

First Things First

by Kenneth E. Hagin



"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."

—1 Timothy 2:1-4

After the final service of Camp-meeting '79 this past July, some of the speakers and others went up to Kenneth Hagin Jr's hotel suite for sandwiches.

As we were talking about the things of God, the Spirit of God kept moving on me. (Actually, only three times in my life has the Spirit moved on me in such a measure.)

I said to the others, "Let's pray. The Spirit of God keeps moving on me."

We began to pray. By the Spirit, I ministered to each one present. Then I was caught up in the spirit of prayer and intercession. For lack of a better term, I was "lost in the spirit." I was not unconscious—but I was more conscious of spiritual things. Spiritual things were more real than the natural.

I sat with my eyes shut, praying in tongues, for what proved to be several hours. (It was just after midnight when we started praying. When it was all over, and I opened my eyes, it was after 4 o'clock in the morning. Yet it seemed as if it had been only 10 or 15 minutes.)

The Lord spoke to me. Among other things He gave me instructions concerning the Prayer and Healing School we are now holding every weekday afternoon on the RHEMA campus.

And I saw something. I saw three things coming up out of the Atlantic Ocean. They looked like three giant black frogs, as large as whales. One

was already in midair. The other two had just stuck their heads up out of the water from the east. I had seen something similar nine years before.

Jesus said to me, "You saw the same thing in 1970. I told you then exactly what they were, but you didn't do what you should have done about it. I told you back in 1970 to pray for the leaders of the nation. What happened [Watergate and so forth] isn't all the fault of the man who was then President. I am going to hold the Christians of this nation responsible. You are the ones who allowed what happened to your nation. If you had prayed, it never would have happened. I showed you what was about to happen. Go back and check . . ."

Later, I went back and checked what the Lord had said to me in 1970 from tapes and manuscripts of a special meeting we held in October 1970.

You see, on September 6, 1970, my wife and I checked into the Holiday Inn in Buffalo, New York. We were in the area in cooperation with various Full Gospel Businessmen's chapters.

I was unloading the car when I began not to feel well physically. That might not mean much to some people, but at the time, I'd had 36 years and 23 days of divine health. I staggered into the room with the last box of books and fell across the bed. My wife heard me say something for the first time in 36 years, "I'm sick."

We began to pray.

Now through those 36 years, once in a great while the devil had tried to put something on me, but I wouldn't accept it. I would pray, and it would leave. So I began to do everything I'd always done—but this time, it didn't leave. I got no better fast.

Finally, I said, "Lord, You didn't miss it. I know that. But somehow I have missed it. I haven't made my prayer connection. Show me where I missed it."

The Lord spoke to me—just in that still small voice you hear down on the inside of you.

First, He wanted to get me healed. So He said, "If you want to be healed this time, this is the only way you are going to receive it. I said to you twenty years and four days ago when you were in Rockwall, Texas, and I laid the finger of my right hand upon each one of your hands, 'The healing anointing is in your hands.' So if you want to be healed this time, lay your own two hands on yourself."

It didn't take me long to get them there. Lying flat on my back on that bed in the Holiday Inn, I could feel that warm glow going out of my hands into my body. I began to amend immediately. In a few seconds I was ninety percent well.

Then the Lord said to me in that still small voice, "You never have done what you should have done with the healing ministry. That's how this happened."

No, the Lord didn't put that on me. I'd gotten into disobedience and the devil put it on me. You see, in the previous five years, 1965 to 1970, I'd had only two designated healing services.

The Lord said to me, "Go back to Tulsa, and the week of October 11 through 18 have a Prayer School in the daytime, and a Healing School at night."

"Teach on prayer in the daytime, mainly in the area of intercessory prayer. Teach prayer not only by precept, but by example. Tell the people that if they don't know how to pray that way, to listen to you and do whatever you do. Tell them to follow you . . ."

