

The Power Closet (Video)

by Shane Idleman

This sermon emphasizes the importance of a powerful prayer life by focusing on three key aspects: praying according to God's will, persevering in prayer, and maintaining a clean heart before God. It highlights the need for genuine repentance, obedience to God's commands, and prioritizing prayer above all else to experience the fullness of God's power in prayer.

Scripture: 1 John 5:14, Matthew 7:7, 1 John 3:21, James 5:16, Joshua 3:5, Isaiah 1:16, Proverbs 28:13

Topics: "Power of Prayer", "Obedience to God's Will"

Description

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Transcript

Message tonight that I just am excited to preach is the power closet. Not the prayer closet, the power closet. Prayer that God answers.

Do you know there's specific prayer that God answers? And it's good to know that because then you can fight that battle even more effectively because you know the type of prayer He answers. Now, I don't know who's going to be listening to this later but let me encourage you with this thought. He answers the prayer that says, God help me.

So you don't have to have everything dialed in. You don't have to have these seven points and missed it. I missed that.

God help me. And if you don't know Him, He won't answer that prayer. God help me.

I need you. I need you to save me. And if you're a believer, God help me.

Sometimes those are my best prayers. How about you? God help me. This morning after looking at the news reports, God help me.

That's all I can say this morning is help me. So last week we talked about keys from, or keys about teaching us to pray. Jesus said, the disciples said, teach us to pray.

And we began by saying our Father in heaven, hallowed be thy name. And we remember that Father is relational. So that's how you have to enter it.

That's how I enter it. Father is relational. And God will hear our prayers based on that relation.

And then also to approach Him in holiness and reverence because of who He is. So we see that God is relational. And then that we see if we're going to approach that relationship, we have to approach Him in holiness and reverence and remembering who He is.

And then time of deep confession. Those who live well, pray well. We talked about all that last, I believe it was two Wednesdays ago.

And it was just getting that relationship right. And then we left with this thought, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Your will be done.

That's what we need to figure out. So the prayer that God answers, I'm going to break down three of them for you. They're all biblical.

They're all in the Bible. Number one, the prayer according to God's will. The prayer according to God's will.

Right? Both Democrats and Republicans were praying. What happened? What's happened? What happened there? Praying according to God's will. First John 5.14. This is the confidence.

So you have confidence. Everyone as a believer, you can leave here tonight with confidence knowing this. This is the confidence we have in approaching God that if we ask anything, according to what His will, He hears us.

Now, sometimes I think we make a mistake with this scripture because we think it says He answers us. So if you pray according to God's will, He will hear you. But that answer might be wait.

But if it's according to His will, Shane, yeah, but God's will is not, His time clock is not on our time clock. His schedule is not on our schedule because normally we want things quick. Get me out of this discomfort.

Answer these prayers speedily. Get me out of this financial dilemma. Quick, quick, quick.

But if we pray according to God's will, He will hear us. So to me, that's very encouraging. I want to know what God's will is.

So God's thoughts, His thoughts must become our thoughts in order to pray according to His will. So what I did, I went through and I pulled out seven things in the Bible. I don't know if it's going to be up here or not.

Seven things in the Bible which are God's will for our lives. This will help your prayer life tremendously. You want power in the prayer closet, do you? Most people? You want to pray with, I'm tired of boring prayer lives.

We just get through it barely getting by and prayer is boring. There's no, there's no passion. If you want these points, Susie can get them to you.

So His will, it says in the Bible that God's will for us is to be thankful. So how many of us are out of His will this morning? See, you got to start right there. God's will is to be thankful.

Do you know the number one Bible verse of all time that is searched more than any other Bible verse on the internet? Nothing is even a close second. John 3 16, be anxious for nothing. Philippians, the most searched, the most sought after Bible verse, be anxious for nothing but everything in prayer and supplication.

Let your request be known to God. So you have to come into it thankful. And let me just confess, that was hard for me today.

I'm still in a bad mood so I'm trying to pray the Holy Spirit. Come on, get me through this. Because, and some of you might not understand, I can explain later, but there was just so much writing on what we believe is important and for our children and different things.

But to be thankful, so God's will is to be thankful. So going into prayer, the first thing we have to do is get your heart in a thankful spot. But Shane, that's hard.

It's not if you remember why we should be thankful. Don't you think we have things to be thankful for? Your spouse, your children, the home, the job, to worship freely. Ask any persecuted Christian.

