

## **Pray Daily: Connecting with God while Changing the World**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Roman numeral I. One of the seven sacred charge commitments is to spend two hours a day in the Word and in prayer. The Word and prayer go hand in hand because the Word enables us to pray more. The more that we pray, the more that we enjoy the Word. We also commit to read the book of Revelation once a week as forerunners for a three-year period of time. That was a specific commitment. The reason that we identified praying daily as a significant commitment to be prepared as forerunners is because prayer causes our spirit to be energized like nothing else. It releases blessings on our circumstances, and God uses it to change the world—to really change human history. People experience salvation and deliverance related to how much other people pray.

### **PRAYER IS TALKING TO GOD**

Paragraph C. What is prayer? Prayer is talking to God. We all know that. It is very simple; however, to go to the heights of that which God has made available in prayer is very costly. It is not costly to touch it in an introductory level. It is costly to go to the heights because the greater power and release of His presence requires a greater connectedness to God. Prayer is the greatest privilege. I know that we are supposed to say that. If you take a step back, it is amazing the greatness of the privilege that prayer is before God. God would release revelation of His heart and His resources based on us talking to Him. He says, “I have many things in My heart to release, I have much resource, much power, and I am going to do it related to how much you talk to Me.”

It is a great privilege. It is a struggle. All the powers of darkness want to shut this thing down. There is a great struggle because the enemy sees the potential of prayer reaching a certain level of maturity. Again, the introductory experience of prayer is not costly, but to go to the heights of the type of prayer that is available to us is very costly. It is an awesome miracle. Prayer is. God the Holy Spirit would help us in our weakness. The third person of the Trinity would move in human weakness so that our connectedness to God would go to the next level. It is a supernatural work of God for prayer to proceed, even this talking to God dimension.

### **GOD DESIRES US TO CONNECT WITH HIS HEART ON A DEEP LEVEL IN PRAYER**

Paragraph D. Why does God want us to pray? In one sentence, it connects us with His heart. It connects us with His heart in deep partnership. He says, “I am going to release my resources related to how connected we are. I will withhold my resources to starve you out of your prayerlessness because you want my blessing. I will withhold it. As you become desperate to pray, you cry out, and then we connect.” The withholding of blessing because of prayerlessness is really God’s greater desire and invitation for connectedness with us. It is as if God says, “I could give you everything now, but you would end up with everything but connection with Me. What I want most is connection to you.”

### **BLESSINGS THAT GOD WILL GIVE US AS WE ASK HIM IN FAITH**

Paragraph E. Therefore, God has made as one of His foundational premises of His kingdom that He requires that we ask. James 4:2-3: “Yet you do not have because you ask not. You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss that you may spend it on your pleasures.” It is that simple. Most of God’s promises of blessing are not guarantees. His promises of blessing, many of them are invitations. They are not guarantees. God says, “This is in reach if you want it. Even in your weakness and brokenness, it is within your reach in the grace of God. You will experience in partnership with My heart with holy, believing, and persevering prayer.” Those are three

specific words: holy, believing, and persevering prayer. He wants abandonment in our heart. He wants us to believe His Word, and He wants us to stay with it and not to give up. He wants us to persevere. The reason these are three requirements of prayer is because God wants us to connect to His heart. That is the whole point. Through holy, believing, and persevering prayer, we connect the most.

**PRAYER DOES NOT EARN US MORE OF GOD'S FAVOR, BUT POSITIONS US TO RECEIVE**

Paragraph F. One of the foundational principles of the prayer is God says, “I give it to you based on asking.” Philippians 4:6: “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.” God will release the increase of the good, or the decrease of the bad. Prayer does not earn us God’s favor. Prayer is just the outcome of relationship with Him. It is the outward manifestation of humans in relationship with Him on the earth.

Paragraph G. God withholds blessing, as I said earlier, until we ask, because He is starving us out of prayerlessness. Because the pressure of God withholding His blessing—finally, the guy says, “I cannot take it any more, I will break down, and start talking to God.”

God says, “There we go.” It is not because God is trying to prove His power like, “Hey, I have the power to withhold. Watch this. You will do it my way, or the highway.” He is not trying to prove His power by withholding His blessing. It is the manifestation of His jealousy for relationship. If I withhold the blessing, you will talk to Me. If you talk to Me, you will be blessed beyond measure in relationship with me. Isaiah 30:18, one of my favorite verses on prayer. The New American Standard Bible says in Isaiah 30:18: “Therefore, the Lord will wait, that He may be gracious to you; And therefore, He will be exalted, that He may have mercy on you. For the LORD God is a God of justice; Blessed are all those who wait for Him.”

