

JN, Oct, 26, 80 P.M -  
(S) - (WVRS?)

## "CHOKED CHANNELS"

2 Thess. 3:1-2

Do you ever think to pray for missionaries? There is a moving plea from the first great missionary "Brethren, pray for us that the word of the Lord may spread rapidly and be glorified." 2 Thess. 3:1. He expected intercession to play a part in his service and he also, needed help opening some closed doors.

There must be praying in detail for those out on the field of missionary service. The veteran missionary gives an echo of what thousands of us should be doing.

The question might be asked: Why are missionaries dependent on the prayers of Christians, friends, and churches? There are several reasons for you to consider:

✓ First, God is pleased when we pray for the missionary enterprise. This is His method for worldwide outreach. Jesus taught his followers to "beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest." Matt. 9:38.

✓ Second, as members of the (body) of Christ, we are dependent on other members. God does not want us to carry on his work independently or in isolation. We are linked together as a chain.

✓ Third, the nature of missionary service makes prayer essential. Missionaries stand in the midst of cultured prejudices, superstitions, plus conflicts from the forces of evil. They face invisible foes. Therefore, prayer is the spiritual warfare.

✓ Fourth, the missionary is (human) and will be subject to testing. Prayer will sustain him. He is often lonely and unfamiliar with the language in his place of service. Separation from home and loved ones. The adjustment to climatic conditions.



His situation is never normal. Hence, the support of prayer can assist in these pressures.

✓ Fifth, prayer is needed because often the missionary is in a (minority) and the task he has assigned him is more than one person can accomplish. They need prayer re-inforcements from the homebase.

"Because you prayed -  
God touched our weary bodies with His power  
And gave us strength for many a trying hour  
In which we might have faltered, had not you,  
Our intercessors, faithful been and true."

--Charles B. Bowser

✓ Sixth, we should pray for our missionaries because (Satan) bitterly opposes Christ's ambassadors. Through the years missionaries have found physical hardships, dangers, disease, attacks from savage people, mental and emotional tensions.

✓ V. 2 - Paul says pray "that we may be delivered from perverse and evil men, for not all have faith."

Not all have faith -- what an inspired statement. The vast majority do not have faith -- at least true faith.

✓ Mr. Sarath, a Christian printer in Ceylon said, everytime I do work for missionaries "either a machine breaks down, one of my workmen gets sick, or something else goes wrong in the shop. I can fill other orders without difficulty, but every time I start to work on Christian tracks, things go wrong. Accidents, and breakdowns occurred with unexplainable frequency whenever there is work on



evangelistic literature.

V. 16  
Why do we find so many choked channels when it comes to praying for missionaries?

Dr. S. D. Gordon was making a brief tour of the colleges of Missouri. One morning walking over to the hotel to take breakfast with some of the boys, he asked very quietly of one, "Are you a Christian, sir?"

The young man turned very quickly and looked at him with surprise and said: "Well, I'm a member of the church, but -- I don't believe I'm very much of a Christian."

Not very much is like looking at a large field through a knot hole in a fence. You can see a little.

Large numbers of people are members of the church without real power in their lives. Often I meet officers of the church who are frank to say, I'm a church member, I hold such and such an office, but I am not much of a Christian.

This speaks of a hungry, unsatisfied heart.

20  
At a meeting the speaker asked one of the ministers present to look over the congregation and tell him what he knew about the assembly. His reply, "I think fully 2/3 of these men are members of the church, and half-laughing added -- "But you know sir, as well as I do, that not half of them are Christians worth counting."

Let me ask you, is this the conditions of affairs in this country?

Is there not a distinction between being members of a church on the one hand, and on the other, living lives that count for Jesus seven days a week!



Let me pose a question for you -- what kind of Christian are you? What kind are you, do you know, because it makes such a difference.

The master has a plan that the world should be won -- not by ministers -- though we must have men of God teaching, preaching -- but by everyone who knows the story of Jesus telling someone, and telling with lips earnestly, tactfully, and even more telling with his life. Men must live the story of his love and power among men.