He showed me in 1970 three spirits that were coming upon our nation. The first was a spirit of turmoil that would create riots all across the land. The second concerned the political scene. The third concerned the economic scene.

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Finally, I said, "Lord, You didn't miss it. I know that. But somehow I have missed it. I haven't made my prayer connection. Show me where I missed it."

The Lord spoke to me about it. And He said, "Now you can pray for the inside of you."

First, He wanted to get me healed. So He said, "If you want to be healed this time, this is the only way you are going to receive it. I said to you twenty years and four days ago when you were in Rockwall, Texas, and I laid the finger of my right hand upon each one of your hands, 'The healing anointing is in your hands.' So if you want to be healed this time, lay your own two hands on yourself."

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He also gave me specific instructions as to how to teach on healing. He gave me a vision of the Wednesday night service and how it would be. Everything happened exactly as He said it would.

But the primary purpose for that 1970 Prayer School was that we could intercede for our nation.

Jesus reminded me of this in those early morning hours after the last service of Campmeeting '79 this past July.

He said to me, "Back in 1970, you saw three similar dark objects come up out of the Atlantic and leapfrog all the way across the land. If you and the Christians had done what you should have done, none of those things would have happened to your nation. You would not have had the riots. You would not have had the political disturbances. Your President would not have made the mistakes he made. In fact, I am holding the Church responsible for his mistakes."

I began to weep and cry, "Oh, God!"

"Yes," He said, "I am holding you and the Church responsible."

Then He said, "When you tell that to some of the Christians, they will laugh. But when they stand before my judgment seat and they receive the condemnation rather than the man who was then President, they won't laugh."



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"If Christians had done what I told them to do in the Bible—If they had prayed for the leaders of their nation—they would have kept the evil spirits from operating."

Then He continued, "Similar things—not the same things—but similar things are about to happen again. If you do not pray, they will happen. I am not going to hold the President responsible for the nation. I am going to hold the Christians of the nation responsible."

Now, let me explain something—you have to know how to interpret these things. I saw those three creatures come up out of the Atlantic Ocean. But that doesn't mean they rise out of the ocean. From Genesis to Revelation "seas" and "waters" refer to a multitude of people. Out of the multitude of people, these things will rise up. Sinners are dominated by the devil; they're in his kingdom.

Jesus said, "There will arise, unless the Christians pray, not for the same purpose that the other riots came—but there will be riots, tumults, and disturbances all across the nation."

"Second, something is about to happen to the President that should not happen—and will not happen if you will pray."

"Third, something is about to happen again that will bring further trouble in the economic scene, the financial structure."

"But you can stop all three. You can stop the upheaval in the social structure of tumults, riots, and disturbances. You can stop the upheaval and the activity of the devil in the political scene of your nation. You can stop the devil in disrupting the financial scene of your nation."

"You can change all three through intercessory prayer. That's one of the main purposes for the classes you are going to start in the fall."

The Prayer School that we're having will have effect around the world. We've already got that one spirit stopped. He didn't even get to land. We stopped him in midair. But we have to continue to pray about those three scenes.

God gave us specific instructions to put first things first.

"Yes, but," people have said to me, "I'll tell you as long as the Democrats are in, it's not going to go." Others have said, "As long as the Republicans are in . . ."

If you're going to be party minded first, you'll never amount to much of a Christian. Christians are to put first things first.

Notice that the Word says, "*I exhort therefore, that, first . . .*" First! Before you pray for your children, before you pray for me, before I pray for you, "*. . . first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority . . .*"

So we would know who the "all men" are, he said, "*For kings, and for all that are in authority.*"

First of all, we are to pray for our leaders—for all those who are in authority in our national government, our state or provincial government, and on down to our city government.

Why? Go on reading . . .

"*. . . that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty . . .*" That "we" as Christians may lead a quiet and peaceable life. God is interested in us.

All the kings Paul was instructing them to pray for were not born again.

Will God bless leaders even though they are not saved?

Certainly. The Spirit of God would not tell us to pray for something God would not give. That would be stupid.

