Session 8 The Value of Using Biblical Prayers

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. When I intercede, I almost always use the prayers of the Bible. The prayers that Jesus, Paul, and Peter prayed are recorded for our benefit. I refer to them as the "apostolic prayers" because they are the prayers that Jesus prayed as our chief apostle (Heb. 3:1) and that the Spirit gave to the apostles. Including doxologies, there are about thirty apostolic prayers (see a list of these on mikebickle.org).
- B. The apostolic prayers are a valuable gift to the church being the prayers that burned in God's heart and give us the language of His heart. He never changes, so be assured they still burn in His heart.
- C. These prayers are guaranteed! They are like checks already signed in heaven and waiting only for a co-signer on the earth to be cashed. They are as relevant today as they were in the early church.

II. APOSTOLIC PRAYERS ARE GOD-CENTERED

- A. All the prayers in the New Testament are God-centered prayers; each one is addressed to God. Not one apostolic prayer is addressed to the devil. God-centered prayer, including spiritual warfare prayer, is the model set forth in the New Testament. It is the model the early church used in resisting and dislodging demonic forces and cultural strongholds (Eph. 6:12; 2 Cor. 10:3-5).
- B. All the prayers of Jesus that are recorded in the Bible were directed to the Father (Jn. 14:16; 17:5, 11, 15, 25). Jesus taught His disciples to direct their prayers to the Father (Mt. 18:19; Lk. 11:2, 13). The apostles' prayers also teach us to address the Father when we pray. In the "warfare epistle" Paul wrote to the Ephesians, he addressed all his prayers to the Father (Eph. 1:16–17; 3:14, 16, 20).

III. APOSTOLIC PRAYERS ARE POSITIVE

- A. The apostolic prayers are positive prayers asking God for the *impartation of positive things* instead of the *removal of negative things*. For example, Paul prayed for love to abound instead of asking for the removal of hatred (Phil. 1:9). He prayed for the impartation of unity instead of praying against division (Rom. 15:5). He asked for peace to increase instead of fear to be removed (Rom. 15:13). He did not pray against sin but asked for an increase of holiness, purity, and love (1 Thes. 3:12-13). Even Paul's requests to be delivered from evil men are positive in focusing on the deliverance of God's people rather than on exposing or bringing down the evil men persecuting them (2 Thes. 3:2).
- B. I believe that one reason God established "positive prayers" as the norm in the New Testament is to enhance unity and love in the church. Some pray "negative prayers" that focus on sin in the church or its leadership; often such prayers feel judgmental and angry. Others in the prayer meeting do not agree with the view or tone that was expressed in the negative prayer, so the prayer results in creating an unnecessary division among some of the people at that prayer meeting.
- C. The Lord knew that praying for the impartation of positive virtues, instead of focusing on removing negative characteristics, would unify intercessors and heal some of the negative emotions against the church in the very people praying for the Church.

- D. I noticed change in my life in the early days as I prayed for the church using apostolic prayers with their positive language. Little by little I became more positive in my emotions and developed more mercy and kindness in my heart toward weaknesses in the church.
- E. The positive focus that comes from using the apostolic prayers can also help us to operate in faith. The apostolic prayers provide us with good theology for a victorious church. A man once asked me, "Why do you believe the church will be victorious?" I told him to look at the prayers of Jesus and the apostles for the church. My theology on a victorious church and revival was formed partially by praying the New Testament prayers. These prayers were given by the Spirit, so we know they will be fully answered. The church will walk in great power, purity, and unity before Jesus returns.
- F. Positive apostolic prayers facilitate unity, impact our emotions, and build our faith. The Father is the "Great Psychologist." He designed these prayers to help human hearts flow well and work together in unity with a spirit of encouragement and faith.

