

Prayer 07 Our Instructions 03

by Bob Clark

Jesus' prayer ministry and intercession are essential for our spiritual well-being, and he continues to pray for us to the Father, making it possible for us to approach God with confidence.

Duration: 32:14

Scripture: Psalm 2:8, Romans 8:1-30, Hebrews 7:19-25

Topics: "Prayer Life"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the exalted position of Jesus as a risen man in the heavenly places. He highlights the ministry of the Spirit of God and how it brings victory over the flesh and affirms our sonship. The preacher then explores the 'Five Golden Guarantees' mentioned in Romans chapter 8, which include being foreknown, predestined, called, justified, and glorified. The sermon also emphasizes the profound love of God, who did not spare His own Son but freely gives us all things. The preacher concludes by discussing the joy and gratitude Jesus expressed to the Father for revealing spiritual truths to His disciples.

Transcript

We should sing our Amen at the end of that. It's very nice to be here, and I have certainly enjoyed being with you, particularly at these morning sessions, to hear you taking part and contributing and expressing your thoughts. And we'd like to continue along that line, but before we actually share some thoughts, let me read a couple of verses.

You might like to turn to them. So in Luke chapter 10, it's a remarkable relationship between the eternal God, the Father, and the eternal beloved Son. There's something very nice, isn't there, when a father and a son are able to be together, and this is even at just a human level, and to have a warmth and exchange and a camaraderie of spirit and a care and an interest in one another is just a very becoming and pleasant thing.

And something that is spoken of here regarding our Lord just seems so lovely. Chapter 10 of Gospel of Luke, verse 21. In that hour, Jesus rejoiced in spirit and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes, even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.

The verse seems to erupt on the page where there has been an expression of the apostles, the disciples, rather, the 70 come back, and they are just exhilarated over their power that they have received from the Lord to have influence over the demonic world, even. Even the spirits are subject to unto us, and they are just rejoicing in this. And our Lord rejoices in his own spirit and speaks to his Father.

And then in John chapter 11, again another familiar verse, coming to the graveside, verse 11, John 11 and verse 41, excuse me. Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid, and Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. Now, there's been no issued prayer, so we know it comes from the musing of his horn.

And it's an ongoing walk, and all through the ministry of our Lord, we've had drawn to our attention during his earthly ministry that he maintained an active prayer relationship, a communion with the first person of the Godhead. The eternal God and his Father was always in fellowship and communion with him and he with him. There was an ongoing constancy in the walk.

And the Lord demonstrated this fellowship with the Father in prayer. He gave us exhortations that we, his disciples and followers, should be people of prayer. He gave parables to illustrate the value and the importance of prayer.

And then he gave us instructions regarding the requirements for having answered prayer. So there is very much written in the scripture about the Lord's past experience on earth and relationship to prayer. Now what we would like to do is to think a little bit about his present experience in the heavens.

You might remember that back in Psalm 2, there was an announcement of the coming King in a prophetic statement, and the first person speaks to the second person and says, Ask of me, and I will give you the inheritance. And it appears that prayer is the communion or the praise or the expression or the manner of speech between the first and the second person. And there is in the scriptures a number of portions of scripture we have just read to, and then there was that prophetic statement in the book of Psalms, which suggests that there is an ongoing spiritual, mental intercourse, if we can use such words, connected with the Godhead, and it's described in prayer.

So when you and I are praying, there is a sense, a limited sense, in which we are being Christ-like. Remember in 2 Corinthians, in chapter 4, in verse 11, there is the expression that we have been delivered unto death, that the life of our Lord Jesus Christ might be seen in us. We who are experiencing mortality can in some little way, by attitudes, by patterns of behavior, express a Christ-likeness.

And one of those Christ-likenesses, one way in which we can express the life of our Lord Jesus, is to show our dependence upon God. Our humility in a sense of weakness by communing with Him in prayer. The Eternal Son did it while He was on earth.

