

27th January 2021 – Dependence on God as the Path to True Freedom – Wednesday Prayer Meeting

I would just like to remind you, just in case you have not been following online, that this year the Lord has given us a direct, clear word, and the word is: Victory in Rest. That was the word the Lord gave us in 2021. In 2020 He gave us a word and the word He gave us in 2020 was, I will put you on the super highway. The problem was that by March, everyone of us was locked in. So someone asked me, "What about the word the Lord gave us, about putting us on the super highway? Now we are all stuck inside our homes." When I thought about it, I realised something. Indeed He has put us on the super highway. Why is that? We have been shifted to the super highway of the internet. We have been doing internet ministry for the last 14 years, from the time of 2007 and God has been good to us. But 2020 was special because it became international in the real sense. For example, the praise and worship was led by someone in Sydney or the team in Melbourne, the message was given from Sri Lanka and the worship was led from Toronto in Canada. You begin to see the same meeting is being conducted from three different parts of the world, and we began to realize that we truly have been placed on the super highway - the super highway of the internet God was using.

Then we were having all the major presenters of the world being made available. We have to specially thank the CRL in Australia for that because they have been contacting people who are giants in the spiritual field and bringing them for the whole world. The famous theologian Scott Hahn came and addressed the CRL worldwide. Scott Hahn has written so many books on the Catholic faith and he is world-famous because he began as a pastor and is now a committed catholic, and bringing out the theology of the faith. We had so many other people and even next month we are having Ralph Martin, a pioneer of the renewal. He was one of the original members whom the Lord used to bring the renewal into the Catholic Church. He went with Cardinal Suenes to Belgium and established the first catholic charismatic renewal office. Today he is a well known figure - prophetic almost - and much sought after. So you can join online. We have the information for you. This information super highway God used to bring the whole world together in 2020.

So something I have learnt is this. When God says something, He will get it done. But He will get it done His own way.

This year's word was I'll give you victory, but in rest, not in anxiety, not in anger, not in restlessness but in rest. We learnt and we are learning it still. How is that? The Lord gave us a word from Psalm 1, which said you have to be rooted and planted in God. If you try to pray when you are in crisis, your prayer might not be too effective. A lot of us pray only when the seat is on fire or when we are seated on the hot seat and things are getting really heated up. Most of the time those prayers are prayers of anxiety and it doesn't work much. Therefore the Lord was telling us, like the apple tree or the mango tree which rests in the soil and bears fruit, we were asked to learn how to rest. That's what we are learning in these days beautifully. How we are planted in the word of God, fertilised and made alive by the dewfall of the Holy Spirit. Then of course the dimension of heaven coming down to us through sacrifice, fasting and prayer. We open ourselves to the dimension of heaven. Heavenly realities coming down.

Last week, to walk in this way, we had a topic. The topic was: Do we need others to know God and to walk with God? If you look at other religions, most of them would say no because most religions are to do with you offering a sacrifice and getting God to give you what you want. So last week we reflected on this and I would like to go through that into the message of today.

Last week we saw the readings of the Sunday before. In the book of Samuel, Samuel was serving in the temple but did not know the voice of God, and that's a very sad thing. He was serving in the temple, he was sleeping where the ark of the covenant was. But when God spoke to him, he was not familiar with His voice. I think that can be the same with many of us. We can be going through all the religious practices, saying our prayers but not really hearing God's voice in our life. If that is so, we need someone to introduce God to us. For Samuel it was Eli the priest who taught him how to hear God and how to respond to God.

Then we realised this: We need others to know God. It's beautifully given in the New Testament when John the Baptist becomes Eli. John points to Jesus and tells two of his disciples, Andrew and another disciple, "Here is the Lamb of God." He introduces the Lamb of God, the Son of God to these two disciples. John immediately loses these two disciples. They leave John and follow Jesus.

That's our call. If people follow us they will be in trouble and we will be in trouble before long. Soon our true nature will be brought out. There is a saying: Nice from far and far from nice. When you get close, people are put off by that.

