

Rev. Mitchell Moore
Sermon Discipleship Tool: 8/11/2024

Jesus' steadfast love awakens disciples to pray

This week's sermon: [Matthew 26:36-46. Listen to the sermon by clicking HERE](#)

SUMMARY

Biblical teaching on God's praying for His people-

Hebrews 7:25- Jesus lives forever to intercede for His people!

Romans 8:26-27- The Holy Spirit prays for children of God (see 8:15-17) when we cannot find words to pray for ourselves!

John 17 - Jesus' "High Priestly Prayer"

To be a praying people, we need more than prayer conferences, books on prayer, strategies for prayer, good intentions, and self-resolve. We need our hearts awakened by the gospel of Jesus! To freshly see Jesus' steadfast love.

Adapting John Newton's famous words, honest assessment of our heart helps us see:

We are great sleepers

Christ is a great Savior

Context helps us see Peter's good intentions: willing to die for Jesus (26:35) and fight for Jesus (26:51), but he could not stay awake for Jesus? Jesus had taught on prayer and even lectured on the power of prayer after the disciples could not cast out a demon (see Matthew 17:14-19). Jesus begs the disciples in His moment of "agony"- "watch with me..." (38); "could you not watch and pray with me...?" (40) "Watch & pray, that you may not enter into temptation..." (41)

Jesus invites disciples to pray like children, trusting the love of our Father (Luke 11:1-13). Jesus invites disciples to abide in His love through prayer (John 15:1-10). The NT teaches disciples to "pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17)- and how is the prayer life of Jesus' disciples?

Disciples are awake in storms (while Jesus is sleeping!): Matthew 8:23-27 But

we are often awake to the wrong things. What do storms reveal about what your heart is awake to other than relationship with Jesus?

How do sleepy disciples like Peter “wake up!” to later boldly pray with Peter (Acts 4) and live in dependency on Jesus in prayer like the early church? Love awakens us from sleep for relationship with our handsome prince- Cinderella reveals a greater love story, namely God’s love for His people. The kiss of grace awakens hearts to prayer!

Jesus does not judge or shame the disciples. Jesus does not disqualify or replace the disciples. Jesus continues to pray, and then Jesus suffers and dies for His disciples. Romans 5:6-11 spells out the amazing love of God through the representative work of Jesus. Take time to read it.

Jonah is a great example. Jonah was running from God’s will, asleep in a storm (Jonah 1). Jonah woke up spiritually by being cast into the storm, discovering God's grace under the waves to pray beautifully (Jonah 2) before following the purpose God had for him (Jonah 3). Jonah experienced God’s grace in the storm under the waves! When inside the fish, Jonah was awakened to pray- Read Jonah 2: 1-10.

BRING IT HOME TO YOUR HEART:

Until grace awakens Jonah, he is unable to pray or participate in God’s purposes. God’s sovereign grace alone awakens us to relationship. Jesus says (Matthew 12:41) that He is a prophet greater than Jonah- Representing His people, Jesus took our rebellion against God, went into the tomb for three days (greater than three days Jonah had in the fish. We are great sleepers... Jesus is a GREAT Savior!

When we are heavy eyed, God’s love is wide-eyed. When we are faithfulness, Jesus is faithful. When we are prayerless, Jesus is praying for us! And gives His Spirit to pray in/ for us...

With John Newton- We see God's love is "Amazing Grace!" Awakening us in Jesus to

P- Pause and evaluate what you are awake to!

R- Repent, realizing Jesus praying for you is more than enough to move you.

A- Awaken with God's grace- daily, His love lifting your eyes to Him and His word.

Y- Yield to God's invitation, moving with His mercy to merge into a prayerful and powerful life.

Questions for Reflection

What are you awake to that is not pushing your heart to awaken with God's love?

How do storms awaken you to prayer, experiencing God's love in the wind and waves?

What does it look like for you to trust God's love enough to repent and return to relationship, marked by prayer? Be specific.

How can you awaken with God's grace regularly- daily- that His love will lift your heavy eyes to Him and His word?

Where do you need to yield to God's invitation to pray, integrating prayer into your life? Be specific.

"Prayer is like waking up from a nightmare to reality. We laugh at what we took so seriously inside the dream. We realize that all is truly well. Of course, prayer can have the opposite effect; it can puncture illusions and show us we are in more spiritual danger than we thought."

(Tim Keller, Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God- p. 130)