They will tell you that America is blessed by God to be able to worship freely. If we could have that, what a wonderful opportunity to be, there's so much to be thankful for. So that's his will, to be thankful.

And then what's it say? To be saved. That's God's will. He's not willing that any should perish, but to be saved.

And I know this might sound funny to a bunch of believers, but there are, I believe, more people, or just, I don't know the numbers of course, so I better be careful here. But there's a lot of people praying to God who have no relationship to, with him. There's no relationship to God.

They don't have that. So the number one, God's will for them is to be saved. To acknowledge the one true and living God.

Can you imagine the millions and millions of prayers going out each day that aren't even being answered? Because they're not saved. They don't have that right relationship with God. They're calling on the wrong God.

So his will is that the people are saved. And then number three in the Bible, his will is that we worship him. And this is a good reminder, worship isn't those five songs.

Worship is our lifestyle. It's how we live our life. Our life is a life of worship.

It's a life of offering. So we get our focus back on that. And then number four, to be holy and set apart for his glory.

Did you know that God's will is for you to be holy? To come out from among them and be different? To look different? To act different? So you see where this is going. You go into the prayer closet thankful. You're saved as a believer.

You're worshiping him. And you're coming out from the world and you're repenting and you're being holy and set apart. Now you're going to better understand the will of God.

Now your prayers are going to change. Instead of that big house on the mountain, you're saying, Lord, thank you for this little house. I don't have to have that brand new car and the brand new is I just want to be with you.

It's the other prayers changing. And God's hearing that it begins to answer begins to put things in your heart that weren't there before God got things. God drops bombs into our hearts.

Do this. I want you to do this. I want to lead you in this area.

And you begin now you have the thoughts of God, the character of God, the understanding of God. And now your prayers are changing. I can't what I used to pray for 15 years ago compared to now.

I had a list of I want like Christmas list. I want this and I want this and I want this. And if you could get rid of this person and if you could, you know, and get in this and this and we have this.

And that's what prayer is. God, give me versus God, who do you want me to be? And it's not about praying and listening and listening. Sometimes it's more about listening.

And I told you last two Wednesdays ago, for me, it's often it takes longer to prepare to pray than to pray. To get my heart in a spot to pray and to seek God. And what's interesting about holiness is just remember this, a holy Christian is an awful weapon in the hands of God.

Robert Murray McShaney said that a holy Christian is an awful weapon in the hands of God. That's who God's going to use and obedient holy people seeking him. Because everybody else is has this list of wants like a Christmas list.

He's looking for those who want to seek his heart regardless of getting anything. They just want him. Have you ever been there where you said, God, all I want is you.

All I want is you. This rat race is killing me. This job is burning me out.

I don't want want want anymore. I don't want your hand. I want your face.

I want to see you. I want to experience you. I just heard a song this morning.

One of the sentences, it says this not for a minute was I forsaken. The Lord is in this place come Holy Spirit dry bones awaken. And you start to say in worship not for Lord, you have never forsaken me.

You're in this place. Would you awaken these dry, dead bones? God, I'm lethargic. I need to come back to you.

I just want your face. God, would you shown on me? Would you fill me with your spirit like Moses? Show me your glory. God, I want to see your glory.

I want the presence of God himself. Or I don't want anything to do with religion. And that gets your heart on fire that gets your heart set in the right direction.

But you will not pray well if you do not live well. Holiness is so important. Are you like all of us you've been caught in sin before? How well do you pray? How well do we pray when we're caught in that? But once we come out and repent, and are revitalized and rejuvenated, and the Spirit of God is working and breaking us, God says I'm hearing your prayer because you're praying according to my will.

And then number five, did you know it is God's will for you to be filled continually with the Holy Spirit? It says that in the Bible. God wills that you be filled with the Holy Spirit. Now we could spend the whole rest of the sermon here, and I've done a lot of talking on the Holy Spirit.

I've wrote about the Holy Spirit. It's one of my favorite topics apart from salvation. I believe that being filled with the Holy Spirit is one of the most important things that can occur to us in our Christian life.

The Bible goes from boring to alive. Christianity goes from a concept to a relationship. You go from a Sunday Christian to seven days a week Christian because you're filled with the Spirit of God.

Now this might be an offensive statement, but we are confused how some people look at the things going on in our nation politically, and yet they name the name of Christ. And I have to wonder, are they truly filled with the Holy Spirit? Are they truly filled? Because if you vote like Hollywood, that should be a concern. If your morality lines up with the rock stars in Hollywood, that's a concern because the Holy Spirit is different.

