

Offering Incense Upon the Altar

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- [0 : 0 0] Exodus chapter number 30. Exodus chapter 30 in the Word of God. It's good to see you all here today. It's good to see some faces I haven't seen for a little while.
- Some for months, some for weeks. And one for the first time. That is not Mrs. Fleming's baby, but she's claiming him for now, aren't you? Yeah, yeah. Keep an eye on her.
- But every time we bow to pray, one of you keep your eye. So, all right. Praise the Lord. It's good to have a new face in the church. All right. And by the way, his name's Caleb Scott. Right? Scott with one T. Amen.
- Okay. Last week we finished in chapter 29 with the priests being consecrated into their office. And we really honed in on just this one peculiar aspect of that service and this whole event, the whole chapter really.
- We looked at how they applied the blood of that second ram called the ram of consecration. They applied that blood to the tip of the right ear, to the thumb of the right hand, and to the great toe of the right foot.
- [1 : 1 4] And we showed that this consecration is something we can apply in our Christian lives because it shows a consecration of the ear to hear the word of God.
- And how necessary that is, how many don't have ears to hear. And how many hear but don't receive and don't understand and don't respond. And so the ear has to be consecrated. The hand has to be consecrated to do the work of God.
- And the foot to walk in the way of God. And for us to do that, it's a decision on our part to be consecrated to the Lord. And to give our energy and our lives and to devote our actions and our activity to the work of God.
- It's a choice to consecrate yourself to serve and obey the Lord. So now we're going to move into chapter 30. And having covered so much information about the tabernacle, the furniture.
- First the furniture of the tabernacle. Certain pieces that were made and fashioned. And then the structure of the tabernacle itself. And the holy garments for the priests. Their consecration. Now there's still yet a piece of furniture that is placed inside of the tabernacle that we have not heard about yet.
- [2 : 2 1] The Lord has not yet revealed this to Moses. And I don't know why. Maybe saving the best for last, you could say. But he's already discussed with him instructions to build the table of showbread.
- And how that's to operate. He's already given them instructions about the candlestick. And how that's to be operated. But he never mentioned this third item. And so this is going to complete the set.
- And this item is called the altar of incense. Or elsewhere it's called the golden altar. And so I want to read with you the first ten verses of Exodus chapter 30. And I'm going to give you an outline of these ten verses while we go.
- It won't be the outline I use for the sermon. But just as we read along, the first five verses discusses the production of the altar. Meaning the material, the dimensions, and so forth.

Verse 1 says, And thou shalt make an altar to burn incense upon. Of shittim wood shalt thou make it. A cubit shall be the length thereof. And a cubit the breadth thereof. Four square shall it be.

[3 : 17] And two cubits shall be the height thereof. The horns thereof shall be of the same. And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold. The top thereof and the sides thereof round about. And the horns thereof.

And thou shalt make unto it a crown of gold round about. And the two golden rings thou shalt make to it under the crown of it. By the two corners thereof upon the two sides of it shalt thou make it.

And they shall be for places for the staves to bear it withal. And thou shalt make the staves of shittim wood and overlay them with gold. And so there's the production of it. Secondly is the placement of the altar in verse 6.

And thou shalt put it before the veil that is by the ark of the testimony. Before the mercy seat that is over the testimony where I will meet with thee. So to picture this as you walk into the tabernacle sanctuary itself.

It's not a big room at all. But as you walk into it the priest would come in through that doorway. Or through that hanging the curtains. He would to his right see the table of showbread.

[4 : 18] And to his left he would see the candlestick. But straight ahead would be the altar of incense right on the outside of the veil. That separates from the most holy place where the other altar was.

Or the ark of the covenant was with the mercy seat upon it where God would dwell. So there's the placement. And now the practice of the altar in verses 7 and 8. Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning.

When he dresseth the lamps he shall burn incense upon it. And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at evening he shall burn incense upon it. A perpetual incense before the Lord throughout your generations.

