

# Why Pray?

(TRANSCRIPT)

With Craig Hill

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**Moderator:** This teaching tape is a product of Family Foundations International. Craig Hill is founder of Family Foundations, a Christian ministry dedicated to restoring God's timeless family values to this generation. Now let's join seminar speaker and Bible teacher Craig Hill as he brings you practical Biblical principles that can be applied in everyday life.

**Craig Hill:** 1 Thessalonians 5:16, some simple things, "*Rejoice always, pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus.*" If you're wondering what was the will of God, now you know. It says we're supposed to give thanks in everything. "*Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophetic utterances. Examine everything carefully; hold fast to what is good. Abstain from every form of evil. Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely, and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass. Brethren, pray for us.*" Amen.

I just want to come back to this place in verse 17, "*pray without ceasing.*" God is speaking to us about prayer. We're meant to pray without ceasing. And I just want to bring forth some simple things this morning in talking about where the battle is. We heard Friday night that the battle was finished—or was it Thursday night?—that the battle is finished. It would seem to some that there would be conflict in some of what was being said, but we need to understand what the battle is. I want to share with you some of how I see, theologically, what is taking place, what is happening. And we just need to understand that different people come from different theological bases. Does everybody understand that? Does everybody know that?

The thing that we need to know, we don't need to agree with everybody, and everybody doesn't need to agree with everybody else. We're all going to have different points of view and different ways that we see things. How many know that when we come to the Word of God, we will tend to place our theological grid over the Word, okay? We're going to see it from certain ways that we already understand things.

I found just a simple thing just in talking about covenant or contract. If you believe marriage is a contract, do you know that you're going to come to completely different conclusions about specific scriptures in the Word of God than you will if you believe marriage is a covenant? And there's no point in arguing about those scriptures, because if you come to it seeing it as a covenant, you're going to place that grid over the scriptures. If you come to it seeing it as a contract, you're going to place that grid over the scriptures—and there's no point in arguing about it with various people who see it a different way, because unless that theological presupposition changes, they're not going to see it any differently. Does that make any sense?

I mean, if you see marriage as a contract, then you're going to just come to completely different conclusions from the Word of God than if you see marriage as a covenant. It's just a whole different thing, and there's no point in arguing.

Now, prayer—I want to talk about this morning about, we're supposed to pray without ceasing according to the Word of God. And I just want to look at something regarding prayer.

I remember back years ago in YWAM in 1975, we first began to hear Joy Dawson's teaching on prayer. Her teaching on prayer was basically this, that instead of praying your shopping list, which most of us know to do, "Oh, God, bless the missionaries, bless the missionaries I know, get Uncle Sam saved, Aunt Suzie saved, and help us with our finances, and change this and do that," and we pray our shopping list, well, the thing we begin to learn was that instead of doing that, how about if we wait on God and find out what's on His heart? Find out what God wants to do on the earth, and then—we're meant to listen to God—find out what is on *His* heart, and then we're going to pray those things. Anybody ever heard that teaching? Okay, a lot of people heard that teaching.

Well, if you begin thinking logically, there's a certain aspect to this that doesn't make any sense to me. Doesn't it seem circular? I mean, who's going to accomplish the work on Planet Earth? Me? The Spirit of God is really going to, all the good stuff that's really done is really done by the Spirit of God. Isn't that true?

I mean, you look at, again, we were talking about Goliath. How'd the guy get killed? Because David was such a good marksman? No, he got killed by the Word that God had spoken in Deuteronomy 9, "*When you come into the land, there are going to be giants. But don't worry about them. I'll go before you. I'm going to be a consuming fire,*" and all David was required to do, in essence, was show up—just show up. And like I said, he could've spit on the giant and it would've killed him, it wouldn't have mattered—thrown a stick at him, thrown a stone at him, spit on him, whatever. I don't think it really mattered, because what killed the giant was the Word that God put forth. And all David

did was show up and enforce the Word. He just showed up and enforced the Word, that's all he did. But he recognized his ambassadorship. He showed up.

I forgot the whole point I was making. I wish it'd come back to me.

*Prayer. Prayer. Waiting on God!*

Waiting—oh, yeah, this was it. God sends His Word out, oh, yeah, and it's the Holy Ghost—I was talking about circular prayer, that's it. The Holy Ghost is the one who really accomplishes that. It's God who won the battle with the giant, not David. All David did was show up.

So here was that teaching: We're going to wait on God, find out what it is that God says to us, what it is that God wants to accomplish. But in the end, it's the Holy Spirit who's going to accomplish it. Isn't that right? God knows what needs to happen, and He's the God that's going to accomplish what needs to happen.

Has anybody ever had this thought? If God has the knowledge, we don't know. Isn't that right? We don't know. If we're going to pray for Afghanistan, how are we going to pray? Turn on CNN so we can get some information to know how to pray? Well, yeah, there's some actual stuff we can gain from that, but really to know how to pray, what do we have to do? “God, what do You want to do in Afghanistan? God, what are You doing there? We need to find out what You're doing, and then we're going to pray in accordance with that? Is that right?”

Now, that's how we're going to do that, but here's the problem. God knows what needs to happen in Afghanistan. Now, are most of us going to go to Afghanistan? No. Not likely. So who's going to go to Afghanistan? The Holy Ghost is going to go to Afghanistan. He's going to accomplish all this awesome stuff that we're going to pray, right? Does that make sense?

Okay, but it really doesn't make sense because God knows what needs to happen in Afghanistan and the Holy Spirit's the one that's going to do the stuff in Afghanistan? So why didn't He just cut out the middleman? Has anybody else ever had that thought? Why do we need to be involved in this deal? I mean, God knows what He needs to do way better than we know what He needs to do, and He's the guy that's going to go do it. So what on earth does He have to come over here to Winter Park, Colorado, to tell somebody over here about what He wants to do in Afghanistan when *He's* going to go do it? Why doesn't He just go and do it?

