

## ***Prayer Energized by Intimacy***

This session I want to talk about prayer energized by intimacy with God. Now, it is clear that there is a worldwide prayer and worship movement that is exploding across the earth right now.

I give four pages of Bible verses proving there is an end-time worship movement that ushers in the return of Christ, and it is deeply connected to the end-time worldwide mission movement. From God's point of view, the mission movement and the prayer and worship movement are really one movement. They are both going to a level of power and impact beyond any time in history—far beyond the book of Acts where Jesus will be preached in power in every nation of the earth. I believe that within ten years—I have received this from the leaders of the mission movement, men like Loren Cunningham, Steve Douglas, Mark Anderson with Call2All and many others.

They are saying that within ten years the Gospel will be preached for the first time in every nation of the earth. That is a remarkable reality. Mark and Loren tomorrow morning will be talking more on where the mission's movement is, and what is happening on a global level.

Here is what the Spirit is saying: not only is the mission movement exploding, not only is the Spirit saying that prayer and worship is going to fill the earth, He is saying that the work of the Kingdom must be energized by intimacy with God.

### **THE HOLY SPIRIT IS CALLING THE CHURCH TO ENCOUNTER INTIMACY**

The prayer that we are talking about, and the mission work, which is really one reality, must be energized. Our spirit must be energized, motivated, empowered because we are encountering God in intimacy. The Spirit is calling: the Spirit is saying Church of Jesus Christ focus on intimacy with God. I do not mean to the exclusion of other things that the Spirit is saying, but put intimacy with God in the foundation of your labors, in your mission work, in your outreach, as well as in your prayer and worship ministries.

In my early ministry in my twenties, I was focused on evangelism. My heroes were all evangelists. Charles Finney in the 1840's and 1850's, he led five hundred thousand people to the Lord in his lifetime. I mean we are talking about no

microphones, no cars, no buses, and no media, yet five hundred thousand people touched by the power of God that was on this man. I highly recommend biographies by Charles Finney. Anyway my heroes were evangelists. I thought a guy who spent time in prayer and in intercession, praying for revival, I thought that was a would-be evangelist who went astray. I really mean that. When God called me to intercession, I said, “No. The intercessors are the lazy people who refuse to do evangelism. Lord, I do not want to be an intercessor. I want to be an evangelist.”

### **EVANGELISM FUELED BY INTERCESSION AND INTERCESSION BY INTIMACY**

Then the Lord spoke and said, “You will be far more powerful in your work of evangelism, if you will undergird it with night and day prayer.” That was a new insight. Then the Lord spoke further, and I am going to tell you the details in a minute: “You will be far more effective as an evangelist, if you undergird it with night and day prayer, and you will be able to sustain night and day prayer, only if you engage with intimacy with My heart.”

So the evangelist—me—became an intercessor because I understood I could be more effective as an evangelist. Then the intercessor was burning out, and so the Lord began to teach me, if I could touch His heart in intimacy, I could be energized as an intercessor, and an evangelist— instead of burnt out. I could become renewed day after day. My heart could be empowered in the process, it would please Jesus, it would delight His heart to fellowship with my heart, and the heart of every born again believer in the earth.

So then, I understood I do not have to choose between evangelists—evangelism, outreach and mission, intercession, or intimacy—they are all three part of one big reality that the Spirit is emphasizing. I believe you cannot separate those three realities. The evangelists separated from prayer are not near as effective. The prayer intercessors without outreach are not as effective, and the evangelists and the intercessors who do not grow in intimacy, will get burnt out in the work of the Kingdom. They all go together. The evangelist and the intercessors who connect with God’s heart, they will be far more effective in their intercession, and in their evangelism.

**MY OWN PERSONAL MANDATE FOR TWENTY-FOUR SEVEN PRAYER IN THE SPIRIT OF THE TABERNACLE OF DAVID IN MAY, 1983**

It was in 1983, twenty-seven years ago, I was twenty-seven years old, twenty-seven years ago. So I am fifty-four years old now. You can do the math. I was in Kansas City, and had a young adult church. Some of you know the story. The Lord called us to go on a twenty-one day fast for revival. I have only been into prayer interceding for revival now for about three or four years—for actually four years. It was a new thing in my life. I am a young pastor, and the Lord called us to go on twenty-one days of fasting and prayer.

I had a young adult church, and we all came together. We went from six in the morning to twelve at night for twenty-one days, eighteen hours a day in a room. Now not everybody did, but a number of them did. They took time off from work. We just took naps in the room, and I took a couple naps everyday right there in the prayer room. We were trying to do the upper room you know for ten days. We were trying like not to leave for twenty-one days. It did not exactly work that way but that is what we were trying to do.

