

Great Commission Praying

by Elmer G. Klassen

Elmer G. Klassen emphasizes the critical role of prayer in fulfilling the Great Commission and reviving the spiritual life of the church.

Scripture: Matthew 28:19, Luke 10:2, Acts 1:8, Ephesians 6:18, James 5:16

Topics: "Great Commission", "Holy Spirit"

Description

Elmer G. Klassen emphasizes the importance of fulfilling the Great Commission through prayer, drawing parallels to historical revivals like the second evangelical awakening in America. He highlights the need for the church to return to fervent prayer, especially in times of materialism and spiritual decline, and stresses the vital role of the Holy Spirit in true worship and soul-saving work. Klassen encourages believers to seek a deeper spiritual experience, exemplified by the teachings of authors like Dr. Samuel Chadwick, who emphasized the necessity of the baptism of the Holy Spirit for all Christians.

Transcript

Our Lord's last word on earth to His followers was the commission to make disciples of all nations. He showed them His confidence in their being able to accomplish it and gave them instructions how they were to go about their task. They were to return to Jerusalem and not leave there till they had prayed. Previously He had already instructed them they should pray for more workers because the harvest would be plentiful. The disciples were commissioned to carry on the work He had begun and were promised supernatural power to do it.

This Commission has now fallen upon those of us who are called by His Name. He is asking us first to pray. We are to ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest fields." C. Peter Wagner of the Fuller Theological Seminary calls this "Great Commission Praying." This type of praying is now being practiced in numbers and earnestness outside of North America as never before.

Great commission praying is practiced in countries today which have experienced financial, commercial and social bankruptcy. This also happened in the United States in the middle of the nineteenth century. Religious life was in the decline. The West had opened the fertile lands to multitudes of settlers which brought prosperity to many. The question of slavery was of great importance, and men's passions and energies were being diverted into channels of debate and contention. This resulted in a loss of faith in spiritual things. Then came the third great panic in American history. Thousands of merchants were suddenly found powerless as banks failed and railroads went into bankruptcy. Factories were shut down

and vast numbers were without employment. People as a whole were far more intent upon examining the political and economic cases of their predicament than searching for a spiritual explanation.

Then America began to pray. We are told that by October of 1857, the hearts of the people had been thoroughly weaned from speculation and uncertain gain, while hunger and despair stared them in the face. Not only did distress precede the awakening; there was praying and there was Divine intervention by the Sovereign God.

The second evangelical awakening was probably the greatest prayer movement that influenced North America. Ten thousand business men gathered daily for prayer in New York alone. Within two years, a million converts were added to the American churches. Beginning with a spirit of prayer and conviction of sin, it continued with an emphasis upon two great doctrines, the authority of the Scriptures and the recognition of the spiritual unity of all believers in Christ. No part of the nation remained untouched by fervent prayer.

Some political prophets are telling us today that the American economy is improving and there is now hope for a better future. Ignoring the basic reason for a better future they are neglecting Godly principles and predicting better times. Some day they will either retract their prophecy or become greatly disillusioned as many Communists and Communist sympathizers have become in recent years. As things are going now there is no Scriptural reason for better times as a nation.

Our country's best weather vane is the American Church. The church is busy but is not praying. She has fallen into materialism on one hand and into psychological counseling and the mysticism of the New Age on the other. The modern church is not a praying church. The modern church is not a praying church. The worst is not that we are not allowed to pray in public schools; Christians do not even know how to pray in the churches! Praying in the Spirit is little known and many Christians are afraid of revival power. We have theology without experience, without life, and without the Holy Spirit. Having started in the Spirit we are trying to continue in the flesh. When the Holy Spirit ceases to be the teacher the soul begins to wither, dry, and die.

Yes, there are prayers being said in the church, but what difference does it make? Most of our activities can function quite well without it. Auction sales, picnics, bazaars, and pizza parties can continue well without prayer. Organizations and committees can run very smoothly without the Holy Spirit. Soul saving and soul changing work is something else. The Holy Spirit is vital for the work of the true church; worship without the Holy Spirit is idolatry.

One of the books we found in the former library of my father-in-law was "The Way to Pentecost" by Dr. Samuel Chadwick. On the back of the front cover was written: "From Homer R. Gettle D.O. at Winona Lake Bible Conference, given to those requesting it and who promised to put 50 cents into the Lord's treasury for it. Dr. Gettle said (August 15, 1946) he had distributed seven hundred of these books."

Then in the introduction by Dr. Robert Lee Stuart, then President of Taylor University, Upland, Indiana, we read the following:

"I have read many books on the deeper life, but I feel that "The Way to Pentecost", by Samuel Chadwick, has been the greatest blessing to my own soul of any book I have ever read in this field. Dr. Chadwick was a great soul. He was the cultured, evangelistic pastor of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of Leeds, England, for seventeen years. He was also honored during his lifetime by the presidency of the Wesleyan

Methodist Conference. At the time of his death, he was the head of Cliff College.

"In this book there is a depth of spirituality, backed by clear thinking and definite statement that helps one tremendously. The fact is, the book is so Biblical and so true to the Holy Spirit, who inspired the Word of God, that it drives one to his knees. The book will bless you spiritually and intellectually. Every pastor and Christian worker ought to have this book. It deals with a difficult subject, yet does it in a way that clears the atmosphere and shows the necessity of the blessed baptism of the Holy Spirit for the Christian believer.

"I hope this book may have a wide reading and prove the blessing to you that it has to me."

After reading this and other books written shortly after the "Second Evangelical Awakening" one notices that much of the psychology, politics and materialism to be found in today's evangelical literature is strangely missing. It will do you and all of us good to take a little time to read some of the messages that used to be preached in our Bible conferences. They are different than what we hear today.

After reading chapter two of this book on page one of this April issue of Herald of His Coming you may want to read more. If you will give "50 cents into the Lord's treasury" the book will be sent to you as a magazine for easy reading and for liberal distribution. It will do you and your church good to experience a little of the former "Winona Lake Bible Conference" right in your own home or church.

The Herald of His Coming has been calling its readers to pray for a worldwide revival and worldwide evangelism for 50 years. Now that many are involved in "great commission praying" we do not want to be left out in having a part in the great end-time harvest of souls.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/elmer-g-klassen/great-commission-praying/>

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