



~ Thought For The Day ~

~gathering from the 4 winds~

“come just as you are”

Refresh, Restore, Rebuild = Healing



Vol. 25 Issue 455

July 06, 2012

www.chapel-flock.com

Worship Music

Prayer

Lord, I ask You to please help me become an honorable representation of who You are. I am sorry for allowing myself in the past to live a low standard that gave a wrong impression about You. Now I understand that I am Your face and Your voice to the people around me. To the best of my ability, I want to speak courteously, dress appropriately, act professionally, and live in a Christ-like manner so I can accurately portray Your Word and Your heart. I know this is going to require some changes in my life, so today I am asking You to help me as I take steps toward becoming a worthy representative who brings only honor to the King of kings. Fill me always with the message You want said. I ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

Sparkling Gems from the Greek.

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[Words Remain-](#)
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[Zion & Babylon-](#)
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If you have a prayer request...please e-mail it to us so we can pray for you...or a person.....

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1 AT THE end of every seven years you shall grant a release. 2 And this is the manner of the release: every creditor shall release that which he has lent to his neighbor; he shall not exact it of his neighbor, his brother, for the Lord's release is proclaimed. 3 Of a foreigner you may exact it, but whatever of yours is with your brother [Israelite] your hand shall release. 4 But there will be no poor among you, for the Lord will surely bless you in the land which the Lord your God gives you for an inheritance to possess, 5 If only you carefully listen to the voice of the Lord your God, to do watchfully all these commandments which I command you this day. 6 When the Lord your God blesses you as He promised you, then you shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow; and you shall rule over many nations, but they shall not rule over you. 7 If there is among you a poor man, one of your kinsmen in any of the towns of your land which the Lord your God gives you, you shall not harden your [minds and] hearts or close your hands to your poor brother; 8 But you shall open your hands wide to him and shall surely lend him sufficient for his need in whatever he lacks. 9 Beware lest there be a base thought in your [minds and] hearts, and you say, The seventh year, the year of release, is at hand, and your eye be evil against your poor brother and you give him nothing, and he cry to the Lord against you, and it be sin in you. 10 You shall give to him freely without begrudging it; because of this the Lord will bless you in all your work and in all you undertake. 11 For the poor will never cease out of the land; therefore I command you, You shall open wide your hands to your brother, to your needy, and to your poor in your land. 12 And if your brother, a Hebrew man or a Hebrew woman, is sold to you and serves you six years, then in the seventh year you shall let him go free from you. 13 And when you send him out free from you, you shall not let him go away empty-handed. 14 You shall furnish him liberally out of your flock, your threshing floor, and your winepress; of what the Lord your God has blessed you, you shall give to him. 15 And you shall [earnestly] remember that you were a bondman in the land of Egypt and the Lord your God redeemed you; therefore I give you this command today. 16 But if the servant says to you, I will not go away from you, because he loves you and your household, since he does well with you, 17 Then take an awl and pierce his ear through to the door, and he shall be your servant always. And also to your bondwoman you shall do likewise. 18 It shall not seem hard to you when you let him go free from you, for at half the cost of a hired servant he has served you six years; and the Lord your God will bless you in all you do. 19 All the firstling males that are born of your herd and flock you shall set apart for the Lord your God; you shall do no work with the firstling of your herd, nor shear the firstling of your flock. 20 You shall eat it before the Lord your God annually in the place [for worship] which the Lord shall choose, you and your household. 21 But if it has any blemish, if it is lame, blind, or has any bad blemish whatsoever, you shall not sacrifice it to the Lord your God. 22 You shall eat it within your towns; the [ceremonially] unclean and the clean alike may eat it, as if it were a gazelle or a hart. 23 Only you shall not eat its blood; you shall pour it on the ground like water.

Chapter 15

Chapter fifteen,

At the end of every seven years you're to make a release (Deu 15:1).

All of the debts were to be forgiven in the seventh year. Now, you're not to demand it again after the seventh year; you're not to ask for it again except for a foreigner or a stranger. Then you can demand it from them. But of the children of Israel it had to be totally forgiven.

Now, also if it were, say, the sixth year, the seventh year was coming up very soon and some guy says, "Oh, I'd like to borrow some money" you shouldn't think in your mind, "Oh, this is the sixth year, I don't want to loan it to him because it will be forgiven in eight months, you know." He said don't figure that way. If he's poor, go ahead and give it to him. Now God is very interested in the welfare of the poor and that we be interested in the welfare of the poor. And here is protecting the poor. And if a poor man comes to you and he's wanting help you're not to think "Oh, this is close to the seventh year. I don't want to give it". That's wrong thinking God says. Go ahead and loan it to him anyhow and then forgive it.

Now in Proverbs we read, "He who lendeth unto the poor lendeth unto the LORD" (Proverbs 19:17), and I think that's a good thing to remember. Rather than exacting the debts from the poor, just say, "Well, I loaned to the Lord and the Lord will repay". Now I like loaning money to God. I think he pays fantastic interest. "And he who lendeth unto the poor lendeth unto the LORD" because God takes the cause of the poor. God takes up the cause of the poor every time and God is very interested in the poor of the land because they're gonna always be with us. In verse eleven, "The poor shall never cease out". You're always gonna have poor people. Jesus said, "The poor you have with you always"(Matthew 26:11). He was quoting here from Deuteronomy. There'll always be poor, and thus, we should always have a heart and a concern for the poor.

Now if you bought a slave who was a Hebrew, man or woman, then they were to serve you for six years but in the seventh year you had to set them free.

And you shall not send them out empty: But give them liberally from your flock, and from your store, from your winepress... : because you're to remember that you were a slave once in Egypt (Deu 15:13-15),

Now, if you have a slave and the seventh year came up and it's time for him to be set free and he comes to you and says, "Hey, I like it here. You're a good boss. I've got good security and I just enjoy working for you and I don't want to be free. I want to remain your slave". Then you were to take him and you were to take an awl and you were drive it through his ear and you were to pin his ear to the doorpost of your house. And that signified a bond slave by choice. They'd usually then put the gold ring in the ear so that the gold ring in the earlobe was a sign that a man was a slave by choice. He had made his own free choice to be a slave for life. And that was the sign of it; the golden ring in the ear, "I am a slave by choice for life". Once you had made that decision then you would never be set free but you had that choice, you could make it. If you loved your master, you wanted to serve him you'd say, "Well, I don't want to leave. I love serving you, working for you" and so the little ritual of piercing your ear with the awl, pinning it to the post and thus

the slave for life. Now, this is the kind of that we have become of Jesus Christ. Paul a duloy, an apostle, a bond slave of Jesus Christ. But it's by choice. "Lord, I love serving you. I want to serve you. I don't want to do anything but serve you. I wanna serve you for life." A bond slave of Jesus Christ, what a neat thing it is to be a bond slave of the Lord, serve Him for life by choice. He didn't force me. It was my choice. I chose to serve him for life. And so there is a beautiful parallel as you read it there from the sixteenth chapter or sixteenth verse, twenty-fifth verse of the bond slave servant by choice, servant for life, the perpetual service. (Through The Bible; C 2000 Series; Chuck Smith; 1979-1986)

Everyone engages in prayer at one time or another. Even that person who says "I don't believe in God," cries out when the crisis looms, "O God, help me!" We are all acquainted with prayer to some extent or another.

Prayer is one of the greatest privileges God has given to man. It amazes me that I can come into the presence of God, the creator of this universe, and talk with Him. And what's more - He always listen to me!

I'm also amazed that God has given me the privilege of talking with Him at any time. I don't have to make an appointment or call in advance. I can come at any hour, for any need, and open my heart before Him. And God not only listens, He's also promised to help me! He's promised to guide me and to provide for my every need.

I imagine one of the great mysteries among the angels in heaven is that man has been given this glorious privilege of prayer, yet he takes such little advantage of it and treats it in such a peculiar way.

Many people treat prayer as a religious work that they must do. After they have prayed for a time, they expect a merit badge for their work. "After all, I prayed a whole hour." As if one should be rewarded for talking to God!

Many people determine to pray an hour a day because it seems like an honorable thing to do. They start the hour of prayer by lifting up every request imaginable. Then, when ten minutes has gone by and they've run out of things to say, they start over again. They go through the list a few more times. Finally, the hour is over and they feel good. "Praise the Lord! I've spent a whole hour praying." They go their way convinced that they've done their duty and fulfilled their obligation.

Prayer should never be done by the clock. It should never be looked upon as an obligation, a required work, or a duty.

Remember, the length of your prayer isn't important at all. Often, there just isn't enough time for lengthy prayers. For instance, suppose that your car is stalled on the railroad tracks and the train is heading your way. If it takes a long prayer to do the job - you've had it!

Jesus warned us, "When ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking" (Matthew 6:7). Many people criticize the Catholics for their repetitious use of Hail Mary's and Our Fathers. But continually repeating, "Jesus! Jesus!" or "Glory! Glory!" or any other phrase is also using vain repetition. When you pray you're actually talking to the Father. You should talk to Him intelligently. Don't repeat the same words over and over again like a mantra. It will get you nowhere.

