

# If My People - Part 3

by Shane Idleman

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*Shane Idleman emphasizes the necessity of prioritizing prayer in our lives to foster a deeper relationship with God amidst worldly distractions.*

**Duration:** 38:45

**Scripture:** 1 Chronicles 16:11, Psalm 41:1, Psalm 145:18, Proverbs 15:29, Matthew 7:11, Romans 8:26, Philippians 4:6, 1 Thessalonians 5:17, 1 Timothy 2:8, James 5:16

**Topics:** "Prayer Life", "Spiritual Growth"

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## Description

This sermon focuses on the importance of prayer, highlighting the challenges and motivations to ignite prayer in individual lives. It emphasizes the need for a consistent prayer life, the impact of prayer on spiritual growth, and the power of prayer to crush sin and work behind the scenes. Various Scriptures are referenced to encourage a life of prayer, seeking God's face continually, and the effectiveness of fervent, righteous prayers.

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## Transcript

I'm actually going to be talking about prayer tonight, which you know, that's why you're here, right? And this is going to be more of topical, and I'm going to pull in a lot of different authors, and a lot of Scripture. My goal is to ignite prayer in our own individual lives, because we need a little motivation in this area, don't we? This is probably one of the hardest spiritual disciplines. And I was actually reading an interview by Max Lucado in Preaching Magazine.

Of course, many of you know who that is. And he was saying that prayer is one of the things he struggles with. And I'm glad to see it's not just me, because I do as well.

We talk about it a lot, and my goal is to make an attempt at prayer, but often we fall short. We get busy, we get carried away with different things. And he actually worked on a four-week study.

I think it's called Before Amen. And it's a four-week study. It's something we're praying about starting here in January on our Monday nights, and going through that, and how to apply prayer to our lives.

But let me just begin with this question. Why is prayer so challenging? Well, like all spiritual disciplines, it goes against the grain. It's like swimming upstream.

It's something the flesh doesn't want to do. So I think the sooner we realize that, the better, right? As soon as I realize, listen, this isn't something I'm going to want to do. Get that in your mind right now.

Now, we should have a craving. The spirit inside of us should be crying, Abba, Father, we should be desiring that. But the flesh isn't going to want to pray.

And you've heard me quote Ian Bounds many times before. He said that when faith ceases to pray, it ceases to live. And think about that.

When your faith, when my faith ceases to pray, it ceases to live. That's almost like the lifeline to our Christian faith. That's almost like the blood and the heartbeat in our walk with God.

So when that suffers, guess what else suffers? Everything suffers. And I see so many people who just love to read the Word of God and thank God for that, wish there were more, but they'll spend an hour in the Bible, or an hour and a half, and five minutes in prayer. And I would submit to you that you should evenly balance that.

If you're 45 minutes in the Word of God, you need to be 45 minutes in prayer. Because prayer isn't just sitting there doing nothing. Prayer is actually getting your heart in sync with God and repenting if need be and clearing our mind and our clutter and our lies.

And the Bible speaks often about waiting on God. This isn't waiting as you're waiting at a bus stop. This is waiting on Him and pondering Him and meditating on His Word.

So remember that when it comes to this issue of prayer, it's probably not going to be like my kids want to get ice cream after this usually, right? It's not going to be that motivating. It's not going to feel like, oh, I can't wait to pray in the morning. Some people do, and I'm glad they do that.

I have times, I have seasons, don't you, that you're passionate to get up and you want a prayer and you're excited, you've got everything ready. But for the most part, it's like swimming upstream. It's because the flesh doesn't want to do it, number one.

Number two, the world doesn't promote it. If we're feeding our mind on Facebook and entertainment all the time, and sometimes I'm on YouTube and I'm watching Hillsong, and you see those little advertisements beforehand? Like, why is that on there? It ruins worship. They've got all these movies for the next zombie movie or Walking Dead, and I'm like, I'm just wanting to worship God.

