

Walking With God

The Family Tree

All started with the Creator - Male & Female

Seventh Generation - Enoch

One Different - "Enoch walked with God" -

And he was not - In God took him

Hebrews and Jude - Reference

How Beautiful and suggestive - Life of Prayer

A Dialogue - A Life -

The Picture

Death and I - Walks

- Merits - Can Alone Each Other

- Silence -

- Conversation

- What did you dream about last night?

- Where are you going today?

- Come home refreshed - Strong themed - Heaven Understanding

The Father and his Son

- Prayer - Crossing the street.

Oh, how there are noble pictures
of that divine - human love in which we were made

Amos 3:3

"Do two walk together unless they have made an appointment?"

① This is an Encounter - A Meeting - An Appointment

Two walk together

- Jeremiah "Before I formed you in the womb
I knew you"

- Moses "Take not come near: step off your
shoes from off your feet: for the place on
which you are standing is holy ground"

- Isaiah "I saw the Lord from and before
him."

- Thomas "My Lord and My God"

- Paul "When we cry 'Abba Father'
it is the Spirit himself bearing witness
with our spirits that we are the children
of God."

② This is A Unity - The Creator with The Creature
The Savior with The Saved
The Lord with The Servant

(3)

Plans

(3) This is a task - not a mode or a step

(1) Companioning - When he reveals himself and I open myself

(2) Just - to walk in step to him -

(3) Attending - Giving & Receiving - When I listen - And Respond

(4) Direction - Progression - Direction - Guidance

(17) Repentance - Confession - Purification
- Only God - Angels - Doubt - Carlessness
can keep you from this

(18) Illumination - Revelation - Truth

(19) Union - All one with the Father in Christ
Through the Spirit -

"If we walk in the light as he is in the light we have
fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus the Son
cleanses us from all sin." [John 1:7]

- The Two On Their Way to Emmaus! or Preparation!

And know us to him - by the work of him

Donna Schrier - Robert Dickinson - Ken Austin
- The Prayer - The Humors - The Death

Methodist - Methodist

January 5, 1985

Welcome and Greetings

- 1) Rosebuds in honor of Christopher Daranouvong,
son born to Chai & Daluny
Grandparents: Thomas & Souan Palivanh

Jessica Lee,
daughter born to Jimmy and Janet Schroeder (Dec. 23)
Grandparents: Jim and Ardina Schroeder

2) Deaths

Brothers of Henry Loewen, Helen Loewen, Al Avington
Grandmother of Dana Schirer--Florence Dickinson

- 3) Sign up for Wednesday evening

Film, "Where Are the Blessings?"

Second in Series BLESSINGS OUT OF BROKENNESS

- 4) The evening service -- message on prayer by Pastor Jittawait

- 5) End of the year offering

- 6) The coffee in the parlor following service

Graduate Recognition

David Kinder -- Bachelor of Arts in Education
from Wichita State University

Kim McManness -- Associate Degree in Nursing
from Butler Community College, El Dorado

Salley Taylor -- Bachelor of Science in Therapeutic Recreation
from Kansas State University

The Right Hand of Fellowship

Herb Baker Couldn't reach:

Evelyn Huber Okon Essien

Marcia Fortune Karron Burleigh

Nancy Lindberg

Dana Schirer

And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayer. And fear came upon every soul; and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common; and they sold their possessions and goods and distributed them to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they partook of food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF WICHITA
January fifth, 1986 Ten-forty-five o'clock

The Second Sunday in Christmastide

JOY TO THE WORLD! THE LORD IS COME

The Chimes

The Time of Silent Prayer

*How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of His
heaven. No ear may hear his coming, But in this
world of sin, Where meek souls will receive Him still,
The dear Christ enters in.*

The Opening Voluntary--"*How Lovely Shines the
Morning Star*" Buxtehude
Joanne Forsyth, organ

The Choral Call--"*Come and Worship*"

The Hymn of Worship--"*Angels from the Realms
of Glory*" 190

* * *

The Invocation and The Lord's Prayer

HE COMES TO MAKE HIS BLESSINGS FLOW

The Call for the Offering

The Offertory Sentence

The Offertory--"*Christmas Improvisation*" Cassler

The Doxology

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him,
all creatures here below; Praise Him above, ye
heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
Amen.*

The Consecration of the Gifts Mr. Don Adams

LET EARTH RECEIVE HER KING

The Invitation to the Lord's Supper

The Right Hand of Fellowship

The Renewing of Our Covenant

Reading of the Holy Scriptures--Genesis 5:21-23

The Sermon--"*WALKING WITH GOD*"

.....Dr. Roger L. Fredrikson

LET EVERY HEART PREPARE HIM ROOM

The Prayer for Healing and Renewal

"*Gentle Shepherd*" 596

"*Breathe on Me, Breath of God*" 161

The Serving of the Bread

The Anthem--"*Thy Will Be Done*" Eilers

The Sanctuary Choir

directed by Kenneth Forsyth

The Serving of the Cup

The Solo--"*Sweet Little Jesus Boy*" McGimsey
Kenneth Forsyth, tenor

The Receiving of the M&M "Thank You" Offering

HE RULES THE WORLD WITH TRUTH AND GRACE

The Call to Commitment

The Hymn of Commitment--"*Song of Community*"... Hayes
*When I am open to you my brother, Then I begin to
realize How sweet the union between our spirits. I
see the love flowing from your eyes.*

Chorus: Alleluia, Thank you Lord. Alleluia, for our
life in you.

*How may I serve you? How may I love you? I want
to be as Christ to you, Building you up and helping
you grow Into the person Jesus Christ has called you
to.*

*Sweet love of Jesus, flow like a river, Fill up our
hearts and lives anew. Give us Your joy that the
world will see The celebration of our sharing life in
You. **

The Benediction

The Choral Response

The Closing Voluntary

* * * Ushers May Seat Latecomers

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Genesis 5:21-24

We are beginning, in the hope of helping one another, a four-week emphasis again on prayer. None of us here is an expert in prayer. We are growing. We cannot pray without the help of the Spirit, who helps us, as Paul writes in Romans, in our weakness, so that we pray in the Spirit. You can hear a very eloquent prayer--the words are just beautiful--but actually it's talk, because the Spirit is not in it. You can hear someone else whose language just butchers the king's English, but the Spirit is in that prayer. I have to say that every time Max Dobbins begins by saying, "Lord, we just love you," I feel the Spirit in that. It's a difficult thing to pray in public sometimes, because we can just end up trying to say something "for these people." We will none of us pray very well in public unless we know how to pray in private--in our closet. And there is a sense, even when we pray in public, that we are praying out of the inner closet, which has been nourished by Christ in the Spirit in a very real way.

As I thought about this attempt to study and learn together, I went back to this old patriarch. I've used this in many services of homegoing, because it says that Enoch walked with God, and then he was no more, because God took him home. I've thought about this in this way--that Enoch and God walked together and they got further and further away from Enoch's home, and finally one day the Lord said to Enoch, "We are nearer my house today than we are to your house; why don't you just come home and live with me." And he was translated.

THE FAMILY TREE

Now there is a mystery about that, but in the Epistle to the Hebrews and in the letter of Jude, Enoch is referred to. There must have been something very significant in this that was not like the other patriarchs.

Now the Jewish people had a gift for lineage--generations. This chapter starts with the writer saying that it all started with the Lord, who made male and female. Then the first man is mentioned, and the seventh generation gets us down to Enoch. But the great thing about him is not just that he was the seventh generation, but that he walked with God.

THE PICTURES

As I thought about this, some simple pictures came to mind. Whenever it's possible Ruth and I walk together. Many times there is silence. You don't want to force it if there is nothing to be said verbally. But sometimes I will say to her, because she has the better and more interesting dreams, "What did you dream about last night, Ruth?" "Well, would you believe. . ." and she will tell me. Once in a great while I have one. Sometimes she will say, "What is today going to be like?" Or, "What are you going to try to do?" Sometimes the conversation will be very shallow; sometimes it will be very deep. Is it wrong to think pictorially that it's like that with God?

In the Christmas rush out here on Market I saw a big strong dad take his boy's hand, and they walked across the street together. I noticed that the boy put his hand up and the father took it. You can't say that it started with one or the other--there was a mutual kind of thing.

Randy is preaching his first sermon today in Brookings, South Dakota. This is a church that's been hurt. Part of me is up there with him. He called us last night in excitement, and we heard the voice of their little eighteen-month-old boy in the background. Then I recalled his telling that in the three rural churches in western South Dakota where he has been, sometimes little Joel would get up and make noises and come up to the pulpit, and he said, "I kind of hold him while I keep talking to the people." I thought to myself, "I wonder what will happen in Brookings if on the first Sunday, when they are going to have communion, this is what the little guy does." Then I thought, "It will all work out all right." But the picture of a dad holding his boy.

Now this only feebly illustrates what it means to walk with God.

THIS IS AN ENCOUNTER—A MEETING—AN APPOINTMENT

This is a tremendous encounter. It is the living heart of why we are here. Augustine, who had a fantastic experience of living a licentious, cheap, tawdry, misguided life, heard a bishop in Italy, and that was the beginning of his turning to God, and he wrote his *CONFESSIONS*--twelve books, the heart of which gets quoted over and over again, "Thou hast made us for Thyself, O Lord, and we are restless 'til we find rest in Thee." The deepest restlessness we have comes because we do not walk with God.

There is a point at which you start the walk. Take some of the statements in scripture about this. "Do two walk together," says Amos, "unless they have made an appointment?" Is prayer, walking with God, an appointment? Was there a time when the Lord deigned to walk with Enoch, and they did?

Or take Jeremiah. He quotes the Lord as saying, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you." When did that appointment start--this walk with Him?

Or Moses stands at the bush--that bush that will not out in its burning--and the voice says to him, "Do not come near. Put off the shoes from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground. There is something awesome about saying, "I have heard Him; I am called by Him; I respond." It's like fire. There is both a hidden part of God and a revealed part, and part of the pilgrimage in learning to walk with God is the discovery of that vast hidden that He wants us to know about. This is why the Psalmist says, "Deep calleth unto deep."

Or take Isaiah. "In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord high and lifted up." Some of you saw the Lord more deeply than you had ever seen him because someone died; there was tragedy that came, great need that pushed you that way.

