



Open Walker Ministries

~ Thought For The Day ~

~gathering from the 4 winds~

“come just as you are”

Refresh, Restore, Rebuild = Healing



Vol. 26 Issue 482

Aug. 15, 2012

www.chapel-flock.com

Worship Music

Prayer

Lord, I am so glad You don't choose only the intellectually brilliant. You are looking for anyone who has a heart to be used by You. Well, that's me, Lord. I want You to use me. I offer You everything I have—my good points, my weak points, my gifts, my talents, and everything else that I am. I want You to use me for Your glory. I've told You before, but today I'm telling You again that I want You to take my life and do something wonderful with me, make the best that You want me to be, lead me and guide me, teach me, and convict me when necessary, change me into exactly what You want, in Jesus' name. Amen....

Sparkling Gems from the Greek.

[Fill Me Up God-
Jesus Culture](#)

[Spirit Breakout-
Jesus Culture](#)

[Pursuit-Jesus Culture](#)

[Walk With Me-Jesus
Culture-Kim Walker](#)

Video's / New Information/ Prayer Requests

[“What's So Great About Jesus” Francis Chan](#)

Radio Stations

[KWVE ...Calvary Chapel](#)

[KLOV](#)

Bible Study Sites

[Chuck Smith
Through The Bible](#)

[Bob Coy/Teachings](#)

[Mike MacIntosh](#)

[Jon Courson](#)

[Biblos.com](#)

[Billy Graham](#)

[Charles Stanley](#)

[David Wilkerson](#)

[Greg Laurie](#)

[Virtue for Women-
Cathe Laurie](#)

If you have a prayer request...please e-mail it to us so we can pray for you...or a person.....

chapel-flock@sbcglobal.net

1 WHEN ALL the kings beyond the Jordan in the hill country and in the lowland and all along the coast of the Great [Mediterranean] Sea toward Lebanon, the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites heard this, 2 They gathered together with one accord to fight Joshua and Israel. 3 But when the people of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and Ai, 4 They worked cunningly, and went pretending to be ambassadors and took [provisions and] old sacks on their donkeys and wineskins, old, torn, and mended, 5 And old and patched shoes on their feet and wearing old garments; and all their supply of food was dry and moldy. 6 And they went to Joshua in the camp at Gilgal and said to him and the men of Israel, We have come from a far country; so now, make a covenant with us. 7 But the men of Israel said to the Hivites, Perhaps you live among us; how then can we make a covenant with you? 8 They said to Joshua, We are your servants. And Joshua said to them, Who are you? From where have you come? 9 They said to him, From a very far country your servants have come because of the name of the Lord your God. For we have heard the fame of Him, and all that He did in Egypt, 10 And all that He did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon king of Heshbon, and to Og king of Bashan, who lived in Ashtaroth. 11 So our elders and all the residents of our country said to us, Take provisions for the journey and go to meet [the Israelites] and say to them, We are your servants; and now make a covenant with us. 12 This our bread we took hot for our provision out of our houses on the day we set out to go to you; but now behold, it is dry and has become moldy. 13 These wineskins (bottles) which we filled were new, and behold, they are torn; and our garments and our shoes have become old because of the very long journey. 14 So the [Israelite] men partook of their food and did not consult the Lord. 15 Joshua made peace with them, covenanting with them to let them live, and the assembly's leaders swore to them. 16 Then three days after they had made a covenant with [the strangers, the Israelites] heard that they were their neighbors and that they dwelt among them. 17 And the Israelites set out and came to their cities on the third day. Now their cities were Gibeon, Chephirah, Beeroth, and Kiriath-jearim. 18 But the Israelites did not slay them, because the leaders of the assembly had sworn to them by the Lord, the God of Israel, [to spare them]. And all the assembly murmured against the leaders. 19 But all the leaders said to all the assembly, We have sworn to them by the Lord, the God of Israel, so now we may not touch them. 20 This we will do to them: we will let them live, lest wrath be upon us because of the oath which we swore to them. 21 And the leaders said to them, Let them live [and be our slaves]. So they became hewers of wood and drawers of water for all the assembly, just as the leaders had said of them. 22 Joshua called the men and said, Why did you deceive us, saying, We live very far from you, when you dwell among us? 23 Now therefore you are cursed, and of you there shall always be slaves, hewers of wood and drawers of water for the house of my God. 24 They answered Joshua, Because it was surely told your servants that the Lord your God commanded His servant Moses to give you all the land and to destroy all the land's inhabitants from before you. So we feared greatly for our lives because of you, and have done this thing. 25 And now, behold, we are in your hand; do as it seems good and right in your sight to do to us. 26 So he did to them, and delivered them out of the hand of the Israelites, so that they did not kill them. 27 But Joshua then made them hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation and for the altar of the Lord, to this day, in the place which He should choose.

