

INSPIRED WORD

May 3, 2017

EXHORTATION / PRAYER

We are gathered here tonight to give praise to the Lord Jesus Christ and give the Father glory and open our hearts to the Holy Spirit. Why are we doing that? We're doing that because we want to grow in how to live life in the Spirit and how to walk in His grace and in His inspirations every single day. And in this place tonight, Lord, we just ask You to pour forth that Holy Spirit, touch the hearts of Your people and release here in this assembly the gifts of praise and also those charismatic gifts that we might touch the hearts and the needs of our brothers and sisters here tonight. We thank You.

PRAYER

Thank You for Your holy presence here tonight, both in the Blessed Sacrament and among us as You walk among us tonight. Glory to You! We're here, O God, with joy in our hearts to praise Your holy name, to love You and to open our hearts to the love and mercy You pour forth upon us here in this place tonight. Glory to You!

SHARING / SCRIPTURE / PRAYER

It's such a joy when I walked in here tonight. A couple verses came to mind. The first one is **Psalms 48:1**: *The Lord is great and greatly to be praised.* And from **Isaiah 43:16**: *The Lord makes a way when there is no way.* These psalms put in MY mind that our God is a consuming fire. There is no other name under heaven which must be praised but the name of our Lord. Lord Jesus Christ, we thank You for Your presence. We thank You for Your presence in this place tonight. O Holy Father, we pray that You continue to show forth Your presence. O Spirit of the Living God, we pray that You shadow upon us, just continue to bless us with Your presence. We're just speechless. And all our words are for naught. We're just speechless in Your presence. We don't even know what to say. We just ask that You continue to lead us, guide us, direct us in all the ways that we should go. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 63:7-9: *The loving deeds of the Lord I will recall, the glorious acts of the Lord, because of all the Lord has done for us, the immense goodness to the house of Israel which he has granted according to his mercy and his many loving deeds. He said, "They are indeed my people, children who are not disloyal. So he became their Savior in their every affliction. He was not an envoy or a messenger but his presence would save them. Because of his love and pity, the Lord redeemed them, lifting them up and carrying them all the days of old.*

SHARING / IMAGE

This is a beautiful song. When we first started singing it, I have to admit my first thought was: Lead me to the cross? Oh great, more suffering! That's not what I want to think about right now. But as the song went on, the Lord gave me a vision. The cross was empty. The crown of thorns was resting on the top by itself. The Lord's cloak was draped over it, swaying in the breeze. And what He said was, "The cross is love, mercy, forgiveness, and eternal life won for you." For us, a victory.

CONFIRMATION / SHARING

I want to confirm that because as we were singing that song, the thought came to me that during Lent when I was praying about the things I wanted to do, and the sacrifices and things I wanted to make, I read a little reflection that said that as you do this, it all leads to the cross. And I was kind of like Laura, oh yeah, right. I didn't want to suffer much more than I am right now, but it's like, okay Lord, I know that's where we go in Lent. But then the next thing was exactly what she said. When it leads you to the cross, it leads you to the resurrection, which is the victory. And so this is confirming that we get led to the cross but the resurrection leads us to the victory of Jesus Christ.

SHARING

It's really powerful, you know, that God the Father sent His Holy Son, Jesus Christ, to die on His cross for us. And the other thing that came to mind when singing this song, leading ourselves to the cross, we realize we have a need. We put our burdens at the cross and that the Lord Jesus Christ has taken those. And in the same way, eventually, when we do an evangelistic songfest for the people who don't know Christ, here we have a wonderful gift. We can show or lead them to the cross of Christ.

PROPHECY / SCRIPTURE

We sang, "Come, Lord Jesus, come" and I heard Him saying, "Come to Me" and also the reading that we hear throughout the liturgical year, a couple different times I think, from the Easter Vigil. From **Isaiah 55:1-5**: *Thus says the Lord, "All who are thirsty, come to the water; you who have no money, come, receive grain and eat! Come without paying and without cost. Drink wine and milk. For why spend your money for what is not bread, your wages for what fails to satisfy? Heed me, and you shall eat well, you shall delight in rich fare. Come to me heedfully; listen so that you may have life. I will renew you with an everlasting covenant, the benefits assured to David. As I made him a witness to the people, a leader and commander of nations, so shall you become a nation you knew not, a nation that knew you not shall run to you because of the Lord, your God, the Holy One of Israel, who has glorified you.*

CONFIRMATION

To confirm that, I have the same scripture open.

