

Rick Miller – Isaiah 35 – Feb 12, 2023

Open up your Bibles to Isaiah chapter 35.

We're more than halfway through Isaiah - 66 chapters. We're on chapter 35 today.

So Lord as we open your word we thank you that the Holy Spirit illuminates the word of God, brings it alive and makes it so exciting to hear that rhema word and encouragement. Lord, we thank you for that and just trust you to speak to each one today. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Isaiah 35. Let's go ahead and pick up verse 1 and we'll read the whole chapter. It's only 10 verses and then we'll talk about it.

“1The wilderness and the wasteland shall be glad for them,

And the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose;

2It shall blossom abundantly and rejoice,

Even with joy and singing.

The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,

The excellence of Carmel and Sharon.

They shall see the glory of the LORD,

The excellency of our God.

3Strengthen the weak hands,

And make firm the feeble knees.

4Say to those who are fearful-hearted,

“Be strong, do not fear!

Behold, your God will come with vengeance,

With the recompense of God;

He will come and save you.”

5Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,

And the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

6Then the lame shall leap like a deer,

*And the tongue of the dumb sing.
For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness,
And streams in the desert.
7The parched ground shall become a pool,
And the thirsty land springs of water;
In the habitation of jackals, where each lay,
There shall be grass with reeds and rushes.
8A highway shall be there, and a road,
And it shall be called the Highway of Holiness.
The unclean shall not pass over it,
But it shall be for others.
Whoever walks the road, although a fool,
Shall not go astray.
9No lion shall be there,
Nor shall any ravenous beast go up on it;
It shall not be found there.
But the redeemed shall walk there,
10And the ransomed of the LORD shall return,
And come to Zion with singing,
With everlasting joy on their heads.
They shall obtain joy and gladness,
And sorrow and sighing shall flee away.”*

As we look at the context of where we are in Isaiah, we're moving toward chapter 36, 37, where we see the Assyrian Empire coming to Jerusalem and speaking with the leadership, telling them you might as well just give up.

We're here to take over your country, and there's no point of you looking to Egypt or some ally or even looking to your God because none of the other gods have been able to deliver from our great military might, and there's no point in you looking to the Lord. So very blasphemous speaking, very proud speaking.

So you've got the nation living under this threat, living under this stress of being attacked and enslaved by a foreign empire.

Last week we looked at God speaking about how he's going to bring judgment to the whole world. You definitely see references to the tribulation that is spoken of in Revelation in other places. But it's also important to remember, as we've gone through Isaiah, we've seen this pattern of how God works in the lives of people.

He works the same really in every human being because of our fallen condition. He wants to bring each person to a place of repentance and repentance means humility. It means admitting you're a sinner. It means admitting you need a savior, you need God. Pride is where you say, no, look at what I've done in my life. It's because of my great efforts and my great intelligence, my great wisdom.

You're not acknowledging that God is the source of everything. Any gift I've been given I need to give back to God for his glory. So this is what God's working with, with every individual on the planet, breaking our pride, bringing us to a point where we'll bow the knee to Jesus.

As we talked last week, God in the last days will increasingly bring pressure on the world. That's literally what we're seeing now, where he's letting wickedness play out, where you can see the result of a particular path of sin and the consequences of it if you have any sort of spiritual awareness at all.

You'll see that this kind of lifestyle leads to this path or this kind of political view leads down this path. We can see the consequences of it. But those who are proud, they're blinded to that. They keep rushing forward in their sin and refusing to repent. So what did God have to do?

He has to turn the heat up even more. Okay, you're not listening. You still don't get it. So I'm going to increase the pressure. That's what we're seeing in the last days and things aren't going to get better. They're going to get worse. I heard a preacher talking the other day. They're called a post millennialist, where they believe the world is being Christianized and will actually keep getting better and better until we basically, as Christians, take over the world, make it better, and then we'll just slide into the millennial kingdom and Christ will come back at the end of the millennial kingdom.

