



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Prayer Makes a Difference

Guest(s): Dr. Jack Graham

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- Dr. Dobson: Well, hello everyone. I'm James Dobson and you're listening to Family Talk, a listener supported ministry. In fact, thank you so much for being part of that support for James Dobson Family Institute.
- Roger Marsh: The late Reverend Jerry Falwell Sr. once said, "Nothing of eternal significance ever happens apart from prayer." Well, you know, he was absolutely right. Prayer is the way in which we communicate with the very God of the universe. Our petitions and requests to him have power and purpose. Believers must rely on this discipline daily, especially in these uncertain times we're living in. This is Family Talk, a production of the James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Roger Marsh, and today we are revisiting a powerful message on the topic of prayer that was originally given during the 2015 National Day of Prayer event in Washington, DC. Our host, Dr. Dobson is with me now and Doctor, you remember this particular speech and it's call to action for believers, don't you?
- Dr. Dobson: That was such an anointed day. And I'm so glad that we get to share some of it with our listeners. In a minute, our listeners are going to hear Dr. Jack Graham and his challenge to Christians that now is the time for extraordinary prayer. But first, let me tell you about this mighty man of God. Dr. Graham has been the pastor of Prestonwood Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas. He's also the founder and teacher of Power Point with Dr. Jack Graham. That's a radio and television broadcast that reaches millions of people every day.
- Roger Marsh: Well, that's right Doctor, and Dr. Graham is also a best-selling author and an eloquent speaker, as you will hear today. Okay, with all that, let's listen to these enlightening words from Dr. Jack Graham right now on today's edition of Family Talk.
- Dr. Jack Graham: What a privilege it is to be with you and hundreds of thousands of people who are praying with us today. Almost everyone who's stepped up here has reminded us of something very important about prayer. And it is this: that crisis most often drives us to our knees. You see it all through the Bible, don't you? Whether it was with a nation or with an individual, it is trouble, trials, tests,

crisis, difficulty, that drives us desperately on our knees to cry out to God. I read this just this week. It is a prayer request, a statement really, from a prisoner of Christ, Pastor Saeed Abedini, who is an American Christian converted from the Muslim faith to believe and follow Jesus, became a pastor, and was arrested and prosecuted in Iran and for the past three years or so has been in jail. And he wrote this to all of us today. "As an American and as a prisoner for Christ, I've spent many hours praying and crying out to God for revival for this great nation.

We all hope for the success of our nation and for America to be blessed. But without revival, there can be no true success or blessing. Change starts with us. Revival starts with us." The first step to revival is praying together in unity as a nation. The national day of prayer is a great opportunity for us to come out and use the freedom that we have been given. So many Christians around the world are imprisoned and martyred for their faith in Jesus. And before I go any further, we should always remember to pray for suffering Christians, the persecuted church, martyred believers around the world. We must never forget them.

You have the freedom to gather across the United States at your state capitals to pray. Please use this opportunity, please, and this is all in caps, use your freedom for the kingdom of God. What are you believers up to, all this prayer? Well, we love our God and we love our country. We love America. And because we love this beloved nation of ours, we are brokenhearted, we are burdened by the uncertainty of our future, and therefore like Solomon at the dedication of the temple, you've heard our verse that describes the theme of our national day of prayer. We cry out to you in your presence. Lord, we cry out to you. Prayer in one sense is very simple. That's ordinary prayer, that simple prayer, we all can do it. But there is a time for what Jonathan Edwards, the great revivalist, called "extraordinary prayer." Uncommon times calls for uncommon prayer. And so we cry out to God.

What is this cry? It is first and foremost, a humble cry. When Solomon offered this prayer, he said, I am your servant, oh God. He was a sovereign, a king, but he recognized his position as a servant of God. He humbled himself before the Lord. And we must as well. The cry is a cry of humility. The Bible says that God resists the proud, but He gives grace to the humble. I can't think of hardly anything worse than being resisted by God. That God would hold up His hands and say, "stop," and hold us off. And yet God says, if you're prideful, if you're arrogant, I will resist your prayers, I will resist your life, whatever. God will hold us off. Why? Because God hates pride. You may consider pride one of the lesser sins, but God considers it the worst of all sins. It was the original sin.

The sin that Lucifer himself in heaven committed. Before there was rebellion on earth, there was revolt in heaven and Lucifer, who was the son of the morning, the angel of the morning became the devil, the father of the night, because of his rebellion against God, his arrogance. He said, I will exalt myself above the throne of God. And thus this eternal cosmic battle has been going on behind the scenes as Satan and all of his cohorts, and those who follow him, rise up to resist in rebellion against God. The proverb says, "these six things does the Lord

hate, oh seven..." And at the top of the list is pride, pride. But God gives grace to the humble. I've noticed as I've read the scripture regarding humility, very rarely does it say, God will humble you. What it says over and over again in God's word is "humble yourself." This is what we do. We humble ourselves before God. And when we do, He said, I will exalt you in due season. In due time, in humble prayer, God will answer and lift us up.