Apparently there was that in the past eternity, before time, where they had that exchange, as is suggested by the psalmist. And now, in the book of Romans, there is a first of three verses that are very well known to us, and these each teach us stages of this intercessory work that is going on now, between the Father and the Son, while He is in heaven. He is a risen man, the marvel of the universe, a man in the heavenly places, in the glory, at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

And in Romans chapter 8, we read concerning, in the beginning of chapter 8, that it's the marvelous declarations of the ministry of the Spirit of God, and how His tremendous effective work gives us victory

over the flesh, and it affirms our sonship. And there is then a declaration of a, I think it's Griffith Thomas, that called it five golden guarantees, the links of glory, where it starts out in the eternity past and links together in five successive statements that we have foreknown, predestined, called, justified, and glorified. And with such an exhilarating theme as the capstone of the great doctrine of the righteousness of God, and the blessing that we have come into, then there is these rhetorical questions that can only be answered in one way, and this is to underline and to prove what God has accomplished on our behalf.

In verse 31, what shall we say then to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifies. How can God lay any charge against those whom he has chosen to be his own, in his own profound wisdom, and has implemented the effect of great redemptive work so much so that he has justified, judicially declared that we are just and free from any charge, and not only vindicated, but the implication in the word justified is not only the past, but a future established. We are justified.

Who can lay any charge? Shall God charge us, whom has actually completely justified us? The next question is, who is he that condemneth? Of course we know that all judgment has been given to Christ, the Son. It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God. And if that is not sufficient, who also maketh intercession for us? What a splendid statement.

Before each time there was fellowship in prayer between the Godhead. On earth there was a constant ongoing fellowship expressed in prayer, where the perfect man effected God's program and became in very truth the last Adam, the federal head of a new spiritual race, a quickening spirit. And in vindication of this he has been raised up to the right hand of God.

Now what does he do at the right hand of God? He makes intercession for us. Now, exercise our minds and our spirits a little bit, and with that kind of a background, what do you see are the implications of what this statement is? What is the context here? The general context of these thoughts. What major broad subject is being drawn to our attention that is under consideration? All right, we are freed from sin and all charges.

That means the subject is not in its accurate sense just salvation, is it? But it is a little bit beyond salvation. What is the thought? It is not salvation, what we are dealing with now is what one word can kind of encapsulate it. Security, all right, or redemption.

That's right, the stabilizing and settling of this grand thing. Now, in relationship to the affirmation of our security and the absoluteness of the great work, he is interceding. What might it be? Now we say this with reverence, but what might it be in your discernment that is the object of this intercessory work? Winning souls to Christ.

Possibly, winning souls to Christ, defeating Satan. What else might come to your mind? Anything else that you might think we should give some thought or consideration to? Glorifying God. Glorifying God, right.

Who can lay any charge? Who can condemn? Oh no, Satan may give accusations, but the glorification of God is interceding for these and establishing that this work that God has wrought is a good work. What else might be before us? Showing the love of God in Christ. Certainly that, isn't it? Right.

Delightful affirmation. He does not save us, pluck us as bran from the burning, and then say, now do the best you can and prove yourself. Nothing like that, is it? Now, let's move our minds over to the book of Hebrews, and there's another statement, and again, very familiar, but I think, as we look at the environment of the situation, we can get a different view.

Now, in Romans chapter 8, we have thought of the purposes of God, the security of the child of God, the glory of God, the defeating of the evil one, and this is kind of a God-ward intercession, if we could say it in such a term. Now, in Hebrews chapter 7, let's start back at verse 19 to get the flow of our thought, but we all know we're going to end up in verses 25. Verse 19, The law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did, by the which we draw nigh unto God.

And inasmuch as not without an oath he was made priest, for the priests were made without an oath, that is, they were born into this condition, the Old Testament Aaronic priesthood, were born to be priests, but this with an oath by him that saith unto him, The Lord swear and will not repent, thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament, and they truly, the Old Testament priests, were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death. But this man, because he continueth for ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood.