←————→
This time shall we turn to the book of Joshua, chapter nine as we begin our study this evening.

Now the children of Israel had conquered Jericho and Ai, which were strong cities. The kings that were in the land of Canaan where they were coming, felt that their only hope of stopping this migration of these people into the land would be by a combined effort, pooling all of their armies, all of their resources in one massive assault against Israel. Now this strategy was really prompted by the fact that the Gibeonites, which did cover an area of several cities, had determined that their only hope of survival was by a peace treaty.

So he starts out the ninth chapter, the first three verses talking about the kings that were getting together to present a united front against this invasion. Lest they would just be picked off kingdom by kingdom, they felt that they should all get together. Then, beginning with verse four, they tell of this Gibeonite conspiracy to develop a peace treaty with the Israelites as they were coming into the land.

Now the Gibeonites had heard of how God had delivered these people out of Egypt, and how He had destroyed the Egyptians. They had heard of how the kings of Og and Sihon, of their kingdoms on the other side of Jordan, had been conquered by Israel. They heard, of course, that Jericho had fallen, that Ai had fallen. So they determined that their best course of action was to make a peace treaty. However, they also knew that these people that were coming into the land, the Israelites, had no intention of making any peace treaties with the inhabitants of the land. For they were under the orders of God to utterly drive out all of the inhabitants of the land, to destroy, to drive out, not to make any covenant with them.

Deuteronomy, chapter seven, God commands them not to make any covenant with those in the land. So they knew that their only hope of making a covenant was by a disguise which they perpetrated. They got some fellows who put on some old, ragged clothes, old clodded shoes, they had some old wine skins that were falling to pieces, that they bound up. They had some dry moldy bread. So they came to the camp of Israel, and they said that, "We have come a long journey. But the fame of your God has spread through the world, and we've come to make peace with you."

They said, "How do we know that you're not our neighbors?" They said, "Oh, listen when we left home this bread was hot in our hands, and now look at it, it's all dry and moldy. That's how far we've come. Our shoes were new on our feet, but look how ragged they are, and we've really come a long way."

So the children of Israel took of their victuals, [and inquired not of the Lord,] or sought not to counsel from the mouth of the Lord (Jos 9:14).

And they made this covenant or peace treaty with the Gibeonites, and they swore unto them by God that they would have sort of a mutual defense pact that they would be allied together. (Through The Bible C-2000 Series; 1979-1986; Chuck Smith; OT and NT; Commentaries)

So as the children of Israel moved on from Ai, they started coming into the area of the kingdom of the Gibeonites, these cities. So as they started to deploy the troops to attack the cities, the men said, "Oh no, no you can't do that."

They said, "What do you mean?"

They said, "We've just made a pact with you, and you've sworn to us by God that you would not attack us." So they honored the pact that they had made. They realized that they had been deceived. But they honored the pact that they had made with the Gibeonites; however, the people began to murmur against Joshua because of his strategic blunder.

It is interesting to note that this is really the second mistake that Joshua made as a leader. The first mistake was in the case of Ai where they sent up only a few thousand troops, and the men of Ai came out against them and defeated them. Now how that when Joshua cried unto the Lord, the Lord told him the reason for the defeat was because of the sin that was in the camp. That one of the children of Israel had taken of the accursed thing out of the spoils of Jericho, which were all to go to God. So Joshua then sought the Lord, got rid of the sin, and the Lord directed them then on how the conquest of Ai should go.