But there is a beginning--this is the point I am trying to make--like when Ruth says, "Shall we walk this morning?" or I say, "Shall we walk together?" The Lord says, "Will you walk with Me." This is not a casual, flip affair. And because it is a gift, we have to say that it is the Maker who walks with that which He has made. It is the Savior who walks with the one that He has saved. It is the Lord who walks with the one who says, "I am Your servant."

Or take Thomas, who would not let go until somehow he knew. Jesus had said earlier, "Ask and you will receive; seek and you will find; knock and it will be opened to you." Thomas was the one who said, "If you're going back to Judea, we are going to go die with you." Now he says, "Unless I can put my hands in the nailprints, I will not believe." And Jesus very graciously reveals Himself to Thomas. In a sense this is the beginning of the walk. All Thomas can say is, "My Lord, and my God."

And Paul, that passionate apostle, says in the great eighth chapter in the heart of Romans, "When we cry 'Abba, Father,' it is the Spirit Himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are the children of God."

THIS IS A GIFT

Now let me say again--this is a gift. He deigns to walk with me. He could have said, "Ridiculous--I'm just tired of the whole thing; I just get too irritated with their impatience and their grumbling and their indifference. But he doesn't. In grace He says, "Can I walk with you? Will you walk with Me?"

WHAT TAKES PLACE IN WALKING

There is **companionship**, and there is **trust**. You do not walk with someone else unless there is trust. It would be a great thing if some of you husbands and wives, or friends, just took a walk today. Some of you may wish you had done it with your mates. It isn't like getting in a car and hurrying off someplace, or getting in a plane and shooting off for New York. So there is companionship and trust, and there is **intimacy**. The Lord says, "I will reveal Myself to you. I will let you know who I am." And I say back to Him, "Lord, let me tell you about me." He already knows, but there is something wondrous in the fact that I can say, "I've sinned; I've been careless; I've been indifferent; I've done things I should not have done, and I've left undone things I should have done."

And there is **direction**. He says, "Enoch--Roger--let's walk this way." In preparing for this I have read some of the mystics, some of the great saints. They say there are three great steps in the progression of walking with the Lord. All of this can be biblically verified. One is **repentance**, which becomes confession and purification. It starts by saying, "I am sorry." Every time we start with God we need cleansing, renewing. Let none of us be so arrogant that we say, "I don't need that." It happens over and over again. The second step is **illumination**; it's revelation; it's the truth. We cannot deal with God, walk with Him, without knowing that we have to worship him in spirit and in truth. And the longer we walk with God the more we discover who He is and who we are and what our calling, as we come to know the truth, is. The third step in this, say the mystics, is **union**. I abide in Him and He abides in me, and I discover in the end love. So there is repentance, there is truth, and there is love that comes in the walk. And in the end it brings us to that which God intended for us.

Let me ask you, if you were to make a million dollars in 1986 and lose any walk with God, would that be more valuable to you than not to have as much but to walk with Him? There is a sense, friends, in which the walk I make today prepares me for life with Him. The life I know now is intensified and deepened in that life.

We called Dana Schirer yesterday to see if he could be here for the Right Hand of Fellowship. He is a minister's son. He came forward last Sunday to say, "I want to be a part of the church." He and his wife Karen, who by the way comes from a Danish background, have three lovely children. He told us on the phone that his grandmother, Florence Dickinson, had died six hours after her sister had died in Garden City. Florence had gone to Garden City to serve and help her sister Lucy, who had a stroke three years ago. Then it was discovered that Florence had cancer. When Lucy died she called her pastor, Wayne Paulsen, who called Lucy's pastor, the Methodist pastor, and the two pastors came. Then she said, "It would be a wonderful thing if you would just hold up, because maybe I'll go too." Then she said, "You know, if two or three are agreed on something, it will be done. Would you pray together that I could go home with the Lord?" They left the room. A little while later the nurse came and said, "You'd better come." And she had joined her sister. So they will have a joint service. See, Florence walked with God, and now she is with Him.

4.

It would be a wonderful thing if, like those two disciples on their way to Emmaus, you would find a stranger coming up and He would enter into conversation saying, "Where are you?" and you would open your heart to Him and He would start to open the scripture to you, and then you would say, "Why don't you come into our home in Emmaus, seven miles away (that's a nice long walk), and let's have supper together." And in the midst of the breaking of bread you would discover the one you had walked with was Christ. And you would have, in a remarkable sense, a burning heart, and say, "Let's go back and tell the others who it is we've been with." Friends, the greatest challenge we have is to engage in dialogue with God, communion with him, union with Him, repentance before Him, the discovery of truth in Him that He wants to share with us, and ultimately everlasting life with Him. I pray and hope we can be a praying people who walk with God as good friends should and do.

In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

This morning Pastor Fredrikson will be greeting at the north narthex door and Pastor Jittawait will be at the south narthex door.

Harold Leffingwell will conduct a tour of the building following the service. Please meet by the piano.

Everyone is invited to the parlor for a time of coffee and fellowship following the service. We particularly encourage visitors to stop by. This is a time to get acquainted and to welcome those who are new among us.

*
* **THE PEOPLE'S SERVICE** *

* **6:00 p.m. in the Chapel** *

* We will begin our time together with worship and *
* praise, then have a teaching on prayer by Pastor *
* Jittawait, and close the evening with a time of *
* prayer. Diane Casey will be sharing music to the *
* glory of God. This is a great opportunity for growth, *
* and often our deepest times together are in this *
* service. Come and join us. *

WEDNESDAY EVENING

5:15 p.m. - His Kids Ringers; 6:15 p.m. - Glory Ringers

5:45 p.m. - Family Fellowship Dinner

Film, "Where Are the Blessings?"

Second in Series BLESSINGS OUT OF BROKENNESS

6:30 p.m. - Carol Choir, Sonshine Singers, His Kids

7:30 p.m. - Gym Activities, Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

UNIFIED BUDGET GIVING

Last Sunday	\$19,329.50
Weekly Offering Required for 1985 Budget	\$10,583.34
Budget to Date	\$550,334.00
Received to Date 1985	\$503,937.12
Received to Date 1984	\$489,504.76
Food for the Hungry	\$1,100.15

The First Baptist Church of Wichita

216 East Second Street, Wichita KS 67202 . . . 316-263-5285

Crippled At the Brook

Lesson in Prayer

- Wrestling - Surrender - Dependence - Meeting God face to face

The Spiritual Biography of Jacob

① The Birth of the Two Boys

Struggle

The Promise

→ Genesis 25:23
The Younger Hanging Onto the Heel

② The Sale of the Birthright

- Thus Esau Despised his Birthright

③ Cheating Old Isaac

- Eyes Open - He Could Not See

- "Now Esau Hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father had blessed him"

④ Then the Stairway to Heaven

- Gate to Heaven

① His Father United the two Peoples

② Whole was Blessed through him

③ Beloved I Am With You

The Sun!

- Do it My Way

- Can't Quite Trust Him

⑤ The Twenty Years with Laban

- Two Wives - Two Herds

⑥ Now his Mother Came to Meet him - 400 Men

- Servants with Gifts

- Two Wives & Children

- Now Alone

Genesis 28:20

(2)

And Jacob Was Left Alone

① He can no longer run - n hide Behind anyone else
- He must face himself and his God

② So with us -

- All the Advice - Now the Decision

- On the Trip - Alone in the Hotel Room.

- Tried All the Schemes - Now Have Unked

- The Anger - The Bad Times - All Alone

- On Your Legs - After Death

A Man Wrestled With Him - Until the Breaking of Day

① His Initiative - In the End

② He comes to where we are - to Deal with us There

③ He cannot run a race | Man who has killed his brother
lives in the wilderness
alone in the Dark of his
soul Alone until

④ This is Dark - Awaken Businessmen - Wrestling

⑤ He will see it through - Until the Break of Day

⑥ This is a Whole Life Time

(3)

He Did An Preview

① How Do You Get Through And Open A Man Up

- Getting Jacob to know who he was
- Just as he had been unwilling to see
- The feeling from which he had been learning

② As He Touched Him and Crippled Him

- There Is A Coming - A Break Through

③ He Plunged to Him Panting

- So Unless You - With A Back Out or A Leg Gone

"I Will Not Let You Go Unless You Bless Me"

① The God of His Fathers Had Waited Forty Years to Hear That

② That is His Wealth - a Family

③ But A Surrender - A Yielding - A Coming to God on His Terms

- The Gift of Grace - Do You Trust God?

- Integrity - Power in Your Life

- Let Go of Your Own, Bankrupt Way

- Stop Playing Games

"Tell Me Your Name"

① Not Jacob - supplanter - intender - Deceiver

When name
should be
from the face
of the Israel

② But Israel - Rule with God - God Rules

God, command, order, rule us.

"Tell Me, I pray your Name"

① "Why do I pray your Name?"

The mystery of God's Name - Abraham

② Then he Blessed him

- his Name - his inheritance - his mission

His Place - Perceiv "I Have Seen God face to face"

"Is not this what prayer is?"

Ready for mission
Anticipation of nation

There is A Book the Cross

"A Place of Decision"

- Alone - yielding - crucifixion - Power - Austrian
Genie Price

The Place of the Cross

- Here I meet Christ and the facade is stripped

- This is the Place of Life and Power - Prayer

What keeps me from it?

Fear

Doubt - >

Self-sufficiency

January 12, 1986

Welcome and Greetings

1) Greetings

2) Sign up for Wednesday evening

Martin Luther King Celebration at Century II

3) Rosebud in honor of Richard Aaron

a son born to Rich and Fayrene McNabb

4) Congratulations to Herschel Boatright and Patricia Mahaney

Married Thursday evening

5) Deaths

Margaret Kroeker's mother

Bob Pattie's brother-in-law

6) The service this evening

The Offertory Sentence

Bless the Lord, O my soul;

And all that is within me, bless His holy name!

Bless the Lord, O my soul,

And forget not all his benefits.

--Psalm 103:1-2

At the End

Coffee for Lorene Gurley -- three years

Also for visitors

Genesis 32:22-32

Every time I think of our dependence on God, the way He tries to teach us over and over again that our final and ultimate security is only in Him, my mind turns to this ancient, great story where the Lord could finally deal with Jacob--one of the patriarchs. I think every lesson in dependence on God is found almost in germ in this story. At bottom, friends, prayer is surrender; it is dependence; it is, I believe, wrestling; it is meeting, to use the words of the scripture, God face to face.