And it messes up my spirit. It's like, God, this is just gross, and this is just, there's such a conflict of good and evil, right and wrong. But prayer flows out of a heart that's already set towards God.

And it's very hard if we're ESPN all day and football season now and this and Duck Dynasty and Dancing with the Stars. And I don't say a lot of those things to make fun of that. What I'm trying to do is get you to realize that if that's what's coming in, you're not going to wake up on fire for God.

You're not going to want to get into the Word of God. You're going to want to look at the news and see what's going on in the world. You want to know who won this game and that game.

So it all fits together. As we meditate on God's Word, as we feed on the right things, it kind of fosters a hunger for more of God and prayer. It's kind of like, you know when you're eating healthy? You ever get on those eating healthy kicks, and you just want to keep doing that? But as soon as you fall off the wagon,

well, I blew it for breakfast.

I might as well blow it for lunch and blow it for dinner. And it is Friday. Let me at least get through the weekend.

Saturday and Sunday. I mean, that's a fun day to blow it. And then here comes Monday.

Well, here's Monday, and let's just start next week. Actually, January 1st is coming up, right? So let's give it two more months of just going crazy. But that's what happens too with our prayer life.

If we don't nip it in the bud and bring it back in, it can slip away very quickly. So one of the whole points of this really wasn't to get up and speak. It was to get up and motivate.

To let you know that you can regain and recapture that heart of prayer, even as early as tonight. When you leave here, instead of grabbing that remote control, why not put on, you know, there's Pandora, Christian music. No commercials or worship for an hour.

And it's difficult the first five or ten minutes, but once you start to get into that flow, you realize, Lord, why haven't I done this more often? And you've got to fight the flesh in order to feed the Spirit. Rarely will you ever want to go home and just turn on worship music, you know, without some type of prompting and meditating on God. Let your thoughts be on God throughout the day, and then it fosters that later on in the evening.

And I've noticed that what captivates us holds our attention. Right? People can sit there. You know, my daughter now, she's one and a half, and baby Einstein.

You remember those little movies with little squares? I mean, she can sit there and she's just, 30 minutes of, this is great. Why don't we do this every few hours? Here, here, here, here. Of course it's not healthy, I'm not promoting that.

But it captivates her. Right? To see little monkeys swinging and little horses and little, and she just sits there like, it's the best thing ever. But what captivates, same with us, what captivates us holds our attention.

And God is not captivating us throughout the day. If he's captivating you throughout the day, from what you watch and meditate on and read and all these things, if we're fostering that environment of God, it's going to captivate us and we're going to want to take that into worship. But if we're not, it's really hard to turn on the God switch.

That's what I like to say. We turn on the world switch all day and get home, okay, now the God switch. Oh, that's good.

And then sit for two hours and pray. And I also should clarify, a lot of times, you know, I joke at five minute devotionals, and if you can do them, I would recommend them. Absolutely.

But that cannot offset the filth and the stuff that we're allowing into our minds, where the world's going, the culture, that's just supplementary. Supplement, it's like a supplement, right? You take supplements with your food. Those are just little things.

You need, and I need to spend time, significant time in the Word of God and in prayer. And I don't like to put time limits on it, because then you watch the clock go. It should just be, we schedule everything else.

We make time for everything. I mean, I know people that go to the movies once a week, twice a week. Two, three, four hours, five hours, a schedule, no problem whatsoever.

We've got the news on, two, three hours, no problem whatsoever. Facebook sit there for two hours, no problem whatsoever. But when it comes to praying in the Word of God, oh man, this is difficult, I don't have time.

But you see where all this is going, right? It's just about prioritizing our time and getting that hunger back again. And the number one excuse, and none of this will be new to you, but I think it's a good reminder, is that we say we don't have any time. Right? And here's how our lives look like.

Get up, most people, alarm clock, coffee's going, I've got to run, run, run, run, run, get home and then flop down. Get up, run, run, run, run, run, get home, sit down, flop down, and you know, the whole process just goes over and over and over again. So we've got to make some adjustments.

