

Don't Let Your Weak Flesh Stop You



By Rob Pue

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In the hectic activity of our daily lives, it's easy to become comfortable and complacent when it comes to our personal devotion to God and our own personal spiritual condition. Many attend church weekly, but many others don't have a good, solid Bible-teaching church in their area. Many have good intentions to study God's Word daily, and many actually do, but for others, their daily devotional and prayer time can easily end up on the "back burner" when life gets busy, and we get tired.

I understand that many of us are tired these days. We need to work hard and put in long days to earn a living, and the cost of everything has risen substantially with rampant inflation and price increases due to "shortages" – many of which I believe are intentionally imposed on us by nefarious groups. And work is only a part of our lives. We also have busy home lives, with cleaning, maintenance, repairs, broken appliances and house projects to do. Then we have family commitments and at the end of the day, it's not uncommon to simply be worn out.

Worship of, and reverence for God is something all Christ-followers have in their hearts, something we certainly want to make a priority, but often times, life just gets in the way, unless we are intentional about our spiritual commitment. The

spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak, and today, both the spirit and flesh easily grow weary.

On the night of His betrayal, Jesus went to the Mount of Olives and told His disciples, *"My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. Tarry ye here and watch with Me."*

This was just after the Last Supper, when our Lord had shown Himself to be the ultimate Servant of all. He'd washed His disciples' feet, instructing us to learn the humility to do likewise as we follow Him in service and ministry to others. It was an intimate, significant moment in history. But then after asking His disciples to watch with Him, He went further on by Himself, fell on His face and prayed to the Father, asking if it would be possible that the cup of wrath would pass from Him. But He added, *"nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt."*

The scene here is one of great spiritual distress, turmoil and sorrow. Jesus knew what was coming and that He must face it. He knew He would soon suffer and be killed in the cruelest of ways, to defeat the works of the devil and offer the only way of salvation and reconciliation for mankind to return to God the Father.

Then He came back to where His disciples were, only to find them asleep. They were understandably tired and worn out. Most likely, none of them could truly grasp the magnitude of the situation at hand, and though He had asked them to "watch" with Him, they all fell asleep.

Even Peter, who had just vowed to never abandon Jesus, had fallen asleep in His greatest time of need. Matthew 26:40, *"And He cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, 'What, could ye not watch with Me one hour?'"* Peter must have been ashamed of himself. But Jesus went away alone again to pray – two more times – and each time He returned to the disciples, they were sound asleep.

By that time, Judas, the one who betrayed Him, had arrived with his group of killers, sent by the chief priests and religious elders to arrest Him. The time to “watch” with Jesus was over, and upon His arrest, all His followers, including Peter, *“forsook Him and fled.”*

Indeed, our spirits may be willing, but our flesh is so weak. What would have made the disciples’ flesh stronger in that moment of fear? Paying more attention to the Lord’s words, His teachings, His commands. Having the spiritual eyes to see and discern the gravity of the situation. Understanding that in everything that happens in our lives, every time of opportunity is there for just a fleeting moment. The door of opportunity always closes quickly, and slams shut tightly.

I would submit to you that this time in the Garden of Gethsemane, at the base of the Mount of Olives was the most significant time of testing the disciples had ever faced up to that point. It was also the most significant time in the history of mankind, second only to Christ’s crucifixion, death, burial and resurrection. Yet Jesus’ disciples couldn’t grasp the significance.

In our modern world today, we’re presented with many times of great significance in our lives, but we usually underestimate what’s right before our eyes, and only understand later, when it’s too late. Those times of opportunity pass quickly, and the door of opportunity slams shut with a bang. Then we grieve as we realize what we missed.

And today, we stand at the threshold of great open doors of opportunity – to witness to others, to minister to and serve others, to be ready with answers to deep spiritual questions, to snatch the souls of those who are ignorant and about to perish from deception, confusion, delusion and ultimately, eternal damnation. That’s what Jesus’ disciples eventually went on to do with their lives, after He returned to sit at the right hand of God. But before they could go forth and

minister to all the world, they first needed to really understand the things of God and cultivate great reverence, honor and awe of Him in their own hearts. It was only after they were so deeply spiritually moved that their “flesh” became strong – strong enough to endure any type of persecution and hardship and gain the ability to deny themselves in order to serve the King of kings...willing to *“love not their own lives, even unto death.”*

Are we that devoted and committed to our Lord? I doubt many of us are. Not really. Our spirit may be willing, but we always have an excuse. Can we not devote one hour to our Creator and Savior each day? And if we, who know the truth, are unable to reverence and honor the Lord like this, how much more lost are those who have never heard the Word, because no one has ever told them?

