



~ Thought For The Day ~

~gathering from the 4 winds~

“come just as you are”

Refresh, Restore, Rebuild = Healing



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Worship Music

Prayer

Lord, I am so thankful that Your Word prepares us for every event that comes along in this life! I know I am living in the last days and that these challenging times require a higher level of commitment from me if I am going to live free from fear. This is such a critical moment for me to be strong, free, and secure. When I am strong I can be a tower of strength to others who are drowning in the world around me. Help me be that source of strength and power to the people who surround me, Lord. I want to be all that I need to be in this hour. Refresh in me Your mercy and compassion, and Lord may I always remember You forgave me, and that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, and that when I remember this to always treat people with compassion, as what may be a ant hill for some, may be a mountain for another. Fill me with Your will always how to respond to other people going through, in Jesus' name. Amen.....

Sparkling Gems from the Greek.

[Love Comes Down-
Kerrie Roberts](#)

[Maybe I'm Afraid-
Kerrie Roberts](#)

[This Love Doesn't Run-
Kerrie Roberts](#)

[Unstoppable-
Kerrie Roberts](#)

Video's / New Information/ Prayer Requests

["Witness Of The Spirit" Leonard Ravenhill](#)

["Gospel Truth " Female Rap Video \(short video\)](#)

Radio Stations

[KWVE ...Calvary Chapel](#)

[KLOY](#)

Bible Study Sites

[Chuck Smith
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[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.....

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1 HANNAH PRAYED, and said, My heart exults and triumphs in the Lord; my horn (my strength) is lifted up in the Lord. My mouth is no longer silent, for it is opened wide over my enemies, because I rejoice in Your salvation. 2 There is none holy like the Lord, there is none besides You; there is no Rock like our God. 3 Talk no more so very proudly; let not arrogance go forth from your mouth, for the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by Him actions are weighed. 4 The bows of the mighty are broken, and those who stumbled are girded with strength. 5 Those who were full have hired themselves out for bread, but those who were hungry have ceased to hunger. The barren has borne seven, but she who has many children languishes and is forlorn. 6 The Lord slays and makes alive; He brings down to Sheol and raises up. 7 The Lord makes poor and makes rich; He brings low and He lifts up. 8 He raises up the poor out of the dust and lifts up the needy from the ash heap, to make them sit with nobles and inherit the throne of glory. For the pillars of the earth are the Lord's, and He has set the world upon them. 9 He will guard the feet of His godly ones, but the wicked shall be silenced and perish in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail. 10 The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken to pieces; against them will He thunder in heaven. The Lord will judge [all peoples] to the ends of the earth; and He will give strength to His king (King) and exalt the power of His anointed (Anointed His Christ). 11 Elkanah and his wife Hannah returned to Ramah to his house. But the child ministered to the Lord before Eli the priest. 12 The sons of Eli were base and worthless; they did not know or regard the Lord. 13 And the custom of the priests with the people was this: when any man offered sacrifice, the priest's servant came while the flesh was boiling with a fleshhook of three prongs in his hand; 14 And he thrust it into the pan or kettle or caldron or pot; all that the fleshhook brought up the priest took for himself. So they did in Shiloh with all the Israelites who came there. 15 Also, before they burned the fat, the priest's servant came and said to the man who sacrificed, Give the priest meat to roast, for he will not accept boiled meat from you, but raw. 16 And if the man said to him, Let them burn the fat first, and then you may take as much as you want, the priest's servant would say, No! Give it to me now or I will take it by force. 17 So the sin of the [two] young men was very great before the Lord, for they despised the offering of the Lord. 18 But Samuel ministered before the Lord, a child girded with a linen ephod. 19 Moreover, his mother made him a little robe and brought it to him from year to year when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice. 20 And Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife and say, May the Lord give you children by this woman for the gift she asked for and gave to the Lord. Then they would go to their own home. 21 And the Lord visited Hannah, so that she bore three sons and two daughters. And the child Samuel grew before the Lord. 22 Now Eli was very old, and he heard all that his sons did to all Israel and how they lay with the women who served at the door of the Tent of Meeting. 23 And he said to them, Why do you do such things? For I hear of your evil dealings from all the people. 24 No, my sons; it is no good report which I hear the Lord's people spreading abroad. 25 If one man wrongs another, God will mediate for him; but if a man wrongs the Lord, who shall intercede for him? Yet they did not listen to their father, for it was the Lord's will to slay them. 26 Now the boy Samuel grew and was in favor both with the Lord and with men. 27 A man of God came to Eli and said to him, Thus has the Lord said: I plainly revealed Myself to the house of your father [forefather Aaron] when they were in Egypt in bondage to Pharaoh's house. 28 Moreover, I selected him out of all the tribes of Israel to be My priest, to offer on My altar, to burn incense, to wear an ephod before Me. And I gave [from then on] to the house of your father [forefather] all the offerings of the Israelites made by fire. 29 Why then do you kick [trample upon, treat with contempt] My sacrifice and My offering which I commanded, and honor your sons above Me by fattening yourselves upon the choicest part of every offering of My people Israel? 30 Therefore the Lord, the God of Israel, says, I did promise that your house and that of your father [forefather Aaron] should go in and out before Me forever. But now the Lord says, Be it far from Me. For those who honor Me I will honor, and those who despise Me shall be lightly esteemed. 31 Behold, the time is coming when I will cut off your strength and the strength of your own father's house, that there shall not be an old man in your house. 32 And you shall behold the distress of My house, even in all the prosperity which God will give Israel, and there shall not be an old man in your house forever. 33 Yet I will not cut off from My altar every man of yours; some shall survive to weep and mourn [over the family's ruin], but all the increase of your house shall die in their best years. 34 And what befalls your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, shall be a sign to you—in one day they both shall die. [Fulfilled in I Sam. 4:17, 18.] 35 And I will raise up for Myself a faithful priest (Priest), who shall do according to what is in My heart and mind. And I will build him a sure house, and he shall walk before My anointed (Anointed) forever. 36 Everyone who is left in your house shall come crouching to him for a piece of silver and a bit of bread and say, Put me, I pray you, into a priest's office so I may have a piece of bread.

Chapter 2

Now the prayer of Hannah does express a depth of spirituality.

And Hannah prayed, and said, My heart rejoiceth in the Lord (1Sa 2:1),

Evidently Mary was familiar with this prayer of Hannah because actually the rejoicing of Mary when she came to her cousin Elisabeth, when she was expecting Jesus, is much the same pattern as this of Hannah. Mary said, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit doth rejoice for He has regarded the low estate of His handmaid." And she goes on and you might want to compare the third chapter, or the second chapter of Luke there. The rejoicing of Mary called the Magnificat with this praising of Hannah. Hannah prayed and said, "My heart rejoices in the Lord."

My horn is exalted in the Lord: my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies; because I rejoice in thy salvation. There is none holy as the Lord: for there is none beside thee: neither is there any rock like our God. Talk no more so exceeding proudly; let not arrogancy come out of your mouth: for the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed (1Sa 2:1-3).

Heavy statement. "By God actions are weighed." It isn't enough to do the right thing. You can do the right thing with the wrong attitude and it counts for nothing, because God weighs your actions. That is, what motivates your actions? Jesus said, "Take heed to yourself that you do not your righteousness before men, to be seen of men, for I say unto you, Ye have your reward". We are told that one day the secrets of the hearts are gonna be judged or weighed. God knows why you have done a certain thing.

Now there are people who pray, but they only pray in order to be seen of men, and thus their prayers really don't count as far as God is concerned. They have their reward. There are some people who give with such an ostentatious way so that their name will be on a placard or something. Well, I won't say it, but so that they might have their name up here. You know, "Up here that's my pew that I bought" or "my chair" or whatever. They give in order to advertise their name.

Now when you get to heaven and you come before the Lord and the Lord goes through the books you say, "Wait a minute, Lord, You're forgetting something. My name was on that stained glass window. We paid a lot of money for that stained glass window, Lord. I don't see it on Your records here."

He'll say, "Nope, it isn't on the records here."

"Why not Lord, I—man that cost me a pretty penny."

He'll say, "You had your reward. Everybody that passed by that window saw your name. They said, Oh, isn't that marvelous he gave a stained glass window to the church." Now some people give in order to be seen of men. Your motive is wrong.

God weighs the actions. "Why did I do it?" is really more important than what I do. Your attitude is far more important than your actions. So acknowledging that by Him are all of our actions weighed.

The bows of the mighty men are broken, and they that stumbled are girded with strength. They that were full have hired themselves out for bread; and they that were hungry ceased: so that the barren hath born seven; and she that hath many children is waxed feeble. [Now I do detect in Hannah's prayer here a little bit of gloating over that woman that troubled her for so long.] The Lord killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up. The Lord maketh the poor, and he maketh the rich: he bringeth low, and he fiftieth up. He roister up the poor out of the dust, he lifts the beggar from the dunghill, and sets him among princes, to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth are the Lord's, and he hath set the world upon them (1Sa 2:4-8).

Now it is foolish to take this picturesque speech of Hannah and say that the Bible teaches the ancient theory that the earth was set upon pillars. Because she uses this figure of speech, and speaks of the pillars of the earth, and the world set upon them. It's only picturesque figures of speech and it is not a kind of a divine revelation at all.

He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail (1Sa 2:9).

Here again is I think a very important scripture, "He will keep the feet of His saints." In the Psalms a lot is said about keeping the feet of His saints. The seventy-first Psalm, "My feet almost slipped, I almost had it." The walking in slippery places, "Keeping the feet of His saints," keeping me from falling, actually.

"For by strength shall no man prevail." What a valuable truth. "For by strength" that is by a man's own strength, you will never prevail. I am strongest when I am aware of my weakness. I am at my weakest point when I think I am strong. When I think, "I've got this wired, Lord, I don't need any help from You. I'm able to make it just by myself. You don't need to hold my hand, Lord. Just let me do it on my own. There's no problems here." That's when I'm at my most vulnerable position. When I'm standing there and saying, "Lord I don't think I can, Lord I know I can't make it. Lord help me I know that I'm not gonna be able to make it through this one. I need Your help." That's when I'm at my strongest position. "For by strength shall no man prevail." By your own strength you'll never know real victory. It is only as we learn to rely and trust in the strength of the Lord that we are really strong.

Now we go into a little bit of history of Eli's sons, and they were real rats. Eli was the high priest and his sons were greedy. They were priests representing God, but they were bad representatives.

Now it was a custom in those days when you would offer your sacrifice to the Lord you would be—it was actually—they were feasts. You would sacrifice the lamb, they would cut it up, they'd burn the fat as a burnt offering; the smoke would ascend up to God. Then they would oftentimes then boil the meat and then you'd eat it. You'd sit down and more or less eat it with God. But as the meat was being boiled, the priests would come along and they had little hooks, little forks with three hooks, and they'd reach in, and pull out and whatever they got out was theirs. That became the priests' pay almost. It was sort of the salary for the priests. They'd just put their forks in and pull out from the food that was cooking, and whatever came out they had.

But Eli's sons would come to them when they were just cutting up, butchering the meat. They'd say, "We don't want boiled meat, we want to roast ours. We want to take ours now."

The people would say, "Well, be sure and take the fat and offer it to the Lord."

They said, "Hey don't give us a bad time. You don't want to give it to us now? We'll take it by force." So they were bullying the people. The effect of it was that men began to abhor the offering of the Lord.

Down in verse seventeen,

Thou the sin of the young men were great: because it caused people to begin to resent their offerings to the Lord (1Sa 2:17).

What a horrible sin that actually is, where you turn people off from God because of your attitude, because of greed and your own greed, you cause people to blaspheme. I really don't know who got me started on these evangelist's lists. But these evangelists sell their lists to each other. So you get on one, and pretty soon you get on all, because they'll sell their lists to each other. They'll do anything for a buck. So it seems that I'm getting more and more letters.