Isaiah describes God as waiting. We think that we are waiting for God; “God, we are waiting for you to answer.” God is saying, “I am waiting for you to ask with perseverance.” The Lord is waiting. He wants to be gracious. He will be very gracious after He hears you. As He hears a sustained cry from your heart, He says, “I really will answer you.”

**WE MUST ASK SPECIFIC PRAYERS OF SUPPLICATION AND NOT JUST THINK ABOUT NEEDS**

Paragraph H. We actually have to ask and specifically offer our requests. It says in Philippians 4:7: “In everything by prayer, make your requests known.” It is not enough to think about the need because we can think about our need with frustration and desperation without connecting to God. Many people think about their need; I mean, believers. They love Jesus, they think about their need, but they do not actually go the next step and ask in a persevering way.

**PRACTICAL ISSUES IN DEVELOPING A CONSISTENT PRAYER LIFE**

Roman numeral II. When we ask, we have to talk to God. We have to speak in His presence to Him. Asking, actually verbalizing the request is very different than thinking the request through. It is as if God said, “I want you to make a request. I want you to ask it, more than think about it.” When we verbalize the requests, the good news is that it helps you control your thought life. Most humans have their thoughts randomly bouncing around the earth. When you actually verbalize it, even at a really low volume, or you even whisper it, your mind cannot go one direction while your words go another direction.

Your mind will always follow your words. Your mind will follow even a whisper. It will help you control your thoughts. It says in Hosea 14:2: “Take words with you, And return to the LORD. Say to Him, ‘Take away all iniquity; Receive us graciously, for we will offer the sacrifices of our lips.’” When you go to the Lord, when you return, take words with you. When you return to the Lord, say things to Him. Do not sit there quietly thinking nice things. Take words with you when you return back to the Lord with all your heart. We are going to look at a couple of practical issues—three practical issues in developing a consistent prayer life.

I am not trying to sound arrogant, but I have had a consistent prayer life for over thirty years. I am only saying that to say this next point. I said these three points over thirty years ago. I learned it from someone else. I have preached it for thirty years and a lot of people say, “Ah, maybe. Maybe yes, maybe no.” I want to say: thirty years later, I am sure these three things are absolutely necessary for 99 percent of you. There is that one guy who does not need them. If you think you are that guy, you are probably not the guy. I have never met the guy who does not need these three things, but I am sure he exists somewhere. Three things to strengthen your prayer life.

### **FIRST: SCHEDULE PRAYER TIMES**

Number one, schedule prayer times. Thirty-five years ago, I was in college. They told me, “You have to schedule a prayer time.” I did not have a, “that is legalism” response. I did not even think about that. I just did it because my leaders said that it would be better. People say, “That is legalism.” I tell you: if you schedule your prayer times in the next ten years, you will pray ten times as much. Put it on the calendar. I have had it on the calendar on a daily basis for thirty-five years. It is critical to do this. Do not say, “Well maybe.” I have preached this for years, but people ten and fifteen years later still resist doing it. They still do not have a prayer life, but they are binding Satan. Then they wonder why their prayer life is so lacking. Put your prayer life on your schedule.

### **SECOND: DEVELOP A PRAYER LIST**

Number two is very simple. Again, I was encouraged to do this when I was a teenager. I just did it. I look back thirty-five years later, I am so glad. Develop a prayer list. I have several prayer lists. With a prayer list, more times than not, I will go into my prayer time, and my brain is blank. I think, “OK, I know Bible verses, but I cannot think of one right now.”

I say, “God, I love you. It is my prayer time. I know there are things I am supposed to be talking about. I cannot remember one.” I look at my prayer list and say, “Of course. I remember that. I have been praying that for years.” It is amazing how a prayer list will give you focus. I am going to tell you a little bit of how to do that. The third thing is critical. I did not know this thirty-five years ago, but stumbled into it a few years later.

### **THIRD: YOU HAVE TO HAVE A RIGHT VIEW OF GOD**

You have to have a right view of God. If your view of God is that God is mostly mad or angry with you, then your prayer life is not going to go well. Paragraph A. A schedule establishes when you pray. A prayer list gets us to focus on what to pray for. A right view of God—the Father heart of God and the Bridegroom revelation of Jesus—cause you to want to pray. You have all three. You have the when to pray, you have the desire to pray, and you know what to do when you actually sit down and pray. Again, I know paragraph B—many people love Jesus as much as any of us in this room. It is years later, they still do not have a consistent prayer life, and they are mystified by it. It is not a mystery of how to do this. It really is simple. I deviate from my prayer list any

time I want to. I do not keep my prayer list or my schedule 100 percent of the time. I keep it about eighty-five percent of the time over the years.

My prayer list: I deviate any time that I feel any wind of inspiration. I just deviate from it. My goal is not to get through the prayer list. My prayer list is a support to me when I do not have direction to pray. It is critical through the years. I have prayed many hours for lots of years, and I still go through a prayer list. We have those prayer lists for you. We have them on the Internet and mentioned in the notes.

