

# Messages on Corporate Prayer #13-16

by Stephen Kaung

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of humility in prayer, highlighting the need to approach God with a humble and contrite heart in order to hear Him and see His face.*

**Duration:** 55:20

**Scripture:** 2 Chronicles 20:20-23, Acts 1:14, 2 Thessalonians 1:3, 2 Thessalonians 1:11

**Topics:** "Corporate Prayer"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the power of praise and worship in the face of battles and challenges. He draws inspiration from the story of Jehoshaphat and the army of Judah, who faced a great multitude of enemies. Instead of fighting, they appointed singers to go before the army and praise God. As they began to sing, God set liars in wait against the enemy, causing them to destroy each other. The victory was won through faith and praise, and the people of Judah humbly gave thanks and blessed the Lord. The speaker encourages the audience to continue praying and praising God, even after victories, and to trust in His provision and guidance.

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## Transcript

Will you please turn to 2nd Chronicles, 2nd Chronicles chapter 20. We'll read from verse 20 through verse 23. 2nd Chronicles chapter 20, verse 20.

And they rose early in the morning, and went forth towards the wilderness of Tekoa. And as they went forth, Jehoshaphat stood and said, Hear me, Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem. Believe in Jehovah your God, and ye shall be established.

Believe his prophets, and ye shall prosper. And he consulted with the people, and appointed singers to Jehovah, and those that should praise him in holy splendor. As they went forth before the armed men, and said, Give thanks to Jehovah, for his loving kindness endureth forever.

And when they began the song of triumph and praise, Jehovah set liars in wait against the children of Ammon, Moab, and Monsia, who had come against Judah, and they were smitten. And the children of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of Monsia, to exterminate and destroy them. And when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, they helped to destroy one another.

This is a most wonderful and unusual story we find in the history of the children of Judah. A great multitude from Ammon, Moab, and Monsia came against that little kingdom of Judah, but they were destroyed. When Jehoshaphat, the king, heard that this great army was coming, he was afraid.

And he had every right to be afraid, because they were such a small country, they had no way to fight against their enemy. But Jehoshaphat set his heart towards the Lord. He proclaimed a fast.

He gathered the children of Judah together, and there he prayed. And his prayer was, we have no might in presence of this great company which cometh against us. Neither know we what to do, but our eyes are upon thee.

And after that prayer, the Spirit of God came upon Jehoshaphat, and he said, fear not, nor be dismayed by reason of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God's. Tomorrow go down against them. Ye shall not have to fight on this occasion.

Set yourself, stand and see the salvation of Jehovah who is with you. So the next morning they rose early, they went forth, and as they went forth, Jehoshaphat consulted with the people. He encouraged them and said, believe in Jehovah your God, and ye shall be established.

And they had such faith in God, that they appointed singers to the Lord. And these singers were clothed in holy splendor. They marched before the army.

There never was such a scene before. And when they began the song of triumph and praise, Jehovah set liars in wait against the enemy. And the enemy just helped themselves to destroy one another.

A great victory. Now this passage came to me two days ago. You know, this will be our last prayer time for the conference.

And as the conference draws nearer and nearer, probably we begin to feel the pressure upon us. There are so many needs that must be met. Now thank God, most have been met already, but there are still more.

And we know that if the Lord is working, the enemy is busy. So far as we ourselves are concerned, we have every reason to be afraid. You know, when a conference is a year ahead of time, we have boldness.

But when it is just at our doors, we begin to tremble. How can we undertake such a big thing? It's not only in the numbers, but in what is behind the scene. A spiritual battle is waging.

And it gets fiercer and fiercer as the time comes. Now the only thing we can do is set our faith upon the Lord. We will acknowledge as Jehoshaphat that we have no might.

And we do not even know what to do. But our eyes are upon the Lord. If our eyes are upon the Lord, we will see that the battle is the Lord's, not ours.

It is true that we have to have our weapons shine and ready. We have to set ourselves and march to the battlefield. But we are not to fight.

The Lord will fight for us. It is His battle. If we believe in the Lord, we will be established.

Now do we believe in the Lord? Do we believe that this battle is truly His? If the battle is His, He has already overcome. Two thousand years ago, on Calvary's cross, He has crushed the enemy's head. The victory is already there.

