

Intro: The last few weeks we have discussed our mission to glorify God, that is to build His reputation by revealing to the world Who He is, what He has done, and what He has promised to do. We accomplish this by proclamation, both to ourselves and to every other people group on the earth so that He will be known by all peoples and worshipped as the God over all that exists, AND we proclaim this by living as a transformed and transforming community of those having been saved by the grace of God in Jesus Christ and those that are being inwardly transformed by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit of God.

As we, well as I, spoke last week of how we are called to live missionally in our society, it becomes painfully obvious that in order to live in such a way in the midst of a culture that also defines us all in some way (we are all shaped and formed by the culture around us to some degree) we need the power to do so. In ourselves, this task of living missionally, transformed lives, is daunting at best and seemingly impossible in reality. Sure, I want to think Christianly about things, to be patient with those around me, to love my enemies and forgive those that hurt me, to be able to honestly show how we think differently about sex, money, and power, but COME ON, LORD!! Just ask me to pass out a tract, or hold up a sign, or invite someone to church. Those things I can do, they're hard, but I can do them. Don't ask me to be gentle when others attack me, or humble when others succeed and get my promotion! Don't ask me to work hard for a society that hates You and at the same time give up all my own power! And PLEASE don't ask me to give up my own time to help the people that don't appreciate me! I cannot do that!

To a degree, you are right. You cannot do that. I cannot do that. Yet, the Lord has called us to live missionally. What are we to do? For such a desperate time, in order to live for our society and within our society, while also remaining distinctively Christian, we must follow again the footsteps of Daniel. It was not Daniel's wisdom or Daniel's strength that lifted him to be missional in Babylon. It was this fact from Daniel 1:9,17, "and God gave them..." Any power that we have to live missionally is found only in the power and the working of the Holy Spirit of God within us and without us. He is the ultimate mover, the ultimate Wise One, and the ultimate transformer of our hearts. So, the first step in learning to live missionally, is really not a step at all, but a drop. A drop onto our knees in prayers of gratitude and petition, asking the Almighty and Gracious Creator to work within us His promised presence and powerful transformation of the soul.

You see, the reason that living missionally and giving up power in repentance and living in complete trust of Jesus is that we have enemy who does not want our Father to get any glory. And he wages war against our Father and against His people. It is in these times of conflict and spiritual battle that we struggle, and as such is the reality, so is the utter necessity for the spiritual strength, protection, and resources of God Himself. Prayer is our first step in every aspect of our life with Jesus. From repentance, to the power to believe, really believe, for the strength to endure when everything around comes crashing down, to the power to pursue the Lord in the midst of great pain, and to the hope that He has called us toward in Christ, our greatest strength and power lies in His presence with us. So we will pray.

1. Prayer is a Tool Within Conflict
  - a. The Proclamation of the Gospel Brings Conflict and Struggle
    - i. 1 Th 2:2
    - ii. 1 Ti 6:12; 2Ti 4:7
    - iii. Heb 12:1
    - iv. Col 4:12
  - b. Prayer is for Wielding the Word
    - i. Eph 6:17-18
    - ii. The proclamation of the Gospel to the glory of God is the purpose of prayer
  - c. Prayer is Purposed in Missions
    - i. John 15:16
      1. Bearing fruit
      2. Remaining fruit
    - ii. Col 4:3
      1. Bold speaking
      2. Wise words
  - d. War-Time Prayer is Audacious Prayer

