

Prayer

January, 02 2009

Series 1 - Worship

Introduction - Prayer

A. Prayer is the practice of the presence of God. Prayer is the place where pride is abandoned, hope is lifted and supplication is made. Prayer is the place of admitting our need, of adopting humility, and claiming dependence upon God. Prayer is the needful practice of the Christian. Prayer is the exercise of faith and hope. Prayer is the privilege of touching the heart of the Father through the Son of God, Jesus our Lord.

B. There are three basic forms of prayer that we see in the Bible: worship, intercession and petition. Each has a different action and motivation associated with it. Each form is also eluded to in the Model Prayer (Luke 11).

C. It seems we so often view prayer only as a means of expressing our needs to God or asking Him for something. So often, we pray and give thanks, intercede for someone hurting or in need, or who may not know Jesus and say amen.

Those are all wonderful motivations, the Lord is concerned about our needs and certainly the salvation of a loved one more that we know (Matthew 6:5, Matthew 6:8, Hebrews 4:15). He is fully aware of the things we need before we even ask Him, it's OK to ask! This form of prayer is petitioning God to act or move on our needs and requests. But is it our repetition that finally drives God to move? (Luke 11: 9-13, 18).

Coming to Him in prayer should mean so much more than simply requesting Him to do something. This mindset almost places God in a servant role, not our master. He is our shepherd not our servant. The fact that we have access to the Creator of the Universe should drive us to our knees in reverence. And His ways are not our ways and what we

Prayer

January, 02 2009

Series 1 - Worship

might think needs to be done could be completely outside of the ways of God (Psalm 55: 6-11). Our primary goal in prayer should be seeking His will, listening for His voice, not invoking our will but surrendering our desires and will to His.

D. Jesus said to Peter, James and John - “What? Could you not watch with me one hour?” We want to point the finger at them, but are we any different? Can we not watch with Him for one hour? (Matthew 26:40). Watch for what, His will maybe? While prayer does involve many responsibilities on our part, and requires humbleness, willingness and surrender, it should never be viewed as a fruitless task that we check off on our “Christian to do list.”

E. Prayer is the most important activity we as believers can do. All forms of prayer should be top priority for all born again Christians. Prayer will open the door for God to do awesome things and prayer will stem the tide of evil.

F. We do not wrestle against flesh and blood in these last days but against spirit powers and principalities, thus the weapons of our warfare should not be carnal. (EPH 6:12) Prayer is the most powerful weapon we possess in our spiritual arsenal.

G. Does Satan have a grip on your life, your relationships, your perspective on life? We will look at why prayer must be the first action we take in overcoming the challenges and breaking strongholds in our Christian walk.

II. The First Form of Prayer is – Worship (Not Praise)

A. Worship is the (Hebrew) word Shachah – Which means to bow down, fall prostrate, before a superior in homage, stoop, crouch, bow in reverence.

Prayer

January, 02 2009

Series 1 - Worship

B. Worship is a form of surrender, a form of not only showing honor but also admitting defeat, laying down arms, yielding.

C. One of the first mentions of the word worship is in (Genesis 22:5 Abraham and Isaac). Abraham surrendered his only son! He was willing to lay Isaac down on the alter as a sacrifice. Are we that willing, to lay and bow down beneath the Mighty Hand of God? Bow to His will even though we do not know the end result? That takes belief, that takes faith and trust.

D. When we worship something else, some other god, are we admitting defeat to that powerless god or idol, are we surrendering to it, are we serving it? (Exodus 20) One reason God gives us this command is to avoid bondage and defeat! Who we serve, they or it, is our master (Romans 6:16). We are conquerors in Christ (Romans 8:31-39), He is our Master, we cannot serve two masters (Matthew 6:24).

1. God commands us not to bow or surrender to any other God but worship in prayer to Him:

a) Exodus 20

b) As born again Christians He has delivered us out of bondage.

(1) Romans 8:15

(2) Romans 8:21

c) We are now bond slaves to Christ we are surrendered to Him. The word servant is translated: To make a slave of, reduce to bondage.