Why will He bless them? For one thing He is interested in us.

"*For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour . . .*" It is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour that we pray first of all for all who are in authority. It is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour that we lead a quiet and peaceable life.

"*Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.*" When there is war—When there is upheaval—When there is turmoil—it is difficult to spread the Gospel. But when there is peace—When there is tranquil—

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ity—then we are free to go and spread the Gospel.

No wonder the devil wants to attack the United States, for instance. You can go around the world and you will find that ninety percent of all missionary work is done from America. If the devil could stop us, he could stop the flow of God's blessings. But, blessed be God, he cannot do it!!

How are we told to pray for those in authority?

"... supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks ..."

The prayer of intercession is a prayer for others. And, of course, this Scripture is talking about praying for others—for those who are in authority. An intercessor is one who takes the place of another, or pleads another's case.

I do not have space here to teach in depth on this vitally important subject. (I am doing so in our Prayer School sessions.) But I will just hit some of the high points and you ask the Holy Spirit who is our Helper to help you to pray the prayer of intercession.

One Bible example is Abraham's intercession for two cities—Sodom and Gomorrah. Read that account in Genesis chapter 18.

The Lord said, "*Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do*" (v. 17). He would not destroy those wicked cities without informing His blood-covenant friend.

And Abraham was standing on his blood-covenant rights when he said to the Lord, "*Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein? That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?*" (vv. 23-25).

The Lord said, "*If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare the place for THEIR sakes*" (v. 26).

Remember what 1 Timothy 2:2 said? "... that WE may lead a quiet and peaceable life ..."

God said He would spare the

whole city for the sake of fifty righteous.

Abraham kept going on down in number until he said to the Lord, "*Peradventure ten shall be found there.*"

And the Lord said, "*I will not destroy it for ten's sake*" (v. 32).

Consider the terrible sins that existed in Sodom—yet God said He would spare the whole place for ten's sake.

You know, this old world would already have been destroyed if it were not for we Christians. Jesus said, "*Ye are the salt of the earth*" (Matt. 5:13).

I am old enough to remember before we had electric refrigerators. My grandfather killed hogs. He'd put salt on the meat to preserve it.

I know this world is bad enough, but if it weren't for we Christians, it would certainly be rotten.

God told Abraham He would spare the cities for the sake of ten righteous. I believe there are more than ten righteous persons in America today.

Some say, "We're going to pot."

No, we're not!

Don't listen to such talk as that.

I believe there are people in America today who will take their place in prayer just as Abraham did.

Abraham didn't sit around and talk about how wicked they were and how they were all going to hell. He interceded on their behalf.

If we will take our place, we can change things. We have a better covenant based on better promises.

I was in the home of a minister of the Gospel whose four-year-old son was so misbehaved he embarrassed me, and even embarrassed my son who was also four. Ken said to me the minute we got into the car, "That boy is awful, isn't he?"

He talked terrible to his father. When his father picked him up in his arms and tried to pet him a little to quieten him down, the boy slapped his cheeks and said, "You old liar. What you're telling is not so. You're a liar."

This pastor—Full Gospel, Spirit-filled—said to me, "Well, you know, the Bible says that in the last days, children will be disobedient to parents."

"Yes," I said, "the Bible also says that the love of many shall wax cold, but that doesn't mean my love has to wax cold. And that doesn't mean my children are going to be disobedient to their parents."

You see, you can sit around and say, "Well, the Bible says that evil men and seducers will wax worse and worse, deceived and being deceived. This whole thing is going down. The love of many shall wax cold," and if you just dwell on that side you will cool off. The devil will take you over and all your children.

But, blessed be God, you don't have to think along that line.

Wake up and realize who you are in Christ. The gates of hell shall not prevail against the Church. The devil can't take over the Church. Jesus is the Head of the Church—not Satan. Jesus is bigger than the devil, in fact, he has already defeated him. He arose victorious over him—and His victory is my victory.