God resists the proud, but He hears the humble. This is why though you can pray in any position, you can pray standing on your head, maybe you have, but the most powerful position of prayer is when we hit our knees or get on our faces before God. And in our very posture, we lay out our lives in surrender to him. This is a humble cry. It's startling to me to see the arrogance of America in our generation. People who are shaking their fists in the face of a Holy God, and sin which used to hide in the shadows is now come out into the light. Look, God doesn't need America. It's a great nation. God has given us our life and our Liberty, but God doesn't need America to do what God will do in the world. But America desperately needs God. And we need Him today.

This cry is a humble cry, but it's something else, it's a heart cry, a heart cry. I read a book early in my ministry by Dr. Stephen Olford, a great preacher of the gospel. It was called *Heart Cry For Revival*. I've never forgotten that title and the wonderful message of that book crying out to God for revival. That's what it means to cry out to God. It comes from deep within. It's been said earlier that the heart represents the core of your being. It's the you of you, it's the part of you that was made for God to know and relate to God, it's your soul, your spirit, your heart, as a man thinks in his heart, so is he. And so out of the heart, deep within, our prayers rise to God. We're not just saying prayers. We are praying prayers from our hearts. We love that. Just when someone comes right at you out of their heart, they're not faking it. They're not making it happen. They're just, they're coming to you out of their hearts. That's romantic. That's powerful. That draws us in.

And so when we pray, God wants us to pray honestly and openly, humbly, but honestly, with integrity, that flows out of our hearts. And I think the heart cry also speaks of the intensity and the focus and the fervency of this prayer. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man, avails us. Ask, seek, knock, literally, keep on asking, keep on seeking, keep on knocking and don't give up. That's the heart cry unto God. We saw it in Abraham, as he cried out to God, as he was willing to offer his son, his only son of promise on the alter, he cried out to God. We saw it in Moses when the people of God rebelled and Moses said, "oh, God blot me out of the book, but save your people."

We saw it in men like Nehemiah, who, when he heard the walls of the beloved city of Jerusalem were down and the people were despondent and God's glory had left the city, it hit him in the stomach and he dropped to his knees and he fasted and prayed for 150 days. And God called him to go make a difference in the world. That's a heart cry. It's the heart cry of the prophets like Jeremiah, the weeping prophet, the others who came with a burden from the Lord to pray and

to proclaim the word of God. A heart cry was the cry of Hannah who prayed for a child, prayed and prayed and promised God that if she had a child, he would be dedicated to the Lord all the days of his life. And God answered that mother's prayer and gave her a child. That's a heart cry.

It's another mother, Mary, the mother of our Lord, standing at the foot of the cross. Her heart breaking, her soul pierced, seeing Jesus, God's Son, her precious Mary's little lamb dying on the cross. It's the apostle Paul who said, I would be willing to die, to be accursed, go to hell, if in some way, my family and friends in Israel could be safe. That's a heart cry. It's Washington on his knees at Valley Forge, praying for the birth of a nation. It's Lincoln, who said "I was so often driven to my knees in desperation because I had no place else to go." It's John Knox of Scotland, who said, "give me Scotland or I die." That's a heart cry.

That's the kind of cry we need today. I heard it in Shirley Dobson just yesterday, when she said I've been in agony about America and this time of prayer together. This is a time to cry out to God. It's a humble cry. It's a heart cry. And it's a holy cry. The scripture says that we are to lift up holy hands in prayer. God says, my arms are not shortened that I cannot save, my ear is not deaf that I cannot hear, but your sins have separated you from me. And so when we pray, we pray with holy hearts, holy hands, not self-righteousness. The last thing we need is self-righteousness, piety. We need genuine godliness and purity. And this is why revival begins with the church. Judgment must begin at the house of God. It begins with you and me. It's like that old gospel song, which says, "Lord, send a great revival and let it begin in me."

"It's me, it's me, oh, Lord, standing in the need of prayer." May God give us a renewal, a real righteousness in our country. "If I regard iniquity in my heart, God will not hear me." To regard means to keep it for yourself. You've got secret compartments of sin, closeted in your own life. God says you regard iniquity, you keep it for yourself like a little pet, and I will not hear you. You've heard a lot of promises about answered prayer today. There's one when God says, "I won't answer." So that's why real revival always begins with repentance. Jesus began His ministry, the first words that He said when He came to earth to save us, was "Repent! for the kingdom of God is at hand." And so this cry is a Holy cry. America must get right with God. I must get right with God.

