

## Resolve

Desperate Prayer

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January 13, 2008



## Desperate Prayer 1 Corinthians 2:1-16

You can have a seat where you are. Good morning. This is the point in this mornings' service where I'm supposed to ask you guys to greet those around you and then we sing a few more songs and then I say, "If you have your Bible, and I hope you do," and you pull out your Bibles and we study the Word together and then we have a song to respond and we pray and we go home.

That's the way the schedule's supposed to work today, but I'm going to switch it up completely. I believe God wants us to take a different direction altogether during our time together this morning based on some things He has been teaching me in my life this last week in a very real way and pretty deep conviction about how that looks in the church that God in His grace has entrusted me to lead.

If at any point during our time together this morning you feel uncomfortable with things being switched up some, just know that I feel more uncomfortable with that. But I do want to say if you have your Bible, and I hope you do, invite you to open with me to 1 Corinthians 2.

I want to show you a text that God has been speaking particularly clearly to me on this week. You've got in your worship guides some great sermon notes for a completely different text so another time, another place. If you want, you can turn it over and write down anything from 1 Corinthians 2.

Last week when we gathered together for worship, we talked about making our worship count. We looked at Malachi 1 and how it missed the whole point of worship. We looked at how they had trivialized the greatness of God and how they had completely missed the holiness of God. I made the statement, "God is more interested in the sanctity of his people than He is in the success of our church." And God has brought some of those statements from last Sunday home and kind of put them to test in a variety of ways this week.

What I want us to look at in 1 Corinthians 2 is the relationship between God and the glory of God, the greatness of God and the Spirit of God, to the Spirit of God and the glory of God listen to 1 Corinthians 2 about midway through verse 10.

It says,

*The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God, for who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him. In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words. The man without the Spirit does*

*not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. The spiritual man makes judgments about all things, but he himself is not subject to any man's judgment: 'For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him?' But we have the mind of Christ (1 Cor. 2:10-16).*

Now, you heard all throughout that passage an emphasis on the Spirit over and over again. This is a theme for Paul in the book of 1 Corinthians. He's constantly contrasting the wisdom of the world and the wisdom of God, and the Spirit of the world and the Spirit of God.

When you come to 1 Corinthians 2, he's talking about how the Spirit of God reveals the deep things of God and who God is. In fact, we start in the middle midway through verse 10. We really should back up. Go with me to verse 6. I want to show you what happens right before this. *"We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature,"* - here he's contrasting wisdom of the world and wisdom of God - *"but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. No, we speak of God's secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. However, as it is written:"* - here he quotes from the Old Testament - *"No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him"* (1 Cor. 2:6-9).

Now, where's he quoting from there in the Old Testament? What book? Book of Isaiah 64:4. Okay, remember you got little note, okay, a little note, go to the bottom of your Bible, instant Bible scholar, you remember? You just got the answer just like, "Of course, Isaiah 64:4, who doesn't know that?"

So hold your place here in 1 Corinthians 2 and go back with me to Isaiah 64:4. You may need to use your table of contents, but find the book of Isaiah 64. Whenever we see the New Testament quoting the Old Testament, we need to pause and go back to the Old Testament so go to Isaiah 64.

The context here is God is speaking to His people when they are going through a time of discipline and they feel distant from God because of their sin. They're longing, Isaiah, he's speaking here, longing to see the glory of God. I want you to hear what he says. We'll start in verse 1, Isaiah 64:1. Listen to what he says there, *"Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down, that the mountains would tremble before you! As when fire sets twigs ablaze and causes water to boil, come down to make your name known to your enemies and cause the nations to quake before you! For when you did awesome things that we did not expect, you came down, and the mountains trembled before you"* (Is. 64:1-3).

What they're doing is they're remembering back to Exodus. You remember when God brought his people out of slavery in Egypt. He brought them to Mount Sinai, and at Mount Sinai God revealed Himself at that mountain and says in a consuming fire. The picture, if you can imagine it, there's just smoke billowing up from the mountain. All the people are scared to even get near the mountain. They're seeing the glory of God rather revealed on the mountain. And in Isaiah, they're calling out, "You did awesome things we didn't expect. You came down the mountains trembled before you." They want to see its glory. Rend the heavens and come down.