Think in line with God's Word and realize that no matter what the situation, we can do something about it.

EZEKIEL 22:30,31

30 And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.
31 Therefore have I poured out my indignation upon them: I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath: their heads have I recompensed upon the heads.

This is God talking. Abraham interceded for two cities. Here God is talking about an entire nation. If He could have found ONE man who would have stood in the gap, who would have interceded on behalf of the nation, judgment would not have come.

"Well," someone might ask, "if God really wanted to spare the land, why didn't He just go ahead and do it anyhow? Isn't He God? If that's His will, why doesn't He go ahead and do it?"

Go back to First Timothy 2:4. There it says that God wills that all men come unto the knowledge of the truth. Why doesn't He just go ahead and make them all be born again. If He can do anything He wants to do, why doesn't He do it? Why does He

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wait for somebody to intercede?

God made the earth and the fullness thereof. Then He made man. He gave to Adam dominion over all the works of His hands.

Adam became the ruler of this world. To put it another way, he became god of this world. He was the ruler. He was the one who dominated the world.

But then, Adam committed high treason and sold out that dominion to Satan. Satan became the ruler of this world. Paul calls him, "the god of this world" (2 Cor. 4:4).

Satan tempted Jesus by offering to him all the power of the kingdoms of this world, "*for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it,*" Satan said (Luke 4:6).

Adam had delivered it unto him.

Did Adam have that right? Legally, he did. Morally, he did not.

Satan became the ruler, the god of this world until Adam's lease runs out. He is not my god—I am not of this world. But he is responsible for the wars between nations, the murders, the violence that is done in the world.

God will not transgress His own Word. He gave the lease to Adam. Adam gave it to the devil. It is running out. But until that time, God can only intervene as Christians seek His face and ask Him to move.

Satan's authority over matters on the earth can only be overcome as Christians pray and intercede in the behalf of their country. God is longing today for someone who will make up the hedge and stand in the gap before Him for the land.

Intercession can be made in your known tongue. It can best be made, in other tongues, as the Holy Spirit helps you to make intercession. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you and *continue* to make intercession.

Here is where some people miss it. They don't hear everything you teach and they grab some little something and run off with it. There are some things you can pray the prayer of faith on—and you pray one prayer and that's the end of it. You don't have to pray anymore; you just thank God for the answer. You can do

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RHEMA CORRESPONDENCE BIBLE SCHOOL

Kenneth Hagin Ministries' RHEMA Correspondence Bible School is a three-year course offering a well-rounded study of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation with an emphasis on faith.

Under the Lord's direction, we have endeavored to design a system of study for all believers who desire to mature into full-grown children of God, able to fulfill their places within the Body, and capable of handling any situation the enemy can throw at them. We would like to share a few testimonies of how students have learned to apply the basic Bible truths they are learning to the everyday situations of life.

"After sharing several things that the Spirit was showing me through this study, we put the formula for faith to work and my husband now has received a raise and a promotion in his job. Praise the Lord! Both seemed to be an impossibility, but we stood on the Word and refused to be moved by the circumstances and all the negative reports. My husband was the ONLY employee that received a raise or a promotion. We give our Father all the praise". Mrs. D.H. — Denver, North Carolina

A student in Denver, Colorado writes concerning a study on prayer . . .

"The timing of these two studies was perfect for my life. My earthly father suffered a severe heart attack nearly three weeks ago. From the very moment I received the news, I began praying, believing, and praising God. On two occasions, we nearly lost him from this earth, but each time after much prayer, he began showing improvement. If it had not been for these studies, I would not have been able to pray appropriately with the confidence I had, claiming the promises, then receiving the peace and assurance that he would recover. Today, he is home recuperating. The doctor says his rapid recovery is 'remarkable'. I say it is God and I am praising Him for it. Thank you, Kenneth Hagin, for imparting these truths to me. I wish you could know how much you have helped me grow spiritually in the past year. Praise God!"

