

Non Anxious Christmas | Part 5 | Breaking Point Prayers

ONLINE RECORDING

NOTES ARE IN APP - Not on screen - Download

- <https://theelement.church/app>

Celebrate Christmas Giving - 10 Families

Connect with us - Next Steps Form

- Text “Element” to 97000

21 Days of Prayer

- Date/Time: Jan. 10th - 28th 2022 | M-F | 7-8 am est
- Location: Zoom: your computer from wherever you are
- Meeting ID: 830 9349 2677
- Passcode: element
- Short invite link: <https://bit.ly/3EUUM0U>

GIVING TIME:

- **4 WAYS TO GIVE**
- ONLINE: <https://theelement.churchcenter.com/give>
- APP: Give Tile
- TEXT: Text an “amount” to 84321
- MAIL: PO Box 52 East Lansing MI 48826

Prayer of openness to God's Word

TODAY: Non Anxious Christmas | Part 5 | Breaking Point Prayers

I hope Christmas was a refreshing time for us ALL!

ILL. Every year toward the end of the year we watch: “It’s a Wonderful Life”

- That’s the kind of life that God came to give us.

Jesus said I came to give you life and not just life... but life more abundantly... or in our case... LIFE MORE WONDERFULLY.

John 10:10

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

George Bailey wanted “A Wonderful Life” for everyone...

- He wanted to travel but he was always giving up his dreams for the good of other people.

George jumps into an icy pond to save his brother Harry who was drowning.

- He saved him but it cost him the hearing in his left ear.
- **George just wanted a WONDERFUL LIFE for his brother.**

As a kid he wanted a WONDERFUL LIFE for his boss

- His boss was a pharmacist.
- His boss was so upset over a telegram he received about the death of his son...
- That he accidentally put poison in a prescription for a little boy...
- So GEORGE steps in and intervenes.
- BC all he wanted was a WONDERFUL LIFE for his boss.
- And bc he steps in... his boss gets angry.

George's father has a stroke and dies takes over company...

- And once again George steps in bc all he wanted was a WONDERFUL LIFE for his mother.
- **He wanted to save his father's company.**

George was always willing to sacrifice his Honeymoon money...

- EVEN his wedding money... to save the bank & loan.

ULTIMATELY... he just wanted a WONDERFUL LIFE for his whole home town of Bedford Falls.

That was the life of George Bailey... BUT most of the movie WAS NOT filled with a Wonderful Life.

- It was filled with trial
- It was giving up so others can experience something greater.
- It was responsibility & compromise

One of the greatest movies ever made because it is OUR STORY

ALL of us have a dream for a WONDERFUL LIFE

- I have a dream for my wife and my kids.
- I want a wonderful for you guys... my church family.
- I want a wonderful life for East Lansing
- I want a wonderful life for MSU
- I want a wonderful life for the world

But just like the movie...
much of life ISN'T filled with WONDERFUL!

- It's like life throws us curve balls out of nowhere.
- LIFE is too often filled with worry.... pains, fears and problems.
- It often takes unexpected twists and turns.
- It is filled with DEAF EARS because of what we gave
- It is filled with MISSED HONEYMOONS
- MISSED HOPES & DREAMS (trips)
 - Failures/Disappointments
 - Stress/Pressure
 - Responsibility

But we CONTINUE ON...

Then George HITS A BREAKING POINT (\$8,000 missing)

- **Explain \$8,000 BREAKING POINT (100K + in 2021)**
- It was the LAST bit of money his company had...
- George's uncle was at the bank making the deposit and misplaced the money.
- BC the \$8000 wasn't deposited into the account...
- The BAD Mr. Potter is gonna shut down the savings and loan.
- Which meant he would evict people from their homes.

Bailey's Breaking Point CHANGES him

- **It changes him...**
 - Responsibility becomes → Resentment
 - Love → Loathing
 - Sacrifice → Sickening

OUR Breaking Points CHANGE US TOO

- **HE LOSES HIS ILLUSION OF CONTROL**

- Feel like George Bailey today??
- What do we do?