So Andrew, who was introduced by John the Baptist, he introduces Simon Peter to Jesus. Simon Peter himself is a third-party introduction. John the Baptist, Andrew, Simon Peter and Simon Peter is the Samuel of the New Testament. He builds the Church in a way that nobody else was able to do.

So we need others to know God, but we need to go beyond that. That's what we learnt last week. That means you can't depend on other people to hear God and walk with God to the end of your life. You must hear Him yourself, you must know Him yourself and you must learn to respond to Him. That's our call. If you don't grow there, we are stuck.

Tonight I'm going to go into a topic that is to do with becoming free of others, becoming independent. I hear God, I respond to God, I walk with God. Otherwise what will happen is, ultimately we think that it is religion, it is the church, it is the community and then we respond to the religion, to the church, to the community, and after some time, we think if we can hide it from the people it's alright. We are not hearing God, we are not responding to God, we are not responsible to God. It's all about hiding from the people, justifying ourselves among people and in the end, what frightens me as I pray about it is, we can lose our salvation. Why? Because we didn't see the eternal dimension of what we are doing. We only saw if we hide it from the others it's okay. That's why we need to know God, hear God and walk with God personally.

This morning I read a joke that is very relevant to what I'm saying. There was this doctor who came to the lunatic asylum and he was introduced by another doctor. This new doctor asked the old doctor, "How do you decide whether a person is sane or not?" He said, "We ask them a simple question and on that we decide." So one guy came and the doctor asked, "How much is 6 x 6?" This guy looked around and he was really confused and counted his fingers and said, "1000." The doctor said, "6 more months for you." Then the other guy came and the doctor asked the same question. "How much is 6 x 6?" He looked pretty upset and then he jumped up and said, "I got it! I got it! February!" The doctor said, "One year for you." Then the third guy came and the doctor asked, "How much is 6 x 6?" He thought and thought and said, "36." "Correct!" he said. Now everyone was happy and he was ready to go. "How did you calculate that?" they asked, just to find out. He said, "I divided 1000 by February."

So we can know all the right answers - spiritual truths, religious truths, because we have learnt from the Council of Trent, from after the protestant reformation, the church's teaching of the religion shifted

towards the byhearting of truths. So we have been taught the truths, but do we understand what we have learnt? How real is it? That's the question. That's where the real problem is. We know the answers, but is that answer an answer for me and an answer for you, in my addiction, in my brokenness, in my sinfulness, in the emptiness of my own life, has that answer become an answer?

For example, if you ask, what have you become after baptism? I think every Christian and every catholic would say we have become sons and daughters of God. It's 36. But when you ask what it means, it means little because we are caught up in our own identity in this world, caught up in the issues, caught up in the struggles of this life.

That's why today's topic is: Dependence on God as the Path to Freedom. Most people think freedom is independence, but tonight I want to show you a spiritual law. Dependence on God is the true path to freedom and rest. I'm going to build that argument right down. So we look at the person who can teach us this: Jesus. There are three dimensions of human maturity, talking from the psychological dimension. One is, we start as dependent. We depend on others. So I'm listening to my grandchildren and it's really interesting. For them, the absolute truth is whatever the mother says or the father says. They will tell me, "No no, that's not right. My mother said that this is the truth." That's what you mean by dependence. We are dependent on someone to tell us what is right, what is wrong.

Then we mature from that to independence. Independence is I have my own opinion. You call them troubled teenagers. They are struggling to become independent. Then of course, difficult adults, independent. But independence itself is not the ultimate purpose of life. It is interdependence, learning to work together for a higher purpose in life, working with others. Independent people working together for a higher purpose in life. In spirituality, this moves in an amazing way. Let me show you in the life of Jesus, dependence, independence and growth into other dimensions:

Luke 2:43-44

After the Feast was over, while his parents were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but they were unaware of it. Thinking he was in their company, they travelled on for a day. Then they began looking for him among their relatives and friends.

When children are secure they normally don't want to be with their parents. They want to play with their friends, they want to run around doing their own stuff. The parents assumed Jesus was with his friends.