Then he says, verse 4, which I quoted over here in 1 Corinthians 2, "*Since ancient times no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who acts on behalf of those who wait for him*" (Is. 64:4). He says, "People have longed to see you revealed in all your glory." And so it's that verse that Paul quotes in 1 Corinthians 2, "*No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him*" (1 Cor. 2:9). Then you get to verse 10, and listen to the word, first word; it's a contrast, "*But God has revealed it to us by His Spirit*" (1 Cor. 2:10). Did you catch that?

What the people in the Old Testament longed to see in a manifestation of God's glory, Paul says in the New Testament, "God has revealed these things to us by His Spirit." Contrast, they longed for it. We have it revealed to us by His spirit.

Now, follow with me here. If you are taking notes, just a few truths. They're going to go right in a row here. Don't miss them.

### **Only the Spirit of God Knows the Fullness of the Glory of God**

First, only the Spirit of God knows the fullness of the glory of God. That's what 1 Corinthians 2 is saying. *The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God*" (1 Cor. 2:10), and uses the comparison, "Who knows a man except for the spirit within the man? Who knows God except for the Spirit of God? Only the Spirit of God knows the fullness of the glory of God." You and I don't realize the fullness of God's glory. The Spirit knows the fullness of God's glory. You with me there? Only the Spirit of God knows the fullness of the glory of God.

### **If We Want to Know God, then We Need the Spirit to Reveal Him to Us**

Now based on that, second premise. If we want to know the fullness of the glory of God, then who do we need to show it to us? We need the Spirit. For anyone who wants to know the fullness of God's glory, we need the Spirit of God to show us the fullness of God's glory.

### **A People Who are Desperate to Know God will be Desperate for His Spirit**

That leads to a very third premise, natural conclusion. Anyone who wants to know the fullness of God's glory will be desperate for the Spirit of God. Makes sense, right? If the Spirit is the only one who knows the fullness of God's glory, then anybody who wants to know the fullness of God's glory will be desperate for the Spirit because only the Spirit can show you the fullness of God's glory. So a people who want to know God are automatically a people who are desperate for the Spirit. You with me?

Now based on that I draw this conclusion that has been the most humbling thing for me this week. A people who want to know the glory of God are a people that are desperate for the Spirit. That means that a people which that is not desperate for the Spirit, a people who are not desperate for the Spirit, that is a sure indicator that they are content with knowing little about God in His glory. You follow with me there? If we are not desperate for His Spirit, then that means we're content not knowing His glory.

And here's why it's been so humbling because I've looked at my own life this week, and the life of the church that God has entrusted to me, and I do not believe we are a people that are desperate for the Spirit and I include myself in that. And I know there may be one or two of you who are here who say, "Well, I'm desperate for the Spirit." Well, then the rest of today doesn't apply to you. But I believe The Church of Brook Hills as a whole, we are not a people who are desperate for the Spirit of God and it's a sure sign that we as The Church of Brook Hills have grown content with knowing very little about the glory of God. I want us to be a people that are desperate for His Spirit because I don't want us to miss His glory.

There is reason why when Jesus was teaching about prayer he says, "Ask your Father and he will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him." Ask Him, cry out for the Spirit, be desperate for the Spirit and you will have the Spirit of God infusing you, working throughout you, your life and church. And you look in the New Testament, everything we have or everything we need as followers of Christ is dependent on the Spirit. The Spirit is the one who saves us. Yes, it's based on the blood of Christ and the sacrifice of Christ on the cross, but it is the Spirit of God who opens your eyes or my eyes to see His salvation and draws us to the glory of God. It's the Spirit who does that.

I'm convinced there are scores of people across this room who are so caught up... We are a people that are so caught up in the machinery of church and the mechanisms of church and the programs of church and the plans of church and the routines of church, that it is possible for us to go 5, 10, 15, 20-plus years doing "church" and never once respond to the very Spirit of God who is calling us to salvation.

I've gone back in my own life this week and begun to wrestle with that again. I have a friend, good friend who this week everybody thought was a Christian, say, "I have not responded to the Spirit of God in my life." Have you responded? Not to a call to pray or sign a card or raise your hand or do this or that. Have you responded to the Spirit of God? Is the Spirit of God living in you? Has the Spirit of God saved you?

The Spirit is the one who saves us. He's the one who searches our hearts. The analogy here in 1 Corinthians 2, "Who knows the man but the spirit of a man?" I remind you, ladies and gentlemen, across this room, the Spirit of God knows your every thought. He knows everything. There is nothing you can hide this morning from the Spirit of God.