There's a holiness. There's a distinction there. So let me get out of that one quickly.

To be filled continually with the Holy Spirit is God's will. Now number six is where we miss it. Number six, to witness.

Did you know that's God's will? And most Christians, the number is so high, I often cannot believe it's this high, of people who actually do not witness, do not tell people about Jesus. Why? Because they're not filled with the Spirit. They're not holy and set apart.

They're not worshiping God. They have no prayer life because witnessing and sharing your faith comes from that genuine relationship. In other words, I'm so on fire for God, I have to tell people about this fire.

You see a wonderful movie. How many friends do you tell? You post it all over Facebook. I see on Facebook even, oh, you've got to try this new beer.

My Lord. Do they ever say anything about Jesus? Because you have to be filled with that, and it overflows, and you want to share your faith. And then number seven, did you know that it's God's will to make disciples? Everyone in this room, I believe, should have somebody somewhere that we're helping.

We're texting, we're communicating with, we're sharing our faith with, we're helping them develop. Because just like, I've used this analogy before, you know where Mono Lake is, up by Mammoth, past Mammoth June Lake, on your way to Lake Tahoe. And I see these wonderful, just beautiful streams that you can drink out of, running into it.

But Mono Lake is dead. The brine shrimp, I think, is the only thing in there. Anything can float in that lake.

It's salty. It's not good for you. Anytime water's going in, but it's not going out, it goes stagnant.

That's why they want you to drink running water. And running water keeps, actually, and you might see them cleaning out fire hydrants on your street sometime. Or on Calvisex, they'll actually reroute a water line, you know this, around in a square, so that water keeps circulating.

They don't want water to end at the end of a dead pipe. They have to keep that water moving and circulating. Same things, as I'm filled with the Spirit of God, as you are, you are created, you are designed to share that.

What you're experiencing, you share. If not, you'll become stagnant and rusty. And something's missing in my life.

That's probably what it is. So now you can better understand the Scripture. This is the confidence we have, so we can approach God with confidence, with boldness, saying, Lord, I know you're going to answer my prayers.

I know you're going to heal me, hear me, because I'm praying according to your will. I'm thankful. I'm saved.

I have a relationship with you. I worship you as often as I can. I'm holy, and I'm set apart.

I'm filled continually with your Spirit. I'm witnessing, and I'm making disciples. So your prayer life is going to be effective.

It's going to be targeted. And I found that God will begin to show you things you never even thought possible. For example, I've talked about the radio stations before.

That would have never even entered my mind. But one day, I was just driving, like, purchase. I'm like, then I went to prayer.

Is it according to your will? Is it lined up with Scripture? You know, all these different things, and praying for certain individuals, and praying for job opportunities for some of you. And you begin to pray and understand the heart of God, because you're praying according to His will. Now, something I didn't put in there, which is obvious, is you need to be feeding on His Word.

As you're feeding actually, I don't just go into sometimes just a long prayer. I'll pray for a while, and then I'll open the Word. And then I'll begin to read on it.

Certain things will stand out. I believe God begins to speak to us through His Word. Certain things will just hit like a hammer.

Other things will comfort. Other things will, oh, that's right. That's the will of God.

And you begin to read and pray in His Word. You begin to learn the counsel, the whole counsel of God. So I want to encourage you, start to read the Bible all the way through, because what do most of us do? John sounds good.

And I think that's why there's a big deficiency, a mental deficiency, a big biblical deficiency from people thinking that there's this New Testament God, who's just a God of love, because they don't spend a lot of time in the Old Testament. And it's one big history book. It's not divided, and this is a divided God.

And now that Jesus is here, it's a different God. You know, I mean, this is the God who took out Ananias and Sapphira when they lied. I mean, the purity that this early church had, He would just, I'm not even messing with lying, He would just take them out.

And the holiness of God, read Revelation. So you get the, you understand the whole character of God. So that's why I think many people, now I know I'm on this election cycle, but many people are not looking at these issues through a biblical perspective from Genesis to Revelation.

They're pulling out love your neighbor and God is love, and that's their proof text. I had somebody tell me that today about our borders and securing our borders. And how a Christian acts is not how the government acts.