"Dear brother, a mutual friend told me about you, and I felt led of the Lord to write, and to share with you my needs. Now I'm enclosing a page of the Bible because the word of God is so powerful. If you'll just write your request on this page, and wrap it up, and send it back to me, enclose your offering in the page also. I'll take your request before the Lord, and I'll pray for you because the Lord tells me there's something wrong. You've got a problem in your life, just something that's not quite right. What is it, brother? Share it with me."

The other day a telegram came, "Urgent: Please send ten dollars immediately, I'll explain everything later."

"I've built a cross. Send me the names of four people that you want nailed to that cross."

"And enclose an offering of fifteen to twenty dollars." Can you believe it? It's unreal.

Now these men, their sin is really terrible. It's awful because they cause people to blaspheme God. They are deceivers. They prey upon people who have become more or less senile, living on pensions. They're nothing but rip-off artists. Their sin is as the sins of the sons of Eli, who caused people to abhor the sacrifice and the worship of God.

Now Samuel began to do little errands around the temple, and his mother made him a little linen robe like the priests. Though he was just a little tyke, yet he began to wear the robes of the priests, and began to do the errands around there. I imagine he was just a cute little guy there to see. There in his little linen robe and going around and doing some of the little duties around there. I imagine it was really quite a sight.

And every year his mother would make a little coat for him, and when she would come up each year to sacrifice she would bring him a new coat, [A little bit bigger naturally than the year before.] and visit with him there. So Eli the priest blessed Elkanah his father [That is Samuel's father] with his wife, and said, The Lord give thee seed of this woman for the loan which is lent to the Lord. And they went to their own home. And then God blessed Hannah, and she conceived, and had three other sons, and two daughters. And the child Samuel grew before the Lord. Now Eli was an old man, and he heard the things that his sons did; how that actually they were lying with the women right there at the gate of the temple (1Sa 2:19-22).

They were just perverse, though they were supposedly representing God as the priests. Yet they were immoral; they were crooked, they were real rats.

And so their dad said, Why do you do such things? I hear of your evil dealings from all of these people. My sons; it's not a good report that I hear: you make the Lord's people to transgress. If one man sins against another, the judge shall judge him: but if a man sins against the Lord, who's gonna pray for him? Notwithstanding they did not hearken unto the voice of their father, because the Lord would slay them (1Sa 2:23-25).

In other words, they had gone so far the Lord was wanting to wipe them out. Therefore they just didn't listen to their dad.

But the child Samuel grew on, and was in favour both with the Lord, and also with men. Now there came a man of God to Eli, and prophesied to him how that God had promised to place the high priesthood into the house of Aaron for ever (1Sa 2:26-28).

However because of Eli and his sons who would not honor the Lord, God said,

For them that honor me, I will honor; but them that despise me shall be lightly esteemed. Behold, the days come, that I will cut off thine arm, and the arm of thy father's house, and there shall not be an old man in your house. And you will see an enemy in my habitation, in all the wealth which God shall give Israel: there shall not be an old man in your house for ever (1Sa 2:30-32).

And then the prophecy of verse thirty-five,

Thou shalt raise me up a faithful priest, that shall do according to that which is in mine heart and in my mind: and I will build him a sure house; and he shall walk before mine anointed for ever (1Sa 2:35).

So the prophecy there of the new priesthood, Jesus Christ, the High Priest after the order of Melchizedek.

(Through The Bible C-2000 Series; Chuck Smith; Bible Commentaries; 1979-1986)

IX. PRAYER-EQUIPMENT FOR PREACHERS

"Go back! Back to that upper room; back to your knees; back to searching of heart and habit, thought and life; back to pleading, praying, waiting, till the Spirit of the Lord floods the soul with light, and you are endued with power from on high. Then go forth in the power of Pentecost, and the Christ-life shall be lived, and the works of Christ shall be done. You shall open blind eyes, cleanse foul hearts, break men's fetters, and save men's souls. In the power of the indwelling Spirit, miracles become the commonplace of daily living."—Samuel Chadwick.

