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Subject: "Men of God have been tested by human advice in certain situations!"

Br. Russ

Praise the Lord.

Well, we want to listen to his voice all the time, to his call and to his Words.

This evening we have come together again to hear what he has to say to us from his Word.

"Not as though we had already attained," but we can say with Paul, who is probably writing to the Philippians here. He says here in chapter 3 from verse 12:

Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.

Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.

Up to here, this precious and holy Word of God.

I think we can fully agree with these words that Paul expresses here.

"Not as though I had already attained, either we are already perfect" and we know that we still lack much.

But we need not despair. As they did, so do we: We reach forth unto those things which are before. We do not look back and we won't let anything stop us, but we hurry towards Him. We raise our eyes and look at what our Lord has to say to us.

Just like those in those days, there was no turning back for Paul and for those who had become believers. They remained faithful to the Lord. And even though they went through many tribulations and perhaps persecution and mockery and through many trials, it all had to be like this.

But they knew what was prepared for them. And I believe that we too know what awaits us, what our Lord has promised us.

And we don't want to pass this by and we won't let ourselves be misled, but we hold on and grow ever stronger in faith, because we know that His coming is very near.

We are so glad that we can worship again tonight and glorify His name. Let us stand up for it.

We worship You tonight.

We thank You from the depths of our hearts that we may be here, that we may receive Your Word again. You will also speak to us tonight, O Lord, and we do not want to fail to speak to You, O God.

Praise, honor and glory be to You, the Lamb.

Bless my brother who is again in our midst, O God. Bless him mightily and bless us all.

Lord, we worship You and know that You will give above asking and understanding.

Hallelujah to Your name.

Amen.

Br. Frank:

Praise and thanks be to the Lord for the privilege of being here again to worship.

I think I always use the same words when I come to the front, but you just get so used to them and they get to the heart of the matter.

We are thankful to God that we can come together, that we have His Word and that it has been revealed to us.

I don't know when Brother Kupka will say goodbye to us, whether it will be tonight or tomorrow morning.

Tomorrow morning? Good.

Then I give you warm greetings from all the dear friends and brothers and sisters from Pakistan. We had wonderful meetings. We had a conference that was meant for the whole country and it was very well attended.

When I came in here now and saw only a few people, I was a bit sad at first.

But then I thought of two events. Once when our Lord no longer saw the crowds around Him and said even to His closest friends, ***"Will you also go away from me?"*** [Joh. 6:67]

He must have been very sad, very sad.

After all the good He had done to thousands upon thousands, healed, blessed, fed. And suddenly they were no longer there.

It must have touched Him deeply.

The other thing was when Brother Russ and I were in the US at the time and we were in the tabernacle of Brother Branham.

What was it? A Wednesday night too? Yes. There were fewer people there than are here tonight. Maybe half, maybe half of what's here tonight.

And I had to think about how things change, times and circumstances. But one remains the same. Nothing changes in him. And whoever remains with him, nothing changes in him either.

Yes.

And we can say that with God's help we are walking the same path that God started with us.

We have not accepted any extra teachings or added any interpretations, but believe what God has left and revealed to us in his Word.

Perhaps that is why we had such a large audience in Pakistan – in these countries it is sometimes customary for a government representative to come and then it is written in the newspaper: "A man of God from Germany and a man from parliament from Islamabad." And then of course more people flock together than you would expect.

We certainly had more preachers there than there are people here today. They came in large numbers. And that's what we wanted. And we were happy about the people who came.

But just to tell you, the circumstances are completely different. When the service starts at half past seven, the brothers come at half past seven and say, "Oh, brother Frank, let's go and have a cup of tea."

And I say, "Wait a minute, I think the service is starting." "Yes, it's starting, but let's have a cup of tea first."

And if it starts at half past seven, then I start the sermon at nine o'clock. Yes, but it goes on, it goes on. It doesn't matter until midnight. People stay there as long as the sermon is going on and afterwards. They have completely different rules of behavior and are not bound by time like we are here.

But as I said, it was a marvelous time that we had and the Lord blessed and that's what matters.

The reason why I returned earlier is that I wanted to make a contact in the Persian Gulf to Bahrain and had the wrong passport with me. The passport I had with me had a tiny stamp from Israel in it. And when the passport officer in this Arab country saw the stamp from Israel, it was all over. The fact that he didn't tear up the passport was the last straw.

I had to leave the country on the next plane.