So twelve to eighteen hours a day, and—just for the record—it was really boring to be totally honest. Some of the people say that must have been awesome. I say, “Actually it was not. It was actually horrible but we did it.” The Lord spoke audibly. This was the dynamic life-changing moment in my life. I do not want to tell the whole story right now because I am making another point. If you want to hear the story you can hear the eight-part series where I told for eight one-hour sessions, I told the prophetic stories of angelic experiences of the audible voice of God, angels appearing, supernatural experiences where the Lord spoke about the future in our nation.

I call it the “Encountering Jesus” series; it is the prophetic history that God gave us as a people. The prophetic events talking about the future, and if you want to hear that in detail again, it is all free. It is on the internet, and you can have that in audio, video or transcriptions. You can have all of it, if you want to hear those stories more in detail. Here is the point: I want to make without going into all the story in this twenty-one day fast, the Lord shocks me, and He speaks by the audible voice. Here is what He says. He says: “I want you to”—I am going to summarize it without quoting it—He says I want you to do twenty-four hour prayer with singers and musicians backing you up. This was a strange idea to me, singers and

musicians. Now it is a very normal idea, but in those days, no singers and musicians were in the prayer meetings.

I called it just the rock pile. We just had a microphone, and no instruments. We just shouted at the devil for a couple hours at a time: “Devil, devil come out or we are coming in, in the name of Jesus, and we are going to throw you out.” You know, we just screamed, and we donated our tonsils to the cause, and we all had horse voices. We screamed for hours a day, no music, no flow, just rah, rah, rah. We were warriors. We were worn out warriors, but we were warriors. Then He spoke audibly, and He said: “Here is what I want you to do. I want you to have twenty-four hour prayer with singers and musicians.” The verse was Psalm 27:4. This was a new verse to me: “I want you to do this night and day prayer in the context of gazing on My beauty.”

“Like gazing on Your beauty, huh? Okay I am an evangelist who broke down and gave in to be an intercessor because I felt I could be more effective as an evangelist. But an evangelist—an intercessor is a warrior, so to gaze on Your beauty? Okay. Cool. I guess. Gaze on Your beauty,” I said back to God.

The Lord replied, “This is what I want you to do: Twenty-four hour prayer, singers and musicians, but I want it to flow out of encountering My beauty throughout the day.” This was so puzzling to me. But it was the audible voice of the Lord. I have had two audible voice directions in my life.

### **TWO TIMES I HEARD THE AUDIBLE VOICE OF GOD**

One was do twenty-four hour prayer. That was twenty-seven years ago. The other one I will tell you in a minute. He said, “Do it through the revelation of the Bride of Christ.” I will get to that.

Two times, the Lord spoke audibly in the direction of my ministry, the audible voice of the Lord. So we put a sign on the wall, twenty-four hour prayer in the spirit of the tabernacle of David because see David’s tabernacle meant David had a worship ministry of singers, and musicians. That is what the tabernacle of David means. So, I put that sign on the wall because that is what God said audibly.

Twenty-four hour prayer in the spirit of the tabernacle of David, and for years people would come by our church. Our church grew to several thousand, and the new people would say: “What does that sign mean twenty-four hour prayer in the spirit of the tabernacle of David?”

You know it is 1984, 85, 86, 87, 88, 90, 91, 92, 93 for sixteen years, we had the sign on the wall. People would say what is that sign? I responded, “I do not know. I guess we are going to sing all day and gaze on His beauty, or I do not know.”

People said, “well, why is it on the wall?”

“Because God spoke it audibly, and He said it would happen,” I responded.

They said, “Well are you not excited?”

I said, “uh. I mean well because it is God, ‘yes.’ I am excited because God said it, but gaze on His beauty. I do not even get this.”

The reason I am going into this detail because if I can get it I know you can get it, because it was a completely bizarre idea—even doing prayer meetings was bizarre in those early days. Again, an intercessor was a would be evangelist who went astray. That is how I saw an intercessor. I saw intercessors as compromisers who said, “Yeah, I am in the prayer meeting.”

“In other words, you are cowards and you are lazy”—that is what I said. I was wrong because I never was an intercessor. But when I got changed, and the Lord said “an intercessor who is an evangelist, and an evangelist who is an intercessor” that changed it. So I put this big sign on the wall. That is 1983. I know we are going to do night and day prayer one of these days. We did not start for sixteen years until 1999. I was mystified by that for years. I would look at that sign every day, and say, “huh?”