Isn't that crazy? And I thought, wow, how blind could this guy be? Very intelligent man, has some other doctrinal issues that I don't agree with. And I

was kind of like, yeah, I can see you're a Calvinist, so you're also confused there, and now you're confused over here as well. So to me, that's a major issue.

I'm not saying he's not a Christian, he doesn't love the Lord, but there's real confusion out there where the plain teaching of scripture just seems so clear that the world is not going to get better. The Christians aren't going to take over the world. We're a remnant.

Now, I believe he's going to bring revival in the last days, but ultimately during the tribulation, as we read last week, they'll be such trials and tribulation on the world. Jesus said the world has never seen that - God pouring out his wrath to that degree, that I believe many will repent because they'll see a third of the trees have been burned up, a third of the ocean is polluted. Yeah, there's no recovery from this.

So, maybe I should think about eternal things, give my life to the Lord. Unfortunately, during that time you'll be beheaded for being a Christian, which doesn't seem so farfetched now, right?

The persecution we're seeing with Christians and the hostility we're seeing toward Christianity, we can see it's ultimately going to come to where, if you profess Christ, you'll be put to death, kind of like it was in the first century. But God works in that way, wanting to bring people to a point of repentance.

If we're wise, we'll respond to God's work in our life. He says, look, I'd rather guide you with my eye rather than bit and bridle. That's a scripture in Psalms. In other words, he'd rather just say, hey, go over there, and you obey and you pay attention to God. He doesn't want to have to put a bit and bridle and force you to go, like a stubborn mule that won't move.

Hardness of heart, not listening to God. So it's up to us. Are we going to respond to the Lord? Or are we going to rebel? Now even as Christians, there's application there, because we still have our flesh that can rule. That's what we call a carnal Christian, right? Where you are not surrendering to the Lord, you are still trying to be in charge and God's got to humble your pride.

He gives grace to the humble, but he opposes the proud. So if we will daily humble ourselves before God and have an open heart and take up our cross and follow him and crucify the flesh, then you know we're in that beautiful "walking in the spirit" rather than having God oppose us.

So again, that application for the way God works in our lives, of whether you're a sinner or a saint, he's still going to deal with your flesh to try to humble you and bring you to a place where you recognize his right to rule in your life. So what we're seeing here in Chapter 34, remembering the picture that we ended up with in chapter 34, leading now into 35, was this barrenness in these big cities that were so prosperous. Man is so proud of what they've accomplished in building these high tech cities.

God says, you know what, I'm going to humble your pride in your prosperity because you won't acknowledge me, to the point where it'll just be like a wasteland where animals will basically take over.

So it'd be like if you left your house and left your doors open in your house and came back a year later. You're going to have all kinds of creatures living in your house. It's going to be a wreck. He's saying that's basically how the world is going to look in the tribulation. So it's this picture, not of just the tribulation time, but it's a picture of how God works in the individual life.

He wants to bring that person to a point of barrenness, as it were, to where they recognize I, without God, I have nothing. I'm empty. But it's the same thing in the Christian life where again we have to humble ourselves every day and say Lord, I want to lose my life so I can find my life.

I want to take up my cross and follow you. It's a principle of God basically humbling you to the point where, "oh, my life is a wasteland, I need God." God doesn't want to leave you there as a wasteland. He wants to pour himself into that place of humility. And that's what we're seeing here, I believe.

Some commentators I've read, they'll say chapter 35, is just talking about the millennial kingdom. I think it is talking about that as one application, but many times when the Lord speaks, he's not only speaking about something far in the future, but something immediate.

So it can be both things. We know from the context that these believers have this threat of Assyria hanging over their head and those who are waiting on the Lord, trusting the Lord, they need the encouragement that God is going to be there for them. I think that's what this chapter represents as we read through here, how the desert's going to blossom.

God's going to pour out streams in the desert, a highway of holiness. All these encouragements that God is bringing, he's bringing to his people that are already humble and waiting upon him. If we go back to chapter 33, verse 2 of Isaiah, we

get this picture of the true believers because there were true believers in Judah at that time who were waiting for the Lord.