### **GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT, FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT, AND WISDOM OF THE SPIRIT**

Paragraph C. In developing a prayer list, I want you to understand this. When you develop your own prayer list, you are going to take mine and change some of it. That is the cool thing about it being electronic: you can download it, change it, and get rid of what you do not want. Let it kind of jump-start you. In developing a prayer list, paragraph C, there are three basic prayer themes that exist. Almost every prayer, maybe every one, fits in one of these three themes.

When I figured that out some years ago, it made it easier to think through my prayer list. All prayers, or nearly all prayers are for gifts, fruit, or wisdom. You are either praying for gifts, the power of God, or the favor of God to break in for you or the life of someone else you are praying for. Or you pray for fruit. You want character formed in you, or character formed in others. Or you want wisdom; you want insight into what God is thinking—His mind.

As you develop a prayer list, all of your requests will be one of those three. That kind of gives a grid to work with as you develop a prayer list. There are three, paragraph D, prayer focuses that I use when I develop my prayer list. You want these three to have a major part of your overall prayer life. There is not one prayer list that covers all of these three. I have several different prayer lists. Number one prayer focus is intimacy—intimacy with God. This is the part of my prayer life, your prayer life, where we give our love to Jesus. We speak to Him tenderly. We tell Him we love Him. We wait in His presence with adoration. Included in this would be our worship times. That is part of our prayer times. You have just been praying for an hour and meditating on the Word of God. That is part of your devotional prayer time.

You are giving your heart to the Lord by prayer-reading the Word. Your Bible is open, but you have dialogue with Jesus. Or, it is in fellowshipping with the Holy Spirit where instead of addressing our attention to God on the throne, we are addressing our attention to the God who dwells in us. We actually talk to God, the third person who is in our spirit. The first prayer focus has an intimacy dimension to it. When I am in the intimacy flow, I am not necessarily praying for the breakthrough of God in the city or nation. It is a connection of my heart to God's heart in a very focused way. Then, there is personal petition. Petition is where you are asking God for circumstances, for the money, and for the breakthrough of direction. It is where you are asking for your ministry and for the Lord to anoint you. It is your personal petition for your own life. That is a very important thing. That is not selfish. That is right to do that. Then, the third prayer focus is intercession. Intercession, in the most basic sense, means you are praying for someone else, another person, city, or strategic focus of something happening in the nation.

### **THREE PRAYER LISTS**

Paragraph E. I encourage you to have three prayer lists: a list for your personal prayer life—for your own heart and your intimacy connection. I have that prayer list on the Internet. It is ten prayers to strengthen our inner

man. I use the acronym FELLOWSHIP. There are ten letters in the word FELLOWSHIP, and I use a different theme for each letter. Like *f* is for the fear of the Lord. Right on through, I know a lot of folks who have been using this for some time. They have the acronym FELLOWSHIP memorized; they do not need their prayer list in front of them. I try to go through that list at every prayer meeting. I do not do it at every prayer meeting, but I try to talk to God about my heart.

Number two: I have prayer list for other people—for individuals, cities, and ministries. We pray for YWAM, Egypt, and Israel. Those are specific focuses that the Lord has given me. There are people in the marketplace and several guys I am connected to in the marketplace who I pray for in a really consistent basis. When my wife and I gather together, we go through this list, and we pray for people together. Then, there are prayers for intercession, prayer for others as well, or strategic issues in society; the Lord has really stirred Lou Engle with great insight and zeal for strategic issues. God has put a special anointing on some people. He has an anointing for specific issues in the nation or nations.

Paragraph F. I have a number of suggestions of downloads you can get from the Internet. The ten prayers for your personal life are prayers to strengthen your inner man. Then, there are the apostolic prayers. I have another acronym of five letters: TRUST. I use that when I talk to the Holy Spirit living in my spirit. I talk to Him and go through the acronym TRUST. I have more notes that I am going to cover here on this; it is critical to have a right view of God. If you have a scheduled prayer time and good prayer lists, this will help you succeed. By the way, the prayer lists grows, develops, and changes over time. Some things from your prayer list a year ago, you just take it off, and other things you add. It is growing and changing over time.

### **RIGHT VIEW OF GOD: TENDER FATHER AND PASSIONATE BRIDEGROOM**

Roman numeral III. If you have your schedule and your prayer list, but you have a wrong view of God, if you feel condemned, and you think God is mad at you all the time, you are not going to want to sit down and talk to Him. You may fear Him, but you will not open your spirit to Him and enjoy His presence. You cannot enjoy the company of someone who is mad at you. You can talk to someone mad at you, but you cannot enjoy his or her company. You cannot enjoy their relationship. The right view of God is to be able to see the Father heart of God, the tenderness of the Father, and the passionate desire of Jesus the Bridegroom. Encountering the Father heart is foundational to our prayer life. Again, there are seminars; there are all kinds of material in the Body of Christ on the Father heart of God.

