

The Urgency of Prayer

by Richard Langworthy

Richard Langworthy's sermon highlights the critical urgency of prayer amidst societal challenges and the need for a deeper relationship with God.

Duration: 55:05

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Hebrews 2:1-3, Revelation 2:2

Topics: "Prayer"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of giving earnest heed to the things we have heard in order to avoid drifting away from the truth. He uses the analogy of a leaking bucket to illustrate how neglecting our salvation can lead to spiritual emptiness and being filled with worldly distractions. The urgency of the occasion, like a life-threatening situation or a sick loved one, should consume us and drive us to seek God's presence. The speaker also highlights the need for the church to wake up from spiritual slumber and be prepared, like the wise virgins in Matthew 26, by having the oil of the Holy Spirit in our lamps.

Transcript

I would like to share this morning, not so much on the need of prayer, but on the urgency of prayer. And I would like you to open your hearts and listen very carefully. I don't want you to hear a sermon.

If you hear a sermon, you've gone out and you've discussed that and said, hmm, that was interesting. I don't want it to be like that, although obviously I've got to share. Somewhere, I would like us to hear a warning.

I would like us to hear something that we would take home and consider in the light of the days and the times in which we are living. I want you to realize that for me, I am sharing this with a fear in my heart and a trembling in my heart because I'm very conscious in my heart of the urgency of the times in which we are living and the state of the Church. There's an interesting story in Numbers 16 where Korah and his friends rebel against Moses.

Don't turn there, I'll just flick through it quickly. And God judges Korah and his friends. And then what happens is the people of Israel then rebel against God.

And a plague comes and starts to enter the population of the Hebrew people. Moses is watching the people. As the plague comes, they are starting to die.

They're literally falling over and dying. And he says to Aaron, who I think Aaron must have been 80 years old, 70 or 80. He's quite serious at that time.

He says to him, go to the altar and put fire in a censer and go and make intercession for the people. And Aaron runs and he goes and he takes this little censer and he puts fire from the altar and he runs. And the Bible says that he stood between the dead and the living.

Literally, as that person died, he stood there with his censer and the plague stopped. He didn't stroll. He didn't take his walking stick and quietly go across.

The old man, whether he had to use Brufen afterwards, I don't know, for muscle pains, but the old man ran. And he ran for one reason. He was consumed with the urgency of saving life.

The urgency of the occasion, the urgency of what was in front of him, consumed him. And he saw that and he gave his life for that and he stood between the dead and the living and the plague was stopped. There's a great difference between the need to pray and the urgency.

And I'm trying to find various ways to give us a little picture that we may understand this. If you have a bald tire at the back of your car, one of those Dunlop super slip non-grip numbers, you know, where there's no more tread and the casing is showing through. And someone comes up to you and says, do you realize that you have a tire of this state and it's very dangerous and that you have a blowout? And you look at it and you say, thank you very much.

But I'm a bit busy right now and I'll drive around town carefully and the one week goes by and the next week goes by and you are not taken with the urgency of changing the tire. Suddenly, your grandmother is very sick in Kwekui and you jump in your little motor car to rush off to go and visit granny because you have to go tonight and as you go past Kwekui, the tire bursts and you and your family die. Whose fault was it? You see, because we weren't consumed with the urgency, we paid the price later.

And that's where we have to understand the churches today. We can talk about prayer and everyone will nod their heads and say, yes, I know it's an important thing, I need to talk and seek the Lord. It's more than that.

We need to understand where we are in our time, where the church is and what takes place in our hearts. And I want to touch on a few things this morning. That's why I want you to open your ears and hearts as wide as you can.

First of all, let's go to Matthew 24. Although Jesus is speaking to the Jews, it has an application directly to the times that are upon us. But there's a few little comments I'd like to see here.