THE SPIRITUAL BIOGRAPHY OF JACOB***The Birth Of Two Boys***

Most of us know something about the spiritual biography of Jacob. His birth was very interesting because His mother Rebekah struggled. She sensed the two within her womb struggling. And when she asked the Lord about this, He said, "Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples born in you, and they shall be divided, and the one shall be stronger than the other, and the elder shall serve the younger." This is God's promise. And when they came out of the womb, the interesting fact is that Jacob was holding onto the heel of the firstborn. It seemed almost a parable--a sign of all that was going to take place.

The Sale Of The Birthright

You know the story about the sale of the birthright. A birthright in that day was a very important thing. It was far more than an inheritance--getting the money, the land. It was the blessing of the father. It was the right that you had as a citizen. There was a great deal of meaning in it. And Esau was a hunter. He came in from the field, and he was hungry. He said, "I'm so famished that I'm about to die." Jacob saw the opportunity and walked through it. He was a slippery man; he lived by his wits. And finally he said, "Yes, I'll let you have my birthright." Jacob said, "Swear." And he did. It says in the scripture in Genesis, "Thus Esau despised his birthright." Never, let me say in passing, treat lightly what is your spiritual heritage.

Cheating Old Isaac

Then there is the whole matter of his cheating with his mother. It's a terrible picture. The old man Isaac is dying, and the mother and the son connive. He had told the older boy Esau, "I'm about to die; my eyes are dim. Go to the field and take your weapons and find game and bring it in and then we will eat together and I will finally bless you." The mother overheard this and she got Jacob and they connived and put the whole thing together. They got the food. They got the clothes of Esau so that it smelled like the hunter. They put hairy skin on him, so that the old man said, "The voice is Jacob's, but the body is Esau's." And finally he got the blessing. When Esau discovered this, the anger was so great that Jacob had to run. And in his running God dealt with him.

The Stairway To Heaven

We have that remarkable account of the stairway to heaven, the angels going up and down. And we read that the Lord said to him, "This land is going to be your land." He said, "The whole world is going to be blessed through you." Amazing promise. And then He said, "Behold, I'm going to be with you the whole way." This is what God promised him. Now the interesting thing is that when that is all over Jacob took the stone and anointed it with oil, which was common in that day. He said before that, "Surely the Lord is in this place." But then he said a strange thing, "If God will be with me." It

was as if he were saying, "I don't really trust what He has said; I'm saying if He's with me." And one of the terrible things that dogged Jacob all his life was the fact that he really could not sell out--that is until he met Him face to face--that he could not really trust Him and that he put, so to speak, fine print in the contract and kept saying, "If."

The Twenty Years with Laban

Now finally he got to his uncle Laban's farm. He spent twenty years. He worked seven for Leah, then seven for Rachel, then six more. There was great conniving over the flocks. Then he got into a bad situation with his uncle Laban and had to flee for home.

Now His Brother Comes To Meet Him

As he journeyed toward home he got the word that his brother Esau was coming out to meet him with four hundred armed men. Now once again Jacob tried to live by his wits. This is something friends we do not understand--the nature of our old self--if we do not see that we are always trying to bargain, to make deals, to somehow by our wits do what God has promised He will do but we don't quite trust Him. So he sent a whole series of servants with gifts. Then he sent his wife and his eleven children.

"AND JACOB WAS LEFT ALONE"

Then we read that he was left alone. I want to underline two things about this. Our sin is that we say, "I'm going to do it in my own strength." This runs deep through church life. We say, "Our program," "Our scheme," "We'll do it." And much of it becomes animal heat, and there is no power in that at all. The other thing is that we read the unchangeable promises of God and say we believe them, and yet we go on and say, "If God will live up to this." It was this finally that brought Jacob to the end of his tether. Now all those years came to face him, and Jacob was alone. There is a point, friends, when none of us can finally run. There is deep within us the fact that we want to somehow blame someone else. We want to say, "I can handle this myself," and all the rest of it. But finally Jacob has to face himself and he has to face God. Unless, brothers and sisters, we do that, there never will be any deep prayer.

Now in this he is somehow, I feel, reliving all that that he has gone through--the years that have come and gone since he left his brother, the anger in which he left him, the conniving in which he has been involved. Something of that enters into this whole inner dialogue that he has with the One who has come to deal with him. Let me just say, when all the advice has been given in your situation, you have to make the decision alone. I recall so well when we took the youngsters to Minneapolis and the New York Yankees came in. It was the days when Bobby Richards was playing. They were standing in the lobby, and practically every player went to the bar. He said, "I'm going upstairs to call my wife."--this marvelous baseball player, but first of all a man of God. Or take the fact that we try all our schemes and they do not work. Finally we are all alone because they failed. Or the surgeon comes and says, "I have bad news. I wish I didn't have to tell you this." And you are taken to the hospital room, and now you are alone. Or they say, "She is now gone." And you have to deal with it alone. Suppose, though, I run all my life. You see in the end, friends, I do not die in community; I die alone. I was born alone and I die alone. So I need to understand that there is deep within me a self that not even Ruth knows, as much as I love her and try to give myself to her, and it is down in that part of myself, that mystery of who I am, that God comes to me and addresses me.

"A MAN WRESTLED WITH HIM"

Now it is a man who wrestles with him. I have misinterpreted this on many occasions when I have talked about this. We have assumed that Jacob chose someone to wrestle

with. But the man came to wrestle with Jacob. The initiative at that point is God's--not Jacob's. Now He comes where we are. In the sweat, the hurly-burly, at the end of this running, this crossing the brook, He comes and is with him. The Bible is full of this. For example, Cain finds himself being addressed by God. "Where is your brother?" Moses stays in the wilderness for forty years; he has run away from his responsibility back in Egypt, and in the burning bush God addresses him. Or take Jonah in the belly of the big fish. Or Saul on his way to Damascus. There is One who comes and wrestles with us--the hound of heaven, the One who made us, the One who died on the cross, the One who loves us beyond all our understanding.

Now this is dirty, sweaty business. Anyone who has watched a wrestling match, where two bodies somehow are interlocked and the pressure is put, knows this is not easy, nice business. There is something dirty and sweaty and grimy about it. It is at this point that the man meets Jacob, and he says, "I'm going to see it through." It's very interesting. The scripture says, "He wrestled with him until morning." In one sense this is not just the incident in one situation. It is that, but it is more than that. There is a lifetime in which I find myself wrestling with the One who calls me, who comes to me.

"HE DID NOT PREVAIL"

Then it says, "He did not prevail." I have really asked myself about this. It struck me that what this means is, "How do you get through to Jacob?" It seems like he does not find the opening--this One who wrestles with him. How does He get Jacob to know who He is? How does He help him see the truths he ought to understand. How does he realize what the calling from which he had been running is? So an amazing thing happened. He touched him and crippled him. And do you know, friends, there is something about the fact that I will never be dependent on God until I have been wounded, until my pride is broken, until I find myself helpless.

Then it says that he clung to him. What happens to you when your back is out? We talked to a young man yesterday who has great pain with his back, and he said, "There are hours in the day when I have to lie down, and there are hours in the day when I have to walk, because I live with this dreaded pain in my back." Well, suppose you became crippled in a wrestling match. You would hang onto the one with whom you were wrestling, just panting, saying, "I won't let you go until you bless me," which is what he really says.

"I WILL NOT LET YOU GO UNLESS YOU BLESS ME"

Now what he means by this is not, "I need more wealth; I need more family." He's talking about something far deeper than that. What is it that he can be given? The gift of grace, the sense of integrity in his life, power that will come to him, the letting go of the old bankrupt ways by which he lived, so that somehow now he becomes clean and new and different. This is the way He comes to us. This is the way He wounds us--the happenstances of life, the darkness of it, all this that touches us in such a way that somehow finally we say, "Lord, will you bless me." God has waited forty years for him to say that--to cry out, "I need what only You can give me."

"TELL ME YOUR NAME"

Then an amazing thing happens. The man says, "What is your name?" There is so much in a name. It had far greater meaning in that day than it does to us today, although names have great meaning. We watch these youngsters that have come into our family, and the names start to take on meaning. At first Levi sounds very strange. I remember when I sort of with a smile announced that. Then Levi starts to become a little boy who walks, and he comes to you at Christmas time and gives you things. You say, "There

is Levi," and when you speak the name it has meaning. So the man says, "What is your name?" He says, "Jacob." Most of you know what that means; it means a contender, a deceiver, a supplanter. That's what he's been. But he says, "That won't be your name any more. Your name is going to be Israel." There are many attempts to define what this means. It means "Rule with God." It means "Lord, command, order, rule us." Some people have said it means "Prince of God now." What it means, in effect, is, "From now on God will rule through your life." In this blessing this is what's happened.

"TELL ME, I PRAY, YOUR NAME"

Then Jacob turns back and says to him, "You tell me your name." Ah, but listen, there is a mystery about God's name. We speak it casually and flippantly. When I hear people invoking that name and using the word "damn" I find increasingly a kind of shudder runs through me. Or we can bandy it about even religiously, instead of saying with a kind of holy awe the name "God." "Yahweh." So when he says, "What is your name?" there is at that point no answer. But the amazing thing is, it says, "He blessed him." It was then that Jacob said, "I have seen God face to face." And Jacob never walked the same again and bore a new name.

Is it right to say to you, this is the essence of prayer? I can babble words that cover up the kind of person I've been and the way I've tried to hide and the way I've tried to run. I ought to come to an embarrassment about that. The deepest moments for me, friends, have been when God called me back to something I intended long ago, to something I knew I should have done, but deeper than that what He expected me to be. And when that time has come and I have dared say to Him out of the innards of myself, "Lord, I will cling to you until I know your spiritual blessing, until I know your reality, until I know what it means to see you face to face," it is the language of wrestling. There has not always been an instantaneous kind of light going on. But in that moment there has come a wondrous sense of peace, a sense of His reality, a great gift of His power. So the prayer is a kind of wrestling. It is, as the saints have said, holy work. Could I say to those of you here who can make no calls because of age, who are not able to go about and be active as once you were, the greatest work any of us can do is the work of prayer, not the work of going. We are called to that work. And entering into it we discover that this is a wrestling, this is a costly thing, this demands not a divided self but a whole self. This demands a clinging, like Jesus in the garden--"Not my will, but Thine be done." And out of that comes a newness and a joy and a wonder that can every day be new.

