

INSPIRED WORD

May 10, 2017

PRAYER

Lord, let our hearts be free with praise for You here tonight. We open our hearts to You. Hear us. We thank You, Lord Jesus, for being here in a special way tonight, for Your presence among Your people as You walk among us. Thank You! We praise You, O God.

SCRIPTURE

The Year of the Lord's Favor, **Isaiah 61:1-3**: *The Spirit of the sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives, and the release from darkness for the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; and to provide for those who grieve in Zion; to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit.*

PRAYER / EXHORTATION

That's Your promise, Lord, proclaiming that You are indeed the Messiah, anointed by the Holy Spirit, with the fullness of the Holy Spirit. And, Lord, as we gather here tonight, can we echo Your words? Can we ask Him to fill us with the Holy Spirit, to touch our hearts and enable us to yield to the promptings of that Spirit this evening and in this place, and to do that out of love? Can you do that, people of God? Can you say yes to that? Lord, here we are, available to You. And we don't want any type of fear or worry to stop us. So anoint us, O God. Anoint us with that oil of gladness. Anoint us, O Lord, with Your Holy Spirit. We are ready to be obedient to You, to Your touch and to Your word.

SHARING / SCRIPTURE

His love never fails. Harkening back to what Chuck sent out in the eblast this week, one of the paragraphs stood out to me and I felt like I got this scripture that has stayed with me. Chuck wrote: The Lord continues to ask us to turn over to Him all of the things we are concerned about, all of the things in life that we are worried about, all of the things that drag us down. He just wants to hold our hand, strengthen us, comfort us, guide us, and give us rest, if only we would let Him. So from **Isaiah 41:9-14**, the word of the Lord says this: *I took you from the ends of the earth, from its farthest corners, I called you. I said, "You are my servant, I have chosen you and have not rejected you, so do not fear, for I am with you, do not be dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you and help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. All who reach against you will surely be ashamed and disgraced, those who oppose you will be as nothing and will perish. Though you search for your enemies, you will not find them; those who*

wage war against you will be as nothing at all. For I am the Lord your God who takes hold of your right hand; and says to you, "Do not fear, I will help you." Do not be afraid, oh worm Jacob, oh little Israel! For I Myself will help you, declares the Lord, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.

CONFIRMATION

I confirm what was just spoken. Because even before she spoke about that, I was thinking about how when you return something to the store, you've gotta have a receipt, and that's not how it works with the kingdom because Jesus said that our debt is paid. It's all said and done. You don't need a receipt. All you need is to trust Him. Just take His hand and trust Him. We can do this.

SCRIPTURE / SHARING

I opened to Mark today and was reading the part about how there was a storm at sea and they all freaked out, all the disciples, and they had to wake up Jesus because they were terrified **(Mark 4:37-40)**. And He says, "Why are you afraid, you of little faith?" Then he got up and rebuked the wind and the sea. You know, sometimes as parents we figure our kids have to learn. But Jesus, even though He was probably a little bit annoyed, He still got up with patience and He calmed the storm. And although He knew nothing would happen, they didn't know, and He wanted to calm their fears.

SHARING

I have an image of the Holy Spirit that might be helpful. In California for awhile, I drove down the coast to work almost every day. And the power of the waves and the massive size of the ocean touched me every time, no joke, every time. But I also watched the seals, the dolphins and the surfers. They didn't just watch the waves; they rode them. And that's how the Holy Spirit is for us, how God is for us. He can be powerful and beautiful but distant. Or we can dive in, get up close and personal and say, "I'm here, Lord." The Church and the scriptures act as the board, the surfboard, that we stand on and they give us the grounding. But the Holy Spirit is the wave itself, and that's what we ride. He supports us and moves us along and shows us where to surf and gives us the strength to surf. And sometimes it's resting and waiting, and sometimes it's a lot of fun. But it's always a wild ride. Come, Holy Spirit, come.

PROPHECY / SCRIPTURE / PRAYER

Come, Lord. Whoever is thirsty should come to Me, whoever believes in Me should drink. And as the scripture says, streams of life-giving water will pour out of His side **(referencing John 7:38)**. Lord, make us thirsty. Make us thirsty here, now. Make us thirsty for more of You. Make us thirsty for Your Holy Spirit. Make us thirsty, Lord. Let the words of these songs not be words of a song but the prayer of our heart. Make us thirsty, Lord. Let us thirst for You, O Jesus.