There's two distinct roles. God has called us to be loving, but He's called the government, according to Romans 13, to be a terror to those who do evil, to protect and to administer justice. You can't apply personal text of scripture onto the administration of government.

Turn the other cheek to Russia and North Korea. No, no, it doesn't work that way. So we have to look at the whole nature of God.

And there's a wonderful book written by Wayne Grudem on politics in the Bible. It's about this thick, thousand pages for anybody who's interested. And it's just ironic to me because so many people don't think we should talk about this at all, but it filters into all areas of life.

Every area of life is affected by biblical truths. For example, what you're seeing now is this big push. It's really, there's an agenda of socialism.

Okay, it's where I'm going to teach my kids this tomorrow night. I'm going to take \$40 from my daughter, and I'm going to have her give \$10 to each of her brothers and sisters. Why'd you do that, Dad? Well, because they don't want to work, and they're not, you know, we just have to evenly distribute it.

She's going to be mad. But see, that's what we're doing. The Bible says hard work, diligence.

If you don't work, you don't eat. Now, within that framework, there's a small percentage of people that can't do that, that need help. That's what the church's job is to do.

We're supposed to come and help and do these things. Do they know we're building orphanages and helping in Mexico? That's how you make a difference. But see, we don't look at all these things from a biblical perspective.

We just, that sounds good. Let's all throw in, if they take 60% of everything you earn, and they distribute it out to everybody evenly, how's that going to be motivation for work? You're going to kill society, because it's not a biblical principle. Biblical principle is you work, you work hard, you're disciplined, and God rewards that work ethic.

That's throughout all of Scripture. We could camp out the Old Testament for a long time. But that's my point.

You start to pray according to God's will, because you know His will. And the scriptures I see people using are so far out of context, especially when I talk about loving those in the LGBT community. But disagreeing with gay marriage.

They say, you can't do that pastor, don't you read your Bible, says judge not. Keep reading though, right? Remove the plank from your eye, and then you can go to your brother and judge them. Jesus told the disciples in John to judge with righteous judgment, according to Scripture.

So my point is that you need to get a good biblical understanding of what God's heart is, God's character. Because it's not the national media, it's not what they're telling you. It's not what rock stars are telling you.

It often goes against that. And then number two, the prayer that God answers is the prayer that perseveres. Matthew 7, 11.

I shortened mine up a little bit there, but you can look at there. Ask and it will be given to you. Seek and you will find.

Knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds. And to the one who knocks, the door will be open.

Is that speaking to anybody this evening? God's saying, if you then are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children. How much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him? Another translation says, or another part of the gospel says, he will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask. The Holy Spirit to do what? To guide and to lead and to direct.

So if we are good to our children, how much more does God want to give good gifts to his children? The Holy Spirit to guide you and direct you. But what's the contingency here? Ask, ask, seek, knock. And I've learned that waiting on God is waiting for him to move.

Our job is to prepare. Waiting on God isn't just this kind of just twirling your thumbs and sitting at home and, gosh, I hope that doorbell rings and there's a job application there. You know, it's waiting, God, I'm preparing for you to move.

I'm waiting on you. But I'm going to prepare in the meantime. I'm going to step out in faith.

I'm going to do certain things as I'm waiting for you. For example, if you know that God is calling you, let's just say, to do ministry or maybe to get a job somewhere, you know, Lord, I'm just waiting on you for this. You're going to prepare.

You're going to prepare and get ready for that as we're waiting for the baby. Are we just waiting or is there a preparation that's happening? A room has to be ready, doctors and all these different things. You have to prepare for that.

And we have to remember God is not getting old. His eyesight is not fading. He does not need hearing aids.

He will hear our prayers. So we have to rest in his sovereignty, rest in his will and rest in his control. So talk about these for a minute.

Ask. Ask. What does ask mean? It means focus.

Asking, focus. Call to me, God says, and I will answer you and I will tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know. So God says to call.

Here's where we give up. We think asking means one time or two times or I've tried that all week, Shane. Well, asking is a petitioning God until you answer me.

Remember, I told you before, the old folks used to hold on to God until he answered. They wouldn't have a 20-minute prayer meeting. Could be three, four hours, five hours, praying, praying, praying.

And then finally, they would get up and say, God answered. How do you know? Deep in my spirit, I held on to God's promises and God's going to answer because they asked and they sought and they petitioned. And then seek just means priorities.

