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CHURCH

SERMON NOTES & TRANSCRIPT

The One Thing That Unlocks God's Power

The Flow of Power: Why Prayer Is the Golden Pipe

Prayer is the conduit for Pentecostal power. Jesus is the source and the Spirit is the oil, but without the golden pipe of prayer the oil never reaches the lampstand, and the way to pray more is to start by praying some.

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SERIES
We're Openly Spirit Filled, Week 2 of 5

MAIN TEXT
Zechariah 4:1-14

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Sermon Transcript

Amen. How many of you know the Lord is good? And how many of you know that the Lord comes through for us? I want to ask that. How many of you know the Lord will come through on your behalf? He'll work on your behalf. That's what I want to talk to you about this morning. I want to talk to you about the Lord who will work on your behalf. I want to talk to you about how power flows. Last week we started a sermon series based on one of our values, that we are an openly Spirit-filled church. We are not closeted Pentecostals. We are openly Spirit-filled. We are not going to be shy about the fact that we believe that the power of God still works in the life of the believer.

If you're a believer, just wave your hand at me. Okay, this is going to be a good message for you this morning. Amen. A few years ago I heard a story about a man who lived in Ohio. He had grown up in Ohio, but his family, generations back, had been from South Georgia. So every summer he would go down and he would spend the summer with his grandfather, his pawpaw. How many of y'all got pawpaws or had pawpaws or are pawpaws? Amen. So he went down and he would spend the summer with his pawpaw, who happened to be a peanut farmer. And so he would go down and every summer he would spend time with his pawpaw, and they had a good bond, and so very, very close.

Close enough that this little boy would get up every morning in the summer at four o'clock in the morning to go out to the peanut farm with his pawpaw. And he learned to drink coffee with his pawpaw. They'd eat biscuits every morning. They had a great bond. And years later — this is why I heard about it — years later this man, who is an entrepreneur in Ohio, his pawpaw passed away. Just a few years ago. And when his pawpaw passed away, he put it in the will that this grandson would get the peanut farm. So he got a peanut farm down in South Georgia while living in Ohio, and he made a decision with his wife and his kids that every summer they were going to go down and they were going to work that peanut farm and keep Pawpaw's legacy alive.

And so they loaded up the first summer after Pawpaw had passed away, and they go down there and they stay on the house, on the property, and every morning he was bonding with his oldest son and trying to get him off the phone, amen, hallelujah. And so he would take his oldest son out at four o'clock in the morning and they'd eat biscuits and they'd drink coffee and then they'd go out and work the peanut farm. Now in the summer, most peanut farming comes down to weed management and irrigation. You just got to keep the peanuts wet. Can't think of any better way to say it.

I don't know. You got to keep the peanuts wet. And so that's basically what you do in the summer. So they would go out every day and they would do weed management. They would make sure the irrigation systems were working and they would keep everything moist. And so the end of the summer came, and even though the man was an entrepreneur and he could go anywhere he wanted to, his kids were in school. So they had to go back to Ohio, because mama wasn't going to have it no other way. Kids were starting school on time. And so they go back and he contracted the man to go out and harvest the peanuts.

They're obviously South Georgia, lots of peanut farms down there. This man had his own land. He worked for several other farmers, and so he got contracted and he was going to harvest all the peanuts. Well, a few weeks passed and the man in Ohio gets a call from a South Georgia area code. So he goes, this must be my guy. And so he picks the phone up and he says, "How's the peanut harvest coming?" And the man on the other side of the phone says, "Well, sir, you know,

I have my own land. I help about six farmers in the area, and I went out to your property today and I have never seen what I saw today."

And the farmer, or the man who owned the field, now he's getting excited because he thinks, oh, I've hit the jackpot. I am the peanut king. Amen. And you could be worse things. Hallelujah. And so he says, oh, this must be great. And he says, "Well, what happened?" And the man on the other end of the phone who was going to harvest all the peanuts, he said, "Well, that's the thing, sir. I don't really know how to tell you this, but I went out and I started to try to harvest the peanuts. And I'm just going to say it how it is. You have no peanuts in this field."

You have no peanuts. And then it dawned on the man that he had seen how to deal with the peanuts in the summer, but he had never seen when the peanuts went into the ground. And so the first year after Pawpaw had passed away, no peanuts went into the field to be tended to. So it turned out he was pulling weeds and watering dirt all summer long. How many of you know that's a mistake you only make one time? Amen. I believe that in the Pentecostal church, we often have a very similar thing happening. We come out to church services like this and we hear a lot about the power, and we see a demonstration of power in our services, and we want God to move on our behalf.

And because we see it in a church service, we experience it in a church service, we feel it in a church service, we think that what's happening is just what's happening in the church service. And so we tie power in our life to what's happening inside this room in moments like this, or in a revival service, or when a famous preacher came through. And we think that it's all about what's happening in that room or about the person who came through being special to some degree. But like the man from Ohio who went down and had never observed his grandpa, his pawpaw, put the peanuts in the ground.

I think sometimes we forget that there is a behind-the-scenes mechanism in a church like ours that we ignore or we never see, but it's actually the thing that causes power to flow. And that behind-the-scenes thing — I'm just going to rip the bandaid off for you this morning — is prayer. It's prayer. Prayer. Listen, you can write this down. Prayer is the conduit for Pentecostal power. And if you've ever wondered, is there more going on in the background than just the worship and the preaching and the excitement and the stuff happening? Yeah. It's prayer.

It's prayer, because prayer is the conduit for Pentecostal power. In fact, it would even be fair to say that without prayer, there is no Pentecost. Acts chapter 2, the model is that they prayed and then fire from heaven descended on top of each one of them and they got baptized in the Holy Ghost.

> **ACTS 2:1-4** ESV
>
> [1] When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. [2] And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. [3] And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. [4] And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

It starts in prayer. Prayer is where power flows from. It's the conduit for power. And I was in prayer a few years ago, coincidentally, and I was in prayer and the Lord spoke to me. And I might have written about this in one of my books, but I'm not sure. I write them.

I don't read them. Amen. I'm done with it when I'm done with it. But the Lord spoke to me in prayer one morning and he said this. He said that when you sow a seed of Bible reading, you reap a harvest of revelation. When you sow a seed of

worship, you reap a harvest of exposure. And the Lord told me, he said, "When you make much of me, I'll make much of you." Hallelujah. And then the Lord said this. He said, "When you sow the seed of prayer, you reap a harvest of power." When you sow the seed of prayer, you reap a harvest of power. Coincidentally, not long after I get this word from the Lord, Charles Stanley — how many of you know Charles Stanley?

Charles Stanley. Charles Stanley is one of the handful of Baptist preachers that I just love. I just take them in all day long. I love some Charles Stanley. In fact, I have two collector's edition Charles Stanley Bibles in my office, and my wife only knows about one of them. I just outed myself. Amen. Because they're expensive. And so I love Charles Stanley. Well, Charles Stanley passed away not long after I got this word from the Lord, and his son, Andy Stanley, posted a picture of the front page of his Bible on Instagram. And I want you to see what Charles Stanley, in probably his first few weeks in the great cloud of witnesses, verified for me.

Can I see that picture real quick? This is the front. It says, "More prayer, less notes. More power, greater results." Because when you sow the seed of prayer, you reap a harvest of power. Okay? Now, I just want to interject. We're going to talk about prayer for most of the morning. And if you don't start amening in about the next five seconds, people are going to know you don't pray. So participate out of your own self-preservation this morning. Amen. All right. Here's where I want us to go. Turn with me to Zechariah chapter 4 this morning. Zechariah chapter 4.

