

Session 6 The Most Glorious Life: Empowered to Glorify God (Jn. 15:7-8)

“Let me drink from the river of Your pleasures as I delight in Your beauty.” (Ps. 36:8; 37:4)

I. THE GREAT PRIVILEGE OF LIVING TO GLORIFY GOD

We are on Session 6 tonight. We are going to postpone this series for the next six Friday nights but will pick it back up after that, and we will do the whole fifteen sessions. That is the goal and the plan. Of course some of the students and interns will be at home, but we will continue to do it on Friday nights. You can join with us and hear the complete series, if that is something that you are interested in doing.

A. The most glorious life possible is to live being empowered to glorify God by bearing fruit and by engaging in breakthrough prayer through intimacy and intercession (15:5-7).

I want to talk about the most glorious life, the most glorious life possible: that we can be literally empowered to glorify God. That seems like a nice religious statement, but think about that. People like us, weak and broken people in our humanity, we can be touched by the grace of God so that we do things that not only please God but show other people His excellent leadership and His glory. They get glimpses of what God is like when we walk out this lifestyle, then the Lord remembers it forever, and He rewards us for it forever. He is so extravagant in His generosity.

Like I have said over the years, our eternal rewards are actually Him just showing how He feels about the way we loved Him in this life. He is so generous, and He is so rich and so extravagant! He says, as it were, “I am going to reward you. I am going to show openly how I feel about the way you loved Me in this world, in this age.” So we can glorify God—we can reveal God’s leadership and His beauty and glory to other people—by abiding in the Lord and bearing fruit. What a remarkable, remarkable reality!

B. In 15:7-8, Jesus applied the “parable of the vine” in 15:1-6, emphasizing the promise and privilege of answered prayer that glorifies God. John 14 highlights the grace available to us, while John 15 highlights the responsibility of a believer with an emphasis on “you” which occurs 22x in John 15.

7If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done...⁸By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples. (Jn. 15:7-8)

Tonight we are going to look at two verses: John 15:7-8. In these two verses, Jesus is applying the parable of the vine and the branches from verses 1-6 which we covered over the last several sessions. Here He is emphasizing the privilege and the promise of having prayer answered.

Again, we can lose the glory of this. I can say things on the earth, and they move God’s hand in heaven, and it changes people’s lives, and people can see God’s beauty through it. Beloved, that is a privilege really indescribable in its glory, but we can read the passage and say, “Oh, yeah, that is cool. Wait a second! What? I can do that literally?”

Jesus said verse 7, “If you abide in Me.” That is number one. Of course He has been talking on that for six verses in the sessions before this. And here is an additional condition: He said, “And if My words abide in you.” We are going to look at that for a few moments. That is not a small thing. It is a very costly condition, but it is a

very essential one. It is demanding, but it is joyful and filled with pleasure. That His words would dwell in us powerfully, “If you do that, you can ask the things that you desire, and My hand will be extended from heaven, and I will intervene into the natural realm, and I will answer you.”

He says in verse 8, in effect, “And by doing this—abiding in Me and My word abiding in you and you asking things—My Father’s glory will be revealed in your life in the way I answer your prayer. And in this way, you will bear much fruit. And in this way, you will prove, you will establish, the truth that you are truly My disciple.” Jesus gave us clear evidence on ways that we can be sure that we are His disciples; we are not left to guess how this works. We want to be His disciples, and we want to know that we are hitting the mark. He says, “This is it right here.”

John 14, which we looked at for fifteen weeks last semester, highlights the grace of God that is available to us. John 15 highlights our responsibility. The emphasis in John 15 is the word “you.” It occurs twenty-two times. He is saying “Now, this is your role: John 14, here is what I have made available to you. John 15, here is how you are to interact with Me.”

C.If you abide in Me: The main activity of a believer related to growing in God is to abide in Christ. It involves three things: *talking with God, applying His promises, and obeying His leadership.* Abiding in Christ speaks of our on-going dialogue with God with active trust in His Word (promises, warnings, doctrines, etc.) and a spirit of obedience flowing from mutual affection.

Paragraph C: He says, “If you abide in Me.” Those of you that have known me over the years, this is one of my favorite topics to talk about and teach. Last week we spent an hour talking about some of the details of what it means to abide in Him. That is in Session 5 of this series—we are on Session 6 right now—so I am not going to go into it again, though I love this truth.

*Abiding in Him involves three things: it involves **talking to Him.** However, it involves more than just talking to Him. It involves **applying His promises** to our heart and **obeying His leadership.** There is more to these three things than just meets the eye at a quick read, but that was last week. I am going to overcome the temptation to remain here because I love this truth. But we are going to move on!*

D.My words abide in you: Jesus’ “words” refer to His teachings and what He speaks to us by the Spirit. We are to be absorbed in conversation with Him related to His teachings and promises. The greatest pleasure available to the human race is when “God reveals God to the human spirit” as the Spirit reveals and writes the Scripture on our heart (Heb. 10:16; cf. Lk. 24:32; Eph. 1:17).

16...I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them. (Heb. 10:16)

Paragraph D: Now He gives an essential condition. We cannot skip this condition. Many people skip this condition, and then they wonder why their prayer life is in the state that it is in. I am not saying this to be heavy. I am saying this to be helpful, so you will say, “Oh!” That is the path forward to having a far more powerful prayer life: His words abiding in us.

His words refer to His teachings, but His words also refer to those times in a contemporary way where the Spirit of God speaks to you in a direct way from the Word or from another person or a dream or a vision where the Spirit speaks to us. We are to talk back and have conversation with the Lord based upon this as well. It is not enough to just talk to the Lord about this a bit; we are to be absorbed in conversation with the Lord related to

His teachings and His promises. He wants us interacting, not in a casual way, but He really wants us immersed in this. I love to say this sentence and have said it many times: the greatest pleasure available to the human race is when God reveals God to the human spirit. There is no greater pleasure to the human frame than the spiritual pleasures. God is the author of physical pleasures, though the enemy counterfeits them. But for spiritual pleasures, He is the author of no greater pleasure to the human frame in this age or in the age to come than when God reveals God to the human spirit.

When He writes the Scripture on our heart, when it says in Hebrews 10, “He writes the Scripture on our heart,” that means He awakens our desire, and it is deeply satisfying. When He writes it on our mind, He gives us living understanding. Like the finger of God when He wrote on the ten tablets with Moses, by the finger of God He wrote on those tablets, and He would say, “By My finger I will inspire your understanding. I will energize your heart with new desires when I write on them.”

