





**PRAY**  
TAKE THE DEVIL TO GOD'S COURT...  
**FIGHT**  
...YOU CAN'T LOSE  
**WIN!**

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& JOSHUA WEISS



## - *Dedication* -

This book is dedicated to the unsung heroes of modern Christianity--the faithful men and women of God known as missionaries. This circle of service must also include the MK's--the children of missionaries who often get pushed or pulled between worlds and cultures.

Not all Christians get to “do” their faith in comfy local fellowships, on safe short-term missions, in sanitized online outreaches, or, like me, through print or electronic media and broadcasts.

Some believers give up careers, advanced academic pursuits, or upwardly mobile aspirations to accept sacrificial lifestyles, making hard choices to serve the least, the last, or the lowest wherever God sends them. And often, nobody thanks them. But they know when they meet Jesus face-to-face, their sacrifices here will bring eternal rewards far more glorious than can be imagined on this side.

Nevertheless, I want to thank God's missionaries and their families. And since one family in particular is on my heart as I complete this work, my appreciation and prayers are with Monte and Carol Ballard (formerly with Wycliffe Bible Translators). God knows your struggle and you know His embrace.

As Carol recently wrote, “It's all a process, not a quick fix. But He's always PRESENT.”

*“God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.”*

(Psalm 46:1)

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# **PRAY, FIGHT, WIN**

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## *Introduction*

My name is Randy Weiss. This book is based on the edited transcripts from a television series called JESUS, THE DEVIL, & PRAYER. It was an interview I prepared for broadcast on our weekly CrossTalk International TV program. The content was based directly from my private, hand-written journals based on my personal Bible studies. Joshua Weiss (my son) helped me prepare the TV programs specifically so that this book could be developed for people who might be interested in the conclusions reached through my studies about prayer and the influence the devil might have in the lives of Christians. I hope you find this material to be helpful. My prayer is that your prayers will be answered by our loving God Who desires to hear from you.



You will quickly see that the transcript represents the voices of two people speaking. I am one (Randy) and my son, Josh, is the other. The book will be divided into fifteen chapters that represent the fifteen episodes in which the program was produced and broadcast.

Should you wish to receive audio, video, electronic pdf files, or the printed book version of this material, all are available through the ministry at our website [www.crosstalk.org](http://www.crosstalk.org). All proceeds (100%) will be used by the ministry to continue the mission outreaches and broadcast efforts of this non-profit 501(c)3 Christian ministry. Financial contributions to the ministry are tax deductible. The author receives nothing from this project except the bountiful blessings of obedience. And he asks nothing of his readers except for their prayers, and any comments they may wish to offer at the book's website [www.prayfightwin.com](http://www.prayfightwin.com).



# CHAPTER ONE

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## *Whatever Brings You to Your Knees*

**[Randy]**

As I go through what seems like crises in my life, I try to remember some basic fundamentals about Who is in charge, who is not in charge, and what kind of circumstances exist that feeds into my situation. So, I've written quite a bit about these matters. Primarily, I wanted to make sure that my family was prepared to understand how to address these important issues. Anybody else that might find such considerations to be helpful are also welcomed to consider my research, but I consider it my duty to make sure that my family understands these matters because we all go through challenging circumstances.

This is a teaching from a TV series produced for CrossTalk that we called "JESUS, THE DEVIL, & PRAYER." Of course, the book is titled, "PRAY-FIGHT-WIN!" Jesus taught us how to pray so that

we could win, but He also instructed us to recognize that we will encounter an adversary who wants us to lose.

***The devil is real. He is not a pushover,  
and he hates the work of God.***

He is the adversary who fights against us in our service to God, so we must be prepared to engage in a spiritual fight. We will be required to contend in faith against our adversary. We must not quit when it becomes difficult.

***If we want to win in spiritual battles,  
we must decide to win.  
Winning becomes a choice.***

We must choose to stay in the fight and to remain engaged. Success becomes a decision. Our fight is not with fists. Spiritual wars are waged in the realm of the spirit. That is why being engaged in the works of God must begin in prayer. And we must understand that we will be required to endure in this fight until we win. Hence, we PRAY-FIGHT-WIN. That is the order. Each component is a requirement.

***If we fail to pray, we will likely fail.***

If we fail to remain in the fight, our adversary will likely win. But if we prayerfully remain engaged as servants of the Most High God, engaged in the struggles to which He has called us, He will bring the victory that He has birthed in the hearts of His spiritual warriors.

My intent is to help us successfully engage in the tasks that our God wants His servants to undertake, and I want us to be successful and to overcome the efforts of our adversary. The best approach in such matters is to stick to the words of Jesus. Of course, I will also lean on a number of other Scriptures, too. We can rejoice that Jesus provides us with some very specific instructions to help us understand how to accomplish the purposes to which He has called us. And within this book, I will also present some very practical explanations about these spiritual dynamics gleaned from a few great men of God of bygone eras. I will share a number of insights that I have learned from a martyred Chinese Christian preacher named Watchman Nee. Additionally, I will include some personal lessons revealed to me the hard way--in the refining fires of God's love.

If you are facing a spiritual battle, or if you feel like you can't win the battle you are in, I am confident that you will find depth, strength, solace, and encouragement in the words of Jesus and those insights preserved from a few old battle-hardened saints who left some notes behind for us to follow on our own rugged path to victory. Together, we will learn to overcome through praying with understanding, praying in the Spirit, and by remaining engaged in the fight. In so doing, we will be challenged to persevere until we win. I can tell you that winning is no cakewalk, but it is absolutely possible. Best of all, it is not terribly complicated. I believe if you're reading this, you want to win. Perhaps you are tired of losing. The various ideas presented in this work are focused to help you overcome. As you do, I believe it will assist you in framing a plan that will bring glory to God and draw you nearer to Him as you force the adversary to retreat.

And with this introduction now behind us, I want to move into the trenches where battles are fought on the ground. As my family knows, but most other people are probably unaware, I make my living as a tentmaker. They know that I am an evangelist and that I use media to share my faith, to announce the love of God, and to declare the coming of the Messiah. Therefore, folks readily recognize that I am a minister of the Gospel, but most don't know I am also businessman. That is how I have made my living, supported my family, and provided funding to remain in the ministry. I am not paid to preach. It costs me to preach, but my call to the ministry has always been the most important pursuit of my life. It is a privilege that I cherish, and I rejoice in the ability God has provided for us to fund ministry instead of draining ministry. I often joke that if you've ever heard me preach, you know why I don't get paid. Conversely, I am quick to point out that I know to Whom I am in debt, and it is never to my audience.

.....  
.....  
.....  
***My goal is not to please my hearers.***  
***I serve an audience of One.***  
.....  
.....

If He is not pleased, no number of accolades from others matter. If He rejoices in the hearing, no amount of earthly disdain carries any weight.

The key point of the above comments is that I have learned much about risks, rewards, struggles, losses, gains, disappointments, fear, and faith as a result of building, buying, running, and maintaining commercial enterprises. In some ways, only other small businessmen can appreciate the depth of the challenges that come from operating small businesses. We may call ourselves self-employed, but what

that really means is that we are really one bad decision or one bad day away from unemployed. Everyone recognizes that there are numerous tests, setbacks, opportunities, and chaotic things to sort through. I've tried to live my life as a prayerful man. Personally, I'm not satisfied with my own prayer life, and I feel that some of my challenges are a result of not being as sensitive to the Lord as He wants me to be. Sometimes, I fail to see and understand things because I am not as prayerful as I should be, but God has brought me back to Luke 18:1-8. This is commonly known as the story of the persistent widow. It's a parable of Jesus.

I prefer a different title. I consider this to be the "Parable of the Unjust Judge." Most of the Bibles that I use call it the "Parable of the Persistent Widow." But I believe her case had legitimate merit and a just judge would have acted on the merits of her case. In the example of the injustice she experienced, whether there had been a decree of guilt or innocence is uncertain. That fact seems to have been irrelevant to Jesus. We really don't know the story. The deciding factor of this case appeared to revolve around the inconvenience that was being caused to the judge. The determinant factors of the legal matter were simply unknown.

Was this guy's golf tee time being interrupted? Did he have a weekly poker game at risk of delay because some pesky widow woman was knocking on his door again? Actually, we have no background on her grievance or even what recompense the widow had requested from this judge. It seems as if the rights or wrongs of the case were irrelevant. Jesus did not elaborate. He gave us no detail.

[Josh]

Okay, for my benefit, I'd like to read it, so I've got some context.

[Randy]

Go right ahead. Thank you.

[Josh]

*(Reading from a Bible app on his cell phone.)*

*Luke chapter 18:1-8, "Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. He said in a certain town, there was a judge who neither feared God nor cared what people thought. And there was a widow in that town who kept coming to him with the plea, grant me justice against my adversary. For some time he refused. But finally he said to himself, even though I don't fear God or care what people think yet, because this widow keeps bothering me, I will see that she gets justice so that she won't eventually come and attack me. And the Lord said, listen to what the unjust judge says, 'Will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? I tell you, he will see that they get justice and quickly. However, when the son of man comes, will he find faith on the earth?'"*

Now, I know that's the NIV version. You read the King James version. It's the difference between older and younger, but there are likely some differences and I'd be curious to hear your thoughts and I'm sure that we're going to get to some of them.



**[Randy]**

*(Laughing)* My first thought is, “Are you sure that’s a real Bible?” It’s a telephone! No wonder you don’t have the whole word of God set in your heart. The same place you get texts and play games - is this is a Bible, son?

**[Josh]**

What the enemy has meant for bad has been turned to good. And for the record, look. You’ve got all of this [pointing to the stack of Bibles I have spread out]. You’re taking up the whole table. I’m taking up one little, you know, three inches by five inches and I can have many more digital versions than what you have here in book form.

**[Randy]**

Currently, this is my favorite Bible [showing a parallel version with four translations]. I always have my King James Bible or as it’s called the Authorized Version. But my favorite Bible these days is this one because I get to read the NIV (New International Version), which is really quite wonderful, and the New Living Translation (NLT), the New King James (NKJV), and The Message. It is very easy to compare them all.

**[Josh]**

That’s awesome.

**[Randy]**

It’s really nice.

**[Josh]**

Can I see that for a second? I’m curious (*picking up my Parallel Bible*). So, man, that’s a heavy Bible!

**[Josh]**

I have all of those versions and about three dozen more right here. Feel the weight of that, though. Yeah, I've got 'em all right there. But you know what, because of my digital footprint, you can have the rest of the table. So, you're welcome.

**[Randy]**

Middle child syndrome? [Josh is the third of four sons and two daughters.]

**[Josh]**

You've got to learn to live within your position when you're blocked on both sides, so it's okay. I thank you for allowing me to interrupt as we go into and actually read the material that we're talking about. It is helpful for us younger folk who might not be as familiar with the verses as you older, wiser folks.

**[Randy]**

Fair enough. I have to confess that, like many older people, although I have read it countless times, I believe God has been showing me new things. I've read, and reread and reread that same small section, from multiple versions. It's really helping me.

And I am curious. I would really like to know more about what actually took place. You know, Jesus didn't give us more information. He was intentional. He didn't think it was necessary. Apparently, it wasn't relevant. Still, when I think about it, I wonder if this lady's landlord raised her rent? Was it a rent increase in violation of some agreement that he had made with her dear departed husband? You know, was she coming and saying, "Hey, my husband told me you

had promised to hold the rent. Then the moment he died, you raised my rent anyway?” We just don’t know what had happened or why she went to court. Perhaps she had bought a horse and it turned up lame upon delivery. Maybe she felt she had been mistreated on the other side of a transaction. Perhaps she had sewn a special robe for a wedding. If she happened to have been a seamstress, maybe she hadn’t gotten paid and she was going to tell the judge, “Hey, I did all this work for the bride and the bride’s mother never paid me.”

Or maybe there’s another side to the story. Maybe she made the robe, she delivered it, but it was the wrong size or the wrong color. For some reason, maybe it was unusable by the recipient? Maybe the horse was limping when she offered a very low price, hoping that she could buy the horse and it might heal quickly. We just don’t know. Maybe the landlord had negotiated a modest annual rent increase with her husband. But after his death, without his income, the widow simply couldn’t afford it. Jesus was silent on the details because the details were not the point of the parable. Jesus clarified the point and purpose of the parable so we would not confuse His words. The message that we were to learn was simple. We should always pray and never give up! That’s the part of the text in the New Living Translation (the NLT) when Jesus spoke directly to me!

I was reminded that I don’t always pray. And sometimes, I feel like giving up. I believe God wants me to learn some important things from this parable. I want to make sure that I learn it, and my family learns it. I want everybody, wherever I have any influence, to learn it for themselves. If you’re interested, I want you to learn it.

**[Josh]**

So, when you read the parable about the widow - and you began feeling conviction about your own level of prayer - are you identifying with the widow? Are you identifying with the judge? Or are you kind of a fly on the wall? Are you just looking at the story and overhearing the message?

**[Randy]**

I'm trying to figure out what's wrong in my own personal circumstance. I read the Bible pretty selfishly. I try to understand what God wants me to learn so I can become who He wants me to be. How can I become a better version of the me that I am? And His words show me where I miss the mark. They show me the higher goals to which I must aim.

Now, I have to acknowledge that I wrestle with a conflict in praying like the heathen do in Matthew 6:7. There is a reference to using vain repetitions. "Oh God, help me, help me, help me, help me fix this. God, this is broken. Fix this. God help me." So often, those are my prayers. I don't like to pray that way, but I find myself in that situation. I can't believe I'm the only person who might still be praying in that selfish manner, but we are often focused on the things that are our personal concerns. We can't help ourselves because we're selfish and we're self-centered. When life hurts, it hurts. And we don't want the hurt to be there.

**[Josh]**

The conflict I have is almost the opposite. I believe that God already knows my problem. He knows my need, He knows my want, and so, I almost don't go to Him enough. My assumption is, "Well, He already knows what I need. Why should I ask Him?"

**[Randy]**

And that's the other side of this reality. Like you, I also use that excuse, but that's not what Jesus told us to do. So, it's not the right view of prayer. The other side of this, another element to this problem, is that I sometimes feel like I am pestering God. If I go to Him with vain repetitions after I know He already understands my problem, isn't that like being a heathen? God has orchestrated the circumstances of my life. He has a plan. I believe His plan is good. I know He loves me. I know He's not trying to crush me. I know He's trying to build me. Still, I sometimes feel like maybe God doesn't want to hear this? So, I want to remind myself, and I will also remind you of something crucial.

.....  
: *When we come to Him, God never says, "Oh, you again."* :  
.....

He doesn't do that. Yet, I keep coming back to Him with the same thing, even if it feels like that heathen's vain repetition. God still wants me to pray. So, we must continue to pray and ask God to help. I have circumstances with a technology company with which I am involved. I face problems in a retail operation that I'm responsible for in another state. It's where I make a living. I have circumstances with some commercial real estate work that I do. It is a large part of how we fund the work of the ministry. Real challenges, real risks, real issues that need real resolution.

As I look at my notes here, month after month, and in some cases, year after year, it's essentially the same thing. "Oh God, help me!" I ask myself, "Is that sort of prayer even right?" I know that in retrospect, my details have changed. The repetition has changed a little. The list of things shifts. You know, "Lord, there's this building that is just a mess. I don't know what to do." So, I prayed about that. God helped. And now, I don't pray about that anymore because that one is off the list. Yet, there's this ongoing list of prayers asking God to help me. "Help me, help me, help me!" And as I'm looking at some of these things, each seemed to be in a crisis that was unworkable. How do you ever get through it? Then, looking back at my journal, I see that I have since forgot about so many items because each has been off the list long enough that they no longer trouble me. Because of God's help, they are not even issues anymore. Many were just checked off. So, when I look at my life in the rearview mirror, I see what God has done. I know they are not really vain repetitions. They are now new repetitions.

**[Josh]**

The cycle continues, only the content changes.

**[Randy]**

Yeah. Right. I had completely forgotten about some of them because I had gotten into brand new chaotic messes. I look back through my notes and remember that at one point, a city government tried to take away one of my commercial properties by declaring eminent domain. I was so greatly damaged by that city government. Without justification, they simply declared my property was to be taken for the good of the city. They said they wanted to build a college on my land. For many years, I had a very successful commercial enterprise going. It wasn't some new thing.

And I told them, “No! You can’t do that. If you want to build a college there, I have additional land, I’ll build the college.” I had done large projects in different parts of the state. I was perfectly well-equipped to do what they wanted, but I didn’t want them to come and take my land, take my building, and do what I could have done myself. I remember going down to the state capitol. I had a meeting with the president of the statewide university system. I said, “Hey, I understand you want to build a college in this town where I have property. The mayor told me that you were going to do this, and they were going to take my land away from me.” I said, “Look, if you want a college there, say the word, we can do this. Let’s make a deal. That’s the way things were supposed to work in this country.” And he played dumb. “Oh, no, no, I, uh, we’re not gonna do that.” My wife and I were there, and he was so nice, but he was just playing dumb. It was crazy. Ultimately, the city did exactly what they said they wanted to do. And of course, it dragged on for a long time. I did everything I could to stop them. I used every legal procedure available to me. Nothing worked. There was no stopping the city’s machine. It puts you on your knees before God. I continued telling God how wrong this mess was. I was informing Him that this was not the way things were supposed to work in this country.

I remember going to the judge, and I’m not going to say he was an unjust judge, because that would be unkind, but you know, he-

**[Josh]**

Things didn’t work out?

[Randy]

Right! Things didn't work out for me. The judge was very friendly to the City, and he didn't care about my situation. The entire process was so chaotic and confusing, but I never questioned God's love. His ability to bring His will to pass in my life, and by the time that mess was done, although they did take my land. Ultimately, they were forced to pay me something for the land.

*In some countries, if the government wanted what you had,  
they would just come, shoot you in the head,  
and take your stuff.*

I had to be thankful that I lived in a country where normally they don't do those things. There was some justice. It was just not perfect justice.

I was thinking back to a time when I had built a large building for a large national company. There was so much prayer that covered that project. I sought godly advice from wise people. Before I went into the whole process, it was bathed in prayer. Shortly after this enormous deal was all done, that company went bankrupt. It was so unfair! It was so disturbing. And, of course, that sent me back to my knees for a different reason. Before, my prayer had been, "Oh God, help me do this. There is this opportunity. Help me do the right thing. Help me make the right arrangements with the right contractor and the right lenders. Help me use the right attorneys and the right contracts and to get everything done perfectly." And then it became, "Oh God, they've gone bankrupt! Help me overcome this problem."



[Josh]

I think everybody can relate to that.

[Randy]

Everybody has circumstances that brings them to their knees. And I want to go back and read what it said in Matthew, chapter six. Jesus said,

***“But thou, when thou prayest enter into thy closet and when thou shut thy door, pray to thy Father, which is in secret and thy Father, which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.”***

This is what we had previously talked about. There's some balance to all of this, but I don't know what it looks like. I just know life brings me to my knees. I go to God, and I tell him my problems. I look for direction to fix the problems myself with His help, or for Him to fix the problems that I can't fix. And throughout my life as a believer, I have pestered God regularly. And I know He never says, “Oh, you again.”

But there have been so many crises that have come and gone. It still feels like vain repetitions. Even though I know better, I'm just glad God never says, “Oh, you again.”

I want to have a better grip on what I know because if I can't formulate that for myself, how can I help my family formulate it for themselves later?

**[Josh]**

Rephrase that so I can get a better grip on what I know.

**[Randy]**

Yeah, I know stuff, but it doesn't mean I live it, okay? I want to live what I know.

**[Josh]**

Put your faith into practice?

**[Randy]**

Yes, yes.





# CHAPTER TWO

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## *Striking a Balance Between Vain Repititions & Pestering God*

**[Josh]**

One important thing to note about the instruction of Jesus in the sixth chapter of Matthew is that He was not suggesting we were to use the specific words described in His message.

**[Randy]**

Right. It's not a formulaic text.

**[Josh]**

I mean, you remember brother Sidney? Obviously, he was kind of the model. He exemplified being a mature Christian for us.

**[Randy]**

Yes, absolutely. Brother Sidney Jones was a great family friend. He knew how to pray! He was very consistent in his prayers. In a work

on prayer like this, it's easy for things to be taken out of context. For example, I knew a successful Christian television broadcaster I had gone to see in a large metropolitan area many years ago. I went to present our CrossTalk program to him a long time back.

He said, "Well, brother, let's go into the prayer closet and we'll take this to the Lord." He had a literal closet. He and I went into that closet, and we prayed about him adding CrossTalk to his broadcast schedule. I was honored he would see me. I was thankful he decided to accept our program. I didn't have the heart to tell him that his closet was not the kind of structure to which Jesus referred in Matthew 6:6 when He spoke of going into our closet to pray. I believe the closet Jesus spoke of might better be represented by a Jewish prayer shawl or *tallis*. That is what Jewish people often use to enwrap ourselves. The Hebrew verb is *L'talayl* -- to enwrap. We enclose ourselves in a prayer covering. In this way, we can focus without distraction. I think we're supposed to focus on God and block out other things. People read the words in English, and I guess an empty closet is what some assume Jesus meant. This kind broadcaster was a wonderful fellow. He was a nice man. He was just trying to do the literal thing. He was a godly man, and God answered his prayers. I'm sure that he did. But, back to the text in Luke.

I know when He hears me pray, Jesus is not saying, "Oh, you again." When He hears from me, I know He hears my heart. Jesus told a story to make sure that I know the difference between the character of God and that of the unjust judge. Some people have a distorted view of God. They see God in a very wrong light. Now, this widow woman is supposed to become our model to follow in prayer, but there's much to learn from the bad example of the unjust judge. Jesus

was not trying to show us how to avoid that old widow lady's name on his caller ID.

**[ Josh ]**

And he was probably worried about her attacking him, too?

**[Randy]**

Exactly. She wasn't going to let loose.

**[Josh]**

So, should we be belligerent?

**[Randy]**

That's not what I'm saying, and I don't believe that was what Jesus prescribed.

**[Josh]**

No, I agree.

**[Randy]**

The unjust judge responded to her incessant nagging. The judge finally rendered a decision in her favor because of her unwavering, repetitive, obstinate, constant petitioning. Her goal was finally achieved because she never quit! There is no indication that the unjust judge cared if she was right or wrong.

**[Josh]**

He really was the unjust judge. Justice was not the motive. His attitude may have been, "Who cares? Just leave me alone."

**[Randy]**

Yeah. He just wanted her to let him play golf or whatever his hobby of the era was.

**[Josh]**

I feel like this is a picture of my son constantly coming to me and nagging me until I change my mind. Whether I have reason for my “NO!” answer or not. He wants me say, “Yes.” He keeps on incessantly nagging until I finally say, “Fine, I want to go play golf.”

**[Randy]**

Right! And I don’t play golf, so I don’t fully understand this, but you’re talking about my grandson. So, please don’t do that. I don’t know what he’s asking, but it’s probably a perfectly reasonable request. He’s a wonderful young man.

**[Josh]**

He is. He is. I’m never worried about him attacking me.

**[Randy]**

Right? But this widow, she personifies what a successful, pesky prayer accomplishes in the case of an unjust judge. Jesus reminded us that her judge neither feared God nor cared about people according to the NLT translation. ***“He neither feared God nor cared about people.”*** And Jesus said, ***“Learn a lesson from this unjust judge. Even he rendered a just decision in the end. So don’t you think God will surely give justice to his chosen people who cry out to him day and night?”*** (verses 6-8) Perhaps there’s the rub. That’s one of the things that bothers me about myself. It goes back to my prayer life. Do I cry out to Him day and night? I don’t. I’ve really been reflecting on



this. I've been conflicted over the caution to avoid vain repetitions. Sometimes, I worry about appearing before God like some heathen who doubted that God could or would fix my problem.

*Ask God in fear or pester God in faith?  
Let's choose the latter.*

I don't want to look at God in the wrong way, and I guess I don't want God to look at me wrong either.

**[Josh]**

It goes back to that. It's a wrestling match between trusting that God's going to take care of my situation and requiring me to ask Him.

**[Randy]**

And as brother Sidney always caused us to reflect on, we are to *"count it all joy"* as Scripture declares (James 1:2 KJV). We are to *"rejoice in our tribulations"* (Romans 5:3 ASV). It is *"through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God."* (Acts 14:22 ASV). These are things that we know to be true, but back to this parable. It's not the end of the story. It's not enough that I stop asking in fear instead of pestering God in faith. That is still not enough. Prayer is a balancing act between asking in faith and asking again, and again, and again because the answer to my prayer has been delayed while the struggle continues. So, we fight in faith as we wait. **We pray, we fight, and we win.**

**[Randy]**

Thus far, we've totally ignored the central figure of the parable, and this was kind of a revelation for me. In my current favorite Bible, it

shows the headings. The NIV titles it the Parable of the Persistent Widow. The NLT also calls it the Parable of the Persistent Widow. The New King James agrees with the title, the Parable of the Persistent Widow. The Message is almost identical calling it the Story of the Persistent Widow. But I look at my, my King James version and it's really interesting. The more archaic styled old King James English calls it the Importunate Widow. Who even uses that word "importunate" anymore?

**[Josh]**

I've had a responsible education. I don't know what importunate means. Why don't you inform me what is importunate?

**[Randy]**

It's persistent.

**[Josh]**

It will be important for me to know what importunate means in this particular situation.

**[Randy]**

Well, it's the same general concept. But now wait, you say the parable is called that of the persistent widow. You said you consider it to be the parable of the unjust judge. When I introduced this, I called it the parable of the unjust judge. Were I to write a version, I would title it as the Parable of the Unjust Judge. And you say, "Wait, I heard you say that." It's true. I said it was the parable of the unjust judge, but without the central figure, there would be no story. There would be nothing for us to talk about.

The entire scene would have ended up on the cutting room floor, totally edited out of the film without the star.

*I mean, who is Batman without the Joker*

or the Riddler or the Penguin? Who is Seinfeld without Newman? I mean, there would have been no case, no need for a judge. The Yankees need the Red Sox. Without an arch enemy, the fans would cheer for everybody.

The protagonist is obviously Batman. The antagonist would be the Joker. In the story presented by Jesus, the antagonist is the unjust judge.

**[Josh]**

It's not my fault. You're just a negative guy and you're focusing on the bad guys.

**[Randy]**

Well, in a way, he is the central figure, and I hadn't figured that out before.

**[Josh]**

Joker is never the central figure . . . except for in the more recent movies where he is the central figure. Otherwise, everybody knows Batman is the central figure.

**[Randy]**

In the parable of the unjust judge, it's crucial that we have an unjust judge. Otherwise, there would be no case. There would be no parable

without this judge and the widow would have lived happily ever after. Were it not for the adversary, nobody would have pushed her into the controversy. I really like the way Watchman Nee characterized this issue. He said,

*“Without the adversary, there would be no story nor parable. For the one who stirs up all the troubles is this adversary. He’s the instigator of all confusions and afflictions, and hence, he ought to be the focus of our attention.”*

And I agree with him.

**[Josh]**

So, that’s why you say the parable of the unjust judge.

**[Randy]**

Yes. That is exactly why.

**[Josh]**

It seems like a negative approach to take. The NIV says “The persistent widow.”

**[Randy]**

Most always, that’s the focus.

**[Josh]**

So, it’s the difference between positive people and negative people, but that’s fine. Let us continue.

[Randy]

Just like the widow woman, we too have an adversary, yet we often live as though he doesn't exist.

We know that he's there. We're spiritual people. We understand it. We have a concept of this warfare, but it's not a sufficiently exercised understanding. Peter wisely advised us to,

***“Be sober, be vigilant because your adversary, the devil walks about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.”***

(I Peter 5:8 NKJV)

Sometimes we need to depose our adversary. We must accuse our adversary before the judge. Take the adversary to court. In this case, our judge is God. The devil is our enemy, but the devil is also the enemy of God, and I think that's really an important, crucial point. It means that

***God is on our side in any conflict with the devil.***

Jesus is our righteousness, so every demonic accusation against us is baseless. We're the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus.

***In any conflict between God and the devil, God wins.***

The devil loses. Therefore, as we walk with God, we can enjoy the victory that He shares with us. We don't win the victory. God wins the victory, and He shares that victory with us. Nevertheless, we do have a despicable adversary. Now, how are we supposed to manage this thorny problem? Turning again to Watchman Nee, the author

provides a compelling argument that I often fail to remember. It just eludes me. Is that a spiritual problem? Is it just that I'm dull? Or is that part of the tactics of the enemy?

I know this to be true. As Watchman Nee wrote, *"Before there is the possibility of our overcoming, we must maintain, in our heart, a hostile attitude towards towards the devil. We must no longer be willing to subject ourselves to his oppression."*<sup>1</sup> That's the right attitude to have. We must declare, "NO! You can't do that. I'm not going to let you get away with that. I'm taking you to my Father who happens to be the Judge.