Luke 2:45-49

When they did not find him, they went back to Jerusalem to look for him. After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him, they were astonished. His mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you." "Why were you searching for me?" he asked. "Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?"

He was dependent as a child but now he was independent internally. He was more than a child of Mary and Joseph. The realities of heaven had come into his life. He saw himself as God was revealing it. What's the age? 12.

Now the question we have to ask is, how do you see yourself? Do you see yourself as how God reveals it to you, or are you having the answer with no experience? You have come to 36 but you don't know how you have come there. From where do you come? We came from God. Where are you returning? We are returning to God. Who are you? We are children of God. What did Jesus do? He saved us. We know answers, but the question is, is it real, or are we caught up in the atmosphere and the environment of this world? We are prisoners. Jesus himself, at the age of 12, had broken out. He had become independent of others, but dependent on God.

So in the spiritual realm you can't be the lone ranger. You have to become independent of others but you have to also become dependent on God.

Luke 2:50

But they did not understand what he was saying to them.

They were dealing with another dimension, another reality. Jesus had come to this awareness at the age of 12. The sad thing is, there are people in this world who will never come to this breakthrough awareness even in their whole life. They will live and die, trapped in the atmosphere of this world, of the natural order and there is no more. That's why I'm thinking we have lost the supernatural dimension in our world. Why is that? Because we are trapped in the laws and the systems of this world and we are living in it, but we are practicing the religion, we know all the answers but we don't know how to experience the power.

Luke 2:51

Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart.

Here is the Blessed Mother. She can't understand what is happening to him but she has this connection with God. Knowledge is not the basic reality of heaven - it's experience. Experience will lead to knowledge but not necessarily knowledge to experience.

Luke 2:52

And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and men.

Our journey through life is growing. Growing from what? Growing from dependence on a human awareness and a human environment, growing into the divine awareness. I'm telling you, if you have all the right answers but you are not experiencing power, that's the sign that we need a breakthrough in our life. You can remember the 36 joke and you'll understand. You have the right answer but you don't know how you got there.

We see this beautifully shown in an interaction between Peter and Jesus. We have Jesus living in one dimension and Peter living in another one.

Matthew 14:23

After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone...

What happened before this is he fed the 5000. When he fed the 5000, he would have been looked at like God, like a king. Everyone would have wanted to touch him, everyone would have wanted to bow down

before him and most of the people would have wanted to follow him also. Why is that? Free food. These are basic things of life and your needs are met. In the gospel of John it is said that they ran after him to make him the king. Matthew doesn't say it but it was the same incident. What does he do? He goes to the mountain and he opens himself up to the reality of God.

Now this is the struggle of the spirit and human nature. Are we going to live in the environment of the world, in the natural system, in the natural laws, or are we living in the realities revealed by God? We have to make a choice. How do you change that? How do you shift that? That's what you mean by prayer. Prayer is not telling God all my problems and complaining and complaining and God says, "Can I tell you something?" and we say, "No I haven't yet finished explaining properly about all my ailments and my problems and my difficulties." No wonder nothing happens! God also must be falling asleep when we explain all this to Him.

Prayer is shifting from the fixed environment of the natural system into the truths of heaven. Whenever the environment was strong for Jesus, he went there and he changed it. Later in our prayer time I'm going to lead you there through the four steps. That's what we do. We shift from our natural understanding, from seeing ourselves at the natural level, we shift to the divine revelation of what God has said about us. If there is no such shift, we will always remain victims, captives of the natural laws of this world. No miracles, no breakthroughs, no dimension of heaven, no interventions of God. Good Christians, like good Buddhists, good Hindus, good Muslims following commands. We all have the answer - 36 - but that's not really an answer for us.

Jesus went to the mountain so that his perspective would be from God and not from the world. When you suffer you can pray because the more we suffer the more we pray. But the moment you get rich or get successful or things become pleasurable of course we tend to let it go. Jesus shifted into the environment of heaven.

Matthew 14:24

...but the boat was already a considerable distance from the land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it.

