

## Where are the men?

*Washer & Leiter - Denmark 2009*

By Paul Washer

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**Bible Text:** 1 Corinthians 16:13; Mark 1:32-39

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### **Grace Community Church**

P.O. Box 10608

San Antonio, TX 78210

**Website:** [www.gccsatx.com](http://www.gccsatx.com)

**Online Sermons:** [www.sermonaudio.com/gcc](http://www.sermonaudio.com/gcc)

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Let's open up our Bibles, first of all, to 1 Corinthians 16.

It is kind of an admonition before we get started on talking about what I feel like the lord has laid on my heart. 1 Corinthians 16:13. "Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong."<sup>1</sup>

Let's go to the Lord in prayer.

*Father, I come before you in the name of your Son and I pray that you would guide us, that you would grant us wisdom. Lord, not only the wisdom to understand your will, but the power and the courage to carry it out. Guide us in all things, Father, in Jesus' name. Amen.*

The Church in Corinth seems to have been something of a mess. We look through there and although they were a very, very gifted people—Paul acknowledged that—it was a mess.

Now in that context we can understand this. Things needed to be changed. The course of the church needed to be changed. The theology of some of the church needed to be changed. A lot needed to be changed. And whenever a man works for a biblical reformation to change things as they ought to be changed he is going to suffer. He is going to be attacked. He is going to have to bear the slander of many people.

And that is why Paul here says, "Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith."<sup>2</sup> And then a very unusual statement, "Act like men."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Corinthians 16:13.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

If there has ever been a lack of anything, it has been a lack of men, a lack of men. We have a saying in the United States which is more like a kind of an illustration that if you take a frog—this is true—and you throw him, a live frog, in a pot of boiling water he will jump out. He will, with good reason. But if you put that frog in the same bucket of temperate water, just room temperature water and then you put that bucket on the stove and you gradually heat it up, that frog will stay there. He will get acclimated to the temperature until he boils to death. That is what is happening to the men in the West.

Slowly they have been domesticated. Slowly they have been pressured into conformity where they will complain in secret little groups, but rise up and do something? No. Too much pressure, too dangerous. Well, what will my family say? What will this church group say?

That is not acting like a man and it is definitely not acting like a man of God.

The zeal for the Lord's house ought to consume you. It ought to be more important to you than relationships with people in an apostate church. It ought to be more important to you than relationships with your mother and your father and your sister and your brother because Jesus said, "If you do not hate them, you do not follow me."

He does not mean, of course, that you should show hatred or disrespect towards your mother and your father and your siblings, but what he is saying is, "You must follow me even though you must bear their wrath."

Now from everything that I have heard from everybody here, there is little going on in Denmark. Everybody complains, "Where is a biblical church?"

Well, my question is: Where are the men to start a biblical church, to rise up and do what needs to be done?

That doesn't mean you run out here tomorrow and just carelessly begin something, but it means that you come to a point where you say, "Look. I have got to risk it all. I have got to risk it all. I have got to do what is right. There needs to be a church in this place. There is not."

Spurgeon said, "If there is not a biblical church, should we not plant one?"

There are things that need to be done.

Last night just counseling with some of the people it was amazing some of the things they told me, the things that I have heard about what is taught in churches here and what is practiced. It seems like it goes from one side it is nothing more than just dead liberalism to the other side it is a wild circus of flesh. There needs to be a biblical church.

You say, "Well, man, it will cost."

Well, let me just share something with you. Join the club. It costs everybody to follow Christ, it does.

Well, what will people think?

What will they think? What does it matter?

You know, I was reading today in Ezra and it was an amazing statement. It said that God stirs up the heart of the king of Persia to bring the people of Israel back into the Promised Land, but he says he does it to fulfill the word spoken through the prophet Jeremiah.

Now he didn't have to say that. I mean, he could have just said to fulfill the Word of God, but he didn't say that. He said, fulfill the Word of God as spoken through the prophet Jeremiah. Why is that?

Go back to Isaiah and you will find out. God vindicates his prophets. He vindicates his servants. So for all those years, all throughout his ministry, Jeremiah was slandered. People thought bad about him. They hated him. They threw him down in a well, everything else. And then after they went into captivity they still slandered him and they mocked him, but when God stirred up the king of Persia they didn't mock him anymore. God vindicated his servant.

What do you care what people think about you? If you do God's will, God will vindicate you, either here or in heaven. And I would rather be falsely accused by men than to stand before God one day and be accused.

Listen, it is not enough to just have your good theology and your good doctrine and kind of try to get your family into the kingdom. You are called to take this to the world starting with your own people.

There is a great thing to be done here. The question is: Where are the men?

“Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.”<sup>4</sup>

That is an amazing thing.

See, over the last few months I was praying, “Oh God, what are you going to do with me? What are you going to do? Where should I go? What should I do? All these things that have happened around me, Lord, where do you want me to go?”

And God gave me that promise in Joshua 1:9. Do you know what is amazing about that promise. He goes, “Paul, it doesn't matter so much where you go. What matters is I am going to be with you. I am going to be with you wherever you go. That is all you need. That is all you need.”

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<sup>4</sup> Joshua 1:9.