THERE IS A BROOK WE CROSS

I feel Jabbok is like crossing the brook Kidron, going to Calvary. For the wrestling that we do in the era of grace is a wrestling at the cross. What unmask us and makes us see our pretensions and our game playing more than anything else is the cross of Jesus. This is why Paul says, "For me to live is Christ; to die is gain." I glory in the cross of Christ because He crossed over beyond the wrestling into the reality of God's grace, and there I discover that, wonder of wonders, He has become my priest. He is the one now who stands and opens the way for me in the Father's presence, and there is released in my life a grace and a newness and a wonder that only He can give.

I thought about this. Ruth suggested that I write Mother a line and thank her for the blue shirt she gave me on my birthday, which I should have done. I assume sometimes that talking to Mother on the phone is good enough. But as she said, a letter can mean even more than that. As I sat down, all of a sudden it struck me. A number of times when Mother was here during the Thanksgiving to Christmas season, we would ask her to pray. Once she said, "I don't know if I say the right words," which was kind of a childlike thing for her to say. But she hardly ever entered into prayer without weeping.

5

And there was, as I think of it, over all the years the answer to prayer from a person whom I believe has crossed over alone into Jabbok, has known the power which only the Spirit of God can release. I recall times of seeing my mother broken, particularly when my brother was killed in a car accident. I remember her scream on the phone, the way she would celebrate the anniversaries of Jerry's death. But somehow out of that came something new, a kind of understanding and love out of which new prayer was born.

Now friend, you do not have to go through an automobile accident, but I cannot go on in this life glibly playing games, somehow making the best of my wits and making that the big thing, then tossing in a few words of prayer, and thinking that somehow that will do it. Prayer becomes a way of life. It becomes a daily communication. And even while I conduct other business and do other things there is down in the depth of my unconscious a kind of union, a communion that is going on. So that Paul's statement, "Pray without ceasing," has a reality in it.

I picked up this little book by Raymond Edmund. He was president of Wheaton College for many years, died in the great chapel there while he was speaking on immortality, can you believe. He has written about twenty-four to thirty different people, men and women. He said they found the secret--every single one of them. I scanned the book last night and early this morning. Every one of these who had power in their lives crossed over and wrestled alone and saw God face to face. It will not happen with you as it does for the next fellow. God will deal with you uniquely where you are, alone, at the point where you say, "I have tried all the games, I have tried this and this, I have played with your promises, I have said if God lives up to His word, instead of saying I know He will." It is in this spirit that we surrender, that we give Him who we are and He deigns to see us face to face, and we discover the greatest joy in life is to live in the presence of God.

In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Genesis 25:23

And the Lord said to her,

"Two nations are in your womb,
and two peoples, born of you, shall be divided;
the one shall be stronger than the other,
the elder shall serve the younger."

Genesis 28:16-17

"Surely the Lord is in this place; and I did not know it." And he was afraid, and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven."

Genesis 28:20-22

Then Jacob made a vow, saying, "If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and clothing to wear, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then the Lord shall be my God, and this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house; and of all that thou givest me I will give the tenth to thee."

The First Sunday after Epiphany

PRAYER IS THE SOUL'S SINCERE DESIRE

The Chimes
The Lighting of the Candles . . . Daniel Holman & Ben Myrick
The Time of Silent Prayer
*Speak, Lord, in the stillness, While I wait on Thee;
Hushed my heart to listen In expectancy.*

The Welcome and Greetings

* * *

The Choral Call to Worship
The Opening Voluntary--"*Voluntary on 'Madrid'*" Jordan
Joanne Forsyth, organ

The Hymn of Worship--"*Come, Christians, Join to Sing*". . 342

* * *

The Invocation and The Lord's Prayer

PRAYER IS THE CHRISTIAN'S VITAL BREATH

The Call for the Offering
The Offertory Sentence
The Offertory--"*Adagio*" Mendelssohn
The Hymn--"*We Give Thee But Thine Own*" 515
*We give Thee but Thine own, Whate'er the gift may
be: All that we have is Thine alone, A trust, O Lord,
from Thee.*

*May we Thy bounties thus As stewards true receive,
And gladly, as Thou blessest us, To Thee our
firstfruits give.*

*To comfort and to bless, To find a balm for woe, To
tend the lone and fatherless Is our great task below.*

*And we believe Thy word, Though dim our faith may
be: Whatever task we do, O Lord, We do it unto Thee.*

The Consecration of the Gifts Dr. Glenn Fisher

THE PATH OF PRAYER THYSELF HAS TROD

The Quartet--"*Holy, Holy, Holy*". Schubert
Gary Ayers, Wyatt Hoch, Ed Hett, Ken Forsyth
The Congregational Prayer
The Hymn--"*Spirit, Now Live in Me*". 151

The Anthem--"*Jesus, Name of Wondrous Love*" Held
The Sanctuary Choir
directed by Kenneth Forsyth

LORD, TEACH US HOW TO PRAY

Reading of the Holy Scriptures--Genesis 32:22-32
The Sermon--"*A CRIPPLING AT THE BROOK*"
. Dr. Roger L. Fredrikson

NO PRAYER IS MADE ON EARTH ALONE

The Call to Commitment
The Hymn of Commitment--"*Have Thine Own Way, Lord!*"
. 400

The Benediction
The Choral Response
The Closing Voluntary

* * * Ushers May Seat Latecomers

*This morning Pastor Fredrikson will be greeting at the south
narthex door and Wyatt Hoch will be at the north narthex door.*

*Lorenne Gurley, who has ministered among us for three years,
will be in the parlor, where we will all have an opportunity to
greet her and express thanks and appreciation for her ministry.*

*We also encourage visitors to stop by the parlor for a time of
getting acquainted and fellowship.*

*Charles Schultz will conduct a tour of the building following
the service. Please meet by the piano.*

Senior Pastor Roger Fredrikson
Associate Pastor San Jittawait
Minister of Christian EducationLorenne Gurley
Ministers of Music & WorshipKenneth & Joanne Forsyth

*
* **THE PEOPLE'S SERVICE** *

* **6:00 p.m. in the Chapel** *

* Our People's Service will be a special time of prayer. *

* We will gather in the chapel to sing a bit and receive *

* some instruction, and then scatter throughout the *

* church for a personal period of prayer, after which *

* we will return to the chapel to share together. This *

* can be a time of power and renewal for all of us. *

WEDNESDAY EVENING

5:15 p.m. - His Kids Ringers

5:45 p.m. - Family Fellowship Dinner

6:15 p.m. - Glory Ringers

6:30 p.m. - Carol Choir, Sonshine Singers, His Kids

7:30 p.m. - Children's Gym Activities

7:30 p.m. - Celebration in Honor of

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Century II Concert Hall

UNIFIED BUDGET GIVING

Last Sunday	\$10,697.01
Weekly Offering Required for 1986 Budget	\$11,304.50
Budget to Date	\$11,304.50
Received to Date 1986	\$10,697.01
Received to Date 1985	\$9,730.96

January 19, 1986

Oliver Amundson

Welcome and Greetings

- 1) Sign up for Wednesday evening
Our Annual Meeting
Highlighting our Ministry through Volunteers
- 2) Deaths
Joanne Forsyth's father-in-law, Mr. Rackley
Orpha Trugillo's brother —
Galen Brown's uncle —
Uncle in with her mother
- 3) The evening service
Lay people sharing about prayer
Music by Vannapha dePriest
- 4) The reception for Carolyn Deaver in the parlor
Coffee for New Member
- 5) Moment of Prayer
Today is Respect Life Sunday
There are two bills introduced in the Kansas legislature this session that could limit abortion. The power of prayer may be the only way lives could be saved.

The Offertory Sentence

But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.

--II Cor. 9:6-7

There is a balm in Gilead
to make the wounded whole
There is a balm in Gilead
to heal the kin-sick soul.

II SAMUEL 11:11

Uriah said to David, "The ark and Israel and Judah dwell in booths; and my lord Joab and the servants of my lord are camping in the open field; shall I then go to my house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? As you live, and as your soul lives, I will not do this thing."

II SAMUEL 12:5-7

Then David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, "As the lord lives, the man who has done this deserves to die; and he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity."

Nathan said to David, "You are the man."

When have you ever loved the Lord?

VERNON GROUNDS

Thus why not in faith apply globally that fervent plea of David Livingstone? The very last entry in his journal, it is engraved on the black slab in London's Westminster Abbey where his body lies interred. His heart, you may remember, was buried, as his blackfriends rightly insisted it should be, in the continent where he had so valiantly labored. Ann and I stood one day in that magnificent abbey and read these words with misty eyes:

All I can say in my solitude is, may heaven's rich blessing come down on every one--American, English, Turk--who will help to heal this open sore of the world. Africa is still an open sore, but so, more or less, is every other continent, not excluding North America, an open sore morally and spiritually. But God by His power in response to our intercession can grant substantial healing to our earth with its open sores.

Jehovah with you
Surrender

Victory to the Fellowship

A Cry for Forgiveness - Healing - Restoration | David
At the Heart of Prayer

The face of David

① The Rise to Power

- Shepherd - Powerful - Chosen from Jesse's Sons
- Overcame Goliath -
- Spared Saul's Life when he once had killed him.
- "A Man After God's Own Heart"

② But Now

- King Sounding at Home - Army at War with Ammonites
- Beautiful Woman - Michal - Bathing -
- Lay with her - Holy
- Joab getting Michal home - Used to go down with her
- Then had him killed in Battle

1 Samuel 11:11

"But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord"

③ Now Nathan

- Two Men - One Rich - One Poor - Sheep
- Rich Man Takes the Poor Man's Sheep

1 Samuel 12:5-7

- David Answered -

- "You are the Man"

- 2 Men Donned

(Father - Husband & Wife)

④ Consequences

- Death - Carry off - No longer walked with God
- Death of the Child
- Broken Heart - Jealousy in the Family

If You Have Been ②

The Meaning of Sin

Made for Fellowship
with God Live Him
Other Way

Physical Violence
Illustration the Poor
Moral Preparation for War

① An Act

- Disobedience - Breaking the Law
- Rebellion - The Relationship is Broken
- Self - Denial - Taking the Entire Possessions
- Perversion - Perversion - Pearls Before Swine
- Gifts - Appetite - Life
- We See Sin in Violence - Adam - Lendinsein

② Notes in My Nature - The Kern - A Disease

- I am ~~Self~~ Within - There is an inner warfare
- "I have brought forth in my heart and in sin did my mother conceive me" Words of Sin!