From verse 3. Now He's speaking to His disciples on the side of Mount of Olives and they say to Him privately, when will these things take place? Now, Matthew 24, 25, 26 to end of 25, He's only speaking to His intimate circle of friends. He's not addressing the crowd at large. And He said to them, take heed that no one deceives you.

For many will come in My name saying, I am Christ and will deceive many. And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars and see that you are not troubled. For all these things must come to pass, but the end has not yet come.

For nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom and there will be famines and pestilences and earthquakes in various places. We are accustomed to that. These are but the beginning of sorrows.

It's interesting that God allows these things to happen to bring nations, arrogant nations to their knees. He says, then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. Persecution has gone through the ages.

There have been seasons of intense persecution for the church. We are entering back into another period of intense persecution. To be a Christian in the next five years or so will be a very, very unpopular thing.

Already the world is turning its heart everywhere against the idea of a sovereign God. The world we know today is changing fast. And then many will be offended.

Offended with the gospel. And will betray one another and hate one another. Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.

In Zimbabwe we have our own generation of false prophets, correct? Now, verse 12, And because lawlessness will abound. Lawlessness is all over the world today in particular in this generation. Men have no regard for the authority of God.

You just have to put on your TV screen and watch what happens in almost every single country. Don't look for riots. Look for gay rights.

Look for abortions. Look for how the courts rule in favor of criminals. Look for how right becomes wrong and wrong becomes right.

Look how men live in such a manner today that there is no regard for the authority of God within society of most nations. And it's growing. This is because lawlessness will abound.

The love of many will grow cold. The love of many for what? For Christ. And it's very interesting to realize that when everyone around us is living in a state of carnality for that disease to creep into the church.

We lose our zeal because of persecution or we lose our zeal because the whole community around about us is living in total rebellion to God and we are standing alone. And also, humanity as a whole has set their heart on materialism. The modern church today is in a love relationship, unfortunately, with the world.

Big time. In a modern church today, you've got to have the latest music. The more worldly the music, the better the church.

You've got to have the latest smoke and lights. We've got to have the latest everything we can because if we are not relevant to the world, why will the world come to church? Well, my question is, where was the Holy Spirit? The world doesn't come to church because we have gizmos and gadgets. We should have the presence of God in the church.

And if a sinner is comfortable in church, there's something wrong with church. He should be uncomfortable. His conscience should be pricked.

But the church is in a love relationship with the world and they are looking more and more for modern technology as their means of, this is how Christianity goes, rather than the simple old gospel of repentance. And so the church today, nearly everywhere, is changing its values to accommodate the spirit of the world. And the love of many will grow cold.

Now, just flick back to Matthew 13. We're going to go back to 26 and over, but Matthew 13, verse 34, says this. Sorry guys, I went too far.

I want to... Jesus says, here we are, Matthew 10. Matthew 10. Jesus said this, Do not think that I have come to bring peace on earth.

I did not come to bring peace but a sword. That doesn't mean that we run around with spears stabbing people. Okay? It means division.

For I have come to set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. What does that mean? That he advocates rebellion in the home? Not at all. We're not talking about rebellion.

We're talking about because of my stand for the gospel, I could find myself at variance with family members who choose another road. Is that clear? Alright? And it says, the man's enemies will be those of his own household. He who loves father and mother more than me is not worthy of me.

And he who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he who does not take up his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me. And he who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for my sake will find it.

Now, in real terms, we can read that scripture quite glibly and say, hmm, interesting. In real terms, for the natural man, that is impossible. It's impossible for a natural man to say, I'm willing to pick up my cross, identify my life with Jesus Christ above all else in this world.

We do not want to do that. It's not our natural desire. What he's talking about is a relationship that we would desire with him that is stronger than any natural affinity we would have for things in this world.

Because if we don't have that kind of relationship, the world will take our hearts. Are you hearing me? Amen? And so, for the true Christian, I've come to the place where I realize that the source of my life is Jesus Christ. The reason that I'm alive is for Jesus Christ.