**[Josh]**

So, if we can pause here: I think a lot of times, in the world that we're in today, you get different extremes about how people view the devil-the adversary. There are those who think that the devil is just some fictitious character made up to be the antagonist. You know, the devil made me do it. It's spiritual warfare. How can you prove it? It's not scientific. There is no devil. And then there are the others. I'm sure that you're probably going to get to them at some point.

**[Randy]**

Correct, you're a perceptive young man.

**[Josh]**

Some people give the devil too much credit.

**[Randy]**

Yes, they do.

**[Josh]**

And there are those who land in the middle. First of all, can we just pause? Do you believe that there truly is a devil?

**[Randy]**

Absolutely!

**[Josh]**

Okay, and why do you believe that there's a devil?

**[Randy]**

Cause the Bible says so.

**[Josh]**

The Bible says so, right? And does the devil take on physical form?

**[Randy]**

He's not dressed up in a black outfit with a red face, red horns, and a pitchfork, okay? The devil is not a comic book character. And perhaps, to someone, the devil seems like some kind of superhero. However, I will address these things by clarifying that he doesn't compare to God. In understanding our parable, the judge to whom we want to make our appeal is God. Our task is to go to the Judge who loves us. He is the judge who is waiting for us to come to Him, and He desires to make His ruling on our behalf.

**[Josh]**

But from a foundational standpoint, going forward in the conversation, I obviously agree there is a devil. Yes, there is a God. Jesus is the Messiah who died on the cross for our sins. He rose again,

and He ascended to heaven where He is sitting at the right hand of the Father, fully God, fully man. These are the things with which we can all agree. Yes, we believe these things to be fact. These aren't scientific things. We believe in the revelation of God. You can't say that it's too much of a leap to believe in God but not too much of a leap to believe that there's also the devil, right?

**[Randy]**

Absolutely, and many people who have been involved in Christian ministry have grappled with this struggle. Believers have been at war with the devil in concrete terms, in real world terms. In some parts of the world, it's more evident than in other parts of the world. There is evil in the world. The devil is evil, and I will reach certain conclusions about that, but for the moment, I want to focus on the reality that we have a legitimate grievance against our adversary. That changes our position.

We must realize that he has exceeded his rights. Sometimes, the devil goes beyond his rights when he is attacking us. At that point, his legs can be cut out from under him because we have a just Judge to whom we can go with our grievance. We can take our adversary to the Judge and let God be the One who manages the chaos.

**[Josh]**

Yeah. In real world terms, if you're in a court, and the prosecutor is basically throwing accusations up against you, the judge hears those accusations. If you sit there quietly and nobody is defending you, it appears that you are guilty or have no defense.



**[Randy]**

And too often that is what happens. We become too passive. We may have experienced physical damages, emotional damages, financial damages. Our adversary has created spiritual havoc in our lives for far too long. Our adversary has attacked the lives of others we care about. We know that it happens, but somehow, we choose to just blindly allow the devil to influence our outcomes because we don't want to overreact.

In my life as a minister of the gospel, there was a time when I know I overreacted. I attributed too many things to the work of Satan. I didn't take enough personal responsibility for my failures. This may have been true for the people with whom I prayed or to whom I was ministering. Sometimes, you just need to call it what it is. You don't rebuke sin. You repent of sin.

**[Josh]**

Yeah, say that again because that's a good one.

**[Randy]**

.....  
.....  
.....  
***You don't rebuke sin. You repent of sin.***  
.....  
.....

And far too often, people have turned too many things into a spiritual excuse. They act like we just need to go against the devil. We have to rebuke the devil. Yes, there's a time and a place for that, but at other times, a sinner must take responsibility for their own actions. I know in my own life, I have been at the wrong end of that pendulum. The circles that I traveled in thirty or forty years ago either ignored the reality of Satan, or they attributed every negative thing to his

work. It was common for my friends and acquaintances to be at polar opposite viewpoints on the work of the devil. Therefore, the appropriate measures to deal with the devil were also all across the spiritual spectrum. I'm not suggesting I've ignored it. Neither am I saying that I have done enough to combat it, but herein I want to get it right. I want to deal with the work of the devil in a responsible, mature, spiritual manner. I do believe that in my own experience, I have allowed the pendulum to go too far the wrong way and I'm tired of it. I'm not going to do it anymore. and I don't want my family to follow in that wrong example.

**[Josh]**

Yeah, I understand.

**[Randy]**

That's the point. So, how will we respond?

**[Josh]**

Do we fight against the accuser as a result of his accusatory work in the world?

**[Randy]**

Yes! We pray and we fight until we win. We defend our ground against the challenges presented in our own lives. We pray, and we fight until we win the victory needed in the lives of the people we love. We all work in different churches and ministries and businesses and other settings.

We see people who are attacked by Satan and harmed by Satan. How shall we deal with these things? What's the proper response? Pray, fight, win! I believe we must be like the widow in the parable of Jesus. We must go to the Judge. We must cry out for vindication. We have this right.

We do not make our appeal to an earthly judge. We do not merely go to our judge who is exasperated by our interruptions of his happy hour or his cooking classes. No, our Judge is our Heavenly Father. Our Judge loves us.

***Our Judge has called us to participate victoriously in God's own war against evil in this world. It is God's war. It's not your war or my war. It's God's war!***

God didn't start this war. His adversary, the devil launched the first attack when war in the heavenlies was declared by Lucifer. The devil was filled with pride and he exalted himself against God. Now, Scripture teaches us that one third of the angels in heaven joined this doomed revolt. One third of the angels, Scripture declares. Wow, that sounds terrifying! When you think about that

***Oh, my goodness, a third of the angels in heaven are against us - okay, yes, that is a big deal, but do the math. That means one third are fighting against us, but two thirds are fighting for us, standing with us, and serving God's eternal purposes in this fallen world.***

We've got to get this straight. I know it's intimidating. It's rational to be intimidated by this horrible adversary who's powerful and malicious, and malevolent. His power is buttressed by one third of the angels. That's okay. It's rational to have concern. It's rational to recognize it, but it's God's army that should be of the most interest to us. God's army. *Adonai Tziva'oth*, in Hebrew, is one of His titles. The Lord of Hosts! Some translations call Him the Lord of Heaven's Armies. God has an army. He's got twice as many of these super beings on His team. However, you want to look at these heavenly beings, they are on God's side, and God is totally powerful. God stands against every enemy, and every one of God's enemies are just minimally powerful in comparison. We've got to keep a balance to our understanding. It's not enough for us to say, "I read the end of the book; we win." That's not enough because we're living in the middle of this someplace in the here and now. So, we must learn to pray, to fight, and to win!





## CHAPTER THREE

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### *Our Adversary Lives to Prohibit Our Victory and Cause Our Failure. How Can We Overcome in God's Legal System?*

**[Randy]**

I want to remind my friends and family that God personally promises victory in Christ, and God will personally measure out eternal punishment against His adversaries. By extension, God's adversaries are our adversaries in this world. That's a powerful thing to reflect on. It's not to be overlooked. So how should we respond to our adversary? Based on that simple eight-verse parable from Matthew's Gospel, I find a clear and profound answer in the words of Jesus. We must pray and not faint. We pray, we fight, and we win. The NLT says we should always pray and never give up. That makes so much sense!

**[Josh]**

Yeah. Another version says, "*pray without ceasing*," right?

**[Randy]**

Right.

**[Josh]**

So, how are we supposed to be praying? When I read *“pray without ceasing,”* it’s like you’re supposed to be praying twenty-four hours a day. Brother Sidney seemed to be praying twenty hours a day even while he was talking. It’s like he would be praying without ever giving up!

**[Randy]**

The reason I read many translations is because sometimes, I don’t understand everything as it is written. Different versions help me see how others interpreted what they read. Sometimes, I’m just trying to learn what it means and how I am supposed to live when things don’t make sense. I think I understand it, but then I’m not sure. At other times, some new thing crops up in my life or in my studies. When I dig a little bit deeper, and see how others have translated it, it offers me a new and broader perspective. We should always pray and never give up.

I was in the coffee shop the other day and I was trying to figure this out. I was making some notes. Essentially, I wrote, ‘I won’t quit.’ I was feeling pretty discouraged. I’d had a big setback in something that I had been praying about. I had been working on a matter for two years and I suffered a major setback. Before the setback, I was praying about the issue and I wrote,

.....  
.....  
.....  
*“I won’t quit. My Father loves me, I work for my Father.  
You can’t beat my Father. Do you remember Jesus?”*  
.....  
.....  
.....

**[Josh]**

My Daddy’s bigger than yours.



**[Randy]**

Yeah. Exactly.

**[Josh]**

You can't equate it all to God or the devil. Sometimes, we endure struggles in our work, struggles in our relationship, struggles in whatever. You fill in the blank. That doesn't mean it's the devil.

**[Randy]**

No. In fact,

*I personally believe there are only two reasons that anything ever happens in my life. It is either for God's glory or for my good.*

I don't leave much room for things beyond that because my God is so powerful, and my Father loves me so much, and He's so in control of this world and my life, that I believe I can depend on Him to take whatever occurs in my life. He will make it into something wonderful and good and necessary to make me who He wants me to be. He knows I'm not satisfied. I know He's not always pleased with my attitude, actions, words, facial expressions, the way I respond to people.

**[Josh]**

You propose a recipe here. It is obviously a recipe that we see in the Bible. Pray without ceasing, pray without giving up. If you interpret something to be bad, it is not always the devil. If it's bad because it makes you uncomfortable, or your circumstance feels rough, that doesn't automatically equate to being bad in the sense of being from

an evil, malevolent source. It could be God bringing you to and through a trial. Either way, the recipe works; pray without ceasing, pray without giving up. You must keep on praying. Keep up the good fight of faith. Trust God and endure. He will help you win. Remember, we pray, we fight, and we win.

**[Randy]**

So, I'm sitting in the coffee shop and I'm trying to write this thing down because I want to remember it. And just in case something was to happen, and I would feel discouraged and sad and disappointed and afraid, I wanted to know I could return to this. We should always pray and never give up. I wrote it on a card to help me remember:

* I WON'T QUIT.
* MY FATHER LOVES ME.
* I WORK FOR MY FATHER.
* YOU CAN'T BEAT MY FATHER.
* DO YOU REMEMBER JESUS?

So, a fella comes walking over by my table who was an employee there, and he says, "Well, you've got a lot of Bibles out there to study." He asked what I was studying, and I said, "I'm just trying to figure out how to live." So, I asked him, "Do you know Jesus?" He said yes and I said, "Do you have struggles?" He said yes and I handed him the card and I made myself a new one.

We should always pray and never give up. Why should we never give up? Because if we don't give up, he can't win because our Father wins. We can quit. We can give up, but that's like turning the victory over to him. It's a surrender. We must continue to pray, continue to fight, and hold on to the victory that God will yet bring to our life. Pray, fight, win!

**[Josh]**

It goes back to knowing the end of the book, yeah? But if you give up, if you quit, you lose.

**[Randy]**

Exactly. Right. So, just like that widow woman, what should we do? We must take our adversary to court, but we don't sue him before an earthly judge. We take them to a higher court. He's not subject to the laws of our country or the country next door. He's just not. We have the right to take him to a higher court where he must pay attention because he is subject to the court of God. He can't escape God's judgment.

Our adversary, the devil has no authority. He has no right to appeal. We do not stand on our own righteousness.

***Rather, in God's court, I am the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus, and my adversary has already been judged guilty from before the creation of the world.***

So, you put that in the balance. Then remind yourself, I know where I'm going. I'm going right to that court, right to that Judge, and I know who wins. Now, if he wants to accuse me of stuff, okay. It's

untrue. He can talk about my past all he wants. He can talk about that time I wasn't nice enough to you, but the Bible says I'm the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus. So, it's Christ's righteousness that matters in this court. The rest is superfluous.

Before the foundation of the world, the world in which we live, this already happened.

.....  
*Lucifer's fall preceded the world's creation.*  
.....

Sometimes, I forget that. It didn't happen Thursday. It wasn't reported by CNN. This was before the foundation of the world. Before Adam and Eve were in the Garden of Eden, Lucifer's shenanigans had already been brought to a certain judgment. Now, through the sin of Eve and Adam, Satan's fate was sealed. Scripture says,

***“I will put enmity between thee and the woman and between thy seed and her seed. He shall bruise thy head. Thou shall bruise his heel.”*** (Genesis 3:15 NIV)

But, of course, this all refers back to the work of one man. The seed spoken of bruising Satan's head was Jesus. It's obvious why Satan hates Jesus. The devil's inescapable judgment was forever. It's done. It was forever settled at the Cross. There is nothing to talk about. It's a foregone conclusion. Prior to Christ's crucifixion, the devil could assail every person accusing them of their shortcomings. He could declare each one a sinner, a loser, and guilty before God.

Our adversary could make powerful arguments in defense of his evil treatment against people because all have sinned and fallen

short of the glory of God. Therefore, every individual was worthy of punishment. If the devil inflicted pain, we were already guilty. We had no viable defense against Satan's accusations to God against us.

**[Josh]**

Yes, an atonement was made. There was an atonement process put in place by God.

**[Randy]**

Right, but that excluded pretty much everybody except the children of Israel who were participating in the relationship God established with his people. What a glorious tribute to God that He extended this grace and mercy. He made it available and evident to a lost, dying world. People were without hope in this world, apart from God, but now, our guilt has been removed through the atonement for sin at the Cross. Those of us who cry out to the judge for vindication today, we do so from the position of an innocent victim. If we're assailed by Satan today, we're an innocent victim. That is unless we have opened ourselves up to satanic attack by living in unrepentant sin. There are some kinds of intentional behavior that invite such attacks from Satan. Sin can become a magnet for divisive things from the adversary.

**[Josh]**

You're not suggesting we're innocent by our behavior? You're suggesting that Christ brings our innocence through His behavior.

**[Randy]**

We are seen as innocent.

*We may have sinned, but the marks of sin have been atoned for by Jesus. They are erased from our record. Our record is expunged. That makes us innocent.*

**[Josh]**

Right. And when the adversary accuses those who have not had their records expunged, the adversary has a legal case that can stand up in court. He's right.

**[Randy]**

Yes. Precisely. That's the point. I think these matters are important. I want my family to understand these things because failing to do so creates needless suffering and hinders the successes that God would bring to your life. We have an adversary who wants to prohibit our victory and cause our failure. He wants our defeat. God enables our victory, but we must pray, we must fight, and we will win!

**[Josh]**

There may be viewers possibly watching this program that have not accepted Christ as their personal Lord and Savior.

**[Randy]**

Then they proceed at their own peril.

**[Josh]**

They proceed at their own peril, but it's important for them to know that you can pray all day long and say, "Hey, I need help because

I've been accused wrongly," but they don't have the legal standing of being made innocent by Christ. They don't have the freedom and the forgiveness that comes from the Cross and so they continue to proceed at their own peril.

**[Randy]**

And that's the reason our culture is in such chaos. Families are crushed, lives are battered and bruised. There is human wreckage everywhere you look.

**[Josh]**

Folks who ignore the atonement process provided by Jesus can't go to the righteous Judge and say, "I need your help against the devil, but I'm not willing to follow Your process to get free."

**[Randy]**

You can go to the Judge, you can make your case, but the Judge will still find guilt in an unredeemed victim. Okay, I don't know how the mercy of God works in some circumstances. I think God answers the prayer of people who don't know Him or love Him. Maybe He's got a sense of humor. Maybe He knows what's next and that He's just full of mercy and grace. Maybe He just gives people a break sometimes, so they get another opportunity to do the right thing and repent.

**[Josh]**

But there's no guarantee?

**[Randy]**

Right, there is no guarantee in that foolish approach.

**[Josh]**

Guarantees come for those who have been redeemed. *“All things work together for good to them that love the Lord and are called according to his purpose.”* (Romans 8:28 NKJV)

**[Randy]**

Well, I realize that a lot of people will consider these matters and be uncertain. It won't make sense to them because it's not how they have built their life. It's not what they're focused on. It has nothing to do with the NFL, or the stock market, or whatever the latest, greatest video game is.

**[Josh]**

Or they haven't seen the previous episodes of this series.

**[Randy]**

Could be, it could be, but it still won't make sense to an unregenerate mind. This stuff could just be vain babbling, but to my friends and family, to people who know the Lord and love the Lord, I want to help them formulate a better plan. To those who are the called according to His purpose, and those who are trying to live their life in faith, and those who may be feeling the struggle of conflict, I want them to have a realistic hope. I want them to find the better plan to lift them out of the bad place in which they might find themselves right now if they don't have a plan.

I just want everyone to know that we can declare with confidence, “I am innocent before my Judge.” It is not because of anything that I have done. Rather, it is only because of what we know to be true.



***Jesus is mine. I belong to God who sees me through the lens of perfection where every sin is blotted out. Every blemish erased. My past is hidden in Christ's future. My past is irrelevant.***

Literally, in God's sight, we are hidden in Christ's future, and that is the blessed future God wants for each of us who are in Christ.

***I am not in the witness protection program. I do not stand before God with a fake ID created to hide me from those who hate me and are waiting to destroy me. That is not who I am.***

That is not where I'm going. That is not how I'm going to behave. I've been born again. I am a new creation in Christ. I'm called to be his witness, but a witness never to be in hiding.

***It's my adversary who runs around with a fake ID. Satan presents himself like a king. He convinces his servants that he's the winner. He acts like he has more power than he does.***

There are sin-weakened people flocking to Satan and living under satanic influences because they see some power. He has some power. Satan is a spiritual being. He can do things we can't do. So, foolish people who don't know that a truly higher power exists don't recognize that a cosmic struggle is taking place. They only see that there is a source of power. They want some of that. They have chosen a king. Their king is Satan, but his power pales in comparison to the

true Judge. And it is to this Judge that we take our adversary. It is to heaven's court that we go to cry out for vindication, and it is there that we go fully expecting relief like that widow woman. We must learn to go to our Judge, and we must know that in His court we can expect vindication and relief.

If we fail to accuse our adversary before the Judge, let me tell you what's going to happen. He is going to continue assailing us before all the other powers of this world. There are earthly powers and rulers of this world who might side with our adversary. I've seen it happen. I've seen political powers do things that negatively affected us. I've seen local leaders do things that had a negative effect. There are powers in this world.

**[Josh]**

So, just for clarification because it's important, are you suggesting that when something bad happens, when a political power or a local leader does something against you, is that the devil?

**[Randy]**

It could be, but it doesn't have to be. However, because I don't always know the difference. I'm going to my Father.

**[Josh]**

Goes back to the process of, "Yes, I'm going to pray without ceasing." Okay, next question. So, you are able to go to Him as someone who is innocent. Your sins have been removed. You're not going to witness protection.

**[Randy]**

That's right.

**[Josh]**

Right. You go with a clear slate - a clean slate. Does that imply you are perfect? Are you sinless?

**[Randy]**

Only in God's sight, so don't ask your mother.

**[Josh]**

No need. So, today, will there be any sin in Randy Weiss's life? Tomorrow, will there be any sin in Randy's life?

**[Randy]**

There will be. There has been.

**[Josh]**

And what happens as a result of that?

**[Randy]**

I find forgiveness at the cross.

**[Josh]**

So, when you sin, you are no longer sinless, you are no longer blameless. There is now a block, but what does this mean? Help us out.

**[Randy]**

I am a sinner. I am saved by grace. Therefore, I am the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus. So, in God's sight, that lens through which

He sees His child, I am pure because Christ's purity has become mine. Now, the idea of praying without ceasing, praying day and night, these various Scriptures point to these things. I am becoming more and more convinced of what that is supposed to mean to me. I'm supposed to remain in constant communion with God. I'm not supposed to be distracted by the things around me. I'm supposed to be having communication with God about my circumstances, about what I see, what I feel, what I sense, what I read, what I study, the conversations in which I'm a participant. I'm supposed to be sensitive to my Father.

**[Josh]**

That's a little different than the praying without giving up.

**[Randy]**

Yes, it is, and it's a little different than I've viewed prayer. There was a time when I would get up every morning at five or 5:15 so that I could be at a specific place to pray from six o'clock until I'd finished praying and then I'd go study.

**[Josh]**

He would hear you just the same at eight by the way.

**[Randy]**

I'm sure that's true, but for years, that was my practice. At one time, I attended a big church where they had a prayer room. I continued going to their prayer room long after I stopped attending that church. Sometimes there would be other people there, but usually, I was there by myself. The door was always open by six so if somebody wanted to go pray, they could pray.

So that was where I regularly went to pray. At some point, that church expanded causing the prayer room to go away. Or they moved it and I didn't know where it was. In any case, I didn't have any place to go to pray. Then I would come to our ministry office. I began going to pray in my office early every morning. I had a routine. Whenever I would get done praying, then I would go study. I had to go someplace else to do that. Just habit.

When I moved further away from here, my habits changed. I felt like I was not praying like I used to pray, and I held that against myself because I was less diligent about it. That was part of my concern. As circumstances would rise up, conflicts would rise up, I'd continue to pray, and I'd always find time to pray, but it wasn't at the same place. It wasn't always at the same time, with the same kind of regularity I had become accustomed to over so many years of developing that habit.

**[Josh]**

So, pause. Some of what spawned this current study into prayer happens to be connected to the fact that you're in, you're enduring a number of obstacles in life and it's your concern that some of it has to do with your prayer life. Not because of praying or not praying, but rather how you're praying and the adversary?

**[Randy]**

Yes, and through this study, I've come to recognize my challenges are still drawing me to my knees. Not necessarily always literally physically on my knees, though sometimes. And admittedly, maybe not enough. I don't know. But I find myself in more communion with God. I am communicating with God about the specifics of what

I'm experiencing. And I'm just trying to count it all joy, trying to rejoice in tribulation. Trying to recognize I know it is through much tribulation we enter the kingdom of God. I'm trying to recognize that life is a test. Everything I'm experiencing is a test. It's all spiritual. The physical stuff is just part of what is spiritual, and it is all for my good. It is all for God's glory. It is all for the desired outcome that God has for my life. That may not mirror my outcome, but it's a better outcome.

I want to be a man of prayer. I want to remain in the good fight of faith. And with God's help, I want to win. Pray, fight, win!







## CHAPTER FOUR

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*You Can Quit, But You Can't Lose.  
TORAH, TORAH, TORAH!*

**[Randy]**

So back to the issue of the judge and the adversary. If we fail to accuse our adversary before the judge, he is going to continue doing what he does. I really believe that. Why would he stop? Let's assume, because we're involved in ministry things in many parts of the world, and we're also involved in business things in different areas, and let's also assume that it's all for the purpose of being able to fund the work of the gospel. Every area of our lives is focused on the things of God. Our purposes are pretty clear. We remain unwavering in our purpose. One should simply recognize that these conditions make us an enemy of our adversary. Okay, so if our adversary doesn't like what we do, because what we do is intended to serve the cause of Christ in this world, why would we think our adversary would stop assailing us if he didn't have to stop?

The other day, I had a meeting with team members of a tech venture where we're developing a broadcast communication enterprise. I'm old school. I read a paper Bible. Nevertheless, I am considered to be a tech guy. In addition to old tech businesses, I also help operate a new technology company that enables us to utilize next-gen capabilities to reach out across the world through creative, cutting-edge technologies for presenting the gospel.

**[Josh]**

I bet you even used a computer to type the content you input?

**[Randy]**

Yes, and I'm gonna read some of this from my paper journal. I'll change some of the names to protect the guilty. But I called a meeting. I'm the Chairman of the Board of this company. I requested a few minutes from the people who now manage the company. I told the group I needed to talk to them about my own doubts and the battle strategy I believe we must deploy. Coincidentally, I also wanted to talk about Jesus, the devil, and prayer because it's central to so much of my thinking these days.

There was a point during the life of Jesus where some observers might have assumed two competing forces existed in mutual opposition to the more mainstream Judaisms of the day.

We all know that Jesus had many followers clamoring to see his miracles and to hear his radical teachings. But we must remember that another contemporary Jewish radical was preaching a similar message of repentance. There are not very many tech companies that have these conversations, but I don't care. I don't work in those

other companies. John the Baptist also challenged the Jewish status quo. John the Baptist wasn't a Baptist. He was a nice Jewish boy, bringing folks to the *mikvah* for ritual purification. Both men spoke of repentance from sin and the coming kingdom of God like Jesus. John the Baptist was also seen as an existential threat to the religious leadership of his day. John was imprisoned for preaching truth to power. In fact, much like a modern ISIS captive being beheaded on the internet, John's decapitation was turned into a public display with his head served up on a platter--literally.

During the time between John's incarceration and his violent execution, John did some soul searching. To be clear, there was no conflict between his message and the ministry of Jesus. In fact, John's ministry was specifically focused on announcing the coming of Jesus. And even though there was complete harmony between these two men, CNN, MSNBC, and a few Fox contributors did what they could to add confusion between their groups of followers and the establishment party leaders who mistrusted anyone not under their control. John was finally locked away. He was probably plagued with bouts of depression and nagging doubts. Was Jesus really the Messiah? I assume John knew it, believed it, preached it, but when he was in jail, he might have wondered if he had really bet on the right horse. He was probably questioning if the cavalry was really coming. He must have wondered if he was going to be saved. John sent a few of his followers to speak with Jesus and they asked some pointed questions. Jesus sent them back with a simple report of what everyone had witnessed with their own eyes. He said, yes, "***the blind see the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them, blessed is he who is not offended because of me.***" It's from Matthew 11:5-6 in the New King James.

**[Josh]**

Man, I know that we're getting kind of heavy, and I hope that maybe I can bring a little bit of added clarification. So, what's a *mikvah*? Okay, a *mikvah*, that's a Jewish word, a Hebrew word. This is like a ritual bath. This is something that would have been used long before the time of John the Baptist.

You can actually go throughout Israel, you can tour the different sites, and in almost every one of these sites, you're going to find a *mikvah*. That's because people were all about ritual cleansing, ritual baths. So, this is not a new thing. You can find out more reading through Leviticus 15. I encourage you, go read that and let's get right back into this topic on prayer.

**[Randy]**

Of course, Jesus knew John would be executed. Jesus also knew the violent end of his earthly life was near at hand, but death wasn't the issue. A greater truth was being declared. After John's buddies departed, he affirmed the tremendous legacy of John and he told his own followers in Matthew chapter eleven,

***“Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women, there is not risen one greater than John the Baptist, but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he and from the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffers violence and the violent take it by force.”***

(Matthew 11:11-12 NKJV)

That verse has always been troublesome for me.

**[Josh]**

The violent take it by force? They're violent, that's why they take it by force?

**[Randy]**

It's such a weird thing, and I've always viewed it as quite enigmatic. I mean Jesus was a peace-loving, passive, humble, suffering servant. Suddenly, He started talking about Heaven suffering violence and the violent taking it by force. That's just so bizarre in so many ways. If you think back, some scholars suggest this was a picture of these eager crowds who first were swarming around John, and then later, they were forcefully gathering in massive groups to draw near to Jesus. Others compare it to a city being surrounded by those anxious to take possession of the treasures that are in the city. For me, it has come into a different focus. I see it more like a view of the poor and the disenfranchised. Previously they had been marginalized by the strict, wealthy religious leaders. Then, because of Jesus, suddenly, those people who had been living at the fringes of society were living with a new hope.

This was contrary to what was expected and what was normal. Through the ministry of John and Jesus, these undesirables were finally granted an invitation to the kingdom of God through simple repentance and this newly dispensed grace. Nothing would keep them from gaining entry. In fact, they would storm the gates with their new knowledge of God's love, and they would never again accept being left out after meeting Jesus. That's the kind of hunger and thirsting after righteousness, after mercy, after grace, with which we should pursue God. They saw it, they wanted it, and they were going to have nothing less than what was to be theirs.

**[Randy]**

I have personally felt that way at times. That's why I've put on the armor of God and gone to battle. That's why I serve today. I think the text was giving us a behind-the-scenes look at the true spiritual battle that exists in this world as we pursue the next world. There's a violent struggle going on for our souls, and the souls of our loved ones, the soul of our society, those of us who are engaged in this cosmic rescue mission, and it's nothing less than that.

*When we declare the gospel to a fallen world, it is a cosmic rescue mission to bring God's salvation, to announce the love of God and the coming of Messiah to this fallen world. Some would like to see us beheaded on the internet.*

Literally, the people who hate what we stand for would love to destroy us and make a public mockery of who we are and what we do.

And others would simply be satisfied with our financial destruction to prohibit us from capturing territory and treasure to be used for the purposes of God. That is what we are doing. We are pursuing territory and treasure, not for our own glory, not for our own advantage, but because we're called as servants of God to do these things for the purposes of God. So, as you know because you were involved in the meeting, I told our team that we all need to be warriors. We all need to recognize that we're a target of our enemy. As Paul wrote, we need to understand that,

***“We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.”*** (Ephesians 6:12 KJV)

It’s true for us! In a way, we must be like the conquistadors who followed Cortez. He made them burn their ships upon landing. There was to be no return to the homeland from which they sailed. Some of us have sort of taken that same position.

