

INSPIRED WORD

February 5, 2020

PRAYER

We welcome You here, Lord Jesus. I welcome You here, Lord Jesus, in my heart. Come have Your way, Lord. Come have Your way in me, Lord. Come have Your way in us, Lord. We welcome You here in this place, Lord. We welcome You in our lives; we welcome You in our hearts, Lord. We surrender all to You, Lord. We desire You deeply, Lord Jesus. Holy Spirit, come with Your power; Holy Spirit, come with Your fire, come with Your love. Holy Spirit, take away all fear. Take away all anxiety; take away our concerns. Come Holy Spirit, let Your love overcome everything, Lord. Let Your love overcome all that I hold in the deep, deep corners of my heart. I want to be empty, Lord, that You may fill me with Your love. You told us a few weeks ago that You are in us, that Your glory is in us, that Your love is in us. Help us to experience all those things. Come have Your way, come have your way, come Holy Spirit. Come Holy Spirit.

SHARING

Several of the worship songs that we've enjoyed tonight are... what the Lord was telling me was that they were a sweet savor offering to Him. You look in the Old Testament, there are different offerings for different things. One of the offerings was a sweet savor as an offering is made and it's a sweet savor in the nostrils of God. And tonight what we've had is a sweet savor in the nostrils of God.

SCRIPTURE

It seems like several of the songs also talked about us loving God and God loving us, and He gave me this message for you guys tonight. From **Hosea 2:19-20** (this is the Lord speaking): *I will betroth you to me for ever; I will betroth you to me in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love, and in mercy. I will betroth you to me in faithfulness; and you shall know me.*

SCRIPTURE / SHARING

We had this phrase in one of the songs that we sang. From **John 1:14**: *And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.* And the last song we sang, we sang "the awestruck wonder" and that's the words that come to me when I think of being full of grace and truth.

SCRIPTURE

I was struck by "the awesome wonder" too and feel that we're in the throne room with the saints. From **Revelation 5:9-13**: *"You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals,*

because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth.” Then I looked and heard the voices of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders in a loud voice sang, “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!” Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea and all that is in them, singing, “To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power for ever and ever!”

CONFIRMATION

I just really want to confirm that scripture. Before we started that song, the first couple bars of it, I had just a sense of being transported into the throne room and being surrounded by the great crowd of witnesses and angels and saints who have gone before – and singing with us. We were not alone in praising our King.

EXHORTATION

All evening the word that’s been sitting on my heart is from that song “You Are” that we did earlier in the night. And it was really interesting because as we were singing this song, which is basically a whole bunch of titles of the name of Jesus, of God – You are holy, You are faithful, Savior, Friend, and every question’s Answer, every Reason why, moving, still, You are – and I I just thinking that, kind of like scripture, ... Mother Teresa used to say, “If you’re reading scripture and if you hit on something and it speaks to your heart and it like jumps off the page at you, stop! God’s speaking to you.” You don’t have to keep going and finish the sentence, the paragraph, the chapter. Stop where the grace is. The grace is on one word. “You are holy” and holy washes over you, stop and think about that; rest in that word. What does that mean? What does it mean for God to be holy? What does it mean for me to be holy? What does it mean to be holy in God? And just let those images come through and speak to your heart. Faithful. What does faithfulness look like? Has God been faithful? Do you know where He’s faithful in your life? Do you trust in the faithfulness of God? Are you faithful? Do you show up for Him? What does faith-filled mean? They said, “Who are you?” to the burning bush. And He said, “*I am who am*” (**Exodus 3:14**).

SHARING / SCRIPTURE / PRAYER

Last week Marilyn gave us a sheet of words and phrases to reflect on, words and thoughts and inspirations that have come up as we gather together, and the one that spoke to me is a call on our lives. **Jeremiah 1:5**: “*Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I dedicated you.*” I’ve often heard people say that they are given a life’s verse that kind of covers all the experiences of their time on this earth, and I rejoiced in that and I accepted that and I listened to God. And God gave me a verse: “*When you seek me with your whole heart,*

then you shall find me” (Jeremiah 29:13). I am with you always (Matthew 28:20). I have called you by name; you are mine. Do not be afraid (Isaiah 43:1). I was surprised because through the years those scripture verses have guided my life and they’ve kept coming. When I came to this prayer group it took about a year for the next word to come and it was from **Acts 18:9-10**. It’s a little passage where the Lord is speaking to Paul, who is going forth, who knows that God’s hand is upon him and that God’s call has been on his life. And this is what God said to Paul and this is what God said to me and this is what God says to each one of us tonight, for we seek for His call upon our life. *“Do not be afraid. Go on speaking and do not be silenced for I am with you. No one will attack you or harm you. There are many of my people in this city.”* We give You thanks, God, in all humility, that Your call is upon each one of us. Help us to listen; help us to follow, that we might know You and love You more.

SHARING / EXHORTATION

I thank you for that word; that speaks to me. Today I was in a situation where someone was saying some things and I said I can no longer be silent. When somebody says some of these things, I have to speak that there’s another way. But even as I was sitting here I was thinking I should have kept quiet. I should have let there be peace. And your word said I don’t have to be quiet. It’s okay, when the Lord calls, to speak, even though that may ruffle some feathers. Say it gently; say it with love – but speak.

SHARING / EXHORTATION

And how many times throughout the years have we heard the Lord say to us “Be not afraid; be not afraid for I am with You; be not afraid for I will give you the words to speak”? He has told us: “My name is greater than anything. Speak my name, speak my words.” And I thank both of you because I have found myself in that same spot. And as the Lord calls us, as the Lord calls me more importantly, I seem to find myself in that spot more often. And I guess it isn’t really very easy to speak up, as Fr. Paul used to say, “counter-culturally”. It probably wasn’t very easy for Jesus to get up on that cross either. Remain aware of God in your presence. Remain aware of His call, not just here on Wednesday nights but wherever we walk. His call has been pretty strong and I suspect that we all hear it. Now it’s up to us to respond.

CONFIRMATION / INSPIRED TEACHING / EXHORTATION

Just a confirmation but also just a last piece... Mary Healy, who was the third woman ever appointed to the pope’s biblical council, was giving a teaching on healing and she was talking about when we “go out”, we go out in power – in word and in power. And that’s what the Acts of the Apostles was about. Paul was sent out in word and power. So when you find yourself in situations “out there”... this here is never supposed to be it. It’s always supposed to prepare you for where you’re going to be “out there” in your lives and in your work places and in your kids’ lives and your grandkids’ lives and their friends’ lives. To speak with word and power, to not be afraid, because that’s when miracles are seen is when we bring the gospel out of this

place. God sends the miracles to pave the way. And that miracle can be a huge miracle or it can be a minor change of heart. Moving someone from step A to step B, just that little bit can be the hugest push to the biggest miracle God's ever done. What we see as the smallest thing, for God and the spiritual world, it was huge to get them from out of their stuck spot here to the next spot of trust. So don't be afraid, even when you don't always see it. Know that miracles are happening – and ask for them. Ask for God to move a heart. It may not be peaceful but as you said, if you say it in love and in truth and you're speaking the gospel, the good word, the good news of freedom, freedom happens. That's what we believe; that's why we're here. We're not just here to sing pretty songs. We're here to get fired up, to get powered up, to get filled up so we can go back out in the place where it's tough – “out there”. So don't be afraid of the miracles. Ask for them; they will come.