IV. APOSTOLIC PRAYERS ARE USUALLY FOR THE CHURCH

- A. The vast majority of the apostolic prayers are focused on strengthening of the church, not on the lost or the transformation of society. This does not mean that God is ambivalent about the lost or society or that we are not to pray for these things. The only prayer in the New Testament that is focused on the salvation of the lost is Romans 10:1 where Paul prayed for Israel that they might be saved.
- B. Why are the vast majority of the apostolic prayers for the strengthening the church? Because God's primary plan to reach the lost or to impact a city is by anointing His church with power and love. When we pray for the whole church in a city to be revived in love and power, the answer to these prayers will have an immense impact on the lost. Many unbelievers will inevitably come to Jesus and society will be changed as the church in that city walks in the power of the Spirit.
- C. We see this principle at work in the city of Ephesus. The preaching of the Word of God was so powerfully anointed that its influence "grew mightily and prevailed" across Ephesus (Acts 19:20). God's strategy was to raise up a large, anointed church with congregations across the whole city that would win a great harvest in all Asia. What happened in Ephesus was so powerful that everyone who lived in Asia "heard the word of the Lord" from Paul and others in this church.
 - ...so that <u>all who dwelt in Asia</u> heard the word of the Lord Jesus...²⁰So the word of the Lord grew <u>mightily and prevailed</u>. (Acts 19:10, 20)
- D. Considering the limited communication and transportation systems of the day, it seems likely that for all in Asia to hear the Word, they had to hear it not only from Paul but also from many believers who were a part of the large church at Ephesus that was inspired by Paul's anointed preaching.
- E. When preachers are anointed and the church is revived, the saints will speak the Word and do the works of the kingdom with great consistency and a multitude of unbelievers will come to Jesus.
- F. We do well to labor in prayer for an increase of the measure of the Spirit's anointing on the church, knowing that a harvest will surely result. No power can prevent the lost from coming to Jesus in great numbers when the church is revived and operating together in the anointing of the Spirit.

- G. We are to pray for the whole church in our area, not just for our ministry or congregation. Thus we ask the Lord to visit a thousand congregations with His power in the region of Kansas City.
- H. The Lord loves the whole church—every denomination and congregation that proclaims Jesus. He wants His people to love the whole church and not to write off any ministry, but pray for them.
- I. We will love those for whom we pray consistently. God knows that we will love the church more as we pray for it regularly. His divine strategy is for the hearts of the intercessors to connect and grow in love towards the church in the city for which they consistently pray.
- J. It is easier to love the lost in a city or nation because we do not know most of them. But some are quick to become frustrated and impatient with the churches in their own city because they actually know the believers in them. Therefore the Lord calls us to pray for the church so that we will love it while we are working to bring the lost to Jesus and impact society. He doesn't want us to despise the churches in our city because of their weakness; He wants us to love both the church and the lost.
- K. God is a brilliant strategist! He directs us to pray for the harvest by asking Him to visit the whole church—the local churches—in our area with His great power. It is no coincidence that most of the New Testament prayers are for the church!

V. THE FOCUS OF OUR INTERCESSION

- A. Two of the primary requests Jesus exhorted us to make of the Father when we intercede are for the release of a greater measure of the Holy Spirit and the release of a greater measure of justice.
 - ¹³"...how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!" (Lk. 11:13)
 - ⁷"...will not God bring about <u>justice</u> for His elect who <u>cry to Him</u> day and night...?" (Lk. 18:7 NAS)
- B. As believers, we received the indwelling Spirit at our new birth (Jn. 3:3-5; Rom. 8:9-11). Thus we do not pray for the Lord to "give us" the Holy Spirit in the sense of the indwelling Spirit; rather, we ask Him to release a *greater measure* of the ministry of the Spirit in and through us.
- C. Scripture refers to a greater measure of the Spirit on the church as a "greater measure of grace." In Scripture this increase is referred to as "a greater grace" (Jas. 4:6); "great grace" (Acts 4:33); "grace...abundant" (1 Tim. 1:14); "full of grace" (Acts 6:8, NAS); "growing in grace" (2 Pet. 3:18); and "grace...multiplied" (2 Pet. 1:2).
 - ⁶But He gives a greater grace. (Jas. 4:6, NAS)
 - 33...with great power the apostles gave witness...and great grace was upon them all. (Acts 4:33)
- D. We pray for the release of a greater measure of justice. Justice can be defined as God making wrong things right. There are two sides to justice: salvation and judgment. We see the salvation side of justice when God's people are healed and delivered. We see the judgment side of justice when the wicked—those who rebel against God's righteous ways—are stopped, removed, and even punished.