Now the problem with Ai was his failure to pray and seek counsel from God before they deployed the troops to attack the city. The same problem existed here. It was a failure to pray and inquire of God concerning the Gibeonites. They just looked at the outward circumstances. They saw the dry, moldy bread and the ragged clothes, and they just were deceived.

Now had they sought counsel from God, had he come to Eleazar the high priest and inquired of the Lord concerning these people, the Lord would've shown to them that these people were fakes. They would've realized that these men were just seeking to disguise themselves as having come on a long journey. But in reality they were fakes, but the Lord would've revealed that. They inquired not of the Lord. Their mistake was that of failure to seek God's counsel. It got them into an ungodly alliance.

How many times we found ourselves in ungodly situations because we failed to seek God first. Oh, for sure when we get into these conditions, then we seek God like everything. But if we would only seek God first, we could be spared so many of these tragic experiences that we encounter in life. So the failure to seek God's guidance led them into this alliance with the Gibeonites.

But having once made it, they honored it. However, Joshua called them and said, "All right you guys why did you deceive us like this?"

They said, "Hey, we knew that God was with you, that God was turning the land over to you, and we feared for our lives, and we felt that the only way we could survive was by this little ruse."

Joshua said, "All right but as a result of this you fellas are gonna have to be the hewers of wood and become our servants."

They said, "That's fine, we'll agree to that, we'll be your servants. We will serve you but we're just glad to be alive." So the people of Gibeon, and the cities of Gibeon were spared.

Now the names of the city of the Gibeonites are listed there. In the listing of the names in verse seventeen, the last name Kirjathjearim is an interesting name and city, because it was at Kirjathjearim that the Ark of the Covenant was kept up until the time of David when he moved it from there to Jerusalem. So one of the cities of the Gibeonites became the place where the Ark of the Covenant was kept.

Now when these five kings heard that the Gibeonites had made this league with the children of Israel, then they decided to attack the Gibeonites, more or less, as traitors. So they came against the Gibeonites.

XVII. PRAYER MARKS SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP

"Give me one hundred preachers who fear nothing but sin and desire nothing but God, and I care not a straw whether they be clergymen or laymen; such alone will shake the gates of hell and set up the kingdom of heaven on earth. God does nothing but in answer to prayer."--John Wesley

The apostles knew the necessity and worth of prayer to their ministry. They knew that their high commission as apostles, instead of relieving them from the necessity of prayer, committed them to it by a more urgent need; so that they were exceedingly jealous else some other important work should exhaust their time and prevent their praying as they ought; so they appointed laymen to look after the delicate and engrossing duties of ministering to the poor, that they (the apostles) might, unhindered, "give themselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word." Prayer is put first, and their relation to prayer is put most strongly--"give themselves to it," making a business of it, surrendering themselves to praying, putting fervor, urgency, perseverance, and time in it.

How holy, apostolic men devoted themselves to this divine work of prayer! "Night and day praying exceedingly," says Paul. "We will give ourselves continually to prayer" is the consensus of apostolic devotement. How these New Testament preachers laid themselves out in prayer for God's people! How they put God in full force into their Churches by their praying! These holy apostles did not vainly fancy that they had met their high and solemn duties by delivering faithfully God's word, but their preaching was made to stick

and tell by the ardor and insistence of their praying. Apostolic praying was as taxing, toilsome, and imperative as apostolic preaching. They prayed mightily day and night to bring their people to the highest regions of faith and holiness. They prayed mightier still to hold them to this high spiritual altitude. The preacher who has never learned in the school of Christ the high and divine art of intercession for his people will never learn the art of preaching, though homiletics be poured into him by the ton, and though he be the most gifted genius in sermon-making and sermon-delivery.