Verse 2 says, *“Oh Lord, be gracious to us. We have waited for you, be their arm every morning, our salvation also in time of trouble.”* So in the time of trouble, they're waiting on the Lord, they are trusting in the Lord.

And yet the leaders in Judah were not always doing that. They were looking to Egypt to another ally to strengthen them, to help them defend against the Assyrians. And God was saying, don't do that. You need to trust in me. Don't trust in the hand of flesh. So often we have those challenges in our lives, don't we?

We're trying to wait on God for things. We're trying to pray and trust him, but then there's a temptation to do it in our own strength. So, in verse 1 of chapter 35, we see Isaiah say *“The wilderness and the wasteland shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly and rejoice even with joy and singing.”*

So that's a beautiful picture of ... what was desert? what was wasteland? nothing would grow. . and now we see in these first two verses, the desert blossoming. We see the glory of Lebanon. If you know about Lebanon, the Cedars of Lebanon, they have these beautiful forests. So it's a contrast to just this barren desert that has nothing, no water, no plant life.

God's saying, no, I'm going to make that desert bloom. It's going to be like the glory of Lebanon. There's going to be these mighty forests that grow. The excellence of Carmel and Sharon, these were places that had lush vegetation. It's interesting how the Lord will put spiritual things in natural ways for us to understand.

I believe this is not only God saying, look, I am going to show up, I'm going to take care of those who are trusting in me, I'm going to pour my blessing and my power into that desert wasteland. I believe it's a picture again, of those who've humbled themselves and responded to God's chastisement. Responded to God's work in their life, where they're saying, Lord I can see where I was tempted to trust in Egypt, but now Lord, I'm trusting in you.

Now he can pour into us that abundance to make the rose blossom, the glory of Lebanon. And notice what he says, it'll be glad, it will rejoice with joy and singing. It reminds us really of how the Lord wants to bring that joy in our lives.

If you're someone trusting the Lord, waiting on the Lord, walking in the Spirit, what does it say, the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience.

And so we may have felt that chastisement from the Lord, and we'll talk more about that from Hebrews where we feel like, Lord, I just feel so empty. I feel so weak. I feel like I have nothing. And the Lord says, good, I can pour into that now.

Whereas you were trying to run the show before. Now I'm going to pour myself into you. If we go over to 2 Corinthians 12:7, we see in the life of Paul this weakness that God would bring him to that he might pour into that wasteland, into that weakness.

In 2 Corinthians 12:7, Paul says, *“And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me lest I be exalted above measure.”* So there was a temptation for Paul to be proud and the Lord was dealing with that. He says he was given a thorn in the flesh. *“Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me, and he said to me, my grace is sufficient for you, for my strength is made perfect in weakness.”* So there's that principle of the wasteland of the desert that God is able to pour into that kind of person, his strength. When we're proud, we don't need the Lord.

Again, we can even be a carnal Christian where we're depending on our own strength, and the Lord says, no, I have to break you down to where you are understanding your weakness, and I'll pour my grace into you. *“Therefore, most gladly, I will rather boast in my infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore, I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”*

How many of us can say that I take pleasure in infirmities, reproaches, needs and persecutions. That's a mature Christian. Where he's come to understand it's in his weakness that God's going to pour his strength into it. If God did not deal with Paul's temptation of pride, then you would not have seen the power of God upon Paul's life.

This is just a pattern that we see through scripture. Romans 7 and Romans 8, you see this same pattern where Romans 7, Paul is just struggling with his flesh and I believe it was probably early on in his Christian life where he's bringing his Phariseeism into his Christian life and he had to unlearn that and then learn how to walk in the spirit.

So he's just struggling and saying, Lord, the things I want to do, I don't do. The things I don't want to do, I do. Oh, wretched man that I am who will save me from this body of death. Then he goes on to say, wow, I found the answer. It's through Jesus Christ, my Lord. And then he goes on to chapter 8 talking about walking in the spirit.

So again, it's this picture of learning to deal with the wretched, fallen nature that we have and crucifying it and letting the spirit lead us, walking in the spirit. That's a picture of coming out of that wilderness into the promised land, as it were, the land of abundance and seeing the desert blossom.