Huh. I wonder what that looks like. Now, I have a little bit more understanding what it looks like, not fully. We are just at the beginning of the beginning. Yes, we had our ten-year anniversary, but we are at the beginning of the beginning of where this is going.

## **GOD IS GOING TO RELEASE GRACE FOR THE BODY OF CHRIST WORLDWIDE FOR US TO WALK IN SONG OF SOLOMON 8:6**

It is five years later, now it is 1988 instead of 1983. I hear—the second audible voice experience. I have only had two, the second one where God is giving me direction for my ministry. I am in my office one morning, and I am reading a wedding card. It is July 1988.

This wedding card, look at the verse Song of Solomon 8:6, it said (paraphrased): “Set Me as a seal upon your heart, for love is as strong as death etcetera, etcetera.” Song of Solomon 8:7: “Many waters cannot quench this love.” I thought, “Wow, what a verse.” Now, I had never really paid attention to that verse. The Spirit of the Lord came on me when I read that verse—this wedding card—I started weeping. I mean I started weeping. I instantly used the verse to talk to Jesus.

I said, “Jesus be the seal of fire on my heart, the seal.” I was just weeping. The Spirit of God was on me. It was very unusual. So I pick up the phone. I call the receptionist. I said, “Uh please, do not nobody call, nobody knock on my door. The Lord is touching me in a very dramatic way. I do not know what is happening.” So I hang the phone up, and I am weeping.

I am saying, “Jesus touch me with the seal of fire. Oh I want to love You with supernatural love. It was so powerful.” A few minutes later the phone rings, it is amazing how you can be in the Spirit, and get in the flesh in one second; I was in the heights of loving Jesus, and the phone rings, and I instantly am mad. Go figure.

I go what? Just confessing it, pick the phone up very nicely, “hello?” The receptionist says, “I am really sorry to disturb you, but Bob Jones, he is the same guy who I referenced earlier, this prophetic man, he is on the phone, and he said that he heard the audible voice of the Lord for you right now.”

The receptionist said, “I did not know what to do. You said not to interrupt you, but the audible voice of God, I figured if it was God calling you, you would want to hear it.”

I said, “Oh that is good. Always let God in. That is always good.” I said, “Hello Bob, how you doing?”

He says, “Mike, I only have one minute. Literally, I have sixty seconds because of something happening. I heard the audible voice of the Lord just a few moments ago. He told me to call you. He said that He is going to visit you, and speak to you from Song of Solomon 8:6-7. Here I am on my knees in my office weeping over this verse. He says, “I heard the audible voice of the Lord. He is going to speak to you and visit you from the book of Song of Solomon 8:6. He told me to tell you two things: number one, He is going to release the anointing to love Jesus in a supernatural way. He is going to restore the first commandment to first place in the

Body of Christ. He is going to release the anointing to love Jesus worldwide before the Lord returns. It is going to be an anointing that will overpower the church worldwide with a supernatural ability and the fire of love to love Jesus. It is available to everybody who loves, who wants it.”

I responded, “wow!”

He said, “And the second thing that the Lord told me to tell you is that this is going to be one of the main focuses of your ministry all the days of your life.” He then said, “I have got to go,” and he hangs the phone up. I just continue to weep, and the Lord was just on me.

I just feel so much love for Jesus so after the emotion lifts, I call my wife: “Diane, you are not going to believe it. It is like what happened five years before when the Lord spoke audibly. Five years ago, He said do twenty-four hour prayer, now He said do the Song of Solomon,” I explained it to her. I said, “two times I have received the audible voice of the Lord, two times.” Now those were the only two times.

I thought it was going to happen like every couple of years but it was only two times in thirty-five years of ministry, so I am so excited. She is so excited. I hang up. I go oh this is so great.

So now the great moment happens: I read the Song of Solomon for the first time. Read it in a serious way. Now, I had read the Song of Solomon through the years as a youth pastor to make jokes in the youth group. You can do the math. I had never read it in a serious way. So I read the Song of Solomon, eight chapters. I am reading through: perfume, flower, necklace, body parts, perfume, body parts, flowers, embrace; I says, “No way! No. This is not going to happen in my life. Not on my watch. I am not doing this. Lord, You know I was excited a couple of hours ago before I read this book!”