### **THE SPIRIT CRIES OUT TO GOD THROUGH THE SPIRIT OF ADOPTION**

Paragraph C: the Holy Spirit is in us and is crying out to the Father through us. He is crying out, “Abba.” *Abba* of course means Papa. It is a term of endearment, but it is a very respectful term, and one that has a dimension of intimacy in it. Some say, “Daddy.” I like to think that, “Papa” is the best one. Where your spirit is open and you feel confident of His tender care, you feel His strength and His power. You are not afraid to be in His presence. That does not mean that we do not fear the Lord. You feel welcomed by His kindness, and the sufficiency of His salvation to come into His presence. When we have the *Abba* cry in our spirit, when we have a connection with the Father, it empowers us to endure difficulty; it empowers us to reject the accusation of the devil.

The devil wants to accuse us and tell us we are just worthless, and there is no future. Satan likes to lie and say that there is no reason in even trying. When we come before the Father, the Father says, “Oh yes, I have a plan

for you. I am tender toward you. I have it all figured out. Come in My presence. I am Abba.” This is a very needed revelation in the Body of Christ today and the prayer movement: the Father heart of God.

### **THE END-TIME PRAYER MOVEMENT**

Paragraph E. The next one is the bridal identity. The end-time prayer movement will flow from the Church who is functioning in a bridal identity. It will come from a billion people across the earth, seeing and understanding Jesus as a Bridegroom God. Then, they will see themselves as a cherished bride who is dear to Him. They see themselves as cherished before One who has great desire for them. The Bridegroom message is a call to intimacy with God, just like the Father heart message.

I just want to say—it is important to say this: Jesus is not your boyfriend. I have literally had people talk like this: “I am going on date night with Jesus.” If you light the candles, that’s cool. Candles are fine. This is not date night with your boyfriend. We are talking about the sovereign God—Jesus Christ. He has deep desire for you. He cherishes you. He is committed to you. He is connected with desire beyond anything you can imagine. When that touches you, it really changes you and moves you.

### **AS SONS, WE EXPERIENCE GOD’S THRONE; AS THE BRIDE, WE FEEL HIS HEART**

Paragraph F. Men and women are both the sons of God. As sons of God, we experience God’s throne and His power. As the Bride of Christ, we experience His heart and His emotions. So men are the Bride of Christ. Women are sons of God. It transcends gender. Every believer in this room, you are a son of God. You have access to God’s throne and His power. You can pray, and the sick can be healed. Demons will move because you have access to the Father’s throne. As the Bride, you have access to His heart and His emotions.

Paragraph B. I just list a few emotions that are related to the Bridegroom message because it is the revelation of Jesus’ emotions. When we touch His emotions, we desire to be in prayer much more. We cannot mostly think about prayer as something that will empower us to do a work project, as if we are the army, and we have to do the great commission. Jesus is a great general. Those are all true. We are an army; He is a general. It is much more than Him saying, “I have work for you guys to do. I do not really want to connect to you. If I lose a few of you, well I am sorry. I did not really mean to lose you.”

He has called us to something far more than a work project. He has called us to be workers in a project: to evangelize the world, which is as essential as we can imagine. Jesus is saying, “It is because it touches My heart, I want you to do it with Me. I love you, and I love them. I want them to receive what I have given you.”

It is about love. It is a big love drama. When we touch His heart, it really touches our heart. Prayer is very different when it is not just a grocery list, but it is an encounter with a person. He has some different emotions, such as His tender mercy, or the fact that He enjoys us even in our weakness. He is gentle with us even in our weakness. He has a heart of gladness. I wrote a book called *After God’s Own Heart*. I went through a number of God’s emotions. I gave a chapter, or two to each one of them. We have some notes on the Internet about that. You want to study the emotions of God. The Father heart and the Bridegroom message will dynamically change your prayer life.

### **HEPHZIBAH: GOD DELIGHTS IN US AND REJOICES OVER US AS A BRIDEGROOM**

Paragraph H. Isaiah 62:4-6. It was in November 1995; I had a dream one morning. It was a very powerful, prophetic dream. In the dream the Lord spoke to me. I was in this large auditorium with the audible voice of the

Lord in the dream. He said, “Call the people Hephzibah.” I called them Hephzibah, and the power of God touched them. I woke up and read Isaiah 62. The Scripture is Isaiah 62:4: “You shall be called Hephzibah,” which means God likes you. He delights in you; He likes being with you. This dream could apply to millions of people. This was not specific to me. God is raising up men and women, singers, preachers, intercessors, all over the earth.