Paul talked about it in Colossians 3:16. He said, “Let the word of God dwell in you richly.” Again, this is not merely a kind of quick ten-minute devotional in the morning. I appreciate it if that is where you are at this time. My point is not to say, “Bah-humbug, you are doing good or doing bad.” I am saying that there is great wealth waiting for you when the Word of God dwells in your heart richly, but you cannot get that on the run. That takes intentionality. It takes a determination. No one does it perfectly, but there are great pleasure and riches when the Word of God dwells in our hearts in a rich way.

1. Jesus’ word abiding in us empowers us in several ways including the following:
 - a. To sustain an *on-going conversation* with Him (that we might love, serve, and obey Him);
 - b. To boldly and clearly speak His word as *faithful witnesses* in the cultural wars (Ps. 2);
 - c. To be able to *equip others* to follow Jesus and understand His end-time plans (Dan. 11:33).
2. David said that the Scripture is perfect and has power to transform and delight our heart. We are to be loyal to Jesus’ teaching as the only perfect and reliable guide to true spirituality.

***⁷The law of the LORD [God’s Word] is perfect, converting [transforming] the soul...
⁸rejoicing the heart...enlightening the eyes...¹⁰More to be desired are they than gold...
sweeter than honey...¹¹And in keeping them there is great reward. (Ps. 19:7-11)***

Paragraph 2: David said the same sort of thing. He said that the word of God, or the Scripture, or “the law of the Lord”—they all mean the same thing—“is perfect.” David said, “God’s word is perfect!” It has the power to transform our emotions and it has the power to bring great delight to our heart. It says here in Psalm 19—most of you know it—“The law of the Lord”—or the word of God as that is just another way of saying God’s word—“is absolutely perfect; it converts the soul.” Meaning it transforms our emotions. It is not only that, but that is kind of the last thing to go—our emotions being changed in a sustainable way. It rejoices the heart; it brings tremendous pleasure. It brings living understanding and enlightens our eyes.

David went back to the idea of the pleasure of the Word of God when he said, “It is sweeter than honey.” He said, “When the word of God touches you”—maybe not immediately but over time—“it is sweeter than honey.” When David said, “The word of God is perfect,” I have written here that we want to be faithful and loyal to

Jesus' teachings. It is the only perfect, reliable guide to true spirituality. There are so many distorted versions of Christianity and grace and spirituality.

The Word of God is perfect. It is the only reliable guide that gives us insight which, if we embrace it, when we stand before God we will not be disappointed. The Lord will say, "Yes, that is what I meant you to do!" We will say that it was awesome that we had that information in this age!

3. The Lord told Joshua that he would be empowered to be courageous, obedient, and prosperous by engaging in long and loving meditation on God's word (Josh. 1:7-9).

⁷Only be strong and very courageous...⁸This Book of the Law [the Scripture]...you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do [obey]...all that is written in it. Then you will make your way prosperous, and...have good success. (Josh. 1:7-8)

¹Blessed is the man...²[whose] his delight is in [the Scripture]...he meditates day and night.

³He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit... (Ps. 1:1-3)

The Lord visited Joshua after Moses died. Here he is after forty years in the desert. Moses is gone, and there is a crisis of leadership in the land. The Lord says, "Joshua, you are it!" I mean, Moses was really a central figure in Israel, in the community of about three million people at that time. He said, "Joshua do not be afraid."

Joshua was thinking, "I am not Moses! I cannot do this!"

The Lord said, "I am going to empower you. I am going to empower you with courage. I am going to empower you to obey. I am going to prosper you, but here is the key: meditate on My word night and day. Meditate on My word! It will inspire courage in your heart. It will motivate, inspire you to obey, and will transform your emotions."

I remember in my early years—and I have shared this many, many times over the years—in my young days, I loved Jesus, and I loved ministry trips, and I loved meetings—public meetings, teaching meetings or any kind of meetings! But I did not like reading the Bible because it was so boring! It was unbelievable to me. The only thing that was more boring to me than the Bible was prayer. I remember when I was in college, leading a college ministry at the University of Missouri, and I had to give a teaching every Tuesday night. I would think, "Oh, I have to study the Bible!" I could not make sense of anything. None of it made sense to me. I remember offering my advice to the Lord and said, "Lord, if You would just make this thing a little bit easier, a lot more of us would read it." And He did not change anything...but anyway.

I had no idea that one day I would enjoy the Word of God, so I know what people mean when they say, "I don't know. I can't do that. It bounces off!"

I can say, "Yeah, I know that!" But it was that verse right there in Joshua 1, "If you will meditate night and day." I thought, "Meditate?"

"Think on it and talk to Me about it!"

I didn't do it night and day, but I did start talking to God when I read the Bible and—it will happen faster for some and slower for others—after a while I began to love it! If the Lord would have appeared to me when I was twenty years old and said, "Yea, young man of God, you will have twenty-four-hour prayer and a Bible school," I would have collapsed in despair!

“Twenty-four-hour prayer! What did I do to deserve this punishment?” I mean it that would have been horrifying to me. A Bible school! That means we will have to teach in the Bible school! Oh my goodness! I had no idea that some years later I would actually love that. My point being, if it could happen to me, then it can happen to you!

You might say, “Well, yeah, but you lead the House of Prayer, so you are supposed to love prayer!” I did not start off liking prayer. I started off just like you with a human heart which did not connect, and it took time. Psalm 1 says the same thing that Joshua 1 says, that the man or woman who meditates on the word night day will be like a tree planted by waters bearing fruit in season.

4. One of the primary issues that is attacked globally in the end times is the teachings of Jesus. David prophesied that the nations would rise up in anger against Jesus’ leadership (Ps. 2:1-3), seeking to remove the influence of His Word from society (2:3). Many secular leaders will see God’s Word in a negative light, as though it were *bonds* enslaving them and hindering “human potential,” and as *cords* binding them to His morality, godly ways, and truth.