You have got a limited window to do something here. Your country as well as Europe are much closer, much closer to death than mine. Mine is right behind you, but you are closer to the fire, to the edge of the cliff than we are. Your people would not serve the one true God. They chose to serve the God of money and medal and hedonism and pleasure and sex and everything else. So God is going to turn them over to serve the god of Allah along with the rest of the world.

You want to find out what bondage is then? You will know what it is like. And up until that point we have a window to do what? To preach the gospel.

I can only think of one day... Just think for a moment what is going on. Christianity exploded in part because of the Gutenberg press. Now, the Gutenberg press was a thing that God in his sovereignty raised up, the fact that you could publish things. He actually had a printer.

Well, the same thing has happened in the last few decades, a new Gutenberg press called the internet where so much can be done. There is so much technology to be able to travel by plane, to be able to do all sorts of things.

Here is what I don't want to happen to me. I don't want to miss this opportunity and then when persecution comes and I can no longer even preach openly I sit there and weep over the great opportunities I had when there was still freedom and I didn't take them.

A friend of mine got up in church in Peru in the middle of the war and he said, "If not now, when? If not you, who?" And what he was talking about: How long will you delay before you decide something has got to be done?

Now, again, I don't want anyone running out of here and say, "Yeah," get all excited about this.

This has to be led of the Lord, but, men, rise up. Something has to be done. If not here then go somewhere else, but something has to be done.

Now I want to talk to you today for a moment about something that is very, very important and I want us to go to the book of Mark chapter one verse 32.

When evening came, after the sun had set, they began bringing to Him all who were ill and those who were demon-possessed. And the whole city had gathered at the door. And He healed many who were ill with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and He was not permitting the demons to speak, because they knew who He was. In the early morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house, and went away to a secluded place, and was praying there. Simon and his companions

searched for Him; they found Him, and said to Him, "Everyone is looking for You."<sup>5</sup>

Now, I want you just to think for a moment about what is going on here. This is preceded by the calling of the fishermen. And then on down from there the casting out of the demon and then in verse 29 he says:

And immediately after they came out of the synagogue, they came into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. Now Simon's mother-in-law was lying sick with a fever; and immediately they spoke to Jesus about her. And He came to her and raised her up, taking her by the hand, and the fever left her, and she waited on them.<sup>6</sup>

What we see in the book of Mark, literally—and I tell young ministers this—if you read the book of Mark correctly you will be wore out, you will be breathing hard. I mean, literally.

I found myself one day doing that. I was reading the book of Mark. This was years ago. And I was like...

Why? Because Mark uses the word "immediately" so many times. And what he is doing is he is giving you snapshots of Jesus. I mean Jesus was over here teaching. He is here casting out a demon in the synagogue. He is here healing. He is here teaching. He is here feeding. I mean it just goes on just constantly.

And, in a sense, that was the life of Christ during his three year ministry. It is just like when you finish preaching, like last night, and a person comes up to you and says, "I know you are probably wore out, but I have got a question." And then they talk to you for 15 minutes and then as soon as you get ready to get up out of the seat another person comes and goes, "I know you are really tired, but I have got a question." And then it just goes on and on and on and on. And then you realize: I got to get up in the morning. Ok, I got to get up. I got to go teach. And you teach. You are going to come here.

You see, it just... everything pulling at him. And then he goes in to the house.

You know, ok, I am in the house now. And then someone is sick. Well, would you take care of this, too? I mean, he goes on and on.

And then we get to 32.

When evening came, after the sun had set, they began bringing to Him all who were ill and those who were demon-possessed. And the whole city had gathered at the door. And He healed many who were ill with various

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<sup>5</sup> Mark 1:32-37.

<sup>6</sup> Mark 1:29-31.

diseases, and cast out many demons; and He was not permitting the demons to speak, because they knew who He was.<sup>7</sup>

Now, I want you to understand something. Jesus Christ was God in the flesh, but Jesus Christ was man and he did these things as a man, the perfect man in the power of the Holy Spirit and when he did things the Bible said virtue went out from him, strength went out from him.

I don't know if you have ever done this, but it is true. A man who ministers according to his gifts in the power of the Holy Spirit, when he is finished, his body is absolutely exhausted. Virtue goes out from him. Strength goes out from him.

It is like a woman who is in a car and she is driving and the car turns completely over. We have all heard these stories. The car turns completely over. The baby is trapped inside. The car is on fire. And a little woman about this big runs over to the car door. Her baby is inside and she rips the door off the hinges. But the next day her arms, the muscles are almost tore apart. That adrenaline flowing through her gave her such strength, she just rips the door off the hinges.

It is the same way. When a man of God or a woman of God is ministering in the power of the Holy Spirit there is something like that that happens to the body. It can wear you out. And I can see here with the person of the Christ, Jesus the man ministering in the power of the Holy Spirit, constantly people coming upon him and he is wore out.

You see, you can't understand these things if you only think of him as God and you don't realize he was God who became man and ministered and walked on this earth as a man filled with the Holy Spirit.

Now, it says here that, "When evening came, after the sun had set..."<sup>8</sup> Now the sun in Israel doesn't set at the same time it does here. It didn't set at midnight. It set some time probably around six. So right after, around six o'clock, after a full day of ministry people start coming in. They start coming in. They start coming in.