The purpose of my life is to honor Christ. If it costs me my life, it's okay. But I'm here as a stranger and a pilgrim on this world.

Whatever I do, I do it as a missionary and to Christ. He is the reason that I live. Everything else that I have, my family, my extension, my relationships, are an extension of that purpose and that goal and that relationship.

That's what a Christian is. And that's what Jesus said. The true Christian has come to that basis, has laid their life down, and that is the reason that they are here.

That's a tall order. Because we have to come to the point where Christ is number one. Not, I'm a churchgoer.

Not, I believe. Not, I go to church so God can do something for me. But rather, He is my Lord.

He is my Savior. My eyes have been opened to how temporal this world actually is. I can see clearly the eternal purposes for which I got saved and I live to serve the Master.

That's grade one Christianity. That's entrance level stuff. Amen? Some of you are looking at me like, we never heard that one before.

Alright. That's a small print where He said, Lord come into my heart. You didn't read the contract.

That's a small print at the bottom of the page. That's the real deal. Amen? Now, keep that in mind.

I'm going to say a few things that could get me into trouble, which is not unusual. Revelation chapter 2. We need to understand the urgency of prayer. We need to understand that there is a darkness that is in the world today because of lawlessness.

That there is a spiritual darkness that has covered the hearts of men right across this globe. That has anesthetized men's hearts towards spiritual things, especially towards God. Revelation chapter 2 is the letter to the church of Ephesus.

And I've chosen this simply because it's pertinent to where we are. And in verse 2 He says, And I know your works, and your labor, and your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. It means they don't want to be involved with that which is ungodly.

And you've tested those who say they are apostles and are not. They have a clear understanding of church structure. And you've persevered, and have patience, and have labored for my name's sake, and have not become weary.

I think that we fall into that category. We are a church that loves to serve the Lord. Nevertheless, He says, I have this against you, that you have left your first love.

Here is my question. If Jesus arrived in our church this morning, would He say this, that, about this church? And unfortunately, I come up with an answer that says yes. Because we have a gospel that we love.

And we are great on works. And we'll organize youth camps, and we'll organize conferences, and we'll put up tents, and we'll fill trucks, and we'll do all wonderful things. But where are we in our relationship with Jesus Christ as a person? We cannot substitute works for relationship.

Am I making sense? Stay with me. We cannot substitute works for relationship. Here are some questions we have to ask ourselves.

Now listen carefully. My personal prayer life must be more than me reading a devotional when I get out of bed in the morning, opening a book, reading a devotional, muttering a few prayers while I brush my teeth, jumping in a car, and going to work with Lord bless me as I go and spend this day with the boss that I don't like. Amen.

That is not prayer. Neither is prayer sitting down and giving God a shopping list of all my requests and thinking that I have prayed. Where is my personal prayer life? Am I willing to give God an hour a day? Am I willing to close down my TV and the soccer and all the things that I like to watch and get alone with the

Lord of my Bible and allow God to speak to me? Or has that become a lost art? You answer that question.

Say, well, I'm so busy. I've got my Facebook to do and I've got this to do and Internet to do and this and this and this. So really, prayer is difficult.

And also, I don't know how to pray and I struggle to pray. I understand that. I understand that my flesh does not like to pray.

And if you leave it to your body, your body will never pray. Have you noticed that? My body will never pray because it's only the vehicle on which I move around in. If I want to pray, I make my body listen to me.

Come on. Amen. Please, you don't sit inside your car and wonder why the car didn't take you to the shops.

Those days are coming. They haven't made cars that can do that. But right now, in our car, you don't tell the car where it's going to go.

Correct? You start the little thing up. It's the vehicle in which you are inside and it's going to take you. It's exactly the same.

Don't tell me that your body doesn't want to pray. Of course it doesn't want to. It's just an inanimate thing, this body of ours.

It's worth 70 cents on the international mineral market. The rest is water. You.

Inside. Me. Inside.