- i. Luke 11:5-10 – “shameless and unconcerned for convention”
- ii. God wants us to shamelessly call out to him in the midnight of our lives, when there are those who need our help and we have no resources left to feed them.
- iii. This is missional prayer, when we are at the end of our rope of giving, and we feel like we cannot do this alone...we need help. God wants us to be audaciously unconcerned about conventional prayer
  - 1. Prayer is not quaint and tidy. God-honoring prayer is raw, authentic, cries of persistence and shameless pounding on God’s door. It’s asking and asking and asking for his help to build His Kingdom, to live His calling, to be His witnesses, until He gives you the divine resources to feed the spiritually poor and walk to the front lines again.
  - 2. A neighbor gives in to this audacious shameless asking because they are displeased, but God, in the strange and mysterious ways of God, gives us the resources we need because He is pleased with our shameless helpless pounding on His door.
  - 3. In these prayers, we do not ask for our mere comforts or concern with our own welfare (Jam 4:3), but are asking for bread for the hungry travelers who have come to our door in the middle of the night. These are prayers for the resources to meet the needs of others and are according to the will of God, for He has stated His desires in His word.
    - a. When we feel that we cannot live missionally, we are shamelessly and audaciously bang on God’s door until we get what we need to live missionally.
    - b. When we feel that we cannot love our enemies, bang on God’s door!
    - c. When we feel that we cannot forgive those who have hurt us, bang on God’s door!
    - d. When we know we need wisdom (Jam 1:5), bang on God’s door!
    - e. When we feel that God is not listening, bang harder! Be more audacious! Don’t let it go! God honors this raw tenacity of helpless dependent prayer.

## 2. Prayer Glorifies God

### a. God Will Win the War

- i. Our prayers do not twist God’s arm, for we are to pray for what God desires and what God has promised.
- ii. Prayer does not work!!
  - 1. It is God that works, not our prayers, as if some secret mantra or special way of praying was the key to success. The key to success lies in the person to whom we pray!
  - 2. God works!! He is active, moving, living, personal, and powerful to affect any change that He so desires, so let us ask Him to give us what we know that He already desires...HIS GLORY!!
- iii. Prayer is NOT powerful!!
  - 1. God is powerful!!!
  - 2. How slight a perversion of words that places the emphasis on the power of man, rather than on the power of God. It is not our prayers that affect anything, it is God who moves and we, in prayer, simply ask Him to affect transformation and change.
  - 3. Being with God is what gives us the motivation, passion, strength, endurance, and joy of glorifying Him..
    - a. C.S. Lewis –
      - “The very question, ‘Does prayer work?’ puts us in the wrong frame of mind from the outset. ‘Work’: as if it were magic, or a machine –

something that functions automatically. Prayer is either a sheer illusion or a personal contact between embryonic, incomplete persons (ourselves) and the utterly concrete Person. Prayer in the sense of petition, asking for things, is a small part of it; confession and penitence are its threshold, adoration its sanctuary, the presence and vision and enjoyment of God its wine. In it God shows Himself to us. That He answers prayer is a corollary – not necessarily the most important one – from the revelation. What He does is learned from Who He is.”

b. Missions is the Work of God

- i. Matt 16:18
- ii. John 10:16
- iii. John 6:37
- iv. We Preach so that Others Believe, but it is Christ that Gathers His Sheep

“Our fallen hearts are predisposed to think that we can ‘do church.’ But we only think that way if we’re task-oriented to begin with. Real ‘church’ is not running a program; real church is the manifest presence of Jesus among His people. And we can’t program Him. We can only pray for His presence.” ~Ray Ortland

c. It is God Who Equips and God Who Saves

- i. Acts 11:18
- ii. Ps 50:15
- iii. Charles Spurgeon quote

God and the praying man take shares....First, here is your share: “Call upon me in the day of trouble.” Secondly, there is God’s share: “I will deliver thee.” Again, you take a share – for you shall be delivered. And then again it is the Lord’s turn – “You shall glorify me.” Here is a compact, a covenant that God enters into with you who pray to Him, and whom He helps. He says, “You shall have the deliverance, but I must have the glory....” Here is a delightful partnership: we obtain that which we so greatly need, and all that God gets is the glory which is due His name.”

- iv. God gets the glory because He is the provider, the mover, the shaker. The Father is glorified as the one who gives what we need to accomplish His purpose.
  1. John 14:13
  2. John 15:5-8
- v. Prayer humbles us and exalts God
  1. There is no power in prayer!
  2. God is Powerful!!

d. It is God that Cuts Loose the Canon of the Gospel

- i. 2 Th 3:1
- ii. Eph 6:19-20
- iