

PRAYING In The Bible

Prayer in the Bible: The Final Word on Prayer

Maybe I cannot let prayer go. I was supposed to let this series finish two weeks ago. Yet, I feel there is a little more to say. I find it interesting and something like soul surgery to walk through themes in the Bible. This theme on prayer is no exception. Jesus' template on prayer is a good place to start. There are those who claim it is the only way to pray. Yet, it could become robotic. I feel that most of the prayer we have studied come from deep in the heart. It is not that Jesus prayer is not heartfelt. Instead, it is a template. One that is used by all these great prayers in the Bible.

I was reading through the Old Testament and noticed the words holy, holy, holy is the Lord. We see the creatures in heaven repeating the same line in the book of Revelation. I have chosen to begin my prayers with this line most of the time. All the prayers begin by elevating God. Saying Holy three times does that for me. To further this point, saying holy Lord knocks me out of my desires. Instead, I am focusing on God and His majesty. I feel that we should begin with God and not our requests. It is time that we pray worship prayers instead of Santa Clause requests. Change our hearts and focus.

It is not that our fears and requests are not important. Clearly, they are important enough that you feel the need to pray. Yet, God is always in control. That includes before you pray. He knows what you desire. So, why do we pray? God wants us to make Him the focus. To get our eyes off fixing the messes ourselves. Maybe we need to clear the heart and mind. We should pray to worship and focus. God says His word will not return void. Adding scripture to your

prayers will accomplish that goal. Set perspective in its rightful place. If God is for us then who can be against us.

Many people say we should be specific in our prayers. It is ok to do so. Yet, if God already knows. If God is usually already working on it, then why be specific? I would like to suggest something. If God knows and God is always working then maybe our prayers should be different. Christians should have faith that God is working. That God is in control and knows what is best. Maybe praying adoration and praise is far better than asking God to get with it.

So much of our lives are spent directing traffic. Who will we give time to. How much work will I do. What you put in is what you will get out. I know pastors that say each page of a sermon must have 2-20 hours of prep. Why? What you put in is what you get out. I do not think sermons should be without work. God needs time to work on pastors so they get the real message. Prayer on the other hand is different. You are talking to God. He already knows. A flowery word or long speech will not change the fact that he knows.

With all that said, I believe the prayer warriors of the Bible got it right. The prayers are generally short. However, they purposely put God on His throne. They usually put themselves on the ground in worship. Yes, they do have requests. Yet, first and foremost they put God first. They acknowledge that only God will solve it. At times they remind God of His word. The point of these prayers to let God know that His word means something. That His throne means something. Our faith in God is built on trusting in the power and sovereignty of the Lord.

I have changed my prayers in the last few months. I say holy is the Lord often as I start. I remind God that I am not Him. I do not even mention other Gods. To me He the only God. I thank Him for today. Then I usually will tell God that I trust His plan and will. That I do not

need to ask because I know God is at work. I expect a God outcome. Recently, I have added Paul's words. I have asked God to provide me with wisdom, knowledge, and eyes to see and a heart to hear God will. I believe that God will answer my prayers. Yet, whether it is yes, no, or not right now does not matter to me anymore. I am stepping aside and letting God chose what is best for my life. I will end this whole study with Psalm 23. Maybe David is saying God is not in "wants." Maybe God is found in green pastures, still waters, and comfort. Verse 5 says thou preparest. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow us all the days of our lives. Prayer should be about trust and not wants.

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. 2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. 3 He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. 4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. 5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of my enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.