



From the Pastor's heart

Prayer- The Final Frontier



Mat 26:39 And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.

There is an interesting play on the word "Prayer". It denotes both, the form of communication required to God and the person who is the "Prayer". In the above verse, we see Jesus the Son of Man possibly prostrate on the ground before His Father praying to conquer the final frontier; death. This moment would decide whether all that Jesus had come to the earth for, could be achieved. The miracles, signs and wonders, the teaching He brought and the hope He gave people was now dependant on His own willingness to go the final step; which was, to accept the will of His Father in heaven. If He did not go to the cross, all this would have been in vain.

The kind of prayer He offered would decide what the outcome would be because His heart condition would be exposed in what He prayed. Though the words expressed His shortcomings as a man in the flesh, His heart expressed the deep need to be obedient even unto death, even the death of the cross. His prayer would ofcourse be examined as to its true intent and motivation and authenticity of expression before the answer to this prayer could come from God. The stakes were high, much higher than any human being could pay. In a sense, the diety of God and His power was being challenged by the devil and so this prayer carried with it an enormous expression of faith. The devil hates prayer because he knows God is always attentive to prayers and will answer them. The devil must have tempted Jesus to the core to give up just at the last moment in the Garden of Gethsemane, by pressing home the enormous cost of the cross. It wasn't that Jesus did not know the cost; it is just that, when the devil highlights it in such an accentuated way, it makes it difficult to believe God for the outcome. **This in essence is the nature of temptation** to which many succumb because it is so desirable to just give in to temptation. The easy way out for Jesus would have been to walk away from the responsibility bestowed on Him which was, to carry the sins of the world and die a horrible death both in a spiritual sense and phsyical sense. To be isolated from God even for a brief moment was to put Himself out there in the open without what would seem to be the lack of God's protection. That is why, on the cross, Jesus cried out; "My God My God, why hast thou forsaken me"? Another prayer but more desperate than the first one because He was out there on His own.

I believe, that desperate prayer is the final frontier. There are many kinds of praying but nothing quite like the desperate prayer. The reason it is the final frontier is; if God does not come through, there is no fall back position. One simply has to accept the outcome. Yet, the outcome is not always what the prayer is about. One can pray for a desired outcome but the answer is yet a completely different result to the one desired. The correlation between desperate prayer and the result of it is often in the outcome of what God has desired it should be. This outcome is wrapped up in His will which is not always clear. The prayer of Jesus in the Garden was to let the cup pass if it was God's will but the acceptance of God's will produced the result that was not mentioned in the prayer.

Let us say; we prayed for someone to live but they died. Would you say the outcome was bad? In our human reasoning we certainly would say that. Yet, if we knew that God was in control, it should give us an assurance that the outcome was right because we have not seen the outcome as yet, concerning death. Faith tells us; the outcome was good. *Heb_11:13 **These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.*** It never ceases to amaze me as to how we as human beings get into depression over prayers that do not produce the outcome we desired. We are all guilty of it. Yet, if we had faith, we would have overcome the temptation of defeat in prayer, which is designed to send us into further unbelief and to stop believing God completely, while seeking our own solutions to manage the outcome.

The prayer life of an individual is critical to the faith that one carries. The strength of prayer is always tested in the strength of the relationship between us and God. God is always listening to our prayers but has placed a burden on us to believe Him for what we pray to Him for. *Mar_11:24 Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.* I believe that this one aspect of our faith is often time falling into unbelief when we pray. I attribute our unbelief to previous experiences of unanswered prayer and that which did not happen instantaneously when we prayed. Furthermore, we are not prepared for the outcome of our prayer. When prayer goes unanswered more often than not, we give up and we are discouraged to pray any more. Yet, God is patient and waiting for us to grow in our understanding of our relationship with Him through prayer in general and not just answered prayer.

Many have received answers to prayer and then have gone on to forget God in the next instant. This is a deep failure of character concerning God's children. It is something that I believe makes God sad when He sees that His children do not believe Him. He asks the question; *Isa 50:2 Wherefore, when I came, was there no man? when I called, was there none to answer? Is my hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem? or have I no power to deliver?* behold, at my rebuke I dry up the sea, I make the rivers a wilderness: their fish stinketh, because there is no water, and dieth for thirst. *Isa_59:1 Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear:*

The times we live in require even greater strength of character in prayer because we need from God what we do not have, to combat the forces we are up against. Many say; "God has already given us everything". They then go about seeking to claim and do this "everything" that God has supposed to have given us. They quickly discover that they are just as incapable as the next person without asking God for what they need. *Jas_4:2 Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not.*

Is prayer, asking God for what He has already given us? I do not think so. I think prayer is requesting God humbly for what we need Him to give us what we do not have and do for us what we cannot do for ourselves. On the other end of the scale, we can operate with what we have and do not need to ask God because it is in us. *Act_3:6 Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.* Here is Peter operating with what he had already been given. Now look at Peter's prayer for what he did not have but what he needs. *Act_4:29 And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word.* This time around, God answered Peter's prayer and gave him what he needed with even greater manifestation of power. *Act_4:31 And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.* I am convinced that the need of this hour is to pray for the things we know we do not have. This is the final frontier of prayer. We may be asking God erroneously for what He has already given us and we need to correct that in the way we pray. When we pray for what we do not have, we must believe and receive the outcome of the prayer.

Waiting on God's answer is another critical aspect of prayer. I believe this is more critical than just praying the desperate prayer or the prayer for what we do not have. It is continuing to pray and then waiting. *Mat 26:44 And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.* The answer of God came in the betrayal. *Mat 26:45 Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.* These are all principles of prayer that we must activate in our lives. Many have only prayed in a certain way because of their experience with answered prayers or praying what they have desired. What they have not realised is, God had put that desire in their heart in the first place to pray in that manner. Another set of prayers that do not allow us to see into the deeper realm of prayer are prayers of intercession and groaning that cannot be uttered. *Rom_8:26 Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.*

We should be praying prayers of deep intercession for the situation at hand in the world. Our prayers must change with the times to change the times we live in. If we persevere in our old ways, we would have wasted our precious prayers on materialistic things and for achievements in the flesh. God does not deny us the gifts of heaven in these matters but is seeking for those who will pray for something outside of one's flesh like Daniel did.

The end of nations is at hand and the world is in turmoil like never before. *Luk 21:36 Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to*

stand before the Son of man. This is the kind of praying we need to pray, not only for ourselves but the whole world. The world situation is beyond anything one can imagine. Just because it is not at our doorstep yet, it does not mean that it will not come. The forces of darkness are getting ready to unleash their end time desperate measures because they know their time is at end. We are more than conquerors through Christ Jesus.

Lots of love

Pastor Noble

20/05/2018