Now the reason I'm saying this is—and we'll come back to that thought in a minute—I believe people confuse the concept of sovereignty with the concept of control. I'm here

to tell you God is not in control. Okay, we hear that all the time, "God's in control." Hogwash, baloney, stupid theology. Sorry to put it that way, but I really feel that way. Dung! No, God is not in control. Why? Because control implies an absolute dominion: Manipulative, controlling power over something, all right? And God does not do that. The *devil* is a controller. The devil reigns on Planet Earth through control. God reigns through the exercise of authority, and there's a huge difference between the exercise of authority and control. You control your car, I hope.

What does control mean? Absolute dominion through manipulative power, okay? Exercise of authority acknowledges an involvement of choice, an involvement of choice. Does God acknowledge an involvement of choice on Planet Earth?

I mean, here's a very simple thing. If God were in control, just think this through. If God were in control, would it not be the case that God's will would 100% of the time be done? It would never *not* be done.

Now, let's talk about every person on Planet Earth. What is God's will regarding every person on Planet Earth? Well, it's very clearly stated. It's His will that none should perish. Is that true? Anybody read that? It's God's will that none should perish. Have we observed that any perish? **Yes.**

We observe that some perish, yet it's not His will that any should perish. So is it evident, apparently His will is not being fulfilled? Now if God were in control, I'm here to tell you, none would perish. Why? God would just control that. Could God control that? Is it possible for God to control that? Absolutely. Is it possible for God to control human behavior? Absolutely. Why? Because God is sovereign.

Our God is in the heavens, He could do whatever He pleases. He is sovereign. But there's a missing link to this thing that I think confuses people, a missing piece to it. There is something that God lacks on Planet Earth. There's something that God lacks on Planet Earth.

Now to accomplish something, you have to have knowledge, and you have to have power. Does that make sense? To accomplish something, you've got to know what needs to be accomplished and you've got to have the power to do it.

Here's the reason I say that. When I look around at Planet Earth, if I think God is in control, then I've got to think one of a couple things: That God wants Planet Earth to be the way it is today. Does God want Planet Earth to be the way it is today? Does God look around and go, "I like everything that's going on. I think rapists are good. I think murderers are good. I think drug dealers are good. I like divorce. I like destruction of

families. I like one generation to be more devastated than the last emotionally and in bondage. I like that. I think that's good"?

Now, that's what we observe is happening. These things are happening. Is that right? We have rape. We have murders. We have drug addictions. We have divorce. We have generational cursing, where each generation has a worse situation than the last. That's what we observe going on with Planet Earth. Now is that God's idea of what ought to happen on Planet Earth? No. I'd hope that'd be self-evident.

Now, there are people that don't think that, and I'll bring that up in just a minute. Okay, so one conclusion is God just wants Planet Earth to be the way it is. I don't think that's the case.

Here's another conclusion, God doesn't want Planet Earth to be the way it is, but He's impotent: He can't change it, He can't do anything about it. Okay? That'd be another conclusion.

If you were answering the question, "why is the earth the way it is? Why is there all this bad stuff going on? Why is it that there are people who rape other people? Why is it there are people who put people through satanic ritual abuse and devastate them from the time in the womb? Why is that? Where does that come from?"

Is that God's idea? No. Does God want it that way? No. Is God impotent to change it? No. *No*, okay? So God doesn't want earth the way it is.

But here's another one in looking at "why is it the way that it is?" God has knowledge, God has power. But what do we need to be involved in this prayer thing for? God knows what He needs to do. He's the guy that's going to do it. Why doesn't He just go and do what He knows to do? What do we need to be involved in this thing for?

Here's what I begin to see: One thing God lacks on Planet Earth is *authority*. And some may find it strange for me to say that. God lacks authority on Planet Earth.

You say, "Well, why do you say that?" Well, turn with me to Genesis 1:26 and let's find out why God lacks authority on Planet Earth. And I want to give you a different picture, a different model of why there is a war on Planet Earth.

Now see, the thing that's strange is two things are true at the same time. Jesus has already won the battle, and what Ed said the other night, that is absolutely true. I really do believe is that He has stripped the demonic realm and the kingdom of darkness of all power. They have no power, they have no authority, but do you know what they do? They go ahead and exercise whatever authority they can that is allowed—by the Body of Christ, anyway. The same way as a thief, the picture we're given in the New Testament

in John 10:10 is that there is a thief and he does have a purpose to steal, to kill and to destroy. Now does he have authority to do that? No.

Think of a physical thief, a thief that comes in your house and he wants to rape your wife and he wants to steal your television set. Does he have authority to do that?

**Audience:** No.

**Craig Hill:** Does he have any authority to do that?

**Audience:** No.

**Craig Hill:** Does he have authority from the government?

**Audience:** No.

**Craig Hill:** Does he have authority from the society?

**Audience:** No.

**Craig Hill:** Does he have authority from God?

**Audience:** No.

**Craig Hill:** Does that stop him from breaking into your house and attempting to do those things anyway?

**Audience:** No.

**Craig Hill:** *No, got it? All right, so what has to stop the thief that comes in your house? Authority. The authority you have.*

Who has authority in your house? You do. So when the thief comes in, what has to happen? You'd better take the baseball bat. Why? Because if you don't, that thief will do whatever you allow him to do.

I said God lacks *authority* on earth. Now see, what people confuse is some people think what I'm saying is God is not **sovereign**. I am not saying that. I'm not saying God is not sovereign, I'm saying God lacks authority on Planet Earth to accomplish the things He wants to accomplish.

Genesis 1:26, "*Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and then let them rule over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the sky, over the cattle*

*and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."* Praise God, you got authority over creeps.

*"And God created man in His own image, and in the image of God He created him. Male and female He created them. And God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply.'"*

We're supposed to do those two things in every regard, in every realm of life, "be fruitful and multiply." Please do it in FFI, okay? Please don't *not* be fruitful. Please be fruitful, but please don't *only* be fruitful. Please *multiply*. Please, next year bring to the conference five people that you've trained to do what you're doing, whatever you're doing, on whatever level you're doing it: Please multiply. Please train some others to do whatever it is that you're doing. *"Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth, subdue it; rule over it, rule over the fish and the sea, and over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."* And God charged who to do that? *Us*. He charged man to do that. That's the Great Commission.

