

Kenny Moorer

I'm going to start with a question. And I want to start with a question that may be hard for you to answer in the way that you think I want you to answer. But I'm going to ask it, nonetheless. And I'd like for you, when I ask this question, if you are affected by what I'm about to say, I'd like for you to raise your hand. If you're not, or if you're not sure, that's fine. And then there may be those in this audience who will not raise their hand and that's fine. But just for my sake, I'd like for you to raise your hand when I ask the question. And let me tell you up front, I'm going to preach this lesson regardless of what you say. So, you don't you know, we hear regardless, but I would like to know how you feel about that. I want to know if on occasion, you lose your spiritual oomph. Raise your hand if that happens to you. Well, good. And I feel a little bit about preaching. It's an interesting question. I don't know. I've never preached on spiritual oomph before. But I think it's important and I'm going to explain that further. As we go a couple of weeks ago, I was sitting in the family room in our house and Beth came through which she normally does she lives with me and she crossed in front of the chair where I was sitting and she kind of stopped and she gently sighed - she didn't know I was going to tell the story. She gently sighed and I said there's something wrong. And she said just don't feel it today like I normally do. And like a good husband I asked what is the antecedent to "it"? I didn't say it like that. But I wanted to know why. Why is it that you don't - what is it about which you don't feel as good today as you normally do? And she told me, and we talked about that. And I understood and I told her I said I get it. But you know what's interesting about that is she just, while she admitted that, she continued to do what she needed to do to prepare for it. And she fulfilled her responsibilities toward it and that didn't surprise me because that's who she is. It didn't surprise me either that she was having some concern about not feeling like she normally felt about that which she was doing. And you know, something the "I don't feel it today" happens to all of us. It's not just spiritually. It happens to all of us in every facet of life. You know, sometimes it's just not what it used to be. I'm going to get a little touchy here. I think Nick Saban kind of felt like you know what? I'm just tired. By the way, I've sent him a thank you note. I wanted all of you to know that. I'm probably not the only one but I know I did. I don't know whether he'll read it or not, but I sent him one. But all kidding aside, I do want to offer some spiritual advice. To those of us when we lose a little or a lot of our spiritual oomph. Oomph is a word. You will find it in most dictionaries and I'm going to tell you what it means. It means an imitative, it's imitative of the sound made during exertion as in lifting a heavy object as in... that's what it is. And I think there are times when we spiritually heavy lift. That it's hard.

When I asked you, do you ever lose your spiritual oomph, my hands, both my hands would have been raised. Because there are times when we heavy lift spiritually. And it's a struggle, I'll use the term, I think it's a struggle. There are frustrations that happen to us spiritually. And we struggle to know how to deal with it - happened to me last week. Happened to me last week about something here, a spiritual struggle with me. About how do I deal with that? Should I deal with that? What should I do about that, and it's weighed on me, and it continues to weigh on me.

But the impetus for this lesson, I think, is interesting. And I'm going to get into the main portion of it in a moment. A couple of weeks ago, after service, and we were having - I was having a conversation with some folks. And I was asked, in that casual conversation, you know, what you need to do is follow up this lesson with another lesson. And that person began to describe why a follow-up was needed. And that person began to describe what that follow up should involve. And there really wasn't a word that the person came up with to describe what needed to be said. And either I or someone else who was in the conversation and there were several standing around who heard the conversation, and the word oomph

was mentioned. And we kind of all agreed that's the word that's a word that needs to be used, because well, I think we understand that. It's about as good a word as I know.

So, one other thought, before I get to the essence of my lesson. We're not talking about losing faith here. We're not talking about something as severe as losing faith. If we were talking about that, I think we would be talking about something totally different. We're not talking about that. Those of you who raised your hand this morning, and it was I think it was a majority of people, those of you who raised your hand this morning, you didn't raise your hand because you're losing faith. That's not it. That's not what I meant by my question. And it wasn't well defined before asked it. But that's not, it's not a question of losing your faith. It's just what I would consider a momentary drop in your, if I might use, it in your spiritual blood pressure. It's as if when it happens, you need a little spiritual pacemaker put in or somehow given to you so that you can just kind of get past what it is that's going on with you. So, let's talk today, for just a moment about what do I do when I lose my oomph? I'm talking about my spiritual oomph.