(1) Romans 6:22

(2) Ephesians 6:6

Prayer

January, 02 2009

Series 1 - Worship

III. Conclusion

A. *Worship in Prayer is so freeing -*

1. **God knows best, His ways are not our ways!**
2. **Surrender to Him and enter into His rest**
3. **Avoid bondage by worshiping God and nothing else**

So often I feel like I have my life all figured out. I have the plans I have for me and they are good ones, ones to prosper me and make me happy and fulfilled. (Jeremiah 29:11). If we truly want a fulfilling life, a future and a hope we have to align our lives with His plans. The idea that we can hinder the plans of the Lord by being disobedient and imposing our will, constantly begging for our way is an idea to behold indeed. Can we really thwart the plans of God? Gods will is ultimately going to be accomplished, with or without us. We can choose to be a part of it or not. Because we have free will it is our choice. The Lord is a Gentleman and He has given us complete free will. He's not going to drag us kicking and screaming into His abundant life!

**B. May we worship in spirit and in truth? (John 4:21-24).
Will we seek Gods plan and Gods best for our lives in
silence, in complete surrender to Him?**

January 2 - Too low they build who build beneath the stars.

The side rooms all around the temple were wider at each successive level. The structure surrounding the temple was built in ascending stages, so that the rooms widened as one went upward. A stairway went up from the lowest floor to the top floor through the middle floor. (Ezekiel 41:7)

Still upward be your onward course:

For this I pray today;

Still upward as the years go by,

And seasons pass away.

Still upward in this coming year,

Your path is all untried;

Still upward may you journey on,

Close by your Savior's side.

Prayer

January, 02 2009

Series 1 - Worship

*Still upward although sorrow come,
And trials crush your heart;
Still upward may they draw your soul,
With Christ to walk apart.
Still upward till the day shall break,
And shadows all have flown;
Still upward till in Heaven you wake,
And stand before the throne.*

We should never be content to rest in the mists of the valley when the summit of Mount Tabor awaits us. How pure is the dew of the hills, how fresh is the mountain air, how rich the food and drink of those who dwell above, whose windows look into the New Jerusalem! Many saints are content to live like people in coal mines, who never see the sun. Tears sadden their faces when they could be anointed with heavenly oil. I am convinced that many believers suffer in a dungeon when they could walk on a palace roof, viewing the lush landscape and Lebanon. Wake up, believers, from your lowly condition! Throw away your laziness, sluggishness, coldness, or whatever is interfering with your pure love for Christ. Make Him the Source, the Center, and the One who encompasses every delight of your soul. Refuse to be satisfied any longer with your meager accomplishments. Aspire to a higher, a nobler, and a fuller life. Upward to heaven! Nearer to God! *Charles H. Spurgeon*

*I want to scale the utmost height,
And catch a gleam of glory bright;
But still I'll
pray, till heaven I've
found,
Lord, lead me on to higher ground!*

Not many of us are living at our best. We linger in the lowlands because we are afraid to climb the mountains. The steepness and ruggedness discourage us, so we stay in the mist of the valleys and never learn the mystery of the hills. We do not know what is lost by our self-indulgence, what glory awaits if we only have the courage to climb, or what blessings we will find if we will only ascend the mountains of God! *J. R. M.*

Jesus said, Woman, believe me, the hour is coming, when you will neither in this mountain, nor at Jerusalem, worship the Father (Jhn 4:21).

Prayer

January, 02 2009

Series 1 - Worship

And then He said something that is very revealing.

You do not know what you worship (Jhn 4:22):

How true that is of so many people today. They really don't know what they are worshipping. He said,

we know what we worship; for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour is coming, and even now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father is seeking such to worship him. For God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth (Jhn 4:22-24).

Where's God found? He's found wherever you are. He surrounds us. God is not localized, nor can you localize God. So often in our minds we make that mistake of localizing God. How glorious it is to gather tonight in the presence of God here in the sanctuary. Well, that's true in a sense, but yet, in another sense, God doesn't just dwell here in the sanctuary. God dwells in your car as you're driving to the sanctuary. God dwells in your house as you're yelling at your kids getting ready to go to the sanctuary, because they're not getting dressed fast enough. We need to become more conscious of the all-prevailing presence of God wherever I am. God is a spirit; I am surrounded by Him. For in Him we live and we move and we have our being. And you cannot localize God...in Gerizim, or Jerusalem, or in any other locality. He doesn't dwell there any more than any other place. God dwells in the hearts and in the lives of every child of God, and He surrounds us all. In Him we live, we move, we have our being. God is a spirit, and if you want to worship Him, you've got to worship Him in spirit. That's spiritual worship of God and in truth.