¹Why do the nations rage...²The kings...and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD...saying, ³“Let us break Their bonds in pieces and cast away Their cords from us.”
(Ps. 2:1-3)

Paragraph 4. On the subject of the Word abiding in us, this is not a small thing. When Jesus said, “Abide in Me; if My word abides in you,” this is a big thing and an important thing. It is doable for everyone. I have heard for decades, “I have ADD. I cannot pay attention longer than ninety seconds, and then I lose my train of thought!” and I said, “Well, read the same verse over and over again.” More people cancel themselves out of their inheritance. Do not cancel yourself out of your inheritance with the common arguments that everyone has, “Well, this generation, we just look at our phones all day long, and we do not know how to talk with God with the Bible open.”

“Put your cell phone down.” Well, anyway...it is not mysterious; it really is not. My point is not a rebuke. My point is: there is gold waiting, and it has your name on it, but God is not going to force-feed you. He is not going to make you do it, but if you will do it, like me—I do not want to scare you, but it took me a couple of years of staying with it. That does not mean that it will take you a couple of years. However, it took me a couple of years of staying with it, and then I started really liking it, and then I could not get enough of it. Then I said, “Lord, if this can happen to me, this can happen to anybody!”

Again, some of you that are younger are saying “Aw, I do not really believe that.” No, I did not like Bible study and the only thing I liked worse was prayer, but I loved ministry trips, and I loved meetings.

One of the primary issues that is going to be attacked in the generation the Lord returns is the teaching of Jesus. That is another reason why He said, “Let My word abide in you.” Be loyal to it. Be grounded in it, and be familiar with it. Be absorbed with it. In Psalm 2, David prophesied that the day would come—it is actually the generation the Lord returns—when Psalm 2 is fulfilled. I believe that we are in the early days of that generation. It is not a prophecy but it is a personal opinion.

Psalm 2, was 1000 BC, so that was three thousand years ago. David said, in effect, “There is coming a time where the kings, the heads of state, and the rulers of the culture—the academic, the military, the financial

leaders, the media leaders, whatever, the opinion makers of the culture—are going to bind themselves together to drive the Word of God out of the culture.”

You might not catch that when you first read it, but what they want to say is verse 3: they want to break God’s bonds off them because they see the Word of God as bondage. Psalm 2 is saying, “The time is coming when the leaders of the culture will gather together and say, ‘We are going to cast the Word of God out of our culture entirely. We are not going to be held captive in bondage to archaic, old biblical values!’” because they see it as slavery. We are in that day right now. I mean, this is the hour that this is being fulfilled globally and in a rapid way. We have to be grounded and rooted in the Word of God. The Word of God has to touch us so it is not only that we will bear stigma for it but we love the word of God. It is sweeter than honey to our soul.

5. John, like Ezekiel, was commanded in essence to “eat God’s word”—that is to devour and digest the Lord’s end-time message (Rev. 10:9; cf. Ezek. 3:1). By meditating on God’s word, we receive understanding of God’s love, leadership, and His end-time plans (Dan. 11:33).

1...“Son of man...eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel.” (Ezek. 3:1)

9...and he said to me, “Take and eat it [the scroll or little book]... ” (Rev. 10:9)

33...the people who understand [end-time message] shall instruct many... (Dan. 11:33)

Paragraph 5: John the apostle was commanded to eat the word of God. That is a strange phrase. It was an idea that God told Ezekiel, and I have the passages listed here. The angel told John, “Take the scroll! Take the little book! Eat it!”

“Eat it?” Yes, digest it. Do not be in a hurry. This thing has to get on the inside of you. And it is not just that we memorize a few verses. No, digest it! By meditating on God’s word, with God’s word abiding in us in this deep way, not only can we receive understanding of God’s love, but we can receive understanding of His leadership and of His end time plans.

Daniel 11 has a much-overlooked promise, when the mighty angel is talking about the generation the Lord returns, and he tells Daniel, “There are going to be people of understanding. They understand My end-time plan, and they will teach multitudes.” God is raising up people in whom the Word of God abides deeply and richly. God is going to use them to be people with understanding of His plans, not just of His general salvation. I love that, but specifically Daniel 11 is talking about His end-time purposes. There is going to be so much hunger in the nations to understand what is happening.

That hunger is awakening right now. I mean, millions of unbelievers saying, “What is going on? Has the train of history run off the track? Does anybody know where this is going?” Most of the body of Christ is confused about what is going on. “Are things getting better or are things getting worse?” Well, the answer is both. The darkness is getting darker, and the light is getting lighter, and the Word of God is a reliable guide.

The angel told Daniel, “There will be people of understanding.” I believe it will be millions, but there are going to be a billion new souls, so they will teach multitudes. You do not need a microphone to teach people. I believe that most of the teaching will be conversational teaching. I really believe that a vast majority of the teaching—though there will be some of those guys and gals with a million followers but for the majority it—will be conversational teaching in family rooms, board rooms, dorm rooms, and in coffee shops. There will be conversational teaching.

With social media, you could be an eighty-five-year-old grandmother who just says something on social media, and it might be something that goes viral and ignites understanding in millions of people, though you never even thought that you were a teacher. However, the Lord helped you put something together.

Some say, “Well, I am not really a teacher.” Yeah you are! You may never hold a microphone and talk to a Sunday morning congregation, but you can talk to three and five people, and you can talk on the internet. You do not know what God is going to give to you that might ignite understanding, even to multitudes.

II. ASK WHAT YOU DESIRE AND IT SHALL BE DONE FOR YOU (JN. 15:7)

Roman numeral 2: Now Jesus says this promise which we are so used to that it is easy for it not to move us or touch us. He said, “Whatever you ask for that is in agreement with My heart” is the condition, the obvious condition. You are going to say words, and the God of heaven is going to extend His hand when you say words. It is going to affect family members, it is going to affect cities and nations, and people’s eyes will open to see God’s beauty and glory in the answer to your prayer; you will as well.

A. Jesus promised that, when His people pray in agreement with Him, He shall answer them.

In John 13-17, Jesus emphasized 5 times His promise to answer “whatever we ask for” in God’s will (14:13-14; 15:7, 16; 16:23). One of the most effective ways to bear fruit is by our prayers.

7“If you abide in Me [intimacy with God], and My words abide in you [mediation on the Word], you will ask what you desire [intercession], and it shall be done for you.” (Jn. 15:7)

Paragraph A: This is such a massive, glorious promise, and, as a matter of fact, in John 13-17—these five chapters—He says this promise five times. What is such a big deal about that? He only mentions something five times in two or three subjects in John 13-17 which I believe is the greatest teaching given by the greatest teacher in human history. When He repeats it five times, it is top priority to get our attention. He is saying, in effect, “Do not write yourself off to having a boring prayer life that is not moving anything. Abide in Me; let My word grow in you, and see what starts happening in your prayer life.”