The Correspondence School is a home study course for EVERYONE, and gives a basic knowledge of the Bible. Curriculum is divided into six general classifications of: Christology, Charismatic Truths, Dynamics of Faith, Communicating Ministries, Bible Interpretation, and Healing Truths. This is what J.B. of Columbus, Ohio says concerning the course . . .

"Your lessons are tremendously practical, and I have received several dramatic personal healings as a result of their being so instructive in true Bible faith. I really can't put a price on what your lessons have meant to me and my family".

These are just three of the many testimonies we receive from students who are learning and growing daily in the Word of God by studying through the Correspondence Course. Why not join these and over 5,200 others who are learning to live in the fullness of God's Word. Begin your NEW YEAR right by enrolling in RHEMA Correspondence Bible School. For a free descriptive catalog, fill out and return the coupon below.

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that for salvation. You can do that for the baptism in the Holy Spirit. You can do that for healing. You can pray the prayer of faith for anything God promised right now. But there are other things you cannot pray the prayer of faith on. One of them is this that we are talking about. *Continue* to pray the prayer of intercession for the leaders of your nation.

And here in America, continue to pray about the three scenes God has shown us.

Pray with us this prayer as we prayed it at the Prayer School under the direction and anointing of the Holy Spirit.

Heavenly Father,
in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ,
we come on behalf of our nation.

We pray according to Thy Holy Word,
putting first things first.

Praying first of all for the President of

our nation. For his Cabinet. For the Supreme Court. For the Senators. For the Congressmen. We pray for all who are in authority in our nation, that divine wisdom, divine direction shall be given unto them.

Father, we are Your children. We have been born again. We are born of God. We take authority on this earth. And in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ—because He has given us authority, He has given us the right to use His Name—we come against the powers of darkness; the devil and all his cohorts that would endeavor to weaken our nation . . . to stop the flow of God's blessings . . . to make it impossible for us to spread the Gospel . . . to hinder us in leading quiet and peaceable lives.

Satan, in the Name of Jesus Christ, take your hands off the political scene of our nation. There shall be peace. There shall be tranquility.

Satan, in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, take your hands off the economic scene of our nation.

Satan, in the Name of Jesus Christ, take your hands off the social scene of our nation.

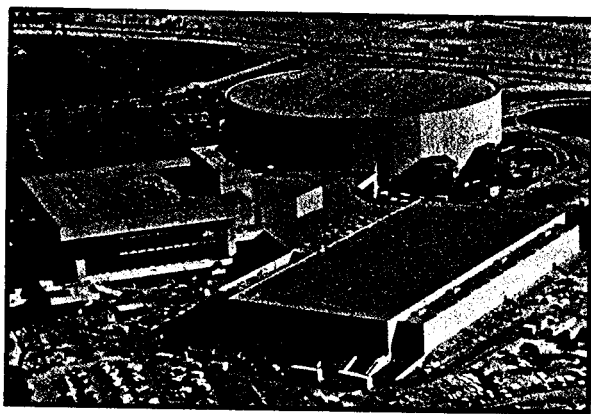
We command every foul spirit to stop in their maneuvers, to cease in their actions, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life—that all men may come unto the knowledge of the truth.

Demons and evil spirits shall not prevail, but the Spirit of God shall prevail.

Angels of mercy . . . the Spirit of the living God . . . Ministers equipped with the power of God . . . shall be free to minister as the Lord directs. The will of God shall be wrought. The work of God shall go forward. This I believe. This I speak. And it shall be so. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

West Coast Faith Convention

January 20-22



Long Beach, California
Long Beach Arena



Kenneth E. Hagin



John Osteen



Buddy Harrison

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Sunday, January 20 — 2:30pm
Monday & Tuesday, January 21 & 22
9:30am, 2:30pm & 7:30pm

Contact these hotels for reservations and be sure to mention you are attending Kenneth Hagin's West Coast Faith Convention.

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