Millions will call the people the ones who God delights in. The Lord told me in this dream, “Tell the people I like them. I delight in them.” Isaiah 62:5: “And I rejoice over them like a bridegroom rejoices over a bride.” God is basically saying, “My heart is touched by them.” There is no sensuality dimension to this. This is about Jesus’ fiery desire for His people and His delight. In Isaiah 62:6, the very next verse, God says: “I have put watchmen, or intercessors, and they will cry night and day.” Here is the point I am making. A lot folks try to do night-and-day prayer. They want to do Isaiah 62:2. They want to have sustained prayer. They want to do night-and-day prayer. They do it disconnected from verses 4-5. It is hard to sustain night-and-day prayer if all you have is a work project—to gain ground in the work project. If we are connected to His heart, we know He delights in us, and He wants to delight in the people we reach. He wants them in the relationship where His delight is manifest over them. It changes the whole way that we approach a prayer room.

It is critical. For years, I went to regular, daily prayer meetings without this understanding. I only had the work project, or war mentality. It is work, and it still is war. Lovers will always outwork workers. People whose hearts are touched by love; they are more courageous than the warriors are. A man or woman in love will work harder, and they are more daring and courageous in their devotion to Jesus, if their hearts are aflame with love. We are going to move; we have the new paradigm of God. There is much more to say about the Father heart and the Bridegroom.

I want you, as you are developing your prayer life—you are saying, “This is red alert. I have to grow in understanding of the Father heart and the Bridegroom. I have to, or the prayer room will get boring and lethargic. It will be a work project.” I have seen people stay with it for a couple years. Rarely do people stay with prayer for a decade, if they do not have a deep heart connect with God’s heart. I have seen a lot of people fiery about prayer for two or three years, but not many for ten, twenty, or thirty years. The issue is if they are connected at the heart level to the Father and the Bridegroom. That is what I believe one of the deciding issues, or distinctions are.

### **THE FOUNDATION OF JUSTICE: NIGHT-AND-DAY PRAYER**

Roman numeral IV. Paragraph A. God has chosen intercession as an essential way to release His government. When I mean His government, I mean His power. He releases His power on the earth through intercession. We know that. The most remarkable thing about intercession is in Hebrews 7:25: “He always lives to make intercession.”

Can you imagine? A million years from now, Jesus will still be interceding. Intercession is not something He did while He was on the earth, and then it was over after the resurrection. He will live before the Father to make intercession for billions and billions of years because intercession means telling God what He tells us to tell Him. That is what it means to us in the most fundamental sense. Tell God what He tells us to tell Him. That will be the means at which God will release His power, not only in this age but forever and ever. What we need is a revelation on the majesty and the mystery of intercession.

## **THE MYSTERY OF INTERCESSION**

Paragraph B. The mystery of intercession: it is mysterious. We simply tell Him what He tells us to tell Him. Power is released. That is so remarkable to me. If I were God, I think I would come up with something far more sophisticated. I do not know what I would have come up with. We do not have to worry about that. It is profoundly simple in its weakness, or in its simplicity. Believers can tell Him what He tells them to tell Him. It is profound in its simplicity. Then, there is majesty to it; there is majesty because of the amount of power God releases through it. More than that, the fact that Jesus participates in this forever makes intercession even more majestic by virtue that this is the way He is used in the power of God. He is fully God, but He chooses within the fellowship of the Trinity to come before the Father. There, He speaks to the Father His will. Then, the Father's will is released. I have here in paragraph C that Jesus operated in Genesis 1 when He created the heavens and the earth. He operated in the intercessory principle. Paragraph one under C.

## **THE MAJESTY OF INTERCESSION**

Here is how it worked in Genesis 1: the Father had a plan in His mind and in His heart. He wanted to create the heavens and the earth. The plan was in His mind. The earth was not created. He only had the plan. The Spirit was moving on the earth, but it was dark, and the earth was formless and void. The Holy Spirit was present. Let me just make up a conversation that did not exist. It is like the Spirit could have said, "Father, I have all the power, so I can make light. I have the power to make light out of darkness. I can do it. No problem. I am God. I am present. I am here." The Father willed it; it was His plan. The Holy Spirit was present, but still the earth was formless, void, and dark.

Then the second person of the Trinity comes in. When He speaks to God His plans, the Spirit has permission to release it into the natural order. It is the Father's plan, the Holy Spirit is hovering in power, but until the Son of God speaks it, the power is not released. All three of them are equally God. Jesus has this role forever. By virtue of our connection to Him as His Bride, He is saying, "You are with Me, and you will operate in the same power forever."

In the millennial kingdom, in a million years in the new heaven and new earth, you will still be speaking God's Word to God. The Holy Spirit will move only after you speak it. The Holy Spirit was present, hovering until Jesus said each one of those things in Genesis 1. The Holy Spirit could have done all of those things at one time. He had the power.

