

Lecture 8: Meetings For Prayer

Key Scripture

Matthew 18:19

Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that these shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in heaven

Corporate Prayer Meetings: Social Prayer, or prayer offered in company, where two or more are united in praying. These meetings have been common from the time of Christ, and it is probable that Gods people throughout the bible have made use of this practice.

(Expectation of the Holy Spirit)

Acts 1:14 - These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.

(Even after receiving the Holy Spirit)

Acts 2:42 - And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

(Peter locked up in prison)

Acts 12:5-18 - Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him. (Read More...)

Revival Birthed from Cooperate Prayer Meetings

Topeka Kansas – Charles Parham

In October 1900 in Topeka, Kansas, a small band of believers led by Charles Parham started Bethel Bible School. The school "invited all ministers and Christians who were willing to forsake all, sell what they had, give it away, and enter the school for study and prayer, where all of us together might trust God for food, fuel, rent and clothing.

In December 1900, Parham sent his students at work to diligently search the scriptures for the Biblical evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. They all came back with the same answer - when the baptism in the Holy Spirit came to the early disciples, the indisputable proof on each occasion was that they spoke with other tongues.

Azusa Street Revival – William J. Seymour

From 1906-1909 Azusa Street revival under William J. Seymour and the healing ministries of John G. Lake and F. F. Bosworth. That meeting ultimately gave birth as well to the Assemblies of God, the Church of God, the Church of God in Christ, and the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World.

Lesson Focus

- I. The Design of Prayer Meetings.
- II. The Manner of conducting Prayer Meetings
- III. Several Things Hinder Prayer Meetings.

Galatians 6:2

Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the **law of Christ**

The Law of Christ

The law of Christ, then, is to love God with all of our being and to love our neighbors as we love ourselves.

Mark 12:28-31

The Great Commandment – Law of Christ

28 And one of the scribes came up and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, asked him, "Which commandment is the most important of all?" 29 Jesus answered, "**The most important is, Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. 30 And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.**" 31 The second is this: **'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'** There is no other commandment greater than these."

In Mark 12:32–33, the scribe who asked Jesus the question responds with, "To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices." In this, Jesus and the scribe agreed that those two commands are the core of the entire Old Testament Law. All of the Old Testament Law can be placed in the category of "loving God" or "loving your neighbor."

James 5:16

Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availed much.

I. Design of Prayer Meetings

1. **One design of assembling several persons together for united prayer, is to promote unity among Christians**

Nothing tends more to cement the hearts of Christians than praying together. Never do they love one another so well as when they witness the outpouring of each other's hearts in prayer. Their spirituality begets a feeling of union and confidence, highly important to the prosperity of the Church.

2. To extend the spirit of prayer

God has so constituted us, and such is the economy of His grace, that we are sympathetic beings, and communicate our feelings to one another. A minister, for instance, will often, as it were, breathe his own feelings into his congregation. The Spirit of God that inspires his soul, makes use of his feelings to influence his hearers, just as much as He makes use of the words he preaches.”

3. Another grand design of social prayer, is to move God

Not that it changes the mind and feelings of God. When we speak of "moving" God, as I have said in a former Lecture, we do not mean that prayer alters the will of God. But when the right kind of prayer is offered by Christians, they are in such a state of mind that it becomes proper for God to bestow a blessing. They are then prepared to receive it, and He gives because He is always the same, and always ready and happy to show mercy. When Christians are united, and praying as they ought, God opens the windows of heaven, and pours out His blessing till there is not room to receive it”

4. Another important design of prayer meetings is the conviction and conversion of sinners.

When properly conducted, they are eminently calculated to produce this effect. Sinners are apt to be solemn when they hear Christians pray. Where there is a spirit of prayer, sinners will fill convicted

Gods House – Is A House of Prayer

Isaiah 56:7

Even them I will bring to My holy Mountain, And make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices Will be accepted on My altar; For My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations.”