The fourth part of our outline here is the prohibition of the altar. Showing there's some things that you cannot do. Verse 9 says you shall offer no strains incense thereon.

Nor burnt sacrifice nor meat offering. Neither shall you pour drink offerings thereon. And finally there's the purging of the altar with Aaron making an atonement upon the horns of it once in a year.

[5 : 22] With the blood of the sin offering of atonements. Once in the year shall he make atonement upon it throughout your generations. It is most holy unto the Lord. It is most holy.

Most holy. This is a very special piece. Very special piece. And we're going to take a look at it this morning. But before we do let's go to the Lord together.

Father in heaven it's our request and prayer before thy throne this morning. That you would be pleased with us gathering here today. That you would present yourself in our midst.

That we could feel and know your presence. And hear from your spirit. That you would move in our hearts. And illuminate our minds to the word of God. And to your will for our lives.

Lord we pray that what we read here. That what was fashioned in its place. That the significance of it would not be lost upon us this morning. And that we would with eager hearts.

[6 : 20] With open minds. With ears to hear. Receive the word of God. And may it bear fruit. May it have impact. May it actually change something about our routine.

In our daily lives. As we seek to please you. As we live in this life. We ask that you'll get the glory for it. You alone deserve it. We want you to have it. We pray this in Jesus name.

Amen. Amen. So the practice of burning incense. As a form of worship. It goes on throughout this. In this Bible.

Like from cover to cover. You'll see mention of it here and there. And throughout the history of the people of Israel. It's a thing. It's a practice. Here it's the way God wants it to happen to him.

This is his prescription for burning incense before him. But as you study the history of this nation. In their times of idolatry. They stopped burning incense to the God of heaven.

[7 : 15] To the Lord Jehovah their God. That they covenanted with. But they continued to burn incense. And in other places. You'll see them burning incense upon the high places. All throughout the land.

You see them burning incense to Baal. You see them references to them burning incense to graven images. And even in Jeremiah. There's times where it says they burn incense to the Queen of Heaven. And in places where the women of the congregation were doing this.

Apart from their husbands. Saying we're going to do this. Whether you like it or not. So it's been a common practice to grind up some formulated concoction into a powder.

And then to pour it over hot coals. Creating a smoke. And creating a smell that would fill the area. And it's a clouded invitation to some deity.

To be present with them. And often incense was costly. It's often made of very rare and valuable ingredients. And so the rising of smoke and the sweet smell.

[8 : 16] Have a significance from this passage. That I think we can really take to our lives today. A real meaning for us. A representation. And to see that. I want to show it to you from the Bible.

So keep your place in Exodus. But find the book of Psalms. And find near the end of that book. Psalm 141. Psalm 141.

And look at some picture that David presents. While he is calling out to God. Verse number 1 and 2.

It says, Lord, I cry unto thee. Make haste unto me. Give ear unto my voice when I cry unto thee. Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense.

Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense. Now let's take that and compare something else. Look at Revelation chapter number 8.

[9 : 26] All the way to the back of your Bible. Last book. Revelation chapter 8. And we're going to see the first couple verses here.

Revelation 8 verse 1. Notice the placement of the golden altar.

The presence of the throne. Before the throne. The presence of God. And this says that the incense was offered with the prayers of all saints. Verse 4. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.

So coming back to Exodus. The prayers of the saints are pictured by the rising smoke of the incense being burned before the presence.

The smoke is what God wanted to fill the atmosphere and surround his presence. And these prayers are a picture of that. You may remember in the book of Acts and chapter number 10, a man named Cornelius.

[11 : 00] And an angel came to him in a vision and spoke these words. He says, Cornelius, thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God.

So I want to look closer at this altar that they burned incense upon. And I want to identify some truths from Exodus chapter 30 in the first 10 verses we read.