The prayers of apostolic, saintly leaders do much in making saints of those who are not apostles. If the Church leaders in after years had been as particular and fervent in praying for their people as the apostles were, the sad, dark times of worldliness and apostasy had not marred the history and eclipsed the glory and arrested the advance of the Church. Apostolic praying makes apostolic saints and keeps apostolic times of purity and power in the Church.

What loftiness of soul, what purity and elevation of motive, what unselfishness, what self-sacrifice, what exhaustive toil, what ardor of spirit, what divine tact are requisite to be an intercessor for men!

The preacher is to lay himself out in prayer for his people; not that they might be saved, simply, but that they be mightily saved. The apostles laid themselves out in prayer that their saints might be perfect; not that they should have a little relish for the things of God, but that they "might be filled with all the fullness of God." Paul did not rely on his apostolic preaching to secure this end, but "for this cause he bowed his knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Paul's praying carried Paul's converts farther along the highway of sainthood than Paul's preaching did. Epaphras did as much or more by prayer for the Colossian saints than by his preaching. He labored fervently always in prayer for them that "they might stand perfect and complete in all the will of God."

Preachers are preeminently God's leaders. They are primarily responsible for the condition of the Church. They shape its character, give tone and direction to its life.

Much every way depends on these leaders. They shape the times and the institutions. The Church is divine, the treasure it incases is heavenly, but it bears the imprint of the human. The treasure is in earthen vessels, and it smacks of the vessel. The Church of God makes, or is made by, its leaders. Whether it makes them or is made by them, it will be what its leaders are; spiritual if they are so, secular if they are, conglomerate if its leaders are. Israel's kings gave character to Israel's piety. A Church rarely revolts against or rises above the religion of its leaders. Strongly spiritual leaders; men of holy might, at the lead, are tokens of God's favor; disaster and weakness follow the wake of feeble or worldly leaders. Israel had fallen low when God gave children to be their princes and babes to rule over them. No happy state is predicted by the prophets when children oppress God's Israel and women rule over them. Times of spiritual leadership are times of great spiritual prosperity to the Church.

Prayer is one of the eminent characteristics of strong spiritual leadership. Men of mighty prayer are men of might and mold things. Their power with God has the conquering tread.

How can a man preach who does not get his message fresh from God in the closet? How can he preach without having his faith quickened, his vision cleared, and his heart warmed by his closeting with God? Alas, for the pulpit lips which are untouched by this closet flame. Dry and unctious they will ever be, and truths divine will never come with power from such lips. As far as the real interests of religion are concerned, a pulpit without a closet will always be a barren thing.

A preacher may preach in an official, entertaining, or learned way without prayer, but between this kind of preaching and sowing God's precious seed with holy hands and prayerful, weeping hearts there is an immeasurable distance.

A prayerless ministry is the undertaker for all God's truth and for God's Church. He may have the most costly casket and the most beautiful flowers, but it is a funeral, notwithstanding the charming array. A prayerless Christian will never learn God's truth; a prayerless ministry will never be able to teach God's truth. Ages of millennial glory have been lost by a prayerless Church. The coming of our Lord has been postponed indefinitely by a prayerless Church. Hell has enlarged herself and filled her dire caves in the presence of the dead service of a prayerless Church.

The best, the greatest offering is an offering of prayer. If the preachers of the twentieth century will learn well the lesson of prayer, and use fully the power of prayer, the millennium will come to its noon ere the century closes. "Pray without ceasing" is the trumpet call to the preachers of the twentieth century. If the twentieth century will get their texts, their thoughts, their words, their sermons in their closets, the next century will find a new heaven and a new earth. The old sin-stained and sin-eclipsed heaven and earth will pass away un XVIII. PREACHERS NEED THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

"If some Christians that have been complaining of their ministers had said and acted less before men and had applied themselves with all their might to cry to God for their ministers--had, as it were, risen and stormed heaven with their humble, fervent and incessant prayers for them--they would have been much more in the way of success."--Jonathan Edwards

Somehow the practice of praying in particular for the preacher has fallen into disuse or become discounted. Occasionally have we heard the practice arraigned as a disparagement of the ministry, being a public declaration by those who do it of the inefficiency of the ministry. It offends the pride of learning and self-sufficiency, perhaps, and these ought to be offended and rebuked in a ministry that is so derelict as to allow them to exist. der the power of a praying ministry.