So there's a lot of different examples of that. I've just given a couple, but I think you get the point of the wilderness blossoming. Then notice that at the end of verse 2, *"They shall see the glory of the Lord and the excellency of our God."* I think that speaks of relationship.

Those who have humbled themselves, that are allowing the Lord to pour his spirit into them, have that glorious experience with the Lord and that intimacy with him. Then in verses 3 and 4, we see this same idea of going from weakness to strength. Verse 3, *"Strengthen the weak hands and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are fearful-hearted, "Be strong. Do not fear! Behold, your God will come with vengeance. With the recompense of God; he will come and save you."*

So remember that the people are living under this threat, the very real threat of being enslaved by the Assyrian empire. Their lives just completely being shattered, and yet that remnant, that small number of people in Jerusalem believing God. The Lord wanting to strengthen their faith and saying, hey, be strong, don't fear, I'm going to come through for you. And of course, that's exactly what we see in the next couple chapters where God sends one angel into the Assyrian army and kills 185,000 soldiers in one night, and they turn tail and run.

The encouragement to those of us who are walking by faith, that are waiting on God, that we feel weak, we feel feeble, God says, no, be strong. Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with recompense, he will come and save you. God is going to break through.

Now in verse 3 it says "Strengthen the weak hands and make firm the feeble knees." If you go over to Hebrews 12, you'll see a reference to that very passage there.

This is talking about the discipline of God. There is this reference to weak knees that we saw in Isaiah 35. Let's just quickly read through this section. I'm going to start with Hebrews 12:1. *“Therefore, we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses,”* so coming out of chapter 11, which is what we call the Hall of Faith, listing all the great men and women of God, that the way they accomplished anything was just through seeing what God was doing and trusting him and walking by faith.

So it says, *“Let us lay aside every weight and the sin which so easily ensnares us and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”*

So you have the Jewish Christians in the first century really struggling with discouragement. They were being heavily persecuted. I believe Paul is the author of Hebrews. There's some controversy with that, but he's encouraging them in this race of faith. Then he says,

“For consider him who endured such hostility from sinners against himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin, and you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as sons.

My son do not despise the chastening of the Lord, nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by him, for whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom he receives. If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons, for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the father of spirits and live? For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but he, for our profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness. Now, no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields a peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.”

Now here's the verse. *“Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed.”* So here is this idea of God bringing correction, chastisement, where it's a difficult thing, painful thing to deal with, but every Christian goes through that. If you're not, you're an illegitimate child.

And yet it yields a peaceable fruit of righteousness. If you're being chastised so that there's this pressure in your life, there's this difficulty, that the Lord's trying to correct you on something, Paul's saying, hey, strengthen the hands which hang down and the feeble knees and make straight paths for your feet.

So that which is lame may not be dislocated, but rather healed. One of the tricks of the devil is like ...” Look at you, you sin. You might as well just go all the way and just give up because God is done with you.” That's like you broke your arm by doing something foolish and then rather than have it treated and put it in a position where it can be healed, you're like, I'll just go break the other arm, what's the difference?

That's just dumb. No, what he's trying to say is position yourself for healing. I love to think about that. When I'm talking to believers and this person's struggling, I ask “are you going to church?” “Well no, I don't hardly ever go.” You have to position yourself for healing.

You have to put yourself in a place where God can speak to you through his people, and you can be ministered to. But you're not doing that. So how do you expect to be healed? So back to Isaiah 35:3. Strengthen the weak hands, make firm the feeble knees. Again, it's this idea that you've been in this desert wasteland, but God's about to change that. He's about to bring the blessing. So be strong. Don't fear. Your God will come.

Then let's go on to verse 5. *“Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then the lame shall leap like a deer and the tongue of the dumb sing.”* So here you have this picture of the Lord working to open blinded eyes, to unstop deafness.

The lame leaping like a deer, the tongue of the dumb will sing. Of course, that reminds us of the ministry of Jesus, right? These miracles he would do in the lives of people, and yet sometimes I think people misunderstand the miracles of Jesus. You hear certain parts of the church; they just speak about healing and prosperity all the time.