He just rampaged and shouted "Israel! Israel!" and then it was all over. A deadly hatred. If you only read about it in the newspapers, then it's a long way away. But when you see it in front of you and witness it, it's a catastrophe.

But as I said, I am also grateful for the lesson, because then you can see at close range what hatred there is in these people.

And then the bridge to probably Galatians 4, where Paul writes that "***the one born after the flesh hated the one born after the spirit.***" Just as there is hatred earthly, so it is also there spiritually. And that cannot be changed. There is no way to change it. Not even God wanted to change it, and it remains that way.

Blessed are those who know, we do not hate, but we are hated. That is so majestic, so glorious, to know which side we are on, namely God's side.

And you all know, the prophets and all the men of God were not liked and not loved either, but loved by God. That's what matters.

And as you can see, I also have to make a few notes now, because I am getting on in years.

I don't know if you've noticed, but I'll say it here now. I was saddened in the last meeting, and I also mean the Spirit of God, at Easter I mean. And not only at this Easter, but also last year, something didn't go the way God wanted it to go on both occasions.

And here it was the last meeting, and the one brother was always after me saying "God gave me a message for the church..." – and you all know what that's like. You pull your neck out of the noose as long as you can, and in the end you give in, and then it's already happened.

The moment you are not led by the Spirit of God, but give in to people and what they want, it's already too late.

And I have noted down a few things from the holy scriptures that should actually teach us a lesson on the way, yes, I mean me now, us brothers who stand at the front and who minister.

And then during the last prayer, you know, two brothers got excessively loud, and instead of me perhaps just helping them, there was an interruption, and there was no way back anymore, you know what I mean.

And so, in future, we really want to make sure that God gives us the grace to thank the Lord with one accord, with one voice, to hear his Word. And to somehow allow ourselves to be inserted in such a way that no one is disturbed, that everything is in harmony before God, that we hear his Word, thank him, and that he can then also bless us.

In the opening word, we have, or I personally have two thoughts: ***I forget what lies behind me.*** [Phil 3:13] You can, from time to time it catches up with you, but then you should be able to forget it again.

But the main thought is, that he has perfected us forever [Hebr 10:14], us who are goal-oriented. After all, we need a destination. When we set off, we need to know where we want to go. If we don't know what the destination is, and what our goal is, then we can stay at home.

I believe this is expressed very clearly in Hebrews 10:14.

For by one offering, he has perfected us forever.

He brought us to our destination.

And that is why Paul could write with such certainty: "***We, who are goal-oriented***" [Phil 3:15], we are aware of the destination. We know where we belong. We know where we will be. We know that the Lord has prepared the place for us.

I wanted to briefly read out or at least touch on the scripture that relate to prayer.

1 Corinthians 14, verses 15 to 18. It is simply necessary for us to have this divine unanimity from the scriptures to actually get into the step we need to be in if God is to move forward with us and can move forward with us.

1 Corinthians 14, verses 15 to 18. Here only the main thoughts.

15 What is it then? I will pray with the spirit and I will pray with the understanding also. I will sing with the spirit and I will sing with the understanding also.

16 Else when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?

You realize what this is all about. So when we pray individually, we should be able to say Amen. How can we say Amen unless we know what has been prayed?

Today some brothers prayed. We went along with their prayers. We heard what they presented to the Lord. We have presented the same to the Lord and then said Amen at the end.

It goes on to say here.

17 For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified.

18 I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all.

19 Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue.

When we are in a service, it is about personal edification and the edification of the church through the Word, through the Spirit, through ministries, through gifts. But it is always about the encouragement, the harmonious building up of the church of the living God. Everything that happens in a church service must and will be done for edification, if it is under the guidance of the Spirit.

First, the individual is built up. From the building up of the individual comes the building up of the whole church of the living God.

And we are grateful to the Lord that he has set us on this path and will give us full understanding of what should and should not be done under the guidance of the Spirit.

I believe we all feel the same way: We want God to come into his own, otherwise we will not come into our own. Only when God comes into his own, by being able to do his will among us, will we come into our own according to the word of promise, into our blessings that he has promised us in his Word.

In Romans 15, verse 6, that is the scripture we read back then. Romans 15, verse 6, it says:

6 That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

So we see that there is both. There is individual prayer and there is communal prayer. And the Spirit of God can be present there as well as there. He can edify, he can bless, he can make someone a blessing and come into his own with us and through us.