Our world today is about as Godless as it's ever been. As I follow our local news, I grieve as I see the weekly “crime gallery.” This is a published listing of mug shots of people arrested for various crimes. The people range in age from 18 to 85. The crimes run the gamut from forgery to identity theft, to child abuse, drug use, drunk driving, and extreme violence against others; even murder. I look at the faces of those arrested and see broken people and lost souls. What's missing from their life is just one thing: God. If they knew God, revered Him, feared Him, honored Him...their lives would have been so different. Instead, most are now facing inevitable prison time and a life in ruins. Not to mention the many other lives they've destroyed with their crimes.

And for each face I see in the “crime gallery,” I know there are a great many more just like them who just haven't been caught yet. Yes, our world is filled with people who don't know the Lord or anything about Him and if they do, there's no respect, fear or worship of Him. You can rarely go anywhere in public without hearing foul language or seeing people – young and old – so confused, lost and deluded. I have empathy

for the criminals because I know that without God in my own life, this could very well be me. *"And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."* Should we not fall to our knees daily in thankfulness, praise and worship of the One Who saved us?

Can we not "watch one hour?" Have we become so cavalier, so comfortable and complacent that we've come to take God and our spiritual life for granted? Are you satisfied with your current spiritual state, or do you have a deep desire to grow more, to reverence God more, to honor Him more, to worship and serve Him more? Do you already have that intimate, personal relationship with your Creator and Savior you so long for? Or...is something missing, and you know it?

Now, I'm going to ask you to do more than just "watch one hour." I'm going to ask you to *invest one weekend* to vastly strengthen your spiritual commitment. On April 4th & 5th, *Wisconsin Christian News* is hosting a Ministry Conference with the theme, "Revival & Reverence, Returning to God." What could possibly be more important or urgent – for all of us – than a thorough deepening of our faith as we come together as the Body of Christ in reverence, repentance, worship and awe? This is not just "church as usual." This is a special time of learning, spiritual growth, renewal and worship.

Our speakers will include Art Pawlowski, the Canadian pastor who's been aggressively persecuted by the Canadian government for years now, simply for preaching God's Word. We'll have Dr. Ted Broer from Florida, offering deep insights on prayer and explaining what happens when we pray. We'll also have Pastor Matt Trehwella, Scott Schara and Dawn Wolf from Wisconsin, as well as Coach Dave Daubenmire and Dr. Mike Spaulding from Ohio; Pastor Butch Paugh from Call To Decision Ministries of West Virginia, and national recording artist and retired pastor Layton Howerton from Montana.

Our theme verse for the event is Psalm 51:10, *“Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.”* Yes, Lord. Oh, how we all need that. I’m also asking that you do your best to bring some guests with you. Do you know a young person who’s struggling with confusion, depression, lack of direction for their lives, and answers to questions that no one has been able to provide? Please, bring them.

Do you have friends who are “nominal Christians?” Do they have a form of Godliness but still deny the power thereof? Would you like to minister to them in ways they’ve never experienced before? Bring them with you. Is your own family fractured or broken? Are there relationships that you need to mend? Perhaps even your own marriage. Come. Come home to Jesus.

Don’t remain stuck in the never-ending news cycle of politics and cultural theater. There’s no political solution for our spiritual condition. Nothing else but returning to God will ever heal our land. It’s time we took 2nd Chronicles 7:14 seriously, instead of simply quoting it and then lamenting that nothing has changed. If things are to change – in your own life, in the lives of those you care about and love, in our overall culture and society – it’s really up to you. God doesn’t force anyone to come. Instead, He stands at the door and knocks.

Has Jesus been knocking on the door of your heart, yet you’ve managed to ignore Him? If He is knocking, He won’t stop. He’s not willing that any should perish. If people perish, it’s because that is what they chose. This is your Call to Decision.

I know there will be many reasons why you think you can’t come. There will be many excuses the enemy whispers in your ear to keep you away from this event. Instead of telling yourself why you can’t come, ask a better question. Ask, *“how can I make it possible to be there?”* Ask, *“how can I bring*

others with me?" Ask, "Is God Himself calling me to be there?" And ask, "Is this not exactly what I've needed in my life for so long?"

The Conference will be held at the Hilton Garden Inn in Wausau, Wisconsin. We begin Friday night at 5 pm and then resume on Saturday morning at 8 am. We'll finish Saturday by 6. Those who wish to be baptized will also have that opportunity at the end.

Pre-registration is required, and tickets are just \$69 per person – for a full weekend like you've never experienced before. Go to **WisconsinChristianNews.com** for the details or call me for more information at **(715) 486-8066**.

This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and that door of opportunity is open to you now...but now *you must decide* what you really want and need in your life. More of the same? Or something infinitely more deep and substantial? April 4 & 5 is coming up quickly. You owe it to yourself, your loved ones and God to commit to one weekend. Your spirit is willing. Don't let your weak flesh stop you.

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