Some truths that I think we can apply to our prayer lives. To our prayer lives. If you don't have a prayer life, you need to get one. And I'm going to say a few things about it that I hope can help you.

I hope you'll see it from the passage and that the word of God will just be very clear on this. What God desires from you. He desires to a few things. You know when you say about being a Christian, there's usually like these top three things that everybody says.

Well, you read your Bible, you pray, and you go to church. And there's more. And you can say, and you witness. And you can say a couple other things that you ought to do. But like the top three. Read your Bible, pray, go to church.

[12 : 03] And it's not a list of these are my do's and I have to check these boxes. But it's just a, it's an attitude. It's a lifestyle. It's what I do. It's fellowship with God. It's seek the truth from the word of God.

And it's attend a local church where God's people come together because this is what he designed for my life to be part of. To sit amongst. To hear from the word of God. To fellowship with believers.

To glorify Jesus Christ. And there's so much benefits to a local church. But we're going to get back to the thing about prayer because there's benefits to that too. So let's look at this. Number one, the altar, the offering of incense upon the altar was to be private.

It was to be private. Would you notice the position or the placement of this altar? Look at verse number six where it says, And thou shalt put it before the veil that is by the ark of the testimony before the mercy seat that is over the testimony where I will meet with thee.

The altar was not placed in public view. It was not placed in the town square. It was not placed in the marketplace. As a matter of fact, it was a place where nobody could see it.

[13 : 14] Nobody could go inside except for that high priest. And that was morning and evening. And it was with specific details, trimming the lamps, dealing with the loaves from time to time.

And offering incense. But even the priests themselves, the majority of the priests, the sons of Abraham, they didn't get to see this. It was such an exclusive and private place.

No one saw it in operation. It was inside the tent. Nobody's granted permission to go inside the tent like that. So it's placed in the sanctuary of the tabernacle.

And it's right outside of the veil. So the only thing between the altar of incense and the ark of the covenant with the mercy seat in the presence of God was that veil that was placed there.

And that veil, you know, later with Christ, it was torn top to bottom. It was removed. And it's gone now. Showing us that we have access to the presence of God.

[14 : 12] But even in that moment, it was just the veil that was keeping those two separated. That was it. It was as close to the presence of God as possibly could be.

Now regarding prayer. Prayer is a private occasion. Your prayer life is a private thing where it's one-on-one. You and a holy God.

Now yes, you can pray collectively. You can pray with your brothers and sisters. Last night some men met here. And we had right in this place. We bowed our knees and we had some requests to God that we prayed for our church.

You can pray with others, but that does not replace a private prayer and communion with God. It's a private thing that nobody else can come into.

Nobody else can see. This is a time and a place where you personally draw near to God. Where he said, draw nigh to God and he'll draw nigh to you. This is where you do it.

[15 : 10] When you get on your knees and you seek the throne of grace and you bow before him personally, privately, and you speak to him as your God.

God. Not the God. Not the God of the fathers or the father of Israel, but your personal God. You talk to him. It's a private thing.

It's a place where you wait in his presence to feel him move in your heart. And he will do it. It's a place where you get strengthened on your knees in prayer.

It happens. I can testify. It happens. God, I go in with a burden and I get up with it lifted. Although it's still present in my life, I have the strength to deal with it or to not allow it to weigh me down anymore.

It's a place where you get strength. It's a place where you get peace. You feel peace because you can go in heavy with sorrow and you can offer those prayers before the throne of God.

[16 : 10] And you can walk out with peace in your heart, knowing from the word of God that it's going to be okay. That I'm going to handle this or that you can trust me. The Lord gives you all of those things in your prayer closet.

You can get up off of your knees with confidence. You can get off having experienced grace. Would you turn with me to Hebrews chapter 4? If you need to see this with your eyes, then let's turn to Hebrews chapter 4.

And this is a verse you ought to memorize and take full advantage of its truth regarding prayer. And the reference is to our high priest, the Lord Jesus Christ.