③ Always An Act Against God

- Sin Horizontal, the sin vertical -
- Transgressions facing Transgression - A Holy God!
- Prophets - For his possesser - A Sin Against A Holy God.
- ~~Given~~ - "Manner as you did it not to the least of these you did it not to me."

④ Transgressions

- Never Sin in Isolation
- One Sin leads to another - Lust - Greed - Killing

⑤ There Are Consequences

- When we Sow, We Reap -

Reaper
Sower
Vast Amount for Consequence

Paul's
Analogy
The Mercies with
a Small thing
is

Martin Luther King
A ~~broader~~
This people sinned
Against

How will you deal with it? (3)
Throws himself on the Mercy of God - "I have sinned"

(1) Iniqueness, O God - lovely Business

- According to thy steadfast love
- According to thy abundant Mercy which does not run out.

Wendy - our
Debt on

Repentance

(A) - "Blot Out" - cancel my Debt
Clear the Books

(B) - Wash me thoroughly - A Reper - Before the Priest
"Wash on the eye brows"

Paul Brown

(C) - Wash me with Hyssop - Pleat
clean - Whiter than Snow

(2) Renewal - God's Doing - Just and kind in the inward being
A Clean Heart - A New and Upright Spirit

(A) - Take not my Holy Spirit from me

(B) - Restore to me my Joy of thy Salvation

Joy

(3) Then I will Fear Transgressors -

Open Thou my Lips

- Thy Sacrifice - Acceptable

- Broken Spirit

- Broken and contrite Heart

David

Heavenly
Prayer

Our Need for Annihilation

① Next - Open Dark Side - Driven Out of the Garden

- Sexual Escapades
- Perverse Appetites
- Craving - Love of Money
- Anger - Allying Even
- The Death of Self - Worry - Fear

② Isolation - Indifference

- The Shippage - Carless - Taken Up With Two Lines
- The Woman Working
- Carless With the Food
- Indifferent - No Belonging - No Obedience
- Prayer - Unhappiness -
- The Breakdown of Human Relations
- Isolation in Our Hearts
- Critical of Others

③ The Young Christian

- The Spine Reveals Areas of Darkness -
- Rebellion - Submission in Our Love

Lack of tender ness

Baselia
Adler

Our Dark

From Isolation
& Indifference to Love
When Has
Been Left Unborn

The Second Sunday after Epiphany

PRAYER IS THE SOUL'S SINCERE DESIRE

- The Chimes
- The Lighting of the Candles . . . Daniel Holman & Ben Myrick
- The Time of Silent Prayer
 - Speak, Lord, in the stillness, While I wait on Thee;
 - Hushed my heart to listen in expectancy.
- The Welcome and Greetings
- * * *
- The Choral Call to Worship
- The Opening Voluntary--"Rise Up, O Men of God" . . . Bingham
 - Joanne Forsyth, organ
- The Hymn of Worship--"We Sing the Greatness of Our God" 338
- * * *
- The Invocation
- The Lord's Prayer Sung in Unison

PRAYER IS THE CHRISTIAN'S VITAL BREATH

- The Call for the Offering
- The Offertory Sentence
- The Offertory--"Holy Is God the Lord" Mendelssohn
 - Organ and Brass
- The Hymn--"We Give Thee But Thine Own" 515
- The Consecration of the Gifts Mr. Max Dobbins
- Discipling Among Our Young People. . . Mrs. Marilyn Herrill

THE PATH OF PRAYER THYSELF HAS TROD

- The Anthem--"Lord, Make Me an Instrument of Thy Peace" Rutter
 - The Sanctuary Choir
 - directed by Kenneth Forsyth
- Reading of the Holy Scriptures--II Samuel 12:1-15, Psalm 51
- The Sermon--"RESTORED TO THE FELLOWSHIP"
 - Dr. Roger L. Fredrikson

LORD, TEACH US HOW TO PRAY

A Time of Prayer and Commitment

"Holy, Holy". 149

"Spirit Song"

- Oh, let the Son of God enfold you With His Spirit and His love. Let Him fill your heart and satisfy your soul. Oh, let Him have the things that hold you, And His Spirit like a dove Will descend upon your life and make you whole.
- Jesus, oh, Jesus, Come and fill Your lambs. Jesus, oh, Jesus, Come and fill Your lambs.
- Oh, come and sing this song with gladness As your hearts are filled with joy. Lift your hands in sweet surrender to His name. Oh, give Him all your tears and sadness, Give Him all your years of pain, And you'll enter into life in Jesus' name. (repeat chorus)*
- The Congregational Prayer
- The Response--"I Surrender All" Mark Hayes
 - Kathy Shoffner, piano

NO PRAYER IS MADE ON EARTH ALONE

- The Call to Commitment
- The Hymn of Commitment--"I Surrender All" 408
- The Benediction
- The Choral Response
- The Closing Voluntary
- * * * Ushers May Seat Latecomers

This morning Pastor Fredrikson will be greeting at the north narthex door and Lorenne Gurley will be at the south narthex door.

Everyone is invited to a reception in the parlor for Carolyn Deaver, who has ministered as Christian Education and Membership Secretary for nine years and will begin new work in a law office this week.

We also encourage visitors to stop by the parlor for a time of getting acquainted and fellowship.

Psalms 51

My beloved friends, prayer is walking with God. We spoke of that two weeks ago. Prayer, if it is anything, is surrender. But at the heart of prayer there is a cry for forgiveness, for healing, and for restoration. This comes out with tremendous power in this Psalm. It comes, we believe, after David had become aware of his sinning.

THE FALL OF DAVID**The Rise To Power**

You know the story of how he rose in power--a boy that watched sheep, anointed before Saul had finished his domain. Powerful with animals, he conquered on one occasion a bear, on another occasion a lion, and literally annihilated Goliath with the stone and the slingshot. He spared Saul's life when he could have killed him. The Bible says "a man after God's own heart."

The Slippage

I do not know at what point slippage begins. This is a mystery of evil. Carelessness begins to come in, and indifference, and hardness of heart. In the eleventh and twelfth chapters of II Kings we have a terrible story of King David, now with power, many wives and concubines, lounging in the palace while his troops are doing battle against the Ammonites. Then he notices, and my guess is that he would not have noticed this had he been close to God, a beautiful woman bathing. Lust enters his heart. He asks her to come. He lies with her, and she conceives. When he discovers this he asks his aide, his secretary of state, his chief general and advisor, Joab, to get the husband home, because Bathsheba is married. Uriah comes home, and he tries to get Uriah to go and be with his wife so that it can really be said that he was the father instead of King David. However, he says, "Why should I do this, when the Ark and the men and Joab are in battle?" He refuses to go in to his own wife. Then David has to change his strategy. And we know what happens. He gives orders to Joab to put Uriah at the front. And not only is Uriah put at the front, but many of the troops are, and some of the chief men of David's court are killed. Then David takes Bathsheba, literally steals her, on the heels of the murder.

Then Nathan Comes

Now the Lord sends a man, Nathan--it's one of the dramatic scenes of the Bible--to confront King David. Nathan tells a story. He says, "There are two men, one rich, one poor. One has one sheep; the other has a hundred sheep. A guest shows up. The man with a hundred sheep cannot give up one. He takes the one from the poor and kills it and uses it." Then it says in the scripture, "David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, 'As the Lord lives, the man who has done this deserves to die; and he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.'" Then the prophet--you can almost see him standing there, simple clothes, alone, the king on his throne or lounging on a couch--has the courage to say, "David, you are the man." Then he goes on to say, "Why have you despised the word of the Lord?" And then David says, "I have sinned."

THE MEANING OF SIN**An Act**

My dear friends, we are gathered here as sinners, but for the grace of God. If I have been made for fellowship with God, and I deny that, pervert my life, change its direction,

live by my own passions and instincts, and come out of fellowship with God, what happens is death, for I have disobeyed God. There are all kinds of attempts to define sin. We fumble after words. It is disobedience, breaking the law. How is it, parents, when you have a child that disobeys you? You say, "Because you did this, this is what you will have to live with." Sin is rebellion. God says, "You are made for this," but I say, "I will do it my own way."--the story of Adam and Eve. Sin is self-centeredness, it is taking, a la the prodigal son, the Father's possessions, which I say are mine, and going into a far country. "I will spend what I want to spend in my way." It is perversion. It is taking that which God intended to be given for His glory and using it for my own ends, so that sex and appetite and time--the gifts of life--get misused.

I had the incredible privilege this week of hearing Dr. Paul Brand at a dinner at Central Christian which was sponsored by the Christian Medical Association. I have referred to Dr. Paul Brand a number of times because of his two moving books, his work among lepers, his incredible commitment to God. This man now is well into his seventies and he looks like he is in his fifties. He speaks with that beautiful British accent after all these years--nineteen years in India working with lepers in reconstructive surgery and now in Carville, Louisiana, working with the lepers from this country. In his message he spoke of defining sin perhaps in contemporary terms. Suppose I come walking out of the church and I see a beautiful Mercedes, a marvelous instrument, standing there--a lovely car. And then I see someone coming out of a bar, weaving across the street, half drunkenly getting into the car, turning the key, and starting the motor, which now whirrs beautifully as it begins its function. Then he starts to drive the car crazily down the street. What has been an instrument of beauty now becomes an instrument of death. This is why Paul says, "May our members, which now have been used by sin, become instruments of righteousness." So that sin is an act. It is like David who sees but then says, "Get the girl to me." It's something that many times is overt.