The Father already said, "OK." It was like the check was already signed. It needs a co-signature. The Father said, "I already approve the check, but until Jesus says it, it is not signed with the second signature." In this age, because we are connected to Jesus, we are in the same relationship of intercession.

The Father says, "If you will say it, the Holy Spirit will release it. If you do not say it, it will not be released." It is more than saying it once. It is wholly, persevering, and believing prayer. It is living lives that are connected to God. I am talking about the deepest level. Prayer is effective a little bit even to the believers who were just born-again. There are levels of maturity in prayer and power beyond anything any of us have ever seen.

## **JESUS USES INTERCESSION TO GOVERN THE EARTH IN PARTNERSHIP WITH HIS PEOPLE**

Paragraph D. Jesus is governing the entire created order in partnership with His people through intercession. The governmental center of the universe is the prayer ministry. The house of prayer is suppose to reflect heaven on the earth, as all the prayers under the Holy Spirit will converge at the throne of God. The governmental

center of the earth—of all the created order—is the house of prayer. The house of prayer is people in unity with Jesus under the Holy Spirit’s inspiration telling God to tell Him what He tells them to tell Him. The power is released.

### **JUSTICE IS MOST EFFECTIVE IN THE CONTEXT OF NIGHT-AND-DAY PRAYER**

Paragraph E. We know the passage well in Luke 18:7-8: “Shall not God bring about justice to the people that cry night and day.” Those that are most effective in works of justice; they do it in context to day and night prayer. Not that every ministry can have a twenty-four prayer ministry. That is not what I am saying. If ministries are connected together, there is a whole lot more prayer than what they might be able to do with their own people in one setting.

I will say this: the most effective works of justice that happen in the earth will happen connected to night-and-day prayer. Again, I am not talking about people starting a missions base like this. That is not necessary unless God tells them to do that. People say, “We want to start one of these.”

I respond, “Only do it at gun point, or if the Lord absolutely tells you that you are going to have 24/7 prayer and have X amount of prayer meetings a day.” You do not have to do 24/7 for it to work in one location.

### **24/7 PRAYER AND JUSTICE TOGETHER**

Paragraph F. If God tells you to, then go for it. The reason that God connects works of justice to night-and-day prayer is when we do the night-and-day prayer, we are praying to contend with the power behind the injustice. The injustice is happening on the earth, in whatever city you pick, significant dimensions of that injustice are empowered by demons. Humanitarian work cannot break the power that is behind the injustice. Humanitarian work is good in itself, but it is not nearly good enough to get what Jesus wants done. There are a lot of Christians who have thrown aside the prayer part, and they do the works of justice as though the injustice did not have demons behind it. Beloved, the work of justice by itself is good, but it will never be sufficient to get the job done. Jesus connected the night-and-day cry for justice with the works of justice for two reasons. He knew that we needed to contend for power to deal with the force behind the injustice, which is demonic.

In Ephesians 6:12, Paul said, “For we do not wrestle with flesh and blood, but against principalities, powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the high places.” We wrestle with demons. As good as it is to feed somebody, there are demons behind some of the problems. The demons do not go away because of an act of kindness. Demons go away when the name of Jesus is spoken, and when people agree with God on the earth in prayer. We do not choose one or the other. We mix them together. We combine them. There is another reason why God put the works of justice connected with night and day prayer.

### **PRAYER POSITIONS US TO BE ENERGIZED BY INTIMACY**

Paragraph G. It is the intimacy, or the heart connection with the worker of justice that counts. The guy or the gal that is doing the work of justice, they will burn out and get wiped out if they are not connected to Jesus at the heart level. They can sustain it for three years. They may sustain it for five years without a heart connect. Jesus said, “I want you for decades. You need to have the prayer dimension to connect with me at the heart level, and you need the prayer dimension to contend with the demonic powers behind the injustice that is being done.”

Jesus is the only social reformer who ever connected justice with night-and-day prayer. It is critical that the two are joined and they are never to be separated. The Church has separated the two for a long time. You do meet some needs, but you never get to the core issues of the power realm and the kingdom of darkness. Also, the workers get burnt out in a three- to five-year cycle in a really big way. The workers cannot sustain without the heart connection. They need to be re-energized by connecting with Jesus' heart. When we tell God what He tells us to tell Him, here is what happens: it internalizes the Word of God in our spirit. When I tell God, or you tell God, we tell Him what He tells us to tell Him: "Lord, release light and truth in this city."