B. There is a deep connection between what we pray and how we think and live by abiding in His Word. His words are in our heart, and when we pray our words are in His heart.

Paragraph B: There is a deep connection between what we pray and how we think and how we live because the word of God is living in us.

C. There is no limit to the power of the life that is in Jesus the true Vine; the only limit is in our cultivating a life of abiding and engaging in prayer that agrees with Him. He responds by revealing His heart, giving us direction, blessing our circumstances, transforming our emotions, touching our loved ones, reviving the Church, saving the lost, releasing justice, impacting society, and so on.

Paragraph C: I have good news for you: there is no limit to the power of the life that is in that Vine. Jesus is the Vine, and we are connected! Jesus said, as it were, “There is no limit to My power. You stay connected to Me, you be absorbed with My Word, and you will be surprised how you will say simple words that no one else may

never hear, but My hand will extend forth into the earthly realm and people will see My beauty and glory—in part, of course; it will be just a glimpse of it—because of the way I answer you.”

D. Prayer positions us to receive greater grace to love and pray with power. Multitudes in the end times will walk in deep intimacy with God and release His power as a way of life (Acts 2:17-21).

Paragraph D: Prayer positions us to be energized to love God. I mean, we can pray our devotional prayer where we connect with the Lord, and then there is the intercessory prayer where we pray for breakthrough. When we pray, we are not earning God’s love, and we are not earning power, but we are positioning ourselves to be in a place to be a vessel of power more and more. Multitudes in the end times are going to be walking in this deep intimacy because it is clear in the end-time scriptures that multitudes will be moving in the power of God. That means that they are abiding in Him and His word is abiding in them, and that is why they will be moving in great power.

Acts 2 says, in essence, “When I pour out My Spirit in those days, everybody will move in dreams and visions. Signs and wonders will be released.” Beloved, there is coming a day of a manifestation of power through the saints to arrest the attention of the nations and reveal the glory of Jesus. Do not write yourself off!

“Well, I’ve tried prayer for a few years and it is pretty boring. You know me. I am really stuck in this, and I worry a lot. I feel rejected all of the time.” You are human, okay! Start abiding in the Word and let it abide in you.

You will be surprised if you are the one I just described. I have been surprised how the Word got a hold of me. I thought, “How did this happen?”

He would say, “It is the power of My Word. It is not anything to do with you being unique. It is the power of My Word. You actually started talking to Me about it!” And it worked, and it shocked me, to be honest.

E. While not every believer is called to preach, we are all called to pray. Prayer is essential for our spiritual well-being. We must make every effort to establish our prayer life, because it will not develop on its own. The Spirit will help all who desire to grow in prayer. The results are worth whatever it takes to cultivate a strong prayer life.

Paragraph E: Not every believer is called to preach in a public format obviously, but everyone is called to pray. Everyone is called to have the Word abide in them. Prayer is essential. We must make every effort to grow our prayer life. We do not want to just be casual and say, “Well, if I do, I do, and if I don’t, I don’t.” No! No! This thing is essential for our spiritual safety and not only that, but for our spiritual pleasure and for us to be vessels of the glory of God to the measure He ordained for us.

I want to do good for His name. I want to say things and do things—whether it is one or a million—but people say, “I love Jesus because I saw that in your life!” All of us have that call from the Lord to be able to say things and pray things and do things so others will say, “I love Jesus because of that!” Can you imagine anything more dynamic than that reality?

No matter how hard or difficult a challenge it was—and I really struggled for a few years with not liking prayer—but the results are worth it! Stay with it! Do not let somebody talk you out of it, and do not let some common, lame argument steal this promise out of your heart: that you can be a person in whom the Word abides and you

can be a person who prays prayers that release power that reveals the beauty of Jesus to people and surprises them.

F. Being a person of prayer is the most important calling in one's life; it is a higher calling than being a spouse, parent, pastor, preacher, or leader in the marketplace. We will all become far better spouses, parents, and leaders as we take time to grow in prayer. Intercession is our most effective spiritual weapon to support and help our loved ones. It is one of our deepest expressions of love.

Paragraph F: Being a person of prayer is the most important calling of your life. It is the highest calling that you have. I think it is really a high calling to be a husband or a wife or a parent, a pastor or a leader in the marketplace, or an educator or whatever, many, many really important callings. I have good news! You will be a better parent if your heart is alive and energized by the Word of God. You will be a better family member. You will be a better friend. You will do better work in the marketplace by taking the time to get your heart alive. Because more of you without the grace of God and anointing on it is not what your family needs. For my family, it is the same; they need more of the grace of God. I have to invest the time, and I have to have an alive heart when I am doing it or at least be in the process of getting one.

I have talked with mothers over the years who think that more of them is the answer to their kids' spiritual safety. I would say, "I really like you, but you are not that great! Nobody is! Nobody could make spiritual life touch their kid and awaken them with hunger for God. You need grace on your life!"

So take a little bit of time out of some of this and some of that—whatever, I am not going to meddle in things in which I do not have understanding—and spend that time to get a vibrant heart. I tell you, you will do better in your relationships, in your assignments, your workplace, etc.

Intercession is our greatest weapon. It is the most effective spiritual weapon that we have: breakthrough prayer. If you really love your family, which you do, grow a prayer life and take them before the Lord. Some of the deepest expressions of love you can give somebody, which they do not even know about, is taking ten minutes, fifteen minutes here and there—it does not have to be an hour—here and there. Bringing their name before God is one of the greatest expressions of love you can give them.

I was talking with someone who said, "Well, we are just going to be with them and feel their pain."

I said "Why don't you get the grace of God to get them free from the oppression on their life. That is what they need. Yes, it is good to be with them and feel their pain, but they need more than their pain felt by somebody who is human." Though I really appreciate that, as that is a real assignment in the kingdom of God, but we need power to break the oppression off them.

G. Jesus clarified that our highest priority is to "abide in Him" or cultivate intimacy with God.

This empowers us to engage in breakthrough prayer to release His glory. By cultivating intimacy with Jesus, we "soak in His beauty and glory" and then contend for breakthrough for the nations.