Now we have these... you know, a lot of people's perception of conception... their idea of the exodus doesn't come from the Bible, but from Cecil B DeMille's *Ten Commandments* movie. Most of us, our ideas of the ministry of Jesus comes from films about Jesus, you know, television, Hollywood, make believe things. You know, we picture Jesus just kind of slowly walking through and touching people and everything just kind of blessed, you know.

Listen. I have got a good idea of what is going on here. Living in Peru we were one time up in the mountains and there were over 1000 people gathered, mountain men, mountain women, suffering in many, many ways, no doctor anywhere, none of them ever have an opportunity to see a doctor or get medicine or anything else. And I had brought with me a

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<sup>7</sup> Mark 1:32-34.

<sup>8</sup> Mark 1:32.

dear friend of mine who was a medical doctor. Now he didn't have surgery facilities. He didn't have a lot of medicine. He just had some ointments and some antibiotics and other things.

When they discovered that there was a doctor in the vicinity, they went wild. Now, these were good people, people who love the Lord. But they stood in line all day and all night. They didn't think the doctor needs to sleep because they had a child that was sick and this was their one opportunity to maybe see a doctor.

Day and night for three days they clamored at the door. My brother, Mike Martin, he couldn't even get sleep. He was wore out. And he kept telling them, "I don't have anything but some ointment, some antibiotics. I can't heal you."

They didn't care. They didn't listen. It wasn't because they were bad. They were driven by need. Pray to God that you are never driven that way.

So when Christ was here they were at the door and they weren't satisfied. Many of them were demanding and yelling. Hey, because they were desperate, because they had only one hope and here he is. And I can guarantee you that what started at around six o'clock in the evening didn't come to an end at 10 or 11 or 12.

As a matter of fact, when you get down here and it says in verse 35, "In the early morning, while it was still dark..."<sup>9</sup> What does that mean? It seems like Jesus didn't sleep because he ministered to these people all throughout the night and now while it is still dark he makes his way out. And to me it almost has to seem supernatural that he was able to do that. How did he get through all those people?

Now, you and I, no human being can sustain a life of every day ministering this way. So I am not trying to tell you you need to minister day and night. What I am telling you is this. In this instance, Christ ministered day and night, was totally wore out and when he finished ministering early in the morning at midnight or whenever it occurred, there were still people who were needy, still people who were not healed, still people clamoring.

But look what he did. Look what he did.

"In the early morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house, and went away to a secluded place, and was praying there."<sup>10</sup>

It is one thing Jesus Chris never told his disciples in frustration. He never told them, "Man, I am just so busy and there are so many needs. I don't have time to pray. There is just so many things clamoring at me that I don't have time to pray."

He never said that, because he knew even though he was the Son of God he submitted himself to the will of the Father and he only did what he saw his Father doing and he did

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<sup>9</sup> Mark 1:35.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

what he did in the power of the Holy Spirit. And in that way we can surely identify because he identified with us.

You can do nothing except what you see the Father doing. And you can do nothing except by the power of the Holy Spirit. And your relationship, intimate relationship with God is absolutely vital, absolutely essential to any type of ministry you may think about doing.

The Son of God, it seems, could not live without communion, secret prayer, being alone with God. But those of us who are much stronger, of course, can get away without such things.

Just look at this. His life of prayer. And it is amazing. It goes, “In the early morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house, and went away to a secluded place, and was praying there.”<sup>11</sup>

When I was first called into the ministry the pastor that was over me in Austin, Texas who I, to this day, admire and respect, he called me into his office. Till today I have hardly met a man with such the power of God on his life. He called me into his office and he said, “So, God has called you into the ministry?”

Trembling I said, “Yes, Pastor Weaver.”

And he goes... he turned around and looked at me and he said, “Boy, can you be alone?”

That’s all he said to me. And I was like I didn’t really understand. I thought me meant if I preached the truth I am going to be alone because everybody hates me. Then I came to understand this is what he meant.

Can you be alone with God?

One of the problems I see, especially with young men is they run in bachelor groups. They run in groups. They are always hanging out together.

Now there is nothing wrong with that, wonderful fellowship, unity, go out together, preach, whatever. But the problem is they are always together, but they are never alone with God. Can you be alone? Can you be alone with God?

My wife knows that although I love her and we have a wonderful relationship, she knows she can’t go with me to the place I have to go and where I have to go daily she does not go with me. Now I pray with my wife. I study the Bible with my wife, but she cannot go with me where I have to go. I have to go and be with the Lord alone.

When her husband gets that far away look in his eye, she knows he is going to leave. He has got to go.

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid.



People in Peru used to call my wife the cherubim or the seraphim and in Spanish [?] because they said she would stand in front of my door where I prayed with a flaming sword and if anyone tried to get through that door she would cut their head off.

They would call. “We need to talk to [?]. We need to talk to brother Paul.”

“Sorry, you can’t.”

“Well, why not?”

“He is alone.”

Everything you are in public is formed by what you are in private. You can stand before any man if you stand before God. And to walk in the power of the Holy Spirit, not like these silly little evangelists that come in and have their healing lines and people falling down and all of the other circus and blasphemy that goes on. I am talking about really the power of the Holy Spirit, not some kind of circus show for money.