My father was a world champion boxer in the amateur arena in the army. A boxer, you know he beat up people; then, he was a professional boxer as well as a lot of my family friends when I was five, six, seven, eight, nine years old they were boxers. My father took me to the bar every Friday and Saturday night. I am talking about when I was five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen, I grew up in the bars with my dad hearing boxing stories about how one guy beat up

another guy, and everybody said, “rah, rah, rah, awesome.” We were tough guys. I was little tough guy, but all my dad and his buddies, they were boxers. They did bad things too, but we will not go into this. I said, “Lord, I am the son of a boxer. I do not think I can do Song of Solomon. This does not really work for me” I said—I actually said this—“Give me the life of David that is it, the book of Romans, my favorite book. Give me the book of Revelation I will do that. I did not know He was going to. But, no. No. Not Song of Solomon, not flowers, perfume, body parts, flowers, perfume, body parts, kiss, hug huh-uh, huh-uh, huh-uh. No. No. No. It is not going to happen.”

So I go home that night. Open the door, Diane asks, “This was the greatest day of your life it is?”

I say, “No. No. No. It is horrible.”

She said, “Well, you know earlier this morning twelve hours ago you said it was.”

I say, “Have you ever read Song of Solomon?”

She said, “Yes. It is awesome.”

I said, “No. No. No. No. I said give it to the ladies ministry. I do not want this book.” So I am in a jam, but I started appealing to the Lord: “Lord, wait, if You think about it You actually told me to do night and day prayer—not Song of Solomon. I am going to go by the first audible voice not the second one. I knew that was a little bit of a conflict. I knew it did not work but I was trying to figure a way out of this.”

You can read a little bit in the notes on the Song of Solomon, and of course, on the website I have a—some of you know this—I have a twenty-four one-hour session on the Song of Solomon with maybe several hundred pages of notes, when I break down every verse line by line. Again if you want it, our copyright is the right to copy. It is yours. It is free on the internet, if you want it.”

I really recommend the Song of Solomon because as time went on, the Lord touched my heart over the next couple of years, and I tell you, He ravished my heart with the message of His heart for me. I tell you, “I love the Song of Solomon,” and years later, I said: “Jesus, thank You, thank You, thank You, and I

could imagine Him saying, “I knew you would like it if you just gave it a little bit of time.” I love the Song of Solomon, fantastic.

**“THE SPIRIT AND THE BRIDE SAY, “COME”” (REVELATION 22:17)**

The end-time Church with the bridal identity will operate in the spirit of Revelation 22:17: “The Spirit, and the Bride say, “Come. Now, this is one of the great end-time prophecies. The Spirit, and the Church are going to be in deep unity. The church will be saying, and doing the same thing the Spirit is saying, and the Spirit is doing. For the first time in history worldwide, the Spirit and the Church will be in total unity. Can you imagine what it will look like when the worldwide Body of Christ is in total unity with the Spirit? Whatever the Spirit is saying, whatever the Spirit is doing, the Church should be saying it, and the Church should be doing it. “Wow. Never in a time in history has that been true. It is not true right now.”

It is a little bit here and there, pockets, but before Jesus returns, there is going to be such a dynamic outpouring of the Spirit, and a spirit of power and revelation that the church and the Spirit will be in dynamic unity with one another, and here is what is going to be happening: The Spirit is crying out for Jesus to come. When you read the whole passage, when the Spirit is saying, “Come,” and the church is saying “Come;” they are saying “Come” in two directions.

The Spirit is saying, “Come, Lord Jesus,” asking Jesus to come, and the Spirit is also saying to the nations, “Come to Jesus, come to Jesus so the cry come it is vertical: ‘Come Lord Jesus,’ and the cry come is horizontal: ‘Come to Jesus.’”

**THE THREE-FOLD CRY OF “COME”**

Now, we tell the Church to come to Jesus as a bridegroom God. and we tell the lost to come to Jesus as the Bridegroom savior. Right now, the Church needs to be called to Jesus into her bridal identity. The unbelievers need to be called to the Bridegroom King who will save them.

So, if you read this passage in context, we are saying, “Come, Lord Jesus,” upward, vertically, and we are also saying, “Come Lord Jesus” horizontally to people—come to Jesus as the Bridegroom God.

So what is the Spirit doing? He is interceding for Jesus to come in power so that the nations will be saved. There will be a remnant harvest in the nations, and He is going to come in power to completely revive the Church. He is going to ultimately come in the sky at the second coming.

What is the Spirit saying? He is revealing the bridal identity. He is revealing the Church's bridal identity. That is what He is saying. When you read this passage in context, and I encourage you to take some time to really study this verse. This is one of the most dynamic prophecies in the Bible about the end times. Revelation 22:17 prophesies about the function of the Church as anointed with the Spirit. In other words, we are in agreement with the Spirit. We are under the unction, and the inspiration of the Spirit. We are engaged in intercession. We are established in bridal identity, and we are effective in the harvest. Those are the four things that are happening in this passage.