We've talked about this a couple of times over the past few weeks. I'm going to keep juicing this chapter of the Bible until I'm sucking on dry pulp. Amen. It's that good. Hallelujah. Zechariah chapter 4. I'm going to read the whole chapter. Zechariah chapter 4. It says,

> **ZECHARIAH 4:1-14** ESV
>
> 1 And the angel who talked with me came again and woke me, like a man who is awakened out of his sleep.
> 2 And he said to me, "What do you see?" I said, "I see, and behold, a lampstand all of gold, with a bowl on the top
> of it, and seven lamps on it, with seven lips on each of the lamps that are on the top of it. 3 And there are two
> olive trees by it, one on the right of the bowl and the other on its left." 4 And I said to the angel who talked with
> me, "What are these, my lord?" 5 Then the angel who talked with me answered and said to me, "Do you not
> know what these are?" I said, "No, my lord." 6 Then he said to me, "This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel:
> Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of hosts. 7 Who are you, O great mountain? Before
> Zerubbabel you shall become a plain. And he shall bring forward the top stone amid shouts of 'Grace, grace to
> it!'" 8 Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying, 9 "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of
> this house; his hands shall also complete it. Then you will know that the Lord of hosts has sent me to you. 10 For
> whoever has despised the day of small things shall rejoice, and shall see the plumb line in the hand of
> Zerubbabel. "These seven are the eyes of the Lord, which range through the whole earth." 11 Then I said to him,
> "What are these two olive trees on the right and the left of the lampstand?" 12 And a second time I answered
> and said to him, "What are these two branches of the olive trees, which are beside the two golden pipes from
> which the golden oil is poured out?" 13 He said to me, "Do you not know what these are?" I said, "No, my lord."
> 14 Then he said, "These are the two anointed ones who stand by the Lord of the whole earth."

"And the angel who talked with me came again and woke me, like a man who is awakened out of his sleep. And he said to me, 'What do you see?' And I said, 'I see, and behold, a lampstand all of gold, with a bowl on the top of it, and seven lamps on it, with seven lips on each of the lamps that are on top of it.

And there are two olive trees by it, one on the right of the bowl and the other on its left.' And I said to the angel who talked with me, 'What are these, my lord?' Then the angel who talked with me answered and said to me, 'Do you not know what these are?' And I said, 'No, my lord.' Then he said to me, 'This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel.'" Let me hit pause here for a second. Zerubbabel is a gentleman who is a governor while Israel and Judah are in exile. Judah — and I don't remember who's ruling them right now. It was either the Assyrians or the Babylonians, but they have been taken over.

Okay. They have been taken over. And Zerubbabel is a governor in the territory of Jerusalem and Judah, but he is a governor who is actually in the lineage of David. So he's a type of a king in this chapter of the Bible. He's like a king because he's in the lineage of King David. And Zerubbabel is going to attempt in this time to rebuild the temple of God. He's going to rebuild the temple. This is no small feat. And so this prophet is now prophesying to Zerubbabel and about the work he is going to accomplish. So he says, "This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of hosts. Who are you, O great mountain?"

So as Zerubbabel does this, there's going to be opposition to what he's trying to accomplish. And the prophet says, "Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain." You think you're an obstacle, but you're not going to stop anything. You're going to be flat ground before I get done with you. "And he shall bring forth the top stone" — the finishing stone — "amid shouts of 'Grace, grace to it!' Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying, 'The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of the house, and his hands shall also complete it.'"

Meaning you're going to start the work and you're going to finish the work. You're not going to quit halfway through, because the Spirit of God is going to give you power. "'Then you will know that the Lord of hosts has sent me to you. For whoever has despised the day of small things shall rejoice, and shall see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel. These seven are the eyes of the Lord, which range through the whole earth.' Then I said to him, 'What are these two olive trees on the right and the left of the lampstand?' And a second time I answered and said to him, 'What are these two branches of the olive trees, which are beside the two golden pipes from which the golden oil is poured out?'

And he said to me, 'Do you not know what these are?' And I said, 'No, my lord.' And then he said to me, 'These are the two anointed ones who stand by the Lord of the whole earth.'" If you're ready to receive this morning, give the Lord one good praise right there. I think that's a good place. You know it's going to be good when you get a whole chapter of the Bible. Hallelujah. So the first thing I want to talk to you about this morning when we're talking about a flow of power — that's what I'm talking about today, that's the message title. This is a flow of power, the flow of power, the flow of power. And how does power flow?

It flows through the conduit of prayer. And this is what I want you to understand. When we talk about this, this is the first realization that you have to come to if power is going to flow into your life. And it's simply that you can't accomplish everything in your own strength. You can't accomplish everything in your own strength. Zechariah chapter 4, verse 6, it said right there, "Then he said to me, 'This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord.'" You have listened to me. You have a measure of power.

You have a measure of might. You have ability, capability. You have intelligence. You have strength. You have muscles. If your legs don't work, your arms work. If your arms don't work, your legs work. If neither work, something works. Amen. Something's working. So you've got something you can work with. You've got some measure of power in your life. But no matter how much power you have, there are things you cannot accomplish in your own strength. There's

just stuff you can't get done. You can't make the people pick up the phone. You can't make the people spend the money.

You can't make people follow in on their industry. You can't make the government do anything — though the way some of y'all post on Facebook, you would think they're just waiting to come across you on social media. "Lord, change everything in the government. Just look at my Facebook profile, Congress." You know? So there's just things you can't accomplish under your own strength. There are things that are outside of you. And so Zerubbabel, in this prophecy, what he's about to do in rebuilding the temple, what we don't talk about very often is what his dependency was.

He was very dependent on the government. He was very dependent on the resources, on being given workers, being given money, being given time, being given permission. He was dependent on the government to a great extent in order to be able to even think about doing this work. And so when he had opposition, where was that opposition coming from? It was coming from within the government, people who didn't want him doing things. And so every day he woke up to go and rebuild the temple, he had to have an approval that was outside of his control.

He had to have a resource that was outside of his pocketbook. He had to have people helping that were outside of his control, because he was a governor, but he wasn't in charge. He didn't have a checkbook and he didn't make the rules. He was operating in a certain ecosystem that he was now being called to do great exploits in. And to me, the way I would see this is, he had the know-how, but he didn't have the resources. He had the know-how, but he didn't have the resources. There's a certain measure of power. And I find a lot of us live there. I know how to do something, if only I had this.

Somebody asked me the other day, "What do you need as a pastor?" I said, "People and money." That's resources. I know how to do a lot of this stuff. If y'all figured it out, I'd kind of walk through here and get some stuff done. I know this world, but hey, I can't do everything. Somebody was asking me if I would do something in a service recently. I said, "When? Before service, I'm trying to shake hands. After service, I'm praying for people. And in the service, I'm singing and I'm preaching, and I get two and a half minutes off because we can't think of more things for Ashleigh to announce," right?

It's the know-how without the resources. And so there are things where you may have some strength, but there's just stuff you can't accomplish under your own power. But there is a power that comes from on high. Not by might, nor by power, but what? By my Spirit. By my Spirit. There is an enabling power and strength that comes from the heavenly place that can take you where you need to go. It can help you do the thing you want to do. Some of you are looking at different situations. Maybe you've been sitting on a house that won't sell. Hallelujah, right? We've got someone who can help you this morning.

Amen. But you've been sitting on a house that won't sell. Listen, the Lord knows the person who needs to buy your house. You may have a limited network. The Lord doesn't have a limited network. Some of you need a job. You just need a job. And you've been putting out stuff every single day. And it's like no one wants to give you a job. Well, listen, God can call someone to look back at your resume. I'm telling you, the Lord could call — maybe this is prophetic, I don't know — the Lord could call somebody to spill coffee on your resume, and all of a sudden start clearing their desk and pick it up and go, "Well, hey, what about this person?

After all, maybe this is a good candidate." The Lord can cause those things to happen. If you're on a limited income or a fixed income, God can cause money to just show up out of nowhere. The amount of times where I've needed something to come through and the Lord has caused the insurance, the IRS, or somebody else to send me money that I

had sitting with them from years ago. If the Lord needs to hold your money in escrow, he'll do that too. So there's a power from on high to make things happen. There's a power from on high that can accomplish the great exploits you want to accomplish in your life.

And you may think, well, I don't have a great exploit. A great exploit is whatever you want to do that you can't really comprehend how you get it done. And for some of y'all, that is owning 10 rental houses. And for some of you, it's just finding the strength to talk to the lady in the checkout line at Publix. Amen. Just strength to do it. So you can't accomplish everything in your own strength. Second thing I want you to know is that prayer is the conduit through which power flows. Prayer is the conduit through which power flows. Zechariah chapter 4, verses 11 through 14.