And here is our verse, Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens. Who needeth not daily as those high priests to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people? For this he did once, when he offered up himself.

For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity, but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son who is consecrated for evermore. Now in verse 25 we have the statement, He ever liveth to make intercession for them. Now, is it as Christ the judge that he is interceding here? Or is it a different office that is conveyed to us? Alright, here is our advocate.

Let's hold on to that word because, alright, but that's the concept now. It's not just Christ the judge, but what is he here? What office is described? He is our priestly office. Now what is implied to us by a priest? A priest implies what? A mediator, one who is on the behalf of others.

Where are the others? He ever liveth to make intercession. Where is his priestly ministry now? At the right hand of God. He is in heaven.

In Romans chapter 8 he was in heaven as the Son, who has the power to condemn, but who will not because he intercedes, giving us security. And it's referenced to our position in the Lord. Now we have a different concept.

Our priesthood has a relationship to where are we? We are here on earth, aren't we? And what is happening to us? We are confronted with sin, Satan, what else? Our own self, right? The world, all the perils and problems of pilgrims wandering in the wilderness down here, and a rough, ragged road that we trace. And in this perspective, he is at the right hand of God, speaking to God, interceding for us, as one as a priest representing another company. Others in the behalf of others who are going through trials and difficulties down here.

And he is interceding for us. He is speaking to God. Now what might be the theme? If security was the theme in Romans chapter 8, the stabilizing of the purposes of God, here, sanctification, the practical setting apart of our life in the wilderness, one who represents us and stabilizes our pathway, keeps us going onward.

He is ever speaking to the Father on our behalf. He ever liveth to make intercession for us. The striking contrast with the earthly priest.

The comparison is there, but the comparison is designed to be a contrast. All the frailties. What are some of the things that are said concerning the Jewish Aaronic priesthood that are designed to strengthen our thought of the Lord's living ministry? And of course we're still thinking about it.

He is still praying. He prayed in eternity, passed with the first person, and within the Godhead there was a discourse. Here, on earth, he was a constant spiritual intercourse with the deity and the Godhead as they communed with each other, and he is up there now, interceding, still speaking on our behalf.

Now, what is it that's said here concerning some of the priests? They were infirmed with sin. Another one that they died. There were many of them.

Something else. Other things are said there. That's right, it was constantly changing.

You just got to know one fellow, and he understood your problems, and he's gone, and somebody else is there. Constantly, because of their own frailty. What a beautiful contrast.

Every one of those things, the Lord stands out and is so distinct. What a blessed provision for us. And he is saying, speak to me.

Don't you think I understand your problems? And it's far more important for me, and I should imagine, as God has allowed me to be with different people in the body of Christ over a period of years, and have the pleasure of praying with different ones, I am markedly impressed in my own soul with the facility that God has given to women to be able to understand what it is that's burdening their heart, and be able to express it to God. They seem to have an... I shouldn't say uncanny. I suppose it's a spiritual exercise of soul and heart, and a perception about themselves.

And we men can be in the middle of a major doldrum, and not really know what it is that's bothering us. It's a grand thing to be objective enough to be able to deal with problems as headship, and be able to be objective in relationships, but it creates a tremendous problem when you want to really get at the difficulties, and it's so hard to know what it is that are a problem. We sometimes are praying in broad generalities because we can't be so definitive, and it's not an easy thing, particularly to get a group of young men together, and we spend some time in prayer, and their exercises, they naturally, instinctively, we talk all around the immediate problem, instead of being able to reach right in and pull it out and say, Lord, I am just so, and name it before the Lord, and be able to bring out the difficulty, and we hedge, and we talk about our environment and circumstances in generalities, and it's so important for us to be able to perceive the immediate situation and present it.

