

INSPIRED WORD

May 24, 2017

PRAYER

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, amen. Lord, we just give You tonight because it's all Yours. Amen.

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, we thank You for being with us here tonight. Let Your river flow and let the Holy Spirit flow through this place tonight, Lord. We who come hungry and thirsty, fill us tonight with Your holy presence. Let Your mercy and love flow, O Jesus. O Jesus.

SHARING / SENSE / EXHORTATION

I wanted to share something tonight and it's tied into that song so I'll just do it right now, even though we haven't done a lot of praising yet, which I definitely want to get to. This is just an experience I had that I'd like to share with you. It's just a possibility that you may want to do it; you may have already done it. It has brought me a lot of joy. But last week the Spirit led me to the Book of Habakkuk (3:1-19) and I read a praise song that Habakkuk said. And a week before that or two weeks before that, the Spirit led me to the Book of Samuel, to the chapter where Hannah is giving a praise song (1 Samuel 2:1-10). And I wasn't familiar with either of those; I really wasn't. So when I sat back down last week, it occurred to me, and I know this isn't really the right word, but was it just a coincidence that the Spirit would take me to two rather obscure places and they were both individuals praising God with their praise song? I didn't have anything come to me though while I was sitting there but I went to adoration immediately after this. I walked into the chapel and genuflected and sat down, and just looked at the Blessed Sacrament, when all at once it occurred to me why I was led to both of those passages. It's because when we sing praise songs and when we read from the Bible, we are saying someone else's words. And that's great, that's fine. But God wanted to hear from me personally, in my own words. And I actually wrote a praise song to Him while I was sitting there. And it was from the heart. And I found that when I went back and tried to tweak it, that's when it went to my head. So I really tried to keep it from my heart and I just wrote down what I wanted to say to Him. And I kind of thought afterwards, it's like a loved one. They'll give you a birthday card or an anniversary card but again, those cards are someone else's words. And it does mean a lot to me; I don't want to diminish that but if my husband were to write something himself, that would mean even more. And I think that's what Jesus is saying to us. All these praise songs, they're wonderful and I don't want to diminish any of that but to have that individual, personal connection with Him – just write your own praise song. And it doesn't have to be flowery or poetic or put to music or anything but just make it personal and from the heart. I really experienced so much joy doing that so just try it. This is my very own praise to God.

SHARING

Praise is not just singing songs; praise is sharing love.

PRAYER

Lord, we do thank You for Your presence and we do want to speak to You from the depth of our hearts because You know us and You want to hear from us. Praise to You, Lord.

SHARING

I think what everybody has said tonight is about faith and about using our faith and the great love of God and His divine mercy. Here are some lyrics from Travis Greene (Made a Way):

Made a way

Don't know how but You did it

Made a way

Standing here not knowing how we'll get through this test

But holding unto faith You know that

Nothing can catch You by surprise

You got this figured out and You're watching us now

But when it looks as if we can't win

You wrap us in Your arm and step in

And everything we need You supply

You got this in control

And now we know that

You made a way

When our backs were against the wall

And it looked as if it was over

You made a way

And we're standing here

Only because You made a way

Looking back on where we come from

(Because of You and nothing we've done)

To deserve the love and mercy You've shown

But Your grace was strong enough to pick us up

You made a way

And You move mountains

You cause walls to fall

With Your power

You perform miracles

There is nothing that's impossible

And we're standing here

Only because You made a way

EXHORTATION

As we pray this next song, help us to remember who it is that made that way. There are a lot of names for Jesus and each name is a different aspect of His divineness, a different facet that is the Lord.

PRAYER

We ask for Your peace, Lord, in all of those things we just prayed, and for Your presence here too.

SENSE

Some nights You call us to a wall-to-wall carpet of music and sometimes You call us to a random mosaic of praises. Tonight is one of those mosaic nights, Lord. We just have faith that You will lead us as You will and not as we will.

INSPIRED TEACHING / EXHORTATION

There's the scripture where Jesus heals the leper along the way (Luke 17:11-19). He heals all ten lepers and tells them to go show themselves to the priests and be reconnected to the community. And the ten go and they are healed. And only one comes back to say thank you. And that's the one that becomes a disciple. The other people experienced a miracle but the one who said thank you received the greatest miracle of all because he became a disciple of Christ for the rest of his life. And I'm just grateful tonight that people are coming back and saying thank you. It just strengthens the faith of the whole community, and that makes all the difference.

PRAYER

Lord, we thank You for Your presence here with us tonight and how You call us to praise, worship and evangelize in the power of Your Holy Spirit. It's our mission.