Prayer, to the preacher, is not simply the duty of his profession, a privilege, but it is a necessity. Air is not more necessary to the lungs than prayer is to the preacher. It is absolutely necessary for the preacher to pray. It is an absolute necessity that the preacher be prayed for. These two propositions are wedded into a union which ought never to know any divorce: the preacher must pray; the preacher must be prayed for. It will take all the praying he can do, and all the praying he can get done, to meet the fearful responsibilities and gain the largest, truest success in his great work. The true preacher, next to the cultivation of the spirit and fact of prayer in himself, in their intensest form, covets with a great covetousness the prayers of God's people. The holier a man is, the more does he estimate prayer; the clearer does he see that God gives himself to the praying ones, and that the measure of God's revelation to the soul is the measure of the soul's longing, importunate prayer for God. Salvation never finds its way to a prayerless heart. The Holy Spirit never abides in a prayerless spirit. Preaching never edifies a prayerless soul. Christ knows nothing of prayerless Christians. The gospel cannot be projected by a prayerless preacher. Gifts, talents, education, eloquence, God's call, cannot abate the demand of prayer, but only intensify the necessity for the preacher to pray and to be prayed for. The more the preacher's eyes are opened to the nature, responsibility, and difficulties in his work, the more will he see, and if he be a true preacher the more will he feel, the necessity of prayer; not only the increasing demand to pray himself, but to call on others to help him by their prayers.

Paul is an illustration of this. If any man could project the gospel by dint of personal force, by brain power, by culture, by personal grace, by God's apostolic commission, God's extraordinary call, that man was Paul. That the preacher must be a man given to prayer, Paul is an eminent example. That the true apostolic preacher must have the prayers of other good people to give to his ministry its full quota of success, Paul is a preeminent example. He asks, he covets, he pleads in an impassioned way for the help of all God's saints. He knew that in the spiritual realm, as elsewhere, in union there is strength; that the concentration and aggregation of faith, desire, and prayer increased the volume of spiritual force until it became overwhelming and irresistible in its power. Units of prayer combined, like drops of water, make an ocean which defies resistance. So Paul, with his clear and full apprehension of spiritual dynamics, determined to make his ministry as impressive, as eternal, as irresistible as the ocean, by gathering all the scattered units of prayer and precipitating them on his ministry. May not the solution of Paul's preeminence in labors and results, and impress on the Church and the world, be found in this fact that he was able to center on himself and his ministry more of prayer than others? To his brethren at Rome he wrote: "Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in prayers to God for me." To the Ephesians he says: "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; and for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel." To the Colossians he emphasizes: "Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds: that I may make it manifest as I ought to speak." To the Thessalonians he says sharply, strongly: "Brethren, pray for us." Paul calls on the Corinthian Church to help him: "Ye also helping together by prayer for us." This was to be part of their work. They were to lay to the helping hand of prayer. He in an additional and closing charge to the Thessalonian Church about the importance and necessity of their prayers says: "Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you: and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men." He impresses the Philippians that all his trials and opposition can be made subservient to the spread of the gospel by the efficiency of their prayers for him. Philemon was to prepare a lodging for him, for through Philemon's prayer Paul was to be his guest.

Paul's attitude on this question illustrates his humility and his deep insight into the spiritual forces which project the gospel. More than this, it teaches a lesson for all times, that if Paul was so dependent on the prayers of God's saints to give his ministry success, how much greater the necessity that the prayers of God's saints be centered on the ministry of to-day! Paul did not feel that this urgent plea for prayer was to lower his dignity, lessen his influence, or depreciate his piety. What if it did? Let dignity go, let influence be destroyed, let his reputation be marred--he must have their prayers. Called, commissioned, chief of the Apostles as he was, all his equipment was imperfect without the prayers of his people. He wrote letters everywhere, urging them to pray for him. Do you pray for your preacher? Do you pray for him in secret? Public prayers are of little worth unless they are founded on or followed up by private praying. The praying ones are to the preacher as Aaron and Hur were to Moses. They hold up his hands and decide the issue that is so fiercely raging around them.