Almost the last words uttered by our Lord before His ascension to heaven, were those addressed to the eleven disciples, words which, really, were spoken to, and having directly to do with, preachers, words which indicate very clearly the needed fitness which these men must have to preach the Gospel, beginning at Jerusalem: "But tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem," says Jesus, "till ye be endued with power from on high."

Two things are very clearly set forth in these urgent directions. First, the power of the Holy Ghost for which they must tarry. This was to be received after their conversion, an indispensable requisite, equipping them for the great task set before them. Secondly, the "promise of the Father," this "power from on high," would come to them after they had waited in earnest, continuous prayer. A reference to Acts 1:14 will reveal that these same men, with the women, "continued with one accord in prayer and supplication," and so continued until the Day of Pentecost, when the power from on high descended upon them.

This "power from on high," as important to those early preachers as it is to present-day preachers, was not the force of a mighty intellect, holding in its grasp great truths, flooding them with light, and forming them into verbal shapeliness and beauty. Nor was it the acquisition of great learning, or the result of an address, faultless and complete by rule of rhetoric. None of these things. Nor was this spiritual power held then, nor is it held now, in the keeping of any earthly sources of power. The effect and energy of all human forces are essentially different in source and character, and do not at all result from this "power from on high." The transmission of such power is directly from God, a bestowal, in rich measure, of the force and energy which pertains only to God, and which is transmitted to His messengers only in answer to a longing, wrestling attitude of his soul before his Master, conscious of his own impotency and seeking the omnipotency of the Lord he serves, in order more fully to understand the given Word and to preach the same to his fellow-men.

The "power from on high" may be found in combination with all sources of human power, but is not to be confounded with them, is not dependent upon them, and must never be superseded by them. Whatever of human gift, talent or force a preacher may possess it is not to be made paramount, or even conspicuous. It must be hidden, lost, overshadowed by this "power from on high." The forces of intellect and culture may all be present, but without this inward, heaven-given power, all spiritual effort is vain and unsuccessful. Even when lacking the other equipment but having this "power from on high," a preacher cannot but succeed. It is the one essential, all-important vital force which a messenger of God must possess to give wings to his message, to put life into his preaching, and to enable him to speak the Word with acceptance and power.

A word is necessary here. Distinctions need to be kept in mind. We must think clearly upon this question. "Power from on high" means "the unction of the Holy One" resting on and abiding in the preacher. This is not so much a power which bears witness to a man being the child of God as it is a preparation for delivering the Word to others. Unction must be distinguished from pathos. Pathos may exist in a sermon while unction is entirely absent. So also, may unction be present and pathos absent. Both may exist together; but they are not to be confused, nor be made to appear to be the same thing. Pathos promotes emotion, tender feeling, sometimes tears. Quite often it results from the relation of an affecting incident, or when the tender side is peculiarly appealed to. But pathos is neither the direct nor indirect result of the Holy Spirit resting upon the preacher as he preaches.

But unction is. Here we are given the evidence of the workings of an undefinable agency in the preacher, which results directly from the presence of this "power from on high," deep, conscious, life-giving and carrying, giving power and point to the preached Word. It is the element in a sermon which arouses, stirs, convicts and moves the souls of sinners and saints. This is what the preacher requires, the great equipment for which he should wait and pray. This "unction of the Holy One" delivers from dryness, saves from superficiality, and gives authority to preaching. It is the one quality which distinguishes the preacher of the Gospel from other men who speak in public; it is that which makes a sermon unique, unlike the deliverance of any other public speaker.