Two or three things this morning. First of all, remember that lulls are normal. When you go through that, I don't want you to think that that's uncommon. You just saw it's not uncommon. I don't want you to think that it's sinful. I don't think it is. And I think some of the passages that we're going to look at just a moment are going to tell us that. I think it's as real as anything that can happen to us. And I think it's real because we are human. And those kinds of things do happen to us. This, this passage that Brett read - one of my favorite sermons comes from this text. I've preached that sermon here, and I'm sure alluded to it several times in the interim. This passage in which Peter says, for this reason, I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though, you know, and are established in the present truth. That's us. You see, that's us. We're, I think we're established in the present truth. He says, Yes, I think it's right, as long as I'm in this tent to stir you up by reminding you knowing that shortly I must put off my tent just as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me Moreover, I will be careful to ensure that you always have a reminder of these things after my decease, why in the world would Peter say all of this, you know, he says, I'm about to die. And I want to tell you some things even though you know, you're established in it. You know what the truth about it is, I'm not telling you anything new Peter says, But I'm doing it so that when I do leave you, you'll be able to go back and think about this. Why say that? Because he knows how people are. He knows how I am. He knows how you are. And he knows that we need to be stirred up from time to time. And the way that happens is you are, you're reminded of that. That's not sinful. It's not sinful when I go through periods where maybe I'm not as spiritually minded, or maybe I go through periods where I struggle a little bit. Or where I'll think is this as this text would indicate where I'm somewhat stagnant, where I just simply don't do anything in reference to my spiritual nature. And that happens. And Peter said, I'm going to tell you some things. And he goes on to tell them some things that they need to remember about that. But what the text says is that there are things that they needed to remember when they got in these situations, same is true of us. But when you have those things, don't think badly about yourself. I don't think that's what God wants you to do. I think what he wants you to do is understand that it's normal and do what you can then to move past that, okay.

Now, the passage that comes to my mind is this passage of Revelation 3, to the angel, the church in Sardis write these things say he who has the seven Spirits of God and seven stars, I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you're dead. And then he says, be watchful and strengthen

the things which remained that are ready to die for I have not found your works perfect before God, verse two, is kind of where I'm focusing on this morning, be watchful and strengthen the things that remain. And now he says that you're dead. But I think what he's saying is, you know, there are parts of you that are there parts of you that aren't there parts of you that are ready to, but you got to kind of, you got to kind of pull all that together and see where that leads. He says, so be watchful, and strengthen the things which remained that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before God. And then he says, "Remember, therefore how you have received and heard hold fast, and repent". There may be some times when our struggles are a result of our sin. I'm not suggesting that they aren't. Sin would identify that. When we sin, we are going to struggle. When we sin, we do need to repent. That's what he's telling some of these folks at Sardis. But he does say there are there are things that you just need to strengthen. Again, maybe sinful, but I think he's also saying there are some things you just need to recheck and reevaluate.

And then this brief passage is found in Romans 13. And do this knowing the time that now it is high time to awake out of sleep. For now, our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. Sleep, a lot of times in Scripture is identified as a period of just you're not alive spiritually. Not that you're dead physically, but you're just not alive in the kind of ways that you typically would be alive and what Paul says is it's time to awake out of your sleep. As a matter of fact, he says it's high time. And I would think for all of us, when we go through these periods as difficult as they may be, there comes a point where we need to just move on and get out of where we are. Okay. I think that's what Paul's saying in Romans 13 You know, if you're in this lull you need to get out of it. Time that you awake for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed There is a time element involved in that. Don't participate in that too long, I think is what Paul is trying to say. So, remember, the lulls are normal they're not sinful and I think to say they're normal.

Let me say this. If you're here this morning, and you don't go through these periods I'm very thankful for you and I'm not suggesting that you're telling something that's untrue. If you might be sitting there going you know what, I just don't I just don't have that. Well, that's good. I'm thankful you don't but I'm tell you what a lot of people do myself included.

The second thing, let me suggest that we need to do when I lose my oomph, reevaluate your options intellectually. Again, I don't know if it gets to that point. But sometimes when we lose what we've had spiritually or we begin to lose what we have spiritually, there might be a sense in which we are at least entertaining the possibility that maybe what I'm doing is not what I ought to be doing. Maybe I'm feeling what I'm feeling because I'm doing something that I shouldn't be doing. Maybe I need to be doing something else. This passage in John 6 where Jesus preaches the lesson behind on the bread of life, he goes on to talk about several things in reference to that. And the text tells us that I think about verse 58, 59, Jesus said, what I'm telling you is you have to drink, eat my flesh, and drink my blood.

