

Hell Shaking Prayer

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I believe the main reason we are not seeing revival in our land today is a lack of fervent prayer. I believe that our pulpits are powerless and without influence because there is no influential prayer life behind them. I believe a man is only as tall in the pulpit as he is long on his knees in continued prayer. The spirit of antichrist is in the land and society crumbles all around us and the church seems powerless to do anything about it. And I believe the answer can be traced back to the day that the American church threw the weekly prayer meeting out the window and replaced it with programs and entertainment. The powerhouse of the church is the engine of prayer and I'm afraid today that too many of us have run out of gas.

My message today friends, is entitled "Hell Shaking Prayer." For I believe in my heart that if the people God got on fire for God and laid hold of him in nights of desperate and prevailing prayer, we could push back the powers of darkness in our communities and usher in a Holy Ghost revival that would shake this nation from coast-to-coast with its hell shaking prayer.

My Bible says in the book of James, "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." The key word in that sentence is "righteous man." Too few today pursue a life of holiness unto the Lord. Too few today give up their sports and entertainments and devote that time to prayer.

I was standing in line at the dry cleaners the other day and the man ahead of me was all excited about our local basketball team. And as he talked about it, he knew all the names of all the players and what shots they'd made and he almost leaped off his feet as he described it with such excitement. I bet the average church member today could tell you all about their favorite sports team or favorite television program but they couldn't name the ten commandments or name more than five of the twelve disciples of Christ, much less quote large portions of scripture to you. Why? We today in the church in North America are consumed with our idols and care little about the perishing world around us and the proof of this is the time spent on indulging our pastimes and passions as opposed to the time spent on our knees and in our Bibles.

It's been said that your average pastor only spends ten minutes a day in prayer. I bet he spends more time than that at the practice range at the golf course working on his

handicap when he should be working on his sanctification. But a desperate life of prayer costs something. There is a price to be paid and few want to pay it.

When Jacob wrestled with the angel of God all night it cost him physically for the rest of his life because he walked with a limp. Every step he took made him wince in pain. But because of that desperate night of prayer, God changed his name, changed Jacob's name from "supplanter" to "Prince with God." I believe Leonard Gravenhill's heart attack was due to a night of desperate prayer. He even said so himself.

Listen friends, what cost counts and what counts costs. If we desire to have prayer lives which move mountains of resistant and shake the gates of hell, then we must stay on our knees in brokenness and importunity until the answer is gained.

Jude speaks of praying in the Holy Ghost, "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost." To pray in the Holy Ghost means that you first must be anointed by the Holy Ghost, filled with the Holy Ghost and sensitive to the Holy Ghost. For to pray in the power of the Spirit means unobstructed access to the Almighty, influence to gain his attention and power to attain answers to our pleading petitions. For praying in the Holy Ghost storms the portals wof heaven with violence, shuts up the heavens from rain and makes fire fall upon the drenched altar of sacrifice. It makes kings tremble and kingdoms shake. For a man praying in the power of the Holy Ghost has the ability to shake strong cities off their foundations and the potential to send mountains tumbling into the sea to startle the very angels of heaven and rattle the red-hot gates of hell.

A man full of the Spirit and anointed with the Spirit and praying in the Spirit knows no resistance, has no opposition, fears no earthly mortal and conquers all unearthly enemies. For praying in the power of the Holy Ghost is the essence that makes prayer effectual and fervent. As the Apostle declares, "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." For a righteous man to be praying with fervency and heat in the Holy Ghost is to have great influence upon one's generation and avail much for eternity.

Listen to the story that a pastor shared with me one day while I was having lunch with him. He was a pastor from Glasgow, Scotland and he told me that he and some other pastors in the city grew concerned over the growing evil in their community. Drug use was on the rise, crime had increased and out-of-wedlock pregnancies among teenage girls had literally skyrocketed. He told me that there used to be a city banner that was prominently displayed throughout the city of Glasgow which read, "Let Glasgow flourish in the Name of the Lord." But some godless civic leaders decided to change the city's model to, "Let Glasgow flourish," leaving out the name of the Lord, they took God out of the sense. When that happened, the city began to fall into a moral tailspin and evil increased daily.