It's me who has to pray. I need to put my body in place where I am going to open my spirit and start to seek God and find His presence. If I don't pray, it's because I have no urgency.

And I'm going to touch on a few things in a moment. Let's look at our prayer record as a church. When do we come together to seek the Lord? With all our heart.

If I look at our youth group, children's church, I don't know how much we pray. Music team, we don't pray. Church, we don't pray.

We come ten people on a Monday night, that is not a prayer meeting. You look at me like, brother, this is dangerous stuff. Of course it is.

We are spiritually bankrupt. We have every single reason in the world why we should not get together and seek God. And the biggest reason that we have is we have no urgency.

We do not understand the urgency of the times and need to pray. We do not understand that until we seek God, we are not going to change things. We do not understand that without the presence of the Holy Spirit, we are going nowhere.

We have lost our vision for His presence and we substitute it for works. And for me, we are in a dangerous place spiritually as a church. Very dangerous.

Psalms 51, David says, you don't want sacrifices and offerings. What you want is a broken heart and a contrite spirit. What God wants is a heart that thirsts for His presence.

A heart that says, Lord, above all else, I want to know You. And when I know You, I want my life to be an extension of that relationship. I want the well of salvation to be dug afresh.

I want the life of the Spirit to flow out. It doesn't happen by my physical works. It happens when my heart touches the throne of grace and I drink richly from the river that flows from that throne of grace.

And it's tough because I believe to a large extent we become so busy doing things that we have lost, we have literally lost the art of seeking the Lord. You know, you find out, put a bunch of people together and say, let's pray. And after three minutes, the well has run dry.

No one has anything. It's like, my words, my words, what's in my heart? It's like that. Look at this little interesting scripture in Hebrews chapter 2. Hebrews.

A little word here in the end of the beginning of verse 3. But I'm going to read from verse 1. It says, Therefore we must give the most earnest heed to things we have heard, lest we drift away. It means slowly, slowly moving away from the point, the goal. If the word spoken through angels proves steadfast and every transgression and disobedience receive a just reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? The Greek for the word neglect means to run out of a leaking vessel.

In other words, it's a bucket full of holes. Go home and take your bucket and punch little holes in the bottom. Not big ones, little ones.

And then fill it with water. And come back in the morning and see how much is still there. It slowly seeps out, comes out.

And that's our spiritual life. God can touch us, but we literally, with our prayer, we are going to leak. We are going to seep out our spiritual energy.

We are going to seep out our discernment. We are going to seep out our passion for spiritual things. Our love for the word of God.

It seeps out of us and it leaves behind us a vacuum which we start to fill with other things. My time becomes more taken with TV, more taken with worldly issues, more taken with worldly material, worldly everything. I start to fill the vacuum with something else which is not going to satisfy my soul.

It's going to lead me down the wrong road. I'm leaking out. The only way I can fill the bucket is in His presence.

If I don't understand the presence of God, the bucket goes dry and somehow little rocks start to fill inside the buckets. Right. Come with me to Ephesians chapter 5. I have a few illustrations I want to touch on this morning.

The first one is this. I believe Ephesians chapter 5. Here we are. That as a church, the reason that we've lost the urgency of the times and the urgency for prayer is because largely the Christian church is asleep.

In the story of the ten virgins in Matthew 26, Jesus speaks of the five foolish and the five wise virgins. You know how the five foolish don't have the oil in the lamp and the five wise do. But He says something interesting.

He says that all ten went to sleep. And when the bridegroom came, he had someone shout and all ten woke up. Now I find it interesting that the righteous and the unrighteous were both sleeping in that parable.

And I find a warning there that in the time just prior to the return of Jesus Christ, the urgency would be lost in Christianity generally. Not one of those bridesmaids were, if they knew He was coming in half an hour, they would fight sleep. They'd be pacing up and down.

He's coming. He's coming. He's coming.

I can't afford to lie down. He's coming. I know.

