

P

is for

Prayer!

In my first year of pastoring (1968), a lady asked if I would consider preaching some messages on prayer. This was a new idea to me and an arrow to my soul. I had studied the Bible to get help with my personal prayer life. I had read biographies and other books about prayer, but this was a request to go beyond my personal life and speak of prayer in public messages.

Since that request I believe God has taught me much and I have preached and taught often of this subject. I have studied and read much before attempting to write some booklets on the matter of prayer.

In more recent years a number of people approached me about combining this material in written form. My daughter, Hannah, has gone over such materials along with readings of some of my favorite authors and written these in a series of daily readings for a year.

If you should find these helpful, then thank our Lord. If they are of no help I trust you will wisely ignore them. I trust they will hinder none and help some.

--- J. Paul Reno

November 1

People of Prayer

Job – Just a Few Days and Full of Trouble

***At best we have a few days to live.**

*** Normal living involves much trouble.**

***The world creates delusions of desires which are impossible – extra long life or an easy, trouble-free life**

***Much praying done today is according to worldly thought rather than Biblical teaching.**

***God has determined our lifespan: days and months.**

***God has appointed boundaries in which we are to operate.**

*** Prayer should consider these two facts.**

*** During times of trouble consider that our Great High Priest understands. “For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities...” Hebrews 4:15 “In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the angel of His presence saved them: in His love and in His pity He redeemed them; and He bare them, and carried them all the days of old.” Isaiah 63:9**

November 2

People of Prayer

Job – Use Our Days for God

“If a man die, shall he live again? All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands. For now thou numberest my steps: dost thou not watch over my sin?” Job 14:14-16

***We only have one time to serve God – our appointed days.**

***We shall live again but not here.**

***Let us pray how to best use this life to prepare for the next.**

***God has HIS work for us to do.**

***God calls us to this work and we should answer in obedience.**

***God watches us in details.**

***He numbers our steps and observes our sins.**

***We need to pray for wisdom in use of time, effort and direction. We should avoid sin and repent when we fall.**

November 3

People of Prayer

Job –Our Record in Heaven

“Also now, behold, my witness is in heaven, and my record is on high.” Job 16:19

**“For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.”
1 John 5:7,8**

- **Heaven’s witness always outweighs earth’s.**
- **We should live and pray to please heaven instead of this wicked world.**
- **God keeps a record on each of us.**
- **God’s record includes our individual prayers.**
- **What is the nature of our record? How long is our record?**
- **Earth’s notice or records on us have little eternal benefit.**
- **The Biblical view of our heavenly witness and record on high will vastly affect our motives, zeal and prayer requests.**

November 4

People of Prayer

Job – Compassion in Prayer

“My friends scorn me; but mine eye poureth out tears unto God. O that one might plead for a man with God, as a man pleadeth for his neighbor! When a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return.” Job 16:20-22

- **Praying saints all suffer scorn, even from friends.**
- **Our response to scorn ought to be tears of compassion for their souls.**
- **We need to plead for souls.**
- **As in pleading for a neighbor, we should learn to organize and agonize in faith before our God requesting that HE would show mercy.**
- **Praying is a work of limited time. We must do it in this life.**
- **We should soon be taken off this scene into heaven never to return to this world.**
- **We must pray purely, powerfully and effectively while we can.**

November 5

People of Prayer

Job – Importance of Words

“Oh that my words were now written! Oh that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an ironpen and lead in the rock forever.” Job 19:23-24

God did grant Job’s request! It is interesting to see that Jesus taught the permanence of words also. “But I say unto you, That every idle word that man shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.” Matthew 12:36

Revelation 5:8 tells us that our prayers are kept on permanent record also. “And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayer of saints.”

We must be careful with our words for they are permanent. On the other hand what a precious truth that the Lord stores up our prayers. They are precious to Him

November 6

People of Prayer

Job – Focus on Jesus

“For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.” Job 19:25-26

- **Job knew that he had a Redeemer.**
- **Our Redeemer is a person who came once and will return...Jesus.**
- **Jesus was the reason for desire of the lasting effects of words and prayers.**
- **Job knew that his Redeemer was deity.**
- **Job looked forward to seeing God the Son after death.**
- **Job's hope was the future beholding (gazing on) Jesus.**
- **No present circumstances would be able to take this away from him.**
- **We also should focus on Jesus our Redeemer.**
 - **In our words**
 - **In our prayers**
 - **In our circumstances**
 - **For our future, time without end**