And we are to go forth and to see that victory. Now do we believe in the Lord? And of course, so far as the regular order is concerned, you first pray and then you praise. But if you pray and you have faith, then even before you see the answer, you have already received the answer.

So you can start to praise. You don't need to wait until everything is finished and then praise. You can praise by faith.

You know, it's almost like what you find in Mark chapter 11 verse 24. The Lord said, Whatsoever you shall ask, if you believe you have received it, you must first receive it in faith, and then it shall be come to pass to you. You will receive it in fact.

Do we have such faith in our God? Do we need to wait until we see the fact before we can start to praise? Or do we have such faith in Him, knowing that Calvary gave us such assurance because the battle is His? He has already won. Therefore, we can praise Him beforehand. I believe this is what God wants us to do tonight.

This is the time that we shall set sinners in holy splendor. This is the time that the sinner should march before the army. Now, it doesn't mean that the army doesn't need to go forth.

The army has to go forth with the weapons shining, ready. But they are not to fight. But the Lord fights for us.

Now, this praise before fact is not only a sign of faith, but it speeds us the victory. Because the Bible says, When they began the song of triumph and praise, they began the song of triumph and praise. They sang the song of triumph, as if it's already done.

The victory is already won. And they praise. And when they started to praise, God started to work.

So I do believe that tonight, well, we still need to pray. The army has to go forth yet. But let's have the sinners go before the army.

And also, let us not forget, after the victory was won, and they plundered the enemy for three days, then they entered into the valley of Berechiah. And there they give thanks and bless the Lord. After the victory is won, we have to go to the valley.

We have to humble ourselves and bless the Lord. Why? Because it is not by our might, nor by our power, but it is by His Spirit that this is done. So may the Lord encourage us as we continue to pray and let's start to praise.

This concludes message number 13. Message number 14 follows. Chapter 1. Verse 3. We ought to can thank God always for you, brethren, even as it is meet, because your faith increases exceedingly, and the love of one of you all towards one another abounds.

Verse 11. To which end we also pray always for you, that our God may count you worthy of the glory, and fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness, and the work of faith with power. Here we find in verse 3, the Apostle Paul with Salvinus and Timotheus, how they thank God always for the Thessalonian believers.

They thank God because their faith increases, and their love for one another abounds. And then in verse 11 you'll find, we also pray always for you. Now oftentimes we think that prayer precedes thanks.

You thank God because your prayer is answered. And I think it is right that whenever we pray and our prayer is answered, it is the time that we should give thanks, unto the Lord. It will be very wrong if we pray and the Lord answers our prayer, and then we just go away, and never return to give our thanks to Him.

Just as you find in the Gospels, when our Lord healed the ten lepers, the nine just, they felt fine, and they just went their way. Only one Samaritan came back to the Lord to give thanks to Him. And our Lord said, now where are the other nine? So I do believe that if we have prayed concerning anything, and our prayer is answered, we shall never forget to return, and to thank the Lord.

Because if we do not, it shows that how ungrateful we are. And you know, after we have gotten what we asked the Lord of, and then just we forget the Lord altogether. So it is true that thanks follows prayer.

But in this chapter you find, pray first, thanks first, and then after the apostles have given thanks to the Lord for what He has done with these believers, then He continues on with prayer. You know, we often think that after we have given thanks, now the case is closed. There is no more to be done.

But you find that after we have given thanks, then we should begin to pray again. Now why is it so? It is because there is no limit to what God can and will do. We have prayed, He had answered, He has done something, and we give thanks to Him.

But if we do not continue on with further prayer, we are limiting God as if that's all He can do, all He will do. But as a matter of fact, seeing that how He has answered our prayer, it does encourage us to pray more, so that the Lord may be able to work more, to do more. So the apostle Paul and his companions, you find that after they have thanked the Lord for what they have seen in these Thessalonian believers, they continue to pray and said that God will count them worthy of the calling and fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness and the work of faith with power.

When we first pray, and our prayer is answered, it is like a seed is sown. It has fallen into the ground. But then after we give thanks, we continue to pray.

It is to water the seed, that it may grow and give increase. I think as we gathered here this evening, we do want to thank the Lord for how He answered our prayers during the conference. There is much that we need to thank God for.

To mention the least, the weather. I think if it should be this week, instead of that week. But the Lord marvelously has answered prayer.

I mean, that is just the simplest thing we can see. And there are many, many things. Some we have already noticed, and many more that we do not even know, that the Lord has really marvelously answered prayer.

And I think it is right for us to return thanks. I was not here last night, but I suppose we give thanks to the Lord. But do we think that after we have given thanks to the Lord, the case is closed? Or do we feel that we need to continue to pray? The seed has been sown in the conference, but now it needs to be watered.

We have to water the seed with prayer. That whatever the brothers and sisters, young and old, have heard, or have seen, or have received, or anything that has been deposited, or any seed that has been sown, now if we do not continue with prayer, we know what will happen. We may not see much increase.

And that is the reason why people often say, you know, at the conference it seems as if you have a good injection, and you are stirred up. After the conference is over, everything is closed, is finished. And I believe one reason is, before the conference there is much prayer, but after the conference we do not pray.

You know, as if it is done. Well, that's just the beginning. If the Lord has done something at the conference, and have deposited something, or touched people's heart, then it is, there is more reason for us to take these things up, and continue to water them with prayer.

So that there will be much increase for the Lord. And of course, at the same time, there are still some loose ends to be tied up yet. And how are we going to tie up these loose ends? We have to pray.

So I do feel that, as we gathered here this evening, on the one hand we should never stop thanking the Lord for what He has marvelously, and graciously, and blessed us. We do not deserve all that He has done for us. But it is no time for us to just relax, and sit back, and be passive, as if a chapter is closed, finished.

You know, and we can just forget it until next year. Then we have to eat the Lord's charity, and we should have another conference. Then we have to start to pray again.

I think we shouldn't commit this kind of error. We should continue to hold the conference, whatever has been done before the Lord, until there is much increase for His Kingdom. And I believe there are things that they are still not fully settled yet.

And that's something that we really need to continue to pray. So that's my feeling before the Lord. I feel that as we come together this evening, do not cease thanking Him, but at the same time receive the burden to continue to pray.

Message number 14, number 15 follows. Second Chronicles, chapter 7, verse 14. And my people who are called by my name, humble themselves and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways.

Then will I hear from the heavens, and forgive their sin, and heal their land. I wonder how much do we relate humility with prayer. I suppose when we think of prayer, we think of faith.

We think of confidence. We think of boldness. But very rarely we think of humility.

We know that faith is essential, because without faith our prayer will not be answered. If we believe whatsoever we may have asked, and we believe that we receive it, we shall receive it. Faith is essential.

We need confidence. We are confident, as 1 John said, that whatsoever we may ask in His name, according to His will, He will hear us. We need boldness.

We enter into the Holy of Holies with boldness. We need all these things, faith, confidence, boldness. But what is faith? Faith is not something that we can manufacture ourselves.

Faith does not have its source in ourselves. Faith is looking off unto Jesus. If we look at ourselves, we'll have no faith.

But if we forget ourselves, and look at the Lord Jesus, then faith rises within us. And we know that's humility. We need confidence.

When we come to pray, we need to be confident that He hears us. But what is confidence? We have no confidence in the flesh. Our confidence is in God.

And that's humility. We need boldness. But our boldness is not because we have merits upon which we can, based on our approach to God.

We have boldness because of the blood of the Lamb. And that again is humility. So as a matter of fact, you know, when you really think of prayer, real prayer, it actually is based on humility.

If we are so proud of ourselves, so confident of ourselves, and being bold in ourselves, that's presumptuous. We have no right. We have no merit.

There is nothing that really, we can force God to hear our prayer. And that's the reason why as we come to pray, we need to humble ourselves before Him. Humility is the only attitude that we must have when we come to pray.

I believe we remember that parable that our Lord Jesus tells us about that Pharisee and that publican, that Pharisee entered into the temple to pray. He seemed to have boldness. He is very bold.

He is very confident of himself. He seems to have lots of faith in himself, not in God, but in himself. But the result is, he is not heard.

But the publican, the tax collector, has no boldness whatsoever in himself. No confidence over himself. No faith.

He only cries out, Lord be merciful to me, a sinner. There is nothing in him that he can trust in, or base on, in his approach to God. It is everything in God.

That's humility. And because he is humble, he is heard. So I think when we come to pray, we really need to have that attitude of humility.

That is, when we come to pray, we forget ourselves. We do not think of ourselves. We do not depend on ourselves.

We do not come as if we have faith. You know, if we think we have faith, we don't. You remember this father, when the Lord Jesus, he said, Lord, if you can, and the Lord said, if I can, if you can believe.

That's the issue. It's not whether the Lord can or cannot, but it is whether you can believe, or you don't believe. And you remember that father cried out, Lord, I believe, help my unbelief.

Now that's faith. So far as he is concerned, there is unbelief there. But he wants to believe.

And he looks to the Lord to help his unbelief, to make him believe. And that's faith. So as we come together to pray, we come as nothing.

You know, uh, do nothing because you have a good day. Therefore, you have faith that the Lord will hear you. Do nothing because you, uh, you have done the right thing.

Therefore, you have boldness to come to God. Do nothing that there is anything in you that deserve his hearing your prayer. On the contrary, we have to come with deep humility.

There's absolutely nothing in us. We have no right. We don't deserve anything.

It is all up to him. And with that kind of attitude, we come to pray. And you will find that he hears us.

Because God gives grace to the humble. And he resists the proud. So this verse, I believe is very familiar, is often quoted.

If my people who are called by my name, and we are his people, we are called by his name. As a matter of fact, we gathered together this evening in his name. And what does the Lord require of us? He said, if my people who are called by my name, should humble themselves.

What he requires of us is that we humble ourselves. That is the attitude we must have. And pray.

In other words, before we pray, we need to have a humble attitude. But if we humble ourselves, and pray, and he says, seek my face. That is what prayer really is.

When we come together to pray, we actually are seeking his face. You know, prayer is not just presenting to him what we want. Prayer actually is seeking his face.

We want to see him. You know, we may have a problem. We do not know how it can be solved.

We want to see his face. We want to see him. And if only we can see him, that problem will be solved.

Prayer is seeking the face of God. Not coming to twist his arms, but to seek his face. You know, oftentimes you find people pray as if they are twisting God's arms.

That's not prayer. Prayer is seeking God's face. But we will not be able to seek God's face if we are not humble.

Seek God's face means seek to know God's will. To know what God's mind really is. To know what he really wants.

Because when you see his face, everything is open. Everything is clear. You see, our problem is we don't see him.

That's the problem. You know, it's not a matter of reasonings. It is not a matter of pros and cons.

It is really a matter of seeing his face. If we see his face, then everything is settled. That's all we need to seek his face and turn from their wicked ways.

And I think that is the natural result. If we see his face, immediately it will reflect upon us that our ways have not been good. Actually, our ways are wicked.

And we need to turn from our wicked ways. We have not been walking as we should. If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another.

And the blood of Jesus, God's son, cleanses us from all our sins. The light of his countenance. When the light of his countenance shines upon us, it will remove all our wickedness, all our sins, all our unrighteousness, all shadows and shade.

In other words, we will be really in communion, in union and in communion with the Lord. And it is then the Lord said, I will hear from heaven and forgive their sins and heal their land. God said he will hear.

Not only hear, but forgive. Not only forgive, but heal. So in this verse, you really see the absolute necessity of humility when you come to pray.

So as we gather together, let us really humble ourselves before the Lord and pray. Let us seek his face, turn from the wicked ways. Then he will hear, he will forgive and he will heal.

It is not in any way contradictory to faith, confidence and boldness. We need faith, yes. But faith, as we say, is looking often to Jesus.

That's humility. In other words, we do not believe ourselves. We believe in him.

In a sense, it humbles us, you know. We like to believe in ourselves. We like to believe that we can do it.

We like to feel confident, you know. But it is in true humility that we have real faith, real confidence and real boldness. It is not a contradiction.

Actually, it is humility that leads us to faith, confidence and boldness. So as we gather here this evening and begin to pray, first of all, let's humble ourselves and pray. This concludes message number 15.

Message 16 follows and begins with Acts 1. Chapter 1 verse 14. Acts 1 verse 14. These gave themselves all with one accord to continual prayer with several women and Mary the mother of Jesus and with his brethren.

In one place we are told that at one time our Lord Jesus, after he was raised from the dead, he appeared to 500 brethren. Now we do not know whether that happened at the time when our Lord Jesus was taken up. Very likely that was the time.

So actually you find 500 brethren. They saw the Lord and probably they heard what the Lord told them before he was taken up. That they shall go back to Jerusalem and to wait for the promise which the Father had given.

That is, they will receive power from on high and then they will be witnesses from Jerusalem to Algida, Samaria and to the end of the world. But after the ascension of the Lord, we find in the first chapter of Acts only 120 returned to Jerusalem, gathered in that upper chamber and they gave themselves with one accord to continual prayer. 500 brethren saw him and heard him but only 120 acted on what he said.

They went back to Jerusalem waiting for the promise of the Holy Spirit. But they did not wait there passively. They waited actively by giving themselves to continual prayer until the promise came on the day of Pentecost.

Now oftentimes we think that if we have God's promise, we don't need to give ourselves to continual prayer. And if we continue to pray, will it not be an indication that we do not have faith? But this is not the truth. The truth is because they have the promise, therefore they gave themselves to continual prayer in

order that the promise might be fulfilled.

They gave themselves to continual prayer. They prayed and prayed and prayed for 10 days. They prayed the same prayer.

They prayed with one accord. That is, they prayed with one mind. And that one mind was the promise should be fulfilled, would be fulfilled.

And I think it is important for us at this juncture. We believe that the Lord has promised for us, especially in view of the conference that is coming within the month. And we believe that He who has originated this conference, He will bless.

But we cannot afford just sit back and be passive about it. Because if we sit back and be passive about it, we may not receive the promise. I wonder what happened to the 380 people who had the promise, but who did not return to Jerusalem.

Maybe they returned home and passively waiting the promise to come to them. But when Pentecost came, they were not there. So that should encourage us, we who have His promise, to really give ourselves to continual prayer.

We need to pray and pray and pray. We do not need to feel monotonous about it, or tired about it, or even think that by praying too much, we do not have faith in Him. But it's opposite is the truth.

Because we believe His promise, therefore we pray, and we pray, so that His promise may be fulfilled. We can go over the same thing, pray the same thing, and yet it can be living, it can be real, it is not necessarily to be vain repetition. The Bible does not forbid us to repeat.

It only tells us not to have vain repetition. And by vain repetition, it simply means you repeat, but your heart is not in it. You repeat because you have a wrong concept, that if you pray long enough, long prayer, then God will hear.

If your prayer is too short, God probably will miss it. And then it's vain repetition. But it doesn't forbid us to repeat, and to repeat, and to repeat.

Even our Lord Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, He repeated three times. Paul in 2nd Corinthians 12, He repeated three times. Elijah repeated seven times.

So it is not a matter of repetition. It is a matter of vain repetition. If our heart is in what we repeat, it reinforces, it strengthens, it builds the prayer before, until the balance is tipped.

You know, that's prayer. So prayer is like like a balance. And one prayer is as if you are adding a little weight to it, and you add another weight to it, add another weight to it, and when you add enough weight to it, then the balance began to tilt.

Now sometimes we stop before there is enough prayer, and the prayer got unanswered. So we just need to continue to pray. Not only we should pray when we are together, like tonight, but we really need to give ourselves to continual prayer.

Now what does it mean by giving ourselves to continual prayer? If you give yourself to do something, you do not just do it once in a week. You do it all the time. So this is something that should be occupying us

within this month.

If we expect, and we do, that the promise and the blessing of the Lord will come upon His people at a conference, then we need to give ourselves to continual prayer. We haven't got enough prayer for this coming conference. We need more prayer.

If we who are here tonight can really give ourselves with one accord to continual prayer, then the day of Pentecost will be fulfilled. And when they are praying, you find that they are not just praying over the same thing all the time, because that's the one thing that is in their mind, the promise of the Father. So evidently they just concentrate their prayer on this one thing, and they pray for ten days.

But also you find that during those ten days something happened, because in the first chapter you find Peter began to share with the people that were gathered there. There some adjustment had to be made. There was a gap, because Judah hanged himself.

There was a vacancy in the apostleship, and that gap had to be filled. A preparation for the day when the Holy Spirit would come. And I do believe this will happen to us too, as we are really praying for the conference.

No doubt the Holy Spirit will show us where there are loopholes, where there are gaps, gaps, vacancies that need to be filled as a preparation. When the Holy Spirit shall come, everything is ready for Him. So I do believe that within the last month, this is a very critical time.

It is not simply just praying, praying, but I believe no doubt the Lord will have to do some adjustment with us, individually or corporately. There need to be some adjustment to be made, and we should be open to it, we should be ready for it. And if we do, I do believe that the promise will come.

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