I like what A.W. Tozer said, and this is so true, we make new converts into workers instead of worshipers. And that's one of the problems in the church, is we want to get everybody busy. We need this, we need this, we got to do this.

Instead of making workers, we need to make worshipers. And not only for new converts, how much more ourselves? I don't want people to ever be so busy that they can't worship God. If ministry's pulling you away from God, give up the ministry for a while, first season.

If anything's pulling you away from God, it's not good. Jobs, ungodly relationships, hobbies, all these things that pull us away from God. Now, of course, I want to be careful here, because I think there are things that we can enjoy, of course.

Entertainment, and you know, if we love to do certain hobbies, those are God's gift to us. Fishing, right, one of my favorites. Where nobody's at, up in the hills, and hiking way up in there, and just relaxing.

It's good. But if there's things that actually take us away from God, and we know what they are, right? I could list a few. We need to focus on bringing those things into submission, and removing them if need be.

And that leads me right into the application part, before I get into some scriptures that should really help. What you have to do, and a lot of people often ask me, okay, tell me about your devotional life, and I don't like to put time limits on things, but here's a few things I took away this morning, I wrote these down as well. Schedule it.

You have to schedule it, and not be in a hurry. Whatever hurts our praying, must be removed. And what I mean by schedule it, is when can you schedule God in? It's funny as that sounds, it's a spiritual discipline.

Because if we put God on the backburner, guess where He's going to stay? On the backburner. And I came across another quote from Ian Bounds, that is really relevant to this. He said, the men, and of course the women, the men and women who have done the most for God in this world, have been early on their knees.

He who fritters away the early morning, it's opportunity and freshness, and other pursuits in seeking God will make poor headway seeking Him the rest of the day. If God is not first in our thoughts and efforts in the morning, He will be in the last place the remainder of the day. And that's very true.

Now, do I know that not everybody can have a powerful devotional life in the morning? Yeah. I had to work in construction sometimes, I had to be on the freeway at 415 to be at LAX by 6 o'clock to beat the traffic. And I had to be on job sites at 6 AM, and it wasn't going to happen all the time.

But I tried. My days off, when it rained, the weekends, you know, they would make up for those things, or get home at night, and Morgan would say, hey I'm taking the kids for a few hours, it's yours, schedule it in there. We have to, we have to, our freshest times, when's the freshest time? Instead we give it to all other things and we try to fit God in, and we wonder why God seems distant.

We wonder why the Bible is warning us, Shane, where's that passion that I read about for Christ? Where's that passion that I see in other people? And it's directly related to this topic. The next thing that's important is confession. Men would live better if they prayed better.

John Bunyan, you know, who wrote the Pilgrim's Progress, said, in prayer, it is better to have a heart without words, than words without a heart. These guys, in my library, I have probably a couple thousand books now, and I just grab them sometimes and just look at the highlights, you know, from years ago, and just drinking rich into the wells of the people who came before us. I would even encourage that.

It sparks a desire. When you read their works, if you get any book on prayer by E.M. Bounds, if you don't put that down motivated, something's wrong. It just motivates us.

In prayer, it is better to have a heart without words, than words without a heart. And what he means there, sometimes praying is just a heart pondering God, and thinking of His faithfulness. Instill your heart, that's the next thing I put.

You just have to take time and instill your heart. What that means is just sit quietly and wait and ponder, and that's one of the issues I've confessed before, and it's going to be no secret, but the difficult thing with me and coffee in the morning is it doesn't instill my heart, it amps up my heart. And it's going 100 miles an hour, and I'm in a hurry and I can't sit there, and I'm like, oh I've got stuff to do, text, and it works against instilling my heart.

It does the opposite. You've got stuff to do, and it's going 100 miles an hour. So once I wean off that and just have tea or different things, I know it doesn't work for everybody, but things that keep you going, right? Sometimes you have your phone there, your internet, your texting, whatever it is that's taking away and not instilling your heart, putting your heart still before God.