And one final thing. I'm so glad I can bring this final word. It's a hopeful cry. It's a hopeful cry. I believe something big is about to happen. I do. And many Christian leaders across this nation are sensing it, feeling it. When we pray, that the revival that we've been praying for and asking God to give, that it's on the way. Now, it's either revival or judgment. It's either revival or judgment. And may God give us the third great awakening in our own generation. Look, all of this stuff, all of this sin that is around us, it's happened on our watch. This is our generation. I'm a baby boomer. I was born in 1950. And we've seen the baby boomers come and now we're going. Some great things really in many ways from our generation, talking about my generation. But so much that has

happened to America. I feel like the prophet who said "the blood is on our hands." 60 million babies aborted. That's on us. That's our generation.

And I pray that one more time before Jesus comes - and He's coming soon folks, He's on the way, He's at the door. But one more time before he comes that we could see our generation. I've heard about revivals and awakenings in the past, but God is still God. God is not older now, can't do what He used to do. Call unto me and I will answer you and show you great and mighty things, which you don't know. Keep praying and pray with hope. Pray with hope. That's why I'm saying it's hope, a hopeful cry. Hope is not "I hope, I hope, I hope," wishful thinking. Hope for the Christian is the certainty and the security that our future is in His hands, the hands of the Lord, Jesus Christ. It's the blessed hope. And because we live with that hope, in fact, it's called a living hope, we're alive in this hope with a resurrected Redeemer in our lives. He lives in us.

And because of that, while there are many things to be discouraged about and there's some bad things, no doubt on the horizon, I'm encouraged, I'm hopeful, because I know a God who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we can ask or think according to the power that works within us. My life verse is 1 Corinthians 15:58. And it's the message that I share with you in closing, "Be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for you know your labor in the Lord is not in vain." Don't be discouraged. Jesus said, don't you ever quit. Keep on praying. Don't fade, don't stop, don't ever quit, because we have hope in the Lord Jesus, the one who died on the cross for our sins, who rose again on the third day, who lives in us by His Holy Spirit, will come one day and one day soon to take us to glory that we might celebrate in all eternity, the victories that he gives us every single day.

Now, prayer is not a substitute for work. Prayer is preparation for work and there's a lot to be done. And may we, God's people, rise up, God's church, rise up from our knees and take up the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God and advance the kingdom of our Lord, Jesus Christ. I believe we're going to have a time now where we read together this prayer that we have prepared, and make it your own, and let it be our cry to God. Would you stand with me?

Heavenly father, we come to you in the name that is above every name, Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Our hearts cry out to you, knowing that you are a prayer answering, faithful God, the one we trust in times like these. We ask that you renew our spirits, revive our churches and heal our land. We repent of our sins and ask for your grace and power to save us. Hear our cry, oh God, and pour out your Spirit upon us, that we may walk in obedience to your word. We are desperate for your tender mercies. We are broken and humbled before you. Forgive us. And in the power of your great love, lift us up to live in your righteousness.

We pray for our beloved nation. May we repent and return to you and be a light to the nations. And we pray for our leaders and ask that you give them wisdom and faith to follow you. Preserve and protect us, for you are our refuge and our

only hope. Deliver us from all fears, except to fear you, and may we courageously stand in the truth that sets us free. We pray with expectant faith and grateful hearts, in Jesus' name, our Savior, amen and amen. God bless you.

Dr. Dobson: You've been listening to Dr. Jack Graham, as he calls us to take account of where we are as a nation and to pray fervently for change. As he says, change will either occur through revival or judgment, and Christians need to pray humbly and hopefully for another revival to sweep this land and turn the hearts of the people back to God. No matter how dark things look now, it is time for concerted prayer and petitions for the Lord to heal our broken land.

Roger Marsh: Well, that was very well said, Doctor, and as all of us have seen before, faithful prayers can have supernatural results. You can learn more about the ministry and work of Dr. Jack Graham, by the way, when you visit drjamesdobson.org, that's drjamesdobson.org and then tap onto the broadcast button.

Well, that's all the time we have for today. Thanks so much for listening and also for your support of this ministry. Your tax deductible financial contributions allow us to continue fighting for marriages and families all across the country. You can make your pledge over the phone, by the way, when you call (877) 732-6825, that's (877) 732-6825. You can also make a donation online when you go to drjamesdobson.org. That's drjamesdobson.org. Of course, you can also write to us as well. Send your gift through the mail, addressed to PO box 39000, that's 39000 Colorado Springs, Colorado. The zip code, 80949.

Join us again tomorrow for another edition of Family Talk. On behalf of Dr. Dobson and the rest of our staff, I'm Roger Marsh, saying thanks for listening and God's blessings to you always.

Announcer: This has been a presentation of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute.