

# The Situation Is Desperate!

by Vance Havner

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*Vance Havner's sermon emphasizes the desperate need for genuine prayer and reliance on God in the face of national and personal crises.*

**Duration:** 32:30

**Scripture:** 2 Chronicles 7:14, 2 Chronicles 20:12, Psalm 34:18, Jeremiah 29:13, Matthew 7:7, Mark 5:27-29, Luke 18:1, Hebrews 11:6, James 5:16, 1 Peter 5:7

**Topics:** "Desperation", "Desperation in Prayer", "Seeking God"

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## Description

Vance Havner emphasizes the desperate situation faced by King Jehoshaphat of Judah, who, confronted by overwhelming enemies, turned to God in prayer, acknowledging his inability to cope. He draws parallels to modern America, suggesting that while the nation is in crisis, many remain complacent, relying on human solutions rather than seeking divine intervention. Havner calls for genuine humility and repentance in prayer, stressing that true desperation for God is necessary to experience His power. He challenges the church to recognize its own spiritual apathy and to engage in fervent prayer, likening it to the desperate faith of those who sought Jesus for healing. Ultimately, he urges believers to acknowledge their need for God and to act with urgency in their spiritual lives.

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## Transcript

...chapter. King Jehoshaphat of Judah was facing a national emergency. The armies of Ammon and Moab were marching against him, and the situation looked hopeless. In desperation he called the nation to prayer and called on God to intervene.

And in the twelfth verse he said, So our God, wilt thou not judge them? We have no might against this great company that cometh against us, neither know we what to do, but our eyes are upon thee. He admits that he is unable to cope with the crisis. We have no might, we don't know what to do.

But man's extremity is God's opportunity. It was then, and it is now. We need a Jehoshaphat in Washington today as never before.

We've had calls for prayer, but most of them don't do any good, because just setting a day of prayer for everybody to turn out and do nothing but pray may miss the mark or a thousand miles, because unless we humble ourselves and seek God's face and turn from our wicked ways, when we pray he won't hear it anyway. If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me. I've been to a lot of prime meetings

where a waste of time, because they didn't meet the conditions of confession, repentance.

America has reached desperation. The situation's desperate, but we're not, and that's the trouble. We still think we can handle it, and the experts are sure they have the answer, and they don't even know what the question is.

Politicians have their panaceas, and you see how well I am at it. I heard of a fellow who went to a hospital for brain operation. This didn't happen, I'm sure, but it makes a good illustration anyway.

And so they were operating on his brain, they had it over in another room working on it. I'm telling it like I heard it. For three years, they don't, but Jesus said before he comes back, it'll be a time of perplexity.

We will have lost and we'll be too proud to admit it. We think that all our reforms and education and technology, when are we going to quit kidding ourselves? Anybody can see that all the new ideas, we have a creeping socialism. Winston Churchill said there are only two places where socialism will work, in heaven where they don't, you've never heard more talk about sex than you have in the last few years.

I don't preach about it, because every time I hear a preacher who likes to preach a lot about it, I get a little uneasy about him. Situation might improve. The operation's brilliant, but the patient's died, and that doesn't speak well for the surgeons.

Best thing the president could say would be, we don't know what to do, but our eyes are on God. Wouldn't hurt him, any president. Everybody knows he don't know what to do anyway.

An honest confession would be good for the soul. We're faced by a combination of forces, beloved, that can be met only by the intervention of God. But as long as we have a few, he'll leave us to and they get to the place that they give up, God will move in.

Now, uh, God, Jeremiah said, remember, oh Lord, we're orphans, and then out of all that mess, there's none upright, that they may do evil with both Heahter and his mischievous descendants, and the guide, he said, you can't even trust your wife. And then the verse that Jesus quoted, for the son, my God is here. Now we're exactly in that kind of situation, looking to man and to our own devices.

I'm tired of hearing the experts tell us what could need to do is improve it. That's where we are now. Churches never faced such a demonic.

We think we're rich, increased with goods and don't need anything. And we don't know how wretched and miserable and poor, like the way, uh, Philip Trent, we're up against the unseen power that spiritual agents from the very headquarters of evil. We've always had meanness, but we're reading today and see, uh, how the invasion of another world, the situation is desperate, but the saints are not.

I don't think we have, but one weapon left and we don't use it. And that's desperate prayer. I hear very little desperate prayer.

I get amused at the way we celebrate new year's eve in most of the churches get together. Well, we have to eat first. Of course, I've always read about poor as a church mouse.

I don't know of anything getting any fatter than a church mouse is easy. Then after we eat, we have a movie and play a few games, learn about quarter to 12, decide to pray. I can't think of enough to play about any longer than 15 minutes and almost run out there.

Why do we resort to everything else on the face of the earth? I marvel that churches don't fill up these days with penitent church members praying all night if necessary, while there's time. The sinners revel all night. I'd hate to know how many of the church members set up for the late, late, late, late show feasting on the filth of Sodom and Gomorrah brought into the living room.

I know of a church that has a glass front. You walk down the street and see what's going on on the inside and no time for a glass front. I said there's not enough going on now to wall up the place.

Does something happen? What would happen, do you think, if the lights burned late in our churches around over this area? Pastor about what's going on here Somebody said we were praying. What about? Know what's going on? We thought it was serious enough committee that'd kill it to begin with. Unfit, appointed by the unwilling to do this.

We're proceeding on the business as usual and never. We've taken down a road, we're not coming back. You don't do as you.

When disaster strikes, tornado, flood, business closes down, the military may have to take over. There's an emergency and there's urgency. The ambulance and the fire truck drive right through the traffic signals and the speed limits because there's an emergency.