SHARING

I had this funny little word from the Holy Spirit all during the first song and all throughout the other songs. And I thought it was kind of interesting. I was thinking of the Holy Spirit on steroids. Can the Holy Spirit be on steroids? Maybe so.

SCRIPTURE / SHARING / EXHORTATION / SENSE

From the **Book of Ezra**, which is not a book I turn to very frequently; it's pretty buried in the Old Testament. The chapter heading is: The Return from Exile and the Rebuilding of the Temple. I'm not going to read the whole thing because it's kind of long, but Cyrus, who is the king of Persia, acknowledged that God had spoken to him, and he allowed the Jewish people to go back. In fact, he commissioned them to go back and rebuild the temple. And the line that just struck me was from **chapter 1, verse 5** which says: *And then the heads of the families of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests and the Levites, in fact, all whose spirits had been roused by God, prepared to go and rebuild the temple of Yahweh in Jerusalem.* And the neighbors gave them everything they needed, and gold and animals and materials and voluntary offerings to help them on their way to do that building. And furthermore, King Cyrus sent along a lot of things as well, including all the old vessels of the temple that had been stolen, for them to go back and repopulate the temple. But what just popped for me as I was reading that is that it was their spirits that had been roused by God in all these people to do this missionary work and to rebuild the home of the Lord where they could worship Him at that time in the way that was the performance of their understanding. And I guess my question to us is: Is our spirit roused by God to go and rebuild the temple of our lives? In our own homes? In the places where God calls us so that we can worship Him and lead others in worship of Him? And if we do step out in that faith, we don't have to do it by ourselves. God will provide those who will also be the ones who can't go with us but will send what we need to get the job done. I guess it's just that sense of we're not alone. If God ever calls you to missionary, to go share the gospel, either across the street or across the world, He never sends you alone. He sends you what you need to get the job done for His glory.

SENSE / EXHORTATION / PRAYER / SCRIPTURE

As we were singing that song, there was the word expectancy, as we prayed and sang that song about Jesus being mighty to save. Do we expect Him to be mighty to save in the circumstances of our life? Do we expect Him to be mighty to save when we walk out of here? Do we expect Him to be mighty in our lives as we open our hearts to the Holy Spirit here? Can we say amen in our hearts? Lord, we are expecting, we are expectant to move in Your grace here tonight. We're expectant that Your Holy Spirit will touch and transform. We're expectant for Your gifts, Lord, to be made manifest. We thank you! We thank You! You are the Lord and You are mighty. What we expect, O God, is that Your graces will pour into our hearts as You have promised in the Holy Spirit. And we say amen. And we say let it be done to me. Glory to you, Lord, praise You! Ask and we shall receive; seek and we shall find; knock and the door

shall be opened (**referencing Matthew 7:7**). Brothers and sisters, those words are true. So now let's ask Him. Come, Holy Spirit. Ask Him to come unto you. Ask Him to release the gifts in you. Ask Him to give courage to you. Ask Him to give expectancy to you. Say, "Here I am. Here I am, Lord, and I expect, O God, to hear Your voice speak to me. I expect an image, Lord. I expect a scripture, I expect a word. Yes, O Lord, to me, to me."

SHARING

We just thank the Lord for His great love the Father sends to us. He sent His only Son, Jesus Christ, to die on the cross for us. Plus, He sent His Holy Spirit. And here we receive this Holy Spirit of anticipation and confirmation. But like any other gift, if you put it on a shelf, what good does it do you? Instead, scripture says in over 50 different references about claiming the abundance of the promises of God. It's up to us to be there to claim the well of the Holy Spirit to work through each one of us.