VI. THREE PRAYER THEMES

- A. I use three prayer themes, regardless of what type of prayer I am offering to God. The three general prayer themes are the *release of the gifts, fruit, and wisdom of the Holy Spirit*. The vast majority of the prayers and promises in the Bible fit into one of these three general prayer themes.
- B. *The gifts of the Spirit*: Praying for a greater release of the gifts of the Spirit involves praying for the release of God's *power*, including His supernatural *favor*, *provision*, and *protection*. We ask for a greater measure of God's power to be manifest in our lives and in the people or places we pray for.
 - ⁷The manifestation of the Spirit is given to <u>each one</u> ... ⁸for to one is given the <u>word of wisdom</u> ..., ⁹to another gifts of healings ..., ¹⁰to another the working of miracles ... (1 Cor. 12:7-10)
- C. *The fruit of the Spirit*: Praying for a greater release of the fruit of the Spirit refers to asking for God's character to be formed in the lives of others. We ask that the fullness of the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23 (God's love, joy, peace, patience, etc.) be established in those we pray for.
- D. One of the ways I pray for a person to have more fruit in his character and to be more godly is to ask the Lord to release a *spirit of conviction* and a *spirit of wisdom and revelation of God* to him. Being convicted of sin and understanding the truth of who God is will result in an increase of the fear of the Lord and fascination with Jesus and thus the formation of godly character in that person.
 - 8... He [the Spirit] will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment (Jn. 16:8)
 - 17...may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him. (Eph. 1:17)
- E. *The wisdom of the Spirit*: When we pray for a greater release of the wisdom of the Spirit, we are asking for an increase of understanding and insight into God's plans, will, and Word for others. Paul prayed much for spiritual wisdom and understanding for others (Col. 1:9-10). Praying for wisdom includes asking the Spirit for dreams and visions that give insight into His will for our lives as well as insight into His plans for a city, nation, business, church, etc. (Acts 2:17-19).
- F. These three themes cover the vast majority of the biblical promises related to praying for people or places. Over years, I developed prayer lists by applying these three prayer themes to my prayer requests. In other words, I pray for a greater release of the gifts, fruit, and wisdom of the Spirit when I intercede for other people or places, when I offer up personal petitions for myself, and during devotional prayer when I ask the Holy Spirit to help me love, obey, and worship Jesus more.
- G. For years I have used these three themes as a "grid" to help me focus my prayers for myself and others. I found that nearly every prayer request can be classified under one of these three themes.
- H. I ask for the *fruit of the Spirit* or godly character to be established in people as the Spirit convicts them of sin and righteousness, reveals the knowledge of God, and releases more of the beauty, love and fear of the Lord to them. I ask for the *wisdom of God* to be given to them so they would walk in God's will and plan for their lives. And I ask for the *gifts of the Spirit*—the supernatural power, favor, and protection of God—to be released to and through their lives and ministry.

Addendum: My Personal Application in Praying Biblical Prayers

I. THREE THEMES IN MY PRAYER LISTS

- A. During the years, I have developed my prayer lists by applying these three prayer themes to each of the three types of prayer. In other words, I pray for a greater release of the gifts, fruit, and wisdom of the Spirit when I intercede for other people or places; when I offer up personal petitions for myself; and during devotional prayer when I ask the Holy Spirit to help me love, obey, and worship Jesus more.
- B. For more than thirty years I have used these three themes as a "grid" to help me focus my prayers for myself and others. I have found that nearly every prayer request can be classified under one of these three prayer themes.
 - 1. I ask for the fruit or character of God to be established in people as the Spirit convicts them of sin and righteousness and reveals the knowledge of God to them and then releases a great measure of the fear of the Lord on them.
 - 2. I ask for the wisdom of God to be given to them so that they would walk in God's will and plan for their lives.
 - 3. I ask for the gifts—the supernatural power, favor, and protection of God—to be released to and through their lives and ministry.
 - 4. I encourage you to write out your prayer list, either in a notebook or on your laptop, and use it during your prayer times. We will pray more often and with greater focus if we develop prayer lists and bring them to our prayer times.
- C. When I pray, I usually use prayers that have been recorded in the Bible. The prayers of Jesus, Paul, Peter, and others are recorded for our benefit. I refer to them as the apostolic prayers because they are prayers prayed by Jesus and the apostles. Because God never changes, we know these prayers are in God's will.
- D. Below is a look into my own prayer journal. It reveals the names of people and places on my prayer list and examples of how I pray for them. I have provided only brief "samples" of my prayers so you can get a sense of what a more developed and complete prayer list may look like. I pray most of the prayers listed below for every individual on my longer list. In other words, as you read the prayer list below, understand that you can pray all the sample prayers for each individual on your own list.

