

THE GOD-MAN LIVING IN THE PRACTICAL CHURCH LIFE AND THE PRAYER FOR GOD'S MOVE

Message Three

Prayer and God's Move in the Gospels and the Acts

Scripture Reading: Matt. 6:9-15; 9:36-38; John 15:7, 16; Acts 1:14; 2:1-4, 16-17a; 4:23-31;
6:4; 10:9-16; 12:4-14; 13:1-4; 16:23-26; 22:17-21

- I. The pattern of prayer that the Lord taught the disciples in Matthew 6 is the prayer that expresses God's will—Matt. 6:9-15:**
- A. Matthew 6:9-13 is the Lord's instruction to us to "pray in this way" to "our Father who is in the heavens" (v. 9a); this pattern of prayer can be divided into three sections:
 - 1. The three basic prayers concerning God are related to the Divine Trinity; "Your name be sanctified" is related mainly to the Father; "Your kingdom come," to the Son; and "Your will be done," to the Spirit (vv 9b-10a):
 - a. This is being fulfilled in this age, and it will be ultimately fulfilled in the kingdom age when the name of God will be excellent in all the earth, the kingdom of the world will become the kingdom of Christ, and the will of God will be accomplished—Psa. 8:1; Rev. 11:15.
 - b. After the rebellion of Satan and the fall of man, Christ came to bring the heavenly rule to earth so that the earth could be recovered for God's interest, so that the will of God could be done on earth as in heaven (Matt. 6:10b); the kingdom people must pray for this until the earth is fully recovered for God's will in the coming kingdom age.
 - 2. The three requests concerning our need are protective prayers: "Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one" (vv 11-13a).
 - 3. The prayer to the Father concludes with three reverent praises as extolling prayers: "For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen"—the kingdom is of the Son, which is the realm in which God exercises His power and the power is of the Spirit, which carries out God's intention so that the Father may have His corporate expression in glory (Matt. 6:13b).
 - B. The ministry of the church is to bring the will in heaven to earth—Matt. 6:9-10:
 - 1. A prayer that is in the nature of work or ministry is one in which we stand on God's side, wanting what God wants—Col. 1:9; 4:12.
 - 2. The highest and greatest work of the church is to be the outlet of God's will; the church is the outlet of God's will through prayer—Matt. 6:9-10.
 - C. The prayer of the church means that when God wants to do something, the church prays about that matter first so that it can be fulfilled and God's goal can be accomplished—18:18-20:
 - 1. In heaven, God's power is unlimited, but on earth, God's power is manifested to the degree that the church prays—6:9-10.
 - 2. The ministry of the church is prayer; the church must have big prayers, serious prayers, and strong prayers, prayers that manifest our God and open the way for Him to move—John 14:23; 15:16; 16:23-24; Acts 4:24-31.
- II. In Matthew 9 the Lord taught the disciples to beseech the Lord of the harvest to thrust out workers into His harvest—Matt. 9:36-38:**
- A. We all need to see a vision of the Lord Jesus as the Lord of the harvest.

- B. In verse 38 the Lord told us to beseech the Lord of the harvest that He may thrust out workers into His harvest:
 1. Firstly, in His economy, God has a plan to accomplish.
 2. Then His economy requires His people to beseech, to pray, for it.
 3. In answering their prayer, He will accomplish what they have prayed concerning His plan.
- C. Whenever you sense the need for workers, you must firstly pray to the Lord of the harvest, saying, “Lord, here is Your harvest. You are the Lord of the harvest. We call on You to thrust out some reapers. Lord, send more reapers into Your harvest.” Praying like this will make a difference—*Life-Study of Matthew*, chapter 29.

III. John 15 reveals the prayer that is related to fruit-bearing—vv. 7, 16:

- A. To ask in the Lord's name requires us to abide in the Lord and allow Him and His words to abide in us that we may actually be one with Him—cf. vv. 4, 7.
- B. Then when we ask, He asks in our asking; this kind of asking is related to fruit-bearing and will surely be answered by the Father—v. 16, note 5.

IV. The book of Acts shows that the apostles never initiated any work without prayer; whenever they wanted to do something, they stopped themselves by their prayer, giving God a way to come into them, to fill them up, and to saturate their entire being—1:14; 6:4; 13:1-4:

- A. In order to be one with the Lord in His work, we need to pray ourselves into God and pray God into us so that we are mingled with God—Matt. 6:6.
- B. To pray means to stop ourselves from doing anything apart from the Lord so that He can do His work through us—cf. 14:22-23.
- C. To pray means that we realize that we are nothing and can do nothing; prayer is the real denial of the self—Gal. 6:3; cf. Mark 9:28-29.
- D. To pray by calling on the name of the Lord is to deny ourselves and to declare, “No longer I but Christ”—cf. Gal. 2:20a.

V. The book of Acts shows the prayer that we need in order to be filled with the Spirit essentially and economically so that all our activities would be the activities of the acting God:

- A. The prayer that we need is the prayer that brought in the outpouring of the Spirit—Acts 1:14; 2:1-4, 16-17a.
- B. The prayer that we need is the prayer that shook the earth and empowered the disciples with the Holy Spirit to speak the word of God with boldness—4:24-31.
- C. The prayer that we need is the prayer of the apostles to match the ministry of the word—6:4.
- D. The prayer that we need is the prayer that brought Peter into a trance and brought a heavenly vision to him—10:9-16.
- E. The prayer that we need is the prayer that opened the prison gate for Peter—12:4-14.
- F. The prayer that we need is the prayer that brought the five prophets and teachers into the Lord's commission—13:1-4.
- G. The prayer that we need is the prayer that brought in a great earthquake and shook the foundations of the prison house—16:23-26.
- H. The prayer that we need is the prayer that brought Paul into a trance and into the Lord's speaking to him—22:17-21.

VI. The book of Acts shows that our working together with God to build up the church is a spiritual warfare and that prayer is the secret to accomplish God's work—4:24-31; Psa. 2:1-2; Eph. 6:10-20.