November 7

People of Prayer

Job – The Wicked and Prayer

“What is the Almighty, that we should serve Him? And what profit should we have, if we pray unto Him? God layeth up his iniquity for his children: He rewardeth him, and he shall know it.” Job 21:15, 19

- The wicked do not want to serve God, even if He is the Almighty.
- They feel no need to pray.
- The wicked live in the moment and forget the long range.
- Death is a certainty.
- Destruction and sorrows are tools that God uses and man cannot prevent.
- If the wicked escape the judgment in this life, it is passed on to his descendents. (19)
- The wicked will know how the children suffer, even from the other side of death.

November 8

People of Prayer

Job – The Wicked and Prayer (cont)

“His eyes shall see his destruction, and he shall drink of the wrath of the Almighty.” Job 21:20

- **The wicked will have to observe God’s righteous judgment.**
- **The wicked will have to drink of the wrath of God.**
- **This realization may come too late for any opportunity to repent.**
- **Their “momentary” prosperity may doom them for eternity.**
- **We should pray much with compassion and pity over their foolish presumption...judgment is sure and thorough.**

“There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked.” Isaiah 48.22

November 9

People of Prayer

Job – Coming to God

“Then Job answered and said, Even today is my complaint bitter: my stroke is heavier than my groaning. Oh that I knew where I might find him! That I might come even to His seat.”

Job 23:1-3

- **Job had a burden to actually come to God, not just offer up prayers.**
- **God is seated and we are to come to HIM.**
- **He resides on the mercy seat, a throne of grace.**

Organized praying

“I would order my cause before Him, and fill my mouth with arguments.” Job 23:4

- **We need to have a cause to live, pray and sacrifice for.**
- **We need to organize our prayers.**
- **We need to know for what reasons God should answer (Biblical arguments).**
- **These arguments should be part of our praying**

November 10

People of Prayer

Job -Asking with Expectation

“I would know the words which He would answer me, and understand what He would say unto me.” Job 23:5

- **We need to ask, expecting God to answer. “But without faith it is impossible to please Him; for he that cometh to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.” Hebrews 11:6**
- **God has His words which He speaks to our souls.**
- **Do we know HIS words?**
- **Do we know HIM and how HE responds?**

“Doubt and fear are the twin foes of faith. Sometimes, they actually usurp the place of faith, and although we pray, it is a restless, disquieted prayer that we offer, uneasy and often complaining...Doubts should never be cherished, nor fears harbored... Our eyes should be taken off self, removed from our own weakness and allowed to rest implicitly upon God’s strength.” (Bounds, Complete Works, 20)

November 11

People of Prayer

Job – God’s Power – a Source of Strength

“Will he plead against me with his great power? No; but he would put strength in me. There the righteous might dispute with him; so should I be delivered for ever from my judge.”

Job 23:6-7

- **When we come to God with a right cause, right reasons and right requests we need not fear rejection.**
- **God’s great power is not our judge, but rather, a source of strength. “He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint.” Isaiah 40:29-31**

November 12

People of Prayer

Job – Where is God?

“Behold, I go forward, but He is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive Him: On the left hand, where He doth work, but I cannot behold Him; He hideth Himself on the right hand, that I cannot see Him: But He knoweth the way that I take: when He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold. My foot hath held his steps, His way have I kept, and not declined. Neither have I gone back from the commandment of His lips: I have esteemed the words of His mouth more than my necessary food.” Job 23:8-12

***Sometimes we cannot find God as in times past (Song of Solomon 5:6 “I opened to my beloved; but my beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone: my soul failed when he spake: I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer.”)**

***This may be a result of our sin as in Song of Solomon or it may be a time of testing as in Job.**

***We must remain faithful in frustrating times. Notice Job’s trust “He knoweth the way that I take.” Job’s faithfulness is clear also. “My foot hath held His steps, His way have I kept, and not declined.”**

***God tests our faithfulness and rewards us. “When He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.”**

November 13

People of Prayer

Job – God’s Answer

“Moreover the Lord answered Job, and said, Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct Him? He that reproveth God, let him answer it.” (Job 40:1,2)

- **God does answer prayer.**
- **We need to be alert and receptive to God’s answers.**
- **God is almighty as well as all-wise.**
- **We may operate freely within the will of God.**
- **It is foolish to contend with God.**
- **It is ignorance to instruct God in prayer.**
- **We will have to answer to God if we try to reprove Him.**