In 15:7, "Mary of Bethany meets Anna the intercessor" (Lk. 2:37).

I know that I am preaching to the choir because you all would not be here if you did not believe all of that.

Paragraph G: Jesus clarifies that our top priority is to abide in Him. He made it clear over and over in John 15. To abide in Him, just to put it in one sentence, is to cultivate intimacy with God. He made it top priority. If

we abide in Him, if we grow in intimacy, it empowers our breakthrough prayer to release God's glory. If I grow in greater intimacy, I am in a position to pray that breakthrough prayer for a family member, a grandchild, a friend, a team member, someone in our neighborhood. Intimacy is connected to growing in the "breakthrough prayer" grace of God. In John 15, we see it coming together: We cultivate intimacy.

I am just saying this kind of fun; I heard a lady say this the other day. She said, "We soak in the glory, and then we contend for the nations!"

I said, "You got it!" I love that phrase and said, "I am going to use that phrase!"

In John 15, it is Mary of Bethany meets Anna the intercessor. Locally it is Dana Candler meets Lou Engle. They come together; the intimacy and the intercession come together in John 15:7.

H. Intercessors burn out without a foundation of intimacy with Jesus (or abiding). Jesus is not just our King with power; He is also our Bridegroom with a deep desire for relationship with His people.

4 "You shall be called Hephzibah...for the LORD delights in you...⁵For as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you. I have set watchmen [intercessors] on your walls...they shall never hold their peace [be silent, NAS] day or night..." (Isa. 62:4-6)

Paragraph H: I have learned this the hard way. I was going to daily prayer meetings and not liking them at all for some time, but I was committed to go to them because my youth leaders told me, "You are never going to go very far in God if you do not have a prayer life!" So I read all the books on prayer that made me miserable about not praying, but I felt good about feeling badly. I thought, "Well, if I feel guilty, then that ought to add something to the equation." So I would read these books and feel miserable about not liking prayer, but thought, "At least I am reading the books to feel miserable!" I did not realize what intercession was. I was going to prayer meetings every day and praying for revival and thought, "Oh this is like, I don't really know...No, no, the Bible says that is where revival comes from!...Okay I will do it!...I will endure this thing if that is what I have to do to see revival in my generation, or in my area or whatever."

Intercessors burn out if they do not have a foundation of intimacy. That is what Jesus is saying. "Abide in Me and My words abide in you"—that is intimacy—"and then ask what you want and have breakthrough prayer." A lot of folks go for breakthrough prayer, but they do not let the Word abide in them, they do not abide in Him, and do not cultivate the intimacy, so after a while they burn out in the prayer meetings.

I have been leading prayer meetings for lots of years, and I have watched a lot of folks go three, five, seven years faithful in intercession for revival for the city, and then they die out. Then for the next ten years they say, "No, it is not going to work!" That is because they were doing intercession without intimacy. They were burnt out in contending for breakthrough revival when their hearts were dying out, and they were spiritually bored, and spiritually dull. I am not saying that negatively. I get it. I have experienced that.

The Lord really highlighted this to me in a really specific way from Isaiah 62, back some years ago. He was telling His people, "You shall be called, 'Hephzibah.'"

Like, "What?" That means the Lord delights in you. And then in the next verse, "And as the Bridegroom rejoices over a bride," that is the way God rejoices over you! "Therefore, pray night and day!" This is such a

remarkable verse in my life because I had been doing night-and-day prayer meetings for some years. I was doing verse 6, “I have set watchmen on the walls, they will never be quiet!” but I didn’t do verses 4 and 5.

I. The message in Isaiah 62:4-5 is that Jesus is our Bridegroom God who delights in His people.

This truth is essential to sustaining prayer in Isaiah 62:6. Both the message of the Bridegroom God (62:4) and continual prayer (62:6) are essential to the forerunner message in Isaiah. 62:10-63:6.

J. In November of 1995, I had a prophetic dream exhorting me to call God’s people, “Hephzibah.”

I heard a loud voice like thunder say, **“Call them Hephzibah, the Lord delights in you.”** The “Hephzibah message” is that God delights in us and rejoices over us as a Bridegroom rejoices over a bride. It is the same as the Song of Solomon message or David’s “beauty of God” message.

Paragraph J: I remember it was in November 1995, so some years ago, I was in a dream and on this big platform with the Lord, and there are thousands of young people. I later knew it was our Onething Conference which we had downtown for about twenty years. We had thousands; often twenty thousand young people would come to it. It was that, and I was seeing it ahead of time. I did not know what it was then, but I heard this audible voice like thunder say: “Call them Hephzibah!” Like, “What?” I didn’t even know what Hephzibah was. “For I delight in them!” The Lord made it clear to me. He said, “You proclaim that truth over them, and it will shift their emotional chemistry. For some people, overnight! For some people, it will set them on a trajectory to shift their whole emotional chemistry and then know I like them! I delight in them, even in their weakness!”

I came out of this dream, and the power of God was resting on me, and I remember thinking, “Wow! Where is that Hephzibah verse at?” I remembered seeing it once. This was like really terrible as it was a Sunday morning, and I had this dream at five in the morning. It was so powerful and so clear, it was like thunder. I remember it like it was yesterday.

And again, we were at our Onething Conference downtown, though we didn’t get down there for another five or seven more years, so at this time I didn’t even know that that is on the agenda. I am not even thinking about that, just that we were at some big place I didn’t know. And so I thought, “‘Hephzibah, the Lord delights’ where is that?” because the Lord said, “Tell them the Lord delights in them and that will awaken their heart and it will shift their emotional chemistry, some instantly and some over time.” So I remember that I was going to preach that Sunday morning and said, “I am going to share this! I am going to forget my sermon but I have to find that Hephzibah verse.”

It is Isaiah 62, but here was the problem: I had preached on Isaiah 62:6, “I have set watchman on the walls; they are never quiet!” I had preached that so many times, verse 6. I always started with verse 6! I never read verses 4 and 5. Like, “Earth to Mike: read verses 4 and 5 if you are going to read verse 6!” I had preached on verse 6 many times, calling people to night and day intercession for breakthrough revival!

