

CB - 2/3/63

PRAYER AS WORSHIP, or ADORATION

Genesis 28:10-22

Intro: Beginning of a series on prayer.

I do not presume to be a teacher of prayer - just a learner. But I would like to share with you some of the lessons the Lord has been teaching me.

Some time ago I spoke of the relationship between the Word of God and prayer, that is, that the Bible is what George Muller called "a divine prayer book". He, and other men and women of God, too countless to mention, were led ^{one by one} to realize that the Bible itself gives us not only the inspiration to pray but even the subject-matter of prayer. This means that they turned the Word of God into prayer.

Personally, I can testify that nothing has brought me greater blessing in my own life. I began the new year to read my Bible through again, but now I find myself in the midst of the most gigantic work I have ever attempted. This is to pray through my Bible.

In the next few Sunday evenings

I want to show you what I have been doing in the hope that this too will become a source of blessing to you too.

Where shall we begin?

Well, a most logical place is to determine the various kinds of prayer there are.

Where will we look?

There is only one place to find the answer. That is in the Bible.

WHEN I PICK UP THE SCRIPTURES AND READ THE WAY MEN TALKED TO GOD, WHAT DID THEY TALK ABOUT?

How does this compare with the way I have been praying?

SINCE THE SCRIPTURES ARE DIVINELY INSPIRED BY GOD (AND THE ONLY BOOK IN THE WORLD WHICH CAN CLAIM THIS DISTINCTION) THEN IT IS QUITE REASONABLE TO BELIEVE THAT ALL I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT PRAYER IS FOUND RIGHT HERE IN THIS BOOK.

As I read it, what do I find?

If you will allow me to use what

I have learned from others and which I, at this point, am not able to improve upon, I will say that prayer falls into five categories:

1. WORSHIP. - of God's Person.
2. THANKSGIVING. - for God's blessings.
3. CONFESSION. - of personal sin.
4. PETITION - for personal needs.
5. INTERCESSION - for others.

There is a reason for the order given above. (Explain.)

Tonight I want to illustrate the first one (although in some ways it is impossible to ~~do~~ separate it from the second).

In using the Bible in this way I do not necessarily need to limit myself to passages specifically dealing with prayer. Any chapter in the Bible will give me suggestions for prayer.

Let us consider Jacob's experience at Bethel, and look for ideas here which can help me in worshipping God.

- I. The background: Briefly it is this: Jacob was where he was because of his own scheming, & because of those of his mother.

Actually, he had no right to expect God to do anything for him.

Have you ever been in a condition like this? I expect that some of us are in this very place tonight. Is there any hope?

What did Jacob learn that night?

II. The revelation of God:

- A. His place (v. 12, 13a). High above the earth, even above the angels, ordering + directing the affairs of the universe.
- B. His Person (v. 13 - middle). ^{absolutely sovereign!} Had Abraham or Isaac ever been in trouble? yes! Had God been sufficient for them? yes! What then. He is still the same for Jacob - unchangeable!
- C. His promise (v. 13 b, 14). Some were peculiarly addressed to Jacob, but why did God promise to bless Jacob so abundantly. Because He wanted to make Jacob a blessing to others.
- D. His presence (v. 15 a). ^{God is good!} Not I was, nor I will be, but I am omnipresent even when His people have taken things into their own hands.
- E. His power: (v. 15 - middle). On the way out, God guarantees a safe return. Omnipotence
- F. His perseverance (v. 15 b). Omniscience God will direct all of our circumstances, even in our unbelief, so that His wise purposes are fulfilled in our lives.

III. Jacob's lament and vow (v. 16-22). The Lord later reminded Jacob of his vow (31:13).

Conclusion: Do I need to suggest how Jacob's experience at Bethel can be turned

into our occasions for WORSHIP
by you?

Don't you have reason to be thankful
that God is sovereign over all the
old things?

Do you fear war?

Are you concerned about your
future?

Are your children a concern to
you?

Do you feel that God is no longer
concerned about you because of
something which you have done?

What about the fact that He never
changes? Time doesn't change Him,
sin doesn't change Him. Circumstances
do not change Him. WORSHIP HIM
FOR THIS.

(And so on down the line.)

What I raise here tonight is only
an illustration! But I hope this
has reached your heart.

~~All these things are the result of~~
Worship must have a large place in
our praying, so take these prayers
for worship and use them. And then,
wherever you are reading, look for
suggestions from the Bible which will
draw your heart out in loving adoration
of our wonderful God.