And because of what he accomplished, then we have something we can do in response. And so the last verse of Hebrews 4, verse 16, the Bible says, Let us therefore come boldly under the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

How do you get to the throne of grace? Do you transport yourself? How do you get there? Do you start climbing?

[17 : 24] Do you get to the top of the mountains? Do you set up an altar? You just get on your knees. You get on your knees before the Father. And in spirit, because of Jesus Christ, you through the Spirit of God can access the Father.

And so you boldly come to the throne of grace. And I don't know, do you ever need mercy? Do you ever need to find some grace to help you?

That's where you get it. And it's a private place. It's a place for you and God only. It's not the crowd that comes in with you. It's you and God.

You need mercy and you need grace. Then you get on your knees. Come back to Matthew chapter number 6. Look at Matthew chapter 6. If you need strength, if you need confidence, if you need to find peace when your heart's filled with fear and anxiety, get on your knees and offer up some prayers.

The apostle Paul tells us to let our requests be made known unto God. And then he says, The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds.

[18 : 42] So if you want the peace, then lay it at the throne. Matthew chapter 6. It said that the offering of incense upon the altar was to be private. This is a private place.

The Lord Jesus Christ taught these disciples to pray in private. He actually rebukes people that pray publicly and openly for a show.

Let's find this in verse number 5. And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men.

Verily I say unto you, they have their reward. Because men look up to them and they respect them and they think so highly of them. Oh, they're wonderful. And that's the only reward they get.

Because their prayer is not coming up before the throne. It's not a sweet smell to God. Verse 6 says, But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet.

[19 : 44] And when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret. And thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. Now while we're here, I'll read the next verse.

And we're not going to get on this, but for a little bit later. Just notice it for now. Verse 7 says, The more you run your mouth, the more...

Christ says that's not how you pray to your Father. And as a matter of fact, there's... Well, I won't get into that. Let's go on to something else. Let's come back to Exodus chapter 30. Secondly, the offering of the incense upon the altar was to be private.

And your prayers to God are to be a private thing. A special thing right up against that veil to where the throne is. Or to where, in this case, the Ark of the Covenant was.

Secondly, the offering of incense upon the altar was to be perpetual. Continuous. Perpetual. Look at verses 7 and 8. And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning.

[20 : 54] When he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it. And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it. A perpetual incense before the Lord throughout your generations.

The incense was offered every morning and every evening. Like clockwork. Tomorrow morning, later in the afternoon and evening. And it goes on the next day and the next day.

It didn't matter if the sun was shining. It didn't matter if the rain was falling. It didn't matter if it was a good day in Israel or if it was a bad day in Israel. It didn't matter if it was a day of victory or a day of defeat.

There was to be incense upon that altar in the morning. There was to be incense upon that altar creating a smoke and a sweet smell before God at even.

It didn't matter what was going on in the day. The priest was to be in his place. He was to be offering incense upon the altar before the Lord continually.

[21 : 55] Perpetually. Consistently. Daily. Monday. Tuesday in his place. Wednesday in his place. Thursday. Every day. In his place. This is what the Apostle Paul meant. When he told the church at Thessalonica to pray without ceasing. It doesn't mean you just never stop praying.

That's insane. That's impossible. But he's telling you that there should never be a time where you cease to pray. There should never be a season in your life. A day or a week that goes by where you cease to pray.

There should never be a morning or an evening when you're absent from your place before the Lord as according to the passage. I'll say it like this. There should never be a day that goes by that God in heaven doesn't hear your voice.

There shouldn't be a day that goes by where you didn't spend time speaking to your Father. Offering your prayers up before his throne. It's perpetual.

[22 : 59] It's daily. Every day. You say, well, for how long? How long then am I supposed to pray? Well, I'm not going to put a time on it. I don't think the Bible puts a time on it.

