**There is a Struggle that Comes with Prayer - Part 2**

**Psa 145:5****I will speak of the glorious honour of *thy majesty*, and of thy wondrous works.**

**Psa 145:6****And men shall speak of the might of *thy terrible acts*: and I will declare *thy greatness*.**

**Psa 145:7****They shall abundantly utter the memory of *thy great goodness*, and shall sing of *thy righteousness*.**

**Psa 145:8*****The LORD is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy.***

**Psa 145:9*****The LORD is good* to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works.**

**Psa 145:18****The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth.**

**Psa 145:19****He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them.**

**Psa 145:20****The LORD preserveth all them that love him: but all the wicked will he destroy.**

**Psa 145:21****My mouth shall speak the praise of the LORD: and let all flesh bless his holy name for ever and ever.**

***Let us briefly remind ourselves of a few of the highlights of what we talked about last week in our introductory comments to this important subject of prayer.***

1. Prayer is communion with God.
2. Prayer is two-way. It is actual direct interaction with Him.
3. Prayer does not come naturally to the natural man.
4. If you want God to draw close to you, you need to draw close to Him.
5. Prayer is aligning yourself with the heart of God.
6. Prayer should be based primarily on thanks, praise and worship, not give me, give me, give me.
7. The essence of prayer is not to change God’s will, but to accomplish it.
8. God ordaining the end of a situation as sovereign Lord does not negate Him using various means to accomplish that. Prayer is one of these.

***Prayer is found throughout the Bible.* It is a powerful spiritual force and something that God wants His people to do.**

18th Century Christian writer William Law said this: *“Prayer is the nearest approach to God and the highest enjoyment of Him that we are capable of in this life.”*

**We emphasized last week the importance of knowing the will of God and then introducing that into our prayers to God. This is not small because, ‘will of God prayers’ are the only prayers He hears! *But to do that (we learned last week), we need to know the revealed will of God in Scripture and also be sensitivity to the Spirit.*** *If we are ignorant of His will, then our prayers are going to be selfish and sinful and are going to miss the mark.*

**Jas 4:3****Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.**

*If you imagine that God is going to circumvent His will, do something that contradicts His promises or perform something that is contrary to His Word, then you are exposing your own ignorance.* ***You are deceiving yourself.***

**It doesn’t matter how sincere you are, how much you have convinced yourself to believe in it, how long you pray, or how passionate you are about what you are praying, doesn’t matter whether you cry with many tears, if it does not conform to His plan and purpose, it is all fizz and bubble.** ***It is presumption.*** *It is a delusion.*

**It is not just crucial to know what the will of God is, you need to then pray the will of God. Before you get discouraged, if you do not know the will of God, it is ok for you to ask Him in prayer to reveal or confirm that will.** *But there is more, it is not enough to actually know the will of God, you then need to employ that revelation in your communications with God.*

By the way,

* It is the will of God to thank, praise and worship Him.
* It is the will of God to ask Him for genuine needs.

***But, please remember, it is the responsibility of the Spirit to reveal and then energize us.***

We quoted Romans 8:26 last week. ***But I did not read v27.*** It reinforces what we were talking about.

26 the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: **for we know not what we should pray for as we ought:** ***but the Spirit itself maketh intercession*** for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

27 And he that searcheth the hearts **knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit**, because ***he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.***

***The Spirit of God reveals the will of God, if we are sensitive enough.***

**Here is an important revelation to have. The truth of this leaves us totally and utterly dependent upon Him. *This is a very sobering truth to take a hold of but it is a very necessary one if we do not want to waste our whole Christian life talking into the air or missing the mark.***

Be sensitive to the Spirit operating inside you who will work in you to pray *“according to the will of God.”*

**I also came across another passage in my own personal devotions in this last 7 days that aligns with what we were saying last week about learning and then using the revealed will of God in our prayers.*****This time, it was to do with drawing nigh to Him.***

We find it in our main reading this morning:

**Psa 145:18****The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth.**

What this is saying is: **truth matters with God. If you want to get close to Him, in better be on the grounds of truth – His truth. *Please do not think you can come on your own terms.***

***I want to be as much practical and spiritual help to you on this matter of prayer as I can.*** *I don’t aim to have nailed it.* ***I am still learning and growing.*** *I have so far to go!*

**But one thing that I’ve learned over the years, it is impossible to divorce the Word of God from the Spirit of God. These work in tandem to enlighten our understanding and then energize our spirits to effective action.**

One thing you should know is, *if you are neglectful of God’s Word you are ignorant of God’s will.* ***It is only what is in there that will ultimately come out.* If you are full of religious ideas, worldlines or selfishness then that is what will come out in your prayers and actions.****But if you are full of the knowledge of God then the Sprit can ignite that truth and use it for you to pray the will of God.**

*That does not mean you have to always pray Scripture verbatim all the time.* ***It means that your life and meditation is kept within the bounds of revealed truth.***

**As you glean God’s heart on issues, and then embrace that truth, you can then share God’s truth**

If you want to do business with the Lord:

* Listen His voice.
* Believe His voice.
* Obey His voice.
* Ignore any other voice that contradicts His voice.
* Share His voice

The will of God involves a cost.

* God’s plan and man’s are normally opposite.
* God’s timing and man’s are normally opposite.