II. MY PERSONAL PRAYER LIST

- A. My family: for my wife, Diane, our two sons, and their wives and children:
 - 1. *Fruit*: Father, release the spirit of conviction to them in a greater measure (John 16:8) and pour out Your love into their hearts by the power of the Spirit (Rom. 5:5). Fill them with love for Jesus and for others and with the spirit of the fear of the Lord (Phil. 1:9).
 - 2. **Wisdom**: Father, grant my sons wisdom to know Your specific will for each area of their lives—their ministries, finances, relationships, business ventures, marriages, and in raising their children (Col. 1:9–11). Fill Diane with understanding of Your will for her ministry and business and as a grandmother (Col. 4:12).
 - 3. *Gifts*: Father, give prophetic dreams and visions to Diane, my sons, their wives, and their children (Acts 2:17). Release the spirit of glory and the power of God in their lives and through their words. I ask for physical health for them. Grant them favor in relationships and in the marketplace and protect them from the attack of the enemy and from all sickness and financial attacks.
- B. International House of Prayer of Kansas City (IHOPKC) leadership team: for Allen Hood (and others on my leadership team):
 - 1. *Fruit*: Father, impart consuming zeal for Jesus into Allen's heart and the heart of each of his family members (John 2:17). Empower him to make known the glory of Jesus. Visit his wife and family with the revelation of Your love, the spirit of conviction, and the fear of God, and cause them to rejoice in holiness and righteousness. Lead them away from temptation (Matt. 6:13).
 - 2. **Wisdom**: Father, fill Allen and his family with Your wisdom, and deliver them from Satan's tactics. Restrain the evil one from trapping them in any way (2 Thess. 3:3). Give them understanding of Your will for their spheres of ministry and for their family relationships, finances, and circumstances.
 - 3. *Gifts*: Father, give Allen and his family prophetic dreams and visions that reveal Your love and glory to them (Acts 2:17–18). Cause each one to minister in all nine gifts of the Holy Spirit. Release the spirit of prayer on them (Zech. 12:10). Grant them physical health and protection. Release Your power when they speak or sing Your words to others. Let them experience what Paul experienced when the Word of God went forth from him in power (1 Thess. 1:5). I ask for unity in their family and extended family and that You fill them with peace and hinder all strife and division the enemy may seek to attack them with. Release favor as You establish strategic connections and open new doors of influence for them. Silence the assignments of the enemy and cut off all his work.
- C. Leaders in the body of Christ

IHOPKC is committed to praying for Youth With A Mission (YWAM), one of the largest missions organizations in the world. Therefore, I put some of the leaders of YWAM on my personal prayer list. I will give only one example, using founders and leaders Loren and Darlene Cunningham. I pray the same types of prayers for other YWAM leaders, such as John Dawson, Mark Anderson, and their families.

For Loren and Darlene Cunningham (YWAM leadership):