So there's an asking, but they see they all have to line up together. I don't think these are separate. Can I ask but not seek? Can I ask to open the door but not knock? So there's asking, which is persevering, but then there's seeking, and this is all about priorities.

And let me say something that's not going to be well received by everybody, but it is the God-honest truth. If you truly want your prayers to be heard, if you want the power closet, if you want to apply these things, your personal life will be affected. You can't play Facebook and video games all day long and watch TV and hang out with all your friends and still have a powerful prayer life.

You can do a few of those things, don't get me wrong, but your personal life will be affected. Why? Because now prayer is a priority. So if prayer is a priority, other things have to take a back seat.

Can you imagine? I know the conviction on this is pretty high, but at night, most people are bored and they'll watch things, right? I know I should be praying. I know I should be praying. It's eight o'clock, nine o'clock, ten o'clock.

We should have prayed. That's just two hours. So to really grab hold of that prayer, things have to change.

Tough decisions have to be made. I have to remove this. Whatever is hindering my prayer life has to be removed.

So it will affect your personal life. I'm not going to tell you false information because now we have the three-minute devotionals, the new thing, 20-second prayers, and I encourage that. Read a three-minute devotional.

Throw out some quick prayers as you're driving, but to truly have the power closet, to truly understand the heart of God, it's wrestling, it's contending, it's persevering, it's seeking, it's prioritizing. God wants to know how bad do you want it? Do you want to put this prayer life above everything else in your life? I come to tell you tonight, I do. I do.

I want to know what that looks like. So that's what seeking is. It's about prioritizing, and you know the analogy I've given before of losing a child in the mall or at the fairgrounds that I did one time, and it was not a good experience.

It's a seeking to where nothing else matters. I was hungry. Now I'm not.

I had to use the restroom. Now I don't. It's time to go and leave the fair.

No, it's not. What's my whole focus? On finding that child. So this is the seeking he's talking about.

I think it was bakash in the Hebrew. It's this, I have to find. I have to find.

It's not, I'll try. I'll give God 10, 20. I have to find you, and I've always seen God answer.

Now he might not say right then. He might be wait, but I've never left a time of seeking God, putting things aside, and where I left there going, that was a waste of three hours. I've done that watching TV or media

or relationships that are not, anybody here have a relationship that is just worthless? I don't right now, so don't worry.

But you're like, what was that about? They dragged me down. Nothing is said that's productive. We don't accomplish anything.

The Lord's never mentioned. This just, I just can't do this anymore. But you'll never find that with seeking God.

It may be difficult. It may be challenging. It may be a struggle, but eventually when that cloud opens, and the sky is seen again, and at prayer time, then you don't want to get up.

Trust me, it's there. It's right around. I know prayer is boring for most people.

Prayer is boring for most people. So is the gym until they see the results. Do you know that most people that start to exercise and get in shape quit before they even begin to see the benefits? They start to walk and walk.

Oh, I'm not seeing. I've only lost one pound in a month. This is not going to work.

But it's the perseverance that keeps the results. Same thing with prayer. See, the physical and spiritual run close, parallels.

We see a lot of the same things applied in physical, in our spiritual realm as well. And then I like this part about knocking. Ask, seek, knock.

In a nutshell, do something. Do something. God, I'm asking, I'm seeking, but what are you doing? Are you stepping out in faith? Have you ever tried to drive a car that the motor's not on? Or a boat? Anybody have a boat on the lake and the motor's off? And you turn the steering wheel, it's not going anywhere.

Right, you've got to, you've got to, there has to be forward momentum. There's got to be engine, there's got to be power. So when you, here's an example.

People are praying, God, I'm asking for you to heal my marriage. I'm seeking you in all of this. Okay, what are you doing to heal that? Lord, I want your direction on this job.

Do I stay in this career? I need to know, do I stay in this career? Would you show me? Well, ask, seek, knock. What are you doing? Does God want you to put out resumes at different places? Does he want you to go and talk to people and maybe get some wise counsel? Now, you don't always have to go and do something. I know people are saying, well, we just wait on God? Yes, but sometimes God will prompt us to go and do something and take that step.

And then number three, we talked about the prayer according to God's will, the prayer that perseveres. And I call this one the clean prayer. It'll make sense in a minute.

1 John 3, 21-22. Dear friends, and you're not going to hear this talked about too much in churches because it's not, it's not politically correct. Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, so if your hearts do not condemn you, you have confidence before God and you receive from him anything we ask because we keep his commandments and do what he, what pleases him.