Imagine if your thoughts over the last year or five years were taken and compiled together? All of your thoughts, the darkest of them included, were put on a screen in this room for every one to see. We would shutter at the thought. Those who are our closest friends would wonder why, how we ever could have thought that about them. The Spirit of God searches us. He knows everything.

And He convicts us. It's the Spirit of God who convicts us of sin. It's the Spirit of God who awakens the sin. It's not me or anything I can do or anybody else who can say, "Are you guilty of this? Are you guilty of this?" and list off the laundry list. It's the Spirit of God who is the one who opens our heart to see the sin that is in us. The Spirit does that. Then it's the Spirit who enables us to overcome that sin.

I talk to people week after week after week after week who are struggling with this sin or that sin and struggle has been there for years and years and years and years. And it's the Spirit alone who gives power to overcome sin. Romans 8:13, "*If by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.*" The Spirit alone can do that. We need the Spirit in a walk through suffering and to guide our lives.

Many times, we hear the Word; we see what it says on Sunday as we gather together. Then we wonder, we wrestle as we walk out, "How does this look in my life? How do I lead my family in light of this?" Only the Spirit can answer that question. I can't answer that. I want to help as much as I can by pointing us to the Word and others can do that, but the Spirit of God is necessary for that.

And it's the Spirit who empowers us for life and for claiming the gospel. It's the Spirit. You look in the pages of Acts these are a people who are desperate for the spirit. They want to

see people come to know Christ. They want to see coworkers, they want to see family members, come to know Christ. That's why they're desperate for the Spirit because they know they need the power of the Spirit to share the gospel with them in a way that they respond. If we want to see coworkers come to Christ, if we want to see family members come to Christ, we will be a people that are desperate for His spirit.

Are you desperate for the Spirit of God, desperate for Him? Are we as a church desperate for Him? You say, "Well, how do I know if I'm desperate for the spirit?" I think the primary place to look is prayer. This is why I'm so convicted because I do not believe we are a church that prays desperately, and I apologize for that. I do not believe we are a people who cry out to God like we really need Him. Sure, we come with our list of things that we want or desire, but there is no desperation.

Leonard Ravenhill said, "Revival tarries because there is a lack of urgency in prayer in the church." He went on, and said, "Hell has nothing to fear but a God anointed, prayer-powered church." And based on that, hell is simply not afraid of The Church Brook Hills right now."

Samuel Chadwick put it best, he said, "The one concern of the devil is to keep Christians from praying. He fears nothing of prayerless studies, prayerless work, and prayerless religion. He laughs at our toil, he mocks at our wisdom but he trembles when we pray." And we are a people who know how to do the promotion and we know how to do the plans and we know how to do the programs. We can do them in our sleep, but we have done all of those things while leaving prayer behind.

And so this morning, I want us to pray. I want us to come aside from the routine and I want us to be a church on our face before God in prayer, desperate for His Spirit to do these things that I just mentioned. To convict us of sin, to bring salvation to some of us in this room, to bring us to a place of deeper confession, to bring us to a place of desperation and hunger for God to awaken us by His Spirit out of our apathy and indifference that we all fall into.

That God would forgive us for the fact that, and I take responsibility for this, the majority of us when we came in this morning did not expect to spend concentrated time in prayer. Ask God to enable us to overcome sin. Ask God to empower us to impact the city of Birmingham for the glory of Jesus Christ. We need His Spirit.

I want us to start by simply praying in the Spirit, and I want to give the Spirit the freedom to lead in that. In just a moment, I'm just going to stop talking and we're not going to have any music going or anything. We're going to pray. I want you to have complete freedom in this room, especially when it comes to praying, that God would, by His Spirit, bring us to a point of confession and conviction, to the point where we confess we need the Spirit of God and we ask Him to search our hearts.

Who are we kidding to think we can worship without asking God to search our hearts, to uncover the areas of our life that are not pure or holy? I want to give you the freedom to come before God in confession, whether that's sitting where you are or going to the places on the side or up here at the front, which is where I'll be.

I want to give you the freedom, husbands, if there are areas in your marriage where you need to confess lack of holiness or lack of purity; if you have not stepped it up to lead your family in a way that honors Christ, in a way that Scripture tells you to do, then I want to

give you that opportunity to turn to your wife and say, "I need to confess to you." And wives, an opportunity to confess to husbands; parents, any confession with your children or students with your parents.

I know that people are separated all across this room. Parents over here, kids over there, I want to invite you if the Spirit leads, for you to go to each other, spend time in prayer together.

