

TELECAST SERMON
FOR SUNDAY, JANUARY 22, 2023 (PRAYER TOWER 49TH ANNIVERSARY)
"PRAYER IS THE STRENGTH OF THE GOSPEL"
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Thank you, Melvin!

I pray your sharing in our TV Gospel service will enable you to flee the devil, and that it will be an opportunity for you to renew your Christian dedication and commitment to our Lord Jesus. We need to pray much for the "Body of Christ." The time is short, and God's people must be fully prepared and ready, when Jesus comes for His "Bride, the Body of Christ." Therefore, it is imperative for us to spread and propagate the Gospel through sermons, such as the one I am presenting today and entitled: "PRAYER IS THE STRENGTH OF THE GOSPEL."

Today we hear a great deal about pressure, stress, depression, and anxiety. Many preachers speak with authority and say, "I have the answers." The only one who has the answers to all our problems is our Lord Jesus Christ.

He tells us in Matt. 6:31-34, the only cure for anxiety is to trust in the Father's care. "Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

In other words, seek first the Spiritual things and the material things will follow. There is no question about it, we are facing pressures on every side in our work and in our world. There's little we can do to avoid the pressures we face. The old adage teaches us that when the going gets tough, the tough gets going. Learning how to pray, even under extreme pressure, is a vital part of living out our commitment to Jesus Christ.

The Lord taught our disciples a model prayer when they said, "Lord, teach us to pray." We read in Matt. 6:9-13, "After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen."

Proper prayer should begin with worship; put the interest of God above the interest of mankind, and be happy in that, which is His will: prayer should ask for daily needs and seek the forgiveness of sins and victory over temptations.

It would be well for us to remember today, that we should approach the Father on Church ground, that is, through the Lord Jesus Christ, and recognize that our standing

is in Him, and we have no merit of our own, and with thanksgiving upon our lips and in our hearts, acknowledge His bountiful blessings to us in Spiritual and material benefits. We have to yield to God's guidance and faithfully obey His Word. Jesus said, "Without me you can do nothing."

Praying under pressure requires we be "clear minded and self controlled," so that we may overcome the problems and pressures that would control us. Satan would like to put all of us in a dark tunnel, where we are miserable and ineffective as true born-again believers. Listen to I Peter 5:7-8, "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:"

Someone said, "Only God can remove mountains, but faith and prayer can move God." We read in Matt. 17:20-21, " And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting."

Why is it hard to pray under pressure? The pressure of life causes us to believe in our weaknesses and shortcomings. Therefore, many church going people pray very little. No wonder so many churches are Spiritually dead. Victory is gone and the joy is lost. We have to see to it that no one misses the grace of God. God renews His grace to us every day, as we need it.

Thus, let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith. We read in Heb. 12:1-2, "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us. Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

The cloud of witnesses represents the heroes of faith, enumerated in the 11th chapter of Hebrews, and all those who have gone on before whose faith was in God's Word. We should lay aside every weight, as weight adds to the difficulty of our progress.

The weights are not necessarily external; they are first of all in the heart. The moment a thing holds a place in the heart and mind, which is not in God's purpose, it becomes a weight or sin, no matter what it is. And the result is soon obvious! We all have a besetting sin, like a close-fitting mantle or garment that clings to the body and impedes its progress and freedom of motion.

Yes, we are all running a race. Each step of the course has been marked for us. It's not how you start, but how you finish. Not once, saved always saved but he that endureth unto the end shall be saved. We read in I Cor. 15:58, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

Some people keep looking at the Promised Land, but never seem to enter it. The time is now if we hope to make it and turn our lives around. Why should we pray to God when under life's pressures? No matter what the pressures, we should keep on praying.

God is the King of the universe, as we find in Psalms 24:7-8, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle." This means all our problems and burdens are in His hands.

Yes, He has the whole world in His hands. God is righteous and He cannot sin against us. God never lets us down, He tells us, "I will never leave thee, no forsake thee." Listen to Heb. 13:6, "So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."

God is everywhere, as we find in Psalm 139:7-10 & 14 "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well."

These verses show us that God is Omnipresent--He is everywhere. Such knowledge is too wonderful for us; we cannot understand it. God is all powerful. Did He not say, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth?"

Let's take the case of Job. Satan smote him with painful boils from the sole of his feet unto his head. Even his wife told him, "Curse God and die." But he admonished her as we read in Job. 2:10, "But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips."

However, he was inclined to be self-righteous, and God had to put Job through a fiery Test. Finally, he came to himself. We read Job 42:6, "Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." The answer to the problem, "Why do the righteous suffer" is found here. Suffering is required to correct and purify the righteous, not to punish them for sins.

Job was godly and possessed a wonderful faith, which his afflictions could not shake. In other words, he was really under pressure, but he never gave up; he hung on! But he was not humble enough and was inclined to be self-righteous. When brought into the presence of God, he realized his sinfulness, judged himself, and opened the door to restored happiness and greater fruitfulness.

All true born-again believers have the same problem, which is solved in the same way Job was vindicated, honored, and doubly blessed. He had more in the end than in the beginning. We read in Job. 42:16-17, "After this lived Job an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, (grandchildren), even four generations. So Job died, being old and full of days."

In this, too, Job was repaid two-fold, having twice the usual span of life, as we read in Psalm 90:10, "The days of our years are threescore years and ten; (70 years); and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, (80 years) yet is there strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away."