Prayer is the language of a man burdened with a sense of need. It is the voice of the beggar, conscious of his poverty, asking of another the things he needs. It is not only the language of lack, but of felt lack, of lack consciously realized. "Blessed are the poor in spirit," means not only that the fact of poverty of spirit brings the blessing, but also that poverty of spirit is realized, known and acknowledged. Prayer is the language of those who need something—something which they, themselves, cannot supply but which God has promised them, and for which they ask. In the end, poor praying and prayerlessness amount to the same thing, for poor praying proceeds from a lack of the sense of need, while prayerlessness has its origin in the same soil. Not to pray is not only to declare there is nothing needed, but to admit to a non-realization of that need. This is what aggravates the sin of prayerlessness. It represents an attempt at instituting an independence of God, a self-sufficient ruling of God out of the life. It is a declaration made to God that we do not need Him, and hence do not pray to Him.

This is the state in which the Holy Spirit, in His messages to the Seven Churches in Asia, found the Laodicean Church and "the Laodicean state" has come to stand for one in which God is ruled out, expelled from the life, put out of the pulpit. The entire condemnation of this Church is summed up in one expression: "Because thou sayest, I have need of nothing," the most alarming state into which a person, or church or preacher can come. Trusting in its riches, in its social position, in things outward and material, the Church at Laodicea omitted God, leaving Him out of their church plans and church work, and declared, by their acts and by their omission of prayer, "I have need of nothing."

church or preacher can come. Trusting in its riches, in its social position, in things outward and material, the Church at Laodicea omitted God, leaving Him out of their church plans and church work, and declared, by their acts and by their omission of prayer, "I have need of ..No wonder the self-satisfied declaration brought forth its sentence of punishment—"Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." The idea conveyed is that such a backslidden state of heart is as repulsive to God as an emetic is to the human stomach, and as the stomach expels that which is objectionable, so Almighty God threatens to "spue out of His mouth" these people who were in such a religious condition so repulsive to Him. All of it was traceable to a prayerless state of heart, for no one can read this word of the Spirit to this Laodicean Church and not see that the very core of their sin was prayerlessness. How could a Church, given to prayer, openly and vauntingly declare, "I have need of nothing," in the face of the Spirit's assertion that it needed everything, "Thou knowest not that thou art wretched, and poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked"? In addition to their sin of self-sufficiency and of independence of God, the Laodiceans were spiritually blind. Oh, what dullness of sight, what blindness of soul! These people were prayerless, and knew not the import of such prayerlessness. They lacked everything which goes to make up spiritual life, and force, and self-denying piety, and vainly supposed themselves to need nothing but material wealth, thus making temporal possessions a substitute for spiritual wealth, leaving God entirely out of their activities, relying upon human and material resources to do the work only possible to the divine and supernatural, and secured alone by prayer. Nor let it be forgotten that this letter (in common with the other six letters) was primarily addressed to the preacher in charge of the church. All this strengthens the impression that the "angel of the church" himself was in this lukewarm state. He himself was living a prayerless life, relying upon things other than God, practically saying, "I have need of nothing." For these words are the natural expression of the spirit of him who does not pray, who does not care for God, and who does not feel the need of Him in his life, in his work and in his preaching. Furthermore, the words of the Spirit seem to indicate that the "angel of the church" at Laodicea was indirectly responsible for this sad condition into which the Laodicean Church had fallen.

May not this sort of a church be found in modern times? Is it not likely that we could discover some preachers of modern times who fall under a similar condemnation to that passed upon the "angel of the church" of Laodicea? Preachers of the present age excel those of the past in many, possibly in all, human elements of success. They are well abreast of the age in learning, research, and intellectual vigour. But these things neither insure "power from on high" nor guarantee a live, thriving religious experience, or righteous life. These purely human gifts do not bring with them an insight into the deep things of God, or strong faith in the Scriptures, or an intense loyalty to God's divine revelation. The presence of these earthly talents even in the most commanding and impressive form, and richest measure do not in the least abate the necessity for the added endowment of the Holy Spirit. Herein lies the great danger menacing the pulpit of today. All around us we see a tendency to substitute human gifts and worldly attainments for that supernatural, inward power which comes from on high in answer to earnest prayer.