When you are in the wilderness, and there is a total lack of water, I'm sure they didn't say, and go to their priest, well, there seems to be a certain need that we have, and we want to be concerned about our needs here. No, they didn't talk that way, did they? They said, where's the water? We want water, and they enumerated it. That's exactly what God wants us to do.

He says that concerning our sin. He's very selective about the Greek word that he uses in the Scriptures for confession about our sin, and that we don't talk about generalities like, well, I just don't seem to have a very happy disposition today, Lord, and things seem to perturb me. He says, confess it.

Just say to me, I'm an angry man. But that's hard for us, because we don't want to expose ourselves, but sometimes it's just too difficult to know what are the problems that interfere with our pilgrim life, but he is interceding for us, and he knows, and he has been there, and somehow, this one who was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners, that is lifted out from among them, and now elevated right into the heavens, he was once here, wasn't he? And in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that, here's the purpose, he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God. He has suffered, and he has been tried, and he understands the pathway, and he intercedes for us.

Now, if you would, what are our two words? We have one word, the first word in Hebrews and Romans 8, it was security, and in Hebrews chapter 7, we thought of sanctification. This might be more difficult to put a word just on this, but in 1 John chapter 2, verse 1, My little children, these things write I unto you, that you sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the fathers, Jesus Christ the righteous.

And he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. Now, this statement tells us that our Lord Jesus is not only as the condemning Christ, who alone can exercise judgment, but on the behalf of believers, he is interceding to secure our salvation. The one who experienced all the tests and problems of life in relationship to our pilgrim walk here, he is there in aid to intercede for us, to sanctify us, but now there's the matter of sin.

Now, he has written to us and encouraged us that we sin not. We are never to be presumptuous with God. Because he died for those sins, I should never go on practicing those things, particularly those which he convicts me of and exercises my soul about, and I need to be confessing those things.

But, he is an advocate. Now, this is a familiar term. What is the word for advocate here? Somebody knows, I'm sure.

Not quite. The one who stands between. I'm looking particularly for the word.

A paraclete, right? A paraclete, right? A paraclete. Who other person, what other person was called a paraclete? The Holy Spirit. And what did the Lord, what was the language or the framework that the Lord described that the Holy Spirit would come as a paraclete? What was it translated as in our English Bible? It says a comforter.

Alright? One who comes alongside. Paraklesis is a call to be alongside. And when the Lord Jesus was doing what? He was anticipating doing what in John's Gospel? Right.

He was going to return to heaven, he said. But why don't you worry about you're not going to be an orphan. What's going to happen? A comforter would come.

The Spirit of God, that's exactly right, another comforter, which suggests what? That he is going to be a comforter. Where is his comforting ministry going to be? In heaven. During what media? Through what activity? Through intercessory work, through his advocacy, through speaking to God in heaven, and the Spirit of God is speaking to us down here.

The Spirit of God has been communicated to us to be another comforter. What I was to you here on earth, my disciple, a companion, an associate, an instructor, a representative of God, the one who brought you into fellowship with God, that's what the Spirit is going to do in all. He is doing this, John says, we have an advocate.

What is implied by having an advocate with the Father? Yes, you need him. Alright, we need him. That's one thing.

Now, thinking particularly about with the Father. Communion. Beg your pardon? Communion.

Communion. Fellowship. What might be said is if we had an advocate with God, one might think what? Family affair.

That's it. If any man sin, you're out of a family. Is that correct? Oh, no.

If any man sin, we know that does not put us out of the family. Why? Because we advocate, we have an advocate with the Father. Right.

That family relationship is perpetuated and it's so carefully expressed. It does not say that it's based upon something I do. What are the words? If any man sin, we have an advocate.

It does not say if any man confess. The moment I sin, what happens? The Lord steps in in His intercessory advocacy. And the moment I sin, and I might not even be aware of that sin, but who would be aware of that? Ah, yes.