We’re not making a way to retreat. We are only advancing. And I told the group because they wouldn’t have been aware of it. I said, my Hebrew name is *Avram ben Moshe Aron*. Although I was disowned by my parents because of my faith, I am most proud of being my father’s son. He was ashamed of me, but I could never be ashamed of him, and I told them about my dad.

***This is going to sound terrible,  
but my dad was a trained killer***

and a decorated hero in World War II. He was a member of the Devil’s Brigade in America’s elite First Special Service Force. He was trained to kill with guns, knives, piano wire, brass knuckles, or his bare hands. And it was from these Black Devils, as they were called, that the later Green Berets, Delta Force, the Army Rangers, and the Navy Seals developed. My dad fought for what he believed and risked everything. And although we didn’t believe the same things, he taught me to do the same.

I pointed out to our group, as chairman of this company, that there were three simple things that I wanted to make sure they understood, and I gave them three specific directives.

**Number one:**

*We're surrounded by a terrible adversary who wants our destruction. The devil is powerful, but he is not all powerful. In fact, his power pales in comparison to the One we serve. Our battle tactic must be prayer.*

We must pray for God’s wisdom, God’s favor, and God’s blessing. All of these are readily available because we’re simply trying to accomplish that to which He has called us. ***“If God be for us, who can be against us?”*** (Romans 8:31 KJV) Therefore, we must also pray that God rebukes the enemy and prohibits him from gaining any ground or causing us any further delays or distractions. ***“With God, all things are possible.”*** (Matthew 19:26 KJV) We didn’t get to where we are, in the work that we’re doing in that enterprise, by accident. We are where we are because God has a plan. Each of the people involved in this enterprise are all playing important parts, but I wanted them to know if you’re not praying, you’re not doing your best to help us win the day.

[Josh]

What a powerful statement.

*If you're not praying, you're not doing your best.*

Just think about that. Like when I’m exerting myself in a sport, or when I’m trying to do my best at my work, or when I’m serving at



my church, or when I'm tending to my family, I might be giving everything I have. I might be giving my absolute all, and yet, if I'm not praying, I'm not giving my best. That's a profound statement, and it's something that's actually convicting. I don't know if it's convicting to you. Maybe you're giving your best always and you're praying, but that's a powerful statement, because prayer is the way that we know how to do our best. Think about that.

**[Randy]**

We need a breakthrough. I believe God can bring the breakthrough that we need. So, I'm asking you to pray. Praying in agreement is a powerful thing. Some battles are best won first on our knees in prayer, and, only then, by carrying our weapons into the battlefield in faith.

**The second thing I wanted them to know:**

*The kingdom of heaven suffers violence and the violent take it by force. I am not going to die from paper cuts or waiting around for lawyers and bean counters to find our success. It feels like the gates are locked. It often seems the doors to our breakthrough have been barred. Those who want to keep us out must fail. We must prevail. It's time to do whatever's required to cut the chains, break the lock, storm the gates, make our enemies move out of our way.*

During the war, my dad spent a fair amount of time behind enemy lines. And I wanted to point out to our team, "Hey guys, where do you think we are? We are so deep in enemy territory that they can't allow us to go deeper. They have to try and keep us out, but we won't be kept out."

The keys to the kingdom of communications are in our reach and God wants us to grab them and open the doors to everyone. I am committed to engage the enemy on behalf of God's kingdom to announce his love and the coming of Messiah. And I'll leave the rest of these things out except to say that the three things, the directives that I gave them were very simple:

**ATTACK, ATTACK, ATTACK!**

And with the help of God, victory will be ours.

I got an email from our CEO. He wrote back, "Tora, Tora, Tora!" Our attorney got a big kick out of that because he knew that was "attack, attack, attack" in Japanese, but it's also the word of God--Torah. You know, the five books of Moses.

We are called to take the territory and the treasures to deploy for the cause of Christ. Doesn't matter to what endeavor we are called. Those who are called servants of God must do what God wants to achieve His purposes. We don't have to lose. We can win. We must win. We can't allow our adversary to just continue, assailing us and getting away with it. We must not allow ourselves to become convinced that we can't win. We can and we must.

**[Josh]**

Yes, I agree. I mean, I think it goes back to the analogy that was said earlier. The end is written. You win unless you give up.

**[Randy]**

Yeah. You can't be beaten. You can quit, or you can win, but you can't lose. You can quit. That's it. So, just stay in the game.

**[Josh]**

It's almost like - not to mix analogies again, it's not even really an analogy - but the whole discussion on your salvation itself and the once saved, always saved. It's a very fitting correlation. Nobody's taking it from you. You win unless you choose to give up.

**[Randy]**

Yeah. If we know our only real failure point is quitting, just stay away from that point. Don't quit!

**[Josh]**

To crystallize it a little bit: in this particular discussion, you're talking specifically about prayer. Fill in the blank on what you're praying about. You have an adversary that's going against you. You're extrapolating that we need to be calling him out. Basically, we need to go to our Heavenly Father, our judge, and point out that the adversary is wrong, you know? He's wrong and make our petitions known to the Lord.

**[Randy]**

Exactly, but there is a reality with which we all must grapple. Do you know that in some cases, there are earthly powers that actually serve our adversary? We live in a fallen world, and sometimes, those with evil inclinations are in positions of authority. We must be aware that the emissaries of our adversary will typically side against us and against our God. So, we must insist on a change of venue. We have no choice. Sometimes, there's not an opportunity to have a fair trial without God as our judge.

**GET A NEW JUDGE. Demand a change of venue! TAKE THE DEVIL TO GOD'S COURT . . . YOU CAN'T LOSE!**

If we continue to allow others to rule over us, and to be our judge without going to God, it puts us in a very uncomfortable position. Remember, Jesus had no chance of being treated fairly when He was accused, and He was judged. He had no chance to get away from a stacked jury or to be under a judge that was not already under Satan's control. I don't like it, but I think it's the only reasonable way to understand what was happening.

Jesus told the court the truth, and it's ugly, but He said, "***You are the children of your father, the devil. You love to do the evil things that he does.***" (TLB) It was no surprise that such a biased court found Jesus guilty. I don't like those facts. I don't like the characterization, but I didn't write it. I'm just reading it. Those details are found in John 8:44. Jesus also knew they were simply doing their job. They were doing what they were supposed to do. And He knew what His mission was. Jesus was blameless. Yet He was condemned so our guilt could be exchanged for His innocence. Now, we have the right to blamelessly approach our Judge and demand that our adversary cease his relentless attacks against our families, our finances, our health, and our mission. We have the right to do that, and if we're not doing that, we're remiss.





# CHAPTER FIVE

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## *Praying on the Offense, Not Only as a Defense*

[Randy]

*If we're not consciously taking our adversary to the Judge and insisting that he take his hands off of what belongs to God, then we're not walking in our full authority.*

I believe we must walk in both the dignity and the authority that is ours.

[Josh]

I think a lot of times what happens in our prayer life, and I'm only speaking for myself, but as you know, I am a pastor. There are a lot of times when people will pray as a response or in reaction to something, but that is not what you are talking about. You are saying we must move to being on the offensive.

**[Randy]**

Yes.

**[Josh]**

You are suggesting we must be praying in advance of the issues coming our way. We should know there are issues coming our way because we have an adversary who is constantly making accusations against us. We need to be diligent in that offensive position with our prayer.

**[Randy]**

Yes, we shouldn't pretend that it's not going to happen just because we may not be feeling the full effect of what our adversary is attempting to accomplish.

**[Josh]**

If we are honorably serving God in godly pursuits, we should want to win. We must pray, we must stay engaged in the fight, and we must remain steadfast in our engagement. Thereby, we pray, fight, win! Our adversary, the devil, is roaming around seeking to steal, kill and destroy. He uses earthly vessels to act as our earthly adversaries, but in reality, we're wrestling not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities. If we begin to pray offensively, and we begin going against our adversary by taking him to our Judge, we will avoid some of this cycle of reacting or just responding to the symptoms.

**[Randy]**

We should become proactive in our prayers. And again, I want to return and repeat what I said.



*We should walk in the dignity and the authority of that which is ours. You know, we are pilgrims but that doesn't make us homeless.*

We're traveling through, this is not our home, but we are not homeless. We have a home. We have a destination that is promised to us, and we also have authority.

*We are not beggars. We are not mealy-mouthed Caspar Milquetoasts.*

That should not be how we conduct ourselves.

[Josh]

Mealy mouth Casper what? Milk toast? Okay, listen, I'm following much of the conversation here, but you lost me on that one. Mealy mouth Casper milk toast. You're going to have to help me on this one.

[Randy]

Okay.

[Josh]

I mean think I get the point of what you're trying to say but -

[Randy]

Okay, *Kuni Leml*.

**[Josh]**

Still lost.

**[Randy]**

Okay. Think of some ridiculously henpecked husband, okay? He goes around like this all day long: “Oh, there’s nothing I could do right. I’d better be quiet. I’m going to get in trouble no matter what I say.” A *Kuni Leml* is an ineffective, timid, nerdy, bland, useless Caspar Milquetoast type of character.

We shouldn’t walk around defeated.

***We shouldn’t walk around like a beggar. We should walk around like foreign ambassadors, okay? This is not our home, but we are ambassadors for Christ. We have diplomatic status!***

God has equipped us, empowered us, and given us credentials that are impeccable!

I’m not going to say that our diplomatic privileges remove us from all local laws like some dignitaries who have diplomatic status, but nevertheless, we must serve as ambassadors for Christ. And in so doing, when the enemies of Christ accuse us wrongly, we must fight back. We must stand up and say, “No, no, no! It ain’t gonna happen.” We must pray, we fight, we win!

**[Josh]**

I have diplomatic immunity.

**[Randy]**

We do.

**[Josh]**

That analogy. I've never heard it before, obviously in the context of Christians, but that works very well from the financial standpoint, too. You know we don't need to be acting like we have to live in poverty.

**[Randy]**

Yes.

**[Josh]**

But, at the same time, this doesn't mean we can name it and claim it. It means that we have the wealth of our Heavenly Father as a provider for us, not for us to be reckless with His resources.

**[Randy]**

He has sent us on a mission.

**[Josh]**

And enabled us.

**[Randy]**

Yes. We serve at His pleasure pursuing the goals that please Him. He has enabled us. He is equipping us. He is our wartime and peacetime provider. We don't go to war on our own nickel.

*We go to war empowered by the King, equipped by the King, and we are prepared by Him to win.*

**[Josh]**

Yeah. That's what we are. We are diplomats of the Kingdom of God.

**[Randy]**

Yes, and we shouldn't be afraid that we're going to run out of our King's resources. They are endless. We just have to make sure that we're doing His bidding. We're doing what He wants us to do, we're doing it in the way He wants us to do it, and then He will equip and provide because He is good. His mercy endures forever. His resources are endless. It's nothing to Him.

**[Josh]**

It also means that when we're living in a foreign land. He won't run out prior to leading us in His victory parade. It is truly a foreign land. There are enemies within that land who also live here, but we should not walk in fear because we are sent by the King with all the authority required to accomplish that which He sent us to do.

**[Randy]**

Yes. I don't want to confuse anyone. I do want to clarify that if we're doing wrong things, if we're doing sinful things . . . well, then we're kind of on our own. It's not to say we won't find forgiveness. We absolutely can find forgiveness, but there are consequences to sin. You must understand that you reap what you sow. If we are living for God, we are serving as ambassadors for Christ.

We should just recognize that, in so doing, the enemies of Christ will accuse us. They'll accuse us wrongly, even if we're living right, walking right and honoring God, in what we do. Their accusations may be completely wrong, and therefore, we must fight back. We must know our defense.

*The Cross is our defense!*

*What is our offense? It must be prayer.*

Prayer is our offense. And it's urgent that we recognize with whom we struggle. I am reiterating these things because I lose sight of it, and I assume others lose sight of it too. We forget who our enemy is. It's not the person who's being mean to us, or doing nasty things to us, or standing in our way. It's not how an ugly person conducts themselves as a coworker, or a student, or a teacher, or a neighbor. They are not our adversary. Those are just people for whom Christ died. Our adversary is the devil.

Our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against the powers, against the world, rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. We must not allow Satan's "hidden work" to "escape our observation."<sup>2</sup> We should be aware of our surroundings. We must be cognizant and sensitive to recognizing the works of our adversary in this world. And as Watchman Nee informs us, "*Shall we not recognize that what we usually consider to be incidental and natural happenings may involve the works of the enemy behind the scenes.*"<sup>3</sup> Satan is really trying to frustrate us at every turn and oppress us in all things. That's an important thing to remember. When confronted by a spiritual enemy, pray, fight, win is the correct order. I've known that since I first encountered a spiritual attack from the enemy in early 1973. At that time, I was immature and ill-prepared for the conflict. I was caught off guard. Although I never want to forget, I must be honest and say that it doesn't mean I always remember. And sadly, sometimes I fail to launch the correct defense.

[Randy]

I love the fact that Jesus was a friend to sinners. I think that's just a beautiful thing.

***The devil is not a friend. Satan controls those who are bound, and he seeks to oppress those who are free.***

Jesus was a friend to sinners. Satan has other plans for sinners. If we keep this in mind, it's a lot easier to have some clarity.

Now, I want to be clear that we shouldn't imagine a demon behind every bush. Neither should we blame the devil for the pain caused by our own failures. There are things that we've done that we simply should not have done. Perhaps we should just call it what it is. We have sinned. In the process we must stop ignoring the devil's work when it interferes with God's purposes in our lives because his evil work is happening, and in some cases, we are just allowing it to happen.

***OK, get forgiven. Then, move on with God.***

Whenever Satan is blocking our progress, we must ask God to destroy the work of our adversary. Wherever God's work is being short-circuited and His pleasure is being delayed in a victory, we must learn to discern our enemy is at work. We must actively resist Satan's evil devices. We must actively, intentionally, consciously, go on the offense. We can and we must overcome. But we should heed the wise words of Watchman Nee. *"Before there is the possibility of our overcoming, we must maintain in our heart a hostile attitude towards him," (our adversary the devil). We should no longer be, "willing to*

*subject ourselves to his oppression.*"<sup>4</sup> The result is that I am not going to remain passive while the enemy is stopping me from achieving what I know God has called me to achieve. I don't want to be passive about this. I want to be active, intentional, and faithful. All believers should actively engage. We should not rest contented and passive while our enemy assails us or our loved ones.

Nee went on and said, "*What we have suffered at Satan's hands is a real grievance which must be avenged.*"<sup>5</sup> He's right! Having suffered loss, discouragement, or unbearable conflict at the instigation of our adversary calls for action. What should we do? How do we effectively engage our enemy without being bested in the engagement? I'm asking these questions very, very clearly and very honestly. I don't want to carry a knife to a gunfight. I don't want to get involved in things that are beyond winning.

And I reject the braggadocious kind of foolishness of some modern Christians who lightly speak about the devil. You know, "Oh man, I'm a devil stomper; I'm a demon crusher." I've been hearing those type of things from some Christians since I came to faith. There was a time I used to think that's the way we were supposed to be, but that is not the way I want to be today. And I don't want you to be that way. That's arrogant, misdirected, and dangerous.

**[Josh]**

How so? I mean, you're saying that basically I'm going to be in a fight against the devil, and I'm going to win. That's essentially what you're suggesting. You know, he's under my feet.

**[Randy]**

But I'm not gonna fight against the devil. And I'm not going to win. I don't consider myself to be in a fair fight if the devil is my adversary. Okay. Let me say it like this, that is not the warfare to which I've been called. That's not my problem. That's not my expertise.

I don't think it's wise to mock our adversary or to advertise our spiritual prowess. I don't think those are things we put on tee shirts. "Hey, look at me. I'm a demon crusher." No! I'm not going there.

**[Josh]**

I mean, it could work for a nice wrestling name.

**[Randy]**

Yeah, you're right, but I don't think we're supposed to promote our powerful spirituality as though we bring the kryptonite to the battle of the comic book superheroes. Yet, that's the way I sort of see it in some circles and I don't like it.

**[Josh]**

So, the flaw that you're pointing out is that approach seems arrogant. It's saying, "I'm the one doing it," versus going to God.

**[Randy]**

Instead of that, I think we should have a different view. Our perspective needs to be corrected. If we have been wronged by our adversary, I suggest we follow the example suggested by Jesus. We should act like the widow. We should pray to our God, asking him to avenge us. Prayer is the best offensive weapon we have against our enemy. It is through prayer that we preserve our line of defense. It's



through prayer that we can attack. We can go on the offensive, but we do it through prayer. That's the best way for us to inflict loss on our enemy's plan. His evil work does have power. I am not gonna diminish the position, the power, the abilities, the cunning, or the strategies of Satan, but if we follow the order of pray, fight, win, we can be protected from defeat and propelled to victory.

**[Josh]**

So, you've got us. You've got the devil. Ultimately, the problem with the argument of assuming he's under my feet is assuming that we have the power to put him there. We don't. We need to take the battle to him by going to the Judge. We must put him under the feet of Jesus.

**[Randy]**

Yeah, and that's the way the Scriptures implore us to manage such contention.

Adam didn't put the serpent under his foot. It is the seed of Eve that is going to put the serpent under his foot, and we know to whom that refers. It wasn't to Super Seymour, the demon crusher. It is Jesus the Messiah.

**[Josh]**

So, resist the devil and he will flee.

**[Randy]**

Yes, and I will get to that.

**[Josh]**

Okay. Sorry. I'm so out of order here. Well, this is very linear and I'm a very nonlinear thinker. I'm sorry. I'll let you go through your linear process.

**[Randy]**

Yeah. Linear, nonlinear. I don't know if that is something from which you get delivered? I need to think that through. I don't know.

**[Josh]**

In some ways. I mean, we jumped nonlinearly to looking at the end of the story. We know how it all ends. You know, we don't have to wait until the end, but I guess we can if you want.

**[Randy]**

What I want to point out here, going back to the simple parable, yes, the widow was never characterized as Satan's worst enemy. She wasn't a demon crusher.

**[Josh]**

You know, she wasn't characterized much at all. She wasn't good. She wasn't bad. She was, she was-

**[Randy]**

Importunate.

**[Josh]**

She was the squeaky wheel.

**[Randy]**

Yeah. You know I don't want to speak in such general terms, but I have heard people and seen how some people are elevated in spiritual pursuits and in their ministry activities. This one has that kind of deliverance ministry. That one, uh, you know, the exorcist. We know such things are real. I'm not diminishing it. I'm suggesting you don't put that on your business card. You know, I don't think it's wise.

**[Josh]**

T-shirt? Maybe. Business card? That's a little bit much.

**[Randy]**

I think there's a place for humility in all of these understandings. It's safer.

**[Josh]**

Because we aren't going direct. It's because we are petitioning. Our relationship is with God. We don't pray to the devil.

**[Randy]**

The widow knew her limitations. She was helpless on her own. I know my limitations and I'm pretty helpless on my own. We don't really have power of our own, but our Father, our God is all powerful, and He loves us. He wants us to come to Him. By boldly appealing to the higher authority, the widow found relief. This must also be the approach for me and for my family. I want us to have the understanding that we go to God in humility. We go to God in faith. We go to God with understanding as it relates to these spiritual encounters. The battles we are facing may be inescapable. I am not saying that to scare you. It's just an inescapable conclusion. We are in a spiritual battle for the souls of men and women.

It's who we are. It's the world in which we live. It's the purposes to which we are called. We have an adversary. He hates us. He wants to defeat us. He'd like to see us on the internet with our heads cut off wearing orange jumpsuits. I'm not gonna go there. There's evil in this world.

They are not our primary problem. They are not our primary purpose. Our purpose is to announce the love of God and the coming of Messiah. The fact is that there are people out there who don't want us to do that. They want us to fail in our call. We won't quit. They will lose. God will win. We have one strategy that we should employ. Pray, fight, win! We should boldly approach God and pray that He vindicates us. Therein lies our best defense and the correct offense. We can turn to God and level a formal accusation against our enemy. We are free to do this in God's own court where He sits in judgment. Think about it.

Our God is the judge. He's more than willing to accept the case. And I believe He will rule in our defense. We should get busy and deal with it. Take it to God. We don't deal with it by going to Satan. Don't do that. Deal with it by taking it to God.

I know we're both involved in these things. And we have other family members who are involved in some really herculean kinds of efforts to accomplish things that are meaningful. Most folks are unaware of them because they are not things we talk about, and until they are something, they're just ideas and dreams. But we know the struggle, we know the attacks, and we know that we must understand the strategy that God wants us to employ to overcome. If we turn to God and ask Him to vindicate us, we stand in faith on the righteousness

of Jesus. It is there that our adversary must certainly be judged as guilty. We are innocent. We are blameless. He is guilty.

***This is a reality. We will win if we pray and if we stay  
in the fight until we win.***

***Pray, fight, win!***



# CHAPTER SIX

---

## *Okay, Don't Get the "Demon-Crusher, Devil-Stomper" Tee Shirt*

[Randy]

*We should be willing to pattern our offense on that of the widow in the manner Jesus instructed. He said, "Shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him." (Luke 18:7 KJV)*

I'm beginning to believe some of my problems can be traced back to my unwillingness to cry unto God day and night. It may seem easier to simply put up with Satan's unfair treatment than to force him to step back. It may feel less threatening to tolerate the loss of ground to the devil, instead of forcefully insisting, through prayer, that God defeats Satan's efforts so as to retake the ground yielded to the enemy. So, in light of such a possibility, I turn again to the insights of Watchman Nee. He's been extremely helpful. I've read a stack of his books. And I'm really grateful for his insights.

*“Whenever we suffer under the devil’s hands we may take advantage of the punishment meted out to him by praying: ‘Oh God, curse Satan afresh so that he cannot do what he pleases.’”<sup>6</sup>*

I think that is profound. That’s a prayer that may need to be repeated on some regular basis. I assume Nee was suggesting that we pray in that manner daily. *“Oh God. Curse Satan afresh so that he cannot do what he pleases.”*

How come I never thought of that? It is just stunning to me, and it makes complete sense, and he’s right. The basis upon which brother Nee makes these bold statements is well grounded in Scripture. He says to God, *“You have crushed him in the garden of Eden. I ask You to curse him anew, placing him again under the power of the cross so as to immobilize him. What the devil fears most is the curse of God. As soon as God curses, Satan dare not try to hurt us.”*<sup>7</sup> I think that is brilliant. It’s simple.

**[Josh]**

So, in light of this, how would you say it would have gone if Job had prayed such a prayer? How do you relate that account in Job, in light of the conversation between the devil and God?

**[Randy]**

Well, the pat answer would be, that was before the Cross. It was a different era.



**[Josh]**

Uh, I don't like that answer. That's not a solid enough answer. That seems like a cop out. I mean, first of all, you're assuming Job was not atoning for his sins.

**[Randy]**

I'm assuming that Satan could have leveled an accusation against him even though he was maybe better than most people. He was not perfect although he's characterized in a very wonderful way. The things that happened to Job were not his fault. I would also change the direction of the question. I believe there's a very good argument to be made in the case of Job. One could say Job was set up.

**[Josh]**

Well, clearly, he was set up. That was a given.

**[Randy]**

But by God! This was something that God had intended. The things that happened were at Job's expense. But there are so many great lessons to be learned from Job.

**[Josh]**

Of course, obviously there are reasons. It's in the Bible.

**[Randy]**

I don't know that Job could have changed his outcomes. I know Job could not have gone to God on the same basis you and I can go to God. Because there was no true, permanent atonement made for Job as of his time.

**[Josh]**

I do wonder if Job could have changed the outcome. Lot and Abraham would be an indication that God will change his mind, so there is precedent.

**[Randy]**

All I'm suggesting is the defense would have had to have been different.

**[Josh]**

Of course. But it still makes me wonder what would have happened if Job had petitioned to God against the adversary?

**[Randy]**

Fair enough. There are deep questions that can be raised from the book of Job, and also from a number of other instances in Scripture where Satan is credited with horrific things. With each, God not only knew about the awkward event and, in some cases, God orchestrated some of the circumstances because the outcomes were things that God wanted achieved.

**[Josh]**

Or permitted it.

**[Randy]**

Yes.

**[Josh]**

There will be a lot of questions when we get to heaven, and that's just in light of where we're at in the discussion.

**[Randy]**

I have strong feelings about some of those things. I have talked about them in some other TV programs, and I've ministered about some of these things in different places at different times to make a different point.

I guess the connection to make herein is that as powerful as Satan might be, even Satan is controllable by God. God can use him for the purposes that He finds useful. That's an awkward comment.

**[Randy]**

Consider this, when Jesus was baptized in the Jordan river, it was sort of like a graduation. You know a lot of parents do something extravagant for their children when they graduate from high school or from college. Some might buy their kids a car. Obviously, that never happened in your world.

**[Josh]**

Won't happen in my kid's world either.

**[Randy]**

We know that some parents do extravagant things for their children. You were expected to graduate. You did what you were expected to do. *Mazel Tov*--congratulations. Soon you'll be Dr. Weiss. I think that's great. But some parents, you know, send their children on lavish vacations, or buy them expensive things.

**[Josh]**

Man!

**[Randy]**

I know, just think if you could have had better parents, right? But my point here is that, in a sense, we can look at the baptism of Jesus as sort of an important event, like a graduation. This moment was an incredible milestone. And what did it warrant from His Father? This beautiful word from God came forth about how pleased God was. We know about this great expression of love and it creates such a powerful image. Immediately thereafter, what did God do? He sent Jesus into the wilderness. Why? To be tempted of Satan! Very awkward, don't you think? A great argument can be made that God sent Jesus into the wilderness specifically to be tempted by Satan. Remember, Satan wasn't just parked out there in the middle of the wilderness waiting for an unsuspecting nomad to wander by. There had to be some coordination in that incredible confrontation between Jesus and Satan.

**[Josh]**

I get it. You're not necessarily saying there was a similar conversation to Job, but you're implying maybe there was.

**[Randy]**

I'm saying that Satan is not completely a free agent. He has some free agency status, but he's not all powerful. So, he can't be a completely free agent. There are greater powers. We call Him God because He is God.

**[Josh]**

Nor is he omnipresent.

[Randy]

Exactly. It was not random.

*The Bible makes it clear saying that Jesus was sent into the wilderness specifically to be tested, tempted by Satan. It was not an accidental encounter in the middle of nowhere. Satan was informed where Jesus was going to be in the wilderness and when He would be there.*

[Josh]

Suffice it to say we don't really know it all or understand it all. We're learning as we go.

[Randy]

But we don't have to be afraid. That's a big part of this. I don't want us to be afraid of our adversary. I want us to recognize him. I want us to have a strategy, and I want us to be prepared to overcome our adversary. I don't want us to be afraid. Remember, the goal is to achieve the victory to which God has called us. The method is to pray, fight, win! To win, we must first recognize our adversary.

In light of that, I must mention that there are numerous places in Scripture where God does things that look an awful lot like things Satan would do. But God has a purpose for what He does. God does things with a perfect plan in mind. His plans are profound, and they are often too far beyond our ability to understand His purposes. I'm not going to judge God or say that the things He does are bad. It would be wrong to accuse God. I'm not going to question God in a judgmental manner. For example, I recognize Job's righteousness was partially explained by his unwillingness to blame God. He didn't

hold God accountable or attempt to judge God. We should not judge God. There are numerous things that occurred in Scripture that seem awkward. Such as when God sent an evil spirit to King Saul to attack David (I Sam. Chapters 16-19). That's some ugly stuff. What's that all about? God sent a lying spirit in the mouth of the prophet to bring about a judgment (II Chr. 18:18-22). I don't know why He did that, and this is not the time to try to answer it. God has no obligation to explain it to us. God does not need a waiver or our permission.

At some level, we have to be willing to say, "It's none of our business." God knows why He does what He does. And it is not our position to judge God. We are supposed to count it all joy. We must learn to rejoice in tribulation. It is through much tribulation we enter into the kingdom of God. God has a plan. It's a good plan. He loves us. His will for us is good. He knows what he's doing. We're not supposed to shake our fist at God and say, "You don't know what You're doing." We're supposed to be thankful and trust God. Yes, we must trust God, and we're not supposed to be afraid of our adversary.

**[Josh]**

I think the important thing - using the analogies and the stories that you've just mentioned, for instance - King Saul didn't need to fear his adversary either. He needed to fear God and it was when he took his eyes off of God, that his problems came. It was Pharaoh not being willing to submit to God when -

**[Randy]**

Yes! I don't know why God sent this angel of death to kill all the firstborn sons of the Egyptians. Yeah, okay. It's none of my business. I just know He did. We can't blame somebody else. God says He did it.

