

Prayer and Temptation

(adapted from a sermon by Bill Johnson, Sons and Servants, April 12, 2015)

Introduction

We have talked about- importance of prayer-
in both a private/corporate sense.

Prayer is communication with God, talking w/God.
To pray is to look to God- to turn to God for help,
comfort, wisdom, for any aspect of life.

OT- story of the Bronze Serpent

Num 21.4-9

People grumbled about Moses leadership- God
sent serpents- bite the people and they died.
People repented- God instructed Moses to build a
fiery serpent and put it on a pole.

Everyone who looked up to it would live/not die.
Picture of looking to God for deliverance from sin.

**Lk 24:49 “And behold, I am sending forth
the promise of My Father upon you; but
you are to stay in the city until you are
clothed with power from on high.”**

Disciples- prayed/looked to God- in Upper Room.
We must look to God first before trying to fix our
problems w/natural wisdom or self-effort.

**Jn 5:19 ... “Truly, truly, I say to you, the
Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it
is something He sees the Father doing;
for whatever the Father does, these
things the Son also does in like manner.**

Our Identity in Christ

Understanding who we are spiritually is very
important- sons of God, access to our Father.

Every person is significant in God's eyes.

Sunday- celebrated 5 birthdays ...

A birthday marks a significant point in the divine purposes of God. You are His special creation for His special purpose, only you can fulfill. A birthday is a day to celebrate who God created you to be.

It is important- view life from- eternal perspective.
Prayer/worship help to give us that perspective.

Mat 13:15-16 (NASB95)

¹⁵For the heart of this people has become dull, With their ears they scarcely hear, And they have closed their eyes, Otherwise they would see with their eyes, Hear with their ears, And understand with their heart and return, And I would heal them.'

¹⁶“But blessed are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear.

Declare- Jesus has given me eyes to see, ears to hear, to look into and understand the eternal.

1 Cor 2:4-5 (NASB95)

⁴and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, ⁵so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God.

In today's world we need more than the perverted wisdom of men- need wisdom/power of God.

Jam 3:17 But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy.

Jesus spoke to the unbelievers in parables ...

Matthew 13:10–11 (NASB95)

¹⁰And the disciples came and said to Him, “Why do You speak to them in parables?”

¹¹Jesus answered them, “To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted.

Again- declare v11 over your life.

I will look to you God for the answers to life.

The Wisdom of Men gone Astray

An example of man’s wisdom gone incredibly astray- story about Bruce Jenner- Caitlyn.

Bruce Jenner was an Olympic star who has now become a woman- picture- cover- Vanity Fair.

He is being applauded for his courage.

I want to be very careful as I deal w/this topic.

My angst is not w/Bruce Jenner but with media, Hollywood, Obama administration-

w/those of influence who can speak truth into our society but instead speak lies.

Bruce Jenner struggled as- child w/gender issues

Real people suffer real anguish over sexual identity issues.

As Christians we understand the struggle of the inner man that occurs because of sin/fall.

Romans 7:21–23 (NASB95)

²¹I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wants to do good.

²²For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man,

23but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members.

These are real people w/struggles that need our understanding and compassion, not applause.

Compassion does not mean compromising biblical truth.

We are to speak truth but in love. (Eph 4.15)

“In love” means speaking with great respect, empathy, and humility.

Every person who deals w/sexual-orientation issues, bears the image of God.

I am concerned- Christians are being shamed into believing lies/false wisdom- not of God.

Rom 12:2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

The idea of sex misalignment is mistaken and does not correspond with physical reality.

John Hopkins- stopped transgender operations because it does not help their identity struggle.

The transgender movement is another result of the sexual revolution.

Changing genders is another form of exalting self-fulfillment/self-autonomy over others/truth.

To say that Bruce Jenner’s body is his own and he can do with it as he pleases- part of the lie.

Jenner’s children lost- father- wife lost a husband.

A lie of- sexual revolution- sex is a private matter, and it does not affect anyone but myself.