That's all. You'll tune into some of these preachers. That's all they ever talk about. Claiming your healing because healing's guaranteed. No, we don't believe that. We do believe God heals, but you always put at the end of your prayer, thy will be done, Lord. I can't force God to do anything.

I can ask him and I can desire healing, but it's just missing the point of the healings that Jesus did. He just didn't come to heal the whole world or feed the

whole world. Remember they tried to chase him down and make him king, to feed them. He fed the 5,000 and they're like, oh man, we want him to be king. He would just give us meals every day.

Jesus said, no, don't labor for the food that perishes, but labor for the food that endures, everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you. Jesus was always trying to point them to the spiritual. He healed somebody of blindness, and then while he would be giving a sermon, he'd say you guys (rebuking the Pharisees), you're spiritually blind. You can't see, or unstop the ears of the deaf. He who has ears let him hear what the spirit says. And so forth.

So it's important that we look at these things from a spiritual perspective. And again, I do believe God heals and we should pray and ask for that. It says if any among you is sick, let them call for the elders and anoint him with oil and the prayer of faith will raise up the sick.

We do pray for healing, but if you miss the whole spiritual point, you're missing the point completely. God wants us to have eyes to see what he's doing, ears to hear what he's saying, that we're not spiritually lame. We can get up and do what God's calling us to do. There are Christians that are spiritually blind, they're not hearing from God.

They're stuck in a rut. They're not doing what God's called them to do. They're not speaking the things God wants them to speak. And we, as believers, we just ask, Lord, give me eyes to see. Give me ears to hear. Give me power to do what you called me to do. Let me speak the words you want me to speak.

So I believe this is speaking of the era when Christ would come, the new covenant and how God would change the lives of so many people through them being born again and filled with the spirit and then doing God's will.

Then verse 6b - through verse 7, talks about the parched ground turning to abundant streams. It says *“For the waters shall burst forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert. The parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water; in the habitation of jackals, where each lay, there shall be grass with reeds and rushes.”*

In the last part of chapter 34, he was again talking about how these prosperous cities are going to be completely desolate. The animals are going to take over. And that's what he's now referring to here again, he said the habitation of jackals. God broke the people down to where they would be humble to now receive from the Lord.

And this beautiful picture of the desert ground that's so dry, becoming a pool, springs of water, and then there's grass and plants growing for provision. It's just a beautiful picture of what Jesus taught. John 7 - if any man is thirsty, let him come to me and drink.

In John 4, he talked to the woman at the well, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is who asked you for a drink, you would ask him and he would give you living water." This picture of water in the desert is clearly a picture of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and those who are humbled and waiting on God are open to have that outpouring into their lives.

Then in Isaiah 35:8 he says, "*A highway shall be there and a road, and it shall be called the Highway of Holiness. The unclean shall not pass over it, but it shall be for others. Whoever walks the road, although a fool, shall not go astray.*" And again, I believe this is speaking of Christ, that he is this Highway of Holiness, this narrow path.

Now you think how this would relate to the people who heard this word back in their times, where to have a road through a wilderness was not a common thing. They say the Romans, that's one of the great things they did, they built systems of roads throughout the world. I think that was part of God's timing and bringing the gospel at that time so that the gospel is more easily spread because travel was much easier.

This is many years before the Romans took over and to have a road in the wilderness, I mean, if you're traveling and you get stuck in the desert and there's no road or you get lost, you're in deep trouble. So this idea of thinking, oh, there's this highway that I can travel and I won't get lost and I won't get attacked or by wild animals, that is something that was important to the people back then.

But of course it has a spiritual application where we think of, spiritually, this narrow road. Jesus said small is the gate and narrow is the path that leads to life and few are those who find it. Jesus said "*I am the way, the truth and the life.*"

So those of us walking with Christ, walking this narrow path, that is a highway of holiness and only those who are born again can walk on that path. And I love that verse where it says whoever walks the road, although a fool shall not go astray. I think of myself as, Lord, without your wisdom, I am a fool.