Who was in the boat? The apostles. The disciples were subject to natural law. Why? Because they lived in the realities of this world and they were fighting the storm, like we are. Covid storm, problem storm, business storm, you name it we have it. If our relationships are not too good and we are put together in the same environment and the doors are shut and we can't go out, there are internal storms also, and we have enough issues in life.

Matthew 14:25

During the fourth watch of that night Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake.

For Jesus, the storm has to bend to his will. It has to shift and bend to the supernatural laws of God. Remember, the disciples and Jesus are in the same storm. These guys are falling apart because for them the only reality is this world. Jesus is riding the storm. He is bending the laws of nature to his will. How do you like to live? Do you like to live a victim of natural law or do you like to transcend into the dimensions of heaven, and live here on earth with supernatural power? You can't find it by struggling. You find it by

rest. You find it by entering into the dimensions of God. That's what prayer is. That's where you find this place from God.

If you don't do it on a daily basis, you will never have it in the storm. That's what I have found in my own life. 2-3 days without proper prayer and it will burst out from somewhere, in a reaction, in an anger, and suddenly you don't even know your personality has changed. You have become a victim of this world. It's an amazing thing. When I look in the mirror even I don't like myself. Why? Because we have become caught up in the dimensions of this world. But if you go there, we ride the storm, we bend the laws and we flow through the natural system with supernatural power. I think that's what we are called to.

Matthew 14:26

When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear.

Because they were not in the realities of heaven, they drew from their past, they drew from their culture, they drew from the collective subconsciousness of their people and they said, this is surely a ghost. It happens to us. If you don't have heaven opened to you, you will always have a human, natural understanding of things. If you don't have one now you will draw from your past. That's why we are victims, prisoners of this world.

Matthew 14:27

But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid."

He introduced himself to them. Last week I told you how Hannah, the mother of Samuel, in her barrenness she thought it was a real curse, but she didn't know that God was working in her barrenness, preparing her to surrender this child to the will of God, to create the great Samuel who changed the history of Israel. So God maybe coming in your biggest problem, Jesus may be walking into your life into the biggest crisis you're having. The only thing is you think it's a ghost, you think it's somebody else, you think it's the devil, you think it's the greatest attack, but it may be the very fact that He is coming to us, preparing us. Poor Hannah had to go through agony. If God had given her 5 children and asked for the fifth one I'm sure she wouldn't have given, because there would have been one for the fields, one for the water, one to get married. She would have had jobs for all her children. But because she didn't have a child, her barrenness opened her to what God was doing.

So it can be that God is actually moving in your struggle. If you look at John the Baptist's father and mother it's the same thing. It's their barrenness that made them order John the Baptist to the work of God. It's your crisis that will prepare you to surrender you to the greater plan that God has - supernatural answers.

Matthew 14:28

"Lord, if it is you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water."

Here we meet Peter. He is hybrid. He is a prisoner of this world but he is also having faith in Jesus. Others are out. They are hugging the bottom of the boat. They escaped chastisement also because for them, this is the only reality - the reality of the storm. They thought they were going to drown and die. That's the only reality they had. Like for many of us, the only reality is the natural system that we are living in.

But for Peter, Peter rose above it. He said, "If it is you, tell me to come."

Matthew 14:29

"Come," he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus.

What was happening? Even Peter was bending the natural laws. He was transcending what was absolute to normal human beings -- you can't walk on water. But he was doing it. How? Because the spiritual realities opened for him through Jesus. So he was experiencing the answer. Jesus would have been telling them the answer but now he was actually experiencing it. But he's hybrid and not purebred.

Matthew 14:30

But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!"

He couldn't hold the focus. Why couldn't he hold the focus? Because he tried to enter the supernatural in an incident. He hadn't grown into it in a journey. Trying for a miracle without any foundation, you can get it if God wants to give it, but most often it won't last because we don't have a foundation. Jesus had a foundation. Why was he still walking on the water? Because he was in prayer before God. His reality was the kingdom of God. He knew he was the son of the Father, he knew that he had come with the mission of the Father, he lived in that reality and it didn't shift in the storm.