The sexual act is private, but our sexual decisions have public consequences- they are not done isolated from our communities and relationships with other people. John Stonestreet

We must not allow- world- shame us into silence. We need to be able to speak- but speak from an informed place and speak w/wisdom and love. We can present our values w/o attacking/making derogatory comments about the other side. But for cultures to drift there must be a shaming of people into silence- we see this today. We do not have to chose between speaking the truth and being loving in the way we speak.

Both truth and love find their existence in the person of Jesus Christ who is the ultimate expression of both truth and love. John Stonestreet

In reality- Jenner is/has always been a man. He is a man created in God's image- struggling with the very creation God made. He is unable to celebrate who God made him. Jenner needs to find out who he is in Christ. Jesus came to deliver us and people like Bruce Jenner from our domains of sinful darkness.

Col 1:13 For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son,

It is Jesus's truth that sets all of us free ...

Jn 8:32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

We need to pray Bruce Jenner/others will have genuine encounters w/God and find freedom.

Prayer and Temptation

We started looking at prayer.

To pray is to look to God- to turn to God for help, comfort, wisdom, for any aspect of life.

Mark 10.35-40

v35 big prayer-did they understand what- asking?

v36-40 When we ask God for big prayers we are also asking Him to change us so we can handle the answer to those prayers.

The disciplines of God are to prepare us to receive His blessings. (Bill Johnson)

Without- internal change- blessing we are asking for- and God wants to give- would destroy us.

v38 what cup/baptism is Jesus is talking about?

We find a glimpse of the baptism ...

Lk 12:50 “But I have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is accomplished!

Talking about- crucifixion- a baptism unto death. James/John- are you ready for this? Are we?

Lk 22.40-46

v40 What do we do to avoid temptation- PRAY- connect w/God, look to God.

Victory over temptation is found in prayer not personal resolve to avoid the temptation.

Temptation is something trying to lure us into an inferior reality. Bill Johnson

Prayer connects us w/God and His presence.

Connecting w/God causes a shift in our values away from sin- which is an inferior reality.

v41-42 This is- cup Jesus is referring to in Mk 10.

Jesus prepared Himself to drink that cup by praying and connecting w/God His Father.

v44-46 Jesus was in agony over the cup He was about to drink- His response- PRAY!

The disciples were burdened with sorrow and their response was to SLEEP.

We all have different ways to avoid pain- eat, sleep, spend money, get angry, etc.

Jesus prayed and faced the cup He was to drink.

The disciples slept and they deserted Jesus.

Jesus had given them a chance to avoid temptation/succeed in that moment- PRAY!

In prayer- presence of God- we gain courage, our values are changed, sin losses its appeal.

Look a little earlier in Mark ...

Mark 10:28–30 (NASB95)

²⁸Peter began to say to Him, “Behold, we have left everything and followed You.”

²⁹Jesus said, “Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or farms, for My sake and for the gospel’s sake,

³⁰but that he will receive a hundred times as much now in the present age, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and farms, along with persecutions; and in the age to come, eternal life.

As we press into righteousness/stand for truth- there is going to be opposition to our progress.

How we handle that opposition determines the weight of God’s blessings we can carry.

The disciples slept- they did not do so well.

Jesus knew who He was and knew He had access to the unlimited resources of heaven.

John 16:13–14 (NASB95)

13“But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.

14“He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you.

The HS has come to ...

- >guide us into all truth (need godly wisdom)
- >glorify Jesus, and
- >make all that is available to Jesus available to us.

That is why Paul says ...

1 Cor 14:26 What is the outcome then, brethren? When you assemble, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification. (Rom 8.19, Phil 3.12-14)

This is our destiny- not just that of a few in the church- every member of the Body of Christ. We are all called to speak truth and release the resurrection life of Jesus Christ.

If you saw who God wanted you to be you would never want to be anyone else.

Who you were created to be is significant/all of creation- waiting for- revelation of sons of God.

Challenge

To gain- passion for God/His Word- read Psa 119.