Think about it, for thousands of years, people, there's no media, there's no phone. I remember when I was little the 943 and the you turn the little thing, right? And if you got home, you might have an answer on the answer machine. That was it.

Mom, I'm riding my bike, I'll see you in three hours. Now we're so inundated. I mean, people can get you wherever you are, whenever.

I was on a plane to Washington, and I'm on email on my plane, and my wife's texting me up 30,000 feet above. It's amazing, just constant. So you've got to work hard to still your heart, because it's in the stillness

of the night.

It's in the stillness of the morning that God begins to speak to us. Do you know where a lot of these sermons come from? They don't come from sitting in front of a computer. They come from how many, I have almost now, I have a pen and a piece of paper by my bed sometimes, just laying there at night.

Oh man, oh that's a good one. You know, just laying there, oh, and I've just got notes everywhere from God speaking to, because then you calm yourself. Be still and know that I am God.

Quiet your heart. And once you quiet the heart, then it starts to listen. And it's listening and listening.

So those things are vitally important. If you want a deep, meaningful prayer life, that has to take place. Here's what Andrew Murray wrote.

Each time before you intercede, before you pray, be quiet first and worship God in His glory. Think of what He can do and how He delights to hear the prayers of His redeemed people. Think of your place and privilege in Christ and expect great things.

Could you imagine just focusing on that for five minutes? Just think of what God can do in our lives. Just thinking of the prodigals He can bring home. Just thinking of what He can do to the church and to our nation, our own spiritual life.

Of how He could fill us with the Spirit of God and have a passion for God. How He could start ministries in your lives and then how He delights to hear the prayers of His people. You've heard me when I spoke on this before.

God's not asleep. He's not on vacation. You don't have to make an appointment.

He's there at 2 in the morning. He's there at 4.30 in the morning. He's an ever-present help in time of need.

He's there whenever. And if you just think, Lord, You're here right now. You hear, if you think of the earth, this small little blip on the universe and He's hearing.

He'll hear the prayers of His children. That's motivating. What do you want to say to me? Ask and you shall receive.

And you ponder those things. That should spark a powerful prayer life. And then think of your place and privilege in Christ and expect great things.

And I really thought about this as well this week, thinking our place and privilege in Christ. We are heirs to the Kingdom. We are in right standing with God.

Yeah, the world's falling apart, but we're in right standing with God. Oh God, thank You for that. Thank You for saving me.

Thank You for redeeming me. Thank You for keeping everything together. And your heart starts to change as you ponder these things.

And then five minutes goes by and ten minutes and fifteen and twenty. And you're pondering God and then you have your list of things to pray for as I do. And what happens when you set all these things in

motion? Stagnation.

Have you ever seen stagnant water? Don't drink it, right? What happens when prayer is powerful? It turns into flowing water. And what I like is once you start this process, you want to take a break midday or in the evening or you can't wait until the next morning. Tomorrow, right now, I've already got the hot water to come on at 4.30 in the morning.

I've got the little breakfast thing out to drink with the tea. I've got the Bible right there. I've got my journal.

It's all ready to go. I've got a little pad so I don't look at my phone and text messages. And I've got all the worship set to go.

I'm ready to do that tomorrow morning. You have to plan for it. Because if not, what happens? Sleep in.

I'll get to it later. But it has built up. That spiritual discipline has led to discipline in this area.

And chances are if you're not disciplined in this area, we're not disciplined in other areas. If we're not disciplined in our prayer life, we're not fooling anybody. I know.

I've been there. Everything else falls apart. Everything stands and is built on prayer.

For example, a person who's really praying can't be prideful. I know that's hard. People are saying, no, I mean somebody who's really praying.

Not, oh Lord, thank you like the Pharisees did. I am so spiritual. No, I mean real prayer.