I want to read these to you, and I want you to catch some of the images in here, and I'm going to explain them to you. "Then I said to him, 'What are these two olive trees on the right and the left of the lampstand?' And a second time I answered and said to him, 'What are these two branches of the olive trees, which are beside the two golden pipes from which the golden oil is poured out?' And he said to me, 'Do you not know what these are?' And I said, 'No, my lord.'" And here's the answer he gives him. Then he said, "These are the two anointed ones who stand by the Lord of the whole earth."

Now I've explained this a little bit over the past few weeks a couple of times, but I want to go back here again. When the Bible talks about two anointed ones in this chapter, in this prophecy, he's talking about two specific people. The first one is Zerubbabel. Now remember, Zerubbabel is the governor in the territory of Judah and Jerusalem, but he is in the lineage of David. So Zerubbabel is a type of king. He is a king in the instance of this prophecy. So the first anointed one is the rightful king of the land of Judah. Okay. The second anointed one that he's talking about — and we see this in another place in Zechariah — is the high priest at the current time, a man named Joshua.

So it is the priest, the high priest, and the king. Those are the two anointed ones. Well, in the Bible, all through the Old Testament, every king had to be a king and every priest had to be a priest, and you could never mix the two. Anytime a king tried to be a priest, it went bad. That's what happened with Saul.

> **1 SAMUEL 13:8-14** ESV
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> 8 He waited seven days, the time appointed by Samuel. But Samuel did not come to Gilgal, and the people
> were scattering from him. 9 So Saul said, "Bring the burnt offering here to me, and the peace offerings." And he
> offered the burnt offering. 10 As soon as he had finished offering the burnt offering, behold, Samuel came. And
> Saul went out to meet him and greet him. 11 Samuel said, "What have you done?" And Saul said, "When I saw
> that the people were scattering from me, and that you did not come within the days appointed, and that the
> Philistines had mustered at Michmash, 12 I said, 'Now the Philistines will come down against me at Gilgal, and I
> have not sought the favor of the Lord.' So I forced myself, and offered the burnt offering." 13 And Samuel said to
> Saul, "You have done foolishly. You have not kept the command of the Lord your God, with which he
> commanded you. For then the Lord would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. 14 But now your
> kingdom shall not continue. The Lord has sought out a man after his own heart, and the Lord has commanded
> him to be prince over his people, because you have not kept what the Lord commanded you."

He was a king who tried to be a priest, and it did not work, and it ended up where he lost the anointing. He tried to do the priest's job when he was supposed to do the king's job, amen? But there are two men in the Bible who are sanctioned as both a king and a priest.

The first is a man named Melchizedek, and Melchizedek is the one who blessed Abraham.

> **GENESIS 14:18-20** ESV
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> 18 And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. (He was priest of God Most High.) 19 And he blessed him and said, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; 20 and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand!" And Abram gave him a tenth of everything.

He's a king and a priest, and Melchizedek is a prophetic figure that points forward toward the second king-priest, which is Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is our king, and he is our high priest, amen? Now here's what I really want you to catch. That's a lot of words to say this: that when we talk about the anointed ones, we're not talking about the anointed ones. You can just scratch the S right off of there. We're talking about the Anointed One, who is Jesus Christ. That's the first symbol here.

It's the olive tree. The olive tree is Jesus Christ. The second image that's in that passage is the lampstand. The lampstand is the believer. The lampstand is the church. The lampstand is God's people. Look at your neighbor and say, "You are a lampstand." You're a lampstand. You ain't nothing but Lumiere. Amen. He's a candlestick with candles. We're having a little bit of a theological disagreement on Lumiere here on the front row. That's from Beauty and the Beast, for those of y'all who are too saved to have ever seen a Disney movie.

Amen. But you are the lampstand. The believer is the lampstand, and the lampstand needs oil to keep burning. Without the oil, the lampstand doesn't have any power to burn, to have fire, to have light, to produce, to make heat. The lampstand needs what the olive tree has. The church needs what Jesus has. Oh, now y'all are awake. Praise the Lord. That's good. And so what does Jesus have that the church needs? The olive oil. That's the third thing. The third thing in the passage there is the golden olive oil. It's the golden oil. The oil is the essence of the tree.

The oil is the essence that flows out of the tree into the church. It's the anointing. It's the power. It's the strength. It's the Holy Spirit experience that the believer walks in. It's the anointing. It's the oil. But then there's a fourth thing in there. The fourth thing is the golden pipe through which the golden oil pours forth. The golden pipe, my friends, is prayer. It is not the anointing. It is not the Lord. It is not the church. It is the mechanism through which the source, the essence of Christ's strength, flows into the life of a believer. And without it, the oil hits the ground.

Without it, the oil never makes the trip. Without the golden pipe, you burn dry and the oil hits the floor. The only way that the oil gets to you and sustains you is through prayer. Now, if you ever wonder why we have a weak and decrepit church in America — and listen, I don't talk ugly about the church in America, because this is the church we got. Okay? It's the bride of Christ. She could use a little lipstick, but it's the bride of Christ. Amen. Sometimes you got to put a little paint on a barn. Hallelujah. But this is an area when we look at the church and we go, why is the church in America being ineffectual?

Why do believers in China never miss a secret house church meeting and we skip months at a time? I'm not talking about y'all. Y'all came out when it's cold. I'm talking about your neighbor. Amen. So don't be offended. That was targeted at somebody else. Why is that? Well, it's because we are not a people of prayer. We're not a people of prayer. Prayer is the thing we go to the least. Now, some of us do some prayers and we think we're people of prayer, but I'm telling you, your 30 seconds a day ain't cutting it. Okay? 30 seconds a day ain't cutting it.

That's the next thing that I want you to hear, is that the more you pray, the more you increase your flow of power. The more you pray, the more you increase your flow of power. Now, I want you to hear me. God has gifted me in this area where I'm kind of able to figure out how things work spiritually and kind of give people frameworks and processes they can follow and activate things in their life for supernatural ministry. And I'm grateful for that. And one of the things that I teach people on a lot of those items, such as Bible reading, is that you don't need to hit the point of diminishing return.

In other words, you don't need to read the Bible so much that it starts to not work. Like it actually has a reverse effect on your life. You've taken in so many words on the page that now you're cross-eyed and everything's blurry. There's no point in that. So you have to find a point of diminishing return. Prayer is not like that. Prayer is a time investment game. The more time you put into prayer, the more flow of power you're going to have. In fact, the more time you put into prayer, the more the golden pipe opens up and it gives it greater capacity for flow.

You have more capacity to receive power in your life. Now, in the past, y'all have heard me talk about people who talk about praying three hours a day. And I don't normally talk real kind about these people, because one, I don't believe them. Do you know how much stuff would have to drop off my calendar for three hours a day of prayer to happen? Do you know how many levels of stuff I'm ignoring that would have to go away for me to pray for three hours? Because if I cleared my schedule right now, I still have stuff that's coming. I have stuff to do. I don't buy this from a lot of people.

And anytime that people get up and they preach stuff that makes them sound like they are more special than you, that's when my red flag goes up. Y'all hear what I'm saying? So I get a little nervous around that stuff. But there is a reality that praying more increases a greater flow of power in your life. But here's what I want you to hear. The way you pray more is you start by praying some. For the majority of people in this room, anything north of saying the blessing would be an improvement. You would cause more prayer to flow. Right? My granddaddy said the same blessing every time we sat at the table.

"Our Father, we thank Thee for this food and all our blessings. We rest in Thy name. Amen." I don't think he had a lot of the Holy Ghost flowing around him from that prayer. Amen? I must be tapping something. Y'all got quiet on me when I started telling you you don't pray. I don't know. I'm just trying to be honest with you. I mean, if you pray, don't be offended. And if you don't pray, you should be. Amen. And you're giving yourself away right now. The people next to you know he don't pray. Lord. The way that you pray more is you pray some. There's an example that Daniel sets for us.