And so it was Sunday morning. “I have to find that Hephzibah verse!” so I was looking at Isaiah, and I have my Bible all marked up, so Isaiah 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, you know, Isaiah 32, 33, 34, chapter 41, 42, 43, 60, 61, 62. When I got to 62 because I knew verse 6 so well, I flipped the page over because I thought, “Certainly it is not in Isaiah 62! I know that chapter!” Then Isaiah 63, 64, then Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel all the way to Malachi, and I could not find it! It took me an hour! I said, “What?” So I did it again, and now I was frustrated

because I had a Sunday morning service coming up pretty soon, so I started again: Isaiah 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, Isaiah 60, 61, I flip Isaiah 62, “I know Isaiah 62!” because I am saving time, dah, dah, dah...Daniel, Jeremiah, Hosea, Joel, Obadiah, Nahum, Micah, Malachi! Augh!!!!

So I broke down and did what men do not like to do. I asked for directions! I looked it up in the concordance, “Hephzibah,” and it said Isaiah 62. I thought, “That is absolutely wrong! There is no way that is in Isaiah 62!” I looked it up. “When did they put that there?” and it changed my life! I mean, I was supposed to say it to change others! I can do verse 6 prayer, breakthrough prayer. But pray prayers that God answers connected to verses 5 and 4. Intimacy with God would be the sustaining power to continue in breakthrough intercession! I said, “Oh my goodness! If I could feel God’s pleasure and delight in my life, I can do prayer meetings!” Prayer meetings started to become enjoyable, especially when we added anointed worship teams to it. Man, it really became good then!

K. When we pray in agreement with God’s will, our “weak” prayers move God’s heart. Our private times of prayer and the public prayer meetings we attend may not move us, but they move angels, and, more importantly, they move the heart of God. Never measure your prayers by what you feel.

Paragraph K: Jesus promised us in verse 7, “If you will pray”—and the idea is “in agreement with My will, by the Word abiding in you”—“your weak prayers will move God’s heart.” What I mean by “weak prayers” is the prayers that I do not feel them when I am praying them. Meaning I do not feel inspired. That is what I mean by “weak prayer.”

Beloved, here is how it works. We offer our prayer in weakness because of our humanity, but by the grace of God and the cross of Christ, it ascends in power when it reaches the throne of God, though I do not feel it. Often there are so many prayer meetings I go to where I do not feel anything! The Lord made it clear to me in some very dramatic ways which I will not go into and said, “Just because you do not feel the power of your prayer does not mean that I do not. Because you do not remember that prayer meeting does not mean that I do not remember it. Do not measure your prayer times by how you feel.”

And the Lord made it clear to me that what are, seemingly, in a practical way, unanointed prayer times, meaning prayer times where I felt bored when I was praying—that is what I mean by unanointed. I did not feel anything and, as a matter of fact, I felt like, “Oh, I am so glad this is over!”—unanointed prayers still ascend in power; and they move God.

When I found that out, I remember—I am not going to tell the story of when the Lord showed me unanointed prayers move God.—It was the only time I broke out, “The hills are alive with the sound of music!” I was so excited I wanted to jump like that lady, the Mary Poppins Lady, jumped! I saw that movie in the sixties; I remember it. Well, I was so happy. I said, “My unanointed prayer meetings matter! Oh my goodness! I can do this!” And then here and there I started feeling them, and then sometimes I do not and sometimes I do. I don’t measure them. I stay with it, though. I want to tell you again because you don’t feel it, remember that does not mean that God does not feel it or that He does not remember it. He promised you, “I will answer your prayer if you will abide in Me and in My Word; you will be absorbed with My word.”

III. THE FATHER IS GLORIFIED IN ALL WHO BEAR MUCH FRUIT (JN. 15:8)

A. The desire of the Father is that we bear much fruit. This is one way that Jesus glorifies the Father. Note a progression—to bear “fruit” (15:4), “much fruit” (15:5, 8), and “fruit that remains” (15:16). A disciple is one who voluntarily and diligently embraces the “disciplines” of Jesus’ leadership.
By this: By embracing Jesus’ leadership and refusing to yield to fleshly ways, God is glorified.

⁸By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.
(Jn. 15:8)

*Roman numeral three: Well, we go on to John 15:8, that the desire of the Father is that we bear much fruit and that we glorify Him in this way. Verse 8, Jesus said, “By this the Father is glorified: that you bear much fruit and you prove to be My disciple.” Now to be His disciple means that you voluntarily and diligently respond. Here is what a disciple is. It is **not** someone who just prays the prayer, “Jesus, come into my heart and forgive me of my sins.” I appreciate that prayer, but a disciple is someone who voluntarily and diligently embraces the discipline of Jesus’ leadership, because disciples live under the constraints and restraints of His leadership. He says, “Do not express your fleshly feelings and values. Restrain them, deny them, and obey My leadership.” A disciple lives under the discipline of the words of Jesus, not perfectly, but that is what a disciple does.*

Jesus said in verse 8, “By this”—by embracing His leadership and not just venting anger, and slander, and criticism, and complaints and lust and over-busyness, not just venting those things in your life but—“by this, if you will do this, you will be My disciple!” I love this, that we are not left at all to guess what it means to be His disciple.

B. Much fruit: Fruitfulness includes possessing love, purity, gratitude, etc. and *inspiring* it in others. It includes our good works or service to others in doing deeds of kindness, answered prayer, obedient love for God (15:10), and leads to joy (15:11), love for others (15:12), and witness to the world (15:27). Bearing much fruit is not mostly about how many people we lead to the Lord. A lifestyle of bearing fruit is in contrast to complaining, being critical or spiritually lethargic, etc.

Paragraph B: He said “You will bear much fruit.” Now we have covered this for several weeks in a row so I just have it there, but it is having the humility and purity in love and imparting it. That is what fruit-bearing is. Having it and imparting it, even to two or three people, and then doing good works, deeds of kindness; maybe you are only touching one or two people with them. Then there are these other ways.

Some folks think that bear much fruit means they lead thousands to the Lord. I like that, and that is cool, but very, very few people in history lead thousands of people to the Lord. There are only a couple Billy Grahams or Reinhardt Bonkes in human history. So when we bear much fruit, does it mean soul winning? “Well, I do not win souls that much.”

Soul winning is part of it as it is part of being a witness, and that is bearing fruit, but bearing fruit is much more than winning souls. If you are growing in humility, you are growing in gratitude a little bit, and you are imparting and inspiring others to grow in it, you are bearing fruit. You do deeds of kindness that nobody even knows or recognizes, though it was inconvenient, but you helped them, and they even criticized you, “Oh, is that what you are doing to help me? Get out of here!” They do not even honor what you did. Jesus still sees it, and He says, “You are still bearing fruit because you are doing deeds of kindness in My name.”