SCRIPTURE / PRAYER

That at the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that He is Lord to the glory of the Father (Philippians 2:10-11). Lord Jesus, we pray and exalt Your holy name for You alone are worthy. Worthy, worthy, worthy is the Lamb. Worthy is the Lamb, worthy, worthy, worthy is the Lamb of God. O holy, holy, holy are You, O Lord. We just praise and exalt Your holy name, for You alone are worthy, worthy of all praise, worthy of all glory. Hallelujah to the Lamb, the holy, risen Lamb of God.

INSPIRED TEACHING / EXHORTATION

As Jimmy was praising God and saying worthy, worthy, worthy is Your name, it reminded me of what we know. When we gather together to praise God, we're not doing it by ourselves, because in heaven around the throne of God, forever and ever, 24/7 in our time, but forever and ever, praise and the worship of God is going on by the saints and the angels. And as we enter into praise and worship, we are joining that chorus of bringing praise and glory to God. As our hearts turn toward Him, let's just imagine all the saints and angels and thank Him that we too can join in that praise, saying worthy, glory, honor and praise be to You, Almighty God.

SHARING

I got up early this morning and it's kind of cool, but peaceful. There was no hint of sun or the morning coming yet, but I heard the birds in the trees greeting a new day. And with all creation, I sing. That's what it reminded me of this morning when I heard the birds sing before morning.

SCRIPTURE

The Holy Spirit led me to this Scripture verse and I think it's especially apropos for those who are receiving confirmation. From **Joel 2:26-29**: *You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, who has dealt wonderfully with you. And my people shall never again be put to shame. You shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I, the Lord, am your God and there is none else. And my people shall never again be put to shame. And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. Even upon the menservants and maid servants in those days, I will pour out my spirit.*

SHARING / INSPIRED TEACHING

Back in the days of old, only the great high priest could enter the sacred heart of the tabernacle where the presence of the Lord was kept in the Ark of the Covenant. And they had to tie a rope around his waist when he entered that room alone because if he made a mistake or did something wrong, he was struck dead. I was thinking about what Ruth said earlier about when we come to Jesus, we can lay our sin down without having receipts, without having to worry about waiting in line, or getting a grouchy clerk, or making a mistake. And Jesus bought

for us, on the cross, forgiveness of everything. Now, because of what He did at His crucifixion, the curtain in that Holy of Holies that only the great high priest could enter, was ripped. It was ripped. It ripped so that we can enter into the presence of God the Most High. And what a treasure that is to come into His presence and to be able to just let Him love us, to be able to lay every sin, every worry, every fear, every sorrow at His feet. He understands. He loves. And we can enter into that presence. What a marvelous, wonderful gift. He wants to free us from anything that is holding us back from fully knowing Him and experiencing everything He has to give us. We just need to accept it.

SHARING / PRAYER

Hopefully this makes sense. Holy Spirit, make this make sense. I love to sing and sometimes I get a song that I can't stop singing but even the songs I like, I get tired of them after a little while. Once in awhile there's a song that I could sing until I was out of breath, until I died. And that last song we just sang this evening is that kind of song. And I tried to put that into words about how I felt. And all I could think of was a prayer that I say too quickly. And it goes like this: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. And if that isn't good news, I don't know what is. God is so awesome and yet He's so close to us. And it's hard to put into words.

We have two testimonies tonight about how the Holy Spirit has changed a person's life or how the Spirit has operated within the person.

EXHORTATION

Before I start my testimony, I want to say something. Laura mentioned the splitting of the curtain that allows us to draw closer to God, right? Well, I want to ask you, now if you want to, but if not, next week from now on. Jesus Christ is present to us physically right there. We know He's present to us spiritually wherever we go. If the curtain has been broken, why are there so many empty chairs up front? I want to ask you, please, draw as close physically as you can to the Lord every day. The curtain has been broken. We don't have to sit far away any more. Do a physical, simple move, break the comfort that you're in and move up. Let's get away from the complacency that's settling in our hearts and in our bodies and let's physically do something different next week, ok? Thank you.