And by the way, I know there's a song in here that people get, they preach, use it as a sermon note or illustration, Sweet Hour of Prayer. It's not a reference to 60 minutes of praying, just so you know that.

Don't buy that. That's not what he's saying. Matter of fact, I'll show you. Look at Acts chapter 3. Look at the Bible. Acts chapter 3. This is what the songwriter was talking about when he wrote Sweet Hour of Prayer.

He was talking about a specific time in your day set aside to talk to God. Acts chapter 3.

And it's in the very first verse. Acts 3 verse 1.

[23 : 59] Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour. That was a time on your watch that said, whoa, it's time to pray.

Right? There's other religions that are real faithful at this. It's very important to them that they observe a specific time in the day and pray. I'm not going to tell you it's 3 p.m. there, the ninth hour of the day or when it might be.

I'm not going to give you that. God can give you that. But don't feel convicted about somebody saying, well, you're supposed to pray for an hour because you sing about it. That's not the case at all. But it's not about who prays the longest.

It's about being faithful to your place of prayer. Being faithful to the operation that goes on here. The priest had to the golden altar. This shows us that it reveals to us the importance of offering daily prayer as well.

Praying to God is not meant to be a burden to you. It is not meant to be something that you bear every day. It's actually a privilege. And when you think on it rightly, it's a wonderful opportunity.

[25 : 11] The offering in the passage we read earlier was to find mercy or to obtain mercy. Like, is that a burden? To find grace to help. That's not a burden.

That's a blessing. Furthermore, God is pleased when our prayers come up before Him. He calls this a sweet incense. A sweet smell that comes into His presence.

He enjoys it. It's something He calls for. And I can think on just my personal opinion on why. Why is when you pray, when you spend time talking to God, it reveals an obedience to His Word.

But it does more. It reveals a reliance upon Him that ought to be there as He is God and you are not. And it reveals that you rely upon Him.

You bring your request to Him. A child wants something, wants a toy, a present. They go to their dad or their mom. They go to somebody who can give it to them.

[26 : 13] And it shows that dependence and that reliance. When you go to your Heavenly Father with your prayer request, you're displaying to Him, I need you.

I want you. I desire you to work in my life and to help and to strengthen and to guide and to lead me. You got questions about your future?

Learn how to pray. Learn how to seek God's leading. Because He is capable of leading His children. He can do it. And He will.

Praying displays faith. Talking to somebody you can't see and you never have. Talking to somebody who doesn't talk back into your ear.

Talking to somebody you'll never see in this life. And yet believing that He can hear and that He can respond. That's faith. That's walking by faith.

[27 : 13] That's what we do. But when you don't pray, believer, child of God, when you don't pray, when you go through today and tomorrow just ignoring the presence of God, you display to Him, I don't need you today.

I don't want you today. I want what I want today. And I'll do what I want today. And that's a problem.

He didn't save you to just turn you loose on your carnal desires. He saved you to get something from you. To get some worship, some fellowship, some fruit.

And this is one way it can be done is when we pray. When we don't pray, it reveals that we don't care.

It reveals we don't desire to serve Him, to fulfill His will. We don't want it. But our prayers being offered up daily upon that altar show something to God that He likes.

[28 : 19] And now come back in Exodus 30. We looked at verse 6. We looked at verses 7 and 8. Now I want to note verse number 9. Thirdly, that this offering of incense upon the altar was to be particular.

Meaning something very precise here. It was only a precise composition of incense that was accepted and nothing else. Verse 9 says, Ye shall offer no strange incense thereon.

So the mixture that was offered was specific to that altar only. Look at later in the chapter. Look at the end of the chapter. Verse 34.

Here's the... I won't pronounce these words right, but... Verse 34. The Lord said unto Moses, Take unto these sweet spices, Saffron, and Cinnamon, and Galbanum, these sweet spices with pure frankincense, of each shall be the like, or be a like weight.