He had a purpose for doing it and therefore it was good because God does all things well. That's who our God is. We don't need to be devil stompers, demon crushers, exorcists extraordinaire to understand that we're in a conflict. We all must understand our adversary, the devil, hates us. He wants our defeat. God loves us and will bring us to His victory. We pray, we fight, and in God's time, we win!

**[Josh]**

But the transcendent truth that is imperative for our viewers to understand is that God is good. If you don't understand, or if something happens that is bad, these things don't change the transcendent truth, that God is good.

**[Randy]**

Right! I have a friend with such a deep, abiding faith. His daughter had a soccer injury. It was a minor thing, but it didn't heal up right away. They prayed and they took her to the doctor. As they were getting ready to leave the doctor, everything was fine. But the doctor said, "I'd like to run one more test." This was a precious little seven-year-old girl. My friend had family and some friends there. They were packing everything up. They were leaving the hospital. And the doctor said, "There was just one little thing wrong. It didn't look quite right. I want one, one more test." And they did the test. It turned out this little girl had leukemia. They never would have found it had it not been for this little soccer injury.

I took this young man out for dinner. I wanted to encourage him just to talk with him and, and he said to me, "Brother Randy, when the doctor came and said, my daughter has leukemia, it was like the worst kind of a thing, you know?" He said, "I prayed, and I just really had to reevaluate."

This guy is a man of faith. He just astounds me with his faith. He's a real role model of a faithful man. He said, "Randy, I was alone, and I was praying, and I just told God, I said,

***'God, even if I have to give up my daughter, I will dig her grave with my own hands and bury her.***

***You will still be my God.'***

***And, he said, "But, I will ask you, please be gentle with us."***

When he was explaining this to me, I just fell in love with his faith because I knew he wasn't yielding to a satanic attack. He wasn't giving up. He was profoundly declaring his love and trust in a faithful God. His daughter is now in remission. What a great and wonderful thing this is. There have been countless people who have heard the gospel because of his situation. He has just so boldly and broadly declared God's love. And I mean, it's had an impact in his community. It's just been remarkable. I'm not saying God did this to his little girl. I'm saying that this man trusted God in such a way that ultimately his daughter has received a great report from the doctor.

She's in remission and God was gentle in how he managed these things. This man's prayers were answered. This man's tremendous confidence in God was made known to me in such a way that it just caused me to want to know God better. I want to trust Him more. And I want to be more like this young man. Even if God had done that to the young lady, He's still good. He is still good. We don't understand it. That's the whole point. That is the whole point.



There was a time when my father was sick. He had cancer. I was forbidden to talk to him. I was forbidden to see him. I wasn't allowed to visit him in the hospital, and ultimately, I wasn't allowed to attend his funeral simply because I believe Jesus is the Messiah. No other reason.

Along the way, someone I love told me, "You should just go and tell him, even though you're not invited. You should just go knock on the door and go see him. Don't take no for an answer, and tell him, 'I'm going to pray for you and if God heals you, Jesus is Lord.'"

I said, "Let me explain something. He doesn't want me to come see him. He wants to be at peace. And my presence makes him uncomfortable. I'm an embarrassment to him, and he's ashamed of me. He has the right to not be confronted by that which makes him so uncomfortable, but whether God heals him or not, Jesus IS Lord!" You see, it doesn't matter what I think. It doesn't matter what my dad thought. It's just the truth.

I don't know why some things happen. I don't know why some people get healed. Some people don't get healed. Some people come to faith. Others don't come to faith. I don't know why God allowed Satan to be positioned exactly where he did so Jesus would go to the wilderness to be tempted by Satan. Satan served a purpose. It was a purpose in the plan of God. I don't need to understand it. It's not my plan. It's God's plan. I don't know why God allowed the serpent to have influence over Eve and then Eve to have influence over Adam. I don't know. I don't know why we didn't even know it was Satan because the best I can tell, there's no connection between the serpent and Satan except at the beginning of the book and we don't

really find out until the end of the book who the character was that deceived Eve. That's weird, right? It suggests he's not that powerful. He's a minor character, a minor player, when compared to our God.

***“The talking snake in the Garden didn’t even get his name identified as Satan until the very end of the book in the Revelation. He’s a minor character. Let’s not make him the star of the story.”***

Okay, he successfully led a revolt against God in the heavenlies. One third of the angels joined him. That gave him some credence. I mean, he has some measure of prominence. He has some power. He has some authority.

***I’ll even say the devil has more power than the average bear in Jellystone park. So, it’s probably best not to call him out to a duel. Don’t take a knife to a gun fight either.***

Instead, take him to the Judge. Bring him before heaven’s creator, the Earth’s creator. Bring him to God. In the gospel of Matthew, Jesus instructed the only way to enter the house of a strong man is to first bind him. In this context, Satan must be bound if we are to do a work for God that assails territory controlled by Satan. He has some power. He has some authority. It’s not our hands or our weapons, in the physical, that will defeat him. It’s a task that we take before a heavenly power that is greater than all power on heaven or earth. The task before God’s servants is to recognize that the works of the devil can be seen throughout the world. He’s ubiquitous in some ways.

We know, ***“The son of God was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil.”*** That’s what it says in I John 3:8.

I'm going to repeat it because it's crucial. "*The son of God was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil.*" We don't have to wonder how this is going to go. The purpose for which God sent His Son is to redeem us, so we would have atonement.

Jesus is going to destroy the devil's works. It doesn't say Josh, the demon crusher is going to destroy the works of Satan. It's the son of God who was manifested. He's going to destroy the works of the devil. So, we have a place to boldly go, but not to go arrogantly. There's a difference.

**[Josh]**

So, it's a problem for me to get a tee shirt that says, 'demon crusher?'

**[Randy]**

I wouldn't do that.

**[Josh]**

But I could get a tee shirt that says, 'I serve the demon crusher?'

**[Randy]**

Yeah, you absolutely can. It's a little tasteless, but that's all right. That's okay.

**[Josh]**

Just don't get the Speedo and the wristbands and stuff and jump into the wrestling ring.

**[Randy]**

I would say, no. Yeah. Maybe, instead, do what works. Pray, fight, win!



# CHAPTER SEVEN

---

*Be a Card-Carrying Believer!*

[Randy]

The Son of God was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil. Therefore, is it any wonder that the devil resists us as we serve God? Is it a shock that Satan fights tooth and nail to preserve the territory that he believes belongs to him? Of course not. His works haven't yet been destroyed.

The devil is still active in this fallen world. This is why I believe it's time to pray like Watchman Nee suggests,

*“Oh God, Your son was manifested to destroy the works of the devil. Please destroy his work in us, destroy his manipulation over our work.”*

That's so beautiful. That is so correct. It is so profound, but it is also contrary to how some of us conduct ourselves in these spiritual encounters. I want to do better at these things. I want to be wiser, and I want to be humbler. I want to be more effective and more successful. I want to be more prompt to pray, more confident to remain in the fight, and better prepared to overcome in faith. Pray, fight, win!

We should become both humbler and wiser. These qualities will help us to successfully engage in such spiritual warfare. This is really important. Jude recorded that even the mighty Archangel of God, Michael, didn't assail the devil with reviling accusations of blasphemy or slander. He could have. Any such accusation Michael would have thrown around would have likely been true. Perhaps the strategy of the Archangel is worth our consideration. If this lofty, powerful, angelic being measured his words, perhaps we should measure our words.

*Michael the Archangel didn't say, "I'm the demon crusher, I'm the devil stomper." He said, "The Lord rebuke you."  
(Jude verse 9)*

I believe great wisdom and wise restraint was modeled for our instruction. Michael limited his words in his battle with Satan. We should consider limiting our words. Satan is not moved by our spirituality or our experience in such matters. We should remember that apart from when the power of God is released in his realm, Satan has no natural predator. No human entity can stop his activities at his level of the food chain. There is just no point in pretending that things are otherwise. Nevertheless, Satan has no choice but to cease and desist at the rebuke of the Lord! So, let us not waste our words or

our spiritually prideful foolishness on Satan. Rather, let us recognize that only through the rebuke of the Lord, in the mighty name of Jesus, do we have a legitimate, successful defense.

**[Josh]**

We might feel like we've got a stern voice. We might feel like we really know how to articulate our words and say, "devil, you're a bad person." We might feel like that's going to be effective. I promise you, if we go through the entire discussion in the Bible, and the things we've been talking about, we'll find our words are not as powerful as our heavenly Father's words. Our Father in Heaven has given us authority, and with that authority, we can speak on His behalf. And what does He say? Well, we go through His word. Use His word as what He says to the devil. The Bible says, "God says X, Y, Z, and as a result, you have to flee."

I encourage you to think about this in practical terms. As you approach the throne room regarding your own concerns about the devil, reflect on the authority of God. Lean on what you know with certainty about God. Absorb what is written in God's Word about such spiritual conflicts. You must study His word. Let's continue the conversation.

**[Randy]**

No natural or supernatural power on earth stands above the power of our Savior! When the Lord rebuked the natural elements of the horrific storm, the wind and the waves gave way to the command of Jesus. I mean that's just incredibly astounding.

Everything in heaven and earth must pay attention and obey Jesus. When the Lord speaks, He speaks with all power and all authority. As we pray and pursue God's will, the Lord desires to move on our behalf. He yearns to display His mighty power on our behalf. God wants to reveal His glory in our situation. It's about Him. It's not about us. That's why the demon crusher tee shirt is really a bad idea.

**[Josh]**

I'll cancel the order.

**[Randy]**

Okay. I mean,

*we should never approach Satan in a cavalier manner or attempt to elevate our spiritual reputation by rebuking Satan.*

We should not be demanding results because God pours His love and power into our lives. Although, God does pour His love and His power into our lives, we won't print that on the tee shirt either. We must never strut around as though we have earned some power of our own. Neither do we act as independent agents wielding God's authority.

That is not the way it works. We must not allow ourselves to become confused as to why or how Satan responds to our words. To do so is to proudly walk into a trap. I don't want to do that, and I don't want my loved ones to do that. It's only as we humbly submit ourselves to God that we can yield our will to God, and He will bring to pass everything that He desires through our struggle. He knows our



struggle. He's allowed us to get into the struggle that we're in. He's not worried about our struggle. He's not off balance because we're in this circumstance. It's true that demons tremble at the name of Jesus, but our task is not to cause demons to walk around on shaky legs. That's not the purpose. It would be a better exercise to learn to master our words. I believe that our tongues can declare the name of Jesus, but our tongues can also spew poison in an unruly manner. We can spit out evil cursing on things that God never intended to curse.

James gave profound advice about dealing with Satan. The best spiritual stance to take in such a struggle is to humble ourselves before God. Referring back to Proverbs, James said,

***“God opposes the proud but favors the humble”***

(James 4:6 NLT)

I want God's favor. None of us can stand against His opposition, so James instructs us to

***“Humble yourselves before God resist the devil and he will flee from you. Come close to God and God will come close to you.”***

(James 4:6-8 NLT)

The devil doesn't flee because we come from such a lofty spiritual stature that he fears us. If we truly humble ourselves, and if we draw near to God, then Satan doesn't even notice us when we're in God's presence. He doesn't see us. That is when God is overwhelming.

***When we are in the presence of God, as we draw near to God, it is exclusively His power that emanates in spite of us, not because of us.***

It is in spite of us, so don't get puffed up in your spiritual confrontation with the devil. Satan cannot stand in the presence of God. He must flee. So, our spiritual battle tactic must begin in humility, and we must stay close to God where His protection brings our victory. So, why am I in the struggle that feels unending and unwinnable? And I will say that often it feels that way. If I just speak honestly, it feels like I can't win, but I've already established I got that card I made. I'm glad I wrote it all down, so I won't forget:

***I won't quit.  
My Father loves me.  
I work for my Father.  
You can't beat my Father.  
Do you remember Jesus?***

***I am now a card-carrying believer. You can be one too.***

I'll give you one of mine. I know the feeling of being in a struggle that's unending and unwinnable. That feeling is an illusion that I wrongly choose to believe when I move beyond the protective shadow of God. When I'm out there on my own, that's on me, that's not on God. Therefore, if I've allowed Satan to draw me away from my place of protection, I must return to the only place where I am certain I can stand strong. I must humbly ask God to rebuke Satan just like the Archangel Michael did.

[Josh]

So, this whole issue, this whole topic of prayer and rebuking, and how we approach this power that is at our disposal, if you will, relies on the baseline, the foundation of humility and submission to God. Listen, we can talk powerfully about what the Bible says, but we still have to be humble in recognizing that the power that we speak about is not our power. It's power that's been given to us to use, but it's God's power. It's His authority. It's His word. It's His strength. It's His almighty powerful self. And the moment that we get a little too confident, to the point that it becomes arrogance, or the point that we think it's us, that's when things start falling apart.

*That's why we've got to always be intentional to make sure  
that we're resting in His power, in His authority  
and not our own.*

I encourage you to keep that in mind.

[Randy]

Now, it's certainly true that our adversary, the devil, seeks our destruction and our damnation. That's why Jesus taught us to pray "*deliver us from the evil one*" in Matthew 6:13 (NIV).

*"Deliver us from the evil one."* Satan is a malevolent being bent on evil, but our freedom and security is safe in Christ. Once again, I agree with the wise words of Watchman Nee. He said, "*Since we do not know when the evil one will come to molest us, we ought to pray with this word. Our Lord Jesus, 'having despoiled the principalities and the powers, . . . made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it, [the cross] Col. 2:15.*"

And brother Nee continued with advice tailored to my circumstance. He said, “*whenever we see the devil’s power on a rampage, we should stand on the ground of the cross asking the Lord to put the devil to shame once more . . .When the devil is shamed, he dare not raise his head. How then can he molest us again?*”<sup>8</sup>

***My position is that we can, and we should ask God to curse Satan. The Lord is perfectly poised to rebuke Satan and to shame him.***

The devil fell from heaven because of his pride that works against him and for us. God alone will shame him and eventually silence every effort of Satan in eternal judgment. And I believe God is exalted as He strips Satan of the power to obstruct God’s own work in our lives.

***Therefore, let us draw near to God so that Satan will flee, and God will free us from every demonic obstruction.***

Are you getting that? I mean, does that make any sense to you?

[Josh]

Yeah. Obviously, we’re taking a very macro approach to this parable about the persistent widow and prayer, right? And we’re talking here about resisting the devil and he will flee.

The James scripture pretty much reiterates everything you just said there, and it also kind of touches base on the tee shirt idea. Again, what’s the shirt that we’re not going to get printed, “demon crusher, devil stomper,” right? And like the Scripture says, “He gives us more grace.” (James 4:6 NIV)

As it says, “*God opposes the proud and favors the humble.*” “*Submit yourselves then to God, resist the devil and he will flee from you. Come near to God and he will come near to you.*” (James 4:6-8a NIV)

So, ultimately, one of the ways that we resist the devil is by drawing near to God.

**[Randy]**

Absolutely! That is the best approach. I know this raises questions for those of us who have been enduring through long, difficult seasons of what feels like times of impossible struggles.

**[Josh]**

You talk to some people and they feel like they’re in a never-ending struggle.

**[Randy]**

And you know, it begs obvious questions such as:

How long is this going to go on?

Have we not suffered enough?

Why do we quietly continue enduring this spiritual onslaught without rising up to stop the enemy assault?

I am asking these questions, too. But I believe it’s wrong. It’s a mistake. I think that we must rise up. I’m going to return to Watchman Nee. He informs us that we can stop this persecution and we should seek vindication. I’ve said that several times because we should stop this persecution then we should seek vindication. He tells us a simple truth if we’re willing to hear it and endure it. “*The Lord Jesus is calling us today to oppose the devil with prayer.*” Those are the words of Watchman Nee, and he continues,

***“The Lord Jesus is calling us today to oppose the devil with prayer.”***

Now, some may say, “okay, let’s pray.” Well, okay:

- *How long should we pray?*
- *When is our prayer finally going to be effective?*

Jesus gives us that answer. Allow me to return to the model of the widow woman in the parable. That was the opening subject of this little excursion. Jesus said, ***“We should always pray and never give up.”*** (Luke 18:1 NLT) These were the words with which He introduced His parable. Jesus assured us with great specificity. The unjust character of the judge, the one who answered the widow’s persistent prayer, is contrasted with God’s good and just character. Jesus instructed us,

***“God will surely give justice to his chosen people who cry out to him day and night. Will he keep putting them off? I tell you, he will grant justice to them quickly.”*** (Matthew 18:7-8 NLT)

That’s the answer Jesus gave in response to the question. And I think we should believe Jesus.

**[Josh]**

I understand where you’re at with this, and I don’t disagree from a practical standpoint. For myself, there’s only so much room in my head, right? So, we are nearing the bursting point in this discussion cause you’re cramming a lot in, okay? I’m trying to take it all in, right? There’s only so much room in my head when I’m working through my day-to-day life. Whether it is about work, or the church, my

family, I have certain checkboxes that must be tagged as information comes at me. Does this matter to me? Is there anything I'm going to do to change this situation, or do I just discard it, right? So, if it's not something that I need to be worrying about, I just kind of chalk it up to, "okay, thanks for letting me know." But I don't need to actually retain space in my head for this because it's going to take place either way, right?

So, this sounds really bad, but I know that when my wife tells me that there's going to be this activity, whether it's a football game for my son or whatever, it goes on my calendar, but I don't retain the space in my head because she's going to remind me six more times. "Don't forget you've got the game for your son, right?" It's kind of going to happen either way.

So, with prayer and with the resisting the devil, how long are we going to be in this difficult time? How long do I have to resist? How long do I have to petition, how long? I've never really viewed my situation like that because I kind of put a lot of things in the checkbox. "It doesn't matter, all things work out for good to them that love the Lord and are called." I know that's a little bit lazy, but that's genuinely how I am much of the time, from a philosophical standpoint. I trust that God is good. I believe He's got my best interest in mind. If it seems bad, He already knows it's going to end up good, and so I just have the checkbox of, "Well, I know how it's going to end up. It's okay." It might hurt for a while, it might go on for a long time, but it really is irrelevant because I know how it ends.

That seems a little bit lazy based on all that we have going on. It's really irresponsible because we're supposed to be petitioning God.

[Randy]

Right.

[Josh]

And you understand the dilemma.

[Randy]

*A great boxer once said, “Yeah, everyone has a plan until they get punched in the face.” Okay. Oftentimes, our problem is that we really don’t recognize that our adversary has a plan. And our plans often fail because they don’t begin in prayer and end in praise.*

If we take that into account, we will develop a defense against his strategy and we will deploy an effective offense. This is what I’m proposing, and it will change the way we pray. It will enable us to believe, and to pray with more confidence. When someone pulls out in front of us in traffic, or when a curve ball comes our way in our conversations or our negotiations, or we’re faced with an unexpected obstruction, instead of reacting to a person or to a situation, we will identify this as a spiritual matter.

[Josh]

So, I thought about this analogy earlier. I didn’t do it because it just seems a little sacrilegious to kind of bring this type of analogy into the discussion, but you opened the door with the boxing quote. So, the door is there. I can bring the analogy in.



**[Randy]**

Okay.

**[Josh]**

Right. You were a Rocky fan, right?

**[Randy]**

I am a Rocky fan. Wait, isn't everyone?

**[Josh]**

So, Rocky. We know when the movie starts - the movie's name is Rocky. You know he's going to be the victor regardless of what happens throughout the story. You know he's going to be the victor.

**[Randy]**

So even if he loses, it's still part of his victory story.

**[Josh]**

He's going to win, right? We know that's the story. We know there's going to be a sequel because he's got to continue winning because it's Rocky.

So, in the analogy of prayer, I know I'm going to win because I am the Lord's, right? And God is good, right? And God has a plan, yeah?

**[Randy]**

Yeah.

**[Josh]**

Because of this card, right?

**[Randy]**

Right! I wrote it all down so neither of us will forget and we can all be card-carrying believers.

*I won't quit.  
My father loves me.  
I work for my father.  
You can't beat my father.  
Do you remember Jesus?*

**[Josh]**

So, I know I win, right? And I know that all things work together for my good because I do love the Lord because I am called according to His purposes because I commit my life to Him on a daily basis and I am constantly working towards that progressive sanctification of drawing closer to Him. I am becoming more holy as I die to myself and He grows in me, right? So, I know the end of the story of my Rocky match. But, just to crystallize the things about which we are talking, it's a matter of how many times I want to get punched in the face before I get to the end of that match.

If I petition the Lord, if I go to the Lord, if I pray, if I don't just take what the enemy throws at me, maybe I can finish it in round two or three instead of having to go the full twelve.

**[Randy]**

Thank you. You've been paying attention. Okay. That is my point.

**[Josh]**

There you go. Okay. So, just so you know, there's a few checkboxes

I just checked off in my head. So, it better be really good where we continue to go because there's only so much space.

**[Randy]**

I believe we should set ourselves to pray in confidence that we won't reach the end without seeing God's mighty deliverance. God will bring His desired victory and Satan will release his grip on our success. I believe, in some cases, our success has been held back because of Satan's grip, but it will all lead to the greater glory of God.

Now, I don't think that we should be surprised that praying in the daytime and the nighttime is required. I think we must sort of condition our prayer life to become constant. I think that's what it's really saying. We should be constant. We should remain in dialogue.

**[Josh]**

In constant communion with the Lord.

**[Randy]**

Yes. I think we can assume that if we're not doing that, we are going to have a problem. I don't think it's hard to do this. I don't think this is some death-defying feat that only the super spiritual can enter into. I think it's for all of us. We just have to develop a habit of keeping our minds in tune and talking to God.

***If we want to win, we have the winning plan. We must pray, we must remain in the fight, and we will win!***



# CHAPTER EIGHT

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*WWSD (What Would Satan Do?)  
He Accuses Us Day & Night.  
Do You Ever Get Tired of That  
Incessant Malevolent Behavior?*

**[Randy]**

Our mind is operative day and night. Our mind doesn't just go away. I mean, when we're sleeping, our mind is still alive and active. Our mind is where our communication can take place with God.

I just have to ask the question; shouldn't we fight fire with fire? Let's remember our adversary, the devil, accuses us day and night. That's what it says in Revelation 12:10. Jesus revealed Satan's strategy to cause our failure. It's the same strategy that we can use to receive our victory. Satan has a go-to tactic in spiritual battles. It's the same over and over. His battle tactic against God's people is accusation.

***We need to learn satan's standard operating procedure.  
WWSD What would Satan Do? Remember,  
he's a liar and hateful accuser.***

**[Josh]**

But how do I pray in my sleep?

**[Randy]**

I'm simply saying we have to train our mind. Our minds wander.

**[Josh]**

I need realistic ideas. How do I train my mind to be praying while I'm asleep?

**[Randy]**

Okay, I'm not exactly suggesting that you have to pray while you're asleep. I'm saying train your mind so that it is not focused on evil things. There are so many evil influences around us. We give ourselves to those things. Those wrong things can fill our minds.

**[Josh]**

That answer doesn't work for me because what you're saying is that the difference is either you're seeking things that are evil or your mind is trained towards this other side. In my own prayer life, for instance, it's not a matter of whether I'm training my mind by filling it with junk versus filling it with the Bible. It's a matter of the laziness or the complacency that says, "Well, God is gonna take care of my situation anyway," right? It's more than just not filling your mind with the things of the world.

[Randy]

Josh,

*I think our adversary is constantly assaulting our minds  
and we're not fighting back.*

We don't have to pursue pornography. You can't hardly go to church without seeing people dressed in ways they just shouldn't be dressed.

[Josh]

I know! Skinny jeans. What's up with that? Sorry.

[Randy]

I mean television, the Internet, how many times a day do we allow our minds to be infiltrated by somebody telling us what they want us think? There are voices telling us, "You want this, you need that. If you only could acquire this thing, then you'd be satisfied. Do this to be healthy, wealthy, and wise. Everything would be wonderful if you just had the right cologne or the right perfume. You'd have the right man or the right woman if you just drove the right car. If you just had the right suit or dress, things would be better."

It's a constant barrage, but we are not defending ourselves with a constant defense. I'm suggesting that our adversary, the devil, he accuses us day and night and that same strategy should be used by us to be in communion with God.

*We should be as aggressive in defending ourselves as the  
devil is at attacking us. We should go on the offense to take  
the territory that God has called us to take.*

We should be proactive in capturing the treasures that God wants to use for His purposes. Satan’s tactic in spiritual battles is accusation against us. In a sense, it becomes the devil’s prayer to God. The devil is appealing in a form of prayer to God. The devil makes his case against us to God by accusing us.

I know that seems so messed up, but when we talk to God, it is our form of prayer. When Satan talks to God, it’s his prayer. Now, God knows the devil is bad. In every way he’s unworthy. He’s just bad. Satan is known as the accuser of the brethren. That’s one of his titles. How often does Satan pray for our defeat? He is the **“one who accuses them before our God day and night.”** (Revelation 12:10 NLT) That is what Scripture says. The good news I want to share about this is great news. The Bible makes it clear,

***“They defeated him by the blood of the lamb and by their testimony.”*** (Revelation 12:11 NLT)

We need not fear that Satan’s prayers of accusation will cause God to believe his lies about us. The devil can lie right to God’s face and he can do it with a straight face. It doesn’t mean God believes it.

You see, God knows that we are the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus and we are new creatures in Christ.

***Just because the devil invests his time accusing us, let’s not lose sight that God also hears another voice. Jesus is speaking up on your behalf and on my behalf as a High Priest, in opposition to our adversary.***



**[Josh]**

Yeah, I still need to go back to what you hit on a little bit. If Satan accuses us, if Satan's going, "Hey God, Josh is a really bad guy. He's just this really bad guy." You fill in the blank on what bad means. On the one hand, God's omniscient, right? God's omnipotent. He's omnipresent, so He knows whether I'm bad or not. So, why do I need to tell God, "Hey God, he's lying," if God already knows it.

**[Randy]**

I don't think you have to tell God he's lying. God already knows it. You can accuse Satan before God and ask God to curse Satan so that he takes his hands off of you, so that he removes the obstacles that he's placed in your path.

**[Josh]**

But it almost seems like why would I have to point that out to God, "Hey God, by the way, you know the guy's a liar?" God already knows he's a liar.

**[Randy]**

Why did the Archangel Michael say, "The Lord rebuke Satan?" Why? Maybe it's a protocol. I don't know.

**[Josh]**

Oh, like open sesame?

[Randy]

Maybe there's convention. I'm not talking about a formula. I'm talking about a concept.

*The devil is praying day and night. I know that's an odd-sounding concept, but that's essentially what he's doing. He's the "accuser of the brethren" and he's accusing us before God, day and night. I think we forget that although God hears the voice of our accuser, He also hears the voice of our intercessor.*

Jesus is not just any intercessor. He's the High Priest. He is our High Priest before God. This is a powerful thing and God responds to these things. I want you to dwell on the fact for a moment that God ordained a High Priest. That's the way things worked in Scripture. The High Priest served a holy purpose. Our High Priest transcended the character, the single-minded focus, and the high call of every other High Priest who proceeded Him. In fact, there's a unique Greek word that appears only one single time in the entire New Testament.

That word is "*aparabatos*." It means "not passing away" in the sense of it's "perpetual, it's unchangeable, it's not transferable." The uniqueness and the singularity of this descriptor refers to none other than the unchangeable priesthood of Jesus Christ. And what is the purpose of our high priest in the dispensation since the Cross? I love the archaic flare of the King James Bible in the text of Hebrews 7:25, "he ever liveth to make intercession for them." We are the "them!"

Jesus is making intercession for us right now. That's one of the most comforting truths of Scripture. It's Jesus who saved me. It's Jesus who

called me. It's Jesus who protects me in my service to Him, and it's Jesus, my High Priest, who stands before God, interceding on my behalf and on your behalf. So, I ask, how safe am I?

How safe are you?

How saved am I?

How secure am I?

*I am safe, saved, and secure! I am resting under the blood of the Lamb, and the One who called me with a heavenly purpose is fending off the accusations of my adversary. He's whispering to God about His love for me.*

He's crying out for my protection. Now, if this sounds overly emotional or somehow overstated, I can't help it. I remain desperate for God and committed to His service, but I also feel the unceasing attack of my adversary. I need relief. I'm tired of some of this stuff. So yes, I am making an emotional connection to what the Scripture says. I know who my God is. That knowledge comforts me. I need comfort. I am comforted in knowing that no one has a greater advocate than I have. I recognize that the god of this world hates me. He seeks my defeat and my condemnation, but I am not going to cower in fear because of this.

**[Josh]**

Awareness that the enemy is always at work to undermine God's plan is something that's beneficial. It's good to recognize that this is taking place. In theory, if you know what the devil is doing, you can be

better prepared to combat the adversary’s attacks. WWSD? Knowing what Satan does should change how you pray, prepare, and live. This is a novel thought. At the same time, we don’t have to be fearful of what the devil is doing because we know God hasn’t given us a spirit of fear, but of power and love and a peaceful mind.