I will make foolish decisions. I will say foolish things. Lord, thank you that I can still walk this road and you're working with me. I want to stay on this

narrow path, and you said, I will not go astray if I keep on this road, this narrow road. Then verse 9 says, *“No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast go up on it. It shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there and the ransom to the Lord shall return and come to Zion with singing, with everlasting joy on their heads, they shall obtain joy and gladness and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.”*

So it's interesting the chapter starts with this idea of singing, of joy. I was looking at a couple passages that speak about singing and joy as believers and one of them was Ephesians 5:15. It says *“See then that you walk circumspectly not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore, do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not be drunk with wine which is dissipation, but be filled with the spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fear of God.”*

Isn't that a beautiful picture where you know, instead of being drunk with wine or being high on weed or whatever your drug of choice is, the Lord is saying, that's just dissipation. That's a waste of time. You need to be filled with the spirit. Then out of that comes joy, hymns, songs, spiritual songs and your making melody in your heart. Do you think of yourself that way, like going through the day singing and rejoicing, or is it, oh, Lord, life's so hard, so difficult? You're complaining.

Get filled with the spirit is what the Lord is saying there. Then Colossians 3:16, that's an easy one to remember right?

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”

So just meditating on the word of God, being filled with the Spirit and there's this joy that comes, I believe, to a believer's life. But then back to Isaiah 35:9, he says *“No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast go up on it. It shall not be found there.”* And of course back in that day traveling was very dangerous.

You could get attacked by a wild animal. And again, I believe the spiritual application, of course, the devil goes about as a roaring lion seeking who he may devour, that we are to resist him. And this idea we're on this narrow path

and the enemy wants to attack us, wants to bring us down and we can just resist him, right?

Some people get so obsessed with the devil. The devil's doing this, the devil's doing that. I don't really see that in the New Testament. Like a huge emphasis on the devil. He is mentioned, but it's pretty rare. It's like the Lord says, yeah, put your full armor on.

We do not battle against flesh and blood, but against spiritual powers. But the greater emphasis is on the believers learning to walk in the spirit to identify with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Walking in the power of the Holy Spirit. And then yes, the enemy will attack you, but you cannot let that be such a focus in your life.

You just resist him and move on. That fiery dart comes; you just take that shield of faith and bat it away and keep going. I love that picture where we're overcomers, we're to be singing. The chapter begins with rejoicing and singing and ends with rejoicing and singing. Yes, of course that will be our condition in the millennial reign and in heaven.

But this is talking about, I believe, life now for the believer who is trying to walk in faith who has these threats hanging over them, difficulties of life. Even in the midst of that, God is saying, hey, you rejoice because I'm about to do something great and you need to just keep your eyes on me and walk with me.

So let's pray, Lord. Thank you for encouragements to our faith.

Thank you Lord for the outpouring of your Holy Spirit into the desert of our lives, and Lord, that truly there can be fruit blossoming from our life that is the result of you pouring your spirit upon us. It's not us. We couldn't make it happen anymore than we could call down rain in a desert or call plants to grow.

We just position ourselves in humility and faith and repentance, and then you can pour upon that kind of heart, your spirit. Then, Lord, there is a joy and a rejoicing and even a singing, Lord, as we go through our day, as we minister to one another. So Lord, we pray, show us where we miss that mark, Lord, where there's pride that's hindering that outpouring, where there's self-sufficiency.

And Lord, that we see a change this week as we say, Lord, show me my pride. I want to humble myself. I want to walk in the Spirit in a way I never imagined. Lord, we pray that for our country. We pray for revival. We pray for, in the

church, Lord, revival, an outpouring of the Holy Spirit where there's an emphasis on other things.

Lord, that it will be revealed to the leadership to just come back to the simplicity of devotion to Christ and walking in the power of your spirit and just doing your will. That's what we all should be interested in every day. Lord, what are you doing? What are you saying?

And so we thank you for these encouragements and Lord, as we go, be glorified in all that we do. In Jesus' name. Amen.