The Great Commission is not in Matthew 28; the Great Commission is in Genesis 1. *"I made you my ambassador. I charge you with authority and dominion over this earth. Rule over it."* What was man given by God?

**Audience:** Authority.

**Craig Hill:** Authority, authority. Whose authority? *God's* authority, okay?

**Audience:** *God*.

**Craig Hill:** God created the earth. Whose earth is it?

**Audience:** God's.

**Craig Hill:** *God's* earth, okay? Psalm 24:3, I think it is, *"The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof."* So the earth belongs to whom? God.

*God*—it's *God's* earth. Is He sovereign over it? Absolutely. Yes, He is sovereign over it, He created it. He had all knowledge of it. He has all power regarding it. He had all authority over it, but He took what? His authority, and He did what? He *delegated*. He delegated it. And he gave it to whom?

**Audience:** *Man*.

**Craig Hill:** Man. So now, whose earth is it?

**Audience:** Man's.

**Craig Hill:** No. Whose earth is it?

**Audience:** God's.

**Craig Hill:** God's earth. Who has authority over it?

**Audience:** Man.

**Craig Hill:** Who's sovereign over it?

**Audience:** God.

**Craig Hill:** But who has authority over it?

**Audience:** Man.

**Craig Hill:** Got it? Man has authority over it. Now, what did man do with the authority?

**Audience:** [Inaudible 00:17:23].

**Craig Hill:** He gave it to Satan through trickery, okay? He was tricked. He was tricked.

You'll never fulfill your destiny under the authority of God. God is very threatened by you. God knows that if you actually knew what He knew, you'd become like Him and that is very threatening to Him. He does not want that to happen, and that is why He said "don't eat of that tree," because then you'd know everything God knows, and the man and the woman bought it. They said, "Yeah, I bet that's right. We'll never really be fulfilled. We'll never fulfill our destiny under the authority of God, so we're going to eat of the tree and find out," and they did. They ate the tree, and they found out. But what they didn't know is, in eating that tree, what did they relinquish?

**Audience:** Authority.

**Craig Hill:** Their authority. They gave it to whom?

**Audience:** Satan.

**Craig Hill:** Satan. Now who had authority on Planet Earth?

**Audience:** Satan.

**Craig Hill:** And he released two forces on Planet Earth. He released the force called sin and he released the force called death. Those two things—sin, death—began to ravage the earth. Did God want sin to ravage the earth?



**Audience:** No.

**Craig Hill:** No. Did God want death to ravage the earth?

**Audience:** No.

**Craig Hill:** No.

Let me give you two concepts that you need to understand that help what we're wrestling with and ultimately, what we're wrestling with here this morning is "why is evil on the earth," okay? Why is evil on the earth? And the reason I'm doing this is I don't buy the theology that was presented the other night, okay? It's a good presentation. I'm going to show you why that theology was the way it was, but I'm going to show you why I don't believe it, why I think there's a missing piece to that. Okay?

There was a whole bunch of it that's true, and a part that really is true that we need to understand is we need to understand that we do have authority on Planet Earth, and that the enemy does have no authority. And when we really do understand that with the revelation and praise God, Ed has a revelation of this thing that, when he speaks to the demons, they say "yes, sir," because he understands "you have no authority." And man, you need to pick up that piece.

If you've got nothing else, you better get that piece. Dealing with demons is just like dealing with a horse or a dog or some kind of an animal. The reason I say that is, do you know that animals you deal with can pick up in the spirit instantaneously whether you know your authority with them or not?

Anybody that's ever ridden a horse that's got a pretty strong or wild spirit, that horse will test you in the first 10 seconds, okay? That horse is going to want to find out just real quickly, do you know what you're doing?

Now, how many know it doesn't matter what tone of voice you use? "I told you whoa." It doesn't matter how loud you shout, how authoritatively you say, "In the name of Jesus, in the name of Jesus, in the name of Jesus." It really doesn't matter how you say it. That horse knows immediately whether you have authority or whether you don't. And if you do, you will direct that horse. If you don't, that horse will take you for a ride.

Same thing, you go out jogging and here comes a dog. It snarls at you and growls. And what's that dog testing? Whether you have authority and know who you are, because if that dog detects you don't know who you are and there's fear in you, that thing will chase you up a tree.

On the other hand, if you look back at that dog and snarl back—come on, come on—if you’ve got in you what David had regarding the bear and regarding Goliath. I mean, after David killed that lion, you know he was standing, going, "Any other lions who want to take me on? Come on." Why? "I got it."

Does David have to yell loud at lions? Hey, come on, come on. You look at that dog, "Come on, I'm gonna kill you," you know that dog will turn and run. Why? That thing knows you know.

Well, what I'm telling you, it's the same with demons. It's not a matter of yelling loud. It's not a matter of having to be real authoritative with them. It's a matter of if "you know you know," and they know that. They also know if you *don't* know, and you'll end up like one of the seven sons of Sceva, because that's just how it works. The authority works that way.

We need to understand that. We need to grab hold of that. "Yes, I do have authority." That needs to become a revelation to us. I'm mixing a bunch of concepts and I'll tie them in the end, I hope.

You need to understand the will of God. I just want to talk about the concept of the will of God for a moment that comes into this. Is it God's will that a rapist breaks into somebody's house and rapes that person, you see? Well, if you believe sovereignty means control, then you’ve got to say, "God let that happen. God allowed that." See, this word "allowed" comes into that, and if God let that happen and God allowed that, then we've got to say that was God's will. Is that right?

**Audience:** No.

**Craig Hill:** Yeah? If that's what we believe, then we’ve got to say that, okay? We’ve got to say then that was God's will.

Now, how many know that creates a real heart problem for the person that had that happen to them, a real heart problem? How are you going to convince that person that God loves them? How are you going to convince that person God loves them, you see? It's hard to convince that person.

Now two Greek words for "will" that we need to understand. One is the word *boulima*—not bulimia; *boulima*, okay? *Boulima* is one Greek word, translated in English as, "the will of God," and here's what it means: The ultimate intention, the ultimate purpose, the ultimate immutable, unthwartable purpose of God that no one will change, okay?

And here's some *boulima* stuff: Jesus Christ will return to earth. See, nobody's going to change that. The devil's not going to change that. You're not going to change that.