Now, is anyone like me and you take that scripture to mean the literal translation? That, yep, God said it. That's what he means. I do.

I look at scripture. He's saying here, if your hearts do not condemn you. In other words, would you ever go to prayer and know there's something not right? Your heart's convicting you, condemning you.

It goes back to that scripture. If you know there's something wrong with your brother, don't go to the altar with your gift. Go back and restore that relationship.

Then go and seek God. So he's saying, if your hearts don't condemn you, then you have confidence before God. You can go before God and receive from him anything that you ask.

Why? Because you keep his commands and do what pleases to him. See, there's a part of Christianity that puts too much emphasis on doing. You gotta follow his commands.

How you doing, Phil? You went to the movies this week? That's not good. You know, command, beating up. How you doing with the word? Push, push, push.

And you have this model that nobody can live up to. It's all about the commands and commands and commands and pushing and pushing. That's where Bible thumping comes from.

You ever have a hard, oppressive person on you, just pushing you? And maybe it's you. I don't know. But just too much of that.

But the other side that I'm concerned about is none of this. It says right here, those who keep his commandments and do what pleases to him. That's why obedience to God's word brings power.

You show me somebody with a powerful prayer life, I'll show you somebody who obeys God's word. You can't be in disobedience or rebellion, have a powerful prayer life. So this clean prayer, there has to be something where you follow the commands of God.

You do what pleases God. Leonard Ravenhill said the prayer chamber is a mirror reflecting our spiritual condition. Is this why the prayer chamber is so unpopular? Did you know that? When you get into a real prayer, I don't know how many of you have really prayed, but when you get on your face before God, when you kneel or you're sitting in a chair and you're praying, that time of prayer is a mirror reflecting your spiritual condition.

You can't walk and live in sin and have a powerful prayer life. It will extinguish prayer. It will put out that fire.

And like I said earlier, a holy minister is an awful weapon in the hands of God. A holy parishioner is an awful weapon in the hands of God. The devil doesn't want you holy.

That's why he goes after and tries to get us to become carnal. What is carnal? Carnal in our nature. So we're lashing out.

We're angry. We're yelling. We're cursing.

We are a carnal Christian. We don't walk in the power of God. We walk in carnality.

The carnal Christian doesn't lead anybody to the Lord. They'll bring them to a wine tasting and Bible study, but not leading people to the Lord. There's carnality there.

Now, if you do that, don't feel convicted. It was just a side joke. But there's something to this.

The obedience brings power. Obeying God's word. And I would have to, if the truth be told, the most powerful times of prayer was when I'm in that right relationship with God.

There's not sin clouding and, yeah, I know I was angry at that person. I know I let them have it. I know I'm holding unforgiveness and I'm really bitter at that person.

I hope they never come again. And I'm going to pray. I'm going to pray.

This is why, please hear my heart with this, because there's a crisis with opiates and with pain meds and different things. And there's a time for it. I'm not saying that.

But I have so many people telling me they can't wait to stop because it affects their prayer life. They don't feel close to God. It's hard to pray because their mind's being altered by this substance.

And God says, when you get these things out, when you clean yourself out and do what pleases me, I will hear that prayer. So as I've said many times before, the problem when we don't hear from God, if he's speaking, is often positioning. It's often positioned.

We're not positioned correctly to hear from God. Christians must be clean vessels that God can use. Hopefully, most of us here aren't saying, yeah, man, I got this master.

I'm a clean vessel. He's talking right to me. What this means is we get our hearts right.

We come to the altar. We repent here and now. And we get our hearts clean.

I love that verse in Joshua. God said something very interesting. He said, sanctify yourselves for tomorrow you will do great wonders.

What did that mean? Get yourself right. Clean yourself. Sanctify yourself.

Get your heart clean. Get your heart ready. And then I will do great wonders among you.

Because there's a process there of just purifying the heart. And I believe that's one advantage of fasting, if the truth be told. One advantage of fasting is it just annihilates the pull of the flesh.

It kills the appetites of the flesh. It starves the desires of the flesh. The thing that's pulling you away from God begins to be starved in the person who prays and fasts.

This kind does not come out except by prayer and fasting. You mix that with prayer. It's a powerful one-two combination.

A. W. Tozer said, have you noticed how much praying for revival has been going on of late? And this is written 70 years ago. Have you noticed how much praying for revival has been going on of late? It's been going on here, hasn't it? And how little revival has resulted? I believe the problem is that we have been trying to substitute praying for obeying. Oh my goodness.