How many of you know Daniel? Some of y'all might even be on a Daniel fast right now. Amen.

> **DANIEL 6:10** ESV
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> 10 When Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he went to his house where he had windows in his upper chamber open toward Jerusalem. He got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he had done previously.

And so there's an example that Daniel sets for us in Daniel chapter 6, verse 10. It says it right here. It says, "When Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he went to his house where he had windows in his upper chamber open toward Jerusalem. And he got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God." Now listen to this line right here: "as he had done previously." To pray in a way where you increase the flow of power in your life, this is what you're going to need.

You're going to have to follow Daniel's example and start with a baseline for prayer in your routine. You got to figure out — you just got to do the work here. It's worth it. Trust me. It is worth it. But you got to carve out enough time in your schedule every day that you have a baseline where you say, "I'm going to pray at least this much every day. I'm going to pray at least this long." Now back in the fall, I told you exactly what your baseline ought to be. I preached a message called "27 Minutes to Change Your Life." You can go look at it on YouTube. I'm not going to give you the explanation on everything I'm going to say.

So if anything I say upsets you, go watch the video and you'll be fine after that. But I'm going to say this quick. I teach people to spend 27 minutes with Jesus every single day. And the way that breaks down is, you read the Bible for 15 minutes. That'll get you through it in one year. You listen to five minutes of worship music, because all worship songs are about five minutes long. It just happens that way. That's God's ordained worship song length. Amen. And so, five minutes. And then you pray for seven minutes. Now I read the Bible, pray, and then do my worship song.

But you pray for seven minutes. This is how you can start praying for seven minutes every single day. "Well preacher, you preached on this in the fall. Have you started doing it?" Okay. So here's the seven minutes. You thank God for one thing you're really grateful for. Don't thank him for stuff you couldn't care about. Okay? Don't do that. Thank God for things you actually care about. Things that you're actually grateful for. It's amazing how starting your prayer time being honest will impact your life. Okay. And then you just list three to five things that you are interested in seeing the Lord work out in your immediate realm of influence.

So I think it's great if you want to pray for peace in the Middle East. But you might want to pray for your children first. Amen. So pray for something, because there's two reasons. One, you actually care about that stuff. And two, you can actually see if it changes or not. Okay. And so pray for three to five things that you want to see happen in your life. That's a seven-minute baseline. Now the first time you do this, you might pray it all in two and a half minutes. But I promise, give it three weeks. You'll figure out how to talk to the Lord for seven minutes.

And some of y'all are going, "Seven minutes?" Folks, seven minutes is nothing to turn your nose up at. Because let me tell you what seven minutes is. Are y'all ready? I'm going to give you something very prophetic. And I want you to hear this. This is something that — this is from the throne. Are you ready? It's better than zero. I like them golf claps. I thought that putt went in real nice too. And just clean right there. So pray for seven minutes. And then once you start to pray for seven minutes, you'll have an opportunity to expand your prayer time.

Now there's two ways I'll help you expand your prayer time this morning, because you need power. Say, "I need power." Okay. So I'm helping you today, right? Okay. So this is how you can expand your prayer time. The first thing you can do is you can pray in the Spirit. I told you we're not a closeted Pentecostal church. We're tongue-talking, devil-threatening, little crazy, run around the room, have a good time Pentecostals. We haven't done it all this morning because it's cold. The colder it gets, the more Baptist we become. Amen. But I'm telling you, we believe in the power of God in this church, and I'm not going to talk about it much right now because I'm going to talk about it next week.

Next week, I'm talking about the power of tongues, supernatural tongues from heaven. That's my whole message next week. So I'm going to talk about it more then. So the first way you can expand your prayer time is by praying in the Holy Ghost, praying in tongues, because the Bible says in Romans chapter 8 that we know not how we ought to pray.

> **ROMANS 8:26** ESV
>
> 26 Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.

So if we can tap into the one who knows all things and can pray exactly how we need to pray, well, you can pray some pretty good prayers if you partner up with the Holy Ghost. Amen. Okay. So that's the first way.

The second way is this, and this is what I do, and this is what I love to do, is I open my Bible — and it's not this one, I just preach from this one, but I go to the Psalms and I just open my Bible up to the Psalms and I have a lot of notes in there, but I scan through the Psalms. I just start scanning, and whatever resonates with me in the Psalms, I start to pray. Okay. So I can't get to the Psalms, so I'm just going to do it from Isaiah 12. This is really — I'm doing this for real on the fly. I have no plan, but I got tired of flipping. So you can do this anywhere.

Amen. You can do it in Isaiah.

> **ISAIAH 12:1** ESV
>
> 1 You will say in that day: "I will give thanks to you, O Lord, for though you were angry with me, your anger turned away, that you might comfort me.

Isaiah 12, right here, it says, "You will say in that day: I will give thanks to you, O God." Okay. All right. So right there, immediately in the prayer place, I can just go, "Lord, I'm thanking you that there's a day coming in this situation where I'm no longer going to be hoping that there's breakthrough, but I'm actually going to be saying my gratitude to you, because Lord, I know you're going to come through. So let me give you a little praise in advance. Father, I thank you for what you're about to do in this situation."

Let's just pray right now. "Lord, I thank you that you're about to bring in a worship pastor into this church. I thank you there's a day coming where I don't have to sing. And even though the church thinks I sound good and I'm real attractive, I'm not going to have to do that anymore." Amen. "And you're going to bring about a worship pastor who's going to come in and make some things happen. Father, I thank you right now that you're preparing an anointed young person who needs a pastor who can train them for the future of the ministry. And God, I thank you that you've given me unique skills in worship ministry that I'm able to implant into another young minister.

So God, raise them up, let them see us on the internet, let us see them on TikTok, help them to find us so they'll know they want to reach out and come to this. Father, I know you're giving us breakthrough in this area." Now you see how just immediately I'm ready to go? Now, I got a little bit of an advantage on you. I've read the Bible a lot and I talk a lot. So it makes it where prayer works. But just getting a little bit, and now all of a sudden you can pray. That wasn't anything I was planning on. I'm just scanning, and I can pray, and my time can expand.

But guess what? Even if I'm not praying good, even if I'm not making sense — it's not about making sense. And it's not about writing out the P.O. form, right? Your purchase request, your purchase order form, right? That's not what you do in prayer. It's about time. And when you get before the Lord and you come into agreement with his word and you start to say some things back to the Lord that he's already said to us, I'm telling you, it's hard for him to say no. How many of

you ever had your kids hold you accountable to something you told them you would do and you forgot about, but all of a sudden six months later they said, “No, you said on this day at this time we were going to do X, Y, and Z.

So when are we going to do that?” Amen. You know, y’all hear what I’m saying? And when you tell the Lord some stuff that he already said to you, I don’t think he’s forgotten it. But even if he has, it’s hard for him to argue with at that point. Amen. I feel like preaching in this church all of a sudden, because there’s power that flows through prayer. There’s power that flows through prayer. And I do want to just make one comment before I close here this morning, and that is that we talked a couple of weeks ago about how the Pentecostal experience is received.

You can’t work for it. You can’t earn it. And this is an area where people start to go, “But is that a work? If I put in time in prayer, am I doing something where now God owes me what I’ve asked for because I’ve put the time in?” And the answer is no, because it’s not a work unless you decide in your heart it’s a work. If you get before God and you say, “Well God, I’ve done X, Y, and Z and you ain’t done nothing” — okay, well, you thought you could earn it. That’s a position of the heart. The Lord showed me this. I’m a little off the script. I hope that’s okay.

I’ll get us done here in a minute. The Lord showed me something a few weeks ago that I had never seen before. And the Lord showed me that the same ethic that is applied to salvation is applied to the supernatural gifts. That everything that comes through the power of God, that’s a supernatural experience, that’s a Pentecostal experience — it all comes by grace. It’s all predicated on the finished work of Jesus Christ, the same way that you’re saved. So we’ll use Romans chapter 2 as an example — or I’m sorry, Ephesians chapter 2 as an example. Ephesians chapter 2 says that you are saved by grace through faith, not of works, so that no man should boast.