Like I have said, so many people say the Spirit of God is here.

No he is not, because if he was you would be dead.

We must be men filled with the Holy Spirit. We must be men who seek God. And let me tell you something. There is a big difference—and I want to point it out to you and it will probably get me in trouble if this goes on to You Tube—but it is this. There is a sense in which we look at Ephesians five, we look at Colossians 3:16-17 and we do understand that there is a direct relationship between the Word of God and it dwelling in our heart and the fulness of the Holy Spirit working through us. But there is another sense that if you are just a man who is sitting there meditating upon Scripture and thinking that because you are doing that you are going to be filled with Holy Spirit and have everything you need for the ministry you are wrong. You must go to God and cry out for greater and greater manifestations of his power in your life to carry out the task that he has given you. You must have that. You must go to him. It is an encounter with God.

Yes, founded upon his Word. Yes, everything God does with you in prayer must be conformed to his Word. But seeking God is more than just simply having a good Bible study. It is crying out to meet with the living God. It is waiting at his door step and rising up and not just simply believing by faith that he has done something to you. It is rising up and knowing that he has done something to you.

We have to be men, but not men like John Wayne or John Claude Vondom, not men strong in the flesh and strong in personality and strong in their presence and strong in their words, no, men strong, strengthened in the Holy Spirit.

The battle is horrifying. To think that you are going to oppose principalities and powers and might and dominions, you are going to oppose the ancient serpent. You are going to go down into the well and fight hell itself. You are not going to do that in your physical strength. You are going to do that in the power of the Holy Spirit.

And do you know what is so sad today? What is so sad? It is that it is so hard to speak about these things. And do you know why? Because of all the corruption and that ludicrous activity of many, many groups that consider themselves groups filled with the Spirit when they are not filled with Spirit. They may be filled with a spirit, but it is not holy because whatever they are filled with causes them to do things that contradict everything we know about Scripture and the fruit of the Spirit.

I am talking about power, not to fall down on the ground and shake like a worm, not power to claim a Mercedes Benz, not power to say you healed somebody when, in fact, he didn't get healed. I am talking about the power to live the Christian life, the power to walk in sacrificial love, the power to pray down strongholds, the power to preach the gospel. That is what I am talking about. That is what we need.

We can be men and women transformed, transformed.

Now there is a sense and when we talk about the Holy Spirit, there is a sense in which we need to see that in two categories. There is the idea of the fruit of the Holy Spirit in a believer's life, dealing with character. There is also the... in the same venue there is also this idea of progressive sanctification, that we grow more and more in Christ's likeness and we submit more and more to the Word of God and we walk more and more in step with the Holy Spirit. All that is true. It is progressive. It grows. It is something that happens every day that we work at.

But there is also another sense in the power of the Holy Spirit for ministry, that the ministry you have to do, you cannot do except in the power of the Holy Spirit. And you need to be crying out, "Oh God, clothe me from on high. Clothe me. Fill me."

Look at... for a moment just look at the book of Luke. Look at the last chapter. Again he says in the book of Luke 24 verse 49, "And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."<sup>12</sup>

Now, many people simply relegate that to a one time event, the day of Pentecost that the Spirit came. Well, in the day of Pentecost the Spirit did come. But he said whenever this thing happened to you, when this happens to you, disciples, you will be clothed with power from on high.

Now let me ask you a question. In your ministry is there ever a sense as you minister that you are clothed with power from on high, that you sense in which I am not even the same man, that a pattern... I am not talking about emotion. I am not talking about anger. I am

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<sup>12</sup> Luke 24:49.

talking about simply this. You recognize that you have been clothed with power from on high. It is not proud to say that. It is something that is promised to us. It is.

Listen. Spurgeon believed this. Martin Lloyd Jones believed this. The saints down through the ages have believed this. What?

Yes, if we have been converted, if we are truly Christians we are indwelt with the Holy Spirit. And, no, at our conversion we don't get part of him or half of him and, no, we don't need a second blessing or this or that. That is not what I am talking about. We, with the moment of our conversion we are regenerated by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit indwells in us, but the same Bible says we should be asking constantly for greater and greater manifestations of his power in our life, less and less of us, more and more of him.

And there can be times, my dear friend, when you are crying out to God. There can be times in ministry according to the sovereign providence of God when God can endue you with power for ministry. That is what you need.

We have so many scribes running around, brilliant men and God bless the Lord for them, but clothed with power from on high?

Just because you can cross every T and dot every I theologically doesn't mean you are clothed with power from on high or you are ministering in the power of the Holy Spirit. And just because you talk about the Spirit or claim things from the Spirit doesn't mean that you are powered with the Holy Spirit.

To dwell with God... We talk about planting churches. You can't plant churches in this country. The devil has an iron wall around this country 20 miles thick with no doors. You think you are going to knock that down? You are going to knock yourself out is what you are going to do. I don't care how long you beat up against that wall, it is not coming down. But in the power of the Holy Spirit it would be like some dry grass being put over a blazing fire.

This is so important. And yet it is so disdained today. People are afraid. Why? Because of the abuses, because of the abuses.

