

Prayers, Promises and Possibilities.

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He who has the spirit of prayer has the highest interest in the court of heaven. And the only way to retain it is to keep it in constant employment. Apostasy begins in the closet. No man ever backslid from the life and power of Christianity who continued constant and fervent in private prayer. He who prays without ceasing is likely to rejoice evermore. — ADAM CLARKE

2 Cor. 10:1-6

Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ, who in presence am base among you, but being absent am bold toward you: [2] But I beseech you, that I may not be bold when I am present with that confidence, wherewith I think to be bold against some, which think of us as if we walked according to the flesh. [3] For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: [4] (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) [5] Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; [6] And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.

Paul started the tenth chapter of second Corinthians in this manner. I have reproduced same as a prelude to what I have to say under this topic. The believer is a pool of unlimited resources. We have the boldness to make this assertion because the bible says that nothing is impossible to the believer. Moreover, the Lord Jesus declared in John 15 that any believer who is fruitful only need to ask in his name and the father will do, Consequently, we see that the premise upon which the believer's ability to do all things is Christ: fruitfulness in him, asking in his name.

Man is the bridge between the realm of the spirit, heaven, where God dwells and the earth, which he has given to man. God acts on the earth through man. He created man for this purpose to have and exercise God's dominion upon the face of the earth. The first man failed and God known, not to accept failure, came down in the form of flesh to show the way to man. He became poor so that we might be rich!

The avenue through which he exercises his flow towards God is prayers. Prayers brings our carnal nature to subjection so that God can flow through us for us and as a channel to reach others. It is not the numerous lists of requests we make to God each time we "pray". Let us take counsel from the scriptures.

Matthew 6:25

Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

Examine your last prayer session and subtract all the thoughts that you took. Jesus said take NO thought so, if you initiate thoughts, they don't count as prayer. (Surely, He didn't mean no thoughts . . .) Stop that! You're thinking again!

Mat 6:27 Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? Now from that same session, subtract the ideas you had which you hoped would improve your life or the lives of others, and the attempts you made to persuade God to add anything to your circumstances. These vain attempts were not prayer either.

Mat 6:32 For after all these things do the Gentiles (nonbelievers) seek: for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

Now subtract all the advice you gave God, all the counseling you gave Him to bring Him up to speed on current events, and any other pagan (Gentile) custom of coercing God to do something He is not already doing. Now, if you're like most pray-ers, the only thing left from that prayer session is, "Dear God."

Mat 6:33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Are we petitioning God for anything that is supposed to be added as a result of seeking the kingdom of God? If we must ask for food, clothing and such, then they must not have been added to us. That can only be because we have failed to seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

We must know what Jesus meant by that command or we will not know how to pray. The kingdom of God...the dominion of God...the authority of God...and the omnipotence of God are all synonymous. If we are seeking the kingdom, then we are seeking God's total control over our lives. There is nothing we need but obedience to God's dominion and authority, and the omnipotence of God assures us that there is no other force in the universe to overturn the effect of God's power over us, except our own stubborn rejection of His will.

To pray therefore is to get to the point where we can meet with God and "know" him. It is the flowing of God's mind into our own. Thus when the mind of God is our mind, the thoughts of God become thought and speak what he speaks, etc. True pray-ers are adopted of the father viz, this is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him. Then we can be a display of the life in the spirit, which the carnal man calls miracles. Miracles agree with the counsels of his will.

The great and precious promises that God gives to us are invitations to this realm of fellowship with him. This fellowship is sustained by the *spiritual energy* called prayers. Promises are the blessings that flow from true prayers. Promises bless the present and the future. Promises are seeds sown, nurtured and harvested by prayers. Promises draw us to pray. Praying is submission to God.

Consider the transaction between Abraham and God (Gen 17:1-10). God initiated the interaction. Abraham must have worshipped and God spoke during the flow. God's words to him were God's will (I Jhn 5:4), and personal promises from God to him. This would initiate further praying henceforth. Promises inspire prayers. The entrance of the word (promise) giveth light and understanding (Ps 119:130).

The promise to Abraham in Gen 17: 1-10 forms the basis of Isaacs' prayers (entreaty, appeal, plea, petition, request) in Gen 25:21. God responded (was intreated of him). The circumstances of life are supposed to draw us to the closeth, where God speaks his mind concerning any issue. The hostility from Laban's family drew a restless Jacob to the place of fellowship. God gave him a direction. He told him to return to the Land he gave to his fathers, which ultimately was given to him (Gen 31:3). The promise gave him courage to proceed even in the face of a very present danger (Esau, his brother who he supplanted). Though afraid, he was able to enter his closeth and sorted the matter out. He wrestled with the Lord. I believe he was trying to force his own will upon the Lord. His strength and will power were subdued and he submitted. **Our human nature is tampered with by God when we pray.** Ask Israel who was Jacob, a thief who became a prophet (Gen 32: 7, 30).

In the place of communion, God told Elijah to go and show himself to Ahab. That ordinarily was a dangerous proposition. But he made his declaration to Ahab and went forth to bring it to be! I Kgs 18:42. God's promises inspire prayers. Ez 36: 25-37. His promises are personal and specific. Jeremiah's prophecy spoke the mind of God concerning his people ahead of time (Jer 29:10). Seventy years into the event, Daniel picked up the matter in prayers (Dan 9:2) and brought the Babylonish captivity to an end. The captivity could have been longer if someone had not prayed. We have many other instances in the bible (Rom 15:30, Acts 2:1, Isa 55:6, Acts 10, etc).

Prayers is not limited. The man who prays is God's friend. God does not hide anything from him (Gen 18:17). The travails of prayers births further promises and extra closeness to God. The intercourse between God and man births a new nature, the nature of God, which swallows up the flesh (Jhn 15:14-16, 16:20-26, I Cor 15:51-58).

Prayer is aimed at a definite object. It moves God and therefore it moves men. It moves the hand that moves the world (Prov 21:1). The ability to pray can be secured through the grace and power of the Holy Spirit. Prayers can go as far as your faith can go. It is not limited. All things are possible to him that believeth. To Saul, Goliath was an absolute impossibility. To the praying man, David, whose faith, had been made strong, Goliath was like the Lion and the bear that God delivered into his hands! He was meant to be destroyed. The size of your faith determines the size of your Goliath. Amen.

The possibilities of prayers reaches all matters that concern man and God. Abraham prayed that Sodom and Gomorrah may not be destroyed. Abraham's servant prayed that he may get a good wife for Isaac. Joshua prayed that the sun may stand still so that he can finish the battle. Solomon prayed for wisdom to govern God's people (I kings 9:2). Samuel cried unto the Lord all night for Israel (I Sam 12:23). The Lord asked us to call upon him (Ps 50:15), Ps 91:15, Jer 29:12). Hebrews 11 gives us a compendium of what prayers and faith can do.

"And what shall I say more? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, of Barak, of Samson, of Jephtha, of David also; and Samuel, and the prophets; "Who through faith, subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions; "Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens; "Women received their dead raised to

life again, and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection.” Heb 11:32.

We conclude with the word of Samuel Chadwick:

*Satan dreads nothing but prayer. . . . The Church that lost its Christ was full of good works. Activities are multiplied that meditation may be ousted, and organizations are increased that prayer may have no chance. Souls may be lost in good works, as surely as in evil ways. The one concern of the devil is to keep the saints from praying. He fears nothing from prayerless studies, prayerless work, prayerless religion. He laughs at our toil, mocks at our wisdom, but trembles when we pray. — **SAMUEL CHADWICK***

And we say Lord, teach us to pray, Amen.