> **EPHESIANS 2:8-9** ESV
>
> 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Romans chapter 4 tells us that Abraham had faith, but he did not achieve what he achieved in the Lord through works. He did not do it as though it was owed to him or that he had earned it. It was a gift. The Bible goes on to tell us that so the promise may be sure and that it may rest on grace.

> **ROMANS 4:16** ESV
>
> 16 That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring—not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all,

It’s not something that he earned. Prayer is not something that you earn. You don’t get into prayer and put your time in and the Lord go, “Okay, good, you did nine minutes, here’s your rate.” That’s not how it works. But the same way that salvation is by grace through faith, there’s a caveat to that.

And the caveat is Romans chapter 10 that says anyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

> **ROMANS 10:9-13** ESV
>
> 9 because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. 11 For the Scripture says, "Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame." 12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. 13 For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

And it goes on to say that those who confess Jesus as Lord and believe that God raised him from the dead in their heart shall be saved. So here's the question: is confessing Jesus as Lord and believing that God raised him from the dead, is that a work? No. First of all, that would be like walking into Publix and writing your name on a form. And then they say, "Okay, well now you can own Publix." Not go get whatever you want. I'm talking about write your name down and now Publix is yours.

You own it. Congratulations. It's hard to look at that and go, "Well, I just walked away with — God knows — a multi-billion-dollar corporation, Publix." Come on, I don't think this is prophetic, but if y'all do this, I want you to tithe off of it. Amen. But you're not going to look at the Publix people and go, "I can't believe you made me write my name down. How dare you. What an egregious thing for you to ask me to do." It's barely anything. Owning a grocery store chain versus writing your name on a sheet of paper that they aren't.

So you confess that Jesus is Lord, believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, and you get eternal life, not to mention blessing and power and authority and dominion on this side of heaven. That's barely anything. It's not a work. It's just a response to his goodness. But it's also a flow by which salvation comes. There is no salvation in any other name. So the only way you get the salvation from the one name that has it to give it to you is to confess it. The same thing is true of Pentecostal power. You don't earn Pentecostal power. You don't make Pentecostal power happen.

You don't work your way into Pentecostal power. You can't generate breakthrough. You can't generate a supernatural flow. But you still have to reach out by faith and receive it. How do you do that? The golden pipe, the prayer. You connect into the source. So there's a flow for the power. Amen. You got to have a power line going from the pole to your house. And I'm telling you, you got to have a power line going from the cross to your life. You have to connect in. Come on, somebody. And so it's not a work. It's not a work, but it is an invaluable part of the Pentecostal experience.

I've made this comment here a couple of times. I've made it all over the country about Pentecost that falls off in the parking lot. The reason is that this experience that we have in here, where we sing a song that blesses us, or the preaching is good, or there's a supernatural moment or something happens, or we get a word, or whatever that may be — that experience is limited to the moment. Whereas prayer tethers us to long-term power, a continual flow. Church is like charging your phone and leaving. Prayer is like having a continual power source on your phone where you never need to charge it again.

Do y'all hear what I'm saying? So you have to hook up, because this is how power flows. And my friends, you need power for what? For everything. And I'm not preaching it today, but I'll say this at some point. A lot of people say that the Pentecostal experience is for evangelism. And I think that's great that we want to evangelize people. I want us to reach every Tom, Dick and Harry in this region. Amen. I'll go for some Sallys and Marys too. Hallelujah. But I want to do that — but you don't need power for evangelism. You need power to go to Walmart. You need power to deal with that guy at work.

You need power to sit on hold with the cable company, folks. Have you ever had someone cut you off in traffic and it's all you thought about the rest of the day? It just stayed on you. The only way you get through stuff like that is power. Because if you don't have power, every trivial thing on the planet will hold you and grip you forever. And that's nothing. Imagine when the real stuff happens. You can't get cut off in traffic and let it go. What happens when someone goes to the hospital, which is going to happen? What happens when there's a financial issue, which is going to happen?

What happens when the car dies, which is going to happen? What happens when you walk — folks, you need power. You need power. You need power. You need power. Why? So you can survive. And you look around and you go, "Well, I see a lot of people who aren't Pentecostal and who don't have this stuff working in their life and who may not even be saved. They seem to be doing fine." Everybody is lying to you, because you need power. Somebody shout, "I need power." Hallelujah. A few weeks ago, I started to think about my time in Huntsville, Alabama, before we came here. Just so you know, I don't know if y'all have seen this.

Everybody's posting. Have you seen all these people posting about 2016? You did it too? And I didn't see it? I'm sorry. I'm going to look at it when church is over. Amen. But everybody's posting online. They're going back to 2016. What are they saying, that 2026 is the new 2016 or something? Everybody's posting this stuff from 2016. In 2016, I stepped out of local church ministry for the first time in my adult life. I started at 18 and I kind of just got out of it after — I guess that had been 12 years or so. And so I stopped working in the local church. We started doing a lot of video stuff.

We started doing a lot of traveling and different odds and ends consulting. And so I was doing ministry, but I wasn't in the local church. And it was really weird because nobody was calling me Pastor Jason anymore. And it was weird. I was just Jason all of a sudden. And I didn't realize how much I liked being called Pastor Jason. That's why I don't ever introduce myself as Pastor Jason, because I don't need it anymore. Amen. I don't need it. I like it, but I don't need it. And about a year ago — a little over a year and a half ago — I met a man in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

His name was George Sawyer. And actually, in fact, his name is George Sawyer. This is his name. And George Sawyer is the pastor of a church in Huntsville, Alabama and Decatur, Alabama called Calvary. And if you don't know this, Pastor Sawyer is a legend in the Assemblies of God, especially in Alabama. So I had known about him for a long time. Like, I got saved, I went to church that week and they said, "Hey, you need to know about George Sawyer." You know what I mean? He's just a legend. And so I had met him, and they had gone through a situation at their church and he needed someone to come in and help.

And so I was able to kind of step in and fill that role. It happened fast, came out of the blue. It was actually not a job I was very interested in. But I liked him so much. And I thought, this is going to be a rare opportunity for me to go spend some time with a man with this kind of legacy in the church. Like, he has built a powerful church in our denomination. And so I spent a year up there before I came here. And so he brought me in with the intention for me to fix some things and make some things happen. And I'm proud of the time that we had there. We saw 25% growth the year that I was there.

I'm happy with that. But when we were talking initially about the things that we needed to do, he told me — this is what he said — he said, "I want to do that." He said, "But I don't have the money for it." He said, "So me and you are going to have to get together and we're going to have to pray it in." My initial response to this was, you know, what kind of strategy is that? That was kind of my response to it. Now I'm going to tell you the difference between me and Pastor Sawyer, outside of the fact that I look a lot better. I'm going to send him that clip later today.

Amen. But here's the difference. If you were to take our spiritual makeup and kind of our spiritual tendencies, I am given a little bit more towards the word — not to say he doesn't know the word, he could probably quote more of it than I can. But when I go into my mode of seeking the Lord, I go to the word. I go to the Scripture. When he goes into his mode of seeking the Lord, he goes more towards prayer. Now this doesn't come out every day. Where it comes out is when things aren't going great. When you wake up and you don't feel good. If I wake up and I don't feel good, I'm going to read the Bible.

I may or may not pray. If he wakes up and doesn't feel good, he's going to pray and probably may or may not read the Bible. Okay. He's given more towards prayer. He is a man of prayer. He is a person of prayer. He would walk into the room and basically start prayer meetings and go, "Okay, we're going to pray." And then he would just walk off. And for an hour, you just hear him walking around praying stuff, just off the top of his head, not thinking, not looking at anything. And I'm over here looking at my Bible going, "All right, well, I'm going to pray this now."

You know, he's just a person of prayer. He's a man of prayer. And so what we saw in our time there is, I watched some things, and I want y'all to hear me. I've been a part of a lot of churches. I've been a part of a lot of growing churches. And I want you to know that, and hear me when I say this: we labor, but the Lord builds the house.