In Acts chapter 4, Acts chapter 4, we have the prayer of the early church. Here it says from verse 24, Acts 4 from verse 24 or just 24 and then 31:

24 And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is.

We read: "***They lifted up their voice to God with one accord and prayed.***"

Just as we can sing together, we can also pray together. It makes no difference to God. He can hear millions at once. He understands every word, knows every request before a word is on our lips or in our mouths. [Ps 139:4]

He already knows it exactly. According to Psalm 139, He already saw us as a formless seed. [Ps 139:16] He already saw us as we are, although still a formless seed, but He already saw us as we are.

God is omniscient, God is omnipotent, God is omnipresent, and we want to acknowledge this and believe it for His glory.

Acts 4, Verse 31:

And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the Word of God with boldness.

There is great power in praying together. And God can work mightily there and pour out His Spirit, fulfill His promises. And as we have read here, He can do

what He has promised in the midst of those who trust Him, who believe Him, who give Him thanks, he can do it, he will do it, he has done it.

When we read in the scripture about the things that God has done somewhere at some time, brother Branham says:

"When people come together and pray and believe the same way, God is obligated to do the same thing He did then or He has to take it back. He cannot do one thing to some and another to others."

But we must come before the face of God with the same attitude, with the same faith, in the same unanimity.

Then we have a passage in Romans 8, verse 14, which I wanted to read. And here in Romans 8, verse 14, it is about the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God or driven by the Spirit, they are the sons of God.

Here we have to make the big difference between being supposedly led and really being led.

I have already mentioned that we have certainly grieved the Spirit of God. I make no secret of it.

And when brother Kupfer called me and cried on the phone and said, "Brother Frank, what happened in the last meeting?" I had to come to terms with myself.

I am not one of those who blow the horn and say everything was wonderful. No, we want to be honest before God as far as we can and as far as we are given grace.

And if we make mistakes, then we want to admit them and bow before the Lord and say, "Help us!"

But when someone comes and says, "I am urged by the Spirit," you are then driven into a corner and are afraid: Maybe there is something there after all.

And then what happens?

So there are two things. There is a real leading of the Holy Spirit.

But it certainly happens during the meeting without anyone having to introduce themselves or emphasize that this is the case.

I have noticed a few things. I would like to read them. Just to commend myself, my brothers, Brother Russ, Brother Schmidt, all the brothers who minister with the Word. We commend ourselves that you pray for us.

I read from Numbers 20, Numbers 20, and here verse 7, Numbers 20, verse 7.

I would like to emphasize two things this evening. One is the calling of God, the commission of the Lord, and to act according to that commission in the will of God. And the other is to give in when people demand something and then a servant of God does it.

These are two fundamentally different things.

I therefore want to contrast them so that we learn the lesson, I for myself, in particular, and then all of us, as a prayer request.

Numbers 20, verse 7:

7 And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Take the rod, and gather thou the assembly together, thou, and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes; and it shall give forth his water.

We all know the story. We don't need to read any further. Moses had been harassed by the people. You only need to read the beginning. By the way, it was in the 40th year of the wanderings.

And what always strikes us is the following, and I would also like to emphasize this: There are always trials and blessings, at the beginning and at the end. There are two kinds of things, always especially at the beginning and at the end.

Let's take our Lord. If we take the beginning, his birth, many prophecies in the scripture were fulfilled. He is brought into Egypt, so that what was spoken through the prophet might be fulfilled. [Mt 2:15] Children were killed, so that what Jeremiah prophesied may be fulfilled. [Mt 2:18] Everywhere fulfillment of the scripture.

Then you don't hear anything for a long time. When he was 12 years, you hear something very briefly in the temple, and then you don't hear anything again until 30 years.

But then suddenly, the last part comes, and it starts. His ministry, his suffering, his death, his resurrection, it's coming thick and fast.

Here is the beginning, and then, I would like to say, nothing. And then the end, full of the plan of salvation and what God has promised.

It was similar with the people of Israel.

I can't go into all the details here. But the beginning, one word after another was fulfilled, great signs and miracles happened. All was glorious, the giving of the law, and then it started. Then it started.

And during the 40 years, we are not told much at all.

But when did Balaam appear? When did all the people appear? And when did all the things happen? Right before the entry into the land.

But let me come back to this point here.

Numbers 20, verse 7:

And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Take the rod, and gather thou the assembly together, thou and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes, and it shall give forth his water.

You all know what Moses did. He struck twice, not just once. [Num 20:11]

Once was also too much, because the rock had already been struck.

But here it says, "**Ye rebels.**" [Nu 20:10]

And we realize, from the words, from the context, that there was a bit of agitation.

By the way, Miriam died directly in the 40th year and did not go in. [Num 20:1]

But verse 2 says:

And there was no water for the congregation: and they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron.

Instead of going into prayer...

Could Moses give water, could Aaron give water? Instead of coming to the Lord, they went against the man of God, and then action was taken.

Moses acted under pressure. He was not as free as he would have been, if only there had been a command from the Lord. The Lord spoke to him, he complied with the people's request, but God was angry with him.

Let's read Exodus 17, to see where the Lord commanded him to strike the rock and where the water came out.

Exodus 17, from verse 5.

And the Lord said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go.

Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink.

And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.

Perhaps the last part of verse 7.

Is the Lord among us or not?

It was a test. It was a test. And we see the man of God acted.

God was with him. God cared for his people. But God doesn't want us to murmur. God wants us to ask in faith.

Do you understand the difference? Then blessing will flow forth in abundance.

We could go on reading all the things here.

It was a rod of God. Whatever that rod touched was blessed because God had blessed it. It happened in faith.

But now let's read Deuteronomy 32 to build a bridge back there. Deuteronomy 32. I read all this for one reason only, to make us, who want to reach the goal togeth-

er, realize how necessary it is to carry even the greatest men of God on hands of prayer, but to leave it to God when and how he will do his work.

That we do not act under human pressure or come under human coercion and influence, but are free under the guidance of the Holy Spirit to serve the living God so that his will can be done.

Deuteronomy 32 verse 51. There the Lord rebukes Moses with the words:

Because ye trespassed against me among the children of Israel at the waters of Meribah-Kadesh, in the wilderness of Zin; because ye sanctified me not in the midst of the children of Israel.

You could read other scriptures and see how quickly even the greatest man of God can do something...

Not in the proclamation!

And I want to emphasize this very clearly and ask you to see the difference and take note of it.

When it comes to preaching the Word of God, there is no influence. There is only one influence and that is the influence of God. And it comes from the word, through the Holy Spirit.

But when it comes to certain actions and doing this or that, then it can happen. If we are not careful that we actually make a mistake, and I wouldn't be the first, there were plenty before me to whom it happened.

We can think of a few, especially Exodus 32. Exodus 32, something happened there that will be remembered forever. That doesn't mean forever of course, but perhaps until the end of time.

In Exodus 32, actually already from verse 1, it was again the people who said, "Where is this Moses? He is not coming back from the mountain" and so on.

And then it says, they said to Aaron, ***"Up, make us gods, which shall go before us."***

It was not God who had spoken – the people surrounded Aaron and said, "What's wrong with Moses? He is not coming back at all. What's going to happen here now?"

They urged him and said, ***"Come on, make us a god who will go before us, for we do not know what has become of this Moses, the man who brought us here from the land of Egypt."***

And what happens?

Aaron, who had been so anointed, that he is even mentioned in the Psalms, that the oil reached the hem of his garment [Ps 133:2], a man of God. All of a sudden, the people surround him, invade him or gather unto him. And really he says, ***"Then give your nose rings, earrings and whatever you have on your feet and hands, noses and ears, give all those things."*** [Ex 32:2]

And he puts it all in a pot and a calf comes out.

And then he says, "***This is our god who brought us out of Egypt.***" [Ex 32:4]

We shake our heads today and say, "How can this be possible? How could it happen?"

It could happen, because a man of God listened to men. That's where idolatry can start. That's where anything can start.

And for me, I have to admit quite honestly, that is a very great lesson.

We have to give an account to God even for every meeting. And I really wish we would take it so much to heart that we would consecrate every service to the Lord and say, "Lord, do not allow your servants to be impressed by circumstances, by influence, by anything, but remain withdrawn, standing under the guidance of the Spirit, so that you can have your right fulfilled."

That is what God wants, and that is what God will achieve.

We see that it was always when men of God listened to men that they failed.

Do we know who speaks through people? Whether they, whether God, whether the devil? What do we know?

The devil even spoke through Peter, a disciple of the Lord, who once said, "***Lord, this shall not be unto thee.***" [Mt 16:22]

And the Savior said, "***Get thee behind me, Satan.***"

What do we know who is speaking through a person at that very moment?

And so I want to give my brother Russ, my brothers who minister with the Word, and I want to give it to myself as a lesson that God could and would give grace that when we come together here we really step into the Holy of Holies and see and hear nothing but the Lord and submit ourselves to the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Well, we shake our heads and say, "How could Aaron give in?" Well, be surrounded by all the people.