We don’t have to be fearful of the devil. We don’t need to be afraid of what he’s doing, but we deserve to be aware of it. Awareness is a good thing. It’s helpful, and so we want to be aware but not fearful. And I encourage you, as we continue on this topic, maybe think through in your own life situations where you didn’t really pay attention and you weren’t even thinking about it. Did you just keep moving forward aimlessly, without even recognizing the devil was actually working against what God was trying to do in your life? Let’s continue the discussion.

[Randy]

*The devil may be angry. He may have the appetite of a hungry lion, but I’m not going to be his meal. Neither am I going to starve because he’s hungry.*

I have an advocate “*aparabatos*.” Perhaps as the *goyim* say, you know, *Jehovah Jireh*, I have a provider. He will enable me to locate my daily bread, or He will provide manna for me in my desert. He may not pour more manna than I should collect. He may not cause me to fill a warehouse with tomorrow’s manna. He knows it would just mold, but He will provide all that I need to accomplish all that He desires in my life in service to Him.

Now, I've had some friends and some family mock me because I'm not a planner. Most people who know me recognize it's not that I'm opposed to planning, I'm just not good at it. The time it takes to make the plans often takes me more time than the time it takes to actually just do some of the things that need to get done. You'll appreciate this Josh because-

**[Josh]**

Yeah, I'm not a planner either.

**[Randy]**

Right, but I have memories of a high school assignment where we were required to write a term paper. The task specifically demanded an outline and meticulously organized 3"x 5" note cards for each point with the references that were being used.

It was a requirement before the term paper could be approved. That's the way it was structured. I was paralyzed.

**[Josh]**

I believe that.

**[Randy]**

I couldn't do it. Planning to write the term paper was terribly confusing. No matter how I tried to understand the concept of an outline and note cards, it just perplexed me. As the deadline drew near for this required assignment, I cheated. I wrote the entire term paper. Then, I went back and filled out some note cards and faked what passed as an outline. Now to this day, as you know, outlines are like foreign languages to me. It's much more logical to me to simply

write a sermon, write the article, write a book, whatever it is. It's easier to do that than to make an outline.

**[Josh]**

Cause you're a linear thinker.

**[Randy]**

Maybe that's the issue. That's probably it, Josh.

**[Randy]**

Outlining requires plans. How can I know what I'm going to think about my research until I've read the source materials? How can I formulate conclusions before I've evaluated the facts? Planning comes easy to some folks. It's a foreign language to other people.

*Now, I'm in favor of letting planners plan. I'm just more like the steel ball in the pinball machine. I'm comfortable with God hitting the flippers to bounce me around touching whatever targets wherever He finds value.*

When am I supposed to slip between the flippers and quit making points? It's not up to me. It's up to God. It's His game. Pinballs don't tell the player how to win or lose the game. They just bounce off the walls, the bumpers, the flippers, the flashing targets until the turn is over. Pinballs don't take it personally. Pinballs don't complain. Pinballs don't take credit when the points are racked up. Pinballs don't get blamed when they slip back into the hole under the game table face. They simply go where they're launched.

That's usually my plan. It takes none of my time to guess the trajectory, the velocity, the angle of the game face or the point value of the target. If I go where I'm sent and bounce off, whatever I'm flippered to touch, God wins. Steel pinballs require no brains. Steel pinballs require no plans. Steel pinballs require no notecards. And steel pinballs require no outlines. I hate outlines. They're so restrictive. I am a servant of God. I mean, that's just the bottom line. I serve at God's pleasure. God's servants die, then His work goes on. The pinball analogy might quickly break down. Okay, eventually the pinball doesn't pop back up to bounce again. Instead, someone else drops in another quarter and it's somebody else's turn. Of course, life isn't the game of pinball and we only get one crack at this. ***"It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this, the judgment."*** Again, the King James version is quite clear in Hebrews 9:27.

So, I want to get this right because I have an expiration date. I don't want to waste my limited shelf life on frustrating note cards with Dewey Decimal notations or aggravating outlines. By the way, if you don't know much about the Dewey Decimal system, Google it. You might need to also Google yesterday's "research headquarters." They were called libraries before Wikipedia. For the record, I could make an excellent biblical argument for planning. First Chronicles teaches us about King David's planning for Solomon's Temple. He calculated everything in advance and gathered the required building materials, foreign and domestic subcontractors. He prepared a massive construction budget and secured all the pre-build construction financing. When required, King David was a careful planner, however, in other times he just asked God, "Hey God, should I attack that army? Hey God, you want me to trust those people?" Then he was sufficiently nimble to just do what God instructed. Jesus gave us

some very responsible advice about the reasons not to plan. It's a little out of context, but humor me, okay. Matthew 6:25 says,

*“Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink, nor yet for your body. What you shall put on.”*

The NIV says,

*“Do not worry what shall we wear for the pagans run after these things?”*

Sometimes, I want to read that last part to your mother when she's stuck in the closet. Now, one would think deciding what to put on carried apocalyptic consequences. And by the way, I can say that because...

**[Josh]**

She's not here?

**[Randy]**

Okay, she's not here, but really, it's because I've been preaching for many, many years on TV and she never sees our programs. She's not watching.

**[Josh]**

Which is why I can say that, and you can say that.

**[Randy]**

That's right, but just for the sake of insurance, I love you Adrienne, and you look fabulous in anything you put on. You could select



anything in the closet blindfolded and I would be blinded by your beauty. Moving right along, Jesus said,

***“Is not the life more than the meat and the body the raiment, behold the fowls of the air for they sow not neither do they reap nor gather into barns, yet your heavenly father feeds them. And are ye not much better than they?”***

(Matthew 6:31-32 NIV)

The obvious point that Jesus was making was stop worrying. Trust God. He instructed us with perfect clarity. These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers. That’s what He said. It was as if He read our minds 2,000 years ago. How many of us just can’t stop thinking about our earthly cares? Our worries are filled with uncontrollable outcomes. The things that keep us up at night and force our minds to not sleep - some concerns just ruminate and create unrest. Instead of simply believing properly, like people who know God, we reject what we know of God. And often we choose to live in fear.

It’s like we live and act like those people who don’t believe in God. We should be ashamed of that.

**[Josh]**

Take the Scripture that you don’t have to worry about the where your provisions are going to come from. You don’t have to worry about your clothing, your food, these different things because He’s going to take care of you. He takes care of the lilies of the field. He takes care of the birds of the air. What makes you think He’s not going to take care of you? It doesn’t say you’re not supposed to ask Him to take care of you though, right? Typically, that’s where it ends. He says

He's going to take care of me. I don't have to worry about it. He's my provider.

**[Randy]**

I think it is appropriate to pray about everything. When your mother and I were first married, I was making a hundred dollars a week and we lived in a \$90-a-month apartment and our food budget was maybe \$15 or \$20 a week.

**[Josh]**

It's a good diet plan.

**[Randy]**

We prayed when we went into the grocery store to go buy our food because we knew whatever we had in our pockets needed to be enough when we got to the checkout. It was always enough. We also knew we couldn't free wheel. We needed direction. We were young and we didn't understand a lot of things. Nobody had trained us. You don't get a rule book and a lot of instruction about marriage.

God just drew us close to Himself. We prayed about everything. The truth is, we prayed about almost every decision we made, and God protected us. Sometimes, I know I need to return to that simplicity. There are now some things that I just decide for myself. I make my own decisions. That is not very wise. It leads to having our minds begin pouring over what-ifs and what-nots instead of what is.





## CHAPTER NINE

---

*Sometimes, PRAY, FIGHT, WIN Includes  
Praying in the Spirit.*

[Randy]

Our goal should be to mature to the point that we stop worrying and trust God. Jesus said,

***“Is not the life more than the meat and the body than the raiment behold the fowls of the air for they sow not neither do they reap nor gather into barns. Yet your heavenly father feeds them. And are you not much better than they?”***

(Matthew 6:25-26 KJV)

What Jesus explained in those few words should be very compelling to us. Our faith must grow so we understand how competent God is at providing what we need. We should look to Him instead of looking at everything around us. He wants us to stop worrying. It is so unchristian to worry, and we are so good at it. That makes us

bad at “doing” Christianity. We’re supposed to stop worrying and trust God. He instructed us with perfect clarity. He said, “these things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers.” That should cut us to the quick. It was as if Jesus was reading our minds today from 2,000 years ago.

How many of us just can’t stop thinking about our earthly cares, worries, and the uncontrollable outcomes that plague our hearts? Instead of simply believing like people who know God, we reject what we know about God and live in fear like those who do not believe.

*Our minds pour over, “What-ifs” and “What-nots” instead of WHAT IS! Jesus spoke to change our minds.  
Stop doubting; start believing!*

He gave a simple fool-proof plan to think correctly. As believers, we must pursue WHAT IS and we must cease fretting about “what-if.”

**[Josh]**

If I could talk to those people who speak modern English - may I read that in a modern English version? I might not be the oldest guy, but I’m old enough to know that nobody in my entire life has ever used the word fowl in a regular sentence except when they’re reading the King James version. I mean, maybe hunting. “Even then waterfowl.” Like, it’s just not a word we use. I’d like to read in the sixth chapter of Matthew from verse twenty-five to the end. Actually, it’s a short passage.

***“Therefore, I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life? And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you - you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore, do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”***  
(Matthew 6:25-34 NIV)

So, all Scripture is foundational, but this is a Scripture on which I often lean. It’s not a lesson on how to pray or what to pray. I lean on this because I recognize God is my provider and I don’t have to be constantly planning my tomorrows. I don’t try to strategically align every move based on what’s coming next. Instead, I know I can trust that God is in control. I can trust that God is my provider. God knows exactly what I need, and because I don’t have to worry about those things, I can focus my efforts on His kingdom.

I can focus my efforts on what He is calling me to do. I can seek Him for His direction for my life rather than how I feel about my needs. From the standpoint of prayer, as you've probably identified throughout the course of this interview, I've never really associated that with the adversary. And sometimes that's part of the problem when we read Scriptures. We read ideas in the passages that we're reviewing, but because the Bible is so vast, you end up reading things in silos. Sometimes, you don't necessarily see them all connected together. You're connecting some of this together in this interview. I've always read that section as teaching me that I don't have to worry about those things. I can focus on what God has, and as you have often said, I'm not responsible for tomorrow, I'm responsible for the next sixty seconds. I need to make sure that I'm committed to God's call for the next sixty seconds of my life. What has God called me to do the next sixty seconds? I must not be constantly worrying about tomorrow. You are seeing this differently and you are helping me to get something new out of it.

**[Randy]**

Well, I hope I'm getting something old out of it. I don't want to make something new that is not already there. I think it's there, but I also feel that I'm not satisfied with myself and this is part of the reason I want to connect the dots for myself. Hopefully, by expressing my thoughts, it may help others connect some of the dots for themselves.

It's just sinful to worry. It's wrong on so many levels. Jesus said these things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers worrying about the things of the world. Be anxious for nothing. It's as if 2,000 years later, Jesus read our minds. He knows how much effort we waste on worry. He knew 2,000 years ago that many of His followers would still need



to learn how to overcome this plague of worry. He said, “Dude, you go ahead, you do that. You can be just like the unbelievers if you don’t believe.” But I want to be a believer. I want to believe.

Now, I have to ask, how many of us will admit that we have difficulty with this? We do put too much thought into our earthly cares instead of simply believing like people who know the goodness of God. As we worry, we subconsciously reject what we know to be true about God. If we are living in some level of fear, it reveals our level of doubt about God’s willingness to help us, or our doubt about His actual ability to help us.

In either case, it reveals a wrong attitude about God. Living with such fear is not what God wants for us. When we choose fear over God, we live like those who don’t believe in our God. When we commit so much time, effort, and energy to worry, our minds have no capacity left for enthusiasm, faith, and the pursuit of the purposes for which we were created. We must learn to change our thoughts, our words, and the content of what fills our hearts. This is what will lead to changing how we speak and how we act. When we change how we think and speak, it changes how we relate to our circumstances and to those around us.

**[Josh]**

But isn’t that somewhat contradicting to being concerned about the adversary? I don’t want to be worried about the adversary. What you’re saying is I should be focused, or at least cognizant, of the adversary. That seems contradictory. How does this help me not to worry?

**[Randy]**

Jesus said, “*Seek the kingdom of God above all else.*” Above all else! Just “*seek the kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.*” (Matthew 6:33 NLT) That’s the NLT version of what you read. I like that. If I can set my mind to understand that my Heavenly Father knows all about my needs, my obligation is to seek His kingdom above all those needs, above everything else, and to live righteously. Then He’s going to give what is needed. It should be an ‘oh duh’ moment.

‘Oh duh! This is going to be okay. I know I can trust God.’ But yes, we do have an adversary, and we’re not supposed to ignore him. We’re not supposed to fear him. We’re not supposed to fear what he’s going to do, but it doesn’t mean that we should not be responsible and wise in how we walk.

If you’re walking in the woods on a path and you know there are poisonous snakes in the area, you pay attention, so you don’t get bit. If you’re allergic to bee stings or wasp stings, you don’t have to go stir a hornet’s nest just to see what’s going to happen. We should pay attention, but we should seek first the kingdom of God. If I seek God, and His kingdom purposes, the King of the kingdom will take care of the rest. That’s His job, not mine. This reality must inform every aspect of my prayer life, including dealing with the snakes.

**[Josh]**

Maybe some people don’t actually set aside a specific time to converse with God. When I’m talking to some of the young people in our church, and we’re discussing prayer or Bible study, people will start to open up. They might say, “I start to pray, but I just feel like I’m

constantly going through my own needs. You know, I listed off all the things I'm needing and then I'm done." There's this prayer process, right? I have always used Matthew six as a guide towards prayer.

**[Randy]**

I think that's important. That is foundational. It's a core perspective of prayer. As the television advertisement says, "But wait, there's more!" There are so many aspects of effective prayer that we need to learn and to apply. In a way, I feel kind of helpless to be able to convey, in my own words, the answer to the question that those young people are asking you. But an answer exists. It's just not my words. I thank God that He provided a record to help us pray effectively. I don't intend to provide some kind of an exhaustive treatise on prayer in this dialogue. I want to raise some points that I'm thinking about, and I'm hoping others will reflect on my thoughts and reach their own conclusions. But I do want to tag a few of the bases to ensure that God's Word forms our boundaries, and grants the treasures of our ability to pray as God desires.

The Scriptures remind us, "The Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness." For example,

***"We don't know what God wants us to pray for, but the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words."*** (Romans 8:26-27 NLT)

Please think about this. Ask yourself, how great a treasure remains buried under fear and doctrinal misunderstanding? Instead of embracing this tremendous gift for praying believers, countless Christians prefer to argue about how this godly treasure fits or

retrofits their church’s statement of faith. God expressed His desire to equip believers with a secret weapon in prayer through his Holy Spirit. So many people just ignore it or reject it. Many Christians just don’t get it. God’s got a gift for us, and because they might not have been taught about how or why to pursue the Holy Spirit in prayer, or to yield to the powerful gift that God wants us to embrace, they’re robbed. Many believers remain confused when they don’t know how to pray. That’s okay. To overcome being uncertain about such things, we should simply turn to the Lord. We can pray in the Spirit. We can let God’s Spirit pray in us, and through us, and for us.

***We should pray in the Spirit and we should be quick to do this. This should not be our last resort. It should be first thing.***

We should pray, and when we’re unsure how to pray, pray in the Spirit. Sometimes, I think that is just a smarter approach, and a better use of our time. Father knows best!

**[Josh]**

Okay, so I’m going to back you up a little bit here. I know what you’re saying, but perhaps there are those who don’t know what you’re saying. When you say pray in the Spirit, what do you mean?

**[Randy]**

I mean what the Scriptures said, God wants to help us in our weakness. We don’t know what God wants us to pray for, but the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in our own words. The gifts of the Spirit are for today. I don’t argue those things. I don’t dispute it with those who say, “No, it was a different era.” I

know God is alive and He hasn't changed and praying in the Spirit is a gift that He has granted to those who want to do so.

**[Josh]**

So, when you say praying in the Spirit, just so the audience is very clear what you mean? You're talking about speaking in tongues?

**[Randy]**

Yes. You know, I don't see it as such a complex thing, and I don't manufacture something. I don't imply that someone is better or worse if they misunderstand this. It's like way beyond trying to measure. I know when I came to faith and I was baptized . . .

**[Josh]**

In water?

**[Randy]**

In water. The pastor was not a well-educated person. I only met the man once. It was when I went to his little church to get baptized. By the way, I don't hold his lack of education against the man. I only know that he was not highly educated because he wrote me a letter. It was not written by a person with a strong academic background or by someone who had mastered grammar and spelling, but it was a very kind and considerate communication. You know, I was 2,000 miles from home. I had visited his church specifically so that I could get baptized. I knew that church did baptisms. He said something to me that I didn't understand. As I was getting ready to go under the water, he said, "You're going to be buried in baptism and when you come up, if God blesses you, you're going to be speaking in your heavenly language." I didn't know what he was talking about. It was

confusing and disorienting at that moment. When I came up, I was praising God and speaking in English, which is my mother tongue.

Almost no time went by before the adversary was telling me, “Uh huh. See! God didn’t bless you. God really doesn’t love you.” I spent six months somewhat confused about that aspect of my Christian walk. I was telling everybody about the Lord, and I was alienating people if they didn’t want to hear about it. I was on fire. My life had been radically changed in an instant. I just thought everybody’s life could radically be changed in an instant if they believed in Jesus. I would come under a strange sense of condemnation from the adversary. It was like the devil would whisper to me, “But wait, do you remember what that man said? If you come up out of that water, you’ll be blessed if you’re speaking in this heavenly language? And see? You didn’t.” The adversary used that against me. I’ve been sensitive about that in how I discuss these things with other people ever since that day because I know the negative impact.

The pastor certainly meant well. He wasn’t trying to cause me harm. He wasn’t trying to confuse me. He knew the Lord. He loved the Lord, but the manner in which he introduced me to the concept of speaking in tongues, was not handled correctly. He conveyed it to me very inappropriately. It was an insufficient introduction. Indirectly and unintentionally, it hurt me. And I would say in retrospect, God wanted it that way so that I would be sensitive to this subject. I’m not afraid of the Holy Spirit. I’m afraid of disappointing God. I am conscious of the danger of falling into sin. I’m afraid of doing things that would displease God, but I’m not afraid of the Holy Spirit. I want the Holy Spirit in my life. I want to pray in the Spirit. I trust God to pray better than I trust myself to pray, and that’s what this

section of Scripture is saying. If you don't know how to pray, well then, take it to God. Let God's Spirit pray for you, through you, and with you. Sometimes, He also brings clarity to your understanding of the things that are involved in the process.

**[Josh]**

I just wanted to make sure that it was clear for our audience. You were speaking about praying in tongues, speaking in tongues, and when you do so, you're essentially allowing the Lord to pray for you. It's kind of like you go on autopilot. Let God's Spirit pray because He knows what you need. You're letting the Holy Spirit speak through you during that time of prayer. Is that a good way to put it?

**[Randy]**

I think so, but I don't like the term autopilot.

**[Josh]**

You're a vessel.

**[Randy]**

Yes, that is true, but a vessel with free will.

**[Josh]**

Okay, fair.

**[Randy]**

I want to pray with understanding as Paul taught, but I also want to pray in the Spirit as Paul taught. Sometimes, things just hurt, and I might want to pray, "God get him."

**[Josh]**

That's a good time to go back to the praying in the Spirit.

**[Randy]**

Yes, because I don't know what God wants to do. I don't know why God brought this circumstance into my life. If I'm supposed to trust God, I'm just supposed to trust Him. I'm going to say this a thousand times.

*I'm supposed to count it all joy. I'm supposed to rejoice in tribulation. I'm supposed to be able to have enough trust in God to not shake my fist at Him and point at Him and say, "You don't know what You're doing," but rather, "God, I know You know what You're doing. God, I want to say thank You for this."*

It's really hard. Maybe I should just pray in the Spirit because I don't know what to do. I don't know what You want. I don't know what's next, but I know You do, and You know better than I do and I don't want to ask for something I'm not supposed to have.

**[Josh]**

Yeah, okay. You made a comment about being filled with the Spirit or praying in the Spirit doesn't make me better. It doesn't make you better than somebody else.

**[Randy]**

No. It doesn't.



**[Josh]**

I had one of my professors in Bible college, who later became my pastor, and boss, and of course now, he is my friend, Dr. Jeff Magruder. When he was in seminary, he attended a seminary that did not believe in being filled with the Spirit. Somebody in class, I don't know if it was a professor or a classmate said,

*“So, do you believe you’re better than me because you pray in the Spirit, because you’re filled with the Spirit.” He quickly responded with an appropriate response. “No, I don’t think I’m better than you. I just think I’m better than I was before I was filled with the Spirit.”*

That’s kind of what you’re saying. The Spirit helps me be better. The Spirit empowers me in a different way than I was before.

**[Randy]**

Yeah. I admit my weakness. Because I’m weak, I go to God and I just want to pray in the Spirit, so I don’t have to continue living in my weakness. I want to let Him be strong in my weakness, and I need the Spirit of God to help me make progress in that regard. Sometimes, in our effort to win, it’s a good plan to pray in the Spirit.

For me, that is part of the power of God’s plan to win. Remember, pray, fight, win! Let’s not exclude praying in the Spirit. As we pray, remain in the fight, and ultimately, with God’s help, WIN!



# CHAPTER TEN

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## *The Holy Spirit Brings Peace; Let's Not Argue About Praying in The Spirit*

**[Randy]**

Talking about the Holy Spirit and praying in the Spirit creates tensions in some circles. Many Christians with whom I fellowship, and churches where I might preach, don't necessarily see these things in the same way I do. I love them. They love me. We have great mutual respect for each other's views. In fact, a dear brother is coming to town tonight. He is staying at my home. I know he has a different view of this topic. He's one of my dearest friends. We talk about everything, including issues of the Spirit, but I know that his experience is different than mine. It doesn't make mine better.

He was trained differently. He has hesitations about some of the things that now, so many decades later, I just take for granted. That's okay. If someone has been taught differently, and their life with Christ is full and vibrant, I am happy for them and rejoice in their flavor of

Christianity. If, like my brother, they are fruitful and effective in their walk of faith, and if they know how to pray effectively, I count them precious in the faith and enjoy our time of fellowship. Should they pray differently than I do, or than you do, it doesn't mean they're not yielded to Christ. I still believe that if they desire, they can also pray in the Spirit. I believe we all can simply yield to the powerful gift of God that I believe He wants us to embrace. That's my view. We should pray in the Spirit, thereby the Father, Who knows all hearts, will pray on our behalf.

***“The father who knows all hearts knows what the Spirit is saying, for the Spirit pleads for us believers in harmony with God’s own will.”*** (Romans 8:27 NLT)

I love that. It's so profound. It's so perfect! And that's where I want to be. That's where I want to encourage you, and the people I care about to be. God's will is most clearly reflected in prayers that emanate from His heart to ours through His spirit. That's how I view this issue.

As we come into union with God in our prayers, we can certainly come to Him boldly, and in faith. We don't need to worry that we're too unworthy to bring our seemingly lowly request to God who sits on some distant throne, unphased by our impoverished petition. No, God cares. God listens and God desires His will to be accomplished in our lives. He wants us to be unfettered from the godless accusations of our adversary, the devil. Therefore, it is

***“Through faith in Him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.”*** (Ephesians 3:12 NIV)

And the path to our victory is through praying in faith, staying in the fight, and winning by not quitting. Pray, fight, win! This is the path I propose should be followed.

Praying in faith is not just repeating words. Our attitude of prayer makes a difference. Whether we realize it or not, we have an attitude when we pray. Our attitude in prayer matters. Do we approach God assuming He will reject us or deny our request? I think a lot of people do that. Sometimes, I think I do that too. I don't want to be that way. I want to approach God and anticipate that since we're praying according to His will, He is simply waiting for us to come to Him to do what He already has revealed that He wants to do. It makes complete sense.

**[Josh]**

But the problem is that if you fail to recognize that you might not be living the life that He's called you to live, you just can't approach His throne and claim the things that He's promised. If you're not living your life in the way He instructed you, your expectation might be unrealistic.

**[Randy]**

I agree.

**[Josh]**

It's not a name it and claim it proposition.

**[Randy]**

That's why I want to walk close to God in the Spirit because the Spirit will reveal to me those things that displease God. One of the job descriptions of the Holy Spirit is that of the one who convicts us of our sins.

**[Josh]**

Yeah. So, if you're praying without ceasing, if you're praying constantly, if you're in constant communion with God, you're seeking Him, and the Holy Spirit is convicting you about matters in your life that may require corrections, it is wise to fix the things that are out of order. Then, when you approach the throne of God, there's a different expectation. You're approaching God as someone who is not only favored by God, but also walking uprightly.

**[Randy]**

Yes, and that's what I'm trying to communicate. If we fear that we're unworthy or unwelcome to approach God, and therefore, we feel that it is unlikely to be blessed, then our problem is deeper than whatever it is we're praying about. I think it is crucial that we recognize this. The writer of Hebrews provides tremendous advice about how we should approach God and precisely what we can expect. He says,

*“We can boldly enter heaven’s most Holy place because of the blood of Jesus. By his death, Jesus opened a new and life-giving way through the curtain into the Most Holy Place. And since we have a great high priest who rules over God’s house, let us go right into the presence of God with sincere hearts, fully trusting him.”* (Hebrews 10:19-22a NLT)

That's the attitude with which I want to go before God. That is how I want to encourage my loved ones to approach God. I know I don't always go that way, because sometimes I'm distracted.

*Sometimes, I'm confused. There are times the adversary has got me in a tether. I'm angry; I'm attacked; I'm feeling unworthy; I'm looking at my circumstances instead of looking to the Holy Place.*

God is not concerned about my pathetic little problems, as though they were going to interfere with His plan. My problems are so minuscule in the sight of a magnificent God that it's like God looks at me sometimes and wonders, "Really? You're worried about that? Don't do that. Don't you love me enough to just trust me? Haven't I shown you the deliverance that I've brought to your life? Haven't I given you peace? Haven't I healed you? Haven't I saved you, set you free, called you to a glorious eternity, and you're worried about that small thing?"

**[Josh]**

It's powerful, but I think sometimes it can be lost. That is a very, very powerful Scripture. I think many people lose because they lose sight of all that it is referencing in that text. Do you mind if we just kind of back up a little bit? There's a lot packed into that one Scripture. That's really important stuff. I think we need to catch the meaning behind it.

**[Randy]**

My position is that those words teach us how to approach God. But the writer also clearly defined what to expect and what to believe about our petitions.

***“Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm,  
for God can be trusted to keep his promise”***

(Hebrews 10:23 NLT)

***It changes everything when we're going to God and simply  
asking God to be honorable, faithful, and to  
keep His promise.***

It's like, now, what would we expect God to say? In that context, we expect Him to say, “Thank you for trusting Me. I'm glad you came to Me so I can do what brings me glory. It brings Me honor when I bless My children. I don't want to curse. I want to bless. I want to help you do what I've called you to do.”

This stuff's not rocket science. We confuse it because of our low perspective. We live at a terribly low elevation. We live on a plane that is so far below what we should, and it is so far below where God has called us. So, I'm thinking about it in terms that the Scriptures bring clarity. They bring confirmation to us that the writers of the various sections of the Bible complement one another. Each explains and exposes the things that we're supposed to know. They want us to be aware of our position in God's love. The words of James closely mirrors the advice from Hebrews. This younger brother of Jesus warned those who pray to God, to do it right.

***“When you ask him, be sure your faith is in God alone. Do not waver, for a person with divided loyalty is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is blown and tossed by the wind. Such people should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. Their loyalty is divided between God and the world, and they are unstable in everything they do.”*** (James 1:6-8 NLT)



I know He's talking to me because sometimes, my loyalty is divided. Sometimes such division begins with distraction. It starts with fear. It also can start with doubt. It's easy to happen if we are not disciplined. When we're looking at a lion that is roaring and nipping at our heels, it requires courage, faith, and a solid grasp on the Scriptures to remember that God shut the mouths of the lions. Forgetting that truth is a terrible mistake when you're facing a lion. It's just not the way we're supposed to do it. That's why it's really important to partner in prayer with others who are faithful believers. Knowing that we're not alone is extremely helpful, yet we often live our lives and our prayer lives by ourselves.

If we are in regular fellowship with other faithful believers and godly pastors, we are not alone.

*If we begin to feel lonely and vulnerable, our prayer partners can encourage us. Loneliness can do weird things to a person. God wants us to be in relationship with Him, but He also wants us to be in relationship with other believers. There is tremendous power in agreement.*

We can strengthen one another. We can help each other to remain accountable in faith and committed to that which we are praying in agreement.