Rooted In My Nature

But the scripture is very plain in saying that the act grows out of my nature. See, our optimistic, casual, surface understanding of sin is that it's this act or that act, and if you stop doing the acts you have taken care of sin. The scripture says, however, "I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." This is not because my mother and father were wild or wrong. It is because I was brought into a body of sin, as you are. I came into this world egocentric. It was in me, like a disease. And anyone that thinks less than that of sin does not understand the depth of it, the root of it. This is why Paul cries out in that tremendous seventh chapter of Romans, "The things I would do I cannot do. The things I would not do, I do. Wretched man that I am." I have heard a hundred times a person say, "I wanted to do this, but I couldn't." "I didn't want to do this, but I did." "I swore that I would not do this, but I ended up doing it." And unless that disease, that tenacious old nature, that wretched flesh, as Tozer calls it, is dealt with, I will continue acting as David did.

Always An Act Against God

But it's not only this, friends. Sin is always an act, finally, against God. I may put down Jim Worthan and say slanderous things against him. I may gossip about him, and in a deep sense I have sinned against Jim. But the deeper thing is that I have sinned against God. I have violated Him. Every time sin is talked about in the Bible, it is unrighteous man dealing with righteous God. It is unholy man dealing with holy God. It is a sin against Him. Friends, the prophets are full of this, all through the Old Testament. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Amos, Micah--all of them. They say, "The way you treat the poor, the way you deal with your fellows, all of this is ultimately nauseating to God. You can get all the sacrifices you want to, but if you have done, this you have sinned against Him."

This was the power of Martin Luther King, whose birthday we celebrate this week. It was not a politician; it was not somebody in Congress; it was a black preacher who somehow caught the cries of his people. And what ultimately some people would make only a constitutional problem, or a human problem, was in the end a moral problem. It was a sin against God to say to people, "You've got to use this bathroom, and you can't go in where whites are," or "You've got to sit at the back of the bus, because you are inferior to the rest of us." And somehow what had been looked upon perhaps as a sin only against the constitution became ultimately defined in terms of sin against God.

The same thing happens to me, friends. Ultimately, with my unholiness, not only at that level, but in my personal life, I deal with a holy God. So that sin, which starts, so to speak, against Bathsheba and Uriah, or whoever--the gossiping, the condescension, the misuse of time--ultimately is a sin against God.

There Are Consequences

And friends, let me move on to say that this is not only a sin that is isolated. Sin always works in a kind of compounded way. You have a desire, you lust, you ask the woman to come, now you have to lie, now you have to kill. So that sin leads to sin to sin to sin. This why in a deep sense we live in this body. And finally sin--and I have only scratched the surface in a sense--has its consequences. What you sow, you will reap. Look at David. The baby that Bathsheba bore died. His hands were bloody. God would not let him build the temple. He did not walk with God. He had to be restored to Him. He had troubles in his family. There isn't one of us here who has not seen at some point the consequences of our wrongdoing against God.

HOW WILL YOU DEAL WITH IT

Forgiveness

Now if this is the case, friends, how will we deal with it. Will I go out tomorrow and play a few games of tennis and forget about it? Will I toss and turn and try to get my mind on something else? Will I give more money to the church? Will I work harder on some church committee? Does David say, "I'm going to be a better king; I swear off all women from now on."? Here is the power of it. Listen. "Have mercy on me, O God." Every prayer, I care not if you've been a Christian fifty years, should have that cry in it.

Now why? Because he says, "You are a God of steadfast love and abundant mercy." Love that does not run out. Ours is erratic, blows hot and cold. But His goes on unconditionally, unlimited, so specific and particular. Abundant mercy--more than enough. The more, in a sense, you receive of it, the greater it becomes. "From grace to grace," John writes. So we rest in that. It is God's initiative. And what He's saying to us today is, "You are a forgiven people. If you accept my forgiveness, I will shower upon you my mercy and my grace. You will sense my steadfast love, if you dare receive it."

So he says, "Blot out . . . wash me thoroughly . . . purge me with hyssop." These are the words he uses. What does "blot out" mean? Suppose I owe the bank a hundred thousand dollars and somebody says, "We are going to wipe the slate clean." Suppose in some court there is a judgment against me and I deserve to go to prison, but the judge somehow says, "We are going to wipe it clean. Someone else has taken your place." This is what blot out means. Or take, "wash me thoroughly." It literally comes from the dealing with lepers. You have the teaching about this in Leviticus. They had to go to the priest, after they were cleansed and had washed themselves, and he would say, "Because your skin is pink and clean like a baby's, you no longer have the disease."

You have been washed." Listen, there is no amount of action on my part that will cleanse me like that, only what He will do. Then he says, "Purge me with hyssop." Hyssop was used in the Passover. They were to dip the hyssop in the blood and put it on the doorpost, and the death angel would pass over.

Renewal

And in this there is renewal. This is God's doing. So in the Psalm he says, "Give me a clean heart, a new and right spirit." Now we are getting down to the essence of the disease. For down at the center there is the possibility of newness and grace given me. "Take not thy holy Spirit from me." For if you do I will die. "Restore to me the joy of thy salvation." I read this week Baselia Schlinck's little book on repentance, and she says over and over again that the repentant people are the joyful people. This is not groveling, making of yourself some kind of doormat. This is like eternal waters come flowing through us so that we are refreshed over and over again, and there is great joy in this.

"Then I Will Teach Transgressors"

Then he says, "I will teach transgressors." See, it's only the healed people who become the healers of others. It's only the people who are washed that somehow can speak about cleanliness. It's only the people who have been purged who know joy. And you can't do that by smearing it on the outside. It comes out of the innards, the depth. I know some of you who have come to new places in your lives in terms of the Lord who have found again the joy, and it's written all over you. It's something that does not come because of cosmetics, or outer arrangements. So there is forgiveness and there is renewal and there is the sharing of this, the teaching of transgressors, what I have discovered.

OUR NEED FOR FORGIVENESS

I want to talk to all of us now quite specifically.

Overt, Open, Fleshly Sins

Some of us here need forgiveness because of licentious, open sins that are like running sores. Our sins are flagrant and open, even though we think they are hidden. They are the misuse of flesh; they are the perversion of ourselves, the lusting after mammon, the spending of time with that which passes away. Ah, there is no forgiveness at that level. I brought with me to the pulpit today the Episcopal BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER. I hadn't pulled it off the shelf in a long time. It was given me by Jan Pay, a dear alcoholic who came to the office years ago and left a little rubbery figure called "Hopeless" and said, "That's me." Eighteen months later she smashed her last bottle of alcohol, poured it down the drain, and started the battle of sobriety. She will celebrate this March her eighteenth birthday. When she joined the Baptist church in Sioux Falls she said, "The thing I miss most of all are the words of absolution that come from the priest after the prayer of confession." This prayer begins,

"Almighty and most merciful Father; we have erred, and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep. We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts. We have offended against Thy holy laws. We have left undone those things we ought to have done; And we have done those things which we ought not to have done; And there is no health in us. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us. . ."

Friend, what would it be like if that would happen to you now in this service?

Coldness, Indifference

Or there are those of us who love the Lord. We feel we've been forgiven of the big sins. But there is the slippage, the carelessness, the lack of prayer, the indifference,

5.

the breaking of the fellowship, the lack of obedience. We know what we should do, but we don't do it. The indifference leads to hardness of heart, the breakdown of human relations even though we are Christians, so that there are snarls in the home, unkindness and criticism. And yet I say with a smile, "I am a Christian." How marvelous when that way grows so dreary that I say, "Have mercy upon me." Which I pray by God's grace literally, and I do not say this boastingly, every day.

The Growing Christian

Or there are those of us whose hearts, in the wonder of Christian growth, are warm today, and we are full of love and grace. The amazing thing is, He leads us to places where we see now what we did not see a year ago, and we see by His Spirit those dark places in our lives, and by His gracious forgiveness, His steadfast love and abundant mercy, we are cleansed again, and we are renewed, and we push on in this wonderful pilgrimage. Many of us, friends, are at that point. So our prayer is that the joy of His salvation should be restored to us.

In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Harold Leffingwell will conduct a tour of the building following the service. Please meet by the piano.

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* **THE PEOPLE'S SERVICE** *
* **6:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall** *
* We will gather for a time of singing and sharing *
* together. Flo Watson, Sandy Kitchen, Brook Deaver, *
* and Fred Woods will share about "What Prayer Means *
* to Me." Vannapha dePriest will share special music *
* with us, and we will close with a service of *
* communion. *

WEDNESDAY EVENING
5:15 p.m. - *His Kids Ringers*
5:45 p.m. - *Family Fellowship Dinner*
6:15 p.m. - *Glory Ringers*
6:30 p.m. - *Annual Business Meeting*
6:30 p.m. - *Carol Choir, Sonshine Singers, His Kids*
7:30 p.m. - *Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal*
7:30 p.m. - *Children's Gym Activities*

UNIFIED BUDGET GIVING

Last Sunday	\$7,653.21
Weekly Offering Required for 1986 Budget	\$11,304.50
Budget to Date	\$22,609.00
Received to Date 1986	\$18,350.22
Received to Date 1985	\$18,921.73

Vernon W

David & Esten Beemels
- May of 1986

January 26, 1986

Welcome and Greetings

1) Registration

Don Peterson
Elaine Roberts

2) Sign up for Wednesday evening

Film "Mending Things"

Third in Series BLESSINGS OUT OF BROKENNESS

3) Jacob Peter, born to Joel and Jeanne Anne

4) New granddaughter to the Colloms

Quinn & Ben

5) Death of Carolyn Bachelder's sister

6) This Afternoon

Dedication for The Homeless Shelter

3:00 p.m., St. John's Episcopal, 3rd & Topeka

Speaker, Rev. Bob Parker, Episcopal Social Services

Reception following at Shelter, 306 W 29th

e) Next Sunday - Mark Hayes

7) Leaders Retreat February 8

Please return your response cards immediately

8) Coffee following the service

Joan

Blessing of a Child and Dedication of Parents

David and Kathi Lynn Gurley

Son - Matthew Barrett

Lorenne Gurley, E.K. and Letha Barrett

Bar Barrett

The Offertory Sentence

Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men. He that giveth, let him do it with liberality; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness.

--Col. 3:23; Rom. 12:8

Mark & Nadine Ackwell
Donna Christian

Nell Allen

Donny & Pam Miller -

Alan & Lisa Hudson -

David & Mary Brumby

It was at this point that she met with a bishop of her church, a man known and respected by many for his gentle and Christlike character.