Those of you who really enjoy theology, those of you who really want to know the truth, be careful about this one thing, that just because in the name of the Spirit so many wrong, very wrong men are doing all sorts of horrible things in the name of the Spirit, don't you reject the work of the Spirit because you don't want to be like them. The true work of the Spirit has nothing to do with what those men do. But there is a work of the Spirit. There is a tarrying and being alone with God.

Young men, you get caught up in so many things, theology, caught up in evangelism, caught up in street preaching, caught up in doing all these things. I wish you would get caught up in your closet. I wish you would go into your closet and dwell there, cry out to God, meet with him. He is a living God.

I am so tired of it. I actually hear people. I have heard this. Oh, I wish I lived... I mean I have heard believers say this. Oh, I wish I lived back in the times of the old covenant when God really manifested himself.

What? The end of the ages is come upon us. We live in the days of the Messiah. These are the last days when the Spirit of God is poured out on all flesh. And yet God doesn't move. God doesn't speak. But we do have this book.

No living God, no guidance, no power, a book.

Now, please do not think I am trying to say anything against the Word of God. The Word of God is our standard. Without the Word of God we have nothing. Everything that happens in our lives must conform to the Word of God, but if you take Christianity and you simply reduce it down to propositional truth in a book, you have missed the point. You have done just what the Pharisees had done. They did not understand the power of God. He is a living God and you must know him. You must seek him out.

It is so amazing. You know, you talk about the work in China and the work in different places in Asia where God seems to be really, really moving. My desire for them is that they would become more theologically correct, that they would become sound and strong in theology because it is an immature church who doesn't have a strong theology. But at the same time isn't it amazing, some little Chinese woman who practically doesn't even have the Scriptures, but cries out to God for hours a day and then rises up and God uses her more than 25 theologians.

Now I am not saying it is good that she be here without the Scripture or that she not have a sound theology or that she at least not have, I mean, a mature theology. But what I am saying is she has got God. And God has her. She is depending upon him. She is crying out to him.

Just look at even the reform... Look at Luther. Read about his praying. He was a man of prayer. Was it not Luther who said, "I have got so much to do today I will never get done unless I pray at least three hours?"

Jonathan Edwards, possibly the greatest theologian that at least our country has ever produced, some say in the world, theologian philosopher, hardly a more brilliant man, was a man of prayer.

David Brainerd, the great missionary among the Indians. We don't hear about him being the greatest of all preachers. We don't hear about him being the greatest of all theologians. But read his diary and find out how he prayed.

We have not because we ask not.

What is this mountain? Jesus said if you had faith it would cast the thing into the sea.

What is this wall that is standing in front of you? Some Jericho that can't be brought down by the power of God? But you have not because you ask not.

And any of you, you try to start something here, you are just going to get exhausted and God is going to exhaust you until you give up and you go to him. You run to him, you cry out to him.

I want us to look for a minute at the book of Luke chapter 18. In order to do something here in Denmark you think you need more knowledge. You have already got more knowledge than you will be able to live out in a lifetime. Now you do need knowledge and you do need theology and you do need Scripture, but you need to be empowered. You need to pray.

Look at Luke 18:1. "Now He was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart."<sup>13</sup>

You know what? No one has a problem with some aspects of prayer. No one has a problem beginning to pray or praying once for anything. It is a rather easy thing to do. The difficult thing to do is to endure in prayer without losing heart.

Now whenever I use the word like lose heart you have, possibly, this picture of a person who is just crying out to God faithfully and God doesn't answer their prayers and they just lose heart, like a victim. No, they are rebellious is what they are. They are not believing their God. Lose heart? Because God didn't do something? Is God not sovereign? Is God not all wise? Keep praying.

You say, "Well, how long?"

Well, I can just tell you the way I do it. Pray until God answers, until he either answers the thing or begins to take the desire away. Just pray.

You endure in prayer. You do not let him go. God delights in people who are so bold as to take him at his promises. He delights in that. Someone grabs a hold, cries out, "Son of David, have mercy on us."

"Be quiet."

They wouldn't be quiet those blind men.

You grab a hold of the horns of the altar and 1000 men can't pull you away.

"Get out of here."

"I will not."

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<sup>13</sup> Luke 18:1.

“Let go of me.”

“I won’t let go of you until you bless me.”

There is nothing that can’t be tore down through prayer, nothing. There is nothing that can’t be built up through prayer, nothing.

You want to learn to be an accurate, useful minister for God? Then learn to pray. Learn to pray.

Now he says in verse two, “Saying, "In a certain city there was a judge who did not fear God and did not respect man.”<sup>14</sup> That is pretty common.

“There was a widow in that city, and she kept coming to him, saying, ‘Give me legal protection from my opponent.’”<sup>15</sup>

Now she is a widow. That does not... see, when we hear she was a widow we think, well, being a widow that would cause the, you know, judge to be more likely to have pity on her because she is a widow. Just the opposite. She is a widow. She has no economic, political or social power. She has nothing. It would be like a dog coming to his door.

“Give me legal protection from my opponent.”<sup>16</sup>

Isn’t it amazing that he would at least use this example. He doesn’t say that the widow says, “Help me get money from someone who owes me.” No, he says, “Give me legal protection from my opponent.”<sup>17</sup>

Do you have an opponent? Do you have someone fighting against you? You do. Principalities and powers and mights and dominions fighting against the entrance of the gospel into this place, fighting against the beginning of a church, fighting against everything that is good and godly and wise and holy and virtuous and excellent. You have an opponent.