I just want us to let the Spirit lead and like I mentioned if you feel uncomfortable with that, there's a level of uncomfortability here as well, but the Spirit of God is good. The Spirit of God leads us and guides us and directs us according to His Word. I want us to let Him do that and I want us to spend time in confession and letting the Spirit convict us of any areas that need to be convicted of and give you an opportunity also church members if there are things that you hold against one another, to go to each other before we even begin to approach the altar before God, to go to each other and get that right. If there are areas of bitterness that you hold in your heart this morning, to leave this room and get on your cell phone and call that person and say, "I need you to forgive me." Let's be honest. Let's not go through the motions this morning. Let's be real.

Whether you would like to sit where you are, kneel where you are, kneel at the front, whatever the Spirit leads, you go to somebody else. Let's pray in the Spirit and let's ask Him to convict us of sin and come to a place of confession before Him.

Father, we confess that the silence is deafening, as we no longer have noise to cover up for our need before you and our emptiness without you. We confess in prayer this morning that apart from you we can do nothing. We are desperate for you, God.

God, I pray that by your Spirit you would bring salvation through Christ all across this room. God, the thought of men and women who's lives are dangling over the fires of hell and yet it's masked by religion. God, deliver us from false religion, we pray. God, give us authentic hearts before you. Overcome our pride by your Spirit, we pray. We confess our need, God. I pray for the secret sins that are represented across this room that by your Spirit you would bring them to light, that you would keep us from being a people this morning who hide, try to hide anything from you, God.

We praise you that not only do you convict of us sin, but you cover our sin with the blood of Christ. Thank you for forgiveness of sin. Thank you for freedom from sin through the Spirit.

Spirit of God, we know that in our flesh we are not able to say no to sin. Only you can do that in us. We need you to overcome sin in our lives. We need you to change and transform our desires, change and transform our minds, to change and transform our bodies so that you see the holiness of Christ in us. God, we want the holiness of Christ.

Cleanse us by your Spirit. I pray for marriages across this room that the Spirit of God in these moments take control and bring great confession and great cleansing. Pray for families across this room and relationships across this room. Your Spirit would bring great conviction and great cleansing.

We know that our unity is a unity of the Spirit. Spirit of God, we are humbled at the conviction you bring and the confession you lead us to and we're humbled by the grace that you apply to our lives. We're humbled by your majesty. We declare through the Spirit that

you are worthy of all of our praise and worthy of all of our glory and worthy of all of our honor.

As you continue to pray all across the front and on the sides, I'm going to ask these guys to lead us in "A Picture of Majesty." You sing along if you'd like. You kneel, stand, you do whatever the Spirit leads you. Let's fix our eyes on the majesty of Christ as the Spirit leads us in prayer.

And in silence before God, I'd like for us to reverse that and I'd like for us to join our lips together all across this room in praise to God. I want us to exalt Him for His greatness and His glory and His beauty and His majesty. I want us to give God the glory He is due. This is what the Spirit does. The Spirit lives to exalt Christ. The Spirit incites the worship of Christ. The Spirit ignites our hearts to see the glory of God and to worship Him for His glory.

Now, we saw last week God does not need our worship. He is glorious regardless of what happens in this room. He does not need our worship. It is a great privilege that you and I have to come before the great God of the universe and give Him the praise and the honor and the glory that His name is due.

And so what I want us to do over the next few moments is whether you alone or whether you and a small group of people where you are or whether you and a small group of people down here at the front, wherever. I want us just to lift our voices in praise to God. I want us to pray, "God, you are," and you fill in the blank over and over and over again for the next few minutes.

God, you are. God, thank you for this. Let's give God the glory for who He is, for all He has done in our lives. Let's lift our voices across this room and give Him the honor that He is due, not because he needs it, because He's given us the privilege of giving it to Him. I want to invite you over the next few moments, whether standing, sitting, kneeling, let's pray prayers of praise all across this room and that will lead us into seeing about His glory.

You begin to pray all across this room, our voices aloud together, not silent. We want God to hear audibly voices all across this room telling Him how wonderful, how gracious, how awesome, how powerful He is. May the Spirit of God ignite the praise of God. You pray all across this room.

You are the ruler of all creation. You're the sovereign Lord of the universe and kings of the earth bow down to your name. The mountains and the hills and the valleys, they all declare your praises.