November 14

People of Prayer

Job – A Clear Vision of His Vileness

“Then Job answered the Lord, and said, Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth.” Job 40:3-4

- **God holds us accountable for our prayers.**
- **Job saw his vileness.**
- **God called Job upright and perfect; Satan found no fault: his wife spoke of his integrity; his friends found no fault!**
- **Vileness is part of our sin nature. We all have it.**
- **In prayer we need to stay aware of our rottenness within.**
- **This inner vileness must be guarded against and may mean we need to stop speaking in our defense.**

“Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.” Job 42:6

- **Self is our worst enemy and needs to be abhorred.**
- **If Job repented, we need to much more so.**

November 15

People of Prayer

Job – The Nature of God Revealed in Prayer

“Then Job answered the Lord, and said, I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee. Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? Therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not.” (Job 42:1-3)

- **God not only can do anything, He can do everything.
“Ah Lord God! Behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by Thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee...Behold I am the Lord, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me?” Jeremiah 32:17, 27**
- **God not only hears our prayers but also knows our thoughts.**
- **Saying one thing to God while thinking another is a mark of ignorance.**
- **God cannot be manipulated!**

November 16

People of Prayer

Job – Repentance Restores Right Position in Prayer

“...my wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends; for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath...So Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went, and did according as the Lord commanded them: The Lord also accepted Job.” Job 42:7b, 9

- **After repenting, Job was in a position to pray for others.**
- **Speaking properly of God also prepares us for prayer. We come into His gates with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise. (Psalm 100:4)**
- **Improper speaking of God disqualifies much of our usefulness in prayer.**

November 17

People of Prayer

Job – Blessing of Praying for Enemies

“And the Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before...So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses.” Job 42:10,12

- **Job’s repenting of self and praying for his persecutors brought deliverance and blessing from God.**
- **Faithfulness and prayer during trials produces great blessing either in this life or the next (or both!)**

**“But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.”
Matthew 5:44**

Could it be that the Lord is waiting for you to offer heart felt prayer in favor of your enemies and then He will turn your captivity?

November 18

People of Prayer

Noah

“Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord God. Ezekiel 14:14 (v, 20)

- **Noah, Daniel and Job are given as righteous examples.**
- **They had power with God – delivering power. Yet in this circumstance only enough power to deliver their own souls.**
- **“The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” James 5:16b**
- **Noah teaches us much about the product of prayer – the deliverance of his family.**
- **Job teaches us about promises and principles.**
- **Daniel teaches us about the practice of prayer.**

November 19

People of Prayer

Noah – Walked with God

“These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.”

Genesis 6:9

- **Noah walked with God**
 - **Had to be agreement as to timing, location and direction.**
 - **Are you in step with God? Walking with Him? Going where He is going? Not lagging behind or running ahead?**
- **Noah was in step with God and not with the world, the flesh and Satan.**

November 20

People of Prayer

Noah – Found Grace in the Eyes of the Lord

“But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.” Genesis 6:8

- **But Noah – he was out of step with the world**
- **He was willing to be different.**
- **Willingness to be different from the sinful patterns of the world meant that God treated him differently in times of judgment.**
- **We too must be different in order to find grace in the eyes of the Lord.**
- **Who are you looking to please? Are you looking to find grace in the eyes of the Lord or in the eyes of your friends or in the eyes of the world?**
- **Consider the book of Judges and what happens when we seek to please ourselves or even our friends rather than God.**

November 21

People of Prayer

Noah – Throne of Grace

“But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.”

The believer is invited to come before the throne of grace!

“Let us therefore come boldly, unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”

Hebrews 4:16

In our time of need we are able to come boldly before the throne of grace so that we might receive grace. Paul tells us that His grace is sufficient! When the situation looks impossible, boldly ask for grace.

“...But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.” Romans 5:20,21

“And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.” II Corinthians 9:8

November 22

People of Prayer

Noah – A Just Man

‘...Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations...’

Noah 6:9

- **The fact that Noah was a just man gave him a basis for prayer.**
- **The unjust must first deal with their sins before they are ready to pray. “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.” Psalm 66:18**
- **He was justified by God not based on good works. “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Romans 5:1**
- **This justice does speak to a holy life and we too should live holy lives if we have been saved by God.**

November 23

People of Prayer

Noah – Perfect?

“Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations...”

Genesis 6:9

- The word perfect here speaks of his being complete –
-
- not without sin.
- He would have been a balanced man.
- He would have developed properly.
- We have no excuse for flaws. When we see our failings we should seek to correct them with the help of God.
- Notice too that he was perfect in his generations...
- God wants us to shine where we live.
- This speaks to a godly life from childhood to adulthood, marriage, parenting, preaching and perhaps grandparenting.

November 24

People of Prayer

Noah – Tuned into God

‘And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth.’ Genesis 6:13

- **Noah received God’s message.**
- **He had the ability to hear from God and to understand what He was saying.**
- **He was tuned into God!**

‘...For the earth is filled with violence...’ Genesis 6:13

- **God said that the earth was filled with violence.**
- **Yet, Noah was able to find peace in prayer. “Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:6,7 Peace is the result of bringing our requests to God.**
- **Noah had a different focus than the world had. We need a strong prayer life to avoid going the way of the world.**

November 25

People of Prayer

Noah – Destruction Coming

“And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me...”

- **Noah was being told that the end of the world was coming...literally. Yet we do not find him in a state of panic. When we get bad news do we turn to prayer or do we panic?**
- **Noah was forewarned. Others were also, but they chose unbelief. Do you believe the biblical warnings of God? Do you personalize them and take appropriate action?**
- **Prayer can bring deliverance from destruction.**
- **Other people who knew peace in bad times would be Daniel, Ruth, the Shuhamite woman...**

November 26

People of Prayer

Noah – Obedient

“Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he.” Genesis 6:22

- Noah obeyed God’s commands – all of them.
- He lived opposite of how the world around him lived.
- He had the knowledge of God’s commands to be able to obey,
- He was careful and thorough in his obedience.

Obedience:

“It implies, in general effect, the giving up of one’s own way and following that of another; the surrendering of the will to the will of another..” (Bounds, Complete Works, 53)

“Obedience is love, fulfilling every command, love expressing itself.” (Bounds, Complete Works, 54)

**“Obedience follows love, and prayer follows obedience.”
(Bounds, Complete Works, 56)**

**“Obedience to God makes it easy to believe and trust God.”
(Bounds, Complete Works, 60)**

November 27

People of Prayer

Noah – Salvation of Family

“And the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou and all thyhouse into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation.” Genesis 7:1

- **God speaks His Word to the hearts of praying people.**
- **God desires the salvation of praying people.**
- **God directs us to reach all our family**
- **Noah’s wife, sons and daughter-in-laws were spared. Have you seen your family saved from the judgment of God?**
- **The priesthood of the believer is a precious privilege in praying and interceding on the behalf of our family.**
- **Noah succeeded where Lot failed.**

November 28

People of Prayer

Noah – Righteous

“...For thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation.” Genesis 7:1

- Noah was righteous in GOD’S sight.
- James 5:16 teaches us that the prayer of a righteous man availeth much.
- There is no neutral ground. Each person is either seen as righteous or unrighteous before God.
- It is not so important how we view ourselves or even how others view us – but does God see us as righteous?
- “thee” – singular – It wasn’t Noah’s father, mother, wife, children or friends, it was NOAH that was righteous.
- “In this generation” – the very worst generation and Noah was the only one who was truly righteous.

November 29

People of Prayer

Noah – Righteous

“...For thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation.” Genesis 7:1

- **True righteousness is the basis for**
 - **Power in prayer**
 - **Potential for the future of your family**
 - **Preservation of others**
- **True righteousness needs to be developed before God.**

**“Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.”
Philippians 2:12**

November 30

PRAYERLESSNESS – A SIN

Prayer is one of the great privileges of the Christian life. It is one of the areas of power. It is also a responsibility. To not pray cannot be dismissed as a weakness, it is a sin of DISOBEDIENCE. Too often we try to excuse our sins by calling them by a milder name. Let us face the truth of God's Word on this subject of prayerlessness.

1 Thess. 5:17

- **This is a Scriptural command.**
- **The quantity is defined..."Pray without ceasing."**

Luke 18:1

- **Jesus taught "that men ought always to pray, and not to faint".**
- **Contrast is between praying and fainting.**
- **A solution to spiritual fainting is proper praying...prayer is power.**
- **Quantity –pray always.**

1 Samuel 12:23

- **Lack of prayer is called sin.**