And thou shalt make it a perfume, a confection, after the art of the apothecary, tempered together, pure and holy. So this is... These ingredients are mixed.

[29 : 33] They're heated up. It's cooled down into a mixture, or to a composition. And then verse 36. Thou shalt beat some of it very small, and put of it before the testimony in the tabernacle of the congregation, where I will meet with thee, it shall be unto you most holy.

And as for the perfume which thou shalt make, ye shall not make to yourselves according to the composition thereof. It shall be unto thee holy for the Lord. Whosoever shall make like unto that to smell thereto shall even be cut off from his people.

This is exclusive for God and for that altar, that golden altar of incense. Now what does this have to do with prayer?

Well, any man-made recipe or deviation from what God prescribed was unacceptable. It's forbidden. God had no desire. You don't bring anything that smells differently to me.

I want only the way I tell you to make it. And regarding prayer, God gave them the info and even the command for them to offer this specific incense before Him.

[30 : 41] The same is true of prayer. He teaches us in His Word how to pray. Jesus taught His disciples. John the Baptist taught His disciples. And there are many examples.

I'm not going to take you through these today. But as you read your Bible, it's important for you to read your Bible. You'll come across these great prayers, these great men like Daniel, like Nehemiah.

Many of the Psalms of Davids are prayers. As you read, you learn how to pray. It's subconscious even. You don't necessarily have to repeat these things and read them as prayers, but you learn how to talk to God, how to exalt the Lord God, and then how to put your requests on Him with a trusting heart of faith.

The Bible says in Psalm 62 to pour out your heart before Him. You learn how to do that from the Scriptures. The more Bible you get in you, the more Bible will be in your prayers.

And it will be acceptable to God. But prayer includes many things, but one thing it does not include, what we read in Matthew chapter 6, is vain repetition.

[31 : 53] Repeating and repeating the same thing over and over and over again. He's not interested in that. Reading out of a prayer book is not praying out of the heart.

That's not pouring out your heart before God as a personal conversation with Him. Reading from a book. That's not it. Reciting some memorized words over and over.

That is not communing personally with a personal God. God condemns that kind of prayer. And it's unacceptable. It's a very popular thing among religions today.

But it's not biblical. And it's not acceptable. It's the wrong kind of offering. It's strange incense. It's man-made. I'm not going to have a priest write a prayer down and then me go in my closet and repeat it ten times feeling that I'm going to be heard for my much speaking.

That's strange incense to God. That's not me talking to Him. The Lord wants to hear from me and He wants to hear from you. Also in verse 9 He shall offer no strange incense.

[33 : 01] And then He goes on to say this. The rest of these are some sacrifices and offerings that are prescribed under the law. They're supposed to be offered to God but notice they're not to be offered on this altar.

He says Nor burnt sacrifice nor meat offering neither shall ye pour drink offering thereupon. Those are acceptable offerings. but not on this altar of incense.

Those get burned out there outside of the veil. They get outside of the tent and they are to be put on the brazen altar. This operation inside here is very particular and there's definite restrictions to the golden altar.

So what does that have to do with our prayers? Well it shows me that the prayers of God's people they're a special thing to God. They're very special and intimate and private and there's other sacrifices that we're called to offer and we've covered these recently read them in Hebrews 13 read them in 1 Peter 2 these other spiritual sacrifices of praise of thanksgiving of good works of communicating or giving of what's ours to the work of God.

all of these are considered spiritual sacrifices but they do not replace what's to be done only upon the altar of incense because that's a special place a place where a particular offering is made to God and nothing can replace that.