SHARING / EXHORTATION

You know, many of you are probably too young to remember the movie that I'm going to talk about but the theme song started like this: How can I begin to tell the story of how great a love can be? You may remember that. How can I begin to tell the story of how great a love can be? So how can I begin to tell the story of how great the love between God and me is? The song has told it for me. I've been in pain, and I'm still in pain, but it's different because God now bears the pain mostly for me, if not with me. I've been lost at times and when I take my eyes

off the Lord, I'm lost again. But He once told me that He would never forsake me or abandon me. And it took me awhile to believe and trust that and to really accept that, but I do now. I used to be afraid to talk about religion. And I never was far away from God but I didn't share that with people. But how can I be in love with someone that loves me so much that He unconditionally, unconditionally forgives any sin that I do and expresses His love to me? How can I do that without telling people about it? My gosh, I go see a movie and I get excited about a movie and I tell you about it. I go to Disneyland and I get excited about Disneyland so I tell you about it. I go visit my granddaughters and I get excited, and tired, but I tell you about it if you give me a chance. So how can I not tell you about a God who loves me and forgives me and changes my life? How can you not justify it? Ray has a story; Rick has a story; Ruth has a story; Laura has a story; everybody, right? All of you can testify. So my first challenge was to physically do something that allows you to draw closer to God. My second challenge is to testify. Quit being afraid. How often has the Lord told us, "Be not afraid"? How often has the Lord told us, "I love you"? Do you share that with people? If you don't, you should start. And if you do, you should increase the frequency. You see, the Holy Spirit has changed me. I went to school with Catholic nuns. I'll share that story with you sometime because it was in public school. But I had 12 years of Catholic education with Roman Catholic nuns. So I was pretty close to God, I thought. And I had religion classes so I knew about God. But I waited until I was about 40 years old before I actually allowed the Lord to touch my heart and change me. And if I have any regret in my life, it's that I waited until I was 40 years old. So I say to you, if you've been waiting, don't wait any longer. Let your love story, if it has not begun, let it begin right now. You people are going to be confirmed. You have that opportunity all over again. You have the opportunity to surrender to the Lord and say, "Yes, Lord, yes, Lord." But you know what, folks? You don't have to be confirmed over again to say, "Yes, Lord, yes, Lord." So my testimony to you is that I'm no different than you. The Lord will do for you what the Lord needs to do for you. But He won't force it on you. He asks for your permission. And if you don't give Him that permission, He won't do it. So my testimony to you is simple. If you want to start a love story that's difficult to describe in human words, say yes to the Holy Spirit every day, not just once, but every day. Yes again today, Lord, yes. Be my Lord, be my God, be my King, be my Savior. Yes, Lord, I surrender to you.

SHARING

About a year and a half ago, I was working and got a call from a woman that I coordinated some things for at work. She had a sister and her sister was murdered, and she was telling me about this. And I knew a little bit about her story. I worked in a private office that had a door, so I said, "Just a moment and let me close this door." I thought: I have no words. I have no words to give her. And as I was about to close the door, I thought: Holy Spirit, this one's yours. And we talked for awhile. She said thank you and said she felt better. Last August I called her to volunteer for something, and I said, "How are things going?" And she said, "Andrea, I have to tell you. I've changed." And I said, "That's great." And she was telling me that what I talked

about on the phone was wonderful, and I was like: I don't know what I said. And she went on to say how her life's now changed and I'm still thinking: please don't ask me to repeat it; I don't know what you're talking about. Like I said, I didn't remember the conversation. So I've seen her since but that's a testimony that that was not me. And I've thought about. I've taken grief counseling classes and I'm a Stephens Minister. I work with Unbound. It wasn't any of that. If it was, then I would have an inkling of what the Holy Spirit said through me. That's kind of what Mel was just talking about. And this was not planned because I came up to Chuck tonight but it's allowing yourself to be open to the Holy Spirit, when you ask Him and you believe He will give you those words. And I give you that challenge.

MESSAGE IN TONGUES

INTERPRETATION

I desire for you to praise Me, not just here.

SENSE

In our hearts, we don't want fear but praise. And You're going to shake things up, Lord.