In many instances modern preaching seems to fail in the very thing which should create and distinguish true preaching, which is essential to its being, and which alone can make of it a divine and powerfully aggressive agency. It lacks, in short, "the power from on high" which alone can make it a living thing. It fails to become the channel through which God's saving power can be made to appeal to men's consciences and hearts. Quite often, modern preaching fails at this vital point, for lack of exercising a potent influence which disturbs men in their sleep of security, and awakens them to a sense of need and of peril. There is a growing need of an appeal which will quicken and arouse the conscience from its ignoble stupor and give it a sense of wrong-doing and a corresponding sense of repentance. There is need of a message which searches into the secret places of man's being, dividing, as it were, the joints and the marrow, and laying bare the mysterious depths before himself and his God. Much of our present-day preaching is lacking in that quality which infuses new blood into the heart and veins of faith, that arms it with courage and skill for the battle with the powers of darkness, and secures it a victory over the forces of the world.

Such high and noble ends can never be accomplished by human qualifications, nor can these great results be secured by a pulpit clothed only with the human elements of power, however gracious, comfortable, and helpful they may be. The Holy Spirit is needed. He alone can equip the ministry for its difficult and responsible work in and out of the pulpit. Oh, that the present-day ministry may come to see that its one great need is an endowment of "power from on high," and that this one need can be secured only by the use of God's appointed means of grace—the ministry of prayer. Prayer is needed by the preacher in order that his personal relations with God may be maintained and that because there is no difference between him and any other kind of a man in so far as his personal salvation is concerned. This he must work out "with fear and trembling," just as all other men must do. Thus prayer is of vast importance to the preacher in order that he may possess a growing religious experience, and be enabled to live such a life that his character and conduct will back up his preaching and give force to his message. A man must have prayer in his pulpit work, for no minister can preach effectively without prayer. He also has use for prayer in praying for others. Paul was a notable example of a preacher who constantly prayed for those to whom he ministered.

But we come, now, to another sphere of prayer, that of the people praying for the preacher. "Brethren, pray for us," This is the cry which Paul set in motion, and which has been the cry of spiritually minded preachers—those who know God and who know that value of prayer—in all succeeding ages. No condition of success or the reverse of it must abate the cry. No degree of culture, no abundance of talents, must cause that cry to cease. The learned preacher, as well as the unlearned, has equal need to call out to the people they serve, "Withal, praying also for us." Such a cry voices the felt need of a preacher's heart who feels the need there is for sympathies of a people to be in harmony with its minister. It is but the expression of the inner soul of a preacher who feels his insufficiency for the tremendous responsibilities of the pulpit, who realizes his weakness and his need of the divine unction, and who throws himself upon the prayers of his congregation, and calls out to them, "Praying always with all prayer and supplication, in the Spirit, and for me, that utterance may be given me." It is the cry of deep felt want in the heart of the preacher who feels he must have this prayer made specifically for him that he may do his work in God's own way. When this request to a people to pray for the preacher is cold, formal and official, it freezes in—stead of fructifies. To be ignorant of the necessity for the cry, is to be ignorant of the sources of spiritual success. To fail to stress the cry, and to

fall to have responses to it, is to sap the sources of spiritual life. Preachers must sound out the cry to the Church of God. Saints everywhere and of every kind, and of every faith speedily respond and pray for the preacher. The imperative need of the work demands it. "Pray for us," is the natural cry of the hearts of God's called men—faithful preachers of the Word.

Saintly praying in the early Church helped apostolic preaching mightily, and rescued apostolic men from many dire straits. It can do the same thing today. It can open doors for apostolic labours, and apostolic lips to utter bravely and truly the Gospel message. Apostolic movements wait their ordering from prayer, and avenues long closed are opened to apostolic entrance by and through the power of prayer. The messenger receives his message and is schooled as to how to carry and deliver the message by prayer. The forerunner of the Gospel, and that which prepares the way, is prayer; not only by the praying of the messenger himself, but by the praying of the Church of God.