SHARING

I have a story and I was just inspired to tell you this story. This is a story from Father Mike Hamill (sp?). You might have heard it. This one is from his youth. His dad and mom decided it would be a good life lesson for him to spend a year in (...). So he was there for about a year and was put on a boat, doing the right thing, being there and being the one getting all the worst jobs and the worst watches in the middle of the night, like three, four in the morning when nobody wanted to do it. That's when everybody wants to sleep. So it was just him and a navigator. So he was watching the navigator to see what he was doing. I've never been on this kind of ship but there's a way to navigate the ship where it's locked in. At that time, the navigator took off the lock and Father Hamill is looking at it and wondering why he did that because it was already set. The day before it was set on the right course. And the navigator said: You know the internal circumstances and the external circumstances and all the stuff that

happens these days, this week, all the time, causing diversions from course that could make a difference in ending up in the wrong place. (...) This reminded me that the Holy Spirit is like this. He doesn't stay on one course but as circumstances move, we move; we move all the time, and so adjustments are needed all the time to keep us on course. We are all in the same ship, aren't we? Look at ourselves; look at our ship; look at our Master Navigator; look at our real course.

SCRIPTURE

This is from **2 Timothy 4:1-5**: *In the presence of God and Christ Jesus, who is coming to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearance and his kingly power, I charge you to preach the word, to stay with the task whether convenient or inconvenient, correcting, reproofing, appealing constantly, constantly teaching and never with impatience. For the time will come when people will not tolerate sound doctrine but will follow their own desires, will surround themselves with teachers who tickle their ears. They will stop listening to the truth and will wander off to myths. As for you, be steady and self-possessed, enduring hardship, perform your work as an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.*

SHARING

We have faith in You, realizing the mercy of the Lord. Just know, brothers and sisters, that there's a stream flowing down from a higher place above; it's a healing stream, a healing stream of love.

PROPHECY / PRAYER

"Come to Me, all you who are hurting and I will give you rest. Learn from Me to be meek and humble of heart." Lord Jesus, You come to us and ask us to surrender to You. You look upon us with love and say the words, "Arise, arise, stand, walk again, come to me again, surrender to Me again." And we Your people gathered here, imperfect people, many times we've failed You. But You pour forth Your mercy and forgiveness. You say the words, "Get up! Arise! Walk again! Surrender again! I am with you and I love you." Guide us, O Jesus and Holy Spirit.

SCRIPTURE

In that first song we sang tonight, I think it was "Shine, Jesus, Shine", it mentions the word "radiance". And I want to say thank You, Lord, for shining Your radiance on us. And Deacon Chuck said the word "arise". And from **Isaiah 60:1-3**: *Arise, shine; for your light has come, the glory of the Lord has shone upon you. For darkness covers the earth and clouds the people; upon you the Lord will dawn, and all his glory will be seen. Nations shall walk by your light, kings by the radiance of your God.*

SHARING

I love the incarnational part of our faith, that Jesus came to us as a human being and not just as spirit; he came to be one of us. And that teaches us a lot of lessons on how to be a body. Yesterday I worked in our yard pulling up thistles, a lot of up and down, up and down, bending over, and I have blisters on my hands and I can hardly squat right now. And the point I'm trying to get to in a roundabout way is that surrendering hurts. Bottom line: It just does. We're not real comfortable letting go of things; we've put roots down pretty hard. Those thistles are tenacious. They don't come out easy. I just pray tonight that the Lord will use my discomfort to remind me that it's worth it, and to use the tools at my disposal to get rid of the thistles and the thorns that are blocking the ground from growing good things in my life, in our community, in our world, everywhere.

SHARING / EXHORTATION / PRAYER

Sometimes when our life seems to go on different paths and we're looking for a particular direction, the Lord places that direction in front of us. And sometimes He does it throughout the prayer meeting and sometimes He does it with only a few moments left, like He did tonight. And we heard quite a bit in the last three minutes – surrender. But we heard a lot before that about being thankful, being thankful to the Lord for everything He does. And I think the more we're called to surrender, the more it becomes easier for us to be thankful. Because when we lay ourselves at His feet, and that's what He's calling us to do, we can just look up and say: Lord, there's nothing I can do, there's nothing I can say. I can say thank You for who You are. Thank You for what You have done in my life. Thank You for the answered prayer of this community. Thank You, Lord, for bringing us as a community to the point where we can say to You, with open arms, with open minds, with open hands, that we surrender to You, Lord. And yes, there may be times when that's difficult but the more difficult it is, Lord, the more we know that You are with us, the more we can feel Your presence, the more we can look up to You and say thank You, Lord, for everything You do in my life and in the life of this community. In Your holy name, we pray.

Amen.