Doctrine of Prayer

The Power of Persistent Prayer

Luke 18:1-8

“And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; 2 Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: 3 And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. 4 And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; 5 Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. 6 And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. 7 And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? 8 I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?”

1. The purpose of this parable is clearly stated. Jesus wanted to teach that people ought always to pray and not grow weary in the process.

2. To grow weary in prayer about a particular matter is to manifest a heart of unbelief.

3. It is a serious accusation to say that Christian people do not believe deeply that the Lord is a God hearing and God answering person but the charge must stand or we must pray more.

4. Why do we grow weary in persistent prayer?

   ● We grow weary in persistent prayer because we do not see immediate results. This fundamental impatience reflects a cultural propensity to getting things quickly. Patience is not part of our worldview.

   ● We grow weary in persistent prayer because we do not really want what we ask for and so like a child that is distracted we move on to another area of interest.

   ● We grow weary in persistent prayer because we lose faith that God wants to give us what is on our heart.

5. There are practical consequences when there is a lack of persistent prayer.

   ● Passion for prayer diminishes when there is a lack of persistent prayer.

   ● Unbelief increases by degrees, if not consciously then unconsciously when there is a lack of persistent prayer.

   “Every man will have to decide for himself whether or not he can afford the terrible luxury of unbelief” A. W. Tozer
• There is a disconnect between the rhetoric of our lips and the reality that is in our lives when there is a lack of persistent prayer.

6. In the parable the woman is virtuous because she will not leave the judge alone. The point is made. We will be more virtuous if we do not leave God alone but will persist to ask for those things that are right and needful and according to His will.

7. There are specific items in Scripture that are declared to be the will of God for which we can pray. Ephesians 5:17 says, “Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. “

• It is the will of the Lord that souls are saved. 2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

• It is the will of the Lord that our hearts be holy. 1 Thessalonians 4:3 “For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication:”

• It is the will of the Lord that Christians bear witness for Christ. Acts 5:32 And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.

• It is the will of the Lord that every Christian be filled with the Holy Spirit. Ephesians 5:18 And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.

8. There are other matters which are stated in Scripture to be the will of the Lord but these are given so that we might begin to earnestly pray for

• souls to be saved,
• lives to be sanctified,
• effective witnessing to take place,
• and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit.

9. What is needed to be persistent in prayer is

• a philosophy of how to pray and then,
• practice in the art of persistency which involves a mental aggressiveness.

10. What is not needed is a

• a spirit that despairs,
• and a philosophy of disbelief that says, “I tried prayer and it did not work.”

11. To encourage hearts, and to increase faith Christ, promises that the person who engages in persistent prayer shall be successful. God will answer later, if not sooner. But we must pray and pray in a specific manner.
12. C. H. Spurgeon said, “All the Christian virtues are locked up in the word prayer”. Therefore, let us pray but pray in a specific manner.