Do you know what kind of Christian you are? There are at least three others that know.

First, Satan. He knows. While we gather statistics, Satan has exact information. He is the ablest, second to none, keeps careful records of every one of us. He knows when we interfere with his plans.

He knows that some good respectable people neither help God nor hinder Satan.

Does that sound rather hard?

But is it not true. He does not object to you being counted in as a Christian inside the church circle. He knows what kind of a Christian you are. Do you know?

Second, (non-Christian people) -- they know. Many of them are poorly informed regarding the Christian life, hungry for something they do not have, and have a vague idea of what the Christian life should be.

They look at us and hope to find what they thought we had and so often are dissatisfied that our ideals and our life, is so much like others who profess nothing.

They look for one who is controlled by peace and the Spirit that makes people



different. The world is tired, hungry, and critical of sham. The world knows what kind of Christians we are. Do you know?

✓ Third, the Lord Jesus. He is watching us today with intense interest.

Sitting up in Glory with the scar-marks of earth on his form looking down the crucified one - He knows.

✓ Use your imagination - He looks down and says there is one I died for, who bears my name. If I had control of that life what power I would gladly breathe in and out of it -- but he is so absorbed in other things.

The Master is thinking about you, studying your life, longing to carry out his plan if he could only get permission. He is sorely disappointed in many of us. He knows. Do you know?

ell - John's Gospel has some pictorial illustrations. He gives light upon those who have power and those who have not.

### I. JOHN 3

The man who came to Jesus by night. Nicodemus was deeply impressed by the Preacher of Galilee.

Wanted to find more out about him - not expose himself to criticism of influential friends.

On the streets at night -- does the preacher live here. Could I see him.  
Conversation.

Failed to understand all he said.



Must have loved Him -- after cruel crucifixion. He brings box of precious spices, hundred pounds. Worth large sum of money -- to embalm the dead body - must have loved him.

John 7 - Special session Jewish Senate in Jerusalem.

Purpose: Determine how to silence Jesus, to get rid of him.

Nichodemus is present - a member of that body. Listening while Jesus, his friend, is being discussed. By force plotted.

What would you expect a friend of Jesus to do under such circumstances? I wonder what for and I would have done?

Would he say -- I spent an evening with him, he is the promised Messiah, I have accepted him as such.

Did he say that? That would have been the simple truth.

But, such a remark would have brought a storm.

7:51 ✓ He puts it -- "Hmm - does our law judge a man without giving him a fair hearing?"

That sounds fair - and feeble.

A Pharisee might have said "Nicodemus, who are you? Do you come from Galilee. Look and see, no prophet comes out of Galilee.

Nicodemus shrinks back - He loved Jesus but he had no power for him. Cowardice?

He was so afraid of what they would think. Is that the sort of Christin you are?



He probably walked down the street and told another Pharisee, I spent an evening with him. He is the long looked for leader. I have decided to give him my personal allegiance. What a difference it might have made in his life.

Powerless because of timidity. Is that the kind you are?

Jesus suffered much from those timid, cowardly Disciples -

John 3:1, 7:50, 12:42, 9:22, 19:38-39.

## II. JOHN 11 - Picture powerless Christian.

Bethany - man laying dead in a cave.

Here stands Jesus -- Disciples, Martha, Mary, Villagers.

Voice -- "Lazarus come forth." Speaking to dead man.

11:43-44  
Dead came forth bound hand and foot with grave clothes. His face bound about with a napkin.

Look - He steps from the tomb. Abundant life. But bound hand, foot, and face!

He could neither walk, work, or speak!

Many Christians remind us of that scene -- they are Christians, but so tied up with the grave clothes of the old life that there can be no power of abundant life or service.

Are you like that? Is that the reason you have so little power with God and for God?

You may ask, what do you mean? First, some personal habit of yours. Second, some



society custom which you practice. Third, some business method you use. Fourth, some old friendship in the old life is hindering your Christian life. It may be some organization you belong too or something that goes into your mouth.