But Peter didn't know much about that. He knew Jesus and he jumped in but then he saw the storm. The same thing happens to us. We get pushed into this, we get caught up in the realities of this world and then it becomes absolute and it freezes over you. This problem can never be solved, this financial problem is too big, this sickness can never be healed, this problem is too complicated. We are stuck in the wind and circumstances.

Matthew 14:31

Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?"

If I was Peter I would have said, "What?! Didn't I walk on the water? What about the others?" Many of us are like Peter -- a little while in the realities of God and most of the time in the realities of this world. No wonder breakthroughs are few and far between. No wonder the laws of nature and the natural systems and what's happening around us seems so dominating and absolute for us. We are not entering into the realities of God.

Jesus had now come to a beautiful state. He could feed people, he could walk on water, he could heal the sick, he could raise the dead, he could have had a grand kingdom on this earth. Walk on water and go to Jerusalem, shake the sun and make the moon go around, send forth an earthquake and frighten the living daylights out of the people and become king, bring justice and rule the world. He could have easily done it. But you would see that God's plan for us is always bigger than ourselves. God is not there just to make me comfortable. His plan is bigger than ourselves. So when you become independent of others, dependent on God and you surrender and you can bend the natural law system by walking in the spirit, God calls us to a greater plan. We can see it in the life of Jesus himself.

We are looking at the high priestly prayer of Jesus. John 14, 15 and 16 is his sermon before he leaves. He explains the Holy Spirit, he explains the vine and the branches, he beautifully gives it in 14, 15 and 16. Now in 17, Jesus prays. I'm picking up a part of his prayer here:

John 17:19

For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.

This is like 36. We can understand the words but we don't know what it means. Jesus lived by now in the reality of heaven. He knew where he came from. John 13 says that. He knew he had come from the Father, he knew he was returning to the Father, he knew that he was the Son of God, he knew that he was a member of the Holy Trinity, he knew about life that is eternal. He had so many realities that had now been revealed fully to him, and he says, "I am making a commitment of myself to you, Father, that all these things that you have revealed to me will become real for those who are given to me, that they too may come to the realization that they come from you and are returning to you, that they are more than Sinhalese, they are more than Tamil, they are more than English, they are more than American. They are sons and daughters of the kingdom, that their destiny is eternity and not just a little victory here on earth to be left with your death, that the power that they possess is to bend the very laws of nature. This great anointing, this goodness, this power that you have given me. Father, I commit myself to you that they too may enter this reality."

As I pray about it I realise it takes a lifetime to work this out. Otherwise we are having all the right answers but we are stuck in the boat. Natural law and the systems of this world have become absolutely real for us. "I commit myself, I give myself up that this reality will enter into their life."

John 17:20

"My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message..."

What is the message of the gospel? Break into the reality of heaven through the message of the gospel, not just learn catechism, not just learn the Christian truths. That's the beginning, that's how you start it. But you break in to this dimension. I have come from God and I'm returning to God. I'm a beloved son of the Father. I'm precious, I have been designed to live forever and my destiny is bigger than the life here on earth. My life is connected to His great purpose. We need to pray that God will give us this breakthrough. Prayer must lead us into this place.

John 17:21

...that all of them may be one...

How can all be one? Only now I realised I've been preaching this without fully understanding it. All of us have been opened to this revelation. All of us have become one because we all have come to experience that we are sons and daughters of God. All of us have become one because we have come to experience that we are a part of God's Holy Trinity, that our destiny and our life is a spiritual reality that will live forever. This truth breaks into the lives of people.

John 17:21 continued

...Father, just as you are in me and I am in you...

This revelation Jesus was having from the age of 12, "Let it break into those who are mine. Let them find this truth in their life." Today the sad thing is Christians live and die without entering the truth. We are baptised, we are catechised, we practice but never break into this truth. That's what we need to pray for.

We need to pray that we have a breakthrough into this. He is giving us the dimensions and he says, "Father, just as you are in me and I am in you." Then he explains it:

John 17:21 continued

...May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

How is that? Because these people are living in another dimension. What is the other dimension? The dimension of heaven -- living as sons and daughters of God, experiencing that love, becoming aware that their spirit lives forever therefore the spirit is first, and because of that, living above and beyond the natural systems. Miracles happening, breakthroughs taking place, the lives of people transformed.