Well, this pastor and his minister friends decided to do something about it so they decided to meet on a weekly basis to pray for their city, for their city of Glasgow. They gave up their social lives to commit this time to prayer pleading with God to make a

difference in their community. After some months of desperate prayer by these dedicated men, they began to see a difference in the life of their city. Crime decreased, drug use decreased and out-of-wedlock pregnancies decreased. This little band of men laid hold of God in such prevailing prayer that eventually they pushed back the powers of darkness in their community.

You see friends, when the light of the gospel grows dim through watered-down preaching and lack of prayer, then a vacuum is created and that vacuum is soon filled with darkness. Why can't you in your city, in your community band together with some other believers and commit to one another and God that you will give up your social lives, your entertainments to desperate prayer until you see God move in a mighty way?

Listen friends, if we can make a difference for God in our city and if enough prayer warriors emerge in other cities, this entire nation could be moved for God. The result would be that there'd be so much hell shaking prayer going on that this very nation would begin to tremble under the influence of God and his Holy Spirit. This is the way to revival. But, oh friends, a desperate life of prayer is a sacrifice and you must be prepared for it. God may have you in a trial right now to turn it into a vital place of influential prayer for him.

You see, friends, when God allows us to go through a trial or storm, he has a larger purpose in view. He often brings us to places of brokenness where we become like the broken alabaster box. For to be broken alabaster boxes means to have a fragrant life pleasing to the Lord. We become better prayer warriors through trials and our faith is tested and increased through these tribulations.

For a prayer life that grips the attention of the heavenly throne room is not built beneath calm, sunny skies but shaken during dark, sorrow filled nights. A serious prayer life is hammered out on the anvil of pain and anguish, desperation and despair, when hope hangs on a tattered thread and all human resources are gone. There and only there does the answer to the request come. Here is where the vital prayer life commences which gains the cupped ear of the Almighty as he leans over to listen more intently to the pathetic sobs and anguished heart cries which in desperation reach out for his robe of righteousness to grab hold of and not let go until the answer is attained. To become a person of prayer is to be a shrill, holy note which continually rings the ears of angels and rattles the gates of glory.

Listen, friends, a true prayer life is not borne out of comfort and prosperity, but through trials and adversities. In your leanness, you will learn to lean upon him. Through your rolling on stormy seas, you will learn how to effectively storm heavens portals for deliverance. When friends fail, disappoint and desert you, you will seek and find favor with your faithful friend Jesus. A desperate life of prayer shakes the gates of hell and influences our generation all for the glory of God. Do you believe that? I do. A strong prayer life will make you fear God and not man.

John Wesley said the following, “Give me one hundred men who fear nothing but God and hate nothing but sin and I will shake the gates of hell.” And he did just that.

We can do it too, friends. Wesley was just a man and a short one at that but he was long on prayer and he stood tall in the pulpit because of his mighty prayer life.

Oh friend, I beg you to fall to your knees and confess your lack of prayer to God. Be honest with him and ask him to help you redeem the time in your generation to show you the foolishness of your favorite pastimes and the wasted time consumed on them. It is time to put away our idols and lay hold of God for this lost and perishing generation of hell-bound sinners and hell-bound unconverted church members.

Dear brother pastor, if you want power with God and influence over man, go to your knees and stay there. Ask God to make your very bones afire for him to where you can ignite others with your holy life of prayer and powerful preaching. This is a call to the pulpits in our land to take back this land for God and for our children and our grandchildren. Go to your knees, church, fall on your face, beg God above heaven and earth on our behalf and pour water upon this dry, thirsty land of ours today.

Let me pray.

O Great God, you are the Ancient of Days. You are Holy and you are worthy to be praised. Give us the grace, O Lord, to seek thy face in desperate and prevailing prayer. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit to pray in the Spirit so that kingdoms will be shaken for thee. O Great God, forgive us for our selfish enterprises, our wasted time spent on useless things, things that don't matter, things that you see as dust in light of eternity.

Help us, Lord Jesus, to be persons of prayer. Mighty persons of prayer that you empower to perform your purpose. Help us to shake the very gates of hell with such power that we push back the darkness in our communities and usher in your presence in a Holy Ghost revival that will grip this nation with the awful solemnity of your presence.

Come, O Lord, and take the field in a great revival of religion, I pray. Come pour your Spirit upon this dry and wasted land. Come save our children. Come save our grandchildren. Come, Lord Jesus, and once again permeate our sanctuaries with your presence and your preeminence. I pray in the strong name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.