Therefore, let us ask God to teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. We can all praise and thank Jesus for all the pressures of life because then we know, we are truly the sons and daughters of God. Our eyes have been enlightened, and now we can see the hope of His calling, and the riches of His inheritance. Thank God for the inheritance that comes through the Gospel of the Kingdom of God.

At the church of Caesarea, while Peter preached Jesus to the Gentiles, the Holy Ghost fell on all that heard the Word. A baptismal followed immediately, as we read in Acts 10:47-48, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days."

It was Jesus, Who shed His blood on the cross for the sins of the world, and only in the name of Jesus can one receive remission of sins. He is the only Saviour for this lost and dying world!

Thus, we see the church at Philippi, the church at Corinth, the church at Ephesus, and the church at Galatia were baptized into Christ, as we read in Galatians 3:27, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."

The Colossians were buried with Him in baptism too. Listen to Col. 2:12, "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead."

We read in John 3:5, "Jesus answered, Verily, verily I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

What does it mean to be born of water? To be born of water is to be immersed in water in the name of Jesus Christ, and according to Acts 2:38, "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

To be born of the Spirit is to speak in an unknown tongue or language, which is the only verification of receiving the baptism of the Holy Ghost. It was baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, without exception.

Why is the name of Jesus so important? Because Acts 4:12 declares, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." It is a name which is above every name in heaven and in earth, and of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named.

Naturally, there is a question by many today, regarding the scripture, Matt. 28:19, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." The truth is, there is not one record of an apostle who baptized a convert, repeating the words in Matt. 28:19. The name must be mentioned to fulfill all righteousness. Father, Son, and the Holy Ghost are merely titles.

There is no promise of remission of sins or the promise of the Holy Ghost, or the gift of healing in Matt. 28:19. The word, "name," is in the singular, not plural. And His name is Jesus, as we read in Col. 2:9, "For in him (not them) dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." God the Father; God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost dwelleth in Christ Jesus. There are three manifestations, but only one God, as we read in I John 5:7, "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."

Now, let's refocus upon our message, "Prayer is the Strength of the Gospel." The Lord tells us not to focus on our problems. Our God is larger than our problems. Don't think negatively. Think positive! God is a God of miracles. Therefore, let's not give up!

Here is some timely advice for our viewers. Pray your way out from pressure. Be willing to confess your faults and take responsible action. Fellowship is having the right attitude about sin. Listen to I John 1:8-10, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."

We cannot say that we have no sin. Only Jesus Christ can say that. The more we are aware of our own impurities and sinfulness, we are able to see that God is light. God is faithful (entirely true) to His promises and to His people, and at the same He is just in forgiving sin, because the penalty was met at Calvary.

The effectual prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Forget the past. Stop digging your old faults up, and just let go, as Paul tells us in Phil. 3:13-14, "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

And what might be the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus? The number one prize is to be the BRIDE OF CHRIST and to be in that number of 144,000, which will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. The trump of God will sound and the dead in Christ shall rise first, and we, which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Don't ever look back, someone might be gaining on you. Remember, Lot's wife. She looked back and turned into a pillar of salt.

It's wonderful to come to the end of the way, after going thru much pressure, depression, and anxiety. God has assured us of salvation and eternal life. On the other hand, the saddest thing to occur on earth will be when one comes to that hour without Jesus and without hope. When Paul came to his hour, after much pressure, he had such great assurance, that he said to Timothy, "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand."

He looked back over his life, and remembered his experience with Jesus on the dusty Damascus Road. Listen to what he wrote in II Tim. 1:12, "For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." Paul has committed himself to Christ years before, and he knew that he was now safe in the arms of Jesus.

Yes, you can entrust your money to a bank, yet, still lose it; you can entrust your friend with a secret, yet he can betray you. However, when you trust your soul to Jesus, it is safe forever. The joy of knowing Jesus is to believe upon Him, Who died for us, that we may know the promise of eternal life.

Paul knew Jesus, not as a historical person, but as a personal Saviour, Master, and Lord. On that day when the light from heaven blinded him, he heard Jesus speaking directly to him. We read in Acts 9:4-6, "And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who are thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do."

From that time on, Paul came to know that, indeed, Jesus was the Son of God and the Savior of the world. And on that very day, Jesus became Paul's Saviour. Persecutions of all kinds came; Paul had suffered the loss of all things, but the one great joy of his life was that he knew Christ. He tells us in Phil. 3:8, "...I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ."

And finally, how about the prayer of the Lord Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane. Speaking about an example of pure pressure, He was the role model. We read John 17:1, "These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee."

The Lord Jesus Christ asked for six petitions:

(1) that He might be glorified

(2) for the believers' safety which we find in verse 11, "And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are."

(3) For the believer's sanctification that we find in verse 17, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."

(4) For the believer's unity in verse 21, "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

As the Psalmist tells us, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." In unity there is strength and victory!

(5) For the future believers, as found in verse 20, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word."

And finally (6) we read in verse 24, for the believer's future glory, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou has given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."

The Bible tells us that an angel from heaven came down to strengthen Him, while He was praying and in agony; He prayed under pressure, and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground. Jesus knew that He was about to go forth to die, but instead of asking for help and comfort, He spent those last hours in comforting His disciples. What a wonderful Saviour!

If you would like to know more about God's Word, the Church, and review these telecast presentations in its entirety, please visit our website at Jesuscomingsoon.org

Until our next telecast, this is your host, Pastor Billy Han, Jr., expressing my sincerest appreciation to each of you, who have allowed us to come into your homes. May the good Lord bless and keep you all in the hollow of His hands.

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