You go to God and you say this, “Give me legal protection from my opponent.”

For a while he was unwilling; but afterward he said to himself, “Even though I do not fear God nor respect man, yet because this widow bothers me, I will give her legal protection, otherwise by continually coming she will wear me out.”<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Luke 18:2.

<sup>15</sup> Luke 18:3.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Luke 18:4-5.

I wish some of you would set it upon yourself to wear God out, to grab a hold of God and wear him out.

You say, “Ah, that’s speech. I don’t like that kind of speech.”

I know you don’t. You are so proper you can’t pray. Learn to love this kind of speech. Bold men who are going to God and believe him because God delights in such things. He is the one saying this here.

I had... I remember one time up in the mountains. I will never forget this. You talk about a teaching on prayer. I had taken several... I had written... it is a workbook and it is just... it is a workbook for new believers. And I had taken a whole bunch of them up into the mountains, but I was going to give several to each pastor. They were for the pastors. The pastors needed them and then the pastors would take them and distribute them.

Well, when I got up there and was handing out there books, I had one left and I was kind of teaching from and this new believer, young guy who was probably about 17 or 18, kind of tall for a Peruvian. I will never forget. And he said, “Brother Paul, is that your last book?”

I said, “Yes.”

He goes, “Can I have it?”

It was like the first day, first morning. And I said, “No.” I said, “I am going to teach.”

“After you are through teaching with that book, can I have it?”

I said, “No. This is the for the pastors. I am sorry, but I brought these for the pastors and I will give this last one to one of the pastors.”

“But the pastors already have books.”

“Yes, and I am going to give them one more.”

“Well, can I have the book?”

I mean, every time I walked outside of that adobe hut to go teach he followed me. And finally before even the conference was over, I just gave him the book and asked the pastor, “Give me one of the books I gave you to teach from because I can’t stand this any longer. I am going to punch him and lose my testimony. Something is going to happen. Take the book.”

He literally wore me out. I am not kidding. I am not making this up. It really happened. And the Lord used it to teach me about prayer. He literally followed me. If I went to the bathroom I felt like he was behind me. He went everywhere I went.

“I need the book. I need the book. I need the book.”

It was unbelievable. I have never seen such tenacity.

You know, I read this. Jim Ellis said this. I think he said he was quoting a friend. But it is going to be one of those things that stick with me the rest of our life. God delights in vindicating the confidence of his children. God delights in vindicating the confidence of his children.

And I like to say God delights in vindicating even the smallest confidence of his children.

So we have this evil judge. Now God is not giving us this parable to somehow identify himself with this evil judge, not at all. It is basically the same thing as this.

“If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him!”<sup>19</sup>

Ok? So what he is saying here... he is not saying that he is like an evil judge. He is saying if an evil judge who neither fears God nor cares about people will answer someone who continues on and continues on, how much more will your heavenly Father listen to your prayers?

People ask me sometimes. They go, “Well, why doesn’t God just answer the prayer I mean instead of maybe you having to endure in prayer?”

Now, I don’t want to seem trite or rude, but a person who asks that question has never prayed very long and had an answer, had a prayer answered. I don’t know exactly why God does it. I know it changes us. I know that he has his time. But there is one thing that will sustain me in prayer and that is if you have ever endured in prayer over a person’s soul, or over something that needed to be advanced in the kingdom and you endured, when it finally came to completion, when God finally answered, the joy was joy unspeakable because you knew he had answered prayer.

I mean, you knew you had dialoged with God. You knew this is not just some vain religious exercise. I was before him daily and he has responded. You have joy not only because of that because it confirms once again that he is a God who speaks and a God who hears, a God who acts.

So he says,

“Yet because this widow bothers me, I will give her legal protection, otherwise by continually coming she will wear me out.”

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<sup>19</sup> Matthew 7:11.



And the Lord said, "Hear what the unrighteous judge said; now, will not God bring about justice for His elect who cry to Him day and night"<sup>20</sup>

But look at day and night.

The idea here, the language is not they pray in the morning and they pray at night for the matter. That is not what he is saying. Day and night is a summary of all day just crying out to God.

Now let me stop here for just a second and talk to you about prayer, true prayer and true fasting. I have many times sat down and made prayer lists and prayer lists are good. I have a real general prayer list that just brings things to mind. But I have tried to make lists of things. You know, these are things that need to be done or must be done or I just know that it is right to ask for these things and I have tried to endure in it and I haven't been able to do it.

Prayer doesn't exist apart from, first, fellowship with God, being in his Word and just communing with him, ok? Prayer is impossible apart from a right heart.

Now, what do I mean by that? In communing with God through his Word and just communing with him in conversation and his Word, becoming more and more conformed, his desires becoming yours, his passion becoming your passion.

Now, so that the things of God become very important to you and then as the things of God become very, very important to you, specific things will start being given to you, let's say. And here is kind of how it works.

I used this illustration the other day. Let's say that I am going to go on a hunting trip. Now, remember, I am from America. I am uncivilized. I do those kind of things. All right. I am going to go on a hunting trip that I have literally been thinking about going on for a year. Man, I am going on this hunting trip. Going to hunt a bear. I am going to get me a bear, all right?