C. We can bear fruit in three ways—

1. **Character:** We walk out the 8 beatitudes in our speech and actions (Mt. 5:3-12) .
2. **Words:** We speak as faithful witnesses of Jesus and His message, which includes the Sermon on the Mount lifestyle (Mt. 5-7) and His views on sin, judgment, eternity, finances, etc.
3. **Deeds:** We demonstrate God’s glory through our practical service and ministry to others.

D.Jesus associated good works (which include our words) with releasing the Father’s glory to others (Mt. 5:16). God’s glorious plan is to transform the nations by using His people as vessels of glory.

¹⁶Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father.
(Mt. 5:16)

Paragraph D: Jesus associated good works with releasing the Father’s glory to others. I love this, these deeds of kindness. And, by the way, good works also include godly words, speaking the word of God. Not just words of encouragement—that for sure—but speaking words of truth particularly in this hour as we talked about a few moments ago in Psalm 2 when the kings of the earth and the rulers of the culture are assaulting the Word of God. They are saying, “Cast off God’s cords, His archaic, old-fashioned morals! Get rid of them! Let us enter into the full potential of our sexuality and our spirituality. We do not want to be restrained by God! No!” There is an attack on the Word of God as we talked about in Psalm 2 earlier.

Jesus said, “Let your light shine! Let other humans see your deeds of kindness.” Again they are not really dramatic, and mostly it is just ones and twos and threes who see them. Every now and then, more will see it, but do not wait for an audience. Just do them. Speak God’s words, whether it is in conversation, taking a stand for what God says, or a word of encouragement to another person which sometimes becomes a prophecy and you do not even know it. You just say, “The Lord says that He blesses you and He loves you,” and they break out in tears. You think, “I just said that He loves you,” and their response is, “Ohhhhh! I just prayed today that He would have someone tell me that He loves me!”

I have done that so many times over the years where I would say the simplest word, and the guy cries, and I thought, “There are a like a thousand verses on that.”

“I asked the Lord to tell me that today through somebody.”

You just do not know. Say simple things to people. Say words to them, and take a stand in the culture. It is glorious: God’s plan to transform the nation using us. You know He could just have angels come or waive His hand and transform nations, but He says, “No! I am going to do it through you guys. You are going to say simple things to one another. You are going to take a stand for My leadership in the culture. You are going to do simple deeds of kindness, and then in context to that you are going to abide in Me and grow in intimacy with Me. My Word is going to grow in your heart, and you are going to take time to grow in My word, and light will shine through you!”

“Well, I have never seen light shine through me!” You do not really see it when it shines through you, but others do, whether they tell you or not. Not all of the time, but here and there, which is a whole lot better than never.

E. Shine before men: The Church and the world have a very different message with conflicting values. Our power is found in maintaining our distinction. We are tempted to blur the lines in what we say to be more accepted by the people who reject Jesus. We must refuse the temptation to distort His message by removing difficult aspects in it. Jesus' teachings are offensive to the secular mindset.

Paragraph E: Shine before men. The Church and the world have very different values, obviously. Our power is found in maintaining our distinction from the world. Our values are in conflict. I am talking about with unbelievers. Many believers, myself included—and I have felt this over the years and I ask the for grace of God to help on this—we are tempted to blur the lines in what we say in the cultural wars that are going on. It is like, “Well, I am not real sure about what God thinks about that type of sexuality.” Well, yes, you are. You are really sure. It is in the Word! “Well, you cannot be really sure.”

We want to be accepted by people, the very people who hate Jesus! We want to be accepted by them. We want the people who hate Jesus to like us. We want to love them, but we need to say what He says. We refuse the temptation to distort the message. The way we distort it is by removing the difficult aspects from the message about His leadership. The premise is that Jesus' teachings are offensive to the secular mind. They do not like the sanctity of life, the sanctity of sex, the sanctity of marriage. They do not like the authority of the Word of God. They do not like His judgments at all. They do not like His end-time plans. They do not like many things that He says are excellent and good.

F. We must uphold Jesus' teaching on self-denial and sacrifice without minimizing the aspects that are more difficult or repellent to people. If we present only the comfortable and positive side of Jesus' message, then we present what is other than “the true gospel.”

Paragraph F: We must uphold His teaching. We are talking about shining light by what we say to the nations and to the twos and threes around us. We must uphold Jesus' teaching on self-denial. We have to uphold His teaching on His call to sacrificing; we must deny our flesh. We deny things we want because we love Him. We do not minimize the difficult or repellent things of the gospel. If we present only the comfortable and positive things of the message, then we are presenting something that is other than what is the true gospel. Many people will only say the positive stuff as though they are little bit embarrassed by the other side of Jesus' personality. Everything that Jesus calls us to is birthed out of love, and it produces love, if it is yielded to.

1. C. S. Lewis wrote of *resistance thinking* that is *against the world, yet for the world*. Our message is both world-affirming and world-denying. We proclaim *what God has called the world to be* in its dignity and destiny, while at the same time proclaiming *what the world has become* in all its depravity. (I recommend the book **Prophetic Untimeliness** by Os Guinness).

Paragraph I: C.L. Lewis said—I took a quote from a book by Os Guinness, which I mentioned here—C.S. Lewis wrote of “resistance thinking.” It was one of his main points. Meaning, we speak that which is against the world though we are yet for the world. Our message is both world-affirming and world-denying. We proclaim what God called the world to be in its dignity and destiny, but we proclaim what the world has become in its depravity. We have to say both, not one or the other. If we only present one, we are not presenting the true gospel. We might get more likes on social media, but we want the Word to abide in us. We want to shine light. I want to say words and deeds that have light in them and not just have the approval of people.

2. We are to proclaim the scandal of the cross with its two applications. First, Jesus died on the cross as the *only* way to obtain our deliverance. Second, His people must embrace the cross as a lifestyle. Refusing this 2-fold message leaves the Church powerless and in compromise. The idea of blending into the secular scene with music, fashion, movies, etc. to win people by becoming like them is a great mistake. If believers are indistinguishable from non-Christians, they are useless in bringing real change to the world.