He's coming. There's an urgency. I want to be ready.

They dozed off. They looked at their little watches or their head watches in those days and they said, you know, maybe it's another three or four hours. We can just relax.

They lost the urgency of the time. And when we lose the urgency of prayer, when we lose the urgency of the times in which we're living, we lose the understanding that the days are evil. We lose the need to pray.

And we go to sleep. Ephesians 4 writes to the church in chapter 5 verse 14. He says, Awake you who sleep and arise from the dead and Christ will give you light.

Now here's the interesting thing. He says, Those who are asleep it's as though they are dead. And a sleeping Christian is actually no different to a sinner in many ways.

Because when a man is asleep, he is unaware of his environment. True or false? Absolutely. So, when I've gone to sleep, it means that I in the spirit, I've dozed off.

I lose my ability to discern. A sleeping Christian no longer is able to discern clearly right and wrong. Neither can they discern the times in which they're living.

Neither can they discern the spirit of what's around them. Their spiritual sharpness has gone dull. Brother Richard says, Amen.

The rest? Oh me, or oh my. But that's what happens. Why do you think the church is open to all this worldly nonsense that's going through? They can't see it.

If we're not in touch with the throne of God and our eyes are closed, we do not see evil. If you are sleeping and the thief comes into your room, you don't see evil. We don't see evil and understand the times in which we're living with our natural eyes.

It comes by revelation. It's the work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts that helps us discern clearly what's lawlessness and unrighteousness and what's clearly the plan of the Lord and what's clearly pleasing the heart of God. That kind of clarity does not come just because I go to church.

It comes because of the imprint of Christ Himself upon my heart that awakens my spiritual eyes to see clearly. When I've gone to sleep, I am vulnerable. I don't know if you ever noticed, but you can actually jump on somebody who's snoozing.

He didn't see you coming. Give them a big fright. Amen? Maybe someone's jumped on you once and you're sleeping.

I don't know. But we are vulnerable when we're sleeping. And the church is vulnerable.

I copied down this little definition of sleep. It says, though living, yet insensitive to any danger, unconscious to what is going on around us. Nice, eh? Though living, sitting in church on a Sunday, smiling, singing songs, yet we are insensitive to any spiritual danger, unconscious to what's going on around about us.

Not there. Unable to hear the voice of God. You ever try to call a sleeping child for supper? I won't say a sleeping teenager because they hear in their sleep when there's food around.

But a child. He's dozing. Supper, he hears nothing.

When we are spiritually asleep, do we hear God? No. The Bible becomes dead. I can read it and it's like this is just words on a page.

But when my heart is engaged, the words jump off the page. The Holy Spirit makes them real to me. Suddenly the things of God are alive to me.

I hear God again in my life. Without prayer, it's gone. He says, awake and Christ will give you light.

The idea of sleeping is I will stand up. I will wake up. I will get up.

I will engage my life. It has the idea of action behind it. And when I stand up, I see.

And when I see, I begin to see clearly what's around about me. A waking person is engaged in their environment. A sleeping person is not.

And I see the Christian church unmoved by sin. Unmoved. Unshaken.

Unconcerned. Unconcerned about what's happening in our neighborhood. Unconcerned about the state of our youth.

Unconcerned about our children. Unconcerned. No burden.

We'll talk about it, but no burden. And no authority in the spirit to address it. It alarms me.

I just want to read this little verse here. 1 Thessalonians chapter 5. Here we are. Verse 5. He says, You are all sons of the light and sons of the day.

We are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore, do not let us sleep as others do, but let us watch and be sober. Awake.

One. The church has gone to sleep. The other thing I want to say to you this morning is that when we lose the heart of prayer and the urgency of prayer, it's as though in the spirit, the walls that protect us have come down.

And here I want you to listen carefully. When Nehemiah arrived in Jerusalem, he came after the end of Ezra. In other words, under the reign of the time of Ezra, they laid the foundation and they built the temple.