Nobody's going to change that. God Himself will not change that. He said it, so that's going to happen. Okay?

There will be an anti-Christ raised up on Planet Earth. *Boulima*. You're not going to change that by praying against it. Man, you can war against that 'til you're blue in the face, and you're not going to stop the anti-Christ from coming to Planet Earth. The witches can pray and fast all they want to stop Jesus Christ from returning to earth. How many know they're not going to get that stopped? *Not going to happen*. That's *boulima* stuff, okay?

The land of Israel is going to be restored to the Jews. You're not going to stop that stuff. It's *boulima*. It's written in scripture. Palestinians can do and say what they want. They're not going to stop that. *Boulima*, written in scripture. God's ultimate purpose. Does that make sense?

Another word, *thelema*. *Thelema* means the character, the nature, the desire of God; the character, nature, desire of God. When we only have the one word "will," it's confusing in English. Because let me ask you this question, "was it God's will for Judas to betray Jesus?" You see how confusing that is? Was it God's will for Judas to betray Jesus?

Well, if you answer yes, suppose Judas came into your church for counseling that day that he's going to do that and he told you, "Now, Pastor, here's what I'm planning to do. I'm going to go tonight and I'm going to find Jesus and I'm going to kiss him and I'm going to lead these religious guys to him, and they're going to pay me for doing it. And I want you to tell me, should I do it or not?"

Now how are you going to counsel him? Because if you tell him, "don't do it," what'd you just do? Aren't you standing against the will of God that Jesus needs to be betrayed? And if you counsel him "yes, do it," you're going to counsel Judas to betray Jesus? Now is it God's will, or isn't it God's will? Do you see you can't answer that with a one-word "will" in English? It doesn't make any sense.

But see, here's the answer to that. Was it God's will for Judas to betray Jesus? *Boulima*, yes. *Thelema*, no. How do you counsel? Always counsel *thelema*. You always counsel *thelema*.

I mean, think of this one. If God is in control so He knows who's going to be saved and who's not going to be saved, then what if somebody is predestined by God *not* to be saved? "Don't waste your breath on that one? Don't pray for them?" You see what I'm saying?

But *it's His will that all should be saved*. What kind of will? His intention, His desire, His character, His nature, His purpose. So, how are we going to pray? We're going to pray *thelema*, okay? We're going to pray for God's nature, God's intention. You don't need to worry about *boulima*. You don't need to worry about whether Jesus is going to come to earth. He's going to come to earth, okay? He's going to come to earth. Does that make any sense? Okay, we need to understand that.

Now let me give you a picture of authority. What does God not have on Planet Earth?

**Audience:** Authority.

**Craig Hill:** Authority. He has knowledge. He has power. What He lacks is authority. Why? Because he delegated it to man. Man gave it to Satan. Now, what happened at the cross?

**Audience:** He got it back.

**Craig Hill:** Jesus tricked the devil and got it back.

Paul said in 1 Corinthians, "*Had the principalities and rulers of this present age known what was going to happen, they never would've crucified the Lord of glory.*" Okay, they made a big booboo, all right, and they gave their authority back. And Jesus said in Matthew 28 as a result of that after the resurrection, "*All authority.*" How much?

**Audience:** All.

**Craig Hill:** "*All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me.*" Now, what did He do with it? This is incredible. He gave it to believers. He gave it back to the people that gave it away in the first place. He gave it back to the believers, okay?

Now who has authority on Planet Earth? Unbelievers don't have authority. Angels do not have authority. Demons do not have authority. The devil does not have authority. And the unbelieving world does not have authority. Who has authority on Planet Earth?

**Audience:** Believers.

**Craig Hill:** Believers have authority on Planet Earth.

Now this is an incredible, awesome thing when we get hold of this. Believers have authority on Planet Earth. Let me give you a picture of this. Suppose I own an apartment building. Whose apartment is it?

**Audience:** Yours.

**Craig Hill:** It's my apartment. Am I sovereign over it? Yes, it's my apartment. But suppose I make a choice: I decide to rent an apartment to Forrest and Cheryl for one year. We sign a lease. I lease this apartment to them. By leasing the apartment for one year, what did I just give up?

**Audience:** [Crosstalk 00:28:26].

**Craig Hill:** I did not give up ownership, I did not give up sovereignty. What did I give up?  
*Authority.*

Now, who has authority over the apartment? Forrest and Cheryl. Can I just march into that apartment anytime I please because I'm the owner and adjust stuff? No. Why? Because I don't have ...?

**Audience:** Authority.

**Craig Hill:** Authority, okay.

Now, suppose I come to the knowledge that there's a gas leak in the oven of Forrest and Cheryl's apartment in my building that threatens to blow up and destroy the entire building. Can I just go in there and fix it? I have knowledge and I also have a repairman standing by to go in there and fix the gas leak. But what do I lack?

**Audience:** Authority.

**Craig Hill:** Authority. So what do I have to do? I've got to call up Forrest and go, "Forrest, it's come to my attention your oven is leaking gas. I've got a repairman standing by ready to go in and take care of it. I wonder if you'd let him in at 3:00, or grant me permission that any time during the day today, any way I could send my repairman into your apartment and fix the gas leak? Can I do that?" And what does he have to give me?

**Audience:** Authority.

**Craig Hill:** Authority. He grants me authority, and now what happens? Now I can go in and fix the gas leak, okay? Now I can go in and fix the gas leak. I have knowledge, I have power, I'm sovereign over the apartment building, but why can't I just go into the apartment? Because I have voluntarily limited myself, according to a lease. Does that make sense?

Now, I reckon God has leased the earth. The lease statement is Genesis 1:26. God leased the earth to man for approximately 6,000 years. The term of the lease is almost up. We read in Revelation what happens when the lease is up: It all changes.

Turn with me to Luke 20. Let me show you Jesus' picture of this thing, okay? Jesus is giving us a Kingdom parable. He's trying to help us understand what's going on, on Planet Earth.

Luke 20:9, "*He began to tell the people this parable. A man planted a vineyard, and he rented it out to vine-growers.*" Whose vineyard? The man's—the owner's. But who's got authority? The vine-growers.

