

Pray for Kings - Part 7

by Chip Brogden

Chip Brogden emphasizes the importance of praying for kings and authorities to align with God's will and purpose in the world.

Duration: 20:23

Scripture: Daniel 4:17

Topics: "Prayer For Leaders", "Spiritual Authority"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of praying for those in authority, especially when secular governments go astray or persecute believers. It highlights the spiritual authority believers have through prayer to impact nations and leaders, focusing on praying for leaders to be saved, supportive of the gospel, respectful of human rights, and ultimately for God's will to be done. The sermon encourages believers to intercede for governments and leaders, seeking God's intervention and judgment when necessary.

Transcript

You see, the secular authority has gone off the rails. When you see the governments of this world are in disarray, when they are in rebellion against the Lord, when they are actively persecuting those who have the testimony of Jesus and those who proclaim the name of Jesus. What do we do in those situations? Now, I'm not saying that you don't vote.

I'm not saying that you don't become politically active and try to change things on that level. But all of us are not in a situation necessarily where we are able to affect things politically. I'm not suggesting that you can't get involved politically.

Daniel was certainly a political force in the secular authority in Babylon and in the Medes and the Persians. He was the second in command. He was right there underneath the king and he had tremendous secular authority.

But that paled in comparison to his spiritual authority. It was Daniel's spiritual authority that really shaped the course of nations and really had such an impact on that nation and upon the kingdom of God. So I'm not suggesting that you discount the possibility of voting or becoming politically active or trying to change things on that level.

But I'm saying all of us aren't able to do that, but all of us are able to pray. We are able to take steps in a spiritual capacity to pray for God's will and for God's purpose to be fulfilled in the nations of this world and in the governments of this world. And when they get out of bounds, when they go off track, we do have the ability to deal with that on a spiritual basis.

So I want to share with you four strategies for exercising spiritual authority. And the first we've already covered extensively. It's the name of this entire series.

First of all, pray for those in authority. Pray for kings, it says. Pray for kings.

Your first action on a regular basis should be to pray for those kings and for all those who are in authority, scripture says. Why? Well, here's the four outcomes that I am looking at when I'm praying for kings. First, I pray that they would be saved and would come to the epignosis of truth, the full knowledge of truth, the experiential knowledge of truth.

If the nation, the leader of a nation, were to have an experience with Jesus like Saul did on the way to Damascus, I believe it would radically change the way the leader of that nation approaches government. And we see that actually happened in the book of Daniel and with Nebuchadnezzar. So don't say it can't happen.

It happened to a pagan king in a pagan land who was in rebellion against God, and Daniel said that the Most High has declared that you're going to be judged, and you're going to crawl around and eat grass like an animal until you realize that it's the Lord who rules the heavens. And unfortunately, scripture says, all of that came to pass, and Nebuchadnezzar was humbled. And at the end of that, it says he opened his eyes, he acknowledged the Lord, and everything was restored to him.

It's a powerful, powerful testimony in the book of Daniel, and if God can do that for Nebuchadnezzar, I believe he can do it for anybody. So we're going to pray first and foremost for kings to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. Secondly, I'm praying that they would be a help to the gospel and not a hindrance to the gospel, that they would help the kingdom of God and not be a hindrance to the kingdom of God.

Thirdly, I'm praying that they would respect basic human rights and freedoms. Basic human rights and freedoms, because that has a lot to do with the quality of life of your brothers and sisters in other nations. The freedom of religious expression, freedom of speech, that if someone wants to worship God in a certain way that the government's not going to knock on their door and put them in jail, or that they can distribute literature, or that they can preach, or that they can witness and share the gospel of Jesus without fear of being locked up or arrested or being penalized or punished.

And in many, many nations of this world, that's just not possible. You run the risk of being jailed or fined or tortured or even executed for your faith. So when we see that these nations are doing this to God's people, that should give us the alert.

It should give us the motivation. It should give us the inspiration that we need to pray for kings so that they would have a change of heart. Pray for those that are in leadership of these governments, that these governments would be changed.