So Jerusalem was there. The temple was there. The worship was there.

But the city itself had no walls. And he comes and he says in Nehemiah that I came and I saw that the walls were broken down and the gates were burnt and the city was in disrepair. Meaning that whoever

wanted to attack the city could.

It was vulnerable to thieves. It was vulnerable to anything. There was no defense.

Just the fact that the temple was there was not sufficient protection to keep darkness out. And just because you are born again is not a natural protection for your life. Don't ever rest on the fact that Oh, I gave my heart to the Lord five years ago.

I'm a Christian, therefore everything is fine. Doesn't quite work like that. It says in Proverbs that a man who has no rule over his own spirit is like a city without walls.

Sometimes I see people's lives as cities without walls. In Isaiah 62 we speak about the watchmen upon the walls. Nice picture.

The watchmen walk up and down and they alert the town and they see eye to eye and they're talking. But here is the key. The watchmen have got to have walls to walk on before they can be watchmen.

What happens if you don't have walls in a city in those days? You've got nothing to protect. Jesus said in Luke that men always ought to pray not to lose. And I want to put this to you this morning.

And I want you to hear me carefully. In John 16 it says the Holy Spirit comes and He brings us truth. He'll bring to us the revelation of Christ.

And He will teach us the things of Christ. The Holy Spirit comes and talks to us. When my heart is closed I don't hear the Holy Spirit.

When my mind is busy with carnal things I don't hear the Holy Spirit. It's as though I've taken down the walls of my life. And this is what I see.

I see Christian families with no walls. I see parents who do not seek the Lord for their children or for their lives. And I see that there are no walls.

It's as though temptation, the world, sin comes in and out my home without any form of discernment, without any form of someone saying stop, without any form of resistance. It just comes in and it involves my children, it involves our lives and we struggle. So I watch people struggle over the smallest issues in their lives which should never be a struggle.

But there's no walls. We're falling over things in each other's hearts and lives that should never happen. Temptation is coming into people's lives.

Christians are falling into sin. Christians are getting involved in the world in basic temptations that should never be there. It shouldn't be a problem.

Parents are crying, my child is in the world, this is happening, that is happening. But where are the walls? Where was the mother or the father who spent time on their knees seeking God for their life and for their children? Where was the presence of God in the home? Where are the walls? What about the walls in our church? You know, I'll say this carefully. The fact that we have young people sitting on their cell phones on the back rows of this church texting on a Sunday frightens me.

One, there's no fear of God, I don't think they're saved. Number two, there's no presence of God and they can do it. You can sit in church and play on your cell phone.

You are not born again. You've got no fear of God, no regard for God. There's nothing spiritual within your heart.

That's one side of it. The other side of it is that the fact that you can do it. The fact that something is wrong in the spirit, that people can walk into this church and are not confronted with about their life.

I could be in big trouble for that statement, but that's how I see it. And it's because there are no walls. We are not praying as a church.

We are not getting on our knees and seeking God for His presence. We have no concern about those who come to church on a Sunday, they were convicted of sin and their lives were changed. No concern about the teenager out there and the young person in the university out there that we would reach their lives, that we would bring them here, that we would find out a means.

No concern for the power of the Holy Spirit. No concern for righteousness. We are happy to come to church, happy to have a language of the Gospel, but we have lost the urgency for life.

A little while ago, I suggested that we would meet in homes, in different suburbs, in the morning at six o'clock. You remember that? I put five men up here and had five different homes. We'd lost it for a few weeks.

We had about, on average, eight or nine people come to the homes. From six until half past six. Whatever it was.

Yeah, six to half past six. Half past five to six. Whatever.

Do you know what the comment I got? From the responsables in this church? The people are tired, Richard, because you put a burden on them. Don't make them pray. I never made anybody pray.

I simply said it's available and we had one percent of this church turn out and the people are tired because you put a burden on them. The only reason we're tired is because we have no burden to pray. I rest my case.