> **PSALM 127:1** ESV
>
> A Song of Ascents. Of Solomon. [1] Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchman stays awake in vain.

Okay. But there are certain things that produce certain results. There are certain things that make certain things happen. And I would watch Pastor Sawyer go into the secret place, come out, and do things that defied the odds.

I don't know what's happening, but when you start talking about prayer and breakthrough, stuff will happen with the technology. We're just going to let it do what it wants to do. Amen. And so he would go into the secret place and see things happen. And I'm going to tell you, I cannot tell you what happened. I cannot give you the details, because it's not my story to share. But in the last two months that I was there, we started to see incredibly supernatural things happen, to the degree that I've been watching churches that are 10, 20 times the size of Pastor Sawyer's church celebrating things that aren't nearly as significant as what was happening up there.

I'm talking about raw data I could share with you. We saw miracle things happen. In fact, I was standing in Saraland High School's foyer. We were registering Jocelyn, and I get a call on my phone and hear about a miracle that blew my mind. And I'm not talking about somebody saying some fake thing that you're sitting around wondering, is it real or is it not? I always hate when I'm at the altar and I ask people, "Did you get healed?" And they said, "Yes." And I walk away going, was that a "yes, yes"? Or was that like an "in faith, yes"? I just want to know, did you get healed?

And I can't figure out what you're saying. I'm not talking about that kind of stuff. I'm talking about real, verifiable miracles that you step back and go, what in the world was that? And I'm going to tell you what I learned: it happens through prayer. Prayer taps into a certain type of power you get no other way. And the reality is, most of the church thinks that they have power because they've engaged in worship, or they've engaged in singing, or they've engaged in serving in ministry, or they've taken notes, or they've read their Bible, or they're listening to preaching podcasts, or they've replaced secular music with Christian music, or whatever else you want to say, whatever else you want to throw in there.

Okay. But that's not power. What you've tapped into is encouragement. It's all good. It's all important. You need to do it. But that's not power. That's encouragement. And so you think you have power because you're making it through the week, but you got to plug back in next week. You got to plug back in. If you don't get that, your whole world falls apart. I'm talking about something that gives you power. That's what prayer does. Prayer is the source of power. That brings me to this, and I'm going to close. A few weeks ago, I was preparing for this series.

I was going through everything and writing some thoughts out and just exploring what the Lord wanted me to teach. And I knew that up front in the series, I had to talk about prayer, because I have a unique perspective on prayer because of my ministry. I have a supernatural ministry. We go out, we see God do powerful things. I've seen stuff that I know wasn't me. Like, I've seen some stuff that I'm like, whoa, it blew my mind. But I've also watched how that stuff happens related to my prayer life. If there are times I'm really in prayer a lot, I go out and I preach and it's kind of like, whoa, that was mind-blowing.

If I go out and preach and I'm not in prayer as much as I would like to be, well then, you know, it may not be as great. I know some of you go, "Well, how long do you pray every day?" At least seven minutes, because I have a baseline. But normally 15 to 20 is more where I'm at. But I'm talking about if I'm having moments where I'm in the secret place for 45 minutes, 50 minutes, an hour, if I'm just kind of captivated in it, I'll go out and look at people and they'll receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. It just gets real effortless. But I've noticed it's connected to prayer.

Well, there's some things here at the church that I've been trying to figure out. We're going to have a great Vision Sunday in a couple of weeks. And I'm going to share a lot of stuff with you. I'm going to show you some pictures. I'm going to show you vision for the future. But I want you to know this. I have pretty well come to terms over the past several months that I do not have a way to make anything I'm going to show you happen. In fact, I'm trying to figure something out, because I'm here and I'm doing everything I know how to do. And we're seeing positive traction, but we're not growing at the rate I thought I'd see growth at.

I'm being transparent with you. The Lord spoke to me and he said, "Do what you're doing, but you're going to grow this church by prayer." And I'm not talking about prayer meetings. I'm not talking about starting an intercessory prayer thing right now. That's not what — I'm not launching a ministry at the moment. I'm talking about me on my face in prayer. That's where I'm going to grow it. I'm going to grow it in prayer, and then we'll come in here and I'm going to do whatever I need to do in this church. But I'm saying this today because I believe we are about to see God do a great move in our church.

I'm seeing some things come together finally that maybe Christmas was in the way. I don't know. I'm seeing some things happen. So buckle up. But I want you to know that when you see it happen, it's not because of this pastor. It's not because Ashleigh is good with getting the volunteers together. It's not because we're smart. It's not because we know what to do. And some of that stuff is true. I know what to do, but I am not smart. Amen. But it will happen through prayer. It will happen through prayer. So when you see the harvest, prayer. When you see God move, prayer. When you see power flow in the church, prayer. That's where it's going to happen.

I just thought I needed to announce it today, that we're going to do it through prayer.

02

Preaching Notes

Before You Preach

This is the second message in a five-week series on the church's value that we are openly Spirit filled. Last week established that the Pentecostal experience comes from Jesus and cannot be earned. This week names the behind-the-scenes mechanism most believers skip: prayer. Next week is speaking in tongues, so touch praying in the Spirit here and save the full teaching.

The message works best as a mix of conviction and practical help. Expect the room to go quiet when you say most people do not pray. Name it with a smile, then give them something they can actually do: a seven-minute baseline and two ways to grow it.

Zechariah 4 carries the whole message. Read the whole chapter, then return to it for each point, and make sure the four images land: the olive tree, the lampstand, the golden oil and the golden pipe.

Introduction

The Lord comes through for His people. He works on our behalf. Today is about how His power flows.

Last week we began a series on one of our values: we are an openly Spirit-filled church. We are not closeted Pentecostals. We believe the power of God still works in the life of the believer.

Illustration: no peanuts in the field. A man who grew up in Ohio spent every boyhood summer on his grandfather's peanut farm in South Georgia. They got up at four in the morning, drank coffee, ate biscuits and worked the fields together. Years later his grandfather passed away and left him the farm. The grandson decided his family would spend every summer there to keep the legacy alive.

That first summer they did what he remembered: weed management and irrigation, all summer long. When school started, they went back to Ohio, and he hired a local farmer to bring in the harvest. A few weeks later the phone rang from a South Georgia area code. "I have never seen what I saw today," the farmer said. "Sir, you have no peanuts in this field."

He had watched the summer work for years, but he had never seen the peanuts go into the ground. So he spent a whole summer pulling weeds and watering dirt.

Prayer Is the Conduit for Pentecostal Power

Something similar happens in Pentecostal churches. We hear about power, we see demonstrations of power in our services, and we tie power to what happens in this room: a service, a revival, a famous preacher who came

through. But there is a behind-the-scenes mechanism we ignore or never see, and it is the thing that causes power to flow.

It is prayer. Prayer is the conduit for Pentecostal power. It would be fair to say that without prayer, there is no Pentecost.

The model is the upper room. Before Pentecost, "all these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer" (Acts 1:14). Then the fire fell.

> ACTS 2:1-4 ESV
>
> 1 When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. 2 And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. 3 And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

A WORD IN PRAYER

Years ago, in prayer, the Lord spoke this to me:

- When you sow a seed of Bible reading, you reap a harvest of revelation.
- When you sow a seed of worship, you reap a harvest of exposure. When you make much of Me, I will make much of you.
- **When you sow a seed of prayer, you reap a harvest of power.**

Illustration: Charles Stanley's Bible. I love Charles Stanley's preaching, enough to own two collector's edition Charles Stanley Bibles. Not long after this word, Dr. Stanley passed away, and his son Andy Stanley posted a photo of the front page of his father's Bible. Written there: "More prayer, less notes. More power, greater results."

Tell the congregation that today is about prayer, and that if they do not start saying amen soon, people will know they do not pray.