How could Moses give in? "They are going to stone me." [Exodus 17:4]

And what was it? He struck. And the rock was already struck. He only needed to speak and the water would have come out.

Another scripture from 1 Samuel 8 that is particularly worth emphasizing. There it happened to one of God's greatest men, Samuel, who was called as a child, as a boy, and placed in the service of the Lord.

And suddenly the people come to him and make him a suggestion, instruct him what to do.

What is it? 1 Samuel 8. You can read from verse 1. I'll just read verse 4.

Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together and came to Samuel unto Ramah

and said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways. Now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.

Israel was not another nation, Israel was the chosen people.

What did Israel have in common with all the other nations?

Was that their pattern? That was not their pattern.

God had chosen them out of all the nations to be his people.

And the Lord said to Samuel, ***"They have not rejected you, they have rejected me,"*** for I am their king, I have brought them out.

And you can read it, ***"In my anger I have given them a king, in my wrath I have taken him away."*** [Hos 13:11]

But the Lord, he says, ***"Grant their request, give them a king."***

What will you do against the will of the people? God himself must say, ***"Give them a king."***

That's what they want.

God can only do one thing, either reveal his will to us and give us the gift of obedience of faith that we are willing to do his will.

If this is not the case, then God can make Balaam out of us and let us go our own way.

Then we have the thoughts of our hearts. Then perhaps we can choose what we can or should do.

Samuel, a special man of God, and the people come to him and say, ***"We want a king."***

I really want to ask this for myself, personally from God, by grace, to help, to bless, to watch over us and to make sure that everything happens under the guidance of his Spirit.

One more word concerning our beloved Paul. Even after reading this, he will remain the greatest man of God that we hold in high esteem.

Acts 21, the scripture we all know. It says here, you could perhaps read a lot, but everyone can do it at home. Here, he was told, I think from verse 10, there he was in Caesarea, and Agabus prophesied to him what would happen to him in Jerusalem.

At the end of verse 14 it says, ***"The will of the Lord be done."***

And then Paul comes to Jerusalem and the disciples recite some things to him, the elders come to him with James, and then there is a conversation.

We read from verse 20:

And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord, but they said unto him...

There is already that "but"...

... but they said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe, and they are all zealous of the law.

And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs.

What is it therefore? the multitude must needs come together: for they will hear that thou art come.

Do therefore this that we say to thee.

Here we go again.

Do therefore this that we say to thee. And then it started. You can read on:

23 We have four men which have a vow on them.

24 Them take, and purify thyself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads: and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing; but that thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law.

That all sounded nice.

Do what we advise you to do.

It seems human.

God has allowed it. God has allowed it. But we realize that even great men of God are tested in certain situations, instead of trusting God, circumcision or not, law or not.

"Paul, let God use you, preach what the Lord puts on your heart."

Here is the beautiful suggestion ***"so that they all know that you are a zealous follower of the law. Have your head shaved. Pay for the purifying. And make the vow and go with the four men."***

We know what happened next.

Earthly speaking, incomprehensible to us.

I say again, God allows it. But we don't want to be in the permissible will of God, but in the perfect will of God.

And if things happen to us, if things happen to me and I couldn't read about it here in the Bible, then I would have to despair, wouldn't I? Then I and perhaps my brothers would have to despair.

But if we can read that God is above everything, that He can ultimately make a big deal out of our mistakes.

All things are possible with Him. Because no one, no man of God will do anything on purpose. On the contrary, if we slip up, it's really only because we weren't paying attention.

But just imagine, here is Paul, here is James, the elders are there, and they have heard this and that and say to him, "**Now do what we advise you to do.**"

He did it. Fortunately, the temple was then closed. That was perhaps the only good thing about the whole story, that the door of the temple was then closed for good.

God has His way.

We just realize how much we have to pay attention to it.

I say this to myself personally, before the face of God, to be careful not to be influenced, not to be told by others what we should do. Didn't we fall into the trap just because we listened to what others have said?

"The Lord wants this and the Lord wants that."

The Lord doesn't want anything.

And I got it over my lips once: "For all eternity I will not listen to what people say."

I wish it would come true.

I wish it would come true that God could come with us through the guidance of His Spirit to stand absolutely in His will to preach what He once preached, to do what He once done so that He could look down on us with joy and that His blessing could come upon us all in full measure.

