

Hebrews on Prayer: Confidence and commitment

Jan. 10, 2010

Intro – week of prayer coming up – more prayer – focused prayer – more dependence on God

- 1. Confidence 1:** Heb. 4:14-16 – Jesus sympathizes with our weaknesses; will help us in time of need
Great H.P. – Sympathetic - Tempted as we - Let us draw near with Confidence (boldness)
ILLUS: O Lord, you know I struggle with this...I know you understand...I need your help
Note: Throne of grace – not condemnation, criticism, merit – throne of a loving father...who wants to do good to do us good
To receive **mercy** - Find **grace** to help in
Time of need – **eukairos** – good time – right time – God’s time – not ours – ILLUS: Flight Path
- 2. Confidence 2:** Heb. 10:19-22 – Jesus’ death cleanses our conscience so we can draw near with faith. (THIS IS THE GOOD NEWS OF THE GOSPEL – we have confident access to Him)
“We have CONFIDENCE to enter the holy places” – the presence of God
By the blood of Jesus (his death on the cross...)
By this new (vs. old testament) and living(vs. dead) way He opened up for us (living God)
Through the curtain (of the holy place)
That is, through His flesh (His flesh was torn, as the curtain was when he died, opening up the holy place to God)
SO LET US DRAW NEAR –
w/ true heart – sincerity
in full assurance of faith – confidence
GOOD NEWS OF THE GOSPEL:
thru faith in Christ we receive forgiveness of sin – clean hearts – evil conscience erased
So go to him in confidence – we have access to Him – not on our own merits – but on His in whom we trust - commitment 2 – ready access w/assurance
- 3. Commitment 1:** Hebrews 13:15 - Pray prayers of praise consistently.
“sacrifice of praise” – sacrifice a popular word in Bible
OT sacrifices: many of them; all symbolic, anticipatory of Christ’s sacrifice for sin – sacrifice needed in order to approach God – when Christ died, no more need for material sacrifices
SO.... in the NT we have sacrifices – **different** – **spiritual in nature** –
NT sacrifices seen here in 15-16 15: **praise** 16: **sharing** your goods with others, generosity
Rom. 12 – **presenting** your body as a living sacrifice – Sacrifice is how we worship God
Here: the fruit of lips (not crops) that acknowledge His name – thanks praise, glory

Let’s think about the word sacrifice - What is sacrificial about praise?
Sacrifice always costly – in OT – animals or crops or wine – specific quality – high quality
NT sacrifices of praise – also costly – how so?

Pride – exalt Him – thank Him, acknowledge Him (Ex. Colt McCoy ackn. God’s sovereignty) – all you have is from Him, not you – His is the kingdom, power and glory

Effort – engage lips in song or prayer – takes effort to offer these sacrifices of prayer – don’t feel like it much of the time – low energy – tired, depressed – that’s when it becomes a real sacrifice – right? – probably the best time – Fenelon – that kind of prayer pleases God more than when we feel good because circumst. are good –

Time – *continually* – our time is His – prayers of praise should be a part of that stewardship of time –

How do we understand *continually* ?

Regular public praise – at least weekly in corporate worship

Daily private praise – daily office - X times a day (7 x’s a day I praise you...)

Spontaneous moments – get a parking place – “praise the Lord”

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Prayer and Meditation

Fixed-hour prayer

Pray the Hours

Select time zone – Bookmark it

Note: with such sac. **God is pleased** – big deal in OT (Cain, Abel) - should be our highest motive – to please Him – that true of you? Here’s the way to do that – when you love someone...

4. **Commitment 2** - Heb. 13: 18,19 – Pray specific prayers for specific needs –

:18 a specific request for specific prayer – that he might be able to return to them –

Themes of our church – specific prayers get specific answers that specifically glorify God –who want a God that’s great in general ? God is great in the specifics of our lives (for he has done...)

ILLUS: couple in Scott brown’s church – job at home depot

ILLUS: our first bible study – prayed for 10 – 8 adults and two children

ILLUS: Croatians praying for new land to come available

ILLUS: Finances – land – 70-80-90 – 100!

Lee veazey - \$275k in pledges – now \$276,336.75

Past year – accountant predicted \$42,090 for 09 – rec. as of dec. 31 \$42,107.55

ILLUS: missionaries to the mission field – 3 for 3 for 3

ILLUS: praying for our children’s spouses – got real specific –Lord I like this one...

ILLUS: early years of the church – James 5 – laying on of hands, anointing – unable to have children (mark and Lynn Fulcher)

Why we want you to come tonight – be prayed for specifically – in obedience to God’s word

Summary – 2 confidences – fatherly love/help AND ready access

2 commitments- discipline of daily sacrifices of prayer AND of specific prayers to great God

All through the work of Christ on the Cross – Gospel of cleansed hearts – free access to God

ILLUS: John Newton – story of Alexander the great