

Watchmen on the Wall

By Santiago Lange



Everyone prays at one time or another. Generally, when we are in trouble or facing a crisis, we pray. It has been said that there are no atheists in fox-holes or on crashing planes. I am sure that many people are praying right now around the world. If the situation is desperate, we all pray. Prayer is one of the mysteries of God. We don't fully understand how it works. At times we are not even sure that it works. Then, when God does answer a particular prayer, we are filled with faith and gratitude. Let's face it; our theology of prayer is cloudy at times. We want God to answer every prayer. Although we do not always or even often know how God works through prayer, we still need to pray. Prayer is the source of life and power for churches and individuals. By prayer we tap into the mind of God. By prayer we move the hand that moves the world. By prayer we receive grace and faith. By prayer we acquire wisdom and direction. By prayer we can receive divine supernatural comfort, even when we don't understand the trials that are afflicting us. Like breathing, prayer sustains our lives. Through it the believer sees God's will come to pass. Prayer changes circumstances, and changes us.

Andrew Murray said, **"The man who mobilizes the Christian church to pray will make the greatest contribution to world evangelization in history."**

Charles Spurgeon said, **"I would rather teach one man to pray than ten men to preach."** Prayer is powerful. If we were to understand the power of prayer, and practice powerful praying, we would "see" God doing fantastic things.

Obviously, the Bible has much to say about prayer. In Ephesians 1:12, the apostle Paul says, **"in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory."** It is still God's desire for the church today to be a praise to His glory and God desires that His church be a glorious church. He desires that through our good works, which God has prepared for us (Ephesians 2:10), we might glorify Him. He desires for the church to bear fruit, much fruit, fruit that remains, in order that He might be glorified. He desires to see people saved, delivered, and filled with His Spirit.

In the time in which the Book of Isaiah was written the cities of the Middle East were fortified with walls surrounding them. People were set on top of these walls as look-outs. In Jerusalem, their job was to keep a watchful eye out for the enemy who might attack without warning. They were the first lines of defense for the city. These watchmen were those who were to sound the alarm and warn the people. This was their serious responsibility. This is an interesting and powerful view of proclamation and of prayer. The view here is that prayer and proclamation reminds the Lord to protect the city as stated already in His revealed desire to do so. Prayer is praying the promises of God. Why should one need to remind the Lord? Is God forgetful? What kind of God would forget His own promises? No, God certainly remembers His

promises. It is at this point that we need to realize what God is after in prayer. It is not that God forgets and must be reminded. It is that **we** need the exercise of reminding the Lord. In so doing several things are accomplished. We remind ourselves of God's promises. We come to a greater understanding of what the promises are. We begin to better understand the mind of God and see more clearly what His will is for the particular situation about which, we are praying. We become "watchmen on the walls" when we undertake to cry to, the Lord in prayer. This is God's desire. He is looking for a people to stand with Him in His purposes. God is looking for intercessors who by the Spirit in and through Jesus will pray to the Heavenly Father according to His will. God will establish us through prayer. God will accomplish His will in our lives through prayer. God will accomplish His purposes in our church and in this world through prayer.

In Luke 11:9-10 Jesus gives us these words, **"So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened."** This is an interesting passage. The verbs indicate a persistent coming to God. We are to ask, and to keep on asking. We are to seek and keep on seeking. We are to knock, and to keep on knocking. They also indicate an increasing sincerity and commitment to seeing our prayers answered. To ask is one thing, but to seek implies greater effort. And to knock implies even greater persistence. God honors persistent prayer.

We are told in the book of James that we do not have because we do not ask. If we really want to "see" God's activity in our lives we must ask. If we really want to "see" God move in our church we must ask. If we really want to "see" God move in our world we must ask. In 2 Chronicles 7:14 we read, **"if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land."**

We can touch God through prayer, but only when we actually take the time to pray. Jesus said that prayer would be a central and distinguishing mark of His church. His house would be a house of prayer.

This is the challenge for us today. This is the call that the Spirit is giving to us. We are being called to become "watchmen on the wall". We are being called to call upon the One who can make a difference in this life. We are being called to commit ourselves to prayer. □