I am just all excited about it. I am going to Canada and I am going to kill me a big old bear and we are going to have bear meat for an entire year. All right. I am going to Canada. I am excited.

Talk about it every day. My wife has built a little room and lives outside the house just because she can't stand me talking about it. I talk it about it so much. I am going to Canada to hunt a bear.

Now, the day that I am leaving, I am packing my car. I have go the car packed. I am getting ready to get in. I turn around to say good bye to my family, my wife and my three children. And right then my oldest boy Ian goes, "Daddy, my head, my head," and he falls over in the yard.

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<sup>20</sup> Luke 18:5-7.

Now at that moment am I going to do this? Dang, now I can't go to Canada. I mean, I have been waiting all year to go to Canada and now I can't go because he has fallen over in the grass unconscious. Is that what I am going to do?

No. Here is what is going to happen. Everything I had thought for a year about going to Canada, what I had been dreaming about, is going to totally disappear. I am not even going to think about Canada any longer. I am not even going to think about going hunting. It is so far removed from me. All I can think about is whatever has got to be done. My little boy is laying in the grass unconscious.

The passion I have for the well being of my little boy totally eclipsed every other passion that I had, especially the passion for going to Canada and hunting. It consumed everything else. Everything else disappeared from my view and the only thing I could think about was that.

Now, in a way that has a lot to do with prayer and fasting, especially fasting. You don't say, "Well, I am going to fast four days because, well, I just need to fast for four days."

It is when you are communing with God and the matters that are important to God become important to you. And as you are communing and praying with him, sometimes God is going to lay certain things upon your heart, certain burdens and passions upon your heart and you are going to come to the point where you are going to say to yourself, "I can't breathe unless this happens."

Now if while my boy was laying on the ground unconscious someone came up to me and said, "Hey, Paul, don't worry about that. We'll take care of him. You just go to Canada and go hunting," my response would be, "Are you sick? I am not going to Canada. What's wrong with you? I don't want Canada."

Or someone drives by and goes, "Hey, Paul, look, we are going to go eat this new pizza place. It is really good. You want to come?"

"Get away from me. I don't want pizza. I don't want to go to Canada. I don't want to eat. I don't want to drink. I don't want to watch television. I have got to get my boy to the hospital."

Do you see that? Everything has been eclipsed, hasn't it, by this passion.

You say, "Well, that never happens to me."

Maybe you are not communing with God as you ought to be.

Communing with God.

And he goes on and he says...

Now I am going to read verse eight and I am going to read it again. He says, “I tell you that He will bring about justice for them quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?”<sup>21</sup>

Now, let me read it the way I think it will communicate the most truth to you. It says in verse six, “And the Lord said...”<sup>22</sup> So the Lord Jesus Christ is speaking and he is speaking to his disciples, ok?

Now, I want you to just look up here. Just look. Jesus says, after giving them this illustration, this parable, he goes like this.

“Now, listen, hey, listen to me. Listen what the unrighteous judge says. Now will not God...’ Now listen to me. This is a promise. Will not God bring about justice for his elect who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? I tell you he will bring about justice for them quickly. Really, he will. But then, again, who among you is even going to believe what I am saying? When the Son of Man returns, will he find anybody believing this stuff, believing what I am telling you?”

Do you see that? Look at that, however. I mean, this glorious promise and then he comes, “However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?”<sup>23</sup>

Will he find anybody taking this?

Do you know what is amazing? You know, you hear about Spurgeon, you know, he is the prince of preachers. And I have to say above all the preachers in the world I love to read Spurgeon, right up there... well, right up there beside him is my beloved Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, but they are both there.

But do you know that Spurgeon, if you read enough of his sermons he was a man of prayer. He prayed. He really was a man of prayer.

Hudson Taylor, man, the great missionary, Hudson Taylor. Did you know he was a man of prayer?

George Mueller, well, we don’t even have to talk about that, do we? He was a man of prayer.

I have looked down through the ages as much as my limited ability I can. I am not a great reader. I can’t consume books, but just at the little that I have looked at I have seen men of God and women of God that have been mightily used of God, but I have... I am hard pressed to find a common denominator, really, because I can tell you this. They are not all reformed. They are not all in one certain camp. They are very, very different. Some

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<sup>21</sup> Luke 18:8.

<sup>22</sup> Luke 18:6.

<sup>23</sup> Luke 18:8.

of them are different, some in their theology, now, not from the basic historical doctrines of Christianity. They weren't heretics at all, but they were very, very... in very, very different camps theologically. Also they were very, very different in their personality. Some of them were rather bold to the point of even just being, sometimes kind of rude. Others were so humble you would think they were a church mouse. Some of them lived by their own will they lived basically in poverty giving everything away. Some of the others rode around in nice carriages.

So what is the common denominator in their usefulness? I have found one common denominator. Prayer or maybe it would be better to say a devotion to Christ manifested in prayer. Prayer.

Albert Schweitzer came to a group of young seminary students one time and, yes, he was very liberal, very, very liberal, doubted many of the historic doctrines of the faith and I don't have much to say for him spiritually, but he came to a group of seminary students and he said one time, "I don't know what you will become, but I know that the happiest among you will be the greatest servants."