*There are certain elementary basics that we need to be aware of if we are going to be effective in our prayers****.* For example, we need to be aware of who we are. *We need to be aware of who God is.***

**That may sound like 101 Christianity, but we might be shocked how many Christians approach God with a faulty attitude.**

* Rather than ask God what to do, many tell Him.
* Some have a small God and a big devil. Many limit Him with their words and attitude.
* Some have an angry judgmental God who carries a baseball bat waiting the first opportunity to wallop them.
* Some delude themselves thinking that God is cool with sin and that they can still ask and He will stand to attention to every request.
* Some have a distant God who never seems close, caring or interested.
* They don’t believe Him. Many just selfishly use Him when their back is against the wall.
* Others legalistically fear Him and have no genuine intimacy with Him.
* Others ritualistically, religiously or superstitiously approach Him without actually knowing Him and talk as stranger to stranger.

I am sure you would agree, **these are all barriers to getting the ear of God.**

*Many invent a God that suits their lifestyle. But we who know Him should have a revelation of His goodness, greatness, majesty, power and authority.* This comes through reading this Book.

**Your revelation of God should match up with the revelation of God in this Book. If it doesn’t then you need to ask whether you have the God of this Book.**

***I think that there must be a general awareness of His character, His ability, and His instruction in order for you to be effective in prayer.***

Hebrews 11:6 informs us, “he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”

**Can I ask you? Who is God to you this morning? Do you have a proper perspective of His character?**

***The only way we will learn to trust God is by getting close to God.***

**How big is He?**

**How powerful is He?**

**How faithful is He?**

**How able is He?**

**It all depends to whether you know Him or not or how close your view of Him.**

John Piper said this: *“May we remember that – believing that God is who He says He is and will do what He promises to do – and then acting accordingly, is what is pleasing to God.”*

***Accurate knowledge on who God is and what He teaches is crucial to effective prayer.* But unless we actually let that revelation of who He is and what He teaches take a hold of us and influence us then it means nothing. It is simply intellectual religious knowledge. *The result of this revelation should increase your trust in His character and increase your faith in what He is telling you.***

**When you recognize that the supernatural God of this Bible is your God and how He deals with His children in this Book is how He deals with His children today, this should a massive positive effect upon your prayers.**

* Your trust in Him should be rock solid.
* Your faith in what He promises should be unwavering.

***When your back is against the wall, when things look bleak, we should take great comfort from Joseph in the pit, Daniel in the lion’s den, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the fiery furnace, Israel at the Red Sea, the disciple in the storm, Paul and Silas in the prison at midnight, etc, etc.*** *That is because this is the One who is watching over us.* ***This is the One you were talking to.***

E.M. Bounds: *“Trust perfected is prayer perfected. Trust looks to receive the thing asked for and gets it. Trust is not a belief that God can bless or that He will bless, but that He does bless, here and now. Trust always operates in the present tense. Hope looks toward the future. Trust looks to the present. Hope expects. Trust possesses. Trust receives what prayer acquires. So, what prayer needs, at all times, is abiding and abundant trust.”*

Armed with a proper knowledge of God, listen to the prayer of David in Psalm 7:1-2:

**Psa 7:1****O LORD my God, in thee do I put my trust: save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me:**

**Psa 7:2****Lest he tear my soul like a lion, rending it in pieces, while there is none to deliver.**

*The greatness and faithfulness of your God will color the nature of your prayers.* ***When you are enlightened about the majestic character of God, and you have proved Him to be who He says He is in Scripture, then your prayers will be bold and confident and will move to another level.***

Nan Jones (a Pastor's Wife) says this: *"God … wants us to understand who He is and in that understanding to be still and trust Him."*

Listen to a Holy Ghost inspired petition by the Psalmist in our main reading in Psalm 145:

**Psa 145:5****I will speak of the glorious honour of *thy majesty*, and of thy wondrous works.**

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**This is a prayer I read a few days ago. *It comes from someone who knew God and was therefore qualified to express His thanks, praise and honor when they approached Him in prayer.***

**Is this the mighty victorious majestic all-powerful faithful God that you know and interact with?**

*It should be!* **The *more Christian move away from this Book the vaguer their perception of God becomes, the more impotent their prayers become.***

The Psalmist continues in army and reading:

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**Passages like this should give us wisdom, knowledge, and inspiration to pray.**

**We learn so much about God’s goodness and greatness from Scripture. But we also learn about the same from experience. *If you are real, if you are in align with Him, then you can confess that I know who He really is!***

**2Ti 1:12****for I know whom I have believed**

***When people or Satan misrepresent Him then you immediately recognize the lies.***

*I believe when you question His promises you’re actually questioning His character.* ***You’re putting a question mark over His integrity and His ability.***

Charles Spurgeon: “*In the same way, the sun never grows weary of shining, nor a stream flowing, it is God’s nature to keep His promises. Therefore, go immediately to His throne and say, ‘Do as You promised.’*”

**Your view of God is either right or wrong. If it is right then there is no limit to what you can do together. *If it is wrong, there’s no depths to which you will sink.***

Renee Swope: *"We learn to trust God's heart by interacting with Him and experiencing His character in personal ways."*

So,

* **The closer you get to God the more you see God for who He is**
* **The more you see God for who He is the more content you get and the more faith that arises in your heart.**
* **The more content and more faith that arises in your heart the more apt you are to receive from God.**
* **The more apt you are to receive from God the more impactful your prayers will be.**

Is that not what Daniel 11:32 says? **“the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits.”**

Charles Stanley, *"I have complete confidence that God is able to take care of any situation and provide an answer to any question or problem - He has all the resources of the universe to draw upon in helping each one of us through any type of crisis if we will trust Him."*

Basically:

* *Your perception of God* must be accurate in order **for you to trust His character.**
* *Your perception of God* must be accurate in order **for you to believe what He tells you.**
* *Your perception of God* must be accurate in order **for you to pray prayers that are pleasing unto Him.**

***But this only comes by getting to know Him.***