

O Lord, Deal with Me!

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Psalm 119:17

Deal bountifully with Thy servant, that I may live, and keep Thy word.

This should be our prayer: asking God to deal bountifully with us, because we know that He deals with us according to His Word:

Psalm 119:65

Thou hast dealt well with Thy servant, O LORD, according unto Thy word.

We should want God to bring us into the place where we're letting Him have His way in our lives, where He frees us from sin and from all sinful ways.

II Corinthians 6:17,18

Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

Our prayer should be, "Lord, deal with me that I might be free from sin, free from all those fleshy and worldly ways."

It can be done, if we would but totally surrender our will to the will of the Lord.

People of the world are only interested in their own will, only interested in what they want. That is all they live for. They have no concern as to what the will of the Lord would be for their lives. Whereas, as a child of God, our desire should be that the Lord would make us into a vessel that is clean and pure, a vessel fit for the Master's use.

To be that clean vessel, there are many things that must be dealt with, many things that will have to be removed.

Pray and Heed God's Word

The first thing we need to have is a desire to pray for the Lord to deal with us and get those things out of our lives: praying that He would chasten, if need be, until we have been brought into the place where we can be a clean, pure vessel, willing to do the will of God without reservation.

Psalm 119:18

Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law.

Resentment and bitterness often creep up in the hearts of God's people over circumstances they allowed themselves to become bitter over. These become wrinkles in their lives and need to be ironed out.

Ephesians 5:27

That He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

We need to pray as the psalmist prayed, asking the Lord to deal bountifully with us that we might live and keep His Word. And, if we are to keep His Word, we must first of all *hear* His Word.

We never want to tune out the preaching of His Word. We need to be in the place where our ears are ever attentive to the Word of God.

So, we must hear the Word of God, and then, after we have heard the Word, be in the place where we receive the Word.

Psalm 119:97

O how love I Thy law! it is my meditation all the day.

We have seen the importance, then, of hearing God's Word, receiving God's Word, loving God's Word — and obeying God's Word. We also saw where we should be praying for God to deal bountifully with us as individuals.

So, we can take note of some of the things that hinder: wrong attitudes, resentment, bitterness, gluttony, greed. We need to be freed of these things.

Our prayer should be, "Lord, if I'm hindering the Spirit of God from moving in my life and from moving in the church, deal with me according to Your Word. Deal with me, Lord, until I get these things out of my life. And, if need be, chasten me."

The Word of God Cuts

Hebrews 4:12

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

The Word of God is sharp. When it goes to work in one's life, it will cut. And, when it starts to cut, that's when many begin to get uncomfortable. But don't allow yourself to get upset with the message or messenger. Let the word work in you, let it cleanse you and make you free.

Because He is a God of love, He shows His love in warning us of those things that hinder. I read in the Word where He chastises His people because He loves them.

Hebrews 12:6

For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth.

Jeremiah 23:29

Is not My word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?

Think about that: the Word of God being like a fire. The Word of God will consume — if we let it go to work in our heart. Yes, it will consume sin; it will consume all fleshy and worldly desires, all that is ungodly.

But, it will do this only if we let God work in our lives.

Psalm 119:17

Deal bountifully with Thy servant, that I may live, and keep Thy word.

If we'll listen to the Word of God, the Holy Spirit is able to use it to consume all that is not godly and right. He will go to work in our lives when we are sincere with Him, when we want to clean our lives up for Him.

Prepare Your Heart Before God

Ezra 7:10

For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments.

Notice that Ezra not only prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord but also to do it. Many will seek out the Word, studying it and reading it, but do they go on to *do* the Word?

After we have read the Word, after we have heard the Word, it's important that we go on to *obey* and *do* the Word.

We see here where Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the Lord. Maybe you need to prepare your heart to seek the Lord. Ask Him to deal with you that you can rid your life of all that is displeasing unto Him. He will do just that: according to His Word — not according to what man has to say, not according to what you or I may think, but according to His Word.

We want to be in that place like Ezra: preparing our heart to seek the Word of God — and to do it.

Desire the Word

Nehemiah 8:1

And all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the street that was before the water

gate; and they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the LORD had commanded to Israel.

Notice here, now, there was a real desire to hear the Word of God (the law of Moses). They wanted to hear the Word so much that they gathered in the street wanting Ezra to read it to them.

Nehemiah 8:2,3

And Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation both of men and women, and all that could hear with understanding, upon the first day of the seventh month. And he read therein before the street that was before the water gate from the morning until midday, before the men and the women, and those that could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law.

