

"Jesus and Prayer"

Scripture Lesson:-

Text:-

Introduction:- God has commanded us to pray. Every student of the Bible knows that. He has promised to do things for those who pray. But there are prayer laws which must be obeyed. It is a glorious thing to come into the presence of the most high, and make an alliance with the forces of Omnipotence. Of all things to be coveted, is to power of prevailing prayer. The holy art of intercession is the most heavenly, and is to be coveted by growing saints.

All real prayer has as its basis a belief in God who responds to the quest of the human soul. "For he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb. 11:6). We find God by our hearts and not by our intellects, and the first condition of entering into his fellowship, is a faith not only that God is, but that He will be found of the soul that honestly and persistently seeks for him. God is not found by those who look for him in the spirit of cold curiosity, or those who look for him with the desire to further their intellectual conquests. This is the reason why many scientists and philosophers have been unable to find God. In Job 11:7, we find these words; "Canst thou find by searching God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?" When a man says in the pride of his intellect, "I will now see if there be any God", he may peer among the atoms, but the greatest thing in the universe will still be hidden from him.

I.

Let us briefly notice some of the things which Jesus mentions as conditions of prevailing prayer. IN HIS NAME. "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son". Jesus is the only way to the heart of God. In every possible relation of life He is the revealer of the Father. Apart from him we would have an adequate knowledge of God. It is

through His blood that we meet God at the mercy seat. He is our advocate and intercessor in heaven, and through His name only we may claim the answer to our prayers. We sometimes base our expectations upon our oft coming, or we build our hopes upon the fact that the faithful Christian men and women have joined their prayers with ours, and we argue that for those reasons God will hear our prayers. But our Lord says that it must be in His name. We are unworthy; He is deserving of all things. We have of ourselves no right to the ear of the Father. He, Christ, sits at the right hand of the Father, and the Father hears Him anyway.

We know little of God, save as we see His glory in the face of Jesus Christ. We know the blessedness of pardon and the sweetness of reconciliation only through His cross. He is our high priestly Intercessor, no veil intervenes, and we can come boldly through His name. Every prayer that is accepted must be countersigned by our High Priest, who ever liveth to make intercession for us.

II.

THE GLORY OF THE FATHER. "That the Father may be glorified in the Son." This goes a little deeper and inquires into the motives of our prayers. He turns the light into the innermost recesses of our being, and asks each of us, "Why do you want this thing?" What is the real purpose back of your prayer? "By one stroke He cuts out of the way all selfish aims and ends. This is in line with that wonderful prayer, the Lord's prayer. "Will it advance His kingdom among men" Many things which we will ask may not be wrong of themselves, they may be good and desirable things, but the motive behind them will not always endure the searching light of the words, "that the Father may be glorified in the Son." God is glorified when sin is taken away and sinners are reconciled by the blood of Jesus, or when evil is overthrown.

When we ask for the growth of the kingdom, for the kindling of revival fires, for the work of the Holy Spirit, we must not think of these things as they relate to ourselves and our happiness, we must

think of them as they relate to the glory and ex-
altation of our Lord.

"In Jesus name". No other name will avail, not ~~any~~ even that of the most saintly man or woman of all time. In Jesus name, not of our good works, not of our long years of service, only the name of Jesus. When a child of God approaches the throne of grace with the name of Jesus upon his lips and the glory of the Father as the supreme desire of his heart, he wields the nearest to infinite power that ever comes within the grasp of man.

III.

THE TWOFOLD ABIDING. "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." (John 15:7) This promise is stupendous, it is staggering and overwhelming in its immensity. "What ye will", and "it shall be done" are more than we can grasp. "If ye abide in me" Jesus had just been talking about the living union of the vine and the branches, and had told them that there must be a similar union between Him and his followers. Just as the life went out from the vine into the branches, even so their life came from him. He warned them against losing this close and intimate relationship. One may not have denied his Lord, or forsaken Him, but he may have lost the living touch; the pulse throb of life, the delicate response of soul are gone. Jesus says, "If you keep the connection working, if there is a vital, instant response between your life and mine, this promise belongs to you" This is the first condition of this almost unthinkable promise. "Abide in me", means feeling the heart throb of infinite love. Abiding, does not mean just running in now and then, but means making that abiding our normal habit of life.

"And my words abide in you" Just what did Jesus mean by this? Did he mean that his written word, the Bible, should be lodged in our memories? He does not mean that we should never forget anything that he has said. No, I think not, but rather to obey Him, to do his will for the simple joy of doing it. To obey him must be the great

thing of life. When we are resting in His love, rejoicing in its fellowship; when we have made His words, the revelation of his will, a living, binding, compelling authority in our souls, we can enter into the privileges of this matchless priesthood.

IV.

JUST TWO OF YOU. "Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree upon earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matt. 18:19,20). This is one of the most challenging sentences Jesus ever uttered. Our Lord said, "If two of you," not a hundred, not a thousand, not ten, but the smallest number which it is possible to gather together. And if the two, shall have agreement of soul, of purpose, anything that they ask, shall be done. When they meet He is there. He does not have to come. His presence is continual. And when that meeting is held, if only two of them shall agree in their prayers, that which they ask shall be done. This promise is good for any gathering, any place, any at any time. He is with them in love and sympathy, ready and able to give what they ask. He means that the two who pray must be one with him in the building of the kingdom; their attitude towards the souls of men must be like that of the Great Shepherd as He seeks for the sheep that was lost. Ah, friends, we are trembling like weaklings, when we ought to be traveling in the greatness of this strength.

Conclusion:- Prevailing prayer is possible. It is the only kind of prayer that he wants. He is more anxious about the lost one than the best of those who pray for the lost. He is more careful about that revival than the pastor on his knees in his study. All the things that ought to be, lie continually on his heart. Why then does he wait? He is waiting for men and women, through whom he works, for he can use only those who are able to pray after this fashion. God is looking for men and women who are willing to be channels of his

power.