What it does—every single time that we speak God's Word back to God, it marks our spirit in a small way. I compare it to a computer programmer who is rewriting lines of code for a new program, or to change a program. Maybe there are a million lines of code, or ten million lines. Who knows? My point is every single prayer meeting, whether you are alone, or with someone else, every single time you say to God what God says to say to Him it impacts us. For example, when you say, "Release Your love, Your glory, and the spirit of wisdom and revelation," it is like rewriting a line of code on your inner man. How many lines do we need written? I do not know. It is just an analogy. Maybe it is millions! I know one thing: God transforms us while we are laboring in intercession for the breakthrough of power. He actually changes us on the inside in the process. We become more tenderized.

### **GOD'S WORDS ARE SPIRIT AND LIFE**

The reason this works, paragraph J, is because Jesus said the Word of God is spirit and life. In John 6:63: "The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life." Jesus said that His words are spirit and life, which means if we say His words back to God, they are spirit and life. They have an element and quality of impartation. We are saying the Word of God back to God; they are marking us with impartation—back to God every single time. Even though it is a small increment, if you will, it is still marking us. Every single prayer meeting marks us. That is why when people are praying, the guy is up on the microphone saying, "Lord, release your power," you are in row ten, and you just whisper it. I don't do it every time. Some prayer meetings, I do this; some I don't do this, depending if I am caught in the Word on something. When the guy says, "Release your glory," I just repeat him, "Release your glory."

He says, "Show Your love." I say about half the phrase, "Show Your love." The guy on the microphone is doing all the work. I am repeating every third, or forth phrase because I know it will mark my spirit if I stay with it. When we intercede, it unites our heart to the people and the places. You cannot pray for a person, or a ministry that you will not eventually love with your heart in a deep way. If you pick any city in the earth, you pray for it over a period of time, you will start loving that city. It gets in you. That is just how it works. God unites us through intercession. It is a brilliant strategy. I have a number of things that intercession does in the notes. Intercession transforms us while confronting the power of darkness. We partner with Jesus in intercession to release a greater power in works of justice. A work of justice is to help the person who is sick with care and food. We give them medical care, money, and food. You know what is even better? Heal the person. Cast the cancer out of them, and then give them a sandwich. We need works of justice that have power dimension to them. We have to keep the two together. That is my point. My reason is because Jesus did this: we are coming to an end here.

### **HOW TO MEDITATE ON THE WORD: PRAY-READING THE WORD OF GOD**

Paragraph A. One of the greatest ways that you will be energized in your prayer life, in intercessory prayer, intimacy, or petition is meditation on the Word of God. Any of the different prayer focuses I mention, whether

any of those three, the meditation on the Word will substantially bolster your prayer life. It will bolster your spiritual vigor in prayer. When my desire for prayer goes down, I know what to do. I know what the vitamin is. I know what the adrenalin shot is: reading the Word of God. When your interest in prayer goes down, spend more time in the Word of God. I do not mean Bible study, though I like Bible study. I am a bible study guy. I believe in bible study so much that we have a Bible school. I believe in it. I am an energetic student of the Bible. I have been for years. Study is not enough. When I read the Bible, sometimes I just do pure study; but mostly, even when I am studying, I sneak some of this in there. I talk to Jesus through what I am reading. I turn it into a dialogue. That is critical.

Paragraph B. John 5:39 (paraphrased): “Jesus said, ‘You search the Scriptures because you think that through Bible study, learning Bible data, you will have life. No. Bible data does not give you life.’” It does not bring the presence of God to your heart. Bible data is important, but it does not bring life, or the anointing to your heart. Here is what you do. Understand that the Bible talks about Me. It testifies of Me. It talks about Me, and what My heart is like.”

In John 5:40, Jesus is talking to the Pharisees: “You are not willing to come to Me to have life”—to have the presence. When we study the Bible, we need to come to Jesus; this means that when I am reading a verse that says, “God loves me,” I need to stop and not just say, “God loves me” and underline it. I need to say, “Thank you that You love me.”

Jesus says, “Yes! You are talking to Me. I do love you.” Say it. Actually say it to Him.

God says, “I will provide all your needs.” You stop. You do not email someone, “Oh! I have a good verse.” That is good to do. Do that, but talk to the Jesus Himself—fully God and fully man. Say to Jesus, “You are going to provide for me. Thank you.”

I say thank you, and then I do one more thing. I say, “Reveal it to me more.” I pause, and I pray in the spirit for a minute. Then I say, “Thank you again. Reveal it to me more.” I will camp at that verse for a minute or two, or twenty minutes, longer or shorter. I do not have any time frame. My point is that I stop and talk to the man behind the Bible: Jesus Christ. The Bible was meant to give you conversational material with God. It is critical that you read the Bible and talk to God while you are reading it. Do not read it for an hour and then talk to Him. That is good, talk to Him after the hour, but talk to Him during the hour. It will absolutely revolutionize your prayer life.