Even if we're diligently praying in the Spirit, we need to recognize the attacks of our adversary and take those things to God. We must invite God to help us. We must prayerfully request that He intercedes on our behalf. We can help one another by saying, "Hey, you've taken your eyes off the prize. You've lost focus. You're acting like you don't really believe God is going to intervene."

*When you feel it's time to circle the wagons because the fiery darts and arrows are flying, somehow you need to be reminded that the cavalry is coming.*

Don't forget my card:

**I won't quit.  
My Father loves me.  
I work for my Father.  
You can't beat my Father.  
Do you remember Jesus?**

*I want to stand strong as a card-carrying believer. If any believer needs a card to remember, I'll send you mine.*

*Email me [randy@crosstalk.org](mailto:randy@crosstalk.org)*

[Josh]

I want to return to what you were saying from Hebrews. It is important for people to understand that previously, people couldn't simply go to the throne of the King. You couldn't just waltz in to the Holy of Holies and talk to God directly. You were required to go through the High Priest. I want to reiterate the breakthrough described in Hebrews 10:19. I'll read it again. It says,

*“Therefore, brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the most Holy place by the blood of Jesus by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain that is his body. And since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and with the full*

*assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from the guilty conscience and having our bodies washed and pure with pure water.”* (Hebrews 10:19-22 NIV)

**[Randy]**

I find it really interesting that biblical scholars, good ones and bad ones, like to talk about the dating of when certain books of the Bible were written. Hebrews was clearly written pretty early. It contains so much conversation about sacrifices, and priesthods, and things that would have come to a screeching halt had the Temple already been destroyed when the book of Hebrews was written. Prior to the destruction of the Temple, this whole priesthood thing was ginormous. There was a regulated control over who came to God, and how God was approached. There were rules and regulations.

**[Josh]**

Every movie about kings and lords in the middle ages demonstrates that as well. That is an appropriate picture of the respect due royalty.

**[Randy]**

Yes, and I'm not opposed to giving honor where honor is due. If I happen to have a meeting with the head of some big corporation or a government official, a congressman, or a U.S. senator, if I have a meeting with someone of prominence, and I know they're going to be wearing a suit, I'm also going to wear a suit. I'm not going to come in blue jeans. There's a certain respect that is shown. There's a protocol. There are conventions about how such meetings take place and how things are done.

**[Josh]**

Which, by the way, doesn't imply worship. You don't typically bow down before people. It's not like you're worshipping them. It could just be a sign of respect because of the protocols in place.

**[Randy]**

Correct. Unless I dropped my pen.

**[Josh]**

Yes. Okay.

**[Randy]**

I have to say, there are some Christians, who when I would see them, I respect them so much that I might go over and I will start to shine their shoes. They know I'm kidding, and they know we are friends, but just to be able to shine their shoes means I know who they are, and I respect them because they have earned my admiration. When I grow up, I want to be like them. The point is that in approaching someone like a king, there are certain conventions and protocol. There are methodologies, rules, regulations. 'Do this, don't do that.' One of those rules that we know about is don't come empty handed. You know when the Queen of Sheba came to Solomon, she brought all kinds of stuff. Gifts. It was customary. Elaborate gifts were brought to the king. God said,

.....  
: "Don't come empty handed."  
: .....

This directive was made clear in Exodus 23:15 and also Deuteronomy 6:16. We were supposed to bring our sacrifices when we came to God. This was also true in the times of the Temple. But those sacrifices were based on a temporary system. It wasn't forever.

Only the High Priest could enter the Holy of Holies. There would be sacrifices made for the sins of the people and also for his own sins because the High Priest was also required to make sacrifices for himself because like all the people, he was also a sinner.

Our High Priest is not sinful. That priesthood came to a conclusion. That Temple service also ended sometime shortly after the book of Hebrews was written. It was certainly still real fresh in their minds because that's the way the Jewish people had been taught to approach God.

**[Josh]**

There's also something to be said about approaching the throne room of a King.

**[Randy]**

Yes,

**[Josh]**

There is a fear that accompanies a position of such power.

**[Randy]**

You approach God in humility.

**[Josh]**

In humility. We've heard different preachers talk about a bell and a cord that was tied around the ankle of the High Priest so that if he died, or he was struck dead by God for not being pure, they would pull them out. Whether we believe that to be accurate or not, I am

unsure. There was a fear of God when the High Priest entered the Holy place. Our High Priest is pure, and we should still hold a holy fear of God when we approach the throne room of God. We must recognize our judgment. Our future is in His hands.

**[Randy}**

But we know our future so we can approach God through our High Priest Jesus with a great confidence. Yes, in humility. Yes, with a fear of God in the sense of not creating displeasure for Him by our bad behavior. We know we can approach Him confidently because we are loved, we are His beloved, and that is different. That's a difference that didn't exist before Jesus. And I'll point out one other thing. You know, people talk about what happened after the Crucifixion. The veil was torn in the Temple. Previously, only the High Priest went in there.

*After Jesus was crucified, the veil at the entry to the Holy of Holies was ripped apart from the top to the bottom. This wasn't just symbolically portraying the end of a failing religious system. I think it was split wide open so people could look inside and see there wasn't anything there.*

*It was empty!*

In earlier epochs of Israel's history, there was stuff in the Ark placed in the Holy of Holies. The tablets of stone with God's word were kept there. To this day in synagogues, there is an ark. There is a curtain-like veil that opens to reveal that behind the curtain, the Torah is stored. Sometimes, multiple Torahs stand there. That harks back to the word of God being in that place. The rod of Aaron that budded was also in the original Ark. A reminder of the Lord's sovereign

selection of the leadership chosen by God. I believe God wanted to remind folks that He brings things to life. In the case of Aaron's staff, something that was just a dead stick grew buds and came to life. God wanted His people to know who He had chosen to be His servant. And one pot of the original manna from the wilderness that kept the children of Israel alive was held in the Ark. By the time we get to the Resurrection, that veil was split and I believe it was empty. I believe it was not just the end of the Temple. It was the beginning of something new. Something new and better, a new and better priesthood had been created by God. Because God provided a new and better High Priest. Jesus had no need to offer sacrifices for His own sins. His sacrifice was exclusively for the people of God. In the case of Jesus, this was a singular, one-time event. The old system required that sacrifices be made every year. There was a continual need to make atonement. Jesus was sacrificed once, for all, and forever. That is what our High Priest has accomplished.

**[Josh]**

That's good stuff. I think that our modern, American Christian Church often miss that picture. We focus on our silos so much and many folks limit their studies to the New Testament. It causes us to lose sight of the whole big picture that gives so much more meaning.

**[Randy]**

Right.

**[Josh]**

I do think something else must be said. You talked about how God loves us, He cares for us, we are His beloved, and so when we come to Him, we can come as His beloved. If, I know that I'm favored by

the King, then when I approached the King, I can approach with confidence because He's my friend. He loves me. He cares for me. And at the same time, we can't be so blinded or cavalier that we would continue living in sin and still approach the King as though everything was okay. I'm not going to fool Him just because I'm His friend. He still loves me. He still cares for me, but He knows when I'm in the wrong. It's important that we approach the throne room with a healthy fear of God. He is our King. It's true that our King loves us. We are His. We are His beloved. When we approach the throne and gain access because of what Christ has done when the veil was torn, we must retain a healthy fear of God. Recognize His sovereignty and His exalted position in relationship to our totally dependent position.







# CHAPTER ELEVEN

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*Speak Truth to Power,  
But be Prepared to Duck*

**[Randy]**

I was recently reminded that I've had many opportunities to go and talk to senators or congressmen and leaders of large government bureaucracies in Washington D.C. It was always a result of difficult challenges that I faced. Sometimes, I believed they were doing things - voting on things, enacting legislation - that would hurt Christian TV broadcasters. So, I've had the privilege of talking to a lot of them.

I made it a practice to do my homework before I went to see them. I wanted to know their position before I talked to them about my concerns. I wanted to know if I was entering friendly or unfriendly territory. Was my encounter going to be a hostile experience? Or did he/she seem to be an ally in my pursuit? Was I going to be required to convince them that they were wrong? Was their staff giving them bad information or had they already been convinced by the countless

Washington lobbyists to do the wrong thing because it benefitted their clients? Did I need to show them they would be unjust to proceed as they had intended? Was my task to convince them to do something different to avoid hurting Christian broadcasters or did they already recognize and agree with the position I was challenging them to take? In Washington, it is difficult to know what anybody really thinks or believes. They have the public persona which doesn't always match their private beliefs. The staffers present one picture of the positions their bosses may take while the lobbyists create incentives to offer staffers future lucrative positions when they leave the public sector to begin the private sector jobs they really desire. No one really knows what our leaders believe or what they simply declare to make their constituents happy.

So how can we know the correct approach for dealing with people who have public faces, private opinions, and personal hopes that may not mirror the public good? I don't know how. I am not expert in very much and interpreting public policy is certainly not one of those things. That's why it's important to know God. He knows what He desires. He knows what is in the hearts of leaders and He knows what we should do in relating to people in power. He is supremely powerful, and He knows why He allowed our leaders to reach the positions they hold. So, the best thing we can do is to go to God. There is nothing more productive than praying in the Spirit to be certain we are praying according to God's will. As we draw near to God, He draws near to us. Simultaneously, when we draw near to God, the adversary flees. As we learn to have the mind of Christ when we pray, we no longer need to feel like we are trying to convince God of what He's already convinced Himself to accomplish.

**[Josh]**

But on the flip side of that, any congressman or senator has likely done his homework on you as well. He's asked his staff to find out if this guy is a friend or a foe? Do we treat him this way or that way? God already has everything identified, He already knows, He's omniscient. He knows whether you are approaching His throne as a servant of God who loves Him and serves Him on a day-to-day basis, or whether you are a mere pretender.

**[Randy]**

The good news is you can change the mind of a senator or a congressman if you have the right argument. If you have the right facts, you can give them new information. Maybe they'll reach a new conclusion unless they're in somebody's pocket.

**[Josh]**

He already has all the information He needs.

**[Randy]**

*God's mind is already made up. We need to come into agreement with God. That's the whole point of -*

**[Josh]**

Praying in the Spirit.

**[Randy]**

Praying in the Spirit, drawing near to Him. He will draw near to us, our adversary will flee, because he doesn't want to be anywhere near God.

**[Josh]**

Yeah.

**[Randy]**

So please allow me to go back to the issue of agreement because it's not just my opinion. These are not my words. Jesus declared.

***“If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my father, which is in heaven.”*** (Matthew 18:19 KJV)

Jesus amplified the importance of praying with other believers. He powerfully declared in Matthew 18:19-20,

***“Where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them.”*** (KJV)

This is important to remember. And this is something we should pursue because Jesus told us to do it. Plus, it just makes all the sense in the world. I think sometimes our prayer lives are affected by the fact we are alone. We are not praying in relationship with God through the Spirit. We pray as though we are uncertain about what God thinks of us. Whereas if we understood the will of God, we would be coming to Him as His beloved. We'd be praying in faith knowing He wants us to accomplish the task to which He called us before we even ask Him. We would know what was in His will for us. We can have harmony. We can have a sense of agreement. If we choose to exclude others from praying with us, we give up the opportunity to enjoy the power of unified prayer. If we fail to invite others to pray with us, we know there is no agreement in prayer. And I think that also makes us

a target. I think our adversary knows when we are most exposed. He knows when we're not standing in agreement with others, it is then that we are most prone to falling alone.

There is another important component of prayer that should be considered. It's the insidious effect of time. Some prayers are spoken at a point in time when we feel we're already out of time. That's often because we make prayer the last resort instead of our first step. The result is that when we get to the place of an emergency, then we cry out, "Oh God, help me, help me now or I perish." Many have said this before me, so let me paraphrase,

***"God is never late; but He rarely misses an opportunity to not be early."***

I really like that. It's certainly not a universal truth, but I still like it. Our problem is that we measure things in time. I think God measures things in eternity. That's very different.

There's a great offering song that was written by a folk singer I like named Jim Cole. The message is wonderful and it's very simple. The lyrics to the song say, "So the man said to God, what's a million years to you? And God said a second. Then the man said to God, what's a million dollars too. And God said a penny. Then the man said to God, will you give me a penny? And God said, sure, you'll just have to wait a second." I love that! Recently, some of my prayers have taken on a greater sense of urgency. It certainly feels like an emergency. To me, my situation seems to be at a point of crisis, but God doesn't seem to be moved by what I classify as a mission critical 9-1-1 call. It genuinely feels like if God doesn't answer this prayer, in this way,

at this time, the mission falls apart. God probably chuckles and says, “Seriously, you just don’t know what’s next.”

**[Josh]**

Just wait a second.

**[Randy]**

Sure. I can’t see what’s next. I can’t see the whole picture of God’s view of the mission. I can’t tell the difference between emergency, urgency, and wait a second. I must therefore assume that it’s not His mission or the emergency is not as critical to God as it feels to me.

*So, I need to find the mind of Christ. My goal in prayer should never be to try and change God’s mind.*

He knows what is best and His salvation plan of the ages includes whatever mission to which He has called me. He’s not an elected official with a staff being influenced by lobbyists or 27-year-old staffers. He’s God! He has got a plan. It’s a good plan, and He’s not getting bad information. He’s not making bad decisions. He’s not reaching ineffective conclusions from processing bad data. He knows exactly what He’s doing. My task is simply to trust and obey.

**[Josh]**

Jesus instructed us about where two or three are gathered together in prayer, that we have a power in that agreement. And He joins with us, right? God believes in community and He’s called us to community, right? He wants us to be in community with one another. He warns us to not forsake the fellowship of the brethren. It’s not because He wants us all to be at church on Sunday morning. It’s because there’s a



strength that comes from being in community. We were created for community. There's a strength that comes in lifting one another up in prayer. I'm somewhat of a private person. I don't often share my prayer needs in public. I don't do well by that Scripture. I'll typically take the approach that when we are gathered together at the prayer service in church, or when prayer requests are shared at Wednesday night Bible study, that is good enough. But I don't typically go to the extent of actually letting people in and sharing my deep prayer needs. That's probably not a good way to go. Some of it's because of privacy. Some of it's because I don't want to be a baby in front of my friends. I don't want them to know my struggle or everything that might be going on. And that's not appropriate either. Is it possible that some of the reason Jesus spoke of where two or three are gathered is because God may choose not to reveal something to you in the midst of it, but He may reveal something about your situation to your brother because they can see from a different point of view? They might have a better frame of mind. They're not in my emergency. Maybe their encouragement to me comes to me from being uplifted by them.

**[Randy]**

That is absolutely true! And some circumstances are different than others. There are things that should not be shared publicly. There are things that should not be shared broadly. Some things require a certain kind of relationship before discussing. Some things might be damaging if communicated inappropriately. And worse,

.....  
.....  
..... *sometimes prayer deteriorates into gossip.* .....  
.....

**[Josh]**

Sadly, that's one of the things that does happen. Some people can't hold it back. "Hey, I just want to let you know to be praying for so-and-so because they're going through X." And the truth is they're using the "please pray for" story as a method to be able to say, "Hey, did you know?"

**[Randy]**

Yeah, and that's inappropriate.

**[Josh]**

It's very inappropriate.

**[Randy]**

Some of that's a "southern" thing. Well, I think it's kind of funny. There are some people down here,

*some gals in the south can get away with saying, "Oh, I'm so sorry they didn't have that shirt in your size," instead of saying, "Hey Hoss, did you gain weight?"*

**[Josh]**

So, as you know, I went to a Christian school for my junior high and high school years. We often prayed at the beginning of class. This was a good thing. I think if more schools prayed during class, our culture and society would be in a much better place. But when we did have opportunity to share our prayer requests in school, just like in many churches, we still often hear someone say, "I have an unspoken prayer request." Perhaps it is the nature of the matter for prayer. Understandably, some folks don't want their prayer request

to become a topic of gossip. Sometimes, it is wise to keep things private. But how can people effectively pray for a request that is never spoken? I mean, what do you pray? In the context of two or three gathering together to pray in agreement, as Jesus taught us, how does an unspoken prayer request help if nobody knows what the need is?

**[Randy]**

Well, I think there are circumstances where someone has reasons for not disclosing the topic of their prayer request. They may need to protect themselves or their loved ones, yet they still genuinely want prayer. There are other times it's something else. You reminded me of something that I'm embarrassed to mention.

**[Josh]**

Oh, please speak it.

**[Randy]**

It's just too funny. So, as you know, your baby sister went to that same school. As you said, they would regularly provide a time for prayer. The children often requested prayer for a variety of different things. The little kids were learning to pray for their needs or the needs of their families. Well, when the teacher got to your baby sister, she said, "Teacher, you know I have an older sister. Something bad happened. She was kidnapped." My youngest daughter told her teacher that her older sister was kidnapped. Of course, the teacher and the class were flabbergasted. The school called your mother immediately.

**[Josh]**

I guess that one should have definitely been unspoken.

**[Randy]**

Right. Nobody was kidnapped, but we were all perplexed. We finally got to the bottom of it. We asked her why she told her class such a terrible thing. It was absolutely preposterous. Her answer was incredible, but it explained a lot. She said, “Well, I didn’t really have anything to pray about.”

**[Josh]**

You’d better come up with something even if you don’t have anything?

**[Randy]**

Yes. Peer pressure. Even in prayers.

**[Josh]**

You should have taught her to just pray in the Spirit.

**[Randy]**

Yes, you’re right.

**[Josh]**

Okay. Sorry. We digressed from the concept of communion with God and with one another and also the need to gather together. This is still important. This can be in the physical sense where you are literally gathered together in a prayer meeting. It could also be when you’re reaching out to specific people with whom you are close, and asking them to agree with you in prayer about the matter you are facing?

**[Randy]**

Yes. I will say that I am cautious with whom I pray, but I do purposefully obey the call of Scripture and sometimes ask folks to

pray with me and for me. I must also report that there have been times when the result was that a brother called me up, weeks later, to say, “Brother Randy, God told me to help you.”

I’ve had experiences when I would be sitting at the coffee shop in tears, studying and praying quietly, not knowing what to do next. The phone would ring with a call from a brother who I’d asked to pray for me weeks earlier. He sought the Lord independently and prayed. God spoke to him, and the man called to let me know that God had told him specifically to help me. Things change when you pray. When you pray in agreement, when you pray with wisdom and understanding, and with sensitivity, things happen.

**[Josh]**

So, I want to point out two things here:

If you’re walking in the Spirit, if you’re in communion with God, if you’re praying without ceasing, if you’re seeking His guidance, God will direct you to whom you should be in agreement with to pray. It is up to you to reach out and pray when that happens. You can trust your inner circle of prayer partners. God will direct you to the people that He will influence to help you if that is the need He wants fulfilled.

As human beings, we can be selfish by nature. I think our journey towards progressive sanctification, that process of drawing closer to God, can be summed up as becoming less selfish, more selfless, putting others ahead of ourselves, and elevating God’s desires above our own. If we suppress our own needs and desires because we’re becoming more selfless, in a sense we are then finally dying to ourselves and allowing Jesus to live in and through us.

I am not the only one who needs to confess that at times people ask me to remember to pray for them and they'll describe a list of prayer needs to me. Sometimes, I might say yes and then forget to pray as asked. It might even seem nonchalant in the way it's said, but I'm essentially committing to pray and then I don't pray. I imagine there are probably times when people ask you to pray for them. Perhaps you have to think about if you really want to commit to pray for their situation. So maybe you can help from that standpoint and just give some directions.

**[Randy]**

Sure.

**[Josh]**

Sorry, I'm sorry. You are probably a saint and never do that.

**[Randy]**

No, I'm afraid of doing that. In fact, last night I was at an IHOP for dinner with a couple of friends. The waiter came to the table. I asked him to repeat his name. He said his name was Jose'. I said, "Well, Jose', we're going to give thanks and pray. Is there anything we can pray for you about?" He said, "Yeah. Pray for my family." And I said, "Okay, uh, more specific?"

**[Josh]**

Unspoken?

**[Randy]**

I pressed him politely because I didn't know what he wanted us to pray, and I was serious. I wanted to pray for him, and I believed he

needed prayer. He said, “Well, for my father.” I said, “Please, a little bit more specifically?” And he said, “My father is trying to stop being an alcoholic.” I said, “Certainly, that is something for which we can pray.” And we were able to pray with understanding. We were able to pray in agreement. There were three Christian men together. We were able to pray immediately. I didn’t have to think about praying for him after I got back on the highway. We had taken that man’s request to the Lord on behalf of his father, right there--right then.

**[Josh]**

Yeah.

**[Randy]**

I wanted to pray for him, and I wanted him to know he’s loved, and that God can deliver his father. I was an addict. God delivered me. I know God frees people from their bondages. God is able! It’s an enormous challenge to Jose’s father, but it’s not an enormous challenge to God. It’s an ask and receive.

**[Josh]**

I think that is a good practice. If more Christians would carry that practice out, it would be an effective method of pointing people to Christ. Evangelism and sharing your faith doesn’t have to constantly appear to be aggressive or in your face. It doesn’t have to be a ‘You’re going to hell’ conversation.

*Evangelism can begin by somebody saying,  
“How can I pray for you?”*

It's irrelevant what you believe. It's irrelevant where you're at in your life for me to say, "How can I pray for you?" It is unlikely that somebody would not want you to pray for them. It opens up doors and it lets them know you care.

**[Randy]**

The night before, I was with a Cuban brother and a pastor. We were getting ready to eat and I called the waiter over and I asked him his name and told him we were going to pray. I said, "What can we pray about for you?" The waiter said, "Well, I'm, living with my girlfriend." I stopped him right there and said, "Marry her." As you might imagine, he was quite stunned. I asked him if he loved her, and he was emphatic that he did, so I told him, "I think God blesses marriage and I don't think that God blesses living together." Sometimes you need prayer. At other times, exhortation is what's needed.

**[Josh]**

And what did he say? "Be-ba-dee-ba-dee?"

**[Randy]**

Pretty much. I told him, "Look, marriage is wonderful. God blesses marriage. You don't have to be afraid of marriage." He said, "I know. I've been going with this girl since I was a junior in high school." They'd been boyfriend and girlfriend for a long time and was now twenty-two. I reiterated, "Marry her, do the right thing. Just marry her, God blesses marriage." I told him briefly about when I'd gotten married. I let him know it was personal, but it was real. I said, "Since 1973, apart from the six times my wife went into the hospital to have a baby, we've never spent a night apart. God blesses marriage. You



don't have to be afraid of marriage, and just because other people's marriages fall apart, his did not need to end. The chaos in broken marriages is because we live in a fallen world. It doesn't mean that your marriage has to fall apart. It's really helpful if your marriage is centered on God and He's at the core of your relationship."

He was a nice young man. He seemed to take my comments in the right spirit. If he'd misinterpreted my original statement, I believe he understood it before we left. I was sincere and I didn't want to leave him thinking that I was just some sort of a smart aleck. I certainly wasn't trying to be inappropriate, but some things are just obvious-

**[Josh]**

But this brings it back to the concept of two or three gathered asking to pray for people. There is a lot of merit and opportunity when you offer to pray for somebody. Just make sure you do it. Don't forget. Don't make a commitment to pray and then fail to pray.

**[Randy]**

I agree. I agree. We want to win. We want to help others win. Winning with God is not a zero-sum game. All who believe can win. We must all live in the habit of praying, staying in the fight, and eventually winning. That will equip us to inspire others to Pray, Fight, Win! So, forgetting to pray for someone who has requested prayer is a mistake we should avoid. Let's be quick to pray for each other and to help them find their answers through prayer.



## CHAPTER TWELVE

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*Life is Not A Sprint Or A Marathon.  
It's A Relay!*

**[Randy]**

I was ministering behind the Iron Curtain with the underground church. We were staying at a Christian couple's home. The Hungarian woman of the house took me to the side as we were getting ready to leave. Quietly, she said, "Brother Randy, would you pray for me? I just got the report back from the doctor. I have breast cancer." I stopped and I said, "No, I don't think I'm supposed to pray for you now." Deep inside, I felt that I wasn't supposed to pray for her at that moment. I'm sure she was disoriented by such an odd, cold response, but I asked God what I should I do. I felt God was showing me that I wasn't supposed to pray for her at that time. I was really uncomfortable. There was an event coming up that we were scheduled to be attending a week or so later. And I said, "I'll tell you what. Let me pray for you then." I did not feel a release to pray at the time she asked me, but I felt complete freedom to offer to pray

for her at that upcoming time. It was a very strange feeling. I didn't understand why. I just sensed I was supposed to delay.

The event was actually a praise gathering of believers out in the woods. It was in a secluded location where nobody would get arrested by the Communists. In fact, it was only the second time in modern history that such an event was happening in Communist Hungary. I had been asked to come back for the gathering. They wanted me to do a ministry concert at the event. I said, "Are you going to be attending the praise gathering in the woods?" She said she would be there, and I agreed to pray for her at that time.

I really pondered this. I was uncomfortable. It's not a normal thing to decline when somebody asks you to pray for them, but that was what I felt led to do. I was very uncomfortable about the situation. It stayed on my mind. I knew I was going to have to face up to this matter, and I didn't understand it. It had never before happened to me. Yet when we got to the event, I felt a complete release to pray for her. I went and I found her there. I said, "I'd like to pray for you now." I prayed for her to be healed of breast cancer. Of course, I knew I would have no way of knowing what was taking place, and I was leaving the country shortly thereafter. At that time, there really wasn't any good way to communicate with believers in foreign countries who were part of the work with the underground. It was sketchy at best.

A few years later, I was back at work in these Soviet Bloc nations. I received a report from her. She had been completely healed, totally healed by God! The doctors confirmed her healing. She had seen the x-rays proving her healing. God just miraculously healed her. I don't know why. I don't know how, and I don't know what it meant. But I

believe that had I prayed for her when she asked, maybe the outcome would have been different. Perhaps it wouldn't have gone the same way. I don't know. I don't understand it. It's none of my business -

**[Josh]**

Right. By the way, obviously, I was with you on that trip, and I do remember our travels and the work behind the Iron Curtain. As a kid, I was puzzled, 'I don't remember going through a curtain and I'm not underground. Like, what is going on? We're not underground, but he keeps talking about the underground and Iron Curtain. I don't see it. What's going on?' One of the most vivid memories I have, underground behind the Iron Curtain, was the border crossings. They were very memorable.

**[Randy]**

Yes.

**[Josh]**

I also remember being hungry. We were with a precious couple who let us into their home. They were not wealthy, and they were sharing their food with us. It looked like a tomato puree soup. I didn't really like tomato puree soup. I remember thinking, 'If I don't eat this, I'm going to be underground for real. I need to eat this and smile.'

**[Randy]**

I think that was probably borscht, actually, but yes.

**[Josh]**

And I remember these crazy guys out in the wilderness where you were talking about. And you sang "Jesus is Lord."

**[Randy]**

Yeah, yeah. And I sang it in Hungarian, too. It was a most remarkable and historic event.

**[Josh]**

Let's get back to your journal here because I want to make sure we get through it.

**[Randy]**

Right. So, I know the Lord hears my prayers. There's this tick-tock tick-tock. There is an incessant, relentless pounding. This clock is ticking. Whether it's the deadlines that I'm sensing, or my own mortality, or the return of Christ, or someone's waiting, and I can't give an answer. I can't do what I'm supposed to because I'm totally dependent on God, and if God doesn't act, I can't act. Obligations feel crushing. Opportunities sometimes feel like they are slipping away. There are pressing problems that need answers. The answers seem inaccessible or painfully elusive. I know the Lord hears my prayers, but sometimes my sense is that He answers. "Sure. You just have to wait a second." And a second to God might still be a million years.

**[Josh]**

Yeah.

**[Randy]**

It really feels that way, and that's my problem.

*I need to become more comfortable with God's sense of eternity because God is not going to fit into my constrained sense of time.*

**[Josh]**

And as you draw closer to Him, you become more comfortable with that.

**[Randy]**

Yes, and it's a mindset that I'm stuck with because I live in time, but that's a construct. It's not as real as eternity. Eternity is more real. This construct of the sun is here, then the moon is here, and there are tides and seasons, and all these things like analog watches.

God is not concerned about time as we measure it. He's concerned about the moment because that's all that there is. It's this moment. I always know, though I often forget, that

*God is much more interested in my character than my circumstance, and that's a big deal. Sometimes my circumstance could be changed in an instant, but my character takes more time.*

Most everything in life is a test, and every test is spiritual. As a spiritual man, I want to learn to translate my experiences, my needs, my victories, my failures, and my opportunities into more spiritual terms. My close friends know that if they ask me how I'm doing, I have a standard answer that remains pretty consistent. I have plenty of challenges and opportunities to trust God. I do, and through them, I am learning to trust God. This is what my life is about.

*I have plenty of challenges and opportunities to trust God.*

The ancient Hebrew prophet Daniel trusted God. He knew how to pray to God. Daniel also knew how to trust God. Those are two different things. We must be able to do both. There is something that I need to learn from Daniel. Through these reflections on prayer, Jesus, and the devil, I will learn the steps to victory: PRAY, FIGHT, WIN! That is the order of events.