He was right there. I could use the same statement. I don't know what you will become and I do not know what your giftings are, but I can tell you this. The most useful servant will be the one who is devoted to Christ in prayer.

I mean... and I want to encourage you, if you can, to be very, very careful. Some of you need to get into some systematic theology books and you need to study theology. You do. Some of you need to read books like George Mueller's autobiography. You need to read Hudson Taylor's spiritual secret. You need to read the secret life of prayer. You need to read about a praying hide of India. And it will encourage you to pray more, to pray more, not by the strength of your arm, not by the power of your intellect, but by his Spirit, by his Spirit.

You know that is the whole purpose of trials. It is conformity to the image of Christ, but the purpose of trials to exhaust your strength, to bring things in your life that it is humanly impossible to overcome so that you will draw on his strength. He is... he cannot be exhausted. Do you realize that? His bounty, his treasury, his power, his virtue, his excellency, his glory, it cannot be exhausted.

What are you, oh mountain, before me? Be cast in to the sea.

You see.

All right, well, let's pray.

*Father, please help us, please. Lord, throw upon us your yoke and the joyful burden of communion with God in Jesus' name. Amen.*

Let me say one other thing that came to mind. For you guys, ministers and things. I make a distinction between... and I know other people don't. Some people think this is trite. But I make a distinction between studying with my boots on, reading the Bible with my boots on and reading the Bible with my boots off. And I want you to think about this at least. When we study the Scriptures, when you study the Scriptures don't kid yourself. If you think it is hard work it is because it is hard work. There are some things that you must wrestle with, you must look at the grammar, you must look at commentaries and you must figure out what this is saying.

You must pray. You must figure out what it is saying. That is hard work. If that is all your relationship is to the Scriptures, you are going to die on the vine. You are going to die.

But there is once you have come to grips with something of the meaning of the text, that you worked through it and you have got basically the answers of how this thing lines up and you are in agreement with other godly men and women, yes, this is what this text means. You have only done a little part of what you need to be doing.

You need to enjoy the text.

George Mueller talked about reading through Scripture until his heart was warmed.

You say, "That is subjective."

Well, a lot of things are.

Until his heart was warmed.

One of the things that you have to be so careful of losing is our meditation upon Scripture. To meditate upon it, to think upon it, to draw from it, to read it and maybe on your knees over and over, to read it as a prayer, to cry out to God, use this to transform me, show me something, illuminate. It is more than grammar. It is more than a series of truths, but just to commune in silence.

You know, very few people can sit still, but just to commune, to listen, to listen.

There is a poem that I really, really like. It talks about Jesus coming in from the wilderness. And going to the temple. And it says, "Hungry to worship, to join in the praise." That's the way it talks about it. It says, "Well, let me start at the beginning."

Well, "Hungry to worship and join in the praise."

So he is marching himself to Jerusalem. And he comes into the temple and it says, "Shock met with anger that burned on his face as he entered the wasteland of that barren place." And then it goes on to talk about how he formed cords and he went and beat out the money changers. And then it says this, his favorite part of the poem for me.

It says, “The noise and confusion gave way to his Word, at last sacred silence, so God could be heard.”

Do you know that sacred silence?

In the morning just simply sitting there or kneeling there with that text and just pondering it, thinking about it, chewing upon it and doing so as though Christ were sitting across the table from you doing it in communion with him, talking to him about it, asking him to teach you.

And then what happens eventually is that attitude at that table becomes sort of a living reality through the day.

I find it amazing, young men, that the Bible talks about studying to show yourself approved. But, you know, it doesn't talk about studying a lot. I don't mean... it doesn't talk a lot about studying. You should study a lot, but it doesn't talk a lot about it.

Do you know what it talks more about? Memorization and meditation. Memorization and mediation. You look up how many times it says guarding the Word in your heart, the Word of Christ dwell in you richly, about meditating.

But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. He will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, Which yields its fruit in its season And its leaf does not wither; And in whatever he does, he prospers.<sup>24</sup>

To have that Word in you, are you memorizing Scripture? And are you carrying that Scripture with you, meditating upon it? It is almost like a cow that has four stomachs. I know it is kind of gross, but he chews the grass up, swallows it down and regurgitates it up again, chews it again, swallows it down, regurgitates it up again. That is kind of a gross, but a really good illustration of meditation. You are taking it down. You are feeding upon it. You are chewing on it. You are getting to know.

But it is to do it in communion with him, not independently of him, but in communion. And then you will begin to see that you will have desires that are his desires. And your prayer will be more of things you have gained from communion with him. And then you can even get to the point where you are sort of strange in the sense that someone will look you in the eye and realize, “Man, that guy is a million miles from here right now.”

And you are farther than that. You are in communion with God.

Now, in the heavenlies that is where you... I would like for you to think of it this way, that you live your life now in the courts of God, that you are always in his presence. You live your life in the courts of God. Like the prophet said, “The God before whom I stand.”

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<sup>24</sup> Psalm 2:2-3.

You may be in this room, but you are in communion with God. You may be in this room, but this room isn't the big reality for you. The big reality for you is God in his presence. Be with him.

All right, well, we are finished. Amen.