God, you are worthy of the worship of all creation. You are worthy of the glory of every man, woman and child in this room. You are worthy of the glory of every man, woman, child in India and in China and in Europe and in Africa. You are worthy of glory from the rising to the setting of the sun. All across this globe, creation sings your praise.

Nothing is beyond your knowledge. Nothing is beyond your control. You are the King of all Kings and the Lord of all Lords. You are the alpha and the omega. You are the beginning and the end. Lord Jesus Christ, you are the savior of our souls. You are the one who died on the cross and rose from the grave. You are the risen and exalted one who is seated at the right hand of the Father and enables us to have this privilege of coming before the Father with boldness and with confidence.

We praise you as our King. We praise you as the one who has sovereign authority over all things, the first born over all creation. We praise you as the great Jehovah God, Yahweh God, our provider, our strength, our hope, our life, our love. You are everything. You are more than our finite minds can even begin to fathom. Your greatness, no one can fathom and all the earth declares your praise.

And God, we long for the day when we will see your face and we will know your glory in all of its fullness. But God, we don't want to wait idly by from this day until that. God, we want to grow in the knowledge of your glory day in and day out. We do not want a day to pass by where our minds are so consumed with the temporary, that we miss out on the eternal weight of your glory.

We pray that by your spirit, you would ignite the praise that your people that you would get praise from The Church of Brook Hills. And have in the praises of your people here that your worship, our worship would be pleasing in your sight. That your name would be lifted high in the city of Birmingham because of your people called The Church of Brook Hills. That your name would be lifted high in the state of Alabama because of your people called The Church of Brook Hills and the glory that you are getting for the grace you provide to us. We pray that your name, an awakening to the glory of your name would sweep across our country. God, we need to see the glory of your name in our nation. We pray that you would awaken hearts, awaken your church in the United States to see your wonder. And, God, we pray that you would do it in a way that has global ramifications. God, the world may know you are good and you are great. You are holy.

Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Make your name known as holy.

We long for the day when every tribe, every nation, every people, every language will bow around the throne and sing your praises. From this day until that, we give ourselves to that task. We want to give you the glory, the honor, the praise that you are due as the holy God of the universe. We sing this together.

Pray that you receive our worship gladly, God. That you receive our voices, our hearts lifted up to you, that our praise would not be empty that you would get great honor and glory with our song about your holiness. God, be pleased with our worship, we pray. Jesus, the Spirit of God ignites the praise of God. We want the Spirit 'cause we want His glory.

Romans 8, "Not only does the Spirit ignite the praise of God, the Spirit intercedes for us," Romans 8 says, "And groans that words cannot even begin to express. The Spirit is an intercessor, Romans 8 teaches.

The beauty of it is, Scripture also teaches about how we intercede on each other's behalf. We stand in the gap for each other and the Spirit leads us in that intercession. Even when we don't know what we ought to pray for, the Spirit intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. That's what Romans 8 says.

As we consider desperation for the Spirit and praying in the spirit, I believe intercession is a huge, nonnegotiable part of that picture in Scripture. That's why I want us to have an opportunity to intercede for each other.

Here's what I'd like to do. In just a moment, I'm going to ask people all across this room who have physical strenuous this morning with illness, disease, whatever that may look like, physical struggles. I want us to have an opportunity as a faith family to intercede for you, to pray for you in the spirit.



I also want to invite not just those who have some physical struggles represented, but there, and we talked about it earlier, are spiritual strenuous represented across this room, addictions, strongholds that the adversary has taken that only the Spirit of God can enable you to overcome. I want us to have an opportunity to pray for each other and some of those spiritual strenuous as well.

I'm going to invite in just a moment people who fall into one of those categories would be willing or would be interested and would like for somebody to pray over them. What I'm going to invite you to do is come down here to the front. If you're physically able to kneel here or maybe just to stand, and then after you've come down, we're just going to invite the faith family to come and surround you.

You're not going to have to tell anybody what your struggle is, physical or spiritual. It's not going to be an open mic time up here. This is a safe place for you simply to have the church put a hand on your shoulder and pray over you in intercession.

If you have, if you fall into one of those categories and you've got some physical suffering represented in your life this morning or spiritual struggle that you'd like for somebody to intercede over you for, then I want to invite you right now, as they begin to play in the background, just to make your way down here to the front.

I'll hope you know this is a safe place for that to happen. You'll come on down and you can, like a said, kneel here at the front or you can stand, whatever is most convenient, but all across this room. And kind of spread out if you can, that way we have room for everybody here. Kneeling or standing, whatever is most convenient for you.

