

The Chief Purpose of Prayer

by Watchman Nee

The chief purpose of prayer is to join hands with God to defeat the Evil One, and God's greatest need is a people who will stay where they have been placed and keep the whole life in touch with Himself.

Scripture: Luke 18:1, Ephesians 6:12, Colossians 4:2

Topics: "The Power of Prayer", "Spiritual Warfare"

Description

Watchman Nee emphasizes that the chief purpose of prayer is not merely to communicate with God but to engage in spiritual warfare against the Evil One. He highlights that true prayer requires a deep connection with the Father through Jesus Christ and is essential for defeating the powers of darkness. Nee outlines five avenues of power, with prayer being the most significant, as it allows believers to claim victory in Jesus' name. He urges Christians to prioritize prayer, as it is through this act that they can join hands with God to fulfill His plans on earth. Ultimately, the sermon calls for believers to remain steadfast in prayer, recognizing its vital role in overcoming evil.

Transcript

(The following is an article by S.D. Gordon. It originally appeared in The Overcomer, published by The "Overcomer" Office Leicester, England, August 1910.)

"Be earnest and unwearied in prayer, being on the alert in it, and in your giving of thanks..." Col. iv. 2. Weymouth.

The great thing that makes the difference is not the service, not the life, but God's touch upon them. God always needs human agency. He must have someone to use always.

He mostly talks to men through men, and He will use us if we will let Him, but the great thing in all the using is not the agency but Himself.

We all need power, the power of the Holy Spirit. There is no power apart from Him--He must be in full control of all power--bodily, mentally and spiritually.

Five outlets of power. Five avenues.

1.--The Life. What we are.

2.--The Lips. What we say.

3.--The Service. What we do.

4.--The Gold. What we do not keep.

5.--The Prayer. What we claim in the Lord Jesus,
the Victor's Name.

The greatest is number five. The greatest thing anybody can do is to pray. The man pleads only as much as he loves.

The greatest thing anybody can do is to pray, but it is not the only thing, but it is the first thing, and the chief thing.

If a man must change things by prayer he must first of all be right in his touch with the Father, and that is only possible through our Lord Jesus.

Prayer and then the serving, and the sacrificing, and the offering will grow out of prayer.

The greatest people in the world are the people who pray--I do not mean those who speak about prayer, or believe in prayer, nor those who can explain nicely about prayer, but I mean the people who take time and pray.

Prayer is to give the cream of your thought--of your strength, to the quiet time alone with God for prayer.

Take time from something else, something else less important, and there are people who take time, first time for prayer, they are the followers to-day, who are being used of God in defeating the great traitor prince of this world.

The word to-night is this. That the full purpose of prayer is not upwards but outwards.

The chief purpose of prayer is not Godward, but it is Satanward, i.e. the prayer is always directed to God the Father, in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and in dependence on the Holy Spirit, but the effective drive of the prayer is upon the vast world.

All prayer begins yonder, then to a man here, and then back to God. Prayer does not influence God's purpose, but it does influence His actions, because it gives Him the liberty through our willingness to carry out His plan down here in the world--the whole driving purpose of prayer is this:--To join hands with God to defeat the Evil One

Prayer concerns three:--

1. God--to whom we pray.
2. Man--who prays.
3. Evil One--against whom we pray.

In our prayer we men down on earth join hands with God, with Jesus Christ, in utterly turning back, and utterly defeating all the power of the Evil One. See Daniel x. and companion chapter Ephesians vi.

We never wrestle against man, "flesh and blood," but against powers, principalities, &c. Paul tells us how to overcome, "withal praying with all supplications," etc., etc. Luke xviii.1-10 (Parable). Three in parable (1) Judge. (2) Widow. (3) Adversary.

A prayer picture. The whole drive of the parable story is to get the judge to join with the widow, to foist the attacks of the adversary against her!

We never will pray up to the full limit of our power, and to the possibility of prayer, until we realize this, that the whole drive of prayer is to foist the power of the Evil One. "Thy will be done," i.e., "The other will be undone."

God needs in His great plan for the world more people who will stay where they have been put. Stay where you have been put with a whole heart and life in full conscious touch with the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Evil One is to be defeated. The victory of the Lord Jesus Christ is here. The enemy fears most, next to God, the man who will put his whole life in full touch with the Lord Jesus, and stay where he has been put, and right there keep in prayer.

Victory in Jesus' Name is ours. We want to say "Get thee hence Satan, in my master's Name," and claim for the Lord Jesus.

The Evil One must turn back before the Lord Jesus. Always keep two in mind when praying:--

(1)The Satan of the Book--of great power and of great dignity.

His whole concern is regarding this earth, and regarding the race of man--that is his chief concern--not with the outer crowd but in the inner crowd--within the Church. He is subtle, powerful, but not all powerful.

(2)The Lord Jesus the Victor.

Had a running fight for 33 years from cradle to Calvary, and then Satan thought that he had won, but the third morning came, and our Lord Jesus Christ, Who gave His life for us, was Victor, and through Him only can we be ever raised up out of death. While Satan is great, the Lord Jesus is infinitely greater.

With a whole life in touch with Jesus Christ, with a heart beating with full witnessing in His power, then we can pray "Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done. Deliver us from the Evil One."

The greatest need to-day--God's greatest need--is a people who will stay where they have been placed, and keep the whole life in touch with Himself.

May there be more of these Victors.

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