I have also noted Acts 21, 10-14 and also the first part.

On the one hand, we notice how men of God say "**The will of the Lord be done.**" That's what we say.

But then comes the second part: The brothers surround him and say "We have heard this and that about you and all the consequences. You despise the law, circumcision, and, and, and. Now do this so that the people get the impression that everything has remained the same."

It hadn't stayed the same.

The law had fulfilled its purpose. "**The law and the prophets were until John. And since that time, the kingdom of God is preached.**" [Lk 16:16]

And this kingdom of God was preached by this man of the kingdom.

And suddenly, the brothers come, they surround Him and say "Oh yes, well, we have heard of all that God has done through you and we praise Him for it."

A nice introduction, a marvelous introduction. Bouquet of flowers, right here, we can read it.

"And when they heard it, what things God had done among the Gentiles by his ministry, they glorified God and said unto him: "Thou seest, dear brother..."

Very nice, you can even say "dear brother." It all sounds so marvelous and beautiful, doesn't it?

I am not saying this as a criticism, I am just saying it so that we don't have to despair.

We can trust our God. We can believe Him and be full of confidence.

Just like with Moses, he was angry with him. And a few hundred years later, on the Mount of Transfiguration, He was very kind to Moses. He could talk to him about the outcome He would take in Jerusalem. God makes everything good. God undoes even the mistakes we have made and presents us before His face as if we have done everything right.

We can't understand it, but that's God. That's how God is. He can still turn mistakes into great victories and glorify His name.

But these examples, they just struck me. And I say to myself, "Lord, when will I get there? How much longer will it take for me to really be removed from all human influence and be under the divine influence, only doing what God wants, or do nothing?"

And when you then read... Not that you want to hide under it. That wouldn't be right. But we can all say one thing to ourselves: Despite everything that was not right in human terms or before Him, God purposefully built His kingdom in the Old and New Testament and brought His plan to fruition. And He will continue to do so to the end.

But we want Him to look down on us with favor and for the perfect and acceptable will of God to be done by grace.

Do you want to pray for us – I will say it now, like I mean it – for us, who have to minister with the Word, not want to, not want to, but have to, because I don't want to, so that you all know, the whole world can hear it: I don't want to, I have to – for us, who have been set by God for a purpose, do you want to pray for us?

We are only human. We are sometimes dependent on circumstances, on things without even realizing it. And already it can happen.

Will you, considering that great man of God, whether Moses, whether Aaron, whoever they all were, we see that people remain people.

And I repeat myself, in the proclamation, in the execution of divine instructions, there was never a mistake. The mistakes or human failures were where human influence was exerted on men of God and they then did what the people wanted.

But the Almighty God was above all this and brought His plan to fruition.

And that will be the case until the end.

Be patient with us and pray for us, but earnestly. More earnestly than ever before, that God might have His right fulfilled by grace with us all.

Amen.

Heavenly Father, I too would like to thank You from the bottom of my heart that we have Your Word. In Your Word we see and recognize what Your blessing rests on, namely, when Your servants have done what You say at Thy Word.

O Lord, we have one request this evening: Place us fully and completely under the guidance of Your Spirit. Take everything from our midst that could come under the influence of others and place us all under Your Word, under Your Spirit.

Take us, faithful Lord.

What bitter lessons we have had to endure because we have listened to men. O Almighty God, we don't want to look back.

As we have heard and we thank You that although we have no excuse that we were not the only ones who listened to others.

Lord my God, but we ask You to give us grace in the future.

May we from this day onward trust You, believe You and come before Your face as Your people in reverence, with faith and with obedience.

And as it was prayed that we leave our own plans outside and can be gathered here before Your face.

Lord, I thank You that You have watched over the proclamation of Your Word in an unfailing way.

Hallelujah to Your glorious and marvelous name.

We have nothing to take back, nothing to correct from what we have preached from Your Word. For this I thank You.

And we ask You now, as You have given us Your Word, so now give us obedience, faith and the guidance of Your Spirit, that we may speak to the smitten rock, so that the time of the spoken Word may dawn.

Hallelujah.

Almighty God, You have seen my torn heart and have given me small comfort that I am not the only one who has fallen for it.

Lord, I thank You and I worship You.

Bless my beloved brother Russ, bless brother Schmidt. May You sanctify this place anew, consecrate it anew and be over us with Your pillar of fire. Place us under divine influence for the honor of Your Holy Name.

We thank You that You have done so.
Amen.