Scope of Prayer

The Christian has one source of power in his life: the Holy Spirit. Jesus said, "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you" (Acts 1:8). He is the source of power in your life.

However, your greatest outlet of spiritual power is prayer. I can do more for God through prayer than I can through any other means, including service. Prayer binds the strong man of the house, whereas service is going in and taking the spoil. I can do more than pray after I have prayed, but I really can't do more than pray until I have prayed. My service to God, though important, is limited to one place. Prayer, however, is limitless in its scope. It can reach around the world.

Through prayer I can spend one-half hour of my life in South America, doing work for the kingdom of God by strengthening the hands of the missionaries. Then I can go to Mexico and spend some time with my friends who are ministering there. I can help them in their ministry by praying for the effectiveness of the tracts they distribute and the words they speak. Then I can move into China and pray for the church there. I can touch a world for God through prayer right from my own closet.

Rewards

Jesus said, "When you pray, don't be like the hypocrites" (Matthew 6:5). The word hypocrite in Greek is hupokrites. The actors in classical Greek drama would wear character masks. These actors were called hupokrites.

In other words, Jesus said, "When you pray, don't be as one who merely puts on an act for the benefit of other people. Don't be as the hupokrites who like to pray standing in the synagogues and on street corners to be seen by men." From this Scripture many people have assumed that public prayer is wrong. That's certainly not what Jesus said. Jesus himself prayed in public. The early Church also gathered together for public prayer. The Bible says the believers continued daily in the apostles' doctrine, fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers (Acts 2:42). Prayer is an essential part of our gathering together.

But be careful that you're not praying to impress men rather than to communicate to God. This is an especially real danger for ministers, because we pray publicly so often. The real temptation comes at the close of a sermon, when I subtly repeat the major points of my message in the closing prayer to make sure the people understood it. I'm supposedly talking to God, but I'm actually trying to bring my point home to the people one more time.

In my early ministry I was almost ruined by public prayer. One day a lady said to me, "You pray the most beautiful prayers." So I thought, "I'll sharpen up on that. I'll make my prayers even more beautiful!" I became so interested in impressing people with the beauty of my prayers that I forgot I was actually talking to the Father.

There's a real danger in praying to impress people with how righteous, godly, and spiritually deep you think you are.

Jesus spoke of two rewards. The first one is given by men. It is given to the person who prays in public with the motivation of impressing people with how spiritual he is. He will be rewarded by someone saying, "Oh, he's so spiritual!"

The motivation of the Pharisees was just that - to make a display of their spirituality. On their way to the synagogue they acted as though they were consumed with spiritual zeal. They had to stop on the street corner and say their prayers right there! They were actually saying, "I'm so holy, I can't wait till I get to the synagogue to pray!" They received their reward, the praise of man (Matthew 6:5).

On the other hand, Jesus said to go into your closet, shut the door and pray to your Father who sees in secret. Then your Father shall reward you openly (Matthew 6:6).

Prayer is rewarding. Even false prayers spoken for man's acclamation are rewarding. But from which source do you want your reward - man or God?

Habits

Oftentimes we fall into peculiar prayer habits. If we're impressed by a certain way a person prays, we'll incorporate their idiosyncrasies into our own prayer's.

For instance, I may acquire a particular "prayer voice" by expressing my words with a little vibrato and sustain. "Oohh, God." Of course, I wouldn't dare talk to another person that way because he'd think I was weird. I wonder what I'd do if my kids would come to me and say, "Oohhh, dear Father!" Also, praying in Old English vocabulary sounds so much more spiritual. So, I revert to King James English instead of the Revised Standard for my prayers.

Jesus said that your Father knows what you need before you even ask Him (Matthew 6:8). So, just ask! God doesn't need to be sold a bill of goods. He's going to answer either yes or no, regardless of how you say it.

Jesus said, "Ask [please ask], and you shall receive" (John 16:24). By asking, you open the door for God to do what He's wanted to do and to bless you like He's wanted to bless you all along.

Form For Prayer

Jesus gave us a basic form for prayer. "After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father" (Matthew 6:9). This prayer form immediately reveals that which is vital for effective prayer, a close personal relationship between the petitioner and God.

Your relationship to God is often manifested in how you address Him.

Some people begin their prayers with "Almighty God." If that's your relationship, then that's the way you should talk to Him. If you don't really know Him as your Father, then you should address Him as "Almighty God" or, "Eternal God."

But, thank God, through Jesus Christ I can have a beautiful Father-son relationship. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God" (I John 3:1). Think of it! We've been called sons of God. I can now come to Him and say, "Father!"

But only through Jesus Christ can we be sons. Those outside of Jesus Christ have a distant relationship to the almighty, eternal God. But you, through Jesus Christ, have come into an intimate relationship. You may say, "Our Father, which art in heaven."

John said, "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John 1:12). God has given each of us "the Spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. (Romans 8:15,16). Because I'm His child, I naturally call Him "Father." Relationship is of vital importance in prayer.

Jesus continues His model prayer with praise and worship. "Hallowed be thy name" (Matthew 6:9). Worship is an important part of prayer. "Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise" (Psalm 100:4). Too often we just blunder right in and blurt out our requests. To enrich your prayer life, just praise Him for awhile. Then present your petitions.

The first two petitions in Jesus' model prayer are in the form of intercession. "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done" (Matthew 6:10). Jesus said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these [other] things [that you're so often praying about] shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33). "Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart." (Psalm 37:4).

So many times men seek happiness by direct pursuit. But happiness can never be discovered by direct pursuit. Happiness is the by-product of a personal relationship with God. If you have a right relationship with God, you will be filled with happiness.

In prayer, seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these other things will be added to you. They'll be the by-product of a proper perspective of life. "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done." Put those at the top of your list, and you'll find that God will take care of all the other things you've struggled with and have failed to accomplish.

You can come to God and make your needs and your requests known to Him. You can open your heart to Him and lay bear the innermost secrets of your soul. You can have such a blessed time by talking with the Father and finding His help, strength, and guidance. What a privilege it is to pray! May God help you to discover the full, beautiful experience of prayer - not a work, not a task, not a duty, not a burden, not an obligation - but the most joyous privilege in the world!

EFFECTIVE PRAYER LIFE; "The Privilege Of Prayer" by Chuck Smith

What Does the Word 'Preach' Mean?

Mark 16:15

In Mark 16:15, Jesus instructed believers, "... Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." But what did Jesus mean when He said that we were supposed to "preach"? Did He mean that every believer must have a pulpit ministry where he or she publicly stands in front of a church and preaches to a congregation? What does the word "preach" mean?

The word "preach" comes from the Greek word *kerusso*, which means to proclaim, to declare, to announce, or to herald a message. It was the message proclaimed by the *kerux*, who was the official spokesman or herald of a king. Because the *kerux* was the appointed, official representative of the king or government, his specific job was to announce with a clear and unquestionable voice the desires, dictates, orders, recent events, news, policy changes, or message that the king or government wished to express to the people.

The position of this *kerux* ("spokesman" or "herald") was viewed to be the highest, most noble, privileged position in the kingdom because his position gave him routine access to the king that was afforded only to rare individuals. To be the king's *kerux* was an honor and supreme privilege that necessitated the highest level of professionalism and excellent performance.

When the king wanted to give a message to his people, he summoned the *kerux*. The *kerux* came to the king's throne room with writing instrument and paper in hand; then he carefully and accurately penned the communication that the king desired to express to his people. After the king was finished dictating his message, the *kerux* was allowed to freely speak to the king and to ask questions of clarification to make certain he understood every point of the king's message. Because this man was speaking on behalf of the king, there was no room for mistakes in his delivery of the message. When he finally stood before the people to announce the message given to him, it had to be accurate, precise, and faithful to what the king wanted to express to his people.

As important as it was for the *kerux* to accurately understand and communicate the king's message, it was equally his responsibility to capture and convey the sentiment, heart, and emotions of the king on these various issues. Thus, the *kerux* was expected to deliver his message with emotional impact in order to properly represent both the word and the heart of the king.

Proper attire was essential for this notable position, for when the *kerux* stood before the people to speak on behalf of the king, he was also to physically represent the king in all his splendor and glory. The responsibility of publicly representing the king demanded that he dress appropriately, for a shabbily dressed *kerux* would have been an insult to the honor of the king.

And because the *kerux* was the primary connection between the people and the king, he was also required to learn how to speak to people in a kind and cultured fashion. If he was rude, his behavior would reflect negatively on the king. If he was kind and courteous, this would reflect favorably on the king. As the king's spokesman, the *kerux* understood that every word he spoke, every piece of clothing he wore, and all his actions, both public and private, would ultimately affect people's opinion of the king. Consequently, because of his great responsibility as the king's spokesman, he knew that every detail of his life was to be lived honorably, honestly, and uprightly. His personal life, as well as his public life, had to be spotless, immaculate, pristine, gleaming, and squeaky clean—free of accusation.

When the *kerux* had finished delivering the king's message to the people, he turned, left the platform from which he spoke, and then remained silent until the king summoned him back to the throne room to give him another message for the people. As the king's spokesman, he had no right to speak his own mind, give his own personal commentary about what the king meant, or draw any attention to himself. Such actions would be considered gross violations of his position and a guarantee that he would no longer serve as the king's spokesman. Keeping all this in mind, let's consider again what Jesus meant when He commanded that all believers go into all the world "to preach" the Gospel. Since *kerusso* ("to preach") is the message of the *kerux* ("the king's spokesman"), it is clear that

by using the word "preach," God is communicating several very powerful messages to you and to me.

First, as a believer, you must learn to see yourself as the representative of Jesus Christ. Although you may never stand before a public pulpit to preach, it is a fact that your life is your most important pulpit. What you say and do in your life reflects on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Second, as a believer, it is absolutely essential that you spend time in the Presence of the Lord so you can hear His Word and capture His heart. You should never think of the time you must spend in God's Presence praying or reading the Word as laborious or dreadful. It is a high honor that God has given you. He beckons you to come into His throne room so He can speak to you, share with you His heart, and then empower you with His Spirit to take the message to people who are desperately waiting for it. Never forget that you possess a position of great privilege.

Third, as a believer, it is imperative that you learn how to dress appropriately and how to speak kindly, courteously, and in a way that brings honor to Jesus. If your appearance communicates a low standard because you dress like a slob, never comb your hair, always look unprofessional.

Fourth, as a believer, you must realize that your private life is just as important as your public life. If you publicly declare the Gospel, but later it is discovered that your private life is a horrible mess and a complete contradiction of what you've been preaching, this, too, will reflect poorly on the Gospel.

The lost world loathes hypocrites but enjoys it immensely when a preacher or believer is found to be a contradiction of the message he or she preaches. So never forget that as the Lord's spokesman, you are required to do everything possible to maintain a life that is spotless, immaculate, pristine, gleaming, and squeaky clean—free of accusation.

Fifth, as a believer and a representative of Jesus Christ, you must make a decision to refrain from making personal comments that are not your business to make. Speak what Jesus tells you to speak—but if someone tries to draw you into a debate or a conversation regarding a matter you know nothing about, just remain silent. You are not required to speak or to act like an authority regarding issues about which you are not an authority!

You see, preaching the Gospel is what you do every day of your life by the way you live and conduct yourself. It is true that public pulpit ministry is a very special gift and honor that some are called to do. But the truth is, you preach every day that you get up and faithfully go to work! You preach when you choose to dress modestly or when you speak kindly to your fellow employees, believers, or friends. All these things reflect on the message of the Gospel.

So as you obey Jesus' words to take the Gospel to every ethnic group, culture, custom, civilization, and sphere where you personally have influence, always be mindful of the fact that you are His kerux in those places. You are His personal representative, and everything you do and say preaches about Jesus Christ!

And as you go through each day, always make sure you set aside time in God's Presence to obtain His Word and capture His heart. Then you'll be able to turn to those you touch every day of your life and give them the message and heart that God has imparted to you on their behalf. Sparkling Gems from the Greek.

1 Timothy 2:1-8 (AMP)

1 FIRST OF all, then, I admonish and urge that petitions, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be offered on behalf of all men, 2 For kings and all who are in positions of authority or high responsibility, that [outwardly] we may pass a quiet and undisturbed life [and inwardly] a peaceable one in all godliness and reverence and seriousness in every way. 3 For such [praying] is good and right, and [it is] pleasing and acceptable to God our Savior, 4 Who wishes all men to be saved and [increasingly] to perceive and recognize and discern and know precisely and correctly the [divine] Truth. 5 For there [is only] one God, and [only] one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, 6 Who gave Himself as a ransom for all [people, a fact that was] attested to at the right and proper time. 7 And of this matter I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (special messenger)—I am speaking the truth in Christ, I do not falsify [when I say this]—a teacher of the Gentiles in [the realm of] faith and truth. 8 I desire therefore that in every place men should pray, without anger or quarreling or resentment or doubt [in their minds], lifting up holy hands..

(AMP Bible; The Everyday Life Bible; Joyce Meyers; Scripture; Commentaries; Past Pastor Sermons; Dictionary; 2006; pg 298-299)
(Word 9 Bible Software; 2010; Concordance, Dictionary, Scripture, Sermons of Saints past, Devos; Sparkling Gems From The Greek)