The Text

> **ZECHARIAH 4:1-14** ESV
>
> 1 And the angel who talked with me came again and woke me, like a man who is awakened out of his sleep.
> 2 And he said to me, "What do you see?" I said, "I see, and behold, a lampstand all of gold, with a bowl on
> the top of it, and seven lamps on it, with seven lips on each of the lamps that are on the top of it. 3 And
> there are two olive trees by it, one on the right of the bowl and the other on its left." 4 And I said to the
> angel who talked with me, "What are these, my lord?" 5 Then the angel who talked with me answered and
> said to me, "Do you not know what these are?" I said, "No, my lord." 6 Then he said to me, "This is the word
> of the LORD to Zerubbabel: Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the LORD of hosts. 7 Who are
> you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain. And he shall bring forward the top
> stone amid shouts of 'Grace, grace to it!'" 8 Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 9 "The hands of
> Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also complete it. Then you will know
> that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you. 10 For whoever has despised the day of small things shall
> rejoice, and shall see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel. "These seven are the eyes of the LORD,
> which range through the whole earth." 11 Then I said to him, "What are these two olive trees on the right
> and the left of the lampstand?" 12 And a second time I answered and said to him, "What are these two
> branches of the olive trees, which are beside the two golden pipes from which the golden oil is poured
> out?" 13 He said to me, "Do you not know what these are?" I said, "No, my lord." 14 Then he said, "These are
> the two anointed ones who stand by the Lord of the whole earth."

Give the background as you read. After the exile, Zerubbabel served as governor of Judah. He was in the line of David, so in this prophecy he stands as a kind of king, and he was called to rebuild the temple of God. This was no small task, and it met opposition. The prophet's word to him: the mountain in front of you will become flat ground. You laid the foundation, and you will finish it, not by your own strength but by the Spirit of God.

The flow of power: how does it flow? Through the conduit of prayer.

1. You Cannot Accomplish Everything in Your Own Strength

"Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the LORD of hosts" (Zechariah 4:6).

You have a measure of power: ability, intelligence, strength. If your legs do not work, your arms do. Something works. But no matter how much power you have, there are things you cannot get done. You cannot make people pick up the phone. You cannot make people spend the money. You cannot make the government do anything, no matter how much you post about it on Facebook.

Zerubbabel's dependence is rarely talked about. To rebuild the temple he depended on the Persian government for permission, money, workers and time (see Ezra 5-6). Opposition came through officials who did not want the work done. Every day he needed approvals outside his control, resources outside his pocketbook and help from

people he did not command. He was a governor, but he was not in charge. **He had the know-how, but not the resources.**

Many of us live there: I know how to do this, if only I had that. Someone recently asked me what I need as a pastor. People and money. I know how to do a lot of this. But I cannot do everything.

But there is a power that comes from on high. Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit.

- You have been sitting on a house that will not sell. The Lord knows the person who needs to buy it. Your network is limited; His is not.
- You need a job and have sent out applications every day. God can cause someone to look at your resume again.
- You live on a fixed income. God can cause money to show up out of nowhere. I have seen Him do it more times than I can count.

A great exploit is anything you want to do that you cannot comprehend how to get done. For some, it is owning ten rental houses. For others, it is finding the strength to talk to the lady in the checkout line at Publix.

2. Prayer Is the Conduit Through Which Power Flows

> ZECHARIAH 4:11-14 ESV
>
> 11 Then I said to him, "What are these two olive trees on the right and the left of the lampstand?" 12 And a second time I answered and said to him, "What are these two branches of the olive trees, which are beside the two golden pipes from which the golden oil is poured out?" 13 He said to me, "Do you not know what these are?" I said, "No, my lord." 14 Then he said, "These are the two anointed ones who stand by the Lord of the whole earth."

The two anointed ones are two specific people. The first is Zerubbabel, the governor in the line of David, a type of king. The second is the high priest of the day, Joshua (Zechariah 3; 6:11-13). The king and the priest.

All through the Old Testament, kings were kings and priests were priests, and the two were never to be mixed. When King Saul offered the sacrifice himself, he lost the kingdom (1 Samuel 13:8-14). But two figures in Scripture are both king and priest. The first is Melchizedek, who blessed Abraham (Genesis 14:18-20). He points forward to the second: Jesus Christ, our King and our High Priest.

So when the passage speaks of "the two anointed ones," we can see in them the Anointed One, Jesus Christ. That gives us four images:

1. **The olive tree is Jesus.** He is the source. 2. **The lampstand is the church.** Have them tell a neighbor, "You are a lampstand." The lampstand needs oil to burn: no oil, no fire, no light, no heat. The church needs what Jesus has. 3. **The golden oil is the anointing.** It is the essence that flows out of the tree into the church: the power, the strength, the Holy Spirit experience the believer walks in. 4. **The golden pipe is prayer.** It is not the anointing,

not the Lord and not the church. It is the mechanism through which the source, the essence of Christ's strength, flows into the life of a believer.

Without the golden pipe, the oil never makes the trip. You burn dry, and the oil hits the floor.

Why is the church in America so often ineffective? Believers in persecuted churches risk everything to gather, and we skip months at a time. We are not a people of prayer. Some of us pray a little and think we are people of prayer, but thirty seconds a day is not cutting it.

3. The More You Pray, the Greater the Flow

With Bible reading there is a point of diminishing return: read so much in one sitting that your eyes cross, and it stops helping. **Prayer is not like that.** Prayer is a time investment. The more time you give it, the more the golden pipe opens up and the greater its capacity to carry power into your life.

A caution: be wary of anyone who preaches a prayer life that makes them sound more special than you, like the claim of three hours a day. That is not the point.

The way you pray more is you start by praying some. For most people, anything beyond saying the blessing would be an improvement. (My granddaddy prayed the same blessing at every meal: "Our Father, we thank Thee for this food and all our blessings. We rest in Thy name. Amen.")

SET A BASELINE

> DANIEL 6:10 ESV
>
> 10 When Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he went to his house where he had windows in his upper chamber open toward Jerusalem. He got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he had done previously.

Notice the words "as he had done previously" (Daniel 6:10). Daniel had a baseline. To increase the flow of power, you need a baseline for prayer in your daily routine: the least you will pray every day.

Back in the fall, the message "27 Minutes to Change Your Life" laid out a daily rhythm: 15 minutes of Bible reading (enough to read the Bible in a year), 5 minutes of worship and 7 minutes of prayer. Here are the seven minutes:

- **Thank God for one thing you are truly grateful for.** Not something you do not care about. Start honest.
- **Name three to five things you want to see the Lord work out in your immediate realm of influence.** Pray for peace in the Middle East if you like, but pray for your children first. You care about these things, and you will be able to see whether they change.

The first time, you may finish in two and a half minutes. Give it three weeks. Seven minutes is nothing to turn your nose up at. Here is a word from the throne: it is better than zero.

TWO WAYS TO EXPAND YOUR PRAYER TIME

Pray in the Spirit. We are a tongue-talking Pentecostal church, and next week is all about speaking in tongues. For now: "we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us" (Romans 8:26). Partner with the One who knows how to pray.

Pray Scripture. Open to the Psalms, scan, and pray whatever resonates. You can do it anywhere in the Bible.

Demonstration: praying Isaiah 12. Open to a passage on the spot and pray it out loud. When this was preached, the passage was Isaiah 12:

> ISAIAH 12:1 ESV
>
> [1] You will say in that day: "I will give thanks to you, O Lord, for though you were angry with me, your anger turned away, that you might comfort me.

"You will say in that day: 'I will give thanks to you'" (Isaiah 12:1). Lord, I thank You that a day is coming in this situation when I will no longer be hoping for breakthrough; I will be giving You thanks, because You are going to come through. So let me give You praise in advance.

Then model praying for a real need in the church. (When this was preached, the prayer was for a worship pastor: a young, anointed minister who needs a pastor to train them, finding the church online.)

Prayer is not about making perfect sense or filling out a purchase order. It is about time. When you come into agreement with God's Word and say back to Him what He has already said, it is hard for Him to say no. Children hold their parents to what they promised months ago. When you remind the Lord of His Word, He has not forgotten it, and it is hard to argue with.

Prayer Is Not a Work

Two weeks ago we said the Pentecostal experience is received. You cannot earn it. So is time in prayer a work? Does God owe me because I put in the time?

