

Necessity of Prayer

Introduction:

1. Text

a. Genesis 1:26-28

26) And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. 27) So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. 28) And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

b. Genesis 2:15

And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.

2. The Purpose of this message is to demonstrate that it is necessary to pray

a. Because God has given Man authority over the earth

b. Because God does not do anything on the earth without man (except judgment)

c. Therefore, God is waiting on us to pray so His will can be accomplished, so He can be involved in our affairs.

3. Let us consider some thought provoking questions.

a. Is prayer really necessary? Why? Isn't God sovereign? Doesn't sovereign mean God accomplishes what He wants, when He wants? If so, why pray?

b. Is God's will for a Christian automatically guaranteed or is it linked to prayer and other factors?

c. Why does it often take so long to get a prayer answered? Why is persistence required? Jacob wrestled with God. Is that what we are to do in prayer? I don't like the thought of wrestling with God, do you?

d. What about prayer for the lost? How can I be more effective? I get a little frustrated trying to think of new ways to ask God to save people, don't you? I thought He wanted to save them. Then why do I feel as though I'm trying to talk Him into it? Is there a better way? Do I ask for their salvation again and again or simply petition Him once and then just thank Him in faith?

- e. What about spiritual warfare? If Satan is defeated and Christ has all authority, shouldn't we just forget about the devil? Does God bind the devil or do we?
- f. What exactly is intercessory prayer? And don't just tell me it's "standing in the gap." Enough religious quotes and spiritual jargon. I know the thought is taken from the Bible, but what does it mean?
- g. What about protection? Is everything that happens to me or my family simply allowed by God? Or is there something I need to do to procure our safety?
- h. The Bible In Galatians 6:2 tells us to "bear one another's burdens." Well, How do we "bear one another's burdens."?
- i. Is there a right time for answers to prayer or does the timing depend on me?

4. God

- a. Will not satisfy the skeptic
- b. And God is displeased with unbelief
- c. But God loves the Honest Seeker

Note James 1:5

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

5. Prayer is Necessary. Right? Why?

- a. S. D. Gordon says according to Dutch Sheets

You can do more than pray, after you have prayed, but you cannot do more than pray, until you have prayed. Prayer is striking the winning blow. Service is gathering up the results.

- b. John Wesley said according to Dutch Sheets
 God does nothing on the earth save in answer to believing prayer.
- c. Here are a few more questions
 - i. If God is sovereign, Why pray?
 - ii. Does God need me to pray, or does He just want me to pray?
 - iii. Can my Prayers actually change things?

- iv. Can God's will on earth be frustrated or not accomplished if I do not pray?
- v. If God is going to do something regardless of whether or not we, pray, then Why pray?
- d. The understanding of "why" can be a motivating force, and the not knowing "why" can get us into trouble.
 - i. I know "why," so I do it to accomplish the proper results.
 - ii. Not knowing "why" causes me problems until I learn "why."
 - 1) "No diving" in the shallow end of the pool means very little for us until we crack our skull, and then we know "why."
 - 2) "Do not touch the pretty red glow on the stove" means nothing for us until we are burned, and then we know "why."
 - 3) "Duck" someone says as they walk through the woods. The person following says to to himself, "No one tells me what to do," and then "smack" the limb hits them in the face, and they know "why" they were told to duck,

6. Prayer is necessary

- a. Our praying can brings Revival
- b. Our praying can bring healing
- c. Our praying can change a nation
- d. Our praying can bring down strongholds
- e. A statement by E. M. Bounds

God shapes the world by prayer. The more praying there is in the world the better the world will be, the mightier the forces against evil...The prayers of God's saints are the capital stock of heaven by which God carries on His great work upon earth. God conditions the very life and prosperity of His cause on prayer.

I. God's Original Plan

A. God made man

1. The word "Adam" means "man," or/and "human being."
2. God made "man" and called him "Man."

3. God made a “human” and called him “Human”

4. God made an “Adam” and called him “Adam.”

B. Adam represented all of us, and what God intended for Adam, God intended for us, and for the entire human race.

C. Let us look at God’s intention for Adam and the human race

1. God gave Adam and Eve dominion over the entire earth and all creation

a. Genesis 1:26-28

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. 27) So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. 28) And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

i. v26--”Dominion” in the Hebrew means “to subjugate,” “rule,” “reign” over the earth (fish, fowl, cattle, earth, etc)

ii. v28--”Dominion” in the Hebrew has the same meaning as v25.

b. Psalm 8:3-8

3) When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; 4) What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? 5) For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. 6) Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: 7) All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; 8) The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas.

i. v6--The Hebrew for “dominion” means

1) To Rule

2) Made to have

a) Dominion over

b) Governor over

c) Rule over

d) Reign over

e) Power over

ii. Put dominion with the rest of Psalms 8:3-8 and Genesis 1:26-28 and we find that Adam and His descendants were and today are