And that's where we come to the ultimate of we're praying that if this government doesn't change that God would judge that government, that he would judge that leader and would remove those leaders that are

doing harm and are hindering the kingdom of God and are persecuting people of faith. So we're not law enforcement. We're not enforcing the judgment of God.

We're not saying, God, take them out by any means. We're praying that they would turn and that they would repent. But we're also asking for the Lord to judge.

And when you have nations and you have leaders of nations that are ambivalent, antagonistic, are not respectful of basic human rights, aren't respectful of basic civil rights, aren't respectful of basic religious freedoms, then there's a problem. And we can sit back and complain about the problem, or we can stand in the gap, pray, intercede for God's purpose and God's will to be done in that nation. And if that means removing that government and bringing in another government, then the will of the Lord be done.

So, and again, let's be careful that we are doing this on a very limited basis in our prayers. I'm certainly not saying that we need to take the approach of actually physically removing these officials. That's what I'm trying to get across to you is that we need to deal with these problems with prayer and with intercession by way of the throne.

So if we have a problem with the leader, a problem with the government, we go to the ruler of the kings of the earth and say, here's a problem, Lord. Here's a problem. You establish governments, you establish these leaders, and look at what they're doing to your people.

And so we're going to cry out to the Lord and we're going to intercede to the Lord and we're going to go to the Supreme Court of heaven and say, there needs to be a change in this government. There needs to be a change in this leadership. There needs to be a change in this secular authority.

And this is exactly what the prophets did in the Old Testament. Not so much in the New Testament, you don't see it as much. Because in the New Testament, the Romans were in charge and they had a pretty firm grip on the empire.

There wasn't a lot of flux back and forth. It was a pretty steady through New Testament times, Romans were the government authority and they were the secular authority and that's it. In the nations in the Old Testament, everything was up and down and all around and you see a lot of nations rising and falling, you see a lot of kings coming and going.

And in the middle of that, you see prophets who are saying, you're on your way out and here comes the next and here's what he's going to do. And you just get the sense that there is a spiritual authority behind the secular authority that is praying and interceding and God is revealing to them the course of the rise and fall of nations, the rise and fall of secular leaders, the rise and fall of empires. So it's very fascinating to look at and to study.

But I would suggest to you that that role of spiritual authority to pray and to intercede and to have a say-so in the affairs of the nations of this world, I think that's a biblical concept that we have lost touch with. I think too many of us, we just sit back and we just let history unfold the way it unfolds. We let the nations, the governments of this world just do whatever it is they do.

We read about it on the news. We might wring our hands over it and say, oh, things are going from bad to worse and we don't know what to do, but I think that we do have authority and we do have power and we do have scriptural power, scriptural mandate, scriptural privilege to be able to pray and to intercede for God's kingdom and his purpose as it pertains to the rise and fall of nations and the leaders of these

nations. The decree of the watchers in Daniel 4.17, the decree of the watchers, and this again just reinforces what we were saying earlier with respect to Nebuchadnezzar.

Daniel 4.17 demonstrates the effectiveness of your prayers as it concerns the nations of this world and praying for kings, because that's exactly what Daniel did. And in Daniel 4.17, he says, after he gives this judgment upon Nebuchadnezzar, he says, this decision is by the decree of the watchers and the sentence by the word of the holy ones in order that the living may know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, gives it to whomever he will, and sets over it the lowest of men. So this word watcher is very interesting.

It is only found three times in the Bible. It's only found in this chapter and it's found in it three times. It means a guardian or an angel.

It also is the same word used for holy ones, the holy, the separate. So it could be an angel, it could be used of God, but it could also be used of the saints, those who are set apart, the holy, which is you and me. So this word of the holy ones, it's the prayers of the saints.

It's the voicing of our prayer and our intercession in obedience to God's word. And this is where all of this comes together. God tells us to pray for kings.

Why are we praying for kings? Because scripture gives four responsibilities that the governments and the kings of this earth, the nations of this earth, the presidents, prime ministers, or whatever the national authority is, that they have a responsibility to govern in the fear of God, to provide criminal justice, civil justice, and social justice. And when that's not happening, we don't have to just sit back and accept it. We take the steps that we can take politically.