*"And he went on a journey for a long time. At the harvest time he sent a slave to the vine-growers in order that they might give him some of the produce of the vineyard. But the vine-growers beat him and sent him away empty-handed. He proceeded to send another slave. They beat him also, treated him shamefully, and sent him away empty-handed. He proceeded to send a third, and this one they also wounded and cast out. And the owner of the vineyard said, 'What am I to do? I'll send my beloved son. Perhaps they will respect him.' But when the vine-growers saw him, they reasoned with one another, saying, 'This is the heir. Let's kill him and then the inheritance will be ours.' They threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. What, therefore, will the owner of the vineyard do?"*

Here's the issue. These guys did not want to be tenants with the authority of the owner on the land. What did they want to be?

**Audience:** Owners.

**Craig Hill:** Owners. What did Satan want to be?

**Audience:** Owner.

**Craig Hill:** See, what did Satan have under God? Authority. Before Satan fell, when he was Lucifer, what did he have?

**Audience:** Authority.

**Craig Hill:** Authority. Who gave him that authority? God. But he said, "I don't want to fulfill my God-given function exercising the dominion and authority God has given me under God's authority. I don't want to be the tenant with the authority of the owner. I want to be the owner."

So, what was Satan's problem? "I refuse to receive the authority and exercise it. I want to be the owner." Okay, so he decided he was going to do that. So, what did he come on Planet Earth and convince Adam and Eve to do? The same thing.

You don't want to just have the authority of God. I mean, can you imagine what these guys had, Adam and Eve? They had all authority of God almighty on Planet Earth, and they said, "that's not enough. We want to be the owner. We refuse to be the tenants and exercise the authority of the owner. We refuse to have the covenant of all that comes with the authority of the owner. We want to be the owner. It's not enough for us just to have His authority. We want to be the owner."

So, what do they do? Same thing Satan did. "Well, we're going to be the owner," okay? So that's what's happening here.

Actually, it's interesting because the parable he tells just before this has to do with money, the "mina" one, "each one had one mina," blah, blah, blah. You know what the issue was there? "We will not have this man rule over us. We will not have this man rule over us." That was the issue there, okay?

What did those guys that had the one mina of the master, what did they have? *The full authority of the master*. They had the master's entire authority to say, "we don't want to have the master's authority. We want to be the master." And that's always the issue. That's always the issue. We don't want to have the master's authority, we want to be the master.

So what did these guys say? "We don't want to just have the master's authority. Here comes his son. We'll kill him, and then we'll get to be the owner," so they thought. So they thought, "We'll kill him and we'll get to be the owner."

"'This is the heir; let's kill him and then the inheritance will be ours.' So they threw him out of the vineyard and they killed him. What, therefore, will the owner of the vineyard do to them? He's going to come and destroy those vine-growers and give the vineyard to others. And, when they heard it, they said, 'May it never be!' But He looked at them and said, 'What then is this that was written: The stone which the builders rejected, this became the chief cornerstone and everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him to dust,'" will scatter him to dust. And it says the Pharisees, they got real upset about this 'cause they realized He was talking about them is the next verse.

Now what is He saying here? What's the picture of the kingdom? See, God has knowledge. God has power, but God has leased the earth to man and given to man authority. Man gave the authority to Satan. Jesus took the authority back. "*All authority in heaven and earth is mine. And so therefore, you go. I give the authority back to you.*"

Now what does prayer have to do with? Maybe this is not all prayer, but this is certainly a major function and a portion of prayer. God knows what needs to happen, and God has the power to cause it to happen, to bring it to pass. What does God not have?

**Audience:** Authority.

**Craig Hill:** Authority. Now this concept, "God is in control," says God *does* have authority, and so everything that happens is God's will. That devastates people's hearts. So some Satanic Ritual Abuse victim that from the very womb was devastated, God wanted that to happen that way? I don't think so. No.

Why did that happen? Because evil people on Planet Earth do all kinds of things that are absolutely, directly, 100% opposed and contrary to the *thelema* will of God.

Now what is prayer? Here's prayer. It's real simple. Prayer is simply *enforcing*. All we're doing is *enforcing* what God said. We're enforcers of Calvary. We're taking what God said.

Here's what I begin to see, all kinds of things God wants to do on Planet Earth. He's got the knowledge of what needs to happen and He's got the power to do it, but what does He lack?

**Audience:** Authority.

Craig Hill: Authority. So the Bible tells us, what does He do? His eyes searched to and fro throughout the earth looking for a man who will stand in the gap and pray, intercede. Why? Why is God looking to and fro throughout the earth? Why is God trying to find somebody to do that?

**Audience:** Authority.

**Craig Hill:** You see? Why? Because God has power and He's looking for somebody with authority who will hear His voice about what needs to happen. When they open their mouth in prayer by the words of their mouth, what did they do? In the spirit realm, they opened the gate and they released the Holy Ghost to do what God wanted Him to do, and it cannot happen without the authority.

So why does God have to wake up somebody over in the United States of America in the middle of the night with a feeling of a heart attack to pray for a man in Tibet at 5:00 in the morning, that the enemy trying to destroy him and God wants to heal him and release him from that affliction? God has the knowledge, the guy in Tibet has the problem, God has the power to heal him. Why doesn't God just do that? Why does He



have to bother waking somebody up over in America in the middle of the night to do that? Why? What does God not have? Authority, so He's looking for somebody.

Can you see the criticalness of this thing? See, why is it that somebody in the United States has to be awakened in the middle of the night to pray for some missionary in Africa? Why does that have to happen? Why? Because God's eyes are searching to and fro throughout the earth, looking for somebody who will release with the words of their mouth the authority on Planet Earth to accomplish what God was trying to accomplish.

What's God's bottleneck? He can't find anybody to do it. Man is going, "I've got a list." But "I've got stuff I want to do in Afghanistan. I've got stuff I want to do in all kinds of places, and I can't find anybody through whom I can release it."