If there is lack of power for Christ -- you may be sure there is something. Dwarfing your usefulness. No more power than a dead man.

Compromise with something questionable or out rightly wrong!

I do not know, but you know, the critical world knows, subtle Satan knows, the Lord Jesus knows.

Do you know if that describes you? Are there choked channels in your life?

### III. JOHN 7 - Feast of Tabernacles.

What is Jesus' ideal of what a Christian should be? I wish that we could talk to him about what a Christian should be -- face to face. What he expects.

Feast of Tabernacle - multitudes - people lived seven days in leafy booths made of branches from trees.

Last day of feast, people, in one of Temple areas, Priest pouring water out of large jars, to symbolize the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the nation. Just then --

7:37-38  
Jesus speaks "If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink; he that believeth on me, as the Scripture saith, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."



That last word, full of meaning, Jesus ideal for every Christian.

Water -- essential of life.

Absence of water, suffering, sickness, death.

Plenty of water means life.

History -- people cluster about the water courses -- rivers, seashore, lakes.

Those people think of Jordan -- no valley exceeds it in beauty and fruitfulness, made by swift waters.

Jesus - quantity of water - rivers!

Not merely Jordan, Nile, Rhine, Mississippi, North West, and James.

"Rivers of living water" -- water of life as clear as crystal. Ezekiel's river constantly increased in depth and everywhere it went there was healing, beauty, food, continued harvest the year round.

Phrase -- "Out of" - not into.

Every stream that turns in, means a dead sea. Many a man's life is the coastline of a dead sea.

"Out of" is the master's thought. The stream must flow in, flow through and flow out.

Must be a clear channel.

Before it can flow out - it must fill up.

Out flow means overflow -- must be flooding inside. The overflow is from fulness within.



A Christian prayed, "O Lord we can't hold much, but we can overflow lots."  
That is thought of the master. Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

Joshua 3 - "For Jordan overfloweth all its banks all the time of Harvest."

When there was a flood in the river, there was a harvest in the land.

Has there been a harvest in your life?

Harvest of the fruit of the Spirit - love, joy, peace, long-suffering, harvest of souls?

No you say not much of a harvest, your heart may say none at all.

Is it hard to tell why? A flooding of the heart always brings a harvest.  
Rom. 5:5.

Everywhere the blood goes there is life.

Everywhere the waters go there is life.

Are you a channel?

I wish I could live such a life, but certainly it is not for me. You don't know me, temptations sweep me off my feet.

You are the one the master has in mind. What Jesus did for sinners in the Bible he can do for you. We are tied up tight, hands, feet, face, some sin, some compromise.



CLOGGED CHANNEL

Colorado -- little town. Ran a pipe from lake, clear sweet water - supply of water year around. One morning, housewives turned the water spigots but no water! Examined lake - full as ever. Pipe no break or leaks. No cause for stoppage. People moved.

Officials received letter -- "If you will pull the plug out of the pipe about eight inches from the top - you'll get all the water you want."

They found the plug placed there by a tramp.

Large reservoir can be held back by small plug. Out came the plug, down came the water.

Why is there such a lack of power in our lives?

Reservoir up yonder is full and overflowing with clean, sweet, life-giving water.

Around your life the earth is cracked open, dry, and thirsty.

Why then do not the refreshing waters come rushing down?

Answer is plain. There is a plug in the pipe. Something in us clogging up the channel.

Nothing can get through.

What can we do? It's harder than we want to do -- pull out the plug -- get the thing that you know is hindering.

*Prayer*  
"Lord Jesus, show me what there is in my life that is displeasing to Thee; what



there is Thou wouldst change."

Be sure he will show you He is faithful.

*Prayer* "By Thy grace helping me, I will put it out whatever it may cost, or wherever it may cut."

He can open our lives up to marvelous blessings undreamed of, prayer for missionaries will become a must.