I believe if I had been one of those who heard him and I heard him say, You got to eat my flesh, and you drink My Blood, I may have been one of the ones that the next verse in verse 60 says, Many thought it was a hard thing and a turned and walked with him, no more, I may very well. I'm not about to eat the flesh of somebody and drink the blood. And yet, that's what Jesus said. So, I understand a little bit as to why and the text tells us that it wasn't, the text says many turned, many turned and walked no more with Him. And when I read that, I get that I do. But the text goes on to say in verse 67, that Jesus turned his attention not to the ones who were walking away, but the ones who stayed. And he said do you also,

to the 12, he said, do you also want to go away? I want you to think about it. Of all the people that nobody would expect to walk away, it would be the 12. Wouldn't it? And yet Jesus said, do you want to go to? It was it was as if to say, now's the time. If what I'm telling you is too hard for you. You need to walk away; he said it to the 12!

And the 12 Evidently didn't respond altogether. But evidently, Peter, as he often did, spoke for them. And he said in verse 68, Peter said, Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Also, we have come to believe and know that you are the Christ, the Son of the living God. Here's what I would suggest about that. I think Jesus said, look, it is hard. And I'm sure he would go on to further explain what he meant by that. But my guess is that he understood even for them, it was hard. And Peter said for them, we don't see a better option. That's Kenny's translation. To whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, or we don't see a better option. I'm not, I'm not trying to come in from the back door. But I think Jesus gives them an opportunity to intellectually look at Do you have a better option? And I would suggest for us that the same issue for us is the issue that the 12 faced. And when you go through these spiritual lulls, or this where you feel like you're losing momentarily, you're losing this oomph, I would like for you to ask, and I've done this myself. Consider Kenny for a moment, that what's happening to you is because of your faith, what other direction you're going to go. You know, what's interesting about that is when I consider other directions, I don't come up with a good option. I don't come up with any good options. And I always go back to where I'm at. And I think that's what the 12 did. And again, I'm not trying to come through the back door, but I think Jesus said, you're going to go away? This would be a good time to let me know you're going to go away, and they said, No, we're not going away. We're not going away because you have the words to eternal life. We've looked at it. You're not just the best option you are the only option. We have eternal life with you, and we have the kind of life that we want with you. So, you are the only option. So, when you have this lull, I don't think it's wrong at all. Think about what is there another direction? My guess is I'm talking to some people this morning who have considered that. I know people who have had faith who considered other options and left for other options. And you do too. You may be sitting there this morning, and you may right now be considering other options. And I don't know about that. And those around you don't know about it. To you, I'd say consider it, if that's what you think you need to do: consider it. But I promise you this. Once you consider it, you won't go anywhere else. What is your best option.? Because Peter answered for you, oh, where are we going to go? You're the best option.

And then let me mention this. As well, you need to remember that losing oomph is a short-term problem. It's not going to last. See that's a good thing about it. When I when I when I've lost it, or when I'm losing it what I always know is that we'll get it back. Because my faith is in something that's solid. And the problem that I'm having is not the one I have faith in. The problem is me. And me is going to change. Me is going to evaluate it. Me is going to think about it, and me's going to figure it out. And so, I know that I'm going to get my oomph back. This passage in Psalm 85, that was on the screen when Mitch led Revive us Again, which we're going to sing in just a moment again, the text says, Will you not Revive us again, that your people may rejoice in you? The very question that God's people asked indicates that they knew, hey, we've been in a lull. Will you not Revive us again? Which is another way to say I know you can, will you help us? Will you help us come out of this, that we may rejoice in You?

You know what I have found that in my life, this is just a personal testimony. I've found out in my life, that the passion will always return for me. If my faith is genuine, always comes back, never fails, always comes back. And that's kept me going through the difficult times. That's part of the joy of getting back is, is even though I may not be feeling like I want to feel right now that if I stay the course it's going to come back and I'm not going to feel that way again. Now, I don't want you to leave this morning thinking man, Is he down all the time? No. Does he have all sorts of these spiritual lulls, no. But if I stood here and told you, I didn't have him, I'd be lying to you. Because I do and I think the indication is that you do as well. So, know that you'll get back, don't quit, you'll get back.

And let me offer a few points from this passage that's found in Second Chronicles 7:14. This, this would be just a few ways. And I'm just going to mention these briefly. If my people who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land. I think some of these things can relate to us whether we are being sinful or not. I'm going to suggest that these are things that we can do to revive how we feel. First of all, I would suggest, as he says, here, the question is asked, Will you need to humble yourselves. And I think that would be the same for us. You know, spiritually, folks, and really, there's nothing we can do. There's nothing we can do to help ourselves. We have to humble ourselves completely. And even over the course of the past week, I've had a couple of conversations with different people here. And that that idea of humility and humbling yourself has come up in those conversations. And I think that's what we have to do when we get in these lulls just is relieve ourselves all by ourselves and humble ourselves and ask God to help us which brings me to the next point which he says is humble yourself and pray. The thing that he asked of us might be the hardest.

I've shared this with you before. I vividly remember a young lady coming forward during an invitation as I recall, it was on Wednesday night. She was a friend of mine and Beth, she was married. There had been some struggle. And she came, she sat down early in the invitation. So, I think we've done a couple of verses, and she came down. And she I'm standing here she said right there. It was unexpected that she had given me a heads up for she had told me she was coming. But when the invitation song was over, I did what I would have sat down with her and I just asked quietly, why have you come? She looked at me and she smiled, and she said, "I want to take any I want I want these people to know that prayer works". That's what she said. I said, Okay, that's great. What else? She said that's it. I said, that's really good. This is going to be this is going to be a good talk.

And I got up, and I said, I'm just going to share with you what this young lady shared with me, and that is that prayer works. And what I've realized is that what she was saying to me is I had been praying, I've been praying that my marriage would improve, and that it would get better. And it has. And she said, I attribute that to the fact that God said he would help me. And he has. In her mind, what had happened was her prayer had worked. And she wanted, she wanted to say that to everybody. And that just seemed, I thought that was very interesting. I'm glad that she did. And I would suggest to you that prayer works. Sometimes that's hard. Sometimes it's hard to pray, because we don't think it works. But we just have to have to commit ourselves to what the Lord says. And he said, you need to pray.

And then he says something interesting, that I think involves the prayer. But I want to carry it just a little bit further, if I might, you know, he says, you need to seek my face. What in the world does that mean? Seek my face. That's language that I think is interesting, but it's not clearly identified. What does it mean to seek your faith? Well, what would you think that would mean? Well, I think John's text, John's Gospel

answers that for us this conversation that Jesus had with Thomas. Thomas said, Lord, do we do not know where you're going and how can we know the way? Jesus said, I am the way I am the truth and the life no one comes to the Father except through me. And if you had known me, you would have known my Father also. And from now on, you know him, and you have seen him, Phillip saying and Lord, show us the Father and is sufficient for us. In other words, I hear you, but you haven't done it. And Jesus said, have I not been with you so long. And yet you have not known me, Philip? He who has seen Me seen the Father. So how can you say show us the Father? So, when the text tells us that we need to seek the face of God, it seems to me if I put these things together, what Jesus is saying is you need to seek Me, look at me. Look at my face. You haven't seen the face of the Father, but you've seen my face. And if you've seen my face what he told Thomas, you've seen you've seen the father, that's what he that's what he kept saying in his ministry. You've seen me, you've seen the Father, that's what got him in trouble. But that's what he said. So, when you get in the, in the losing the spiritual oomph, just continue to see Jesus. Continue to seek Jesus. So, in review, you need to humble. You need to pray. And you need to seek.

So, the great news, I think, is that we all face most of us anyway, face these spiritual lows. And we've climbed out of it. And the way we tie my knowledge, we stay the course. We don't quit. We don't get discouraged. We just stay the course knowing that we're going to pull out of that. So maybe these things will help you.

Let me tell you how I prepared this lesson. I sat down and I said, Okay, what should I do when I lose my spiritual oomph, and this is what I came up with. Now, you may have other things that help you and I'm sure there are other things too. If you like, talking with people about I get that I think that'd be a great thing. But I would suggest, fundamentally, these are the things that we talked about this morning. that will help you and me get out of those times I pray that it will I pray that it'll help you.