Now when we ask Jesus to come "to us"—see we are going to ask the nations to come to Jesus. We are going to talk about that later in the other sessions, but in this session we are asking Jesus to come to us. There are three-ways we pray this prayer: Today, we ask Jesus to come near us individually, so we have intimacy at the heart level. Today, as we worship, we are saying, "Come, Lord Jesus, breakthrough in my heart"—intimacy with God.

Today we are praying, "come, come to us in revival." We are asking for a breakthrough of revival in our region or our nation, but in the future we are going to ask, we are going to pray for Jesus to come for us in the sky at the second coming. So when we cry, "Come, Lord Jesus, we are saying come near us in intimacy; come to us in revival; come for us at the second coming." The Spirit is inspiring those three directions of prayer. Now in this hour, this is important.

We are not praying for the second coming right now. We long for the second coming, but we do not pray for the second coming right now. We do not pray for the second coming until the final three and a half years. I hear some people on our microphone, and they say, "Jesus come back now." No. There are too many things in the Bible that the Bible says clearly have to happen in the will of God. The Spirit is not saying to Jesus to come back in the sky in this hour, but He is—we are crying out, "Come near us, and come to us in revival." I encourage people do not pray for the second coming yet. Wait until the final three, and half years.

### **WAIT UNTIL FINAL THREE AND A HALF YEARS TO PRAY FOR HIS RETURN**

Then, the Spirit will be having the Church worldwide pray for the second coming. We long for the second coming right now. We look forward to the second coming, but we actually do not pray for it in this hour just so that you are not confused by

this passage. Right now, I am asking the Holy Spirit to come touch my heart, and to stir me up in intimacy and revival. The Bridegroom message is a call to intimacy with God. That is what it really is about. It is a call to intimacy with God.

The Bridegroom message or the intimacy with God is an invitation to experience the deep things of God's heart. Look at 1 Corinthians 2:10, it says: "The Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God...we have received...the Spirit...that we might know the things freely given." The Spirit searches everything. The Spirit searches the deep things of God or the deep things of His heart. Can you imagine the Spirit is searching the deep things of the Father's heart, and the heart of Jesus in order to reveal them to us? What a powerful passage. The Spirit is discerning the things on the Father's heart, so that you and I can experience the deep things of His heart.

The message of intimacy is the call to experience the deep things of Jesus' heart, or the Father's heart. As sons of God, we are called to experience God's power. As sons of God, we experience His throne, we are heirs of His power, but as the Bride of Christ, we experience His heart or His emotions.

### **WE ARE ALL THE BRIDE OF CHRIST AND SONS OF GOD**

Every man and woman in the Body of Christ, every born again believer, we are both the sons of God, and we are the Bride of Christ. All the ladies are the sons of God. All the men you are the Bride of Christ. It is the other way around as well. Most women do not struggle with being sons of God. They understand it is a call to experience the power of God. Most women do not say, "I am not a son of God because it undermines my femininity." They do not think it is a call to be less feminine to be sons of God. They understand it is a call to experience the power of God, or to relate to the throne of God, but men they get confused. They think that the message of the Bride of Christ is a call to be less masculine. It is not about masculine or feminine.

It is about experiencing God's power as sons, and experiencing His heart as the Bride. As a matter of fact, I have watched this now over twenty-years when men experience intimacy with God's heart, it does not undermine their masculinity, but it strengthens their masculinity. It does not undermine it at all. Some of the greatest men of God in history, they connected with the Bride of Christ reality. They did not all call it the Bride of Christ, but they had the Bride of Christ intimacy reality. For example, King David the great warrior King of Israel was the lovesick

worshipper. Here, we have the greatest warrior king in Israel's history, but he is the lovesick worshipper who is gazing on the beauty of God all the days of his life.

The end times, the great warrior church will have a bridal identity. The Bride has on army boots. Our love songs, we will sing love songs to Jesus, and they will go forth, they will resound in the realm of the Spirit as a cry of war against the kingdom of darkness.

God is using love songs to thrash the kingdom of darkness, and to destroy its foundations because of the victory of the cross, and the resurrection of Jesus. Some people come into our midst, and they say, "Well, I am a warrior. I do not like all of this I love You stuff." I say well King David was a warrior, and he did a whole lot of the "I love You" stuff because there is no contradiction between the two. John the Baptist was the fiery prophet out in the wilderness, but he talked about hearing the voice of Jesus as the Bridegroom God.

