


Christian Book Reports

Jim Hoffman



The Author – Jim Cymbala

“One day I told the Lord that I would rather die than merely tread water throughout my career in the ministry ... always preaching about the power of the Word and the Spirit, but never seeing it. I abhorred the thought of just having more church services. I hungered for God to break through in our lives and ministry.” Jim Cymbala






God is attracted to weakness.

“That evening, when I was at my lowest, confounded by obstacles, bewildered by the darkness that surrounded us, unable even to continue preaching, I discovered an astonishing truth: God is attracted to weakness. He can’t resist those who humbly and honestly admit how desperately they need him. Our weakness, in fact, makes room for his power.” Jim Cymbala

2 Corinthians 12:9 But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.





God is at work in us.

“How I treasure those early humblings. Those experiences showed me that I didn’t need to play the preacher. Jesus called fishermen, not graduates of rabbinical schools.” Jim Cymbala

Matthew 4:19 "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." NIV






Some times less is more.

“Confrontation came hard because we could ill afford to lose people. But if these members were to stay, the result would be ongoing discord—and I knew the Lord would never bless that kind of a mess with the spiritual power we so desperately needed. One by one, these people made their exit. On a couple of occasions I even had to help answer my own prayers by suggesting that members consider another church.” Jim Cymbala

Better to have a few who are in agreement than a crowd that is in disarray.






You can't live off the past.

“I was tired of the escapist mentality I had witnessed since childhood—always glorifying what God did way back in some revival, or else passionately predicting ‘the coming great move of God’ just ahead.” Jim Cymbala

It may good to remember what God has done in the past, but if all of his work is in your past what does that say to us?





We Need Freshness

“One day I told the Lord that I would rather die than merely tread water throughout my career in the ministry ... always preaching about the power of the Word and the Spirit, but never seeing it. I abhorred the thought of just having more church services. I hungered for God to break through in our lives and ministry.” Jim Cymbala

It is a the person with the healthy appetite who longs for something fresh.





A promise from God.

“Then quietly but forcefully, in words heard not with my ear but deep within my spirit, I sensed God speaking: If you and your wife will lead my people to pray and call upon my name, you will never lack for something fresh to preach. I will supply all the money that’s needed, both for the church and for your family, and you will never have a building large enough to contain the crowds I will send in response.

Jim Cymbala

Jeremiah 33:3

'Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.'

NKJV





Procurement via Prayer

“If we call upon the Lord, he has promised in his Word to answer, to bring the unsaved to himself, to pour out his Spirit among us. If we don’t call upon the Lord, he has promised nothing—nothing at all. It’s as simple as that. No matter what I preach or what we claim to believe in our heads, the future will depend upon our times of prayer. “

Jim Cymbala

When we pray we acknowledge our need for God and our utter inability to accomplish anything that lasts on our own.





What are doing, really?

“You can tell how popular a church is by who comes on Sunday morning. You can tell how popular the pastor or evangelist is by who comes on Sunday night. But you can tell how popular Jesus is by who comes to the prayer meeting.”

Jim Cymbala



I suspect that prayer meetings have the lowest attendance numbers because they also has the least amount of entertainment.





What does spirituality look like?

“The format of a prayer meeting is not nearly as important as its essence—touching the Almighty, crying out with one’s whole being. I have been in noisy prayer meetings that were mainly a show. I have been with groups in times of silent prayer that were deeply spiritual. The atmosphere of the meeting may vary; what matters most is that we encounter the God of the universe, not just each other.” Jim Cymbala

I think there is a great confusion in contemporary Christian circles about what spirituality looks like.






When do we pray?

“Prayer cannot truly be taught by principles and seminars and symposiums. It has to be born out of a whole environment of felt need. If I say, “I ought to pray,” I will soon run out of motivation and quit; the flesh is too strong. I have to be driven to pray.” Jim Cymbala

To this I can only sadly say, “amen”. I suspect I am part of a great company of Christians who pray the best when we hurt the most.






Blessed are the Broken?

“In fact, Carol and I have told each other more than once that if the spirit of brokenness and calling on God ever slacks off in the Brooklyn Tabernacle, we’ll know we’re in trouble, even if we have 10,000 in attendance.” Jim Cymbala

How different is this from the world – in the world it is we will know we are successful when things are easy. These two see being needy as the measure of success.





Are you too old to cry?

“Charles Spurgeon once remarked that “the best style of prayer is that which cannot be called anything else but a cry.” Jim Cymbala

Psalms 34:6 This poor man cried, and Jehovah heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.

ASV





Satan's Strategy

“SATAN’S MAIN STRATEGY WITH God’s people has always been to whisper, “Don’t call, don’t ask, don’t depend on God to do great things. You’ll get along fine if you just rely on your own cleverness and energy.” Jim Cymbala

When will we get it? That God is not interested in the self-sufficient, he desires those that have needs.





Evil sometimes looks like self-sufficiency.

“Notice how God defines wicked people in Psalm 14:4. “Will evildoers never learn—those who devour my people as men eat bread and who do not call on the LORD?” Jim Cymbala

One of the great devotional writers said, “The main thing God asks for is our attention.”





Evil sometimes looks like self-sufficiency.

“If our churches don’t pray, and if people don’t have an appetite for God, what does it matter how many are attending the services?” Jim Cymbala

Has the 21st century western church been trapped into maintaining buildings instead of building disciples?





Video Link

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6jRfPIJG1rc>
- This is the you tube link for Jim Cymbala's sermon called "My Father's House Shall Be Called a House of Prayer"





Questions / Comments