- 1. *Fruit*: Father, strengthen Loren and Darlene with Your power in their inner man by Your presence (Eph. 3:16–17). Fill them with steadfastness, patience, and hope by the Holy Spirit (Col. 1:11).
- 2. **Wisdom**: Father, give Loren and Darlene a spirit of wisdom for Your global purposes for YWAM (Col. 1:9). Grant them wisdom to know Your specific will for each area of their lives—their ministry, finances, and relationships— and give them wisdom in strategic alliances with leaders in the different spheres of society in the nations.
- 3. *Gifts*: Father, empower Loren and Darlene to minister in a new measure of Your power and all the gifts of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:7–10). Release Your favor on their circumstances and finances (Ps. 91; Deut. 28:1–14). Grant them physical heath and protection from the attack of the enemy and from all sickness and financial attacks. Let God arise and scatter His enemies (Ps. 68:1). Give direction, provision, protection, power, and unity to their natural family and to their leadership team (Ps. 91:1–13). I ask for unity in the YWAM global leadership team. Cut off all strife that the enemy may seek to hinder them with. Silence all accusing voices and cut off all the works of the enemies in their midst. Father, I ask for a corporate release of the Holy Spirit on YWAM's outreaches so that many people are saved, healed, refreshed by Your Spirit, touched by Your power, and set free. Cause a prophetic spirit to rest on their worship leaders and musicians. Open doors of finance and favor, releasing the wealth of the nations to the ministry of YWAM (Hag. 2:7–9; Deut. 8:18). Open the financial windows of heaven until there is no more need (Mal. 3:10–11).
- D. Leaders in government: for the president of the United States, the governor of my state, and the mayor of my city:
 - 1. *Fruit*: Father, fill the president, the governor, and the mayor with the spirit of wisdom and unite their hearts to fear Your name (Ps. 86:11). Release the spirit of conviction to their hearts (John 16:8). Help them to walk in righteousness, truth, and justice. Uphold them with a steadfast and right spirit (Ps. 51:10).
 - 2. **Wisdom**: Father, fill them with the knowledge of Your will, with all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that they will choose what is right and accomplish Your purposes (Col. 1:9–10). Release Your strategies with creative ideas to help them bring Your blessing and justice to those under their sphere of influence.
 - 3. *Gifts*: Father, release Your favor and power to establish Your will through them. Give them prophetic dreams that cause them to fear You and to know You. Silence the voice of the enemy and cut off demonic assignments against them. Grant them unity in their families and leadership teams by removing all strife (Rom. 15:6).
- E. Cities and nations: for the church in my home city, Kansas City, and in Grandview:
 - 1. *Fruit*: Father, grant the body of Christ in my city greater revelation of Your love and glory (Eph. 1:17–19). Pour out the spirit of the love and the fear of God on one thousand congregations in our area. Let them experience the height, the depth, the breadth, and the length of Your love for them (Eph. 3:17–19). I ask that Your blessing rest on every

- denomination and congregation and that You release the spirit of power and conviction through all who speak Your Word, so that Your people will walk in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit (Rom. 14:17). Reveal the majestic beauty of Jesus and the reality of eternity to all believers in my city (Ps. 39:4–6; 90:12).
- 2. **Wisdom**: Father, fill the leaders in the churches and the marketplace in my city with an understanding of Your will and specific direction on how to steward what You have given them. Give them creative ideas and strategies to cause Your kingdom to expand in this region and beyond through each local church and ministry in my city.
- 3. *Gifts*: Father, may the believers in our city experience a greater measure of power in their lives and ministries so that more people would be saved, healed, and delivered. Cause all nine gifts of the Holy Spirit to operate in one thousand congregations across this area. Release the spirit of prayer on each prayer meeting in every congregation (Zech. 12:10). Let Your Word go forth in power, and let it spread rapidly (1 Thess. 1:5; 2 Thess. 3:1–2). Cut off the plans of the enemy in every congregation. I ask for marketplace messengers who, like Job, receive economic blessing so that they will bless the poor in Your name.
- F. IHOPKC is committed to praying for Jerusalem, Israel, and messianic leaders. I have several messianic leaders, including Asher Intrater, Dan Juster, Eitan Shishkoff, Avner Boskey, and others—and their families—on my personal prayer list.
- G. For Jerusalem and the nation of Israel:
 - 1. *Fruit*: Father, release the spirit of conviction on the city of Jerusalem as You did in New Testament times when three thousand people repented on one day. Reveal the beauty of Your Son to the whole nation of Israel. Raise up the church in Jerusalem and throughout Israel to walk in the love of God and in purity without any compromise (Phil. 1:9); let them be filled with zeal for Your house (John 2:17).
 - 2. **Wisdom**: Fill Your people in Israel with the knowledge of Your will for every area of their lives and for their national assignment (Col. 1:9–10). Release prophetic strategies and creative ideas for the church, marketplace, national problems, and international relationships so that God's will and purposes come to pass in their lives, families, and ministries.
 - 3. *Gifts*: Father, release a greater measure of power on the saints in Jerusalem and throughout the land of Israel (1 Cor. 12:7–9). Release more of Your power through them as they speak Your Word with boldness and lay hands on the sick (Acts 19:11–12). Throughout the congregations of Israel, release Your Spirit so that people get saved, healed, refreshed by Your Spirit, touched by the power of God, and set free, even during worship. Let a prophetic spirit rest on worship leaders and musicians throughout the land and in all the houses of prayer in Israel. For the marketplace messengers in Israel, I ask for breakthrough in wisdom, finances, and favor. Open doors of finance and favor, releasing the wealth of the nations (Hag. 2:7–9; Deut. 8:18).