John, the apostle, Jesus called him the son of thunder. He was this thunderous man, but he called himself the man who Jesus loved, meaning some of the greatest men of God in history who were absolutely captured by the message of intimacy with God. Now, in the generation the Lord returns, the church worldwide will have a bridal intimacy, a bridal identity meaning it says, "The Spirit, and the Bride say, 'come.'" It does not say the Spirit and the army of God says, "Come." It does not say the Spirit and the family. It does not say the Spirit and the Body, the Spirit and the kingdom, the Spirit and the priesthood, the Spirit and the army. It says, "The Spirit and the Bride."

### **THE END-TIME CHURCH WITH A BRIDAL IDENTITY**

Now, we are the army of God. We are the family of God. We are the Body of Christ. We are the temple of the Holy Spirit. We are the kingdom. We are all of these things. These are part of our identity in the Spirit forever. But, in one hour of history right before Jesus returns, He is going to emphasize our bridal identity. That is a sign of the times that the Spirit is moving that we are getting near the coming of the Lord.

The message of our bridal identity is becoming well known around the world. It is exploding, the message that the Spirit is speaking about the bridal identity. That is the kingdom message. The Body of Christ has this message worldwide. It is the Spirit's message, and He is giving it to the Church everywhere. It is a sign of the

Lord's return because never in history has the message of the Bride of Christ been emphasized by the Spirit on a worldwide basis, as it is right now.

The Bridegroom message is the revelation of Jesus' emotions. Jesus, the King, is a revelation of His power. Jesus, the Bridegroom, is a revelation of His emotions, His desire, His affections, His gladness, His burning desire for us. Some people say, "Well, I would rather focus on being a son of God and operating in power. Others say, "I would rather focus on being the Bride of Christ and experiencing His heart;" beloved, we do not have to choose between God's heart and God's power. We can have both His power and His heart. That is the inheritance of the end-time Church. Well, that is the inheritance of the Church throughout all history.

### **CALL GOD'S PEOPLE "HEPHZIBAH" (ISAIAH 62:4-7)**

In Isaiah 62:4-7, the Lord says, "You shall be called Hephzibah because the Lord delights in you for as the Bridegroom rejoices over the Bride, so your God will rejoice over you. I have set watchmen on your walls. They shall never hold their peace day or night. Give Him no rest until He establishes Jerusalem a praise in the earth." Now, this is a very powerful and significant prophecy and it is about the generation the Lord returns. In its context, it is about the generation the Lord returns. Now, of course, this prophecy is true. It is relevant throughout all of church history, but it has its ultimate fulfillment in the generation the Lord returns. What the Lord says, "You shall be called Hephzibah." Now the word Hephzibah, look at Isaiah 62:4. Let us look at that again. The word "Hephzibah" means "the Lord delights in you." The Lord calls you "Hephzibah." He says, "I delight in you. I have feelings. I have joy. I have happiness when I think about you. I delight in you." In Isaiah 62:5, for as the Bridegroom rejoices over the Bride, so your God shall rejoice over you.

The way that the Bridegroom rejoices over the Bride is in the same way God rejoices over you. November 1995, I have a very powerful prophetic dream. I am going to do a little bit of what happened in that dream in just a moment. In this dream, I am in a large auditorium, and there are thousands of people like this, but it was even larger, and in the dream, I am on the microphone. I have a microphone and the audible voice of God comes like thunder from the sky. It says, "Call"—it is like thunder—"call the people Hephzibah for I delight in them. Call them Hephzibah. Tell them I delight in them." So this thunderous voice in this dream, and I wake up early it is on a Sunday morning, and the power of God is on me.

I am just trembling under the authority of the Holy Spirit and the power. I am thinking, “Wow.” I get up. I am going to preach that morning at church. I take my message. I throw it away whatever I was going to preach. I said, “I am going to tell our church they are Hephzibah, God delights in them.” Now notice that in Isaiah 63:6, God says, “I have set watchmen on your walls, they shall never hold their peace.” These watchmen are intercessors. Instead of the word “watchmen” put the word “intercessors.” “I have put intercessors on your walls oh Jerusalem. They shall never be silent day and night” (Isa. 62:6). They will never be quiet. They will intercede day and night, night and day, day and night until God breaks in with power, and makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth. Isaiah 62, I want you to follow this: In Isaiah 62, God is calling intercessors to pray night and day until God breaks in with power. I have preached on Isaiah 62:6 for many years many times. I would open up. I would go to a conference, turn to Isaiah 62:6, and I would say God is calling intercessors and evangelists—the mission movement is the term we are using now and the prayer movement are joining together in the Spirit. “They are one movement,” the Lord says. I would tell people God is building houses of prayer. They will cry out night and day. They will never be silent until, until, until God breaks in with power. They will never be silent until God breaks in with power.