And the one who is the accuser of the brethren is glad to publicly announce and throw that's what the word accuse means. It's diabolos, to throw across the heavens. And the implication is He doesn't stand by the side of the throne of God and say, now there, that beloved brother down there of yours, he sinned.

He doesn't do anything like that. He's glad to throw across the heavens the accusation that all the angelic beings and any beings that are on tune and listening and can be involved will be hearing these charges. But, if any man's sin, long before that one can react and make any accusation, we have an advocate.

And who is that one? How is he described? Jesus Christ the Righteous. Jesus the Christ the Righteous One. What a blessed provision for us.

Does He have a good, ongoing prayer ministry now? Ah, yes. What word would you connect with this if it was in Romans 8 dealing with security and with our sanctification here. What word might you connect with 1 John advocacy? His love.

All right. His love. But we have to have a word that begins with the letter S. I mean, we've got two.

Solace. All right. There's a good one.

His love. His solace. Dealing with the subject of sin.

This is securing a total deliverance from this operation of the principle of sin that operates within us. So thorough and comprehensive is the work of salvation. So deep and genuine.

We have an advocate with the Father. Now, when the Spirit of God convicts us concerning these things that He has already done in His advocating work, He has maintained the work with the Father. What is it

that we have to do according to chapter 1? We must confess it.

To do what? Secure our salvation? No. That's right. To restore the fellowship.

To be back in the light as He is in the light. To have this ongoing walk. Our salvation has been secure by His intercessory work and the great redemptive work.

Our sanctification and strengthening here on earth has been based upon that magnificent ongoing work understanding all of our needs as pilgrims here in this world. And now concerning sin itself, He is our advocate. He speaks to God on our behalf.

And this is rather interesting that this is one of the verses that indicate to us the great effectiveness of this work. He is Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins.

He is the mercy seed. He is the meeting place for our sins. And, not for ours only, but for the whole world.

There's adequacy in His work for the whole world. And John has such a broad heart. He wants us to comprehend that there's nothing that we have done that has not been covered by His advocacy.

Some of us long, many months and years have been grieved over things in our life for the flesh has asserted itself and we have been grievously wrong. And we need to comprehend that He is the propitiation for our sins. He is the meeting place, the mercy seed for all of our sins.

And there's so much adequacy in His work. It's not for ours only, the body of Christ, who have confessed those sins and laid them upon them, but they're sufficient for the whole world. It does not say that He died for the sins of the whole world, or even that He is the propitiation for those sins.

There is sufficiency. Until they, individuals of the world, make it their own by their own faith, it is not effective to them. This is where our human responsibility comes in to avail ourselves of this wonderful provision.

And if any man sin, we have a comforter, an advocate, the lawyer, the one that pleads our cause before the Father. What a lovely provision. Now, if the Lord is praying in heaven, what should that mean to us? What are some of the things, just honestly and simply, put forth and share with each other now, what are some of the things that that should mean for us? Security.

Pardon? We should surely be praying as well. Peace. Confidence.

And praise. Praise. Great comfort of soul should be ours.

What serenity and stability to our lives. What buoyancy to our spirits. Humbling indeed when we fail and sin again, praying to be able to confess and know that it's all established and secured.

Nothing takes God by surprise. And, if we have been delivered unto death, that the life of our Lord Jesus might be seen in our mortal flesh, how lovely that others would see us praying and in communion with our God and in an ongoing fellowship with our Father and in seeking to magnify the work and the person of our Lord Jesus and in any little modest way we can, every time we address ourselves to the Lord, you are in some little measure being Christlike, showing our humble dependence and a desire to have an ongoing walk with Him. It's a wonderful thing to be a child of God.

Let's pray. Father, how we thank Thee for Thy words and what a blessing it is to our soul to be reminded of the rich inheritance that is ours and the remarkable truth that Thy beloved Son is still maintaining the great work of prayer, intercession, advocacy on our behalf. We thank Thee for this glorious provision and bless Thee in His holy name.

Amen.

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