There's no urgency in our hearts. We have lost sight of the times in which we're living. The walls have come down in our church and in our homes.

Nobody has within them the energy to stand up and to strengthen their heart and to say, I need to repent before God and humble myself and get on my knees and seek His face until I break through with God. Are we going to live? How far do we go? In Revelation, the scripture I read, he said, repent for you lost your first love and beware, he said, because I'll take the candlestick away. Do we want to lose the presence of God? How far does a Christian community go in lethargy, in idleness, whatever it may be? I don't know.

We watch the world change around us and destroy itself around about us and we are completely oblivious to it. As long as I can go to church, hear a language, have God take care of me and do not ruffle my nest, affect my lifestyle, put me in any form of discomfort, change the way I live, ask me to make a sacrifice, I will be fine. We are in grave danger.

For me, we are in grave danger. In Ephesians chapter 6, Paul writes to the church, in fact, I'm going to read that. He says in verse 12, For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in heavenly places.

Who is our enemy? You haven't got an enemy, have we? Come on. The fact that I do not preach about demons on a Sunday does not mean they do not exist. The fact that I don't tell you horror stories so that your eyes get big and your hair stands straight does not mean that the devil does not exist.

It does not mean that there are no ruling spirits over Zimbabwe. It does not mean that people's lives are not affected by the occult. It does not mean that Satan is not going to try and destroy the church and destroy our young people.

It does not mean that spirits of uncleanness have been released on this earth like never before. It does not mean that his whole goal is to blind the eyes of men at this time so they will not be ready for the return of Jesus Christ. It does not mean it's not there.

It is there. Our we wrestle not against flesh and blood but against something far more sinister and ungodly. We are not called to fight demons.

We are called to draw our strength from Jesus Christ. He says here for we do not wrestle against them. Therefore he speaks about taking up the whole armor of God.

Forget about the armor. He said that you may be able to withstand in the evil day and having done all to stand. That is a picture of a soldier standing on a piece of ground with his armor and his weapons in a state of aggressiveness ready to defend his rights and defend his territory.

He is ready to go to war. He is alert. He is engaged.

He is prepared. He is trained. He is disciplined.

He is there because that's where he should be. Paul says that, my friend, is where the Christian should be. The armor is a different facets of our righteousness and the gospel.

And he says that having done all, pray. Prayer is not considered as part of the armor. It's considered as the essential quantity we need in our lives.

The picture that Paul is portraying here is not some Christian getting up in the morning and trying to put on the armor of God. Lord, I put on the helmet of salvation and the best pair of righteousness. He's not talking about that.

He's talking about an attitude in our hearts by which we are engaged spiritually so that we can make a difference in our generation and we can stand and protect our families. We can stand and protect our communities. We've got something righteous to give our community, that we are the salt of the earth and we carry an authority in the Spirit.

That's what he's saying. The question is at the end of the day, do I want to do that? Now, I've shed my heart this morning, I guess in my normal fashion, but my heart is for one thing. One is to blow a trumpet.

One is to stand before the Lord one day and God can never tell me you did not speak to the Christian community and make things plain. I will never be guilty of that. The other one is the cry of my heart that somewhere our hearts would be shaken to realize that we cannot sleep any longer.

To realize that we cannot play games with our Christian faith any longer. To realize that there are days that are flying upon us that are going to affect our lives more than we understand. To realize that in the last days there is going to be a falling away from the church.

To realize that many Christians sitting here today in two years' time may not be here. You could well be in the world. Many young people today, you may not be in church in two years' time.

You could well be fully in the world. To realize that just going to church on a Sunday is not the token of my Christian faith. It doesn't get me to heaven.

To realize that somewhere there's a bankruptcy and a dryness in our hearts that we have to change. And I can't change it for you. There's no rule.