Where it's heart examination. Where it's looking, Lord, did I say that to my spouse yesterday? Did I treat my children like that? God, Lord, help me. Lord, and it's self-examination.

And the heart begins to open up and repentance takes place. And here's what else I've noticed. The mind becomes uncluttered and focused.

Problems that used to, I didn't know how I was going to get out of or how we were going to deal with it. This is happening and all hell's breaking loose for a lack of a better phrase. I don't know what to do, but in that time of prayer, when you're still before God and you're reading His word, how He holds everything in the palm of His hands, how He's got this, and you look at Proverbs and then the mind begins to be focused.

Okay, here's how I'm going to handle this. Lord, I'm going to wait on You. I'm not going to react.

I'm not going to respond. I'm going to handle this with grace and mercy and love. And now everything's focused because of that time of prayer.

But if we get up and pop on Dredge Report and see when the latest beheading is, or who now has Ebola, that just sets a course to fear factor. And anxiety. And we go, oh man, oh it's coming.

Well, that's because the mind is now cluttered again and not focused on the things of God. And the thing that I love the best is the result is a powerful spiritual life that flows into everything else. And I would have to say that, and I thank a lot of you who are thankful for this church and you love the messages here and everything.

But I've got to be honest with you. I know it's God's work. I know it's God's work through prayer.

Through prayer. The hours and the hundreds and maybe thousands of hours that God has allowed me to pray and pray. Everything is coming from that.

So to think, oh look at what I did. I mean, it's laughable. Because it's in the time of prayer I say, Daddy, help.

It's in that time of prayer I say, I can't do this. Will you take over? Preparing next Saturday's sermon. I'm already getting a headache.

Lord, you've got to help me in this area. I need your help. I can't do this.

And that's when he says, good. Good. Now your heart's ready.

And it's a constant of praying and praying and praying and praying. You know, it's just everything hinges and stands on that. And you know, those who've had a powerful prayer life, you know this is all true, right? And when prayer is lacking, we know.

Because I know what it feels like to be dying spiritually. In God's word, I'll read it, but it's just not there. I don't feel the passion for God.

My prayer life stinks. Certain sins that I thought dealt with years ago are coming back. Lord, it's gone.

It's stagnant. But you can reverse that with times of prayer and confession and allow God to rebuild your life. Because he hears the prayers of his people.

He will not leave us in that condition if we cry out to him. The problem is we get in that condition and like a pig that wallows in the mud, we stay in it. We just stay there and stay there.

And it's funny how the prodigal son came to himself. I'm not saying we get in a prodigal state, but we get in that state where we just get in that flow. It's not going in a good direction.

Right? And you probably know if you haven't prayed in weeks or months. I really pray. I mean, we all say the quick prayers, don't we? Oh God, help me get to work on time.

Please let that check come in. That promotion at work. Come on, Lord.

Shut that person up at work. Help me get to work on time. Those kind of prayers, they're good.

That's what I think pray without ceasing means. When Paul says pray without ceasing, it should be a life of prayer. As I'm pulling into my driveway, Lord help the home be quiet.

Let the environment just be good. Lord, tonight's service. Lord, move in a powerful way.

Let people be changed. And everywhere we're going, we're praying without ceasing. But let me encourage you, if you're stagnant, if you're dead spiritually, you can reawaken that.

Actually, God reawakens it. But you just become the vessel that submits to that work. The funny thing that I've noticed is it's not about being too busy.

If we wanted to, we could put God into a large portion of our day. If we wanted to. If you write down, if you show me your calendar and your checkbook, I'll show you how busy, where you can fit God in.

Because I just looked at statistics and the national average of the family who has a television on is seven hours a day. With the TV, media, probably Facebook, all those things. Seven hours a day.

And I'm thinking, that's no way. But if you start to, morning, kids get home from school, then three hours at night, Facebook time, I mean it's probably pretty close. Say the Christian community, say it's three hours, four hours.