Paragraph 2: We proclaim the scandal of the cross. The message of the cross is a scandal, that a man died as the only way for me to be saved and freed! I cannot be freed or delivered otherwise.

“There is only one way? I cannot do it myself? By a man who died on a cross, are you kidding? That is the answer?” To the secular mind, that is absolute foolishness.

*However the second application of the message of the cross is that you have to die to yourself, too. You bear a cross. That is the message of the gospel. When we deny that two-fold message, it leaves the Church powerless. We are not shining as light. The point I am making is the Father being glorified **by** our words and deeds. The idea of blending into the secular scene with music, fashion, movies, whatever, whatever, to win all of the people by becoming like them is a terrible mistake. We do not need to be rude, arrogant, or angry in our messaging. We need to be tender and humble. However, we are going to be faithful to the message. If believers are indistinguishable from the non-Christians, we are useless to bringing change to the culture. There is only one way change comes, and that is by the power and the glory of Jesus being released through weak and broken people like us, like millions of us around the earth.*

IV. BY THIS MY FATHER IS GLORIFIED (JN. 15:8)

- A. We show ourselves to be Jesus’ disciples by bearing fruit. There is no guessing as to what He looks for in determining who His disciples are. Imagine, on the last day, His acknowledging you this way. A fruit-bearing believer is part of Jesus’ gift of love to the Father. ***This is the most glorious life.*** To glorify God means that our life gives insight into and a demonstration of the Father’s glory.

⁸By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples. (Jn. 15:8)

Roman numeral four: “By this My Father is glorified.” There is no guessing about what Jesus is looking for in disciples. Can you imagine on the last day you are standing before Him, and He says, “You were truly one of My disciples!” Can you imagine Him saying that to you on the last day? Beloved, everything, no matter what it costs us, is worth Him saying that sentence. “Yes, you proved to be My disciple. I bear witness to your life, your weakness, too. You were not perfect, but you reached for Me, and you sought to do this! You are one of My disciples.”

Now it is not only that the Father is glorified; He is glorified by Jesus doing this in us. Catch this sentence: a fruit-bearing believer is part of Jesus’ gift of love to the Father. Jesus is going to offer you as His gift of love to the Father because you let the Word abide deep in your heart and you stood true to the words and you did acts of kindness whether you were appreciated or not, and you are a faithful witness, and Jesus will say “Father, look! Look what I did! They love You because of what I did!” You will glorify God, and you will be part of His gift to the Father. This is the most glorious life, I mean there is nothing you could do—a big ministry, a big

marketplace assignment, a big, big anything, I do not care—this is what the most glorious life is: that we can do things that give insight to other people and to the Father's glory.

B. We glorify God in our personal prayer life when we discern and delight in His beauty by treasuring, enjoying, celebrating, and making much of His name and beauty and then by declaring it to others. "God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him." **John Piper**

Paragraph B: We glorify God in our personal prayer life when we discern and delight in His beauty. Like in our personal prayer life, when I can see His beauty a little bit, and I delight in it a little bit. I treasure it. I enjoy it, and I celebrate it in my life. I make much of His name and His beauty in my conversations with others. I do not mean everything that you say to everybody all of the time, but we make much of Him, and we say it to others. We glorify God.

I love John Piper's quote, "God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him." When we are delighting in His beauty, the Father is getting glory in that expression. He has a weak and broken person who has seen only glimpses of His beauty, yet they enjoy it. And then somebody else sees them and says, "What is it I do not see?"

C. Our greatest dream is to love Jesus with all our heart and to do good for His name by living in a way that shows people the excellence of His leadership by our joyful embrace of obedience even in mundane and difficult tasks. It is worth it regardless how difficult or how long the journey. It is a great miracle for weak people to be used by God to show glimpses of His glory and beauty in a dark world filled with people who do not often or easily recognize His excellent leadership.

¹²The word of God is living and powerful.... a discerner of the...intents of the heart. (Heb. 4:12)

Paragraph C: Our greatest dream as sincere believers is to love Jesus with all of our heart, the first commandment. The grace to walk in the first commandment, our greatest dream, is the same thing to do good for His name. Can you imagine you—forty, fifty, eighty, ninety years on the earth—and you did good for His name. Maybe not to a lot of folks, but to the folks who saw you. In the way you spoke and the values that you embraced, you did good for His name. You showed God's beauty to them a little bit. To live in a way that proves to people His leadership is excellent! It is excellent by the way we joyfully embrace obedience even when it is mundane and difficult. We embrace it because it is His leadership. and we are saying to people, "His leadership is excellent."

It is a miracle for weak people like us—like the whole body of Christ—weak in our humanity is what I mean. We are strong in the grace of God, but it is a great miracle for people like us to be used by God to show glimpses of His glory in a dark world, in a dark world that is filled with people who do not often or easily see glimpses of His glory. God would say, "I have chosen you to show a glimpse of what I am like in a dark world where people do not see that. It is there, but they cannot see it." God would say, "I have an answer. I put you in that neighborhood. I put you in that job. I put you in that church. I put you in that family because they cannot see My beauty, but they are going to see glimpses of it through you." Beloved, that is the greatest miracle I can imagine, and that is what I call the most glorious life.

Amen and amen! Let's stand before the Lord.

Lord, here we are! Lord, I want to go all the way.

You would not be here tonight if that was not in your heart and your heart's cry. Sometimes it is stronger, and sometimes we lose that same fervency, but the Lord says, "You can get it back!"

Lord, I ask for the Spirit of grace across this room. Come and renew us! Holy Spirit, come and rest on us. Here I am, Lord. I want Your word to abide in me more! I want to shine the light of Your glory through the simple things I do and say.

Lord, here we are before You. Help us! Like a seal of love on my heart, Lord, Song of Solomon 8:6, is the seal of fire. Abba, we want a heart tender in love. Help us, Lord. Visit us in Your power. You said You would.

Come on up to the first line. The Lord sees your heart's cry. Even this is a statement of humility and hunger right now. There is nothing shameful about not desiring the Word. It means you are human. It takes the power of God to like God's word. It really does. Some of you do not have to come up here because the place is full, but all over the room and those on the internet joining us.

Lord, here we are. I want the miracle of an awakened heart, that the Word would abide in me. Lord, I ask for discouragement to be lifted off people. Lord, come and renew us! Come and wash us! New hope, Lord.