Father, we come before you on each other's behalf and we thank you for the privilege of intercession and thank you for your Spirit's guidance in our intercession.

Father, we pray on behalf of men and women across the front here who are walking through physical suffering, through illness, through disease, through cancer, through a variety of other things. And Father, we pray.

We pray two things. We pray, number one, for healing. We pray for healing and we pray with confidence for healing knowing that our finite minds don't know how or when that healing might come, but knowing the confidence that you bring ultimate healing. You are the God who heals. And whether that is today or next week or next month or next year or not in this life but in the life to come, we trust that you will provide complete and total healing. We give you great glory as the God whose healing supersedes anything this life or any doctor can begin to offer. We praise you for the day when we will all stand before you with new bodies and there will be no more hurts and no more pains, no more sorrow and no more tears in our eyes.

God, praise you for the healing you bring. So we pray for healing.

And second, we pray for sustenance, God. We pray for our brothers and sisters all across the front here that you would sustain them. Sustain them in the middle of sickness and hurting and pain. Sustain them when that healing is prolonged, God, that you would sustain them with the strength of your Spirit, the sufficiency of your Spirit. God, that they would know your presence in a way that supersedes even how they feel. God, even the depth of pain, God, that they would know you are with them and know that you've not left them alone. Even when everything seems to the contrary and the adversary tries to convince

them of the contrary, God, I pray that they would know your presence and the strength of your presence and the comfort of your presence, the sufficiency that you bring when everything else in this world physically is taken away.

God, we praise you for your sufficiency, and we pray that they would know it in good reports from the doctor and bad reports from the doctor. God, grant them grace to give you praise. God, in ups and downs grant them grace to walk with you and to trust in you. Father, we pray for those who are struggling spiritually all across the front of this room who have areas of their life that have pulled them down. God, we pray that the grace of Jesus Christ would pull them up or the power of the Spirit would pull them up. Lord, we confess that we cannot overcome sin on our own. We need the power of your Spirit to do that. And so we pray that on behalf of each other, Lord, that by your Spirit you would empower our brothers and sisters to let go of that which has held them for months, years. God, we pray that you would show the holiness of your great name and the power you give over sin. God, we want to reflect your holiness in this world. We want this world to know that you are holy. And so we pray that for the sake of your name in Birmingham, you would make us a church that is holy. And God, that you would deliver us by your grace that you would deliver us from any strongholds of sin and, God, that you would make us holy and make us pure.

God, I pray for men across this room that you would deliver them from thoughts that are impure, unholy actions. God, for marriages and families, individuals across this room, God, makes holy, we pray by your grace. Give us great victory by your Spirit in our struggles with sin. We trust in you, God. We know this is, you've saved us not to sin, you saved us to live in your Spirit. So God, we pray on behalf of our brothers and sisters that that would be a reality.

And God, whether it is physical or spiritual struggles, we praise you as the father who never lets go of us, who does not turn His back on His people. We praise you for your faithfulness to us even when we waiver in our faithfulness to you.

As we sang earlier, prone to wander. We feel it prone to leave the God we love. God, we praise you for never leaving us alone, for never letting go of us, for your presence always being with us. And God, we celebrate that. That even in the darkest times, you bring light. Even in pain, you bring eternal pleasure. Even in mourning, you bring joy. All glory be to the Savior on the cross who took the ultimate symbol of pain and suffering and turned it into the ultimate symbol of life and joy. All glory be to your name as the Father who never lets us go. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

Okay, have a seat and get out your Bible and go with me back to 1 Corinthians 2. I want to show you something there, the Spirit of God and the glory of God. God, make us a people desperate for your Spirit. You get to the end of 1 Corinthians 2. It's the verse we read, verse 15 and 16. Listen to what it said. Don't miss this. "*The spiritual man,*" verse 15, "*makes judgments about all things, but he himself is not subject to any man's judgment*" (1 Cor. 2:15). Verse 16, and quotes again from the Old Testament, "*For who is known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him*" (1 Cor. 2:16). Where is he quoting from? Isaiah 40.

Hold your place here. Quick learners, let's go Isaiah 40. I want to show you this. Isaiah 40 is an incredible chapter of Scripture. I quoted from it last week. It's when God says, "*To whom will you compare me? Or who is my equal?*" says the Holy One... *He who brings out the starry host one by one, and calls them each by name*" (Is. 40:25-26). It's a picture of His greatness.