The plea and purpose of the apostles were to put the Church to praying. They did not ignore the grace of cheerful giving. They were not ignorant of the place which religious activity and work occupied in the spiritual life; but not one nor all of these, in apostolic estimate or urgency, could at all compare in necessity and importance with prayer. The most sacred and urgent pleas were used, the most fervid exhortations, the most comprehensive and arousing words were uttered to enforce the all-important obligation and necessity of prayer. "Put the saints everywhere to praying" is the burden of the apostolic effort and the keynote of apostolic success. Jesus Christ had striven to do this in the days of his personal ministry. As he was moved by infinite compassion at the ripened fields of earth perishing for lack of laborers and pausing in his own praying--he tries to awaken the stupid sensibilities of his disciples to the duty of prayer as he charges them, "Pray ye the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth laborers into his harvest." "And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray and not to faint."

XIX. DELIBERATION NECESSARY TO LARGEST RESULTS FROM PRAYER

"This perpetual hurry of business and company ruins me in soul if not in body. More solitude and earlier hours! I suspect I have been allotting habitually too little time to religious exercises, as private devotion and religious meditation, Scripture-reading, etc. Hence I am lean and cold and hard. I had better allot two hours or an hour and a half daily. I have been keeping too late hours, and hence have had but a hurried half hour in a morning to myself. Surely the experience of all good men confirms the proposition that without a due measure of private devotions the soul will grow lean. But all may be done through prayer--almighty prayer, I am ready to say--and why not? For that it is almighty is only through the gracious ordination of the God of love and truth. O then, pray, pray, pray!"

--William Wilberforce

Our devotions are not measured by the clock, but time is of their essence. The ability to wait and stay and press belongs essentially to our intercourse with God. Hurry, everywhere unseemingly and damaging, is so to an alarming extent in the great business of communion with God. Short devotions are the bane of deep piety. Calmness, grasp, strength, are never the companions of hurry. Short devotions deplete spiritual vigor, arrest spiritual progress, sap spiritual foundations, blight the root and bloom of spiritual life. They are the prolific source of backsliding, the sure indication of a superficial piety; they deceive, blight, rot the seed, and impoverish the soil.

It is true that Bible prayers in word and print are short, but the praying men of the Bible were with God through many a sweet and holy wrestling hour. They won by few words but long waiting. The prayers Moses records may be short, but Moses prayed to God with fastings and mighty cryings forty days and nights. The statement of Elijah's praying may be condensed to a few brief paragraphs, but doubtless Elijah, who when "praying he prayed," spent many hours of fiery struggle and lofty intercourse with God before he could, with assured boldness, say to Ahab, "There shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word." The verbal brief of Paul's prayers is short, but Paul "prayed night and day exceedingly." The "Lord's Prayer" is a divine epitome for infant lips, but the man Christ Jesus prayed many an all-night ere his work was done; and his all-night and long-sustained devotions gave to his work its finish and perfection, and to his character the fullness and glory of its divinity. Spiritual work is taxing work, and men are loath to do it. Praying, true praying, costs an outlay of serious attention and of time, which flesh and blood do not relish. Few persons are made of such strong fiber that they will make a costly outlay when surface work will pass as well in the market. We can habituate ourselves to our beggarly praying until it looks well to us, at least it keeps up a decent form and quiets conscience--the deadliest of opiates! We can slight our praying, and not realize the peril till the foundations are gone. Hurried devotions make weak faith, feeble convictions, questionable piety. To be little with God is to be little for God. To cut short the praying makes the whole religious character short, scrimp, niggardly, and slovenly. It takes good time for the full flow of God into the spirit. Short devotions cut the pipe of God's full flow. It takes time in the secret places to get the full revelation of God. Little time and hurry mar the picture.