Matthew 21:13

My house shall be called a house of prayer

Acts 2:1

When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

II. Conducting Prayer Meetings

1. Give occasion to prayer

It is often well to open a prayer meeting by reading a short portion of the Word of God, especially if the person who takes the lead of the meeting, can call to mind any portion that will be applicable to the object or occasion, and that is impressive, and to the point. If he has no passage that is applicable, he had better not read any at all. Do not drag in the Word of God to make up part of the meeting as a mere matter of form.

2. Focus the mind to pray

A man can no more pray without having his thoughts concentrated than he can do anything else. The person leading should therefore see to this, by bringing up before their minds the object for which they came to pray. If they came to pray for any object, he can do this. And if they did not, they had better go home. It is of no use to stay there and mock God by pretending to pray when they have nothing on earth to pray for.

3. No Need of a Title to pray

In calling on persons to pray it is always desirable to let things take their own course, wherever it is safe. If it can be left so with safety, let those pray who are most inclined to pray. It sometimes happens that even those who are ordinarily the most spiritual, and most proper to be called on, are not, at the time, in a suitable frame; they may be cold and worldly, and only freeze the meeting. But if you let those pray who desire to pray, you avoid this”

4. Be mindful of time when in corporate prayer

Commonly, those who pray long in a meeting do so, not because they have the spirit of prayer, but because they have not. Some men will spin out a long prayer in telling God who and what He is, or they pray out a whole system of divinity. Some preach; others exhort the people - till everybody wishes they would stop, and God wishes so, too, most undoubtedly. They should keep to the point, and pray for what they came to pray for, and not follow the imagination of their own foolish hearts all over the universe.

5. Don't be praying random thoughts/private issues

Each one should pray for someone object. It is well for every individual to have one object for prayer; two or more may pray for the same thing, or each for a separate object. If the meeting is convened to pray for some specific thing, let them all pray for that. If its object is more general, let them select their subjects, according as they feel interested.

6. Follow the Leader

If, in the progress of the meeting, it becomes necessary to change the object of prayer, let the leader state the fact, and explain it in a few words.

If the object is to pray for the Church, or for backsliders, or sinners, or the heathen, let him state it plainly, and then turn it over and hold it up before them, till he brings them to think and feel deeply before they pray.

III. Things that Hinder Prayer Meetings

1. A Rebellious spirit toward leadership

When there is an unhappy want of confidence in the leader, there is no hope of any good. Whatever may be the cause, whether he is to blame or not, the very fact that he leads the meeting will cast a damp over it and prevent all good.

2. Praying without the Spirit

Where the leader lacks spirituality, there will be a dryness and coldness in his remarks and prayers; everything will indicate his want of unction, and his whole influence will be the very reverse of what it ought to be.

3. When the leader leaves the Purpose/Focus of Prayer to become personal/ Introduces controversy

Sometimes the benefit of a prayer meeting is defeated by a bad Spirit in the leader. For instance, where there is a revival, and great opposition, if a leader gets up in a prayer meeting and speaks of instances of opposition, and comments upon them, and thus diverts the meeting away from the object, he knows not what spirit he is of.

4. Do you your Best to be on time.

5. Corporate prayer is not the time of place to make cold confessions.

6. A great deal of singing often injures a prayer meeting.

The agonizing spirit of prayer does not lead people to sing. There is a time for everything; a time to sing, and a time to pray. But if I know what it is to travail in birth for souls, Christians never feel less like singing than when they have the spirit of prayer for sinners.

When singing is introduced in a prayer meeting, the hymns should be short, and so selected as to bring out something solemn; some striking words, such as the Judgment Hymn, and others calculated to produce an effect on sinners; or something that will produce a deep impression on the minds of Christians

7. Maintaining Unity Throughout the Prayer

The lack of Unity and cooperate participation are the greatest hinderance to prayer. When the purpose of prayer is to come together and when we are together, we remain as individual when we should be crying out together for one another leaves for awkward exchanges.

8. Selfish Prayers

Injury is also done when Christians spend all the time in praying for themselves. They should have done this in their own homes. When they come to a prayer meeting, they should be prepared to offer effectual intercessions for others. If Christians pray at home as they ought, they will feel like praying for sinners. If, however, their private prayers are exclusively for themselves, they will not get the spirit of prayer.