No. It only becomes a work if you decide in your heart it is a work: "God, I've done X, Y and Z, and You haven't done anything." That is a position of the heart.

The Lord showed me something: **the same ethic that applies to salvation applies to the supernatural gifts.** Every Pentecostal experience comes by grace, predicated on the finished work of Jesus, the same way you are saved.

> EPHESIANS 2:8-9 ESV
>
> [8] For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, [9] not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Abraham did not earn what he received. “That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace” (Romans 4:16).

But there is a response. “If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved” (Romans 10:9). Is that a work? No.

Illustration: owning Publix. Imagine walking into Publix, writing your name on a form, and being handed ownership of the whole multibillion-dollar company. No one would complain, “How dare you make me write my name down.” It is barely anything. Confessing Jesus is not a wage; it is a response to His goodness. And yet it is the way salvation comes, because “there is salvation in no one else” (Acts 4:12).

The same is true of Pentecostal power. You do not earn it, make it happen or generate it. But you reach out by faith and receive it, through the golden pipe of prayer. You need a power line from the pole to your house, and you need a line from the cross to your life.

Encouragement or Power

We have talked about Pentecost that falls off in the parking lot. The experience we have in here, a song that blesses us, good preaching, a supernatural moment, is limited to the moment. **Prayer tethers us to a continual flow of power. Church is like charging your phone and leaving. Prayer is like a continual power source, so you never have to recharge.**

Some say the Pentecostal experience is for evangelism, and we want to reach everyone in this region. But you need power for far more than that. You need power to go to Walmart, to deal with that person at work, to sit on hold with the cable company. If someone cutting you off in traffic can ruin your whole day, what happens when someone goes to the hospital, or there is a financial crisis, or the car dies? You need power.

Illustration: praying it in. Before coming here, I served for a year alongside Pastor George Sawyer at Calvary in Huntsville and Decatur, Alabama, a legend in the Assemblies of God in Alabama. Early on, when we talked about what the church needed to do, he said, “I don’t have the money for it. So me and you are going to have to get together and pray it in.” My first thought was: what kind of strategy is that?

We are wired differently. When I seek the Lord, I go to the Word first. When he seeks the Lord, he goes to prayer. He would start a prayer meeting and walk the room praying out loud for an hour. I watched him go into the secret place and come out to do things that defied the odds. We labor, “unless the LORD builds the house, those who build it labor in vain” (Psalm 127:1). But certain things produce certain results. In the last months I was there, we saw what I can only call verifiable miracles.

Here is what I learned: **prayer taps into a power you get no other way.** Most of the church thinks it has power because it worships, sings, serves, takes notes, reads the Bible, listens to podcasts or switched to Christian radio. All of it is good, and you need it. But what you have tapped into is encouragement. You make it through the week, and then you have to plug back in. That is encouragement. Prayer is power.

Conclusion

In my own ministry, I have watched the supernatural rise and fall with my prayer life. My baseline is at least seven minutes; most days it is fifteen or twenty. But when I have been captivated in the secret place for 45 minutes or an hour, ministry becomes almost effortless, and people receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

As I prepared this series, I came to terms with something. I do not have a way to make happen what the Lord has shown me for this church. We are seeing positive traction, but not the growth I expected. Then the Lord spoke: **"Do what you're doing, but you're going to grow this church by prayer."**

That is not a new prayer ministry. It is the pastor on his face before God.

So when you see the harvest, it will not be because of a smart pastor or a great volunteer team. When you see the harvest: prayer. When you see God move: prayer. When you see power flow in the church: prayer.

When you sow the seed of prayer, you reap a harvest of power.

03

Scripture List

Every passage read, cited or alluded to in the message, in the order it comes up.

Read

Read aloud in the message.

ZECHARIAH 4:1-14

1 And the angel who talked with me came again and woke me, like a man who is
awakened out of his sleep. 2 And he said to me, "What do you see?" I said, "I see, and
behold, a lampstand all of gold, with a bowl on the top of it, and seven lamps on it,
with seven lips on each of the lamps that are on the top of it. 3 And there are two olive
trees by it, one on the right of the bowl and the other on its left." 4 And I said to the
angel who talked with me, "What are these, my lord?" 5 Then the angel who talked
with me answered and said to me, "Do you not know what these are?" I said, "No, my
lord." 6 Then he said to me, "This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: Not by might,
nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of hosts. 7 Who are you, O great
mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain. And he shall bring forward
the top stone amid shouts of 'Grace, grace to it!'" 8 Then the word of the Lord came
to me, saying, 9 "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his
hands shall also complete it. Then you will know that the Lord of hosts has sent me to
you. 10 For whoever has despised the day of small things shall rejoice, and shall see
the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel. "These seven are the eyes of the Lord,
which range through the whole earth." 11 Then I said to him, "What are these two olive
trees on the right and the left of the lampstand?" 12 And a second time I answered
and said to him, "What are these two branches of the olive trees, which are beside the
two golden pipes from which the golden oil is poured out?" 13 He said to me, "Do you
not know what these are?" I said, "No, my lord." 14 Then he said, "These are the two
anointed ones who stand by the Lord of the whole earth."

DANIEL 6:10

10 When Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he went to his house
where he had windows in his upper chamber open toward Jerusalem. He got down on
his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he had
done previously.

ISAIAH 12:1

1 You will say in that day: "I will give thanks to you, O Lord, for though you were angry
with me, your anger turned away, that you might comfort me.

Cited

Named or quoted along the way.

ACTS 2:1-4	1 When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. 2 And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. 3 And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.
GENESIS 14:18-20	18 And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine. (He was priest of God Most High.) 19 And he blessed him and said, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; 20 and blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand!" And Abram gave him a tenth of everything.
ROMANS 8:26	26 Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.
EPHESIANS 2:8-9	8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast.
ROMANS 4:16	16 That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring—not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all,
ROMANS 10:9-13	9 because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. 11 For the Scripture says, "Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame." 12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. 13 For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

Alluded to

Drawn on without naming the reference.

1 SAMUEL 13:8-14	8 He waited seven days, the time appointed by Samuel. But Samuel did not come to Gilgal, and the people were scattering from him. 9 So Saul said, "Bring the burnt offering here to me, and the peace offerings." And he offered the burnt offering. 10 As soon as he had finished offering the burnt offering, behold, Samuel came. And Saul went out to meet him and greet him. 11 Samuel said, "What have you done?" And Saul said, "When I saw that the people were scattering from me, and that you did not come within the days appointed, and that the Philistines had mustered at Michmash, 12 I said, 'Now the Philistines will come down against me at Gilgal, and I have not sought the favor of the Lord.' So I forced myself, and offered the burnt offering." 13 And Samuel said to Saul, "You have done foolishly. You have not kept the command of the Lord your God, with which he commanded you. For then the Lord would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. 14 But now your kingdom shall not continue. The Lord has sought out a man after his own heart, and the Lord has commanded him to be prince over his people, because you have not kept what the Lord commanded you."
PSALM 127:1	A Song of Ascents. Of Solomon. 1 Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchman stays awake in vain.

Pastor Jason Mayfield

SENIOR PASTOR, CITYLIGHT CHURCH

Pastor Jason Mayfield is the Senior Pastor of Citylight Church in Saraland, Alabama, where he and his wife, Ashleigh, lead a church devoted to Building Lives on Jesus. His preaching is rooted in the Bible, full of hope, and grounded in one conviction: an incredible life is built on the finished work of Jesus Christ.

For more than 20 years, Pastor Jason has given his life to the local church. He has been credentialed with the Assemblies of God for 21 years and ordained for 14, and he has led revitalization in churches that went on to rank among the Top 100 Fastest-Growing Churches in America. He carries a deep conviction that the church can be both excellent and supernatural, and a passion for revival.

He is an author and the creator of Tear Up Your Bible and POWER 27, a daily rhythm of Bible reading, prayer and worship. His resources have helped more than 100,000 people go deeper in the Scriptures. Above every title, his greatest joy is seeing people meet Jesus, be filled with the Spirit, and grow into everything God has called them to be.

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