### **GOD DELIGHTS IN US AND REJOICES AS A BRIDEGROOM**

So I would preach on Isaiah 62:6 many times. So, now in November 1995, I have this dream. I am in the large auditorium. I just told you the dream. I will say it again. The thunderous voice of God says, “Call them Hephzibah. Tell them I delight in them.” In essence, I enjoy them. I like them. I enjoy My fellowship with them even in their weakness I like them. Tell them this. So I wake up from this dream early Sunday morning. I determine that I am going to preach on this message of Hephzibah. I throw away the sermon I prepared the day before.

Here is an interesting story: I said Hephzibah. I remember reading that verse once. Now Isaiah 62 is one of my favorite chapters in the Bible, but here is the problem. Every time I read Isaiah 62, and every time I preach on it, I start in Isaiah 62:6. I never read Isaiah 62:1-5. I always start in Isaiah 62:6. So I am going to look for the Hephzibah passage. I know it is in the prophets, so I am going to. It is early Sunday morning. I am going to preach in a few hours, so I am getting ready. So I say, “Isaiah 1. I think I am can find it in my Bible in Isaiah 2, 3, 4, 5,” I am thumbing through my Bible. Then I look through Isaiah 50, 51, 52, 53, and when I get to Isaiah 60, I say, “Isaiah 60, I am looking scanning the pages.”

Isaiah 61, I scan the page. When I get to Isaiah 62, I just turn the page over without looking because I said to myself, “I will skip Isaiah 62 to save time, as one chapter I really know is Isaiah 62.” So I skip over Isaiah 62. I read Isaiah 63-64, and I am scanning it.

Then I go Jeremiah 1, 2, 3, 4. Ezekiel 1 is taking a long time. Daniel 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11, 12; Hosea 1, 2, 3, Hosea 4 I am scanning, Hosea 14. I go on to Joel, and Amos through all the prophets. I get to Malachi. That took me like an hour. I go where is the Hephzibah? I said, “Because my Bible is all marked up. Surely I marked it somewhere.” Well, I look at the clock. I have still got a couple of hours before the Sunday morning service. I rise up. I am going to do it again.

Isaiah 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, I am scanning. Isaiah 60, 61, when I get to Isaiah 62 because I know Isaiah 62, so well, I just turn the page over again. I do not know it is on that page. I do not even know. I go Isaiah 63, 64 Daniel you know Jeremiah. Now, I have wasted two hours, and I am frustrated. The anointing, and the feeling is gone. The whole experience is gone, and I am just frustrated. So I do what you have to do. I had to break down and get out the concordance.

So I said, “man. Okay I have got to look this thing up in the concordance.” Like Hephzibah shows up, it says Isaiah 62. I say, “That is—the concordance is wrong. It cannot be Isaiah 62. The one time the concordance is wrong. If there is one chapter I know in the Old Testament, it is Isaiah 62.” That is for sure. I look it up: Low and behold Isaiah, the concordance was right. Hephzibah is the verse before my favorite verse. It is two verses before. I say, “This is impossible! How, wait when did that verse get there? Who put that verse there? It has never been there before.” Then it hits me for the first time.

## **CONNECTING GOD DELIGHTS IN YOU WITH TWENTY-FOUR SEVEN PRAYER**

The very first time it connects with me that the Hephzibah message which is “God delights in you” which is the bridal message, the bridal paradigm. Paradigm just means perspective. The bridal perspective of the kingdom, the Song of Solomon message—it is all the same thing.

The Hephzibah message is the Song of Solomon message. God delights in you. God likes you. God’s heart is towards you. It touches me for the first time that the

intimacy message of Hephzibah and Song of Solomon which are the same is essentially connected to the night and day prayer message.

The intercessor mandate, and the intimacy mandate are the same mandate in God's heart. This was a radical thought to me that Isaiah joined intimacy and intercession together. I thought intimacy and intercession were two opposites. I thought one group did intercession, and the other groups said, "I love You, I love You. Oh I love You. I love You, but they did not care about intercession."

The intercessors were the warriors, and the intimacy people were the wimps. That is how I saw it. The real guys were the guys who skipped intimacy, and intercession, and they just did the work out in evangelism. Those were the real heroes of faith. So for years, I had conflict between intercession, intimacy and evangelism; it all comes together powerfully right here.