And listen to what it says in Isaiah 40:12, start one verse before. It's comparing God and His greatness to us in our puniness, so to speak. I don't know if that's a word, but that's what it's doing. Verse 12, *"Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, or with the breadth of his hand marked off the heavens? Who has held the dust of the earth in a basket, or weighed the mountains on the scales and the hills in a balance"* (Is. 40:12). You see the picture of the greatness of God. He takes the dust of the earth and puts it in a basket. He weighs the mountains on scales and hills in the balance. It's showing the greatness God.

Then listen to verse 13, *"Who has understood the mind of the Lord, or instructed him as his counselor"* (Is. 40:13). The obvious answer is nobody. Who can instruct God? Who has the mind of God? The obvious rhetorical answer in Isaiah 40 is no one can know the mind of the Lord.

Come back to 1 Corinthians 2. Paul quotes from it. It says, *"For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him?" But* (1 Cor. 2:16) - contrast same thing he did over with Isaiah 64. "But" - here's the difference - *"But we have the mind of Christ"* (1 Cor. 2:16).

Did you catch that? Who can understand God's mind? Isaiah 40 says nobody could. Paul says, New Testament, ladies and gentlemen, we have the mind of Jesus Christ. What this means is in the Spirit of God, whole theme in 1 Corinthians 2, in the Spirit of God, with the mind of Christ you and I in this room have the privilege of understanding and knowing God from the very perspective of Jesus Christ himself.

What this means is that praying in the Spirit and desperation for the Spirit is not limited to doing that in a certain place. First Corinthians 6, "Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God dwells in you." Same picture. The mind of Christ dwells in you. What this means is, we gather together this morning and we pray in the Spirit and we show desperation for the Spirit. We walk out of here in the Spirit.

The glory of God, the Old Testament limited to a place. Glory of God, New Testament, no longer limited to a place. The glory of God dwells in you and me. The Spirit of God dwells in you and me. Therefore, we don't ask for God to pour out His Spirit on places anymore. We don't ask Him to pour out His Spirit on programs and plans and methods. We ask Him to pour out His Spirit on people, on you and I. And we take the Spirit with us and what this means is the same Spirit that we have prayed in, prayed in desperation for this morning is the same Spirit that desires to meet this faith family in prayer closets all across this city tomorrow morning.

Desperation for the Spirit is not just what happens in a place. Desperation for the Spirit is what happens when men and women and kids all across this room get up in the morning, get alone with God, fall on their faces and say, "I'm desperate for your Spirit."

This is where we show desperation for the Spirit, and we do that Monday through Saturday and then we gather together on Sunday and we express corporately as a family desperation for the Spirit. This is not an isolated event that's intended to stop in a place. We have the mind of Christ.

The Spirit goes with us all throughout our day. This Spirit leads the small groups that meet all across this city all week long in Spirit-led community. That's the picture.

In fact, you have in your worship guide at the very front a picture of small groups and a thing called Group Link. That's exactly it. This whole deal is next Sunday. Next Sunday night having an event that we haven't had before, but for anybody in this room who's not a part of small group to say, "I'm not going to be an anonymous spectator in the church. I want to grow in community. I want to express desperation for the Spirit and be able to share the struggles that were represented all across this room with people on a weekly basis, walk through this journey on a weekly basis with others."

If you're not in a small group, Spirit-led community, I want to encourage you fill this out today. Please, fill this out today. Put it on your calendar to come next Sunday night. Join together. The whole picture is going to be that Sunday night. People who are not in small group are all going to get together and get in small group.

Some of you tried small group in the fall and maybe it didn't work, maybe that small group time wasn't good or maybe, I think the politically correct way to say it is the chemistry just wasn't there. It happens. Let me encourage you to be a part of Spirit-led community.

Fill out, whether you put it in the offering basket, which we're going to pass in a minute, in a second, or give it to the table outside that says "Group Link" and talks about small groups that connect to table. Please, I urge you as your pastor, do not let this be your spiritual hour and a half for the week. Do not walk this journey in isolation. Walk in the Spirit and in Spirit-led community.

With that said, I want to us to worship by giving our offerings and by filling those out. I know I haven't given you a lot of time to fill that whole thing out. If you haven't filled it out already, you can put that in the offering basket as they begin come by you. If you haven't filled it out already, please, before you leave today fill that out and take it to the table outside.

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