be sought out with faith and prayer. Seymour said, But I'm praying five hours a day now. I increased my hours of prayer to seven and prayed on for a year and a half more.

I prayed to God to give me what Charles Parham preached, the real Holy Ghost and fire and tongues and love and power of God like the apostles had. Come on, friends, we've seen awesome things from God, but we haven't seen what we're supposed to see yet. If this book is true, if our God is true, we haven't yet touched what we're supposed to see.

We've got a glimpse, but that's it. Let's not insult God by saying this is that yet. Oh, we've seen things that few generations have seen.

I'm confident we've seen things that no generation in America has seen this century or at least in the last 90 years, here and in many other parts of the land. And because it's in so many parts of the land, that's why I can say it so confidently. And it's happening among Baptists and Methodists and Pentecostals and Lutherans across denominational lines where those really know the Lord.

God's moving. And the worldwide spread of the gospel is unprecedented in history. What's happened in the last 15, 20 years puts to shame as far as souls coming into the harvest anything that the world has ever seen.

And yet I believe we're coming to a point of climax where God's going to come down and visit and inhabit and move and live and stretch out His hand and shake everything. We're right on the edge. John Lake says about Seymour, God had put such a hunger into that man's heart that when the fire of God came, it glorified him.

I do not believe any other man in modern times had a more wonderful deluge of God in his life than God gave that dear fellow. And the glory and power of a real Pentecost swept the world. Oh, friends, it's so close.

I felt this at different times in my life, but it's all over me now. It's so close I can just about get hold of it. And I'm going to give a simple call.

If you don't know Jesus, this is for you. This is your time to come and to cry out to God in whatever way you know how. If you're backslidden, if you're bound by sin, this is your time to come.

But every single one in the balcony, in the choir loft, in the main section here, I don't care if you're on the platform, I don't care who, now is the time to come. If you're hungry, if you're thirsty, if you just have to see a breakthrough, if you can't live any longer the way you've been living, if you must see God come and change you and change your surroundings and come in power and visit, I want you to get to this altar right now from all over this building. I don't want you to wait for a minute.

And when you get down, get on your knees and begin to cry out to God. Begin to lift your voice to God. Begin to lift your voice to God.

Come down. Come down from the balcony. Find a place.

Get up close. Get up close. Step out.

When it gets filled, fill the aisles. Come on. Until you bless me.

Just between you and God. Just save me. Be a sinner.

All is clear. The righteous cry out. And the Lord hears.

Blessed are those who thirst. You're a new believer. You were saved for a month and got drunk one night.

We've wanted to save. We've wanted to enjoy our life. We haven't been willing to say.

And when we say it, forgive us, Lord. Forgive us, God. Oh, God.

Let the surgeon do his work.

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