There's no law that I have to go before God and say, Lord, I am no longer content with my spiritual state. I want that river to be awakened once again. I am prepared to do whatever you ask me, Lord, until I break through in prayer.

We start to find our place in prayer on a personal basis. We'll start to come together and seek God for the youth of this church. Start to seek God for the music of this church.

Start to seek God for the presence of God in this church. You understand me? We'll start to get together as a church and not have an hour of prayer meeting on a Friday by which time we are tired and want to go home. But we'll start to seek God until we break through with God.

How we get there, I'm not going to tell anybody because it becomes a law. Everybody hates me again. It's like, you put us on law.

There's no law. It has to. If it's not in here, it doesn't happen.

But if it's not in here, and we're not seeking God, the problem is the walls are down. The enemy moves and does what he likes. And I see people fall into sin and iniquity without any form of discernment, any form of worrying them, stumbling over worldly things.

People should never ever be out there. Why? But if I trace it back, they let go the anchor to the throne of grace. They dried up their well a long time ago.

And suddenly the flesh is alive. You can tell that person, pick up your cross. How can a sleeping man pick up his cross? He's too busy sleeping.

He doesn't even see it. We've got to have, once again, have the presence of God alive in our hearts to know what it means to identify with Christ. Amen? No? Yes? I trust that you hear me.

I don't know how to make it sound more urgent. I don't know how I get on my knees and cry and weep. But somewhere, somewhere I am praying that God shakes this church and shakes our lives in such a manner that our lethargy will break.

And then we will become a people who will seek His heart with all our heart. But it has to come from within. And I don't know what it takes.

But I do know that we have to change. And I do know that something has to change in this church and change fast. If it has to change with me, let it change with me.

If my life has to change, then God show me I'll do whatever is necessary. But each one of us somewhere this veil of the flesh has got to lift. And our hearts have got to come back to where we are going to seek God with everything that we have.

That His presence may come back into our lives. Amen? Amen. Alright, let's pray.

Father, thank You for our salvation. Thank You for every person here, Lord. Thank You that You have a plan for our lives.

Thank You, Lord, that even if we are not faithful, You are faithful. You are so good. And all I can pray, Lord, is that what I've said this morning is not taken in the wrong spirit, but that we would allow the Holy Spirit just to flick through the pages of our hearts and stir our lives.

And open our eyes and take us out of the danger of slumber that we have fallen into, that we can rebuild the walls again. And this church can become the church that You want us to be. A salt in our community and a place, an ark of safety and a refuge of hope.

But it's spiritual. It's not to do with works. I hunger for Your presence, Lord.

I want to know Your presence. I want to see people saved, properly saved. Especially young people brought back from the world and brought to a place of safety in this very dangerous time in which we're living.

To see families healed. To see us reach back into our community in every single way possible with the authority of the Word, the authority of Christ. Not just a smile.

To know the fire of Your presence. That You can walk up and down the aisles of this church and be proud that You're here and happy. That we would find again the first love that we've lost.

And exchange that for all the cheap things of this world that seem to occupy our hearts so fast. Do something, Father. Set Your Holy Spirit in our midst.

Not that You're not here, but it's like You knock on doors and we become so accustomed to the knock we don't hear it anymore. Change that knock somewhere, Lord. May we open our hearts to You to find a way, each one individually and then collectively, where we will dig again those wells of salvation.

And the river of grace will flow freely in our midst. Not because we believe it, but because it's felt. It's a reality.

The dryness would leave our hearts and the new rain would fall upon our hearts. Touch every heart here, Lord. Touch every life.

What I shared this morning is an individual thing. Each one must bring his own heart before God. Each one of us knows.

Each one of us must be honest. Each one of us has to find something in the Spirit. We've got to come to maturity.

Touch our hearts and our lives today, Father. Touch us. Not just here, but stay with us.

So, Father, we commit our hearts and lives to You. We bless Your Name. This message was brought to you by Salvon Park Christian Church.

We hope you have been blessed.

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