The pressures of life can be almost unbearable at times.

WHAT DO WE DO W/ OUR BREAKING POINTS?

Breaking Point?
Frustration/Stress

HE PRAYS

HE LOSES HIS ILLUSION OF CONTROL

It's like what George said...

- "God... I'm not a praying man"
- "If you're up there... show me the way."
- "I'm at the end of my rope!"

ILL. George Bailey (James Stewart) knew about Breaking Points

- 1940 - He won Academy Award for Best Actor in the comedy The Philadelphia Story
- 1941 - GOES TO WW2
- 1943 - Active missions flown in Germany, England - awarded Flying Cross
 - he appealed to his commander and was sent to England as part of the 445th Bombardment Group to pilot a B-24 Liberator, in November 1943
 - Stewart was promoted to major following a mission to Ludwigshafen, Germany, on January 7, 1944.[122][N 2] He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for actions as deputy commander of the 2d Bombardment Wing,[124] and the French Croix de Guerre with palm and the Air Medal with three oak leaf clusters.[125] Stewart was promoted to full colonel on March 29, 1945, becoming one of the few Americans to ever rise from private to colonel in only four years. At the beginning of June 1945, Stewart was the presiding officer of the court martial of a pilot and navigator who accidentally bombed Zurich, Switzerland.
- 1945 - Promoted to colonel in 4 years - one of fastest ever
- 1945 - Early fall returns to US with PTSD
- 1946 - It's a Wonderful Life
 - During filming, Stewart experienced doubts about his abilities and continued to consider retiring from acting.

- Although It's a Wonderful Life was nominated for five Academy Awards, including Stewart's third Best Actor nomination, it received mixed reviews and was only a moderate success at the box office, failing to cover its production costs.
- In the decades since its release, It's a Wonderful Life has grown to define Stewart's film persona and is widely considered a Christmas classic, and according to the American Film Institute is one of the 100 best American movies ever made.

Maybe the only lesson greater than the life of movie character George Bailey is the life of the man who actually played the character - James Stewart!

JANUARY: Slow Down Spirituality

21 Days of Prayer

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2022 - From Stress to It's a Wonderful life?

CHALLENGE: Be involved!

- **First step? Be there the first 3 days**

"Scott, I don't know how to pray?..."

It's like what George said...

- "God... I'm not a praying man"
- "If you're up there... show me the way."
- "I'm at the end of my rope!"

5 Thoughts as we turn our attention to PRAYER in 2022

1. Holy prayers don't have to be prayed from holy places

- George Bailey is in a bar
 - Yeah, God hears prayers from there.
 - Derek Williams “How many of you have prayed from your Martini?”

There’s NEVER a bad place to pray!

- **Not just GEOGRAPHY**
 - Affair
 - Hiding
 - Sin
 - God’s LIFE for sin
- Prayer might seem like the LAST thing you should do, it is the FIRST thing you need to do

ILL. Jonah 2 tells us while he was in the belly of that whale...

- He had taken a course AWAY from what God was asking.
- He was running from God’s directives
- He was all wrapped in seaweed and nasty stomach junk...
 - It was NASTY!
- BUT HE PRAYED!
 - City Wide Revival
 - New Perspective on life & ministry

ILL. Darkest times in life pointing away from God = Run To God

Do we run from God or To God?

Reveals our Perspective = what we believe about God.

LIFE COULD CHANGE IN 2022 if we RAN TO GOD AT DEEPER PLACES than every before?...

- No matter how horrible of a place we may be in...
 - Financial
 - Physical place...
 - A bad spiritual place...
 - Bad mental place...
 - Bad relational place

- You might be in a dark acidic place of death like Jonah...
 - full of nastiness
 - Or you might be in a bar like George Bailey...