He's right on the money. Many people are substituting praying for obeying. I don't know who said it, but I had to write it down.

He said the depth of revival will be determined exactly by the depth of the spirit of repentance. In other words, the more you repent and get that heart right, the more the power of God can flow through you. There's an analogy I've used.

If you've been coming here a while, you've heard me talk about it before where out back in our house, not where we're at now, when my son was little, he liked to play with a water hose, right? Most kids do. And he had that thing turned on all the way. But what was coming out? Just a drink, just little drips.

It's like, dad, it's not working. I said, oh, it's working. That valve has high pressure.

That valve is 80 pounds per square inch. You can shoot that all the way to the back exit door. It's not the problem.

I said, you need to go and start removing all those kinks in the water hose. So one by one, and on the fourth one, he could even hold it. But see, that's the difference we get.

In the Bible, that's the imagery we get, that that kink in the hose will stop that flow of God's power, that sin, that unrepentant sin, that pride. There's so much pride in the church. Oh my Lord.

It's a kink in the hose. And we're wondering, where's this power? Where's it? We talk about revival. Where's it at? The depth of revival will be determined exactly by the depth of the spirit of repentance.

So that's my challenge for you tonight. During worship, maybe you need to come to the altar. Maybe you need to repent of some things.

Maybe you need to get your heart right. Instead of having some type of prayer service and praying and corporately, which is great, I think it's just a time to get our hearts right and to pray for our individual needs, our family needs, and let God. Ten minutes with God up here will do more than a lifetime.

A lifetime of being distant from God. You don't need me to pray with you, although I'd love to. You don't need, you know, certain things to happen.

Sometimes we just need to do business with God. So Brandt's going to come up and Olivia, and we're just going to start in a few songs of worship. And what I do, what I'll ask you to do is just ask God, Lord, is there anything, anything in me that is hindering my prayer, my prayer life? And as I confessed earlier, that I was so full of anger this morning, just of comments, of pride, of people, so full of anger, it killed my entire prayer life.

I even knew it. I had a post-it note on my phone last night and said, seek God first. I turned my phone off.

I got out there about 3:45, four in the morning. I have a little side room, and I lasted an hour. And I had to know.

And the anger, the comments, it just, it just killed my prayer life. It flowed into today. And being bitter at people, I almost unfriended a few.

I know it's hard to believe. It's not to be mean, but I'm just, I'm tired of your, you know, just, oh God. It's often I wonder how much of that we should even be worrying about and involved in, you know, you want to know it's gone.

But I had to, that just, it just killed my, I had a wonderful first hour. And after that, it just died. Because I broke my own rule there.

Seek me first. Seek God first. So I'm just wondering how much more, how much, how much more is there unforgiveness in this room? Bitterness? Is there pride? My way is right.

My theology is right. My ideas are right. Or sin, besetting sin? Is it, is it killing our prayer life? So they're going to go ahead and start.

And I would just encourage you to come to the altar if you need to. Stand, if you like, kneel in your, in the pew. These are the times when God moves the most.

These times, this is when revival, everybody's talking about revival, right? Do you know revival usually doesn't start by a man preaching? I don't know if I've, I haven't read too many books where it starts from a man preaching, but it starts from men and women on their face before God. Small prayer meetings when they're crying out and say, Lord, bend me, break me. God, give me clean heart.

Give me a clean heart and pure and, and, and, and clean hands. And mean it. And actually mean it.

I don't know about you, but I don't want, I don't want just religion. I don't want just, just going through the motions. I want to truly say, God, give me a clean hands and a pure heart.

If I've lifted up my soul to an idol, if I've sworn deceitfully, God, convict me, break me here this evening. I want all of you. I want to see your face and not your hand.

I want to humble myself before you. I want all that you have to offer. I want to be filled again with your spirit.

Oh God, once you have that feeling of the filling of the Holy Spirit and worship comes alive, you do anything to get that back. I'm telling you right now, as God is my witness, I miss those weeks when we had that revival conference. I've shed tears over that.

God, we were so broken. We were so hungry. We wanted more of you.

Nothing could have bothered me. I was on a spiritual high. I was praying for people throughout the day.

Where is that God? I'm desperate for that again, but thank God. I believe he answers. It's like he's saying, son, I will.

I will. In my time, just seek me.

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