Henry Martyn laments that "want of private devotional reading and shortness of prayer through incessant sermon-making had produced much strangeness between God and his soul." He judged that he had dedicated too much time to public ministrations and too little to private communion with God. He was much impressed to set apart times for fasting and to devote times for solemn prayer. Resulting from this he records: "Was assisted this morning to pray for two hours." Said William Wilberforce, the peer of kings: "I must secure more time for private devotions. I have been living far too public for me. The shortening of private devotions starves the soul; it grows lean and faint. I have been keeping too late hours." Of a failure in Parliament he says: "Let me record my grief and shame, and all, probably, from private devotions having been contracted, and so God let me stumble." More solitude and earlier hours was his remedy.

More time and early hours for prayer would act like magic to revive and invigorate many a decayed spiritual life. More time and early hours for prayer would be manifest in holy living. A holy life would not be so rare or so difficult a thing if our devotions were not so short and hurried. A Christly temper in its sweet and passionless fragrance would not be so alien and hopeless a heritage if our closet stay were lengthened and intensified. We live shabbily because we pray meanly. Plenty of time to feast in our closets will bring marrow and fatness to our lives. Our ability to stay with God in our closet measures our ability to stay with God out of the closet. Hasty closet visits are deceptive, defaulting. We are not only deluded by them, but we are losers by them in many ways and in many rich legacies. Tarrying in the closet instructs and wins. We are taught by it, and the greatest victories are often the results of great waiting--waiting till words and plans are exhausted, and silent and patient waiting gains the crown. Jesus Christ asks with an affronted emphasis, "Shall not God avenge his own elect which cry day and night unto him?" To pray is the greatest thing we can do: and to do it well there must be calmness, time, and deliberation; otherwise it is degraded into the littlest and meanest of things. True praying has the largest results for good; and poor praying, the least. We cannot do too much of real praying; we cannot do too little of the sham. We must learn anew the worth of prayer, enter anew the school of prayer. There is nothing which it takes more time to learn. And if we would learn the wondrous art, we must not give a fragment here and there--"A little talk with Jesus," as the tiny saintlets sing--but we must demand and hold with iron grasp the best hours of the day for God and prayer, or there will be no praying worth the name. This, however, is not a day of prayer. Few men there are who pray. Prayer is defamed by preacher and priest. In these days of hurry and bustle, of electricity and steam, men will not take time to pray. Preachers there are who "say prayers" as a part of their programme, on regular or state occasions; but who "stirs himself up to take hold upon God?" Who prays as Jacob prayed--till he is crowned as a prevailing, princely intercessor? Who prays as Elijah prayed--till all the locked-up forces of nature were unsealed and a famine-stricken land bloomed as the garden of God? Who prayed as Jesus Christ prayed as out upon the mountain he "continued all night in prayer to God?" The apostles "gave themselves to prayer"--the most difficult thing to get men or even the preachers to do. Laymen there are who will give their money--some of them in rich abundance--but they will not "give themselves" to prayer, without which their money is but a curse. There are plenty of preachers who will preach and deliver great and eloquent addresses on the need of revival and the spread of the kingdom of God, but not many there are who will do that without which all preaching and organizing are worse than vain--pray. It is out of date, almost a lost art, and the greatest benefactor this age could have is the man who will bring the preachers and the Church back to prayer.

(Power Through Prayer; EM Bounds; Chapter 17-19; Edward McKendree Bounds (August 15, 1835 – August 24, 1913) was a clergyman of the Methodist Episcopal Church South and author of eleven books, nine of which focused on the subject of prayer.)

(Amplified Bible; Joyce Meyers; 2006; Faith Words; Scripture; Commentaries; pages 340-341)

Chapel Flock ♦ PO Box 161102 ♦ Wichita, KS ♦ 67216 ♦ (316) 243-1438

(If you wish to be removed from the mailing list e-mail at: chapel-flock@sbcglobal.net)