Now if you believe God's in control, don't waste your breath. God will just do it. Do you understand what I'm saying? God will just do it. I mean, if He's the controller, man, that demotivates me from prayer. I might as well not waste my breath. But if I realize, "No, the fact is there is a lease in place and it isn't over yet, and God has voluntarily given that authority to us and He isn't going to violate it," just like the owner of the apartment who is sovereign over that apartment building. He's not going to come in there without the permission of the lessee. He can't. He signed that right away in the lease. He signed that away in the lease. He said, "I've got all kinds of things I want to do, but I need your permission. I need your authority." That is awesome, that God has chosen to partner with us that way.

Now, imagine what would happen. What if every one of us in this room just decided to take one half hour a week and start to relieve some of the pressure on the bottleneck? What if every one of us in this room said, "For one-half hour a week, here's what we're going to do. We're going to say, 'God, we'll just pray whatever's on Your heart. I mean, You just tell us. Whatever You want, we'll pray. You show us the stuff; we'll release it on Planet Earth to come to pass.'"

See, what are we starting to do? Now we're starting to relieve the bottleneck. Now we're starting to relieve the pressure in heaven. God has knowledge. He's got power. He wants to accomplish it. He's looking for somebody wearing an earth suit with authority through whom He can release it. That's what He's looking for.

I want to show you one other piece to this, just a little chart that I think will help you to understand this. Can you put that thing up there? We're going to answer two questions regarding evil things happening on the earth, regarding evil things happening on the earth. Two questions are, "Is God responsible for the evil that happens on the earth?" And secondly, "Is the evil that happens on the earth just?" That's a big question in people's hearts. Is this just? Is God responsible, and is it just?

Evil happens. Some little child dies of leukemia at age 2, okay? Someone comes along with a bumper sticker that says God's in control. And the parents of that child go, "Thanks, God. You did a real good job regarding my child." Okay, you see what I'm saying?

Now let's answer that. Is God responsible?

Okay, here's one position: God is responsible because He's in control. That's where people mix the concept of sovereignty and control. "Because God is sovereign, God is in control, and control makes God responsible for everything that happens on Planet Earth." So is God responsible? Yes. And if we say God's responsible, then we have to say that what happened is just—otherwise the conclusion, "God's unjust."

So as Christians, we're not going to come to the conclusion "God's unjust," so what do we have to do? We've got to go through some real mental gymnastics in order to say now this was really what, in the overall scope of things—this rapist that broke in, raped this mother, killed this child, stole the goods and crippled the father—in God's overall scope of things, this really was just somehow or another, because God's ways are not our ways, and God's thoughts are not our thoughts. And so we think this is unjust, but somehow it's really not. Everybody got that one? Okay.

Now, this is the classic evangelical Christian position, "God's in control," okay? Which means everything that happens somehow God was responsible for that, and it's almost the concept of God being a puppet-master.

Now, what about somehow or another over here in this family, the rapist broke in on this family and the same guy came in, but somehow or another he was disrupted by some kind of a circumstance and so he didn't get the job done. That family's going to go, "Praise God. He delivered us." What's this other family going to say? Well, that obviously makes God a respecter of persons and a puppet-master. "Well, God did it over here, but He didn't do it over here." This stuff is in the heart of people. This is heart stuff. *Evil* happened in your family. Evil happened to somebody you know, and the heart goes, "Well, I want to believe God is just, but this doesn't feel very just to me." Okay, and you end up with all kinds of religious nonsense of people trying to justify that.

**Second position.** We're just going to mix those four positions, just mixing these two things. "God is responsible, but it's not just." This is the classic position of every unbeliever, okay? This is what we face in evangelism. You go to try to win somebody to Jesus Christ and you tell him, "God loves you and God is powerful and God has a wonderful plan for your life," because they mix sovereignty and control. What's the question of the unbeliever? "If your God is so loving and your God is so powerful, then why ...?" And they will tell you the injustice in their life. "Then why did this happen?"

Then why did that happen?" And then we try to explain to them, if we hold the first position, we're going to try to move them from the second to the first, how this really was just and somehow in the overall scheme of things God's ways and not our ways, and this is what God works all things together for good.

Now, it doesn't say God *causes* all things. How many know there's a huge difference between being the author of all things and being the master of all things? I mean, a lot of things God says in His Word, they're descriptive, but they're not directive.

God says, for example, "Don't jump off a cliff. It's bad for you," and so some guy goes and jumps off a cliff anyway. God does everything He can to stop him. God puts signs, God sends angels, God sends a brother, "Don't jump off the cliff." The guy jumps off the cliff anyway, ends up in the hospital.

Now, how many know that even though God is not the author of destruction and evil, God is an opportunist? He'll use every single circumstance to benefit and glorify Himself. So, what does God do? He puts him in the hospital next to a guy that needs to get saved. The guy gets saved, 28 of his relatives get saved, and some well-meaning Christian comes along and says, "Now I see why God let you fall off that cliff."

No, God didn't let him fall off the cliff. God was doing everything He could to *stop him* from falling off the cliff. But why doesn't God just reach down and grab hold of him so He doesn't fall off the cliff? Why? Because God does not violate people's free will, because He has limited Himself—because He delegated authority to man.

Could God stop the person from falling off a cliff? Certainly, certainly—He's sovereign. He can do anything. What I'm saying is, the battle that's going on in Planet Earth is not a battle between good and evil. It's not like there's the dark force and the light force and these things are equal. No, there's no contest. I mean, any day, any moment, God could snuff Satan out like this. "Poof, you're done." Could He do that? Absolutely.

Why doesn't He do that? Well, simple: The lease isn't up. There's a day coming. We read in the Bible He's going to do exactly that. There's going to be a big war and a big battle and we're going to wonder, "Oh, oh, get him, God, get him. Oh, no! He got God. Oh, it looks like God's going to lose. Oh, no, no, God's coming back. Oh, He's going to get—yeah, yeah, yeah. Go God, Go God." It's not going to be like that. How's it going to be? It's going to be like this, "That's it." It's like an elephant and an ant. At any moment the elephant goes, "You're done. Poof, that's it."

See, it's not like the dark god against the light God. No, there's no contest here. It really already has been done.

Third position: Nonsense. Nobody believes this. Is God responsible? No. And it is just? That's nonsense. Nobody believes that.