## **ISAIAH JOINED INTIMACY AND INTERCESSION IN CHAPTER SIXTY-TWO**

Isaiah joined intimacy with intercession because intercession without intimacy leads to burnout. I preached the Isaiah 62:6 message for years: night and day prayer, night and day prayer, night and day prayer. People would just get in the prayer room, and pray hard. Night and day prayer, night and day prayer, revival, revival, revival, transformation, revival and they would just wear themselves out.

You know what you can do that for five years, maybe for ten with no intimacy, but sooner or later, you will wear out, and burn out waiting, revival, uh yelling at the devil praying for revival. It is like with no connection with God at the heart level. I watched this for years. So many of my intercessors whom I recruited and preach Isaiah 62:6 to, I would recruit them to intercession. I would get them to sign up, and they would join the prayer room, and they would be faithful, but almost everybody burnt out within five or ten years, almost everybody.

Very few people ever stayed with it for any amount of years, and suddenly, I understood for the first time. The Hephzibah message, the intimacy with God message is essential to the night and day prayer intercession message. It is essential. We cannot stay the course. We cannot do twenty-four seven prayer, if we do not have intimacy energizing our spirit in the process.

So I found here at the end of verse, the bridal revelation, the Hephzibah message is the bridal revelation that God likes us, that God enjoys us, that God is tender in His heart towards us.

The Isaiah 62:4-5 message is essential to the Isaiah 62:6-7 message of night and day prayer. You cannot separate them without one of them becoming ineffective in our life.

### **NIGHT AND DAY PRAYER AND THE BRIDE OF CHRIST MESSAGE**

So I had for the first time that morning when it came to me, I saw the two audible voice mandates in my life. One was in 1983 do night and day prayer. The second one was in 1988 do the Song of Solomon or the Bride of Christ message. For years I asked, "Is it night and day prayer or is it Song of Solomon? Which is it? Lord, which is my mandate? That morning I understood that the Song of Solomon mandate is the same foundational truth as night and day prayer that you cannot do IHOP without engaging the people with love songs and intimacy with God.

This was a most remarkable revelation to me that the warriors, and the lovers of God were the same people. It was the verse that the Lord gave me in 1983, by the audible voice, He said "This one thing I will do: I will gaze on Him all the days of my life" (Ps. 27:4, paraphrased).

### **DAVID HAD THIS REVELATION BEFORE ISAIAH DID**

I will gaze on His beauty. So the great warrior king was one who gazed on the beauty of God. David had it long before Isaiah did. I said Lord I get it. I get it. If we are going to raise up houses of prayer across the earth who do night and day prayer as instructed in Isaiah 62:6-7, they have to have a revelation of their identity as "Hephzibah" (Isa. 62:4-5). You cannot do night and day without Hephzibah. You cannot sustain intercession without intimacy as the foundation.

Yes we are the family of God. We are the army of God. We are the kingdom, and the Body, but beloved, this is the hour of history where the Lord is revealing not just His hand, and His power, He is revealing His heart and His face. He is revealing His heart to us. He says, "if you know how I feel about you, you will intercede far differently, and you will be a missionary to the nations with a far different spirit if you know how I feel about you. If you know how I feel about them. I am not just trying to stamp their passport, so they can avoid hell. I want to save them because I love them. I want to be close to them forever, and you are My messengers. Go tell them."

## **PREACHING THE GOSPEL THROUGH THE BRIDAL PARADIGM**

As the Bride of Christ call them to come to the Bridegroom King. Do not just come to a Savior, and get their passport stamped so they can skip hell. Tell them to come to a wedding banquet.

Tell them there is a King who is also a Bridegroom, and this King has power, but He is ravished with desire for them. Go tell them, "I desire them and they will come with a totally different spirit."

So I want to tell you people who come to visit IHOP through the years and are these warrior guys, I get warrior guys. Again, I grew up with a boxer dad, and boxer friends, and mean guys, and tough guys, and I understand that. I grew up in that culture. When the Lord said to do Song of Solomon it said, "No way."

I did not know that it would change me so I could be the far more effective evangelist with power and tenderness, and I could be an intercessor who does not give up in the process of the battle. Beloved, God is calling intercessors and evangelists, missionaries, the same thing and intimacy as all one reality in the same heart of the same people. So when people visit me, and they say, "You know, I am a warrior. Do I have to do this? I love You. I love You?"

I say, "It is absolutely essential. It will change the way you preach the Gospel. It will change the way you carry yourself in a prayer meeting. It will change the way you wait in revival. It will change the way you resist temptation. It will change the way you endure hardship if you know how He feels about you.

Amen, let us stand. I just want you to close your eyes, just posture yourself before the Lord. I just want to declare this over you. I want to break strongholds of dullness.