We vote for the people that God leads us to vote for if we have the ability to vote. If we don't have the ability to vote, if you live in a country where you don't have the right to vote, you can still, regardless of what you're able to do or what you're not able to do politically, you can still appeal to the throne of God. And we see here when Nebuchadnezzar got too far off track, that there was a decision made, a decree was set forth, a sentence was set up by the word of the holy ones, by the word of the holy ones.

And I would suggest to you that that is the prayers of the saints, making intercession according to God's will for the kings of this earth and for the nations. We don't just pray against a king or against a government because we don't like their policies or we don't like their politics. And especially in my country, in the United States, politics is such a divisive thing.

It divides people. It even divides Christians between Republicans and Democrats, conservatives and liberals. Everyone has their own political viewpoint.

But when we go to the Lord and we pray, what we're praying for is not for a political party. We're not praying for one guy to get out so the guy we like can get in or vice versa. We are praying for God's kingdom and his will.

Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. And your kingdom come and your will be done in my nation and in my country and in the leaders of my government that your purpose will be fulfilled and that they would rule and govern in the fear of God and for the best interest of the people that they have responsibility over. And if they don't do that, then we're going to pray, Lord, that you send judgment, that you send correction, that your will and your purpose will be done as on earth as it is in

heaven.

And that is the prayer. That is the prayer of the watchers. That's the decision, the decree of the watchers, sentenced by the word of the holy ones.

And in this case, it was directed towards Nebuchadnezzar who became too lifted up in pride. And then at the end of that, here's the blessing of this. At the end of the time in Daniel 4:34, it says that I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven and my understanding returned to me and I blessed the most high and praised and honored him who lives forever.

For his dominion is an everlasting dominion and his kingdom is from generation to generation. All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing. He does according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth.

No one can restrain his hand or say to him, what have you done? And at the end of this, it says, now I, in verse 37, now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the king of heaven, all of whose works are truth and his ways justice and those who walk in pride he is able to put down. What a tremendous testimony. Coming from a pagan king of a pagan nation who rebelled against the government of the Lord, rebelled against his responsibility to the people and became lifted up in pride.

And then he learned this lesson that it's the most high that rules in the kingdoms of men. And that's the basis I believe that you and I should go to the Lord in prayer. First, for the country that you live in.

And then for the nations in this world where brothers and sisters in Christ are being persecuted. Why are they being persecuted? Because the governments, the kings, those that are in authority, they're not governing in the fear of God. And they're not ensuring the civil liberties and the freedom of expression and the freedom of religion that's so necessary and so vital for the kingdom of God to flourish.

Now, it doesn't mean that the body of Christ isn't functioning in these nations. China is an excellent example where secular authority says that you're not allowed to meet, you're not allowed to do anything outside of the secular government. And yet we see a tremendous movement there in the body of Christ in China.

So God is at work in the nations according to his purpose, according to his promise and the privilege that you and I have, especially if we live in a free nation where we are able to worship God without fear, without fear of persecution or fear of punishment, fear of imprisonment. The best way that we can serve the body of Christ in these free nations that we live in is to pray for kings and for all that are in authority in these governments, in the nations that we live in, and in particularly those nations that are not respectful of the kingdom of God and are not helping the kingdom of God, but they are hindering the kingdom of God by either persecuting or allowing the persecution of people of faith. So let's pray for kings and let's pray for God's will and for God's purpose in these lands.

And let's pray for our brothers and sisters who are being persecuted for their faith, tortured for their faith, so that God's will would be done, that our brothers and sisters in these lands would be protected, that they would be blessed, and that those who are persecuting them would be removed, stopped, ashamed, that no weapon formed against God's testimony in these nations would prosper. These are just some examples of some ways that we can pray and have a positive impact and make a real difference in the world just by dealing with things by way of the throne, whether we cast a vote or whether we become

politically involved, that's up to you and that's up to your conscience and how God leads you and what you're able to do. But all of us can pray and all of us can appeal to the throne of God on behalf of our brothers and sisters in Christ.

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