1) God's managers here on earth

2) God's stewards here on earth

3) God's governors here on earth

4) God's mediators here on earth

5) God's go-between here on earth

6) God's representatives here on earth.

c. Psalm 115:16

The heaven, even the heavens, are the Lord's: but the earth hath he given to the children of men."

i. Moffatt records it like this

The Heaven; 'the Eternal hold Himself, the earth He has assigned to men.'

ii. Mofatt uses "assigned" instead of the KJV "given."

iii. The Hebrew word for "given" in v16 means

1) To give

2) It is used to mean

a) To appoint

b) To ascribe

c) To assign

d) To commit

e) To distribute

f) To lend

g) To let out

Note: Man did not have ownership to the earth, but God gave man the responsibility of governing the earth. Like a steward, or a manager over a farm or a ranch, authority over the earth belonged to man. We have been assigned the earth.

Note: An example of this is the giving of the talents in Matthew 25 and the pounds in Luke 19

d. Genesis 2:15

And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.

i. “Keep” is from a Hebrew word that means

1) To guard

2) To protect

3) The meaning is to hedge about; or to attend to.

ii. The NIV says “...to work it and take care of it”

iii. The Hebrew word in this scripture is the primary (main) Hebrew word that is translated “watchman” in other Scriptures.

Note: Therefore, Adam literally was God’s Watchman or Guardian on the earth.

D. Adam represented God on the earth

1. He was in God’s Likeness.

a. Genesis 1:27

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

i. “Image” is from a Hebrew word that means

1) To shade or shadow or Phantom

2) Illusion

3) Resemblance

4) Hence a representative figure

- ii. When God looked at Adam, it was like looking in a mirror.
- iii. When the rest of creation saw Adam (man), they did a double-take, and you might hear them say or think...Oops, I thought it was God, but it was only Adam.

Note: That is representation!

2. Representation

- a. Literally means, “to present again”
- b. To “re-present”
- c. A “representative” is one who “re-presents” the will of another.
 - i. Adam “Re-presented” the will of God to this earth.
 - ii. We “Re-present” Christ and His Will to this earth, again, and again as we tell others about Jesus either vocally or through our daily walk, and daily prayer-life.
- d. The dictionary meaning of Representation
 - i. To exhibit the image and counterpart of another.
 - ii. To speak and act with authority on the part of another.
 - iii. To be a “substitute” or agent for another.

Note: That is what Adam was to do for God, and that is what Christ did for us, and that is what we are to do for Christ.

3. Genesis 1:26...God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness:

- a. “Likeness” is from the Hebrew “demuath” which is from the Hebrew “damah”
 - i. It means “to compare”
 - ii. Adam was like God
- b. Psalm 8:5...For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.
 - i. “Angels” here is from the Hebrew ‘elohiym
 - ii. The NIV says “lower than heavenly beings”

iii. “Man” was made just “a little lower than God.”

- 1) Man was “crowned with Glory and Honor”
- 2) Man was made with the ability to create eternal spirits.

Note: No other creature has this ability. Hayford says this is one reason satan hates us so much. He is jealous because he cannot re-create anything, but we can re-create eternal spirits

4. Comments

- a. Adam (man) carried the weight here on earth.
- b. Adam (man) represented God with full authority.
- c. Adam (man) was in charge
- d. Adam (man) was crowned with glory and honor.
 - i. “Glory” is from the Hebrew “kabowd” which means “heavy or weighty”
 - ii. 1 Corinthians 11:7 “...Man...Is The Image And Glory of God...”
 - 1) “Image” is from the Greek “eikon” and means “likeness”
 - 2) “Glory” is from the Greek “doxa” and means “dignity”

Note: So you could say that “Man is the Likeness and Dignity of God.”

- 3) This is saying that “God” was recognized in “humans.”
 - a) For what purpose
 - b) So we could “represent” Him.
- iii. Adam was made “like the Glory of God,” but for us today to be in the “Glory of God,” we have to be “changed back into God’s Image.”

Note 2 Corinthians 3:18

We are changed into the same image (of God) from glory to glory, even by the Spirit of the Lord.

II. Let us look at two Reasons that we must pray.

- A. Adam’s authority was so complete and final over the earth that he, not just God, had the ability to give it away to another.

1. Read Luke 4:5-7

5) The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. 6) And he said to him, "I will give you all their authority and splendor, for it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. 7) So if you worship me, it will all be yours."

a. Satan says--"it has been handed to me, and I will give it to whomever I wish."

b. In John 12:31; 14:30; and 16:11, Satan is called the ruler of this world.

B. So complete and final was God's decision to do things on earth through human beings that it cost God giving His Son to regain what Adam gave away.