H. For Cairo, Egypt:

- 1. *Fruit*: Father, cause the people of Cairo to understand Your love for them. May they be consumed with love for the Father and the Son. Release the spirit of revelation of the majesty of Jesus and conviction throughout the entire church in Cairo (John 16:8). Release the spirit of the fear of God on all of Egypt. Raise up a mighty church that walks in righteousness and humility. Release a spirit of unity in the church, and silence all strife so that all Your people may be of one mind in Christ, with humility (Rom. 15:6).
- 2. **Wisdom**: Father, send understanding of Your kingdom purposes and ways to the leaders in Your church across Cairo and to political and economic leaders. Release prophetic strategies with creative ideas for ministry and each sphere of society as well as for national problems. Grant the church in Cairo and throughout Egypt wisdom and strength to stand for You in the midst of persecution.
- 3. *Gifts*: Father, release the power of conviction on the words of the believers in Cairo and all of Egypt so that when they speak Your words, multitudes will be convicted of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:8). I ask for the corporate release of the power of the Holy Spirit on one thousand congregations in Cairo so that people get saved, healed, refreshed by the Holy Spirit, and touched by the power of God. Let a prophetic spirit rest on worship leaders and musicians in each congregation and in every prayer ministry so that the house of prayer throughout all Egypt is mighty (Isa. 19).

You can use all these sample prayers for each individual or city you pray for. But don't be limited by them! I pray similar things for each person and city on my list, in addition to praying specific things that the Holy Spirit highlights for them. Making a list of those for whom you pray regularly and basing your prayers on the themes discussed in this chapter will make it easy for you to remember what to pray when you bring them to the throne of grace.

III. WAYS TO PRAY FOR THE CHURCH

- A. As a rule our prayers are to be God-centered prayers, rather than demon-centered or sin-focused prayers. This is the New Testament model of prayer. The major thrust of our prayers should be for a greater release of the ministry of the Spirit on the whole church in our city and for the impartation of positive kingdom virtues such as love, holiness, unity, hope, and peace.
- B. Below are ways to pray for the church using the apostolic prayers.
 - 1. Pray for the presence of God to be manifested in church services and for people to be saved, set free, healed, and refreshed by the Spirit during the worship, preaching, and ministry times.
 - 2. Pray that love will abound and that God's people will approve the things that God calls excellent (Phil. 1:9–10).
 - 3. Pray that the anointing of conviction will rest on the preaching of the Word so that both believers and unbelievers are impacted greatly (John 16:8).
 - 4. Pray for a spirit of holiness and love to prevail in the congregation.

- 5. Pray for a great increase of the gifts of the Spirit in the church and the manifestation of these gifts through words of knowledge, words of wisdom, discerning of spirits, healings, miracles, and so on.
- 6. Pray for a prophetic spirit to rest on preachers, worship teams, and ministry leaders, according to Acts 2:17.
- 7. Pray that the Spirit will open more doors to minister to unbelievers and that He will prepare them to receive the gospel (Col. 4:3; 2 Thess. 3:1).
- 8. Pray that the Spirit will motivate more believers to share the gospel and give more believers a burden for evangelism (Matt. 9:37–38).
- 9. Pray for the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of God, His will, and His ways to be given to leaders of churches and the individual members (Eph. 1:17).
- 10. Pray that believers will be strengthened with might by the Spirit in their inner man (Eph. 3:16).
- 11. Pray for unity among all the believers and all the families in the church (John 17:21–23).
- 12. Pray for an increase of the spirit of prayer to be released in the church (Zech. 12:10).
- 13. Pray for every family member to be saved and healed and for every family to prosper with secure, steady jobs (3 John 2).
- C. If we pray consistently and faithfully in this manner for the church in our cities, over time we will see both the church and the cities transformed before our eyes.