When my prayer time is boring, as it has been boring many times over the years. Then it gets exciting, then it gets boring; then, it is exciting again. It almost is always related to the amount of fuel that I have in the tank. That is my dialogue with God from the written Word of God. I want to tell you a secret after these years. Read the Bible and talk to God, you will start getting excited for prayer. Your desire will go up, particularly if you have a right paradigm of God.

## **TRUTHS TO BELIEVE AND TRUTHS TO OBEY**

Paragraph C. When I read the Bible, I have two broad categories of truth: this is in the broadest sense and the most general sense. There are verses that exhort me to believe something, such as God loves you, God will provide for you, or God will forgive you. Those are things you are supposed to believe. There are other verses that they exhort us to obey. For example, bridle your tongue, use your time rightly, use your money in a way

that honors God. Those are obedience passages. There are a lot of belief passages and a lot of obedience passages. Some of them will overlap. My goal is not to be too technical. My goal is to give you a framework of how to talk to God in the Bible. When I am in a belief passage, when the Scripture says, “God loves you, God will provide for you, God will direct you, and God will forgive you,” I do two things. I thank Him; I actually stop and talk to Him, “Thank you that you forgave me.” Then I ask, “Reveal it more. Reveal more to me. How your forgiveness has touched your heart. I thank You and ask for greater revelation.”

Paragraph E. The other kind of passages are the obedience ones, “Bridle your tongue, obey God with your time, obey God with your money, obey God with your thought life, and obey God with your bodily passions,” What I do is I stop, and I commit myself to obey. I say, “Lord, I resolve to obey you with my speech.” I stop and actually talk to Him for just a few seconds—even thirty, or forty seconds.

“Jesus, You said to obey You with my time, money, and all these areas,” I take whatever is in that one verse that I am reading. I am just going through chapter by chapter through the Bible.

I tell God, “I resolve to obey.” I commit myself to obey. Then I ask for help, “Would You help me to obey you?” You can have a running dialogue wherever you are at in the Bible with God. The bible study must turn to conversation. Then, it will ignite the fires of prayer in your spirit. Whether it is intimacy, prayer, personal petition prayer, or intercession, your heart is tender, and your heart is energized for your prayer time.

### **MEDITATING IN PRAYER AND FELLOWSIPPING WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT**

Meditating is prayer too. It is the easiest kind of prayer. It really is. I started this over thirty years ago. I am saying that to say this. When I started, I did not like the Bible at all. I remember this. I really loved Jesus. When I was eighteen years old, I was in university. I loved Jesus, but I hated prayer, Bible study, and I hated fasting. I did not mind witnessing. I loved to go to meetings though. Then God spoke to me when I was eighteen years old through my leaders, “You have to pray, fast, and you have to read the Bible.”

I said, “No!” If you had told me at eighteen years old that I would be leading an IHOP-KC, I would have said, “You have the wrong guy,” as that would be more bitter than death. That would have been a prison if you had told me that. I did not like the Bible and did not like prayer. I liked the Bible in the general sense of kissing the Bible. I did not like reading it. I liked telling people how cool the Bible is, but I did not like reading it myself. I started—here was the key—I started talking to God. I did not understand.

I told the Lord once, “If you would make the Bible clear, we would read it a lot more.” I said, “I know it is too late, and You already published it. If You would have made that thing clear, we would have read it a whole lot more. Just an idea, God.”

I look back, and God must have winked at me. Years later I said, “There are so many levels and layers.”

He says, “Oh, little guy, you are seeing what I was doing.” That is going to keep us interested for billions of years. You are going to read the same Bible a million years from now. There are so many layers to it that you will read it a million years from now, and it will excite you. I did not have that understanding when I was giving God my advice. I do not get any revelation before or after, but I would stop and say, “I commit my heart to love You. Will you help me love You?” I would hang out on that verse for a couple minutes. But then, the next verse, I got no revelation.

God would say, “Obey Me.”

I would answer, “OK. I can do that.” Eventually, I fell in love with the Bible. You know me as a Bible teacher—you say, “You always loved the Bible.” I am telling you, I was in a ministry with some guys, and they met when I was about seventeen years old. They met as a discipleship house every single day. They prayed for maybe ten minutes a day together. They would pray for about a year, or two. My own best friends prayed, “Lord, we are so concerned for Mike Bickle because he does not love the Bible and prayer. Would you give him desire for Bible and prayer?” They were so concerned. They fasted for me because I hated Bible, and I hated prayer time. When they come through—come to IHOP–KC because they still lived in Kansas City, they said, “We labored for this thing way back when.” It is true though. It is funny, but it is true. The key change in my heart was when I began to read the Bible, and though I did not understand verse one, two, three, four, or five, I understood verse six. So even though I did not understand the first five, I turned the phrase into dialogue. That was the key. Amen and amen.