Last week I was reading a testimony, in Latin America a mother testifies that she was listening to the TV. Her daughter had a cleft palate and the doctors had said she needed at least 5 operations if they were lucky, if not 9 to fix that. She was praying before the TV. She didn't know who it was that was conducting the service but a word of knowledge comes through for a mother who is praying for a child with a cleft palate and God is healing. This mother was given the grace to believe and she lays hands and prays for the child. The next day they go to the doctor to start the procedures and the doctor says, "All what was missing in the cleft palate that had not grown from birth has now grown and is completely healed."

How did that happen through a television? Because the supernatural dimension was real to one person, it is flowing through the airwaves, through the internet, through the television into the life of somebody else. All the truths that we have learnt in our religion brought alive by the Holy Spirit.

Jesus says, "Father, just as you are in me and I am in you," what he was experiencing at the age of 12, what he was experiencing when he sat by himself on that mountain after feeding the 5000 and communing with the Father. He says, "Father, I pray that that world that I am living in will become real for these people, and then the world will know that you have sent me." I am praying, "Lord, let the supernatural manifestation happen." We have also conformed to the respectable forms of Christianity. "Oh, they are really good now, they don't do crazy things." So we have become respectable. We are talking nice things, acceptable and respectable, we are not doing crazy things, but in the end there is no breakthrough if the Lord does not move.

Dependence on God, entering the dimension of heaven, opens us to the supernatural realm. For me, I'm thinking I want to live in that the few years I have left. I don't want to be respectable. Respected by whom? By human beings who die themselves? Acknowledged and recognised by whom? By people who themselves are struggling with the meaning of their own life? We have a breakthrough. "Father," he says, "just as I am in you and you are in me, let that revelation happen in their hearts." Then you become independent of others but completely dependent on God. Then the supernatural breaks into the natural.

I want to show how the world is being made one by God with this beautiful experience I read that I thought will be useful before we come to prayer. This testimony is from 1768, 300 years ago. It's concerning a pastor named Peter Miller. Peter Miller was in Pennsylvania in America and everyone loved him, respected him because he had the church in the village. But of course there was one man who was really against him - abused him, fought him, reacted to him and did a lot of damage and harm. In the civil war between the British and the Americans, when the British lost the war, this man who was his enemy was identified as a British spy, and he was branded a traitor and now the death sentence was given to him.

When Peter Miller heard that this man who was his enemy and who had attacked him his whole life had been given the death sentence, it is said he walked 68 miles to Washington to meet George Washington and said, "I have come to plead for the life of this man." George Washington said, "I admire your commitment to your friend. You have walked 68 miles but he is a traitor and he has to die." Then Pastor Miller had said, "A friend? He is my worst enemy. He has done the worst for me, but yet I come in the name of Christ." That struck George Washington. George Washington was so challenged he said, "That has to be responded to." He gave him a letter and the letter said, "Release this man," but this man was being shot that afternoon, 16 miles away.

So what did Miller do? He walked the 16 miles also and when he came to the place where he was to be executed, they had just led him to the place to be shot. He saw Miller coming, and that man shouted, "Miller, so you have come to gloat over me. You have walked all this way to just see me die," he cried. Then Miller handed over the letter and it broke the heart of this man. He was saved. "Father, make us one just as you and I are one." If he didn't have a revelation from heaven he would never do that. "Thank you Jesus, you showed my enemy what it is to be opposed to me. Praise the Lord that he is going to die. That is what happens to the enemies of God!" From where are we? We are at the natural level. But look at this: "Father, make them one just as you and I are one." What did Jesus say from the cross? "Father forgive them for they know not what they do." Unity through self sacrifice, through inner responses, through laying down your life. Father make us one.

Let's not be satisfied by being stuck in this dimension. Let's not be satisfied by merely knowing the right answers. Let's strive forward tonight, begin our spiritual prayer life in the next week. O God, I want the reality of heaven to invade my heart.