Writing along this line in his Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, Paul is first general in his request and says, "Brethren, pray for us." Then he becomes more minute and particular: "Finally, brethren, pray for us," he goes on, "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; for all men have not faith." The Revised Version has for "free course" the word "run." "The Word" means doctrine, and the idea conveyed is that this doctrine of the Gospel is rapidly propagated, a metaphor taken from the running of a race, and is an exhortation to exert one's self, to strive hard, to expend strength. Thus the prayer for the spread of the Gospel gives the same energy to the Word of the Lord, as the greatest outlay of strength gives success to the racer. Prayer in the pew gives the preached Word energy, facility, and success. Preaching without the backing of mighty praying is as limp and worthless an effort as can be imagined. Prayerlessness in the pew is a serious hindrance to the running of the Word of the Lord. The preaching of the Word of the Lord falls to run and be glorified from many causes. The difficulty may lie with the preacher himself, should his outward conduct be out of harmony with the rule of the Scriptures and his own profession. The Word lived must be in accord with the Word delivered; the life must be in harmony with the sermon. The preacher's spirit and behaviour out of the pulpit must run parallel with the Word of the Lord spoken in the pulpit. Otherwise, a man is an obstacle to the success of his own message. Again, the Word of the Lord may fail to run, may be seriously encumbered and crippled by the inconsistent lives of those who are the hearers thereof. Bad living in the pew will seriously cripple the Word of the Lord, as attempts to run on its appointed course. Unrighteous lives among the laity heavily weights down the Word of the Lord and hampers the work of the ministry. Yet prayer will remove this burden which seriously handicaps the preached Word. It will tend to do this in a direct way, or in an indirect manner. For just as you set laymen to praying, for the preacher or even for themselves, it awakens conscience, stirs the heart, and tends to correct evil ways and to promote good living. No man will pray long and continue in sin. Praying breaks up bad living, while bad living breaks down prayer. Praying goes into bankruptcy when a man goes to sinning. To obey the cry of the preacher, "Brethren, pray for us," sets men to doing that which will induce right living in them, and will tend to break them away from sin. So it comes about that it is worth no little to get the laity to pray for the ministry. Prayer helps the preacher, is an aid to the sermon, assists the hearer and promotes right living in the pew.

Prayer also moves him who prays for the preacher and for the Word of the Lord, to use all his influence to remove any hindrance to that Word which he may see, and which lies in his power to remove. But prayer reaches the preacher directly. God hears the praying of a church for its minister. Prayer for the preached Word is a direct aid to it. Prayer for the preacher gives wings to the Gospel, as well as feet. Prayer makes the Word of the Lord go forward strongly and rapidly. It takes the shackles off of the message, and gives it a chance to run straight to the hearts of sinners and saints, alike. It opens the way, clears the track, furnishes a free course. The failure of many a preacher may be found just here. He was hampered, hindered, crippled by a prayerless church. Non-praying officials stood in the way of the Word preached, and became veritable stumbling blocks in the way of the Word, definitely preventing its reaching the hearts of the unsaved. Unbelief and prayerlessness go together. It is written of our Lord in Matthew's Gospel that when He entered into His own country, "he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief." Mark puts it a little differently, but giving out the same idea: "And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folks and healed them. And he marveled because of their unbelief." Unquestionably the unbelief of that people hindered our Lord in His gracious work and tied His hands. And if that be true, it requires no undue straining of the Scriptures when we say that the unbelief and prayerlessness of a church can tie the hands of its preacher, and prevent him from doing many great works in the salvation of souls and in edifying saints. Prayerlessness, therefore, as it concerns the preacher is a very serious matter. If it exists in the preacher himself, then he ties his own hands and makes the Word as preached by him ineffective and void. If prayerless men be found in the pew, then it hurts the preacher, robs him of an invaluable help, and interferes seriously with the success of his work. How great the need of a praying church to help on the preaching of the Word of the Lord! Both pew and pulpit are jointly concerned in this preaching business. It is a copartnership. The two go hand in hand. One must help the other, one can hinder the other. Both must work in perfect accord or serious damage will result, and God's plan concerning the preacher and the preached Word be defeated.

("The Weapon Of Prayer"; EM Bounds; Chapter 9 ; 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 420-422)

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