Is it going to hurt anything to unplug that? Because a lot of it isn't building us up towards God, it's pulling us down. How do you know that, Shane? Because when I look at Facebook, I don't leave Edified very often. Look at all those people having so much fun, on vacation again in October.

Just bought a new boat, jet skis, new motorcycle, drinking champagne on the Riviera, taking a boat ride down the little Italian coveys, and just, everything's great. Or everything's not great. All the news stories, all the things you don't want to hear.

Everything's just so negative, and negative, and negative. Murder this, and molestation this, and we're just feeding our mind. I don't think we were created to absorb everything that's going on nationally.

I just don't think we need to know everything all the time. Of course we need to be aware, we need to be equipped, but when these things begin to drag us down like a magnet, we've got to break that. And the only way to break it sometimes is to remove these things.

I know it's difficult, but if you took time and put God in there, you'd see a huge difference. And the Scripture we've been on in 2 Chronicles is, you know, this one back here, if my people pray, and they seek me, and they turn. If we look at the Old Testament, I pulled out four Scriptures, what it meant to pray, pray in the New Testament, pray in the Old Testament, they're very similar.

But in the Old Testament, Scriptures on prayer, let me read a few. 1 Chronicles 16. Seek the Lord in His strength.

Seek His face continually. And it's funny how they often say, seek His face, not His hand. Seek His face, who God is.

Because we often, don't our prayers say, seek Your hand, what You can give me. And there's nothing wrong with that. It's good for kids, children to ask their parents what we need.

Hey Dad, I need these areas. But if we're constantly, our thoughts are on Lord, what can You give me? Instead of who You are. It can really mess up our prayer life because we're always wanting and wanting and never giving.

Seek the Lord in His strength, not our strength, His strength. Psalm 41. Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness.

You have enlarged me when I was in distress. Have mercy on me and hear my prayer. Psalm 45.18 The Lord is near to all of them that call on Him.

All of them that call on Him. They knew this in the Old Testament. If you call on God, He will answer.

He will answer those who call on Him in truth. Proverbs 15. The Lord is far from the wicked, but He hears the prayers of the righteous.

That's why Robert Murray McShaney used to say a holy minister is an awful weapon in the hands of God. That righteousness, that holiness. And the same thing applies to us.

A holy Christian is an awful weapon in the hands of God. Holiness and prayer go together. If a man lives well, he prays well.

If he prays well, he lives well. They go together. And then also, we have to remember that our trials, our trials should bring us closer to God.

The Barnes Notes on the Bible, hopefully this is for somebody, said this about trials. It is a universal rule that God sends trials on those whom He loves. It does not, of course, mean that He sends chastisement which is not deserved, or that He sends it for the mere purpose of inflicting pain.

That cannot be. But it means that by His chastisements, He shows that He has a paternal care for us, in the same way that a parent would chastise. They use strong words here that we sometimes think, oh gosh, what's he talking about? But when God uses certain things to turn us back to Him, there's power in pain, there's peace in adversity, and there's strength in the storm.

If we pray. If we pray. Because what happens in the storm, in the trial, if you don't pray, guess what creeps in? Bitterness.

And resentment. And anger. And fear.

Prayer is the only hope for a heart that's been hurt in going through a trial. You will not go through that on your own. And I know of no better way to motivate you than looking at these Scriptures in the New Testament on prayer.

Matthew 7, 11, if you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven give good gifts to them who ask? And it's funny, as I'm reading these, I've heard all of these hundreds of times, and so have you. But if you stop and you think, if you then, being evil, and evil is just, you know, we're not God. If we know how to give good gifts to our children, how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven give good gifts to those who ask? And this one just woke me up thinking, yeah.

Often I think, well, God's got it out for me. God's not going to answer. You know, how much more He wants to give good gifts to His children? But you've got to ask.

I don't know if my son wants to go to Toys R Us unless he tells me. I don't... God knows though, but He wants us to ask. Ask, and you shall receive.