Fourth position. Is God responsible? No. Why is God not responsible? Because He delegated authority to man, okay? Nobody's going to stand before God on judgment day, say, "You made me, You controlled me, You forced me." No, God's going to say, "No, no, no, you chose it. You chose. You chose evil. You chose to forsake Jesus. You chose to not receive the provision I made." There's no control here, it's an exercise of authority. Is God responsible? No. Is this just? Absolutely not.

Now, I find when we present that to unbelievers, that makes sense. We go, "You know how God feels about what happened to your sister? Same way you feel. He weeps. He hates it. It's not His will. He didn't want it." And when people can understand, "Well, why did this happen? Because the lease isn't up yet and evil is operative on the face of the earth, but you know what? Jesus died and shed His blood and He really did give us authority, and there's something we can do about it. There's something we can do about it. The first thing we can do about it, we can recognize that God's eyes are searching to and fro throughout the earth looking for an intercessor, looking for somebody to stand in the gap and somebody who will hear what God has to say and who will pray it forth." We need to learn that.

You know what I'd request that you do? I would request that you just take a half hour per week and that you would delegate that just to pray for Family Foundations International. Here's how you pray, "God, what's on Your heart? God, what's on Your heart? What do you want to do in FFI?"

Let God direct you. Let God speak to you what's on His heart. Why? Because He's got all kinds of things He wants in FFI, *through* FFI. And you know what the restriction is? He's looking for somebody that'll release it in prayer. He's looking for somebody that'll open the gates of authority on Planet Earth so the Holy Ghost can accomplish exactly what He wants to accomplish. That's what He's looking for.

God used my wife Jan to pray for me before we met each other. It saved my life. Back in January of 1975, I was working, flying Learjets, flying the US mail. Some of you heard this story, but I'll repeat it. I was flying the US mail out of Grand Rapids, Michigan. Every night we'd leave Grand Rapids, come across the lake to Chicago, O'Hare, go down to Bloomington, Illinois to St. Louis, then back up to Peoria to Chicago Midway and back across the lake to Grand Rapids.

We do this in the middle of the night. One night we're coming back across the lake and air traffic control calls up and says, "temperature dew point spread is real low throughout almost all of Michigan, and Grand Rapids is going down in visibility real

quick, getting real foggy. We suggest you turn back to Chicago." Well, I was the co-pilot. And the other guy, he looks over at me and he goes, "You want to spend a day in Chicago?" I said, "Not really." He said, "Neither do I." He said, "We can beat that fog in."

So we blast across the lake and, to make a long story short, we come to Grand Rapids, Michigan. They always put airports in the crook of a river. Have you ever noticed that? When fog forms, where do you think it forms first?

**Audience:** River.

**Craig Hill:** Over the river, yeah. So we shoot an approach from one side, get down to minimums, nothing. No visibility, no lights, no ground, nothing, just cloud. We shoot it from the other side, nothing. We lower approach from the other side, precision approach, no visibility, nothing—can't see anything, no lights. We go back up.

Now, a problem with the jet is a pure jet burns as much fuel on idle at the ground as it does in cruise at 41,000. So we're sucking fuel at the tailpipe like crazy on this thing. And now the low fuel lights go on and we go, "Oh, this isn't good." He said, "What else is open?" They said, "Lansing." We blast over to Lansing, shoot to approach over there. Same thing. We get down to minimum—no ground, nothing. No visibility; can't see a thing. And now the fuel is really low, and now we're both scared. And I'm thinking, "Dear Lord, we're going to die in a Learjet. We're going to crash in a fog, run out of fuel."

What else is open? Detroit. We blast this thing over to Detroit as fast as we can go. And I'm praying under my breath like a machine gun [foreign language 00:50:33]. And I'm having this vision of going to heaven and meeting people. "Well, how did you die?" "Well, I was murdered for the Lord Jesus in Tibet. How did you die?" "I was stupid, ran out of gas in an airplane."

Man, I didn't want to have that testimony in heaven. I said, "Lord, I don't want to die yet. I don't think I'm supposed to die. You've got to save my life. Help me, God." Well, we were the second to the last airplane to make it into Detroit that day, and then the visibility went down. Nobody got in after the one after us, and I've never seen the fuel so low in a Learjet before or after. I don't reckon we had more than a couple minutes of fuel left when we landed.

That happened in January. In the summer I went to spend a summer in Europe in YWAM, and that's where I met Jan. We were on a team together in Poland, an evangelistic team. Sometime later I got to know her and got the sense that God was doing something in terms of putting us together. And a few months later, I was telling her all my war stories, what had happened, how I had almost been killed doing this and that.

I was telling her this story and she says, "Well, I've got to ask you two questions." She said, "Was the other guy flying with you older than you?" I said, "Yeah, he was quite a bit older." She said, "Were you wearing light blue jumpsuits, like one-piece type jumpsuits?" And I said, "Yeah, as a matter of fact, we were, but why would you ask that?" She said, "We prayed for you." I said, "What do you mean you prayed for me? How could you pray? That was January. I didn't meet you 'til July. What do you mean you prayed, 'We prayed for you?' Come up here and tell your side of it."

She was in a YWAM school in [Herlock 00:52:31], Germany. And every morning they got up and had times of intercession, like I just described. Instead of just praying their shopping list, what they did is they said, "God, what's on Your heart today? What do You want us to pray?" And then what they'd do is they'd write down this list of stuff. One person said, "Oh, I think it's this." Another person said, "This and this."

Well, this one morning they had on their list, "pray for an airplane." That was about the second thing on the list.

**Jan Hill:** We did that five days a week, and just in our little group—and I can see where we were—we prayed and we got together and we started [saying 00:53:14], and somebody said, "We are really smart." Somebody said, "We need to pray for an airplane. It's a little airplane, but it's fast, like a big airplane." So we knew we had this little airplane that was fast like a big airplanes.

And somebody else said, "They're flying and they're having trouble. They're running out of gas, and they're having trouble finding a place to land." And somebody said, "They're flying the US mail." Another person said, "One person's older, one person is younger." Somebody said, "They're in blue jumpsuits." I had like a Great Lakes-type picture, and it was all sort of dark and foggy, like it was really dark. And somebody said, "They're running out of gas, see, and we need to pray for them to find a place to land." I think that was all that we had, yeah. So anyway, so we prayed. We prayed.