God hears prayers from all kinds of places

- **PRAY THEM from wherever you are!!**

2. Our prayers don't have to be long

- Many if not most of the prayers in the Bible aren't long.
- **Short Prayers - Bible**
 - **Luke 18:13** "God, have mercy on me, a sinner."
 - (tax collector)
 - **Mark 9:24** "Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!"
 - (boy's father asking for healing)
 - **Psalms 56:3** "When I am afraid, I put my trust in you."
 - (David captured by Philistines in Gath)
- **The Lord's Prayer (Matt. 6:9-13)**
 - "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day 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 evil."
- **Jesus to Spirits - "Go"**
- **Us to God - "HELP!"**

3. The best prayers aren't eloquent, just authentic

Like what George said...

- "God... I'm not a praying man"
- "If you're up there... show me the way."
- "I'm at the end of my rope!"

So many people are intimidated by prayer...

- You don't even like to pray for the family meal...
 - BC we think our prayer sounds stupid...
 - Can we just get rid of that?

- **Simple Prayers - Beautiful Prayers.**

- “God, I Love you.”
- “God, I need You.”
- “God, I am so thankful”
- “God, thank you for loving me.”

Do you think that is silly? Stupid? Unreligious?

Sometimes we are threatened by prayer because we don't actually know ourselves.

In 2022 - Our prayers don't have to be eloquent... let's make em real.

4. God usually answers prayers in ways we don't expect (because its what is actually most helpful)

Q: What did George WANT?

- probably WANTED a check for \$8,000 dollars

Q: What did God WANT?

- God WANTED to help George, not just financially - Wholistically
- George was struggling with wanting to leave bedford falls
- George was struggling with Mr. Potter
- George was struggling with the drafty old house
- George was struggling with his career choices
- George was struggling with the decision to have kids

GOD CAN GIVE WHOLISTIC ANSWERS TO OUR PARTIAL QUESTIONS

ILL. Movie - Clarence came to help George by:

- Not by handing him a check, but by JUMPING IN A FROZEN RIVER
- Also Clarence didn't give a \$8,000 check, but offered **PERSPECTIVE**

**Nothing changed in George's life
EXCEPT Perspective**

- He saves George **FIRST**

- THEN invites him on a journey of offering perspective

ISRAEL WANTED A POLITICAL MESSIAH
JESUS CAME AS A BABY IN A MANGER

- **They wanted a Messiah to free them from Roman oppression, Jesus was God working to earn our souls**
 - He saves us FIRST
 - THEN takes invites us on a journey offering perspective

John 1:14 MSG

The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighborhood. We saw the glory with our own eyes, the one-of-a-kind glory, like Father, like Son...

Q: WHAT DO YOU WANT?

Q: WHAT DO YOU NEED?

YOUR BREAKING POINT PRAYER IS A PATHWAY
TO THE ANSWERS YOU TRULY NEED,
NOT JUST THE ONES YOU THINK YOU NEED!

How do we go on a journey of perspective with God?

New Perspective comes by engaging New Prayer

2022 Prayer = 2022 Perspective

God invites us to new perspective... we can engage it!!

5. God still actively works in our breaking point prayers

End of movie, the whole town rallies - God works in our BREAKING POINT PRAYERS

The MOVIE is obviously a caricature -

I believe in a supernatural God
who still actively answers prayers

A: Sometimes supernaturally through supernatural means

- Clerance

B: Sometimes supernaturally through natural means

- People: George saw God at work people...
 - The Church
 - Believing God is ordering the plans for 2022
 - Make this place YOURS!

- Prayers don't have to be performed from a holy place
- Prayers don't have to be long
- Prayers don't have to be eloquent, just real
- God answers prayers through offering perspective
- God answers prayers in our breaking points

Do you know that God has given us a wonderful life
BUT He wants us to experience something even more wonderful?

John 10:10

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

**In 2022 Let's Bring the Breaking Points into Prayer and believe for
His Perspective
TOGETHER!!**

ENCOUNTER PRAYER:

- 21 days of prayer involvement

SURRENDER/SALVATION TIME

REMINDER & PRAYER/CLOSE:

- January in person @ Kellogg
- Family Meeting
- Big News coming up