Lord, I need help in this area. Lord, would you move in this area? Lord, would you deliver in this area? Would you cleanse in this area? Would you heal in this area? Ask. And the Bible also says, you do not ask, you do not knock, you do not seek, so you don't find.

Because we do, and maybe it's just me, but we think, well, God knows, right? I mean, He knows what I need. I'm not going to ask Him. Come on, Lord, just do it.

But I think it's in that seeking and that asking we humble ourselves, and there's a dependence there on seeking God with all of our heart. What about Romans 8, 26? Likewise, the Spirit also helps our infirmities, which is our weakness. For we know not what we should pray for as we opt, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

And this is interesting because this is when you wait on God and, you know, a lot of people can sometimes use this as tongues or a different thing. You know, I don't want to get into that debate right now. All I want to say is this, that the Spirit will make intercession for us.

The Spirit will pray for us if we're in that state of quietness and we're stealing our heart. We're saying, Lord, I don't even know how to pray. Have you ever prayed like that? I have.

It's a hard spot to be at. Lord, I don't even know how to pray through this situation, Lord. So many things are happening.

I don't even know what to ask for. I'm so confused, Lord. I don't know, but through that yearning, through that groaning, through the Spirit, the Spirit in me and God, it cries, Abba, Father.

It knows what we need and it will pray for us as long as the heart is right. Especially in times of great loss. Great or great disappointment.

Many of you know that when Alexis was lost this week, I mean, this Scripture, Lord, how do you pray for that? You've got to do something. You have to. God, you have to do something.

If you don't, this is not going to turn out good. You have to move on behalf of your people. Spirit, make intercession, Lord.

Tell him where she is. I don't know. Just do something, God.

Move on our behalf. I don't know how to pray. Go find her here.

Go find her there. What? I don't know what to pray. But the Spirit comes in and helps and gives us that strength to pray and to lead us in the right direction.

That's what that means. Philippians 4-6 Be careful or be anxious for nothing. Jeez, that's a sermon right there.

How many? Does that apply to just about everybody in this room? It's funny how but we like to, you know, make excuses. Yeah, but I need to know what's going on. Yeah, but the government.

Well, I don't know. Scripture's pretty clear. Be anxious for nothing.

Be anxious for nothing. It's funny. Somebody sent me an email on the CDC and why did they buy a hundred million caskets and, you know, they're buying up all the ammo and, you know, here's what they're doing.

I'm like, oh man, you just ruined my day. Jeez. But then you've got to remember who's really in charge.

See, we forget really who's in charge. You know? They're buying all the colloidal silver that will cure Ebola and I'm like, oh man, people stop sending me stuff. I've got enough to worry about.

I think that's my problem. I've got enough to worry about. I don't need to know ten times more stress.

But be anxious for nothing. But in everything, Paul, everything, by prayer and supplication, supplication is basically you're acknowledging, you're acknowledging the need there by prayer, acknowledging and thanksgiving, let your request be known to God. So if you don't know what to pray for, here you go.

Be anxious for nothing. If you're anxious, Lord, take this away. But in everything by prayer and supplication and thanksgiving, let your request be known to God.

And it's funny, you know, throughout a lot of my life, and you've seen this too, you know, people lose jobs or there's major things and they are just a wreck, and rightly so. I mean, life is falling apart. And I've never seen God let somebody down in this area.

They might have to sell some things. They might have to move some from the 401k to here. They might have to downscale their house.

You know, or live with their parents. You know, but He never lets them. He doesn't let us you know, just die without Him directing us and guiding us.

And that's why it says in everything prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your request be known to God. What about 1 Thessalonians? I'm tongue-tied tonight. 5:17, pray without ceasing.

So our life should be a life of prayer. Is your life a life of prayer? Pray without ceasing. Some people say, well, that's impossible.

Not really. I mean, it's not like, you're not praying everything you do. You've got to talk to people.

But your heart is set towards God at work. Your heart is set towards God driving. Your heart is set towards God at home.