Many who sit in church listening to the preaching of God's Word can hardly wait for it to end so they can leave and go home! "Oh, it's so long. When will they stop?" Yet, for others, for those who are really desirous to hear what God has to say from His Word, the time goes by so quickly.

How important it is that we have a hunger for the Word of God: a desire to hear the Word, a desire to read the Word, a desire to study the Word — and a desire to obey the Word.

Back in Ezra's day they stood from morning until midday listening to God's Word. They weren't even sitting. No, they were standing all that time, and the ears of all were attentive. They weren't bored; they were attentive. They were listening. They weren't being distracted. Why? Because they were hungry to hear the words of the law, hungry to hear God's Word.

This is the way we should be when we come into the house of God. We should be so hungry for God, so desirous to hear God speak, that we are attentive, not missing a word.

Nehemiah 8:5,6

And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people; (for he was above all the people;) and when he opened it, all the people stood up: and Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands: and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the LORD with their faces to the ground.

They were having a great time in the Lord. Remember, now, *they* were the ones who initiated this. It wasn't Ezra: The people gathered together as one and asked him to read the Word to them.

It makes such a difference when God's people can walk together in unity, all believing the same thing, all standing for the same thing, all desiring God to move in revival, and all willing to pay the price to get what they desire.

Nehemiah 8:8

So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.

When some preach or teach the Word, they seem to go around Roby's Barn. That's an expression my mother-in-law had; meaning that, instead of getting right to the point, they go all around it; and by the time they finish, they've lost the people's attention.

Nehemiah 8:9

And Nehemiah, which is the Tirshatha, and Ezra the priest the scribe, and the Levites that taught the people, said unto all the people, This day is holy unto the LORD your God; mourn not, nor weep. For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law.

God was doing something, and it was causing the people to weep as they listened to His Word.

Amos 8:11

Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD

Many are not hearing the Word of God today. They're not being taught the Word of God. Everything has priority above God's Word. There are all kinds of things being preached and taught except for the Word of God.

Many ministers open their message with a Scripture verse and end with a Scripture verse, but in between there is nothing about the Scriptures: it's all foolishness, current events, or some other topic.

Paul told Timothy to preach the Word, being instant in season and out of season: always ready to preach the Word of God (see II Timothy 4:2).

Romans 10:17

So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.

As people hear the Word of God preached, faith begins to grow in their hearts. They hear what "Thus saith the Lord," and they begin to see God's Word coming to pass in their own lives.

Revival!

Let's look back at Nehemiah once again. The Lord was truly moving and the people wept before Him.

When revival falls, God takes away the dryness and waters our soul. As we feel the moving of the Spirit on our soul, we'll weep and cry and it won't be put on.

Nehemiah 9:2

And the seed of Israel separated themselves from all strangers, and stood and confessed their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers.

Revival! Do you think this could happen in your church? Yes, yes, yes! Indeed it can happen. There can be a revival just like this, where men and women, young people, and even children will confess their sins.

Nehemiah 9:3

And they stood up in their place, and read in the book of the law of the LORD their God one fourth part of the day; and another fourth part they confessed, and worshipped the LORD their God.

You see what the Word did? It brought revival. It got their lives straightened out.

Thank God we have this passage of Scripture to show us what can happen when the Word of God is being read and ministered.

Realize, now, they not only heard the Word, but the Word was explained, causing them to understand what was being read.

Nehemiah 8:8

So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.

This was written for our learning. We can see here the benefit of listening to the preaching of God's Word. This is an example to show us what the Word of God can do. It can bring forth a revival. It can cause people to get right with God, surrendering their will to God, surrendering their all to God.

Ecclesiastes 5:1

Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil.

When we go to the house of the Lord, we should be very quick to hear. What do you go to church for? You should be going to worship God and to hear what He would have to say from His Word.

Yes, you can worship God at home; you can read the Word at home; you can shed tears before the Lord at home. You don't have to wait until you go to church, but church is important too.

Be a Doer of the Word

James 1:22-24

But be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the Word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.

This is the way life is. We get ready for the day: washing up, brushing our teeth, combing our hair. We take a quick look in the mirror, and then, when we walk away, forget what we looked like.

This is the way it is with many when they hear the Word of God. They hear it but then walk away and forget what they heard. They have slippery ears: where it goes in one ear and slips right out the other.

When we don't take the Word and put it into practice, this is what happens. It's not enough to hear the Word of God; we need to obey it and apply it to our lives.

Psalm 119:16

I will delight myself in Thy statutes: I will not forget Thy word.

We forget too easily. We all forget things now and then, but there is one thing we don't want to forget: We don't ever want to forget God or His Word!