If your house were on fire and I came down the street and you were asleep up in your room, I would be justified in tearing the door down if I could to get in and advise you of your emergency. You wouldn't expect me to act as usual. You'd expect me to come in and say, pardon me, but there seems to be a slight conflagration in the neighborhood and I'd advise you to remove your carcass from this detention.

Of course, I know some people get panicky in a fire, carry feather pillows downstairs and do all kinds of silly things. I did it the wrong way. I did it during a revival.

They don't think they're worth going to. We have a lot of visitors, sometimes 50, 50. Had people drive a hundred miles or did last night, some of them.

And folks right across the street, church members never come all week. They couldn't care less. Now, that doesn't bother me personally.

I've reached the age where I'm not trying to project an image and build up a reputation. I'm not trying to pack the house. It's the business of the church members to fill the house.

The business of the preacher to fill the pulpit. And so I try to tend to my part of the deal. I know a lot of people not interested in their sermon tasters.

They go one night to hear the new preacher and then I don't know where they are next night trying out another one. And you never get anywhere with that kind of a crowd. I'm after folks that mean business, what few we have left today.

If we don't, if we don't believe what we believe, if we believed it, I don't think any church auditorium hold a crowd. We don't believe it. I don't think most of us believe it.

I don't think we believe God's there. Oh, Jonathan Goforth went to a church and on prayer meeting nights, the crowd was slim and the preacher said, oh, why don't people go to prayer meeting? Oh, Jonathan Goforth said they don't believe God. They believe God was here.

And they look, you have to have some famous name during the Welsh revival. Evan Roberts finally got there and walked out and said, do you believe the Bible? Do you believe God's here yet? Now that was a dramatic way to be George Lewis. If we don't believe what we say, we believe we're the worst hypocrites on earth to preach and promote something that most of each adherence wouldn't miss if they lost it.

Every church member lost it. There's something wrong with our Christianity. When you have to beg most of our crowds to come to church to hear about it.

I'm ashamed of the world going, trying to recruit new volunteers for them. Either Christianity is not what it's supposed to be, or we've been sold a cheap brand, or we've been immunized against. I believe in any other organization that didn't take any more joy in its programming, used as much raw material and turned out as poor a finished product as the average church would be out of this church.

And another just didn't accept the relief of conditions in the church. He said, well, I know, but that's not what he did. We're just about to get, I couldn't be sitting in a rocking chair, drawing my social security and go, because I can't take it easy.

And any preacher who does is not worth the salt in his bread. I don't have to preach this hard and this much, but somebody has to. And I started out preaching like this.

Devil said, if I think the devil is right, because I can't take it easy. And I do believe, beloved, that we need to get on and have you noticed that through Jacob at Jabbok, Moses at the Red Sea, Gideon in the 300, David and Goliath, the Syrophenician woman and the woman at midnight no bread, everyone desperate. I'll tell you one who wasn't desperate, and he didn't get his.

He was the rich young ruler. And you'd have thought he was the best prospect who had come along. But he could take it or leave it.

As long as you can take it or leave it, you'll leave it every time. But I love to think about that woman in Mark 5, that had spent all her money, and she heard a big noise. She looked out, the streets all headed in one direction.

She got an old rag of a dress. But when you're desperate, you will do what you can't do. And she got through.

And Mark tells us, and touched his garment. When she said, if I may touch with it, and she did. And Jesus, no, you have both words in the next verse, and sayest thou who touched me? And Peter said, one of the Gospels tells us, said, Lord, why would you ask who touched me? I thought somebody said he was the most.

But Jesus knew the difference between thronging and touching. And I often looked actually on Sunday morning there, and I wonder who will touch him. But you're not going to touch him if you're not desperate.

I just noticed that old song a while ago. I think when I've been with them then. Well, a thousand years, and people say, oh, if Jesus were just here today, it'd be for us to touch him too.

He's telling you something here. He's here right now. He's right in this place, because he said, with two or three gathering in my name, I'm there.

If we could ever wake up to that and believe it, I don't know when we'd ever get out of church. But we've heard it too much. We got used to it.

Doesn't move us. But if you get desperate, you may do something about it. So I keep wondering, have we got any desperate people in the congregation? I'd like to know tonight.

I mean somebody with a special, deep, desperate need of the Lord. Now, if you have to think it up, forget it. You haven't got it.

But if you've got a desperate need, nobody left to tell you about it. Nobody had to tell this woman, Jesus going through town, do you need anything? My soul. She was just one.

And I don't have to bother. If you're desperate tonight, the people order me in when you take the over, over. And yet I get bothered about content.

Our crowds are not much upsetting. Have you got a desperate need of Jesus tonight? For yourself? Shall we bow our heads and pray? I'm going to ask just one little simple. If you have a desperate need of Jesus tonight, your spirit, for yourself or for somebody or something, would you just lift your hand right now? Yes.

Why? My Lord, we saw that. My Lord, if these folks are desperate, they won't have to be begged to do anything. And you're here, Lord Jesus.

But we can't see you with these eyes. You're not geared for seeing. But you're here.

These people that lifted their hands, anything they need. Tonight. Right now.

My God, Jesus, you buy some things you desire when you, you shall have them. I'm not going to beg you to come. Choir is going to sing ever so softly.

Pass me not. Oh, gentle Savior. I'll tell you what I'd like for you to do.

I wish you'd clear off this. Your granddaddy and your, nothing much happens. I wonder how many of you would be willing to sleep down here and just touch Jesus for that need tonight and believe him for it.

Now, I'm not going to beg you for if you're desperate, you'll come. You'll believe him. Choir.

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