You're praying, Lord, help me. I'm sure I'm praying a hundred times a day. Little things.

Like, Lord, change his attitude, you know, with my son. Or, Lord, change it. Just a heart of prayer.

1 Timothy, I will therefore, I will that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting. And God says, I wish men everywhere would lift up holy hands. Hands that are holy and set apart for God.

Without wrath. Without anger. A lot of men, especially, have anger in their hearts.

Are you aware of that? Men are not soft, gentle, nice little. Think of Bambi. It doesn't happen.

So, God says, listen, holy hands, righteous hands, come to me as broken, humble men. Lift up holy hands in humility and don't doubt that I am God and I will answer your prayers. Because a man who's doubting is a double-minded man.

He's unstable in all of his ways. We just have to remember, God, you'll answer it or you'll say wait or you'll say no. We know that you're in control.

We know that you know what's best. James 5:16 Confess your faults to one another and pray for one another. That you may be healed.

You know, I often wonder how many ailments are due to not doing this. Holding on to sin. Holding on to things that can lead to sickness.

But to confess the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. What that basically means is the effectual effective. It's effective because it's targeted.

It's fervent. It's passionate. And it's a righteous man whose heart is right before God.

That type of prayer God will answer. And finally, prayer crushes sin. It outlives us and it works behind the scene.

Don't ever forget that. When you go into prayer tomorrow or tonight, prayer will help to crush that sin. And even our prayers will outlive us.

They'll reach into the lives of our children now, into our nation, into our church. And prayer is working behind the scenes. God works behind the scenes.

We don't like that, do we? We want to know right now. I need answers right now. But God says, listen, I'm working behind the scenes.

So what we're going to do, Chelsea's going to come up and as we go into prayer and worship, there's about a 35 minute message or 40 minute message. Personal example of prayer and a time of prayer to follow I wrote down. What I meant by that is you know, a lot of people ask you know, what to pray for.

And you want to have a list. You want to have a list out. You want to have things that you're targeting.

But really you want to have it come from your heart. You know, you just want to say, Lord, help my children. You know, Lord, save my children.

You guys can pray this if it belongs to you too. Lord, bring the prodigal son home. Lord, the daughter, my daughter.

Lord, who's not listening, who's rebellious or calm her spirit. Lord, give me a gentle, Lord, I need a gentle understanding spirit. Lord, I need to have peace in my home and it starts with me.

Lord, would you break this proud man? Lord, humble me. Lord, humble me so I can be a better husband and a better father. Lord, give me wisdom to lead the church, to lead my family.

Lord, we need you now like never before. Lord, I repent of areas in my life that are not pleasing to you. Lord, I pray for such and such, their salvation.

Lord, this other person's salvation. Lord, that issue they're going through. Lord, that daughter that they have that's sick.

Lord, the daughter of leukemia. Lord, would you heal her? Lord, in Jesus' name, bring healing to that body. Lord, you know we also need a building.

Lord, we need solid leaders. Lord, would you bring those people? Lord, invest in our kids at the church. Lord, build up another army of believers through the children's ministry.

Lord, but more than anything, protect them. Lord, in this place, let this church be a place of shelter and protection and safety. Lord, edify the children.

Protect them. Any evil that will come against this place, we denounce in the name of Jesus Christ. The enemy has no ground here, Lord.

Lord, check my heart. If there's any impure areas, Lord, I repent of them. Lord, help me with my words and my actions.

Lord, let me be slow to speak and quick to listen. Lord, let me not be in such a hurry that I blow people off. Lord, but slow my life down.

Let me appreciate the days and the years and the months. Lord, thank You for saving me. Your Son dying for me, I acknowledge that.

Lord, thank You for everything You've done. Lord, let Your Word speak to me this morning or this evening. Lord, let it bring clarity to the issues in my life.

Lord, help my memorization. Help me, Lord, retain Your Word and apply Your Word. I need You today, Lord.

Speak to me through Your Word. And I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Amen.

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