One lesson I've had difficulty learning is that after I pray, after I fight, I must still often wait before I win. I have been waiting for years on important matters of prayer and it's difficult. Now, I'm happy to say that, in some ways, I'm much closer to the goals for which I've diligently worked and prayed. In other ways, the goal posts just seem to move away faster than I can advance across the field. It feels more urgent than ever, but what if God delays? It's up to God. I try to remember God is eternal. Time is a construct. Time doesn't make demands on God. So, I am trying to broaden my horizon of success and not put it in the context of time.

*I must remember, as Charles Wesley said, "God buries His workmen but carries on His work." I am clearly aware that my race is neither a sprint nor a marathon. It's a relay.*

**[Josh]**

Life is a relay. What does that mean? It means that sometimes we get caught up in just accomplishing what we need to accomplish in our own lives. Sometimes we get caught up in working towards our goals and our goal for our life, and when we're done, we're done, right? That would be the marathon that runs however long our life endures. That's the marathon, but the reality is it's a relay of marathons. We have to be able to push, to pass on what God has given and called us



to do. We've got to have something to pass on. In a relay, someone must pick up the baton and carry it forward to the next generation. If we're not passing it on to the next generation, then we're failing to recognize our role in the greater picture of humanity.

**[Randy]**

So, I pray for strength. I pray for the strength of our team, our family, and I don't want to grow weary because success is delayed. I have to take responsibility for every moment in which I still carry the baton. I must be responsible for all of the seconds in the race that I'm holding the baton. But I'm not going to lose sight that my enemy won't simply be nice and let me win because I've worked hard, or I look tired. Sometimes, I think we look at our surroundings and where we contend and we think we deserve a break. Cut me some slack. My enemy won't play fair. My enemy won't show mercy. There's no reason to believe that he will, and there's no reason to lose sight of the fact he is vicious and malevolent. It's just his character. It's his nature. None of these things should frighten or disorient us, but they should be facts that we don't ignore. Sadly, I think we do ignore the character of our adversary. That is a serious mistake. My enemy would like to wear me out. My enemy would like to injure or discredit me. My enemy would like to cause me to quit. He wants me to be exhausted. He wants me to have terminal discouragement. When prayers seem unanswered or unanswerable, it's important to have already made a decision. Write it down, stick it in your pocket, stick it in the Bible:

* I WON'T QUIT.
* MY FATHER LOVES ME.
* I WORK FOR MY FATHER.
* YOU CAN'T BEAT MY FATHER.
* DO YOU REMEMBER JESUS?

I won't quit. If you won't quit, and if your Heavenly Father can't lose, just stay close to your Heavenly Father. When you feel like the devil is wearing you out, remind him about Jesus. Do not surrender. Do not yield to despair. Do not abandon the race. Work in faith, work for God, live in faith, live for God. Walk in faith and this is the key.

***PRAY, FIGHT, WIN! Figure out where God is going, then just reach out and take His hand. If you walk with God, Satan's not going to harass God.***

He will flee from God. It's just the truth. He will flee from God because God will curse him.

Satan doesn't want the abuse and we don't need to take his abuse. If the devil harasses you, just turn him over to God. Ask God to rebuke the devil in the name of Jesus. There's power in the name of Jesus. There are reasons why demons tremble at the name of Jesus. Remember, not even the terror of death frightened Jesus. Satan sees nothing but the certainty of his own defeat in the face of Jesus. He knows what to expect in the name of Jesus.

**[Josh]**

It's a very powerful image to think of drawing closer to God, grabbing a hold of His hand, knowing that the enemy is not going to harass God. That's a good image. We need to be constantly drawing close to God and recognizing that as we are in His presence, as we draw near to Him, the enemy will flee because he doesn't want to be in the presence of our God when He is angry at the damnable behavior of our adversary. You can't have light and darkness at the same time. It's not possible.

**[Randy]**

He may see I got that devil crusher tee shirt on. The devil don't care.

**[Josh]**

Right.

**[Randy]**

But when he sees you're holding God's hand, the adversary takes notice of your Protector.

**[Josh]**

People sometimes forget that you can't create darkness. Darkness is just the absence of light. As we draw closer to God, we draw closer to the lack of darkness.

The Confessions of Saint Augustine reflected about the growth of evil in our world. He said, *"The preservation of the good that is evil is the corruption or rejection of some original good evil brings emptiness, privation, lack, degradation, and loss the further that we move away from the light of God's creation, just as every light cast a shadow. So,*

*in our fallen world, the shadows grow larger. The farther that we move away from God's original creation intent."*

I think that if we let ourselves fall away from God, the shadows will become bigger because the evil is in our world. Therefore, it's an imperative that we draw closer to the light.

**[Randy]**

Yeah. one of my favorite songs is one that evangelist George Thomas Wright sang. He taught it to me. He said, "That great big hand of God comes down and takes a hold of mine." Yes, Lord, please take my hand.

**[Josh]**

You mentioned Daniel. He demonstrated a closeness to God in his daily communion with God. His prayer life was vibrant and powerful. Daniel lived at a time and place that was seemingly in the shadows where he was able to rest in the light of God.

**[Randy]**

I want to go back to Daniel. Obviously, he lived before the incarnation of Jesus, but his life provides a valuable lesson about the tactics of Satan revealed in his ancient text. Daniel had diligently prayed. He fasted. He had a unique and powerful relationship with God, but the answers to Daniel's prayers seemed to not come. I'm sure he was weary. I'm sure that Daniel was plagued with discouragement and doubt. Daniel faced horrendous, powerful, scheming opposition. Daniel contended with the powers of hell in a pagan society.

**[Josh]**

This was because Daniel lived in exile, right? The children of Israel were exiled to Babylon, they were in bondage, right? And he was praying for the freedom and restoration of his people. He was praying for deliverance from his circumstance, and it seemed to never come.

**[Randy]**

Right, and it would have done no good for Daniel to rebuke the sins that got them there.

**[Josh]**

Oh, yeah.

**[Randy]**

The people had sinned. They experienced a tragic judgment of God. God sent pagan adversaries to capture Jerusalem. They were God's tools. They were hired help on God's payroll to punish sin. They were sent to drag the people of God out of the homeland that God had given them. God was getting their full attention. The Lord was showing them the result of worshiping false gods. God was demanding that they stop idol worship.

**[Josh]**

Daniel was living in the judgment of Israel's culture. He was seeking God's deliverance from the bondage brought onto Daniel's people by their sinful behavior. And just to bring context, it wasn't coming quickly. It would have been easy to become discouraged.

**[Randy]**

This young man, along with his three young friends, were servants of God. Their godly behavior is well documented. Did they suffer? Did they endure persecution? It is worth asking the difficult question, “Why were they sent to live with the chief of the eunuchs?” Some would say they had been castrated. They may have been made eunuchs. That was the reason they were assigned to the chief of the eunuchs. What was their life like in the Babylonian exile? Regardless of their condition or circumstance, they remained faithful to God.

Daniel did not quit. Among all men, Daniel must have been most lonely. He was a Jewish guy, living in a pagan world, trying to stand for God when everything was against him. God did elevate him. God put him in a position of influence, far from home. But Daniel was still surrounded by godless people in a totally pagan culture. Though lonely, Daniel was not alone. I want to point out the important difference. Daniel was not alone. On multiple occasions, God sent his Holy archangels to bring comfort, instruction, and encouragement to minister to Daniel. Sometimes we may feel alone, but we are not alone. And we are never alone when we have God.

God has messengers. God has powers beyond what we can see. God has beings beyond what we can see. Daniel had a personal experience with two of the archangels, Gabriel and Michael. Real angels. Not just any garden variety, low-level angels. God sent his top echelon, most powerful archangels. Now, just as Satan and his evil demons seek our destruction, there are also much more powerful forces and messengers of God who surround us. They minister on God’s behalf to help His servants. Please don’t lose sight of this. It’s valuable to remember that even though we can’t see them, angels exist. They

are here. They were there visiting Daniel. These enigmatic spiritual beings serve higher powers on both sides of the spectrum. Light and darkness exist in realms we don't fully understand, but our lack of clarity or detail of their existence doesn't alter their existence or their functionality.

*I don't understand or see gravity, but its functionality is clear. Gravity works with or without my agreement. So do angels and demons.*

In an event reminiscent of the apostle Paul's Damascus road experience, the tenth chapter of Daniel describes a confrontation that was in plain sight to Daniel. It was a vision seen by Daniel, but optically invisible to Daniel's nearby companions. They were there. They could hear but they couldn't see what Daniel saw. It totally amazed Daniel. His friends were simply terrified. There's a difference. They fled in fear, but Daniel saw and heard what God required Daniel to grasp. The reason for the delayed answer to prayer was explained to Daniel. The answers to Daniel's fervent prayers were delayed. God wasn't saying, "You just have to wait a second." I don't fully understand all of this. I don't know the mechanics of how it happened. Scripture reports it. God heard Daniel. He dispatched the angel Gabriel with an answer. However, the demons in charge of the spiritual realm of Persia blocked Gabriel's mission for three full weeks. That's an enigmatic report. It's bizarre, but it happened. You can be certain that unexplainable things in the unseen realm still happen.

[Josh]

Spiritual warfare?

**[Randy]**

Yes, spiritual warfare. Ultimately, the angel Michael came to assist Gabriel . . . Wait a second, God sent backup?

**[Josh]**

I mean, could you imagine a Hollywood movie on this spiritual battle?

**[Randy]**

Yes. When the angelic messengers completed the mission to inform, encourage, and strengthen Daniel, Gabriel returned to the spiritual front line. A war was going on that Daniel could not see. It is still being waged. We still don't see. Daniel didn't know what was going on. But Gabriel was fully engaged in this war. A battle was raging in the heavenlies unseen by human eyes but impacted by human prayers. I don't get it. I don't write it. I just read it. Gabriel said

***“Soon I must return to fight against the spirit Prince of the kingdom of Persia. And after that the spirit Prince of the kingdom of Greece will come.”*** (Daniel 10:20 NLT)

He went on to explain that nobody was helping him except Michael. And Michael was specifically Daniel's spirit Prince. That's fascinating. And it's weird, but it's real. Gabriel had been standing beside Michael to support and strengthen him since the first year of the reign of the new King in the land where Daniel lived. Daniel served God and he walked with God. It's fascinating. It's real. It's profound, and it's for our understanding. Even though it's difficult to understand, we can't ignore it. We can't pretend it doesn't exist. We can't pretend it wasn't written for us. It was written for us. We don't see it, or feel it,



or experience it with our rational senses, but don't be deceived. Don't think that it's not real. The reason I'm pointing this out is that we may be lonely, but we are not alone.

*And if our prayers are delayed, don't quit. Stay engaged,  
draw near to God. PRAY, FIGHT, WIN!*



# CHAPTER THIRTEEN

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*We're Not Wired To Wait.  
But Sometimes, Victory Only Comes  
To Those Who Wait.*

[Randy]

*We are on a trajectory toward victory. To successfully  
attain the prize, we must PRAY, FIGHT, WIN!  
Sometimes, before the win, we must wait.*

The requirement to wait might be the most challenging. I live with instant access, wireless connectivity, cars without keys, instantaneous touch screens, millisecond response devices, and the perception of deep drilling research through a mindless, quick-as-you-click Google command. It's an illusion! But it feels like everything is at our fingertips. Our world has changed more than I can describe.

I remember being a newlywed. At that time, I became a janitor in a local factory. I was forced to ride a bicycle to work along a four-lane

highway in my overalls. The technological advancement for me was figuring out that a rubber band could keep my raggedy dungarees out of the bike chain. The rubber band discovery was great. You see if the chain grabbed you, it could throw you off the bike. And riding down Highway 41 to work on a bicycle was challenging in the best of circumstances. My expectations were low, and my needs were limited.

The boss on my shift let me tell my coworkers about Jesus. As long as the toilets were clean, the garbage cans were emptied, and the floors were swept, my boss was happy. He gave me all the overtime I wanted, and he let me share my faith. Prior to that gig, I'd been making a hundred dollars a week. Being a factory janitor and getting some overtime was fat city. One day, the other fellow janitor told me about his new part-time second job. He asked to come over to our little apartment to show my wife and I, a new magical device that he was selling. It was related to his other job. He described the contraption he was peddling, and I knew it was a hoax. From my view of the world, it couldn't be real, but he was a friend and I wanted to tell him about Jesus. It seemed like allowing him to make his sales pitch to us was going to help him. It was one of those no-obligation, in-home sales presentations. Having been a part-time vacuum cleaner salesman myself, I understood the routine. And he promised that if I let him make his pitch, he swore his futuristic gizmo would change our lives.

The evening came when we were both on the day shift. He came to our apartment after work and explained that if we joined his United Consumer Club, we could buy an appliance that would actually cook a potato in just a few minutes with no flame. Obviously, that was

impossible. But, let me tell you something, he left our apartment with a contract that I signed to buy instant baked potatoes and popcorn popped in a paper bag. It was unbelievable. Nobody had ever seen anything like this in 1973. It was a microwave oven! His demonstration defied all contemporary logic. To us, it was magic. He asked us to look at his paper bag. It just had a bunch of popcorn seeds in it. He put it in the gizmo and then boom—it's popcorn! No fire. Unbelievable. I certainly didn't understand it. I saw no flame, but I got instant, hot food. Nowadays, nobody would even notice a microwave oven, but at that time, to us, it was more advanced than a spaceship. No one waits for anything except for a wife to pick what she's going to wear from the closet.

**[Josh]**

It's universal.

**[Randy]**

Sometimes you wait at the doctor or the dentist or for a plumber, but for the most part, we don't want to wait. We expect instantaneous access, instantaneous results, instant answers to prayer, or why bother? And that's a mistake. How about waiting on God? I think we need to learn to be spiritually prepared to wait on God. We must not quit. Don't give up. The message Daniel received related to the end times. He had strange visions and complex prophetic messages that have very colorful imagery. One element that intrigues and challenges us in the book of Daniel is his description of God's nemesis. When Daniel spoke of this adversary, the American Standard Bible says of him that,

***“He shall speak words against the most high,”***

wait for it,

***“and shall wear out the saints of the most high.”***

(Daniel 7:25 ASB)

***Don't allow your adversary to wear you out. Stand strong!***

Our enemy's strategy is clear. He shall speak words against the Most High and shall wear out the saints of the Most High. That should capture your attention. Remember, God's enemy is our enemy. Our adversary intends to wear us out, and we must not succumb to that. We must resist—in other words, we must fight! We must resist the temptation to cave into exhaustion in our struggle.

Watchmen Nee gave profound advice, and I want to share it. Brother Nee says, *“Whether or not you can resist him, depends on how much you detest him.”* I exhort you to PRAY, FIGHT, WIN!

***If you fail to pray, you will fail. And if you fail to fight, you will lose. If you want to win, there are steps you must not ignore.***

“If you are really exasperated, you become angry at him. This anger becomes your power as you open your mouth to cause him to flee.” Allow me to simply add, open your mouth, declare the name of Jesus, and access the power that is in the blood of Christ over your circumstances.

Be like the persistent widow; go directly to the Judge. Petition God. Ask Him to avenge your injustice.

***Satan has no right to damage you or continue his wicked assault. PRAY, FIGHT, WIN! Ask God for vindication.***

As Brother Nee taught us, he said, “O God curse Satan afresh so that he cannot do what he pleases . . . Place him again under the power of the cross, so as to immobilize him.” There are things you cannot fix, and you cannot stop. There are also things where the influence you wield through prayer and active resistance will cause the adversary to pick a fight with someone else because he knows he cannot overcome a believer who is steadfastly, unshakably, standing on the Word of God and in the power resident in the name of Jesus and the overcoming blood of the Lamb. PRAY, FIGHT, WIN! “What the devil fears most is the curse of God. As soon as God curses, Satan dare not hurt us.” Satan is not interested in your demon crusher, devil stomper t-shirt, bumper sticker, or business card. None of that impresses or discourages him. But the name of Jesus and a summons to the court of the Eternal God is a powerful deterrent to your worst adversary. When he loses, AND HE WILL, you win.

**[Josh]**

And he’s not scared by your title or your prideful prowess.

**[Randy]**

He’s not, but he trembles at the name of Jesus. So, I want to tell you a little bit about Watchman Nee. In case you are unfamiliar with Watchman Nee’s writings or his life, he was a Chinese preacher. He ended up spending decades in prison for his faith.

Mao Zedong came to power in China. He was a wicked, evil man who did wicked, evil things in his country. Mao Zedong tried, but he failed to break Brother Nee's faith in Jesus. When Nee was finally set to be released, mysteriously, he just ended up being held in custody for some unknown reason. He stayed in a Communist prison until he died. Though he was supposed to be released, Watchman Nee never gained his earthly freedom, but in his martyrdom, he received the full release he desired from the time he came to faith in Jesus.

We have an adversary who hates us. Give him no entry. Turn him over to God. Evil exists in this world. Some Americans have problems with such concepts. They mistakenly believe good and evil are relative terms. They are unwise. They are blind. They are misinformed. They are misled.

***Good and evil are real, definable, and observable. This is not a matter of relative good or evil. In a world of relativism, many will declare that all roads lead to God. That, too, is also evil. All roads do not lead to God.***

**[Josh]**

Sure they do.

**[Randy]**

Well. In the sense that they all lead to a final judgment, I would agree.

**[Josh]**

All roads will lead to God, but the outcome is different.



**[Randy]**

Yes. Every knee will bow, and every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord. Why not do it while the choice is yours? That's the way we approach these things. There are people who believe that cleanliness is next to godliness and charity begins at home. They are convinced these are declarations from the Bible. They need to read the Bible and recognize that it really doesn't say those things. It says a whole lot of other things like repent and be baptized. It is appointed unto men once to die. And after this, the judgment. Americans are short sighted in part because we want instant everything. The result is too many Americans have no plans because they live paycheck to paycheck. Even giant, iconoclastic, American corporations live on three-month quarterly earning's reports. Our government exists in two-year and four-year election cycles. Long-term thinking barely equates to matters lasting longer than the next news cycle or the weekend.

This mentality is short-sighted. We have been trained to be unwise. This is not how our competition thinks.

*The famous Chinese business mogul Masayoshi Son, the CEO of SoftBank, doesn't focus on a good quarter or a bad quarter. He famously has a 300-year plan for his enterprise.*

I don't know what's going to happen with his company. Like many companies, he may have short-term challenges. But he's not thinking short-term in his planning or his worldview.

*Many Americans have difficulty planning beyond dinner.  
China plans for centuries.*

Their focus is not tied to a mere presidential election (though they influence such contests where permitted).

Some people may not like my view, but I think China is evil. I'm not saying all Chinese people are evil. They are not! I'm saying that I think China, in some sense, represents evil in this world. Chinese communists have literally killed millions of their own people. What else can you call that if not evil? Chinese prisons have become silos for harvesting human organs for a thriving transplant industry. Prisoners are arrested for the simplest things. They live at the whim of an evil government without being afforded basic human rights. Those who have ideas about freedom inconsistent with Communism often end up being imprisoned in China. That often leads to becoming an involuntary organ donor. And some of these Chinese prisoners have their organs removed while they are still alive without anesthesia!

A person's organs are worth more than the person. One's kidney or heart is more valuable than one's life or family. They are a product. They are being commoditized. It's evil. There's evil in this world, and I think that some in China evaluate life, business, and politics altogether differently than most of us do in our country.

*Evil is orchestrated by Satan. He is the father of evil.*

Please hear me. I'm not saying the Chinese people are evil. There's a thriving revival of Christianity going on in that land right now.

There are probably more on-fire Christians in China than the whole population of America, but it's a revival birthed in persecution. It's a revival that's taking place by virtue of the power of God. He is showing people that He offers the promise of eternal life. Through Jesus, they can pursue and have access to God's love and righteousness in spite of the wicked evil world around them.

**[Josh]**

Where there is immense evil, God's word seems to thrive. His church seems to thrive. This is something that I have difficulty relating to in my comfortable situation here in the West, but I know that the church behind the curtain of these closed countries is a persecuted church. It's a church that endures such hardships. The encouraging thing, however, is that the result seen from the hardships they endure is a church that ends up thriving. The persecuted church of China is a vibrant church that knows true faith. I encourage you to take all of the things that we've been evaluating and make them a matter of prayer. Pray for China. Pray for the people of China and learn from them. Learn that in the midst of their difficult challenges, they are still praising God. They are powerfully glorifying God, and we want to glorify Him too.

**[Randy]**

Satan has a long-term plan, just like the Chinese communists. We can rejoice in the fact that God has an even longer plan. God's plan is eternal. We get lost in this time construct. God does not.

So, what is the point of all this? Why have I asked you to consider all these things? I want to win. I don't want to quit or to be defeated. We must learn to PRAY, FIGHT, WIN!

I want you to understand these concepts. I want to encourage you to embrace them in your own walk of faith. If you want to wrestle with some of these ideas or if you disagree, that's okay. If I'm mistaken about things, help me understand. But I think these ideas have merit. I am explaining them to you because they have helped me. I hope they will help you too. I hope they will help your spouse and your children. I have organized my thoughts on these matters because I want to help my own family PRAY, FIGHT, and WIN!

I want to say that there was a time in my life when I was far from God. I was a coke freak. I was delusional. I'm not going to say I was insane, but I will say I was absolutely delusional.

*At my absolute worst, God called me to Himself. A preacher didn't call me. A church didn't call me. God called me to Himself. It's the love of God that reached down to take my hand and draw me to Himself because He loved me.*

The church really didn't love me. God loved me. I fell in love with God.

From that time, I never wanted to be far from Him. He never wanted me to be far from Him either. It's called fellowship. That's where prayer and worship and direction and life happens in a walk with God. It is in fellowship with God. It's in a unique type of a relationship. God reached from eternity in heaven to touch me in time on earth. Coincidentally, it was in the nick of time. He saved me, delivered me, made me His own. He sealed me, and He sent me to declare His love and the coming of His Messiah--my Messiah--our Messiah. I went

from death to life, from without hope, to a blessed hope. I am held close in the arms of God. At that moment, I could not have been closer. From that day until now, I have tried to remain that close. I have desired to remain that protected, that loved, and that secure. But as it says in I John 2:16,

***“All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life is not of the father, but is of the world.”*** (Revelation 2:4 NASB)

***My adversary the devil, wants to draw me away. Satan wants every servant of God to become distant from God. He wants us disoriented, discouraged, discontent, disconnected, exposed, and vulnerable.***

He wants us removed from our first love. That was a message to one of the churches in Revelation. ***“You’ve left your first love.”*** We should read that, and we should reflect on that. We should be uncomfortable with that risk. We should be cognizant that it happened to that church in Revelation and the Spirit of God had to remind them that they had left their first love. That’s not a good thing.

I’m not suggesting I have left my first love. I’m saying that on the day I met Him when He saved me, and He delivered me, I could not have been any closer because I was in His arms. I could not be any closer unless I get distracted, confused, fearful, or filled with doubt. That is how we become distant from God. He does not move away from us. We move away from God. If I remove myself from the grip of my Father in Heaven, it is not because He wants to push me away. He’s not sending me off, but there have been moments when I removed

myself from His grip. When we do that, it is telling God, “You don’t know what You’re doing. I have a better idea.” I don’t want to act that way, and I don’t think you do either. That would not end well. We should strive to be where we could never be closer. And we should just stay there because that’s the only safe place in this fallen world.

When I earned \$100 a week, God’s provision was perfect. I mean, it was remarkable. It was perfect. We prayed for everything because when you only earn \$100 a week, you absolutely need God. That is a great place to be if you want to remain desperate for God. He is so faithful! He was faithful then and He remains faithful today.

By the way, God is never the problem. Perhaps we must learn to better time our consumption.

*Maybe we must all come to grips with the need to not live beyond our means or God’s timing.*

And I think we all need to do better about not making decisions that God has not led that can easily cause us to live beyond our means. When that happens, we should not expect God to bail us out because we failed to pursue His intention when we were blinded by our own. God wants us to be both dependent on Him and directed by Him. If we make ourselves vulnerable to difficulties of our own doing, that’s on us. It’s not on God. Draw near to God. He will draw near to us. And that will enable us to walk around most of the pitfalls on our path.

**[Josh]**

It’s not always that we are living beyond our means. When people

are struggling financially, sometimes it means we are actually living on our means instead of God's means. Let's remember that we are supposed to be stewards.

***When we live as a steward of somebody else's stuff, then somebody else owns what we use, so we should treat our stuff as though it's His stuff.***

If it's His, and we are His, I shouldn't act as though I'm reliant on myself. I really should not make my decisions independently of His. If I act like it's my money, and He gets ten percent, it's as if He's getting His portion. The rest is mine. But that's not correct. I am a steward of His means. If you're now saying I'm supposed to live on my means, that's a different story.

[Randy]

That's good. You're absolutely right.

***Unfortunately, we live in this instant society. We don't ask the question, "Can we afford it?" We ask the question, "Can we afford the payments?"***

[Josh]

Except when it comes to tithing. Some people give as though they wonder if they can afford to tithe, but that just proves they misunderstand the entire concept. They just missed it. We are stewards of God's stuff. None of it is ours. Everything we have is on loan from Him to use as He directs. It is ridiculous to act like it's ours and we're just going to give God a tip. How dare we ask if we can afford to tithe?

**[Randy]**

I told your mother I was reading the Bible where it explained that our first fruits belong to the Lord. I told her that I thought we were supposed to take my first week's paycheck and give it to God because it was His. It was our first fruit. She dutifully just went along and wrote my entire first week's paycheck to a Christian orphanage I saw advertised on TV. From that point, whenever we got another paycheck, the first part, the tithe, was always given immediately back to God. She did that until we could afford to do more than ten percent. Over the years, God blessed us immensely. Through His immeasurable kindness toward us, we've been able to do more and more and more. We've all heard people say, "You can't out-give God." I don't understand how that works. I can't say that I know it's a universal truth. But I can categorically declare that we have never out-given God.

**[Josh]**

The principal is not how much you gave. It's that you identified that you were merely a steward. He is my provider. One hundred percent of what I have is a result of His goodness and His efforts. It's all His. Everything I have is a gift from Him. And you gave your first fruits to an orphanage?

In theory, if we are living with a proper perspective about stewardship, one hundred percent is still His. He allots some of it to go towards your grocery bill, some of it goes toward whatever other bills you might have, right? And if we're constantly seeking Him, if we're drawing close to Him, if we're praying, if we're seeking His guidance and direction, and if we're letting Him direct our steps, then He is going to take care of us.



**[Randy]**

Yes! And He is faithful. He wants us to understand that even in this instant culture, sometimes we have to wait. That is often the difference between what you can truly afford versus can you afford the payments? If you can afford the payments, you don't have to wait, but it means you can't afford it. You can only afford the payments.

**[Josh]**

Well, but to your earlier point about emergencies. If you didn't seek Him for the decision to begin with, then you find yourself in a financial emergency you caused because you couldn't afford your decision, that is not God's fault.

**[Randy]**

Well, I am certainly glad you figured that one out, buddy.

**[Josh]**

But if you're seeking Him and drawing close to Him, He is going to give you the desires of your heart. It doesn't mean because I may want a new big screen TV that He's going to give it to me. I believe it means He's going to implant His desires in you because you're drawing close to Him. When your desires begin to align with His desires you are growing closer to Him. He will continue to implant more of His desires into your heart. And as you seek Him, then He can provide the desires of your heart because they are, in fact, His desires for you.

**[Randy]**

And that is how lining up with God is moving into harmony with the will of the Lord.



# CHAPTER FOURTEEN

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## *Why Do We Fail in Prayer? Why Do We Fail in Marriage?*

[Randy]

I do want to focus on another great man of God from an earlier era. At the turn of the century, in 1900, R. A. Torrey quoted two versions of Ephesians 6:18. I want to present them both to you with his thoughts. ***“Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.”*** He went on to say, *“When we stop to weigh the meaning of these words then note the connection in which they are found, the intelligent child of God is driven to say, ‘I must pray, pray, pray. I must put all my energy and all my heart into prayer. Whatever else I do, I must pray.’”* R.A. Torrey also quoted what would have been the modern translation of his era. He believed the Revised Version of this verse was *“even stronger than the authorized.”* Torrey liked it better. ***“With all prayer and supplication praying at all seasons in the spirit, and watching thereunto in all perseverance and supplication for all the***

**saints.”** He wanted us to, “*Note the ALLS: ‘with ALL prayer, at ALL seasons,’ in ALL perseverance, ‘for ALL the saints. Note the piling up of strong words, ‘prayer,’ ‘supplication,’ ‘perseverance.’ Note once more the strong expression, ‘watching thereunto,’ more literally, ‘being sleepless there unto.’*”<sup>10</sup>

Continuing to quote this tremendous servant of the Lord, he says, “*How seldom we pray things through! How often the church and the individual get right up to the verge of a great blessing in prayer and just then let go, get drowsy, quit. I wish that these words ‘being sleepless unto prayer’ might burn into our hearts. I wish the whole verse might burn into our hearts.*”<sup>11</sup>

So, I must ask WHY? Why do we do this. Torrey is right. Why don’t we persevere in prayer? Torrey has an answer. He says, “**BECAUSE THERE IS A DEVIL.** He is cunning, he is mighty, he never rests, he is ever plotting the downfall of the child of God; and if the child of God relaxes in prayer, the devil will succeed in ensnaring him.”<sup>12</sup>

Then Torrey gives another reason saying we should be in “*constant, persistent, sleepless, overcoming prayer,*” because “*Prayer is God’s appointed way for obtaining things, and the great secret of all lack in our experience, in our life and in our work is neglect of prayer.*”<sup>13</sup>

.....  
.....  
***Our lack in life can be traced to a lack of  
dedication to prayer.***  
.....  
.....