1. God had to become a part of the human race...To regain authority over the earth.

2. Humans (man) were forever to be God's link to authority and activity on the earth

a. Adam lost that authority through disobedience

b. Satan gained that authority through deception

c. Jesus got the authority back for Man through obedience, and by paying the price for our sins

C. In these two points (point A. & B), we see the necessity of prayer.

1. God chose from the time of creation to work on the earth through humans, not independent of them.

2. God has always worked on the earth through humans, and He always will work on the earth through humans even at the cost of becoming human. (Jesus prayed)

Note: During the Millennium it will be Christ the Son of David and the Son of God who sits on the throne on this earth as man and as God, He will rule

D. Comments

1. God is sovereign and all-powerful, yet He limited Himself concerning the affairs of the earth to working through man.

2. Note:

a. God and humans for better or for worse doing it together.

b. God needing faithful men and women

- c. God needing prophets
- d. God needing judges
- e. God needing a human Messiah
- f. God needing human hands to heal
- g. God needing human voices to speak
- h. God needing human feet to go

E. Scriptures

1. In Matthew 6:10, We are told to ask for “His Kingdom to Come”
2. In Matthew 6:11, We are told to ask for “Our Daily Bread”
3. In Matthew 9:38, We are told to ask for “Laborers To Be Sent Into The Harvest”
4. In 2 Thessalonians 3:1, Paul said,
Pray for us that the Word of God may spread rapidly and be glorified.

Note: These four things, as well as others, are God’s Will, yet we are told in His Word to Ask for these things to be done. In our asking, we release Him to do it.

5. Lessons from the Word

- a. Elijah in 1st Kings 17-18
 - i. Elijah announced a drought and according to James 5, he prayed that it rain not
 - ii. Three and ½ years later, he announced that that it would rain, yet he had to pray seven times before it rained.
 - iii. Elijah’s prayer birthed the rain

Note: While He was praying, He was in the position that Hebrew women used when they birthed a child.

- iv. Elijah prayed 7 times. Why?

Maybe God wants us to know that since Seven is God’s number for completion, We should pray until the job is complete. Pray Until Something Happens.

- v. According to James 5:17 and 18, Elijah’s prayer produced rain

1st in v17, Elijah prayed that it would not rain

Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.

2nd in v18, Elijah prayed for rain

And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit

Note: God said it was to happen, yet Elijah had to pray for it, and that same applies to us today.

b. Daniel in Daniel 9

i. Jeremiah had prophesied that Israel would be restored after 70 years of captivity.

ii. Daniel had read Jeremiah's prophecy

1) Daniel did not just sit idly by and wait to see what would happen

2) Daniel prayed for the fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecy in Daniel 9:3.

I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek Him by prayer and supplication, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.

3) In Daniel 10

a) We find that it took 21 days to get an answer because of demonic resistance

b) And in verse 12, The angel told Daniel that his words were heard, and the angel said; "I have come in response to your words (prayers)."

c. God needs our prayers

i. Ezekiel 22:30-31

30) I looked for a man among them who would build up the wall and stand before me in the gap on behalf of the land so I would not have to destroy it, but I found none. 31) So I will pour out my wrath on them and consume them with my fiery anger, bringing down on their own heads all they have done, declares the Sovereign LORD."

1) God searched for a man

a) To stand in the gap before Him for the land

b) God needed a man to keep God from destroying the land

2) God found no one

Note: What An Indictment against a nation, a family, a church, that God could find no one to stand in the gap and make up the hedge so God would not pour out His wrath.

3) God could not and cannot excuse sin, because He is Holy and Just

- a) Sin must be judged
- b) But God is loving and
- c) God wants to Redeem
- d) God does not derive any pleasure in the death of the wicked

Note Ezekiel 33:11

Say to them, 'As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live. Turn! Turn from your evil ways! Why will you die, O house of Israel?'

4) Consider this

- a) God has limited Himself to us Earthlings
- b) God either wants the earth like it is, or is powerless to do anything about it
- c) Or God needs and is waiting on something From Us to bring about change.

Note: God is Waiting On Us.

Note: Human inaction does not nullify the atonement, but human inaction can make the atonement ineffective for lost people.

Conclusion:

1. We have a responsibility to Pray

- a. And Praying is a privilege
- b. And Praying is enjoyable

2. Jack Hayford said

Prayer is a partnership of the redeemed child of God working hand-in-hand with God toward the realization of His redemptive purposes on earth.

3. It is necessary that we pray
 - a. Our personal growth in the Lord is dependent on our Praying
 - b. Our personal relationship with the Lord is dependent on us praying
 - c. Our children, grandchildren, etc depend on us praying
 - i. To keep satan at bay
 - ii. To keep angel surrounding them
 - iii. To keep God's Spirit touching them
 - iv. To bring to fruition the Word which they have heard
 - d. Our spouses depend on our praying as we guard our garden and keep it for the Glory of God
 - e. Our church family depends on our praying
 - f. Our community and our nation, and our world is dependent on our Praying
4. So, let us pray