

Sermon Outlines

The Delicateness of Prayer

Introductory Thoughts

How easy to sing, “Have thine own way Lord, have thine own way”.

1. We must bow to the sovereignty of God.

Isaac’s Intercessory prayer

- 1) It was after the boys have grown up; after Esau sells his birthright and there’s a famine in the land.
 - a) At least 20 years later, that’s when Isaac hears God’s voice for the first recorded time – probably he was in his eighties. Still at this late time of life hearing God speak to Him, what an encouragement for us who are older.
 - 2) I haven’t heard his audible voice yet either – but Rebekah was probably only forty when she was privileged to hear the Lord’s voice.
 - 3) God spoke to people in Biblical times and even the unsaved idolaters:
 - a) The unsaved:
 - i) Abraham (Acts 7:2). Possibly Abram had left pagan Ur in heart and was seeking God (Josh. 24:2).
 - ii) Pharaoh (Gen. 41:1-7)
 - iii) Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 2:1-3; 19-44)
 - iv) Belshazzar (Dan. 5:5; 24-28)
 - v) Cornelius (Acts 10:4-6)
 - b) People in fellowship with Him:
 - i) Adam fellowshiped with Him, walked and talked with Him in the cool of the day (Gen. 3:8).
 - ii) Cain was rebuked by God (Gen. 4:9-16).
 - iii) Abraham spoke with God (Gen. 18:24-32).
 - iv) Sarah exchanged a few words with Him through the door of the tent (Gen. 18:12-13).
 - v) Moses talked with Him face to face – as a friend (Ex. 33:11).
 - vi) Samuel heard him when he was just a young lad (1 Sam. 3:4-10).
 - vii) Paul spoke with Him on the Damascus Road (Acts 9:4-6).
 - viii) John heard Him reveal the end times on the Island of Patmos (Rev. 1:9).
- (a) God longs to communicate with us, so much that He sent His Holy Spirit to continually guide us, encourage us, comfort us, and witness to our spirit that we are children of God.

Major Lesson

- 1) Perhaps we are asking for the wrong reason (Jam. 4:3).
- 2) At times God does not answer our prayers for He knows what is best.
 - a) Illus. Had my son at 15 years of age asked me to buy him a 1500 cc motor bike I would have said no. Not because I did not love him but because love for him would have stopped me from putting his life in danger. God with His superior knowledge and foresight knows what is best for us

Suggestions

- 1) If years have gone by and we’re still waiting for God to grant our petitions:
 - a) First of all, we need to be careful not to help God answer our prayers by our efforts like Abraham did, like Joseph did.
 - b) Secondly, we need to be careful not to hinder God by hardening our hearts, by becoming discouraged in the waiting.

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- c) Remember God gave man free will and there is the possibility that an individual may be rebelling against what God would love to do for them.

The Ideal Response

- 1) Like Joseph and David, we may see the reward for our burdened hearts in this lifetime, but sometimes, like the prophets and like the martyrs, we may only see the results and receive the crown when we see Jesus face to face.
- 2) In this world we will have trouble, trials to make us better, not bitter, to make us more useful for ministry in this lifetime and to prepare us to rule with Him in the Millennium.
- 3) How does God speak to us today?
 - a) He can speak through illness, bereavement.
 - b) He can speak via circumstances, a lost job, a disappointment.
 - c) He certainly does speak through His Word.
 - d) He can speak through conscience.
 - e) He can speak through the words of others.
- 4) Abraham and Sarah were impatient.
 - a) They could not wait for God's time.
 - i) The natural man must have it now.
 - ii) The spiritual man will bear the order if needed and wait God's time.
 - iii) Hebrews 6:15 Patiently endured
 - b) They acted without a word from God.
 - i) The flesh does not need a Bible.
 - ii) The flesh does not want the Bible.
 - iii) It started in the heart of man.
 - c) Hagar came from Egypt
 - i) The world
 - ii) The flesh and the world go hand in hand.
 - d) Hagar was a slave, a bondwoman.
 - i) Being under the law makes one a slave.
 - ii) The spirit brings freedom.
 - iii) What is the difference between liberty and legalism as the carnal man sees it ?
 - e) How quickly things happened in Genesis chapter 16
 - i) The idea in Sarah mind v.2
 - ii) The child born in v. 15
 - f) The principles of leadership were set aside.
 - i) It started with Sarah.
 - ii) The woman took a prominent place.
 - iii) Cp. Eve in the garden.
 - iv) Man gives up his place governmentally.
 - g) Abraham fell in with the whole scheme.
 - i) The flesh in him found the other woman and the idea attractive.
 - h) Conclusion. Ch. 16 the flesh at work.

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i) Yet, Abraham was a friend of God.

5) In Eternity

a) The gifts of eternal life, glorified bodies, a mansion in the New Jerusalem, and the privilege of walking and talking with Jesus face to face is for every believer alike. There is no favouritism with God, and James says, there should be none among His children either. Jesus is Lord of Lords and King of Kings, but he didn't play favourites. He ministered to the least of us: the bruised, the broken and the banished, the beggars, the blind, the lepers, and the deaf, the demon-possessed, anyone that needed Him, and that's everyone. No one was too low, too sick, too poor, or too dirty. From Nicodemus to Zacchaeus, from the most religious to the most depraved, all who will may come, from every tribe, nation and tongue, and He loves them equally. 1 John 4:19 says: "***We love Him, because He first loved us.***"

6) Sometimes God makes us wait for the fulfilment of His promises i.e.

- a) How long have we known we are going to Heaven and it has not happened yet?
- b) How long did Abraham have to wait for Isaac to be born?
- c) God pledged Jacob the full blessing but like Abraham, he went about it his own way.

**May God grant us good understanding as He, by His Holy Spirit, deigns to guide us into all truth.
John 16:13**

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