**Audience:** [Inaudible 00:54:04] was real ugly?"

**Jan Hill:** No, we didn't have that. Just one was old, one was young, blue jumpsuits. So we prayed. We prayed about 15 minutes about the airplane situation and these guys, and then we went on to the next thing, which is a missionary thing.

Normally we did that five days a week. And normally I would not have remembered that situation at all because we did that every day. We got strange things, and we prayed for them. But afterwards, as we were walking to class, this one girl who met the Lord on a trail to either Katmandu or Timbuktu or one of those places, she was a druggie and a flower child back in the hippie days, but she really knew the Lord and she was very

spiritual, but she was a little bit—I liked her, but she was very spiritual and you always wondered a little bit about her.

She came up to me afterwards and said, "That airplane, that airplane we prayed about, that had something to do with *you*." And I thought, "Oh." I thought, "I'm from Iowa." I said, "I don't know anybody that flies. The only one I know who knows how to fly, some farmer who's got some little airplane he lands in his cornfield," but I didn't dismiss it. I just said, "I don't know how that would have anything to do with me." I shelved it and went on to class. If she hadn't said that, I wouldn't even remember the story, so I'm glad she said it.

**Craig Hill:** Yeah. Now, isn't that an amazing thing? Isn't that an amazing thing, that God would have somebody to pray for her husband six months before she even met him? And see, they would just pray those crazy things that they had no knowledge of. They didn't have any natural knowledge of that, but people got all those details, different people.

One person, "I see a map. It's in the Great Lakes." Another person, "I see a small airplane. It's a jet. It's fast like a big airplane." One other person, "I see two people on board. They're carrying the US mail." Another person, "One's old, one's young." Another person, "They're wearing blue jumpsuits." Another person, "We've got to pray for a safe place for this airplane to land." "Okay, well, we'll pray that." They prayed that until they got a release, then they'd go on to the next thing. They were doing that every day.

Now, what is God doing? See, why couldn't God just reach down and save my life, you see? He had the knowledge. Man, He knew we were in need. He had the power to do it. What did He lack? Why did He have to tell somebody over in Germany to do that? What's He looking for? *A release of authority*. That boggles our mind, that God would do that. But what God has said—I mean, you see the scriptures where God is astonished, astounded that He can't find an intercessor. I mean, think of that. What would astonish God? What would astound God? And why is God astonished and astounded? It's almost like God is saying, "After all I've said, after all I've done—I mean, after all I've conveyed to you that I critically need your authority to release what I want to do on Planet Earth, and yet I still can't find anybody who will do it? That's astonishing."

Why do we need local church prayer leaders in every church? Because God's got all kinds of stuff He wants to do in that church that He can't get done. Why can't He get it done? He doesn't have the authority. He's looking for somebody who will open the door for the Holy Spirit to do what He wants to do. Now, if that doesn't motivate you to pray, I don't know what will. See what I'm saying? I mean, there's this huge bottleneck in heaven of all kinds of things God wants to get accomplished on Planet Earth. He's just

looking for somebody that's willing to make themselves available and pray the crazy stuff. Jan prays that way all the time.

Back in the Gulf War—yeah, back in the Gulf War—God told her pray for a bottle of black hair dye for somebody in Baghdad. So she did, just prayed, “God, I just pray that you deliver a bottle of black hair dye to this lady that needs it in Baghdad.” Why? “I don't know. It's just what I felt like the Spirit of God said I was supposed to pray,” so she prayed it.

A week later we hear on one of the news networks, this lady telling this story about how she was trapped in Baghdad, and I can't remember for sure, but I think it was a Canadian, either an embassy or media person, desperately needing to get out of Baghdad. I don't think she was a believer, but she got this idea, “if I dressed up like a Muslim woman, there's this particular border that I could get across into Turkey.” But she's blonde, and she said, “The one thing I lacked,” she's telling this story on the news network. She said, “I knew I could get out if I could get to this border. I had everything arranged.” She said, “I had the whole veil and all that thing all arranged. The only thing I lacked was I was blonde. I needed to dye my hair black so that I would look more like the women there.”

And so she said, “I didn't know how that was going to happen.” But she said, “The strangest thing happened. Somebody walked up to me, handed me a bottle of black hair dye, and disappeared.” She says, “I don't know if it was an angel or what, but I just got this bottle of black hair dye. That was the last component I needed—dyed hair black, and that's how I got out.”

Now sometimes you get confirmation of stuff like that. Later on, sometimes, God will let you hear the story. Other times you never hear the story, but it really doesn't matter, it really doesn't matter. We've just got to know that God's got all kinds of things He wants to do and He's just looking for somebody that'll release the authority on Planet Earth, somebody that'll pray, somebody that'll release that to happen. Does that makes sense?

**Audience:** Yes.

**Craig Hill:** All right. And I just want us to understand that, that this stuff is critical. All kinds of things God wants to do. In FFI we just got a bottleneck, finding somebody that'll do it. Man, if you just delegate a half hour a week and say, “God, we just allocate a half hour a week of our time to do that, just tell us what You want to do, we'll pray it and release it,” well, we see all kinds of things happen, incredible kinds of things, what happens. Praise God, hallelujah!



Now, God is sovereign. God exercises authority, but God's not in control. And God is going to operate through men and women on Planet Earth who are His ambassadors.

Let me just close with this last scripture, John 20:21. I think I'll just give you this one. It's a good one to meditate on. He really has made us ambassadors and I charge you as ambassadors of FFI as well to take what God has given us to steward and impart it.

John 20:21. Here's what Jesus said, "*Jesus therefore said to them again, 'Peace be with you; for as the Father has sent Me, I also send you.'*" We're ambassadors. The Father sent Jesus, He sent us, so we've got to go forth and exercise the authority that He's given us and open the door for prayer.

Let the Holy Spirit be released on the earth to accomplish what it is that God has appointed that needs to be accomplished, and we get participation in it by releasing it with the words of our mouth in prayer. Amen.

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