"It was not so much anything he said," she later told me, "But a quality within him, a sort of indescribable Holy Absolute, which pursued me in my heart after I left him and drew me, irresistibly back to God."

* * * * *

Dear Jesus,

Please be Chairman of the Board . . . through me.

* * * * *

Paula Clump - Healer
A. Mullin Holman

"Our Lord can use us best in our inadequacy," she told me recently. "It is not self-sufficiency but God-sufficiency that counts. When I look back," she said, "I know it was he who opened all the doors, put all the right words in my heart, and gave me all the wisdom I needed."

* * * * *

Fenelon
"Tell (God) all that is in your heart, as one unloads one's heart to a dear friend," wrote Francois Fenelon. "Tell him your troubles, that he may comfort you; tell him your joys, that he may sober them; tell him your longings, that he may purify them; tell him your mislikings, that he may help you conquer them; talk to him of your temptations, that he may shield you from them; show him all the wounds of your heart, that he may heal them. . . . Blessed are they who attain to such familiar, unreserved (communion) with God."

The Third Sunday after Epiphany

PRAYER IS THE SOUL'S SINCERE DESIRE

The Chimes

The Lighting of the Candles . . . Daniel Holman & Ben Myrick

The Time of Silent Prayer

Speak, Lord, in the stillness, While I wait on Thee;

Hushed my heart to listen in expectancy.

The Welcome and Greetings

* * *

The Choral Call to Worship

The Opening Voluntary--"*Rise Up, O Men of God*".. Bingham

Joanne Forsyth, organ

The Hymn of Worship--"*O For a Thousand Tongues*

to Sing" 349

* * *

The Invocation

The Lord's Prayer New Beginnings

PRAYER IS THE CHRISTIAN'S VITAL BREATH

The Call for the Offering

The Offertory Sentence

The Offertory--"*Prayer of Mary*" Dupre

The Doxology

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise

Him, all creatures here below; Praise Him above, ye

heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Amen.

The Consecration of the Gifts Mr. Rodney Busey

THE PATH OF PRAYER THYSELF HAS TROD

The Duet--"*I Waited for the Lord*" Mendelssohn

Kenneth Forsyth and Meredith Stevens

"What Prayer Means to Me"

and The Congregational Prayer Mr. Jerry Johnson

The Response--"*Alleluia*" Choir and Congregation

LORD, TEACH US HOW TO PRAY

Reading of the Holy Scriptures--I Samuel 1

The Anthem--"*Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying*"

. Ken Medema

The Sanctuary Choir

directed by Kenneth Forsyth

The Sermon--"*HANNAH: SHE CONTINUED PRAYING*"

. Dr. Roger L. Fredrikson

NO PRAYER IS MADE ON EARTH ALONE

The Call to Commitment

The Hymn of Commitment

The Benediction

The Choral Response

The Closing Voluntary

* * * Ushers May Seat Latecomers

This morning Pastor Fredrikson will be greeting at the south narthex door and Lorenne Gurley will be at the north narthex door.

Charles Schultz will conduct a tour of the building following the service. Please meet by the piano.

Everyone is invited to the parlor for a time of coffee and fellowship following the service. We particularly encourage visitors to stop by. This is a time to get acquainted and to welcome those who are new among us.

Senior Pastor Roger Fredrikson

Associate Pastor San Jittawait

Minister of Christian Education Lorenne Gurley

Ministers of Music & Worship Kenneth & Joanne Forsyth

"Hannah: She Continues Praying"

Drawn as the center of her life - Two Weeks up the Stairs
Home Alone

(1) The Prayer Out of her head

(A) Eekárah - her cries Pénin an - with children

Hannah - barren -
she had closed her womb

C.S. Lewis

God whispers to us in our pleasures -
speaks to us in our pains

The offering each year and the portions
her curse provoked her men - to irritate her
wings and times not set

the curse on to God in her pain

(B) to listen - on trees

- she is a mental hospital

- one a kind - despair -

- I am so free - I need a friend - in hunger

- how can I going to save their marriage

Prayer in Hunger

(2) Pain and Struggle in her Prayer

(A) "she was deeply distressed and prayed to the Lord and kept fast"

- the struggle of prayer

(B) and she vowed a vow "Give me a child and I will give him to you" - all the days of her life -

- her prayer gets us to the home of promise -
self-offering -

Prayer is
pleasure

(2)

(3) Persistence in her Prayer

(A) "The Continuous Praying Before the Lord"

- The Atonement - the Fund -
 - The Teaching of Scripture
- The Friend at Midnight
The Widow and the Judge

(B) Our Situation - The Holy Bible

- The Prayers of Mother
- The Great Verities - God's Morning
 - John Knox "Give the Scotland or I Die"
 - In Our Families - Our Children

(4) The Strange Freedom of Prayer

(A) "Speaking in her Heart - Only her Lips Moved and her Voice was not heard"

- Eli took her to the Priests
- "No, I am a woman sorely troubled"

"I have pouring out my soul before the Lord"

(B) The Freedom and Possession of Prayer

- We are not to judge or belittle
- We make better little speeches - What No Power
- Adam Pellingham and David Wilkerson

Eli pressed her

countenance as
long as

Walter

(3)

⑤ The Answer and the offering of Hannah

① Elkanah knew Hannah his wife
and the Lord remembered her

"Hannah, I have asked him of the Lord"

- Then she kept him and nursed him

- After three years she brought him to Shiloh.

"In this case I prayed, and the Lord has granted me
my petition which I made to him. Therefore
I have sent him to the Lord; as long as he lives,
he is sent to the Lord"

② Whatever God gives us is his

⑥ Then Great Joy and Celebration

Hannah's worship of the Lord.

"And they worshipped the Lord there"

(14)

⑦ The Impact of Hannah's Prayer

① Hannah's Life Strikes With Hannah's Prayer

- Her Family
- Her Early Childhood

② The Greatness of Samuel

- Received Edotary from the Lord
- Exalted the Only True God
- Established the Monarchy
 - Samuel & David

③ Can We Not Pray With Great Expectation?

- Our Sunday School Classes
 - Home by Home
- For People in Places of Leadership
- A Wise Place for Our Steps
- The Day When Had the Breakdown
 - The Encounter with the Bishop

Benjamin's Advice on Prayer —

* * * * *

THE PEOPLE'S SERVICE
6:00 p.m. in the Chapel

We will continue our emphasis on prayer in our service this evening. There will be a time of singing, sharing, and prayer together, and Pastor Jittawait will share a teaching on prayer.

* * * * *

WEDNESDAY EVENING

5:15 p.m. - His Kids Ringers

5:45 p.m. - Family Fellowship Dinner

6:15 p.m. - Glory Ringers

6:30 p.m. - Film, "Mending Things"

Third in Series BLESSINGS OUT OF BROKENNESS

6:30 pm. - Carol Choir, Sonshine Singers, His Kids

7:30 p.m. - Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

7:30 p.m. - Children's Gym Activities

UNIFIED BUDGET GIVING

Last Sunday	\$10,843.05
Weekly Offering Required for 1986 Budget.	\$11,304.50
Budget to Date.	\$33,913.50
Received to Date 1986	\$29,193.27
Received to Date 1985	\$25,834.19

HANNAH: SHE CONTINUED PRAYING

Fourth in a Series on Prayer

January twenty-sixth, 1986

Dr. Roger L. Fredrikson

1 Samuel 1:9-20, 26-28; 2:1-2

My brothers and sisters, the point of these messages is not that prayer is going to be peripheral, on the edge of our lives, but at the very center. I'm convinced that we have not been, as we ought to be, praying people. There is a prayer in me that all of us will not simply say prayers somehow, like we've always done, for meals, as good as that is, or simply go through an exercise in the morning or the evening, but that we are going to become people of prayer in the deepest sense.

We have taken one after another people from the scriptures who have been men, and now a woman, of prayer. This is the story of Hannah's prayer for a child. It has to do with a husband, Elkanah, who has two wives, Penninah and Hannah. Penninah bears children, and every year, when they go to worship, Hannah has to watch as portions of food are given at Shiloh to each of the children that this other wife, really her adversary, receives. Hannah is belittled, poked at, made fun of by the other wives, and she is in misery, not just because she's being ridiculed, but because, as the Scripture says earlier, her womb has been made barren by the Lord. And she longs for a child. I'm going to say seven things about this.

SHE PRAYED OUT OF HER NEED

First, there is nothing wrong with praying about what we might think of as the little things, or the personal needs. You know we have a great deal of interest in what Randy and Elaine are going through in their pastorate in Brookings. This week Randy said on the phone, "I feel alone. I don't have the supports I had in Rapid City. I don't quite know who to go to. And I have been driven back to more dependence on the Lord." That's what happened to Hannah. You don't in the end manipulate to get a baby. In the end you go to God, because a child is a gift of the Lord, and not of anyone else. There is not one of us here today who does not have personal needs. I've heard the cry of men this week who want work, and some of them have spoken of that in a godly way. I've been on the back wards of mental hospitals and have tried to pray with people. I've had people pray, "God, save my family." "God, I'm hungry." C.S. Lewis says, "The Lord whispers to us through our pleasures. He shouts at us through our pain." There is an openness that comes to us in pain and need that does not come perhaps in any other way. "Give us this day our daily bread." And Jesus, as we've said many times, says to us, "The sparrow does not fall to the ground without Your knowing it." Does He not know then whether or not I have slept well or slept uneasily, whether I'm worried or anxious, whether there are needs in my life that have never been satisfied? So with Hannah there is no shame in coming to the Lord and saying, "Here is my need,"

PAIN AND STRUGGLE IN HER PRAYER

The second thing I want to say is that there can be pain and struggle in prayer. Yes, there is praise and thanksgiving, but we have in prayer after prayer in the Scripture the anguish and the struggle of the offering of self. For example, we read about Hannah, "She was deeply distressed and prayed to the Lord, and wept bitterly." And that prayer drove her to a vow, "If you give me a child, I will give him back to You." If you honestly pray, friends, in the way that the Scripture talks about it, you will sooner or later get to the place where prayer will lead you to a vow, "I promise you, Lord, this is what I will give you." This is not bargaining; it is God leading you to the place where ultimately you have to say, "The best that I have I give You." I want to underline again, brothers and sisters, that anything God gives you is His.

