

The Old-Time Evangelistic News

Evangelist W. Paul Redmond Sr.

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We Need To Pray! (Part 8)

I Timothy 2:1-2, 8

We have spent several months considering the Process of Prayer, the People for Prayer, and the Practice of Prayer. Now we come to our final thought—**The Product of Prayer**. Sometimes we may hear stories of great answers to prayer. Those are wonderful to hear, but they do not just have to be stories. I am not going to mention any of those as we begin this final part of the message. I may tell some, if the Lord leads, but I want to focus on three thoughts that are mentioned in some passages on prayer. In each of these passages, prayer is mentioned and then followed with a subordinate clause explaining the result of prayer. In English we learn that subordinate clauses are dependent upon the main clause—they cannot stand alone. As we examine these statements, we will notice that they are the result of prayer. They will not happen by themselves. They are only possible when one spends time in prayer. Without prayer, these three products will not happen. May our hearts be stirred to be people of prayer, so that we can see God work.

The first product of prayer is found in the passage where we began—I Timothy 2:1-2 and 8. As we saw, Paul exhorts Timothy to pray. He has discussed what prayer involves and whom to pray for. The last part of verse 2 says, “*That we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.*” Prayer will result in Persistency in Growth. Scripture describes growing in the Lord in many passages. Spiritual growth is very similar to growing in our physical life. Physically, we are born as babies and grow into childhood and adulthood. Spiritually, we are born again into the family of God. Scripture then describes believers as babes in Christ. I Peter 2:2 says, “*As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the*

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word, that ye may grow thereby.” But we are not expected to stay spiritual babies anymore than physical babies stay that way. Paul tells the Corinthian believers in I Corinthians 3:2 that he had fed them with milk because they were not able to handle meat. Paul seems to imply that they should be beyond the milk stage, but they are still babes.

But how can a believer grow? Obviously, there are many things such as Bible reading and church attendance that would be part of a complete answer to that question, but we must stay within the context of our message. Scripture exhorts us to pray. The result will be “*a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.*” What exactly does that mean? Let us take a few moments to find out.

The word quiet carries the idea of stillness or tranquility. One writer said that it means “not troubled from without.” The word peaceable is similar to the word quiet. It has the idea of keeping one’s seat and of being undisturbed. Think about what this word means. Picture a person being seated and then given some alarming news. Normally, our reaction would be to jump out of our seat. But one who prays will remain seated. There is no cause for alarm. He has surrendered his will to the Lord, and the Lord will take care of everything. The writer I mentioned earlier said that it means “not troubled from within.” So far the verse is stating that one who prays will not be bothered by the things around them. Many people are troubled by things within and without. Being troubled is an evidence of the lack of prayer. We will make every excuse as to why it is all right to be alarmed by situations around us, but our lack of quietness and peace shows that we are not praying. God can give peace even in the midst of trouble. We see many evidences of that in Scripture. Every person who has experienced peace in troubling times is a person who has spent time with God in prayer. If we want peace, we must pray!

The verse further states that this quiet and peaceable life will be “*in all godliness and honesty.*” Godliness means true reverence for

God which comes from knowledge. It also is the right attitude toward God and the holiness, majesty, and love of God. Honesty is referring to moral earnestness that affects outward demeanor as well as interior intention. It is interesting to note that the outer man and the inner man is mentioned two times in this passage. Prayer will change the way one lives. You cannot spend time with God and not be affected by Him. I will state it plainly—Prayer will make us what God wants us to be! If you want to know more about God, then spend time with God in prayer. I often heard preachers say this when I was young, “You will become like the people you hang around.” If you hang around bad people, you will start being bad. If you hang around good people, you will practice good behavior. The same is true of us as adults as well. If we spend time with God, we will become like Him.

People often get upset when a preacher preaches about holiness. They say that they can live their lives any way that they want to live it. But what they are saying is that they never spend time with God in prayer. You cannot be in the presence of God without desiring to rid your life of anything that displeases Him. Praying will yield holiness. How can I say that? Because the Bible says that God is holy. If you spend time with Him, you will become holy as well, and you will not be offended when preachers preach about how you live.

There are many examples in the Bible of people who spent great amounts of time in prayer such as Daniel, Nehemiah, and Paul. But I want to focus briefly on Moses. Moses spent days alone with God in prayer. In Exodus 33, Moses asked to see God’s glory. God told Moses that he could not see His face and live, but would allow Moses to see His back parts. God revealed Himself to Moses and when Moses came down from the mountain, his face shown. The glory of God was seen in the face of Moses. If we will pray, God’s glory will be seen in us. Prayer will make us what God wants us to be.

The second product of prayer is found in II Thessalonians 3:1. Here Paul writes to his Thessalonian converts and says, “*Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course,*

and be glorified, even as it is with you.” We spent time earlier talking about the first part of the verse, but now we will focus on the last part. Why is Paul asking his earlier converts to pray for him as he is laboring in a new place? What will happen if they do pray? As we saw earlier, the result begins with the word that. The result will be “free course” of the word of God. But what does Paul mean by free course?

This phrase, free course, is used for warriors running in battle. It describes the swift progress of the Word of God. The second product of prayer is the Prosperity of the Gospel. Paul is speaking from experience. He had seen firsthand how Satan had hindered the preaching of the Gospel. He is asking these Thessalonians to pray that there would be no hindrances. We must do the same in our day. Satan desires to hinder and even stop the preaching of the Gospel. He will try everything from pride to selfishness to busyness to stop the Gospel. Sometimes he will use people. Other times he will use the attractions of the world to hinder it. Whatever it takes, Satan will use it. We must pray that his work will not stop the Gospel.

It is interesting to note how this word is used in other writings. I mentioned that it talks about warriors running to battle. This analogy may seem trite, but if we will pay attention, it may help us. A soldier going to battle with one arm tied down will be hindered. What if his legs are tied together? Will he be able to fight well? The answer is obvious. Of course, he will not be able to fight the battle well. Then why do we get so entangled with the world? II Timothy 2:4 describes a physical soldier as not being entangled with the things of this life. The implication is that we as Christians should not be entangled with this life as well. We must pray that nothing would hinder the Gospel, especially things in our life that might actually be a hindrance to proclaiming the Gospel.

The definition of “free course” includes the idea of running. Could there be obstacles in the running of our race? A man running a sprint would be greatly hindered by things in the way. The devil

likes throwing obstacles out to hinder the Gospel. The only way to stop those obstacles is by prayer. We must pray that Satan will not be successful in putting obstacles in the way of the Gospel.

The final product of prayer is Preachers who will Go. In Matthew 9:38, Jesus said, “*Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.*” There are many places that need a preacher. There are many people that need a preacher who will preach to them. How is that going to happen? By praying for the Holy Ghost to call men to preach. Notice that this is not left open for discussion as to whether it should be obeyed or not. It is a command from the mouth of Christ Himself—Pray for labourers. Are we obedient to Christ’s command? It is interesting that two of the three products that we have talked about concern the preaching of the Gospel—one for those who are already preaching and the other one for more who will go. We often think that we have enough missionaries, and we will complain when another comes by the church, but the reality is that there are not enough. People are dying and going to Hell because a preacher did not get there in time. We must pray for Preachers who will Go.

We have a great responsibility, but it is also a great privilege. We can pray to God! The time is late and there is much to do. May God help us to see that WE NEED TO PRAY!