Torrey’s conclusion is a reasonable explanation, and it becomes and indictment of our irresponsible commitment to prayer.

Speaking of the current work of Jesus in our lives, Torrey said, *“There’s another reason for constant, persistent, sleepless, overcoming prayer that seems if possible even more forcible than this, namely, **praying is the most important part of the present ministry of our risen Lord.**”*<sup>14</sup> He went on to discuss a text in the seventh chapter of Hebrews that reminds us of what Jesus is doing. His words should cause us to think that perhaps we should also do the same things. Quoting from Hebrews, he says,

***“He ever liveth to make intercession for them.”***

(Hebrews 7:25 KJV)

*“This verse tells us that Jesus is able to save us unto the uttermost, not merely FROM the uttermost, but UNTO the uttermost unto entire completeness, absolute perfection, because He not merely died, but because he also ‘ever liveth.’ The verse also tells us for what purpose He now lives, ‘**to make intercession for us,**’ to pray. Praying is the principal thing He is doing in these days.”*<sup>15</sup>

Wow. Wow, wow, wow! I find that really enlightening. So, Jesus desires that we pray. And we specifically should pray in His name. It’s not a formula. It’s a place of power and authority. Without authority, they are just words, but in the name above all names, they carry heaven’s authority. These words have meaning. It changes things.

He says, *“The next reason for constant, persistent, sleepless, overcoming prayer is that prayer in the name of Jesus Christ is the way Jesus Christ himself has appointed for his disciples to obtain fulness of joy.”*

He states this simply and beautifully in John 16:24,

***‘Hitherto, have ye asked nothing in my name; ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be fulfilled.’***

*Torrey said, “Made full’ is the way the Revised Version reads. Who is there that does not wish his joy filled full? Well, the way to have it filled full is by praying in the name of Jesus.”*<sup>16</sup>

I was studying with my grandson Justus. And we were reading through some books of old saints of God. We happened to read through this book by RA Torrey. It deeply ministered to him. It showed him something that just jumped out at him. And I couldn’t have said it in a way that this old saint of God had said it so long ago. *“Why is it that prayer in the name of Christ brings such fullness of joy? In part, because we get what we ask. But that is not the only reason, nor the greatest.”* And this part really ministered to Justus. It also ministered to me. I hope it ministers to you too. Justus pointed it out, and it is a tremendous truth. I will read the words of R.A. Torrey, *“It makes God real. When we ask something definite of God, and He gives it, how real God becomes! He is right there! It is blessed to have a God who is real, and not merely an idea.”*<sup>17</sup>

**[Josh]**

I think it goes back to your dignitary analogy<sup>18</sup> as well. If you’re a diplomat, and you’re speaking on behalf of your leader, it gives authority to what you’re saying. It reminds you, ‘Wait, I’m standing on behalf of my leader.’ There’s power in that.

**[Randy]**

Yes, there's power. There's authority. It's certified. You gotta listen. You gotta pay attention. It's not me.

**[Josh]**

Cause if it was just me, then it really wouldn't mean very much, but the words I deliver on behalf of the authority who sent me have weight and power.

**[Randy]**

It's the One who sent me. I am an ambassador for Christ. It is Christ who has said these things, or it is one of Christ's ministers who has said these things on His behalf, and it is true.

R.A. Torrey says, *"Prayer, in every care and anxiety and need of life, with thanksgiving, is the means that God has appointed for obtaining freedom from all anxiety, and the peace of God which passes all understanding."*<sup>19</sup>

***"Be careful for nothing,"***

says Paul,

***"but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God, and the peace of God which passes all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."*** (Phil 4:6-7 KJV)

I also want to talk about admitting my own personal lack of prayer and recognize a general lack of prayer in the church. Such lack of

prayer leads to crises that might be avoided if we were more diligent about the work of prayer. Torrey suggests, *“If we would only spend more time in prayer, there would be more fullness of the Spirit’s power in our work.”* I don’t think anyone would argue his point. As a minister of the gospel, I must not lose sight of this. He’s absolutely correct. He says, *“Many and many a man who once worked unmistakably in the power of the Holy Spirit is now filling the air with empty shoutings, and beating it with his meaningless gesticulations, because he has let prayer be crowded out. We must spend much time on our knees before God, if we are to continue in the power of the Holy Spirit.”*<sup>20</sup>

One of the most serious declarations Torrey made, provides a most timely message for our current day. *“Prayer is the means that Christ has appointed whereby our hearts shall not become overcharged with suffering and drunkenness and cares of this life. And so the day of Christ’s return come upon us suddenly as a snare.”*<sup>21</sup> This is serious stuff because snares abound and the coming of the Lord is closer than ever.

**[Josh]**

You said our lack of prayer likely ends up leading us into the crises.

**[Randy]**

I think it’s very possible, yes.

**[Josh]**

With prayer, you can avoid crises.



**[Randy]**

Yes. If we are allowing God to direct us, if we are praying and paying attention, if we are asking God about our decisions and we are petitioning God to deal with our adversary, I believe things change. If you're paying attention, while walking in trust and obedience, I think you can avoid an awful lot of the problems.

**[Josh]**

But it's important to be clear. You're not suggesting that because of prayer, you're not going to have problems in life? But you will avoid some of them by seeking God and asking for His guidance.

I think it's important to also recognize that we can still hope in God. If you haven't been praying, there is still hope. If you haven't been seeking God, yes, you might be in the middle of a crisis, but it's never too late to turn to God. If you are in a struggle, we want everyone to know that with prayer, you can get through the crisis. You might have been able to avoid the crisis if you had begun with prayer, but God will still help you navigate through your struggle if you turn to Him in prayer. The outcome will be different with prayer than without it. It's also important to recognize that sometimes, even with prayer, you may experience difficulties, but as you draw close to God, and you pursue communion with God, your crisis can be redefined. What might look like a crisis today, may be different when God opens your eyes to how He sees your circumstance. Looking through the eyes of God, He may translate a terrible problem into an opportunity to reveal His glory, such as occurred with the lady who was healed of breast cancer.<sup>22</sup> It was a crisis for her until it became a testimony of what God can do.

That doesn't mean that she wasn't walking in the will of the Lord. That doesn't mean that you weren't walking in the will of the Lord at the point in time when you didn't pray for her. In fact, His name was likely more glorified by the process. The blind man in the gospel wasn't necessarily blind because of sin or because he wasn't praying. His blindness, and the timing of his healing, was for the glory of God. Similarly, if you are in a circumstance that may feel bad, but as you draw close to God, you'll gain context. Perhaps you will even get more clarity, and with prayer, yes, you can get through.

**[Randy]**

Right. I heard your brother, pastor Ben, preach the other day. It was a wonderful message. He pointed out the importance of identifying your trial in the storm that exists. Praying and preaching about it in faith, while he was in the midst of the particular circumstance, was very different than looking back after the answer to prayer had been received. The reference was to a young man, a dear friend, whose daughter has leukemia. When he first found out it was a powerful thing to see him so absolutely resigned to love God, no matter what came in the middle of that horrific circumstance. Now, thank God, she's in remission.<sup>23</sup>

Great glory comes to God when the power of faith is made evident when looking back. I'm so happy to have heard our friend's declaration of faith during the trial. God takes our suffering and our struggles. He transforms what we see into something we could never have imagined when we really give them all to Him. I wrote a song a long time ago. It said, "God can fix a broken heart, but you have to give him all the parts." That must be our lifetime pursuit. We just need to continue giving all the parts to God. There's some broken

stuff in there. There are broken things around us, but when we give it all to God, He can make what He wants from the pieces.

While I was recently rereading Watchman Nee, I was struck by something I had originally noted in the book back in about 1991. It grabbed me in a particularly new way. Nee wrote, *“The spirit himself bears witness in your spirit to that relationship into the inheritance and glory that are ours. If so, be that we suffer with him. And your response to the father of our spirits is ABBA father. When this is really established in you, you have come to a new place which we speak of as resurrection ground.”* The note I had made to myself was a reminder of an event in my life from 1973.

All I wanted to do was live for God and serve God. I had built a little recording studio and was doing Christian music and ministry teachings. Back at that time, your mother was confused by all of these things. You must understand that she had sort of married one guy and got another. I was not very sensitive to how disorienting my whole life-changing thing must have been to her. Like a lot of people, she was raised in a church, so she thought she was a Christian. Suddenly, she must have been wondering, ‘What’s this guy talking about? What is all this stuff about being born again? Why is he suddenly so different? How come he just can’t be normal? Why must he be so radical? Why can’t you just go to church on Sunday, if you want to be a Christian?’ Of course, none of that would have made sense to me. It would have all been nonsensical to me. My life was nonsensical to her. Our marriage was in the tank. There was no possible road to a peaceful marriage. People were saying from the beginning, “They’ll never make it.”

**[Josh]**

Over-unders?

**[Randy]**

Yes. You know that my family wouldn't have anything to do with us. They were convinced we were a horrible mismatch. They thought I was an idiot, and you know, they were positively convinced there was no hope for our marriage. Making it worse, I wouldn't say my wife had begun to hate me, but it felt like it. She would argue and yell at me. I didn't know how to respond. I was supposed to be a new creature in Christ. I wasn't sure what it all meant. I just didn't know what to do, so I would just listen to her angry words and not respond. That just made her more angry because I wouldn't argue. I didn't know what to do.

**[Josh]**

I don't think that's unique to a Christian. I think a lot of newlyweds have no idea what they signed up for here, but yes, that seems to have certainly fit your situation.

**[Randy]**

I prayed. I asked God what to do. God led me to a place in Scripture. It was my very first time reading through God's Word because I'd never had a Bible. I mean a Bible that contained a New Testament.

***“Likewise, you wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be one by the conversation of the wives; while they behold your chaste conversation, coupled with fear.”*** (1st Peter 3:1-2 KJV)

It went on to say,

***“For after this manner in the old time, the Holy women . . .”***

By the way, those words resonated for me, because that was what I wanted. I needed a holy woman. The text continued, these holy women,

***“who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands.”*** (1st Peter 3:5 KJV)

Buddy, I was praying, ‘Oh God, yes! Fix her. That’s what she should be. That’s our problem spelled out in black & white.’

***“Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him Lord.”***  
(1st Peter 3:6 KJV)

I just needed to read that to her. That would fix everything if she just understood those words.

**[Josh]**

Genius newlywed.

***“Even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him Lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as you do well and are not afraid with any amazement.”*** (1st Peter 3:6 KJV)

**[Randy]**

And then I got down to verse seven and it said,

***“Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife as unto the weaker vessel and as being heirs together of the grace of life that your prayers be not hindered.”*** (1st Peter 3:7 KJV)

And the Spirit of God gave me a revelation. God convicted me. He showed me that my attitude was wrong. He made clear that I wasn't living with my wife according to knowledge. I did not give honor unto her as my wife, as being a weaker vessel, in the sense intended here. I was not treating her as though we were joint heirs together of the grace of life. I just looked at her as though she was unsaved. I knew I was saved so I initially related to Peter's words as though I was supposed to tell God how to fix her, but God, through His Spirit, revealed He wanted to fix me.

The Lord used that text to show me that I had been a terribly rude man. I had been very unkind and inconsiderate to my wife before we married.

***My whole life, before Christ, had been about my music, rock & roll, and drugs. I was a product of the 60's.***

It really was all just about my life, and somehow, I assumed my new wife had just come along for the ride. Therefore, she just had to learn to understand what was important. Before, it was my musical career. Now, it was Jesus. I couldn't understand why every time I would go to do some work at my little recording studio, it was taking away whatever little bit of time we would have together. And she had come to believe that I didn't really want to spend time with her. I assumed she didn't want to spend time with me because she was mad at me so

often. But that was because I had made her mad. When I wasn't doing music at my little studio, I was going to write music and work with a pastor who was mentoring me in ministry. He was the man who had brought me into the work I was doing with the Underground Church. And, by the way, earlier I had referenced that I was riding a bicycle to work with my trouser leg rolled up and secured with rubber bands.<sup>24</sup> There was a reason for that. I had gone out to the studio where my mentor lived - we were involved in very intense and fruitful ministry together - but I had used my wife's car without her permission. She got aggravated. She didn't like it when I went to do that work, but when I had to take her car, she went over the edge. She hid the keys. So, that was why, I was riding a bicycle down Highway 41 to go to work where I was a janitor in a factory.

**[Josh]**

Marital bliss?

**[Randy]**

Marital bliss! Oh, how my friends laughed at me at work. They mocked me. And they had good reason. I had Argyle socks exposed half-way up to my knees underneath my ratty overalls with the rubber bands. I wasn't really intending to become a fashion plate. However, I never thought I'd end up the butt of everyone's jokes. They just laughed and laughed, and I didn't even realize how foolish I must have looked. I didn't let it stop me. I just wanted to tell them all about Jesus. I'm sure they thought I was just a clown. Anyway, when I read this verse, immediately, I knew I had to stop asking God to fix her. Because God was making it clear to me that He wanted to fix me. And years later, reading Watchman Nee, I knew that I had continued standing on that resurrection ground.





# CHAPTER FIFTEEN

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## *The End of My Story's Beginning and Prayers Answered*

[Randy]

I have strong recollections of what happened in 1973. I had set up all of my recording stuff in my mother-in-law's basement, at your grandmother's house. When the Lord showed me the text in Peter, *“likewise, ye husbands dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor to the wife as unto the weaker vessel as being heirs together of the grace of life.”* (1 Peter 3:7 KJV) I knew I had to stop implying that my wife was unsaved. I had to stop acting like I believed she was not saved. I began to start living like she was a joint heir with me. She was an heir to *“the grace of life.”* And I suddenly understood that if I wanted to have my prayers answered, instead of being hindered, I needed to pay better attention to what that Scripture declared. I promptly headed back to your grandmother's house. I went down to her basement. I packed everything up that had been part of my studio. I never said a word about it to your

mother. I brought everything back to our apartment. We had a closet with a bed sheet covering the entrance for a door. I filled the whole closet up and stacked everything from my recording studio and my guitars inside. I had hauled all of my stuff up the stairs. We lived on the second floor of a private home above the old lady who owned the house.

As I was carrying all the stuff upstairs, running back down the stairs, and bringing everything to store away, she finally asked what I was doing. I told her that I was not going to do those things anymore. She didn't understand and asked what I meant. She knew that the ministry and the new Christian music I was doing meant everything to me. There was nothing more important, but God had showed me that it was wrong for me to continue. I told her that I loved her more than what I was doing. I told her I was sorry. I finished packing everything away. I stored it in the closet intending to never use any of it again.

*I chose my wife over the ministry. That dumpy little apartment with that crammed storage closet became resurrection ground.*

From that day, I was standing on resurrection ground in that place. And one day shortly thereafter, my wife came to faith. I had nothing to do with it. Nothing.

God is faithful. He does what He says. We have to do what He tells us to do, and He does the rest. I thought I would never, ever have another opportunity to minister again. Never again. I promised her that I was done with ministry and music. She didn't ask me to quit.

I chose to quit. I showed her my love by quitting what I loved. In a few weeks, maybe a month or two later, she started being nice to me. I didn't understand what was happening. One day, I asked her what was going on. She didn't understand. I questioned why she was suddenly being nice to me. Now, I know that sounds funny, but I didn't know how else to say it. We hadn't been acting like we cared much for each other. Our marriage was pretty ugly, but out of the blue, all of a sudden, she was just being nice. I still didn't understand why. I asked her again why she was being nice. She said, "I asked Jesus to be my Lord."

It was just that simple with no additional complexity. Jesus changed her, just like He changed me. Just like He's continued to change lives. Jesus is Lord. He's in the life changing business. He changed my life. He's still changing lives. So, I know He heals marriages, because He healed mine. I'm very happy. I'm very thankful.

So, I was reading the Watchman Nee book again. I saw my notes from 1991. At that reading, I was going through an enormous trial. It was a major challenge. I had an incredible opportunity to trust God. I was very far into the middle of it, and I was still so far from the end that no hope was in sight. I realized that once again, I was standing on resurrection ground. I was remembering what God had done in 1973. The note that I made to myself was,

***"The ground is burning under my feet." That's what it felt like. That's what resurrection ground is.***

*If you are not desperate for God, perhaps you don't really need Him. However, when nothing else will work, and God is your only hope, when you really need God, He is faithful.*

**[Josh]**

How long into your marriage was that?

**[Randy]**

Oh, just maybe six months. I don't know. But I know the lady that lived downstairs below us was really happy because she used to start pounding on her ceiling with a broomstick every time your mother started screaming at me. At that time, I was working a job that kept me on a swing shift rotation, so sometimes it might happen at three o'clock in the morning.

**[Josh]**

I imagine during that entire season you were praying regularly for Mom and for her salvation. And there were probably times, at that stage, when you weren't in the place you are today in your walk of faith. Your journey with the Lord must have been different back then, but to persist in faith and never give up must have been crucial. I imagine it was definitely living out a faith walk and praying for her salvation, and never giving up?

**[Randy]**

Yes. Prayer is the answer. Fighting the good fight of faith must never give way to quitting. And thereby, victory is ours. Pray, fight, win!

[Josh]

We've obviously talked a lot about prayer and the different things that I'd like to read. I want to share something from Matthew. A verse that I had mentioned earlier has become a sort of guide for prayer. It doesn't encompass everything in every situation, but it is a guide. In the sixth chapter of Matthew, we find the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus was giving an example about prayer. He said, "***This, then, is how you should pray: 'Our father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.'***" (Matthew 6:9-14 NIV) And often, when people repeat this prayer, they say, "***for thine is the kingdom and the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.***" So, this is something that people will use as a form of prayer. Some pray those exact words as though Jesus was telling us, "Say this, and something like magic happens."

[Randy]

Right. It has become a prayer formula.

[Josh]

That's the magic, but it was not intended to be a formula. Perhaps we would do better to approach these words of Jesus as a guide for praying. That is often how we discuss it with young people or in Bible study or with young believers.

When I begin to pray, and if my mind is clouded with all the different things that are going on, sometimes it is confusing. If you have many things requiring intense prayer, or for which you need guidance and direction, it's easy to get distracted. I just start throwing them out, one at a time. Or if it feels like an emergency, whatever is the most urgent gets my attention in prayer. Sometimes we need to take a step back and use this guide that Christ provided.

**“Our father in heaven, Hallowed be your name.”** It's praise. It begins with praising the Lord and thanking Him. We acknowledge that He is the God of the heavens and the earth. We thank Him. We praise Him. We exalt His name.

**“Your kingdom come.”** We're seeking Him and His kingdom. We yearn for His kingdom, His righteousness, His peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. That's the Kingdom of God. That's the righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost that we must seek in prayer. We seek His righteousness through prayer. We pursue His peace in every situation through prayer. I will seek his joy. I want His kingdom to be evident through my life.

We declare, **“Your will be done.”** And at this stage, I ask for guidance and direction from God. “Lord, I want Your will. I want what You want. I want to be drawn close to You. And I seek Your will in my situation.” I try to take time to list out the things for which I need His guidance and direction on earth as it is in heaven because I know that what He wants for me, when He wants it for me, it will be a certainty. It's not a question. It's a certainty.

***“Give us today, our daily bread.”*** Ah, now I can say, “I have this need, but Lord, I’m going to trust You to provide just like You do for the lilies of the field. Just like You do for the birds of the air. Lord, I’m going to seek You to provide my daily bread, both from a spiritual sustenance standpoint, as well as my physical provider. Lord, You are my provider and I’m seeking You for my daily bread and God, I need forgiveness.”

***“Forgive us our debts.”*** I’m first going to ask Him to forgive me for the things I have done wrong. To forgive my sins, I seek His help to reveal my sins to me, to convict me of my sins. Then, I’m able to specifically ask for His forgiveness, and then I’m going to pray for those who have wronged me.

***“Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors.”*** And this is where the adversary often gets involved. Typically, in my formulaic prayer, I ask that He ***“lead me not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.”*** And now, given the greater clarity I have as a result of this discussion, I will remember that we have an adversary. I will ask the Lord to curse my adversary. I’m just going to call it what it is.

There are two components here. “Guide me, direct me, help me to flee temptation. Help me to move away from my adversary. Help me to avoid the darts and arrows that my adversary will throw at me.” That’s first, and that’s typically how I pray, but now I will focus differently on the second part. I admit that I have typically overlooked this step, but I will acknowledge that I need deliverance from the evil one. This goes beyond the standpoint of temptation. I will ask the Lord to curse my enemy. I have an adversary. He is wrong, and I’m going to ask for God’s guidance in that area of my prayer life.

Then, I'm going to conclude with the prayer "*for thine is the kingdom and the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.*"

That would be the formula that Christ has laid out. It's a good formula. I trust the formula, not because I say those specific words, but because it gives direction. And then I will also pray in the Spirit. I want to leave room to let the Holy Spirit pray and help me commune with God.

**[Randy]**

Well, I agree with you, and I think that people should be confronted with these questions and these explanations. I think you're right. Sadly, I think many people misunderstand. I'm not opposed to people saying that prayer. That's fine, too, but I think it wasn't intended to be a rote memorization of words.

**[Josh]**

I think in terms of this process, right? And if you don't hit all the components, OK, you still want to commune with God. But there's something to be said about starting from a place of praise. When we enter the throne room of a King, there's honor, there's respect, and there's acknowledgement. When you think of it from that standpoint, it makes sense, and it helps me to stay focused. I don't just go straight to God with, I need this list of things. The formula helps me remember to back up. It's not about me. It must be about Him.

**[Randy]**

Well, Joshua, I want to say thank you for allowing me to go through all of this material. Obviously, it's not the kind of thing that I could



do in a church or call it a sermon series. There is far too much for a sermon. And there would have been holes because there would have been distractions. I wanted to convey very specific thoughts, so I spent a lot of time formulating my thoughts. I wanted to convey these ideas to make them available to my children, my grandchildren, and those friends outside of our family, who might be interested in these thoughts on Jesus, Prayer, and the Devil. I did this for people I love. If anyone else is interested, I'm happy. We all have spiritual needs, and we can all pray. We must all remain in the fight, and in so doing, we will win.

**[Josh]**

We have prepared the TV series Jesus, Prayer, and the Devil to be an aid for people to draw near to God. It is our belief that He will help you overcome the adversary. The transcript from the series was the basis for this book—PRAY FIGHT, WIN! Catching all of the series on TV might have carried challenges. So, if you missed portions, we trust that this book provides the entirety of what you missed.

**[Randy]**

Right. I do want to clarify that this was never intended to be some lame Prayer 101 thing. It was not intended for a person to find a quick fix for their prayer life. It was something I was trying to figure out for myself. As I developed it, I wanted the people I love to have access. It helped me. I hoped it would help them too.

A dear Christian friend of mine, who is a pastor and an evangelist, was having dinner with me recently. This brother is a deeply faithful, Christian man. He said, "Brother, Randy, you're not going to believe this." He said this humorously, but there was a tinge of sadness. He

said, “I am ashamed. My son was asking me, ‘What’s with all the John 3:16 stuff? What does that mean?’” My friend then said to his son, “Wait, you know what the signs for John 3:16 mean don’t you?” His son asked again, “No Dad, what does all that mean? Why are they putting those things out there? And why are they holding up a sign like that?” My friend was astounded. Now, you need to realize that this young man grew up in church. He’s not a four-year-old. He’s old enough, way old enough to know better, and my friend is truly one of the most deeply spiritual guys I’ve ever known. He spends lots of quality time with his kids. He’s a really great father. But when his son asked him that question and revealed he had no idea why someone would hold up a sign saying John 3:16, my buddy was absolutely shocked. Then, he told me something extremely profound that is also extremely simple. We shouldn’t take such things for granted.

*Not everybody knows everything that we  
think they should know.*

So, if this sort of presentation about Jesus, prayer, and the devil is boring to you because it’s all old news, let me say “Yay! There is no need for this stuff.” That would be great news. But sadly, I think many folks haven’t thought enough about these matters. Like another wonderful friend of mine, Dr. Harry Yates, says, “If you already got your wings, fly on outta here.” Speaking for myself, I’m still wrestling with some of this stuff, and so I’m just assuming that if I am trying to work through these things, there may be a few other people asking similar questions. I don’t want my family to wrestle with certain things if I could point them in a safer direction, so they don’t need to figure these ideas out on their own.

So that's the reason I've quoted so many simple texts, multiple times, and why I went to some obscure texts as well. Because I don't want them to be lost. It's also why I quoted so many old words, from some old, dead preachers. Because these old, dead preachers finished well. Even if their end was martyrdom. You see, I respect the lives they led, the truths they taught, and I know I can still learn from them. And by the way, they're not on YouTube.

Okay, so, Jesus asked a most profound question at the close of the parable in Luke 18:8, and I want to wrap this up and put a bow on it for anyone who has stayed with us. I began with the parable of the persistent widow and the unjust judge, at least that is how I see it. At the end of that parable, Jesus said "***when the son of man comes, shall he find faith on the earth?***" (Luke 18:8 KJV) My answer, from one Dr. Weiss to another Dr. Weiss, is YES! He will find faith on the earth. If I have breath, He will find faith. If you have breath, He will find faith. If your brothers and your sisters, your nieces and your nephews, my grandchildren and great grandchildren have breath, He will find faith on this earth. It is our task to make certain that they will know what they need to know. It is our task to make certain that they will walk in faith because every generation needs a voice for the gospel. There will be faith. It wasn't a rhetorical question that Jesus was asking. It wasn't something that we can take for granted. For our faith to be transmitted from generation to generation, we have the task to make sure that our loved ones all know the truth of God's salvation. John 3:16 is more than a sign raised at a football game. These were powerful words of Jesus to an unbeliever who wanted to understand God's love and a foundational message of Jesus Christ.

It has been called the gospel in a nutshell. Jesus said,

*“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”* (John 3:16 KJV)

My generation, your generation, and every generation needs to understand God’s love and the heart of Jesus for our salvation. So, we must pray.

We all need to learn to pray. That’s what Jesus was teaching us in the parable I discussed. If we do what He said, He’ll do the rest of what He said too. He’s faithful. *“His mercy endures forever.”* (Psalm 136:16 NKJV)

**[Randy]**

Watchman Nee was writing some of his most profound things in the 1920s.

**[Josh]**

Did he do a podcast?

**[Randy]**

I’m sure he got his own YouTube channel after the cultural revolution and did some VLOG from a Communist prison . . . Oh, boy. ‘Say good night Gracie.’ You’ll have to Google that one, too.

**[Josh]**

Alright. Well, thank you. Remember, PRAY, FIGHT, WIN!

**[Randy]**

No, thank you Josh. I really, I really appreciate the insights you shared during this process. Thank you for helping me do this.

**[Josh]**

Thanks for pouring in.

**[Randy]**

All right. We're done for now.

# ENDNOTES

## Chapter 2

- 1 Watchman Nee. *Let Us Pray*. (New York: Christian Fellowship Publishers, inc.) p. 57.

## Chapter 5

- 2 Nee, p. 56.
- 3 Nee, p. 56.
- 4 Nee, p. 57.
- 5 Nee, p. 57.

## Chapter 6

- 6 Nee, p. 58.
- 7 Nee, p. 59.

## Chapter 7

- 8 Nee, p. 61.

## Chapter 14

- 9 R.A. Torrey, *How To Pray*. (Chicago: The Bible Institute Colportage Assn. Copyright 1900 Fleming H. Revell) p.7.
- 10 Torrey, p. 8.
- 11 Torrey, p. 8.
- 12 Torrey, p. 8.
- 13 Torrey, p. 9.
- 14 Torrey, p. 12.
- 15 Torrey, p. 13.
- 16 Torrey, p.16-17.
- 17 Torrey, p. 17.
- 18 See page 75
- 19 Torrey, p.18.
- 20 Torrey, p. 23.
- 21 Torrey. p. 23.
- 22 See page 187
- 23 See page 103
- 24 See page 204