CONFIRMATION / SCRIPTURE

I'd like to stay with Cece's telling of rebuilding the temple of the Lord because what I got was from the prophet Haggai. He didn't write much, just a couple chapters. But there's a lot in it. It's also about the people coming from the exile. They came to rebuild the temple, those who were moved by the Spirit. You might remember when they came and laid a foundation, the elders had seen the old temple what was huge, rich, opulent. The new temple was nothing like it. The old temple was funded by the incredible amount of wealth that Solomon had. The second temple was built from what money was left over from what Cyrus sent. But what it was really built with was trust in God, confidence in His love. People were stripped of their pride. They put themselves as the currency for the building of that temple. And yet they cried because it was so much smaller looking. But to God it was so much bigger. But Haggai goes with what he says and I think there's a lesson in what we do with our temples. It's not what we see. It's not what matters to the world. It's what matters to God. **Haggai 2:3-9**: *So who is left among you that saw this house in its former glory? How do you see it now? Is it not in your sight as nothing? For I am with you, says the Lord of hosts, according to the promise that I made you when you came out of Egypt. My Spirit abides among you; fear not. For thus says the Lord of hosts: Once again, in a little while, I will shake the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, so that the treasures of all nations shall come in, and I will fill this house with splendor, says the Lord of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, says the Lord of hosts. The latter splendor of this house shall be greater than the former, says the Lord of hosts; and in this place I will give prosperity, says the Lord of hosts.*

INSPIRED TEACHING / EXHORTATION

We often look at the temple of our life and often it has cracks and weaknesses. But like Katarina says, God sees differently. And the Hebrews needed to have the original temple before they could have Jesus, the New Covenant, the new sacrifice, the new temple. He broke

through the veil that separated the Holy of Holies from the people. And it is said that the veil was torn in two. And so, it now wasn't that only the high priests could go in once a year just for a few moments, but we can all go in and approach the Holy of Holies, all the time, and have that new, intimate, amazing, incredible relationship with God, the Almighty, in Jesus. But sometimes God works in steps. And He had to build the first temple and teach them how to use it, teach them how to worship. And in our life, sometimes He does simple things too, or different things, so He can teach us what we need for when He's ready to reveal the next thing that's then greater. So if you're stuck on step one and you're feeling stuck, just know that it's preparation, that God in heaven, where He's calling us home to be in His presence for eternity, has a plan. And He built it logically and He's a good papa. And He doesn't throw the amazing at a child who can only receive the simple. He takes us one step at a time through our journey of faith and so we are able to enter into that Holy of Holies and be in His presence and then enter into the grand Holy of Holies with Jesus in heaven for eternity because we're ready.

WORD OF KNOWLEDGE

As we hear all these words and sing these songs and fall on our knees to Jesus, I just have the sense that there is a person here, and you don't need to identify yourself, but I feel that the Lord is really calling to you in a special way, maybe more deeply than ever before. Jesus, His heart, is all you're waiting for and when He says, "Come", that is really speaking to your heart. And He just wants you to know that all you have to do is say yes. Yes, Lord, I don't know where You'll lead me; I don't know what You'll ask of me, but I hear that You are trustworthy. And He just wants you to say yes and then let Him just love you with the tremendous love that He has and begin a new chapter of yes in your life.

CONFIRMATION

I confirm that. I keep getting the story of the prodigal son (**Luke 15:11-32**) going over and over in my head and it's not just the father, the story is God the Father restoring Him to us and redeeming us and filling us with fresh water.

SCRIPTURE

John 1:1: *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning; and through him all things came into being. Not one thing came into being except through him. What has come into being in him was life, life that is the light of all. The light shines in darkness and darkness could not overpower it.*

SCRIPTURE

From the **Letter of James 1:2-6:** *It kind of hits on keys points that have been brought up tonight. Count it all joy, my brethren, when you meet various trials, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God,*

*who gives to all men generously and without reproaching, and it will be given him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. **James 1:16-18.** Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. Every good endowment and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures. **James 1:22-25.** But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if any one is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who observes his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. But he who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer that forgets but a doer that acts, he shall be blessed in his doing.*

WORD OF KNOWLEDGE / SCRIPTURE

Something keeps pressing on me and I think it's for that person Barbara mentioned earlier, somebody who is dealing with darkness in their heart, mind, spirit, anywhere it might be. And the Lord is offering all the light needed. Would you pray with me in your hearts, whoever you are, **Psalm 23:1-6?** *The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want; he makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil, and my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.*

IMAGE

One thing comes to mind as we were praying, as we were singing. I just kept on getting this image of a person chasing something ephemeral, in other words, something without substance, like an illusion, going after this thing. And the word that came behind that was, "No, come to Me. Put your treasure where your heart is, in Me, and not of the things of this world. Lay your trust in Me."