PERSISTENCE IN HER PRAYER

Thirdly, there is a persistence in prayer. We know that. Not an anxious, simply neurotic persistence, like someone out of insecurity begging to have their way. But we are led to a kind of holy knocking, a leaning, that Jesus talked about. He said, "A friend came at midnight and kept knocking at the door, asking for bread. Finally the one came down and said, "Here is bread." He told of a widow who kept going to a judge until finally the judge said, "Yes, I will grant it to you." My friends, the great things are not given us by the snap of a finger.

Someone spoke recently of being in Edinborough. I remember hitchhiking there in 1947 with a friend from London and standing at the church of John Knox and seeing those words. Knox was the man God used to revive Scotland. Much of the Church of Scotland came out of the life of the Reformation that came from this man. And the prayer of Knox was, "Give me Scotland else I die." Who of us has ever prayed that way? And yet, there is a persistence in prayer. You do not pray families into greatness with one prayer.

I want to say again, gratefully, I have been made aware in this last year or two, more than ever, that somehow the life that we have known, the life of our children, even of our grandchildren, is rooted in the prayers of my own mother. I think of people who sit here, who are godly, who know Christ, who want to serve Him, because someplace back there in the roots there was someone who anguished and prayed and offered this one to God. I'm sorry for you in a sense if you have not had that background and pray that somehow the church can give it to you even in this hour. But there is a persistence. Hannah does not give up with one little prayer. It says "she continued praying before the Lord." The great moving of God has always come this way.

THE STRANGE FREEDOM OF PRAYER

The fourth thing is the strange freedom about prayer. Take that place where it says she "was speaking in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard." It's a strange thing that here a woman whom we would call a lay woman is not understood by a holy man, who was supposed to be, in some sense, an ordained clergyman. I think it often happens this way. We think that because we have gotten a degree in seminary or read books about prayer that we know how to pray. We who have been Christians for thirty or forty years, upon hearing someone kind of unashamed and unabashed, praying with a kind of freedom, can almost wonder if we have ever prayed.

I recall Nels Ferre, who is looked upon as a liberal theologian, but was a man of prayer. He had in his office at Andover-Newton four mornings a week a time of prayer. I recall climbing the hill, because the Seminary was on a hill. And I suppose I heard Nels pray a score of times, in his Swedish brogue, "May grace flow from the hill, O Lord." When he got through praying there were times when I wondered if I knew anything about prayer. And he prayed freely. In our company there were two refugees from Estonia--Valdeko Kangro and Kaljo Raid. Valdeko was a Pentecostal. He prayed frequently in a language I did not understand. But was I one to judge him, and say, "Because I do not understand, and because this is strange and different, I have to draw back from this."?

I recall Graham Pulkingham, the leader of the Episcopal Church in Houston, telling of the dryness in his life, and finally going to New York City to check with David Wilkerson. He had read about this man struggling in the ghetto with the druggers. Walking down the street in Harlem, Graham Pulkingham says, "This man Wilkerson turned to me and said, 'You do not have the Spirit in your life, do you?' This Episcopal clergyman said, "I guess not." He said, "Let us kneel and pray." And on the streets of Harlem they knelt. Pulkingham said, "At first I was very conscious of everybody looking, but there came into my life that day a power I had not known before."

Be careful about judging anybody about the way they pray. Some people want to be flat on their bellies; some people want to raise their hands; some people in great cathedrals want to pray very quietly. Someone told me before the service they had been in a Catholic service, and it was a living service in which the Lord was present. Our danger is that somehow, like Eli was prone to do with Hannah, in crossing off the freedom, the life, the reality of prayer, we lose the blessing ourselves. God looks on the heart, not on the outer, and what He sees, as He has said in a number of places, is either a broken and contrite spirit that comes clinging to Him, longing for Him, opening to Him, or else He sees words, shibboleths, and all that, which have no meaning. Let us remember the words of Jesus, who in teaching the disciples said, "These holy men think they will be heard for their much speaking. But I say to you, 'Pray like this, in your closet: Our Father, who art in heaven. . .'" So there is a strange freedom about prayer that we need to be open to. And I am not putting my finger on any particular method or mode. Let me say again, some pray in bed; some pray by a particular chair; some pray vocally; some sing, even though perhaps they are not skilled musicians, because they find strength in the words. Let us be open and search for the reality in prayer as the Lord moves us.

THE ANSWER AND THE OFFERING OF SAMUEL

Fifthly, there is an answer and an offering. The answer came. After the encounter with Eli, when he said to her, "Go in peace, and the God of Israel grant your petition which you have made to him," she went home with her husband, and the scripture says, "Elkanah knew Hannah." What it means is there was the intimacy of life, the sharing of that which brings life forth. But before she ever went into that experience it says, "She ate, and her countenance was changed." It was as if she trusted God that somehow now He would care, and in that trusting the answer came. And the beautiful part of this is that she offers him to the Lord. So after three years, when the boy had been weaned (like in primitive countries, children nursed long in that culture) she brought him back to Shiloh, and she said to the man, "I am the woman that came and prayed those years ago. For this child I prayed; and the Lord had granted me my petition which I made to him. Therefore I have lent him to the Lord; as long as he lives, he is lent to the Lord."

See, friends, we need to know that in our lives. The prayer is answered. "Lord, grant me a home." One of our families was rejoicing because they prayed they could sell their home back in Parsons, and it happened, and they know it's an answer to prayer. But what this does to this family, just like it does to us, is to place a kind of burden on us in this situation to say, "Lord, this is yours. You answered my prayer; I give it to you." I need to say to us parents, one of our greatest difficulties is we want to hang on and arrange and live for others, our own children, only what they can live out. It is a dangerous, exciting, frightening, exhilarating thing to let them go, believing that somehow God has them in His hands and the prayers that have been uttered will be answered. I ask you as you put your youngsters to bed, or send them off to school, or send them off to college, or to work, or you see them getting married, is there somehow rooted in you the kind of prayer that is an offering of that child, that life, that home--whatever it may be--that really belongs to God?

THEN GREAT JOY AND CELEBRATION

Sixthly, there is great joy. This whole first part of the second chapter of First Samuel is almost like the Magnificat--that great prayer of offering of Mary's, later in the New Testament. "None holy like the Lord." "My mouth derides my enemies, because I rejoice in Thy salvation." Prayer will always authentically at some point get us to rejoicing. We pass through the anguish, the requests; the answer comes, and we find ourselves with great joy celebrating and thanking Him. Our life should be full of this. As Paul says in Philippians, "In everything give thanks, as you make your petitions known." There is an intermingling of thanks with our petitions, with our crying out, that He will grant us what He has laid on our heart to ask for.

THE IMPACT OF HANNAH'S PRAYER

Lastly, I want to speak about the impact of Hannah's prayer. You take Samuel's life. I wonder about that--when the boy came, when she carried him in her womb, my guess is every day she prayed. As the life stirred, when he was born, when he went to sleep at night, how she must have puzzled over him. You cannot live in that atmosphere, even if it's only three years, without it making an impact. There was no way Samuel could get beyond his mother's prayers. Little did she realize at the time he was given that he was to become one of the greatest judges Israel had ever had. He was used by God to cleanse that country from idolatry. I ask myself, who is there on the American horizon that will help cleanse us of our idolatry? If and when it were to happen, it would be the result of prayer. In the midst of polytheism, when they had many gods, Samuel exalted the one true living God. All his life he did. He dealt with kings--Saul and David. All his life he was faithful to that. He was used by God to establish the monarchy. Do not forget that. Saul at the beginning was a good man. David became probably the greatest king Israel ever had. He was used to do that.

You do not know, friend, the impact your prayer can have. Never try to measure it humanly. For somehow in the vast wonder of God's grace, this God who flings the space out, and all that we are now discovering in such magnificent ways that it kind of overwhelms us, this great God has a concern and understands and can use a prayer.

Two women, after praying day after day, finally confronted Dwight L. Moody. The change in Moody's life that brought power to him and led him to become who he was can be rooted in a sense in the prayers of those two women. I picked up a book that had been on my shelf since 1979. It was a gift from Word Books. I sat down and started reading it. It was written by a woman of the Episcopal church. Her name is Elizabeth Rockwood. She tells answer after answer to prayer, not in an easy, kind of glib way, but in a powerful, authentic way.

She tells of one woman who had a nervous breakdown, had been hospitalized, and when she came out, like many people who have been in institutional mental treatment, she couldn't even make decisions. She had a major problem in going to the market, and she would stand at the grocery store wondering if she dared pull this or that off the shelf. You've known people like that perhaps. They are immobilized. She had been so active in her church before; she had knocked herself out doing all the stuff in the church. Then one day she met one of the bishops, and she said about him afterwards, "He is a Christlike man. It was not so much anything he said, but a quality within him, a sort of indescribable Holy Absolute, which pursued me in my heart after I left him and drew me, irresistably back to God."

Out of this encounter, after much prayer, she was given the opportunity to be a volunteer in a retirement home where there were many people ill. She began to find herself and eventually went on to tell about how she became chairman of the board. She wrote a statement and put it on her desk, and the statement was, "Dear Jesus, please be Chairman of the Board through me." In the two years as chairman of the board healing took place on the board of directors. An unexpected gift for a million dollars was given, which provided for forty more people in that home. But at the end do you know what she said? "Our Lord can use us best in our inadequacy." Don't anybody go out of here saying it's because you're strong or good or big or have got station that God will hear you. We all come like Hannah. "It is not self-sufficiency but God-sufficiency that counts. When I look back, I know it was He who opened all the doors, put all the right words in my heart, and gave me the wisdom that I needed."

I think our Lord is calling us to be a praying people. I confess to you, I need to learn and

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grow in what I think is the greatest opportunity given me--to commune with my Maker, my Redeemer, and my Sustainer, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

I'm going to read a statement by Francois Fenelon, one of the great saints of the church.

Tell God all that is in your heart, as one unloads one's heart to a dear friend. Tell him your troubles, that he may comfort you; tell him your joys, that he may sober them; tell him your longings, that he may purify them; tell him your mislikings, that he may help you conquer them; talk to him of your temptations, that he may shield you from them; show him all the wounds of your heart, that he may heal them. . . . Blessed are they who attain to such familiar, unreserved communion with God.

Lord, hear the prayers of your people. In Jesus' name. Amen.