[34 : 35] when those sin offerings and those burnt offerings were offered the nation could see they could see the smoke go up it was a visible thing they couldn't go inside the courtyard of the tabernacle but from their tent they could see the smoke rise up they could tell that it was the time of sacrifice and they know when those sacrifices are being offered and to liken that to what's visible in the church is that there can be good works and you personally can excel in good deeds in the local church in your Christian life you can have a reputation for being faithful for being engaged for being excited for being a soul winner for handing out tracts and for being a Bible reader you can have so many good qualities about you that is known about you everybody can know that you sing everybody can know that you serve the Lord and all of those sacrifices of spiritual value can be offered to God and the people can see it and can rejoice and praise the Lord and God can accept those but this incense is special and it's offered in one golden altar place that nobody gets to see except God when you do your service for Jesus Christ and you do it alongside your brothers and sisters and you praise God that's acceptable but that's being done on the brazen altar in the picture that's somewhere else this one's on the inside this is where God says that's great

I love that stuff but you haven't been in here for a while I haven't heard your voice for a while don't you know that this is real close to me this is so special to me I want that smoke and that sweet smell to fill the room and it's your voice that I want to hear sometimes you can get carried away with what other people can see what other people can behold and you can get carried away and rightfully so get addicted to the ministry and serving God you can find such fulfillment in serving with your brothers and rejoicing in the Lord in those things but do not neglect your attendance at this golden altar where your prayers are received by God so in your life the incense is either on the altar or it's not the smoke and the sweet smell is either filling the room and God can sense it and enjoy it or he can't what is it for you is there anything going up before the Lord or is it all just doing these other things

I'm not accusing you of being seen of men and you're witness for the Lord your excitement for Jesus Christ your faithfulness to this church and all you do here is appreciate it and God he accepts it I'm sure of it but this one let's highlight it because God highlights it he doesn't place it when he talks about the other furniture he leaves it out for later and he discusses all that consecration all that priesthood stuff and he leaves it out for later and then he comes around and says by the way that one thing that you're going to put right up there right up against the veil the closest thing to my presence is this one and I find very clear significance to this one it's your prayer life Christian it's your time spent before God this is special to God this is sweet this is private and it's about your personal relationship with him it's one that's easy to dismiss it's easy to come and join church and be part of activities and never take time to get in the closet and shut the door but now you've been reminded about it you've been confronted with it

I hope you see how personal and special this thing is to God I'll repeat it's not to be a burden it's not to be something that you carry about and you just have to do because God's making me do this it's a privilege and a right of a child of God with the spirit of adoption to cry Abba Father and to come before his presence and so I'm challenging you this morning if your prayer life is not faithful then let's work on making it faithful let's work on making it perpetual consistent continual daily like this altar was to be ministered in let's work on being particular in our prayer and making sure that this is something special that we offer to God not trying to accumulate all the other rewards but let's get some time with God together personally privately I hope you see the importance and the significance of it

I think it's pretty plain so now it's going to be on you to respond to it let's bow our heads to be dismissed in a moment and before we do with your heads bowed I'll ask you to just take on an attitude of prayer and quietness and I asked you a question earlier I want to repeat it is there anything on the altar how long's it been since the smoke went up before the Lord I'm not talking about when you eat breakfast in the morning I'm talking about that hour of prayer that time when you say oh it's time to talk to God we have the right and privilege to do it all the time and in the car and at the job and at the house and in the bed and all over we can talk to God but how long has it been since he heard your voice not just throwing up a flare but to where you just bowed and spent some time some quiet time to where God can infuse in your new man the strength to go on to where God can encourage and strengthen you and give you that confidence to face this world how long have you spent praying for the souls in your family the souls that need to be saved or they'll spend eternity in the fire of hell damnation when are you going to find time to pray when are you going to clean up and fix up and put some real value to your personal relationship with God father move in our hearts draw us to prayer lord do this in this moment and do this throughout our lives each day of the week draw us to prayer to communion with you to sweet time and may you get something from it and I'm sure we'll benefit from it but I pray that you use this message to help us to grow in this category of our

[41 : 52] Christian life forgive us for neglecting it for putting other things above it for putting our service in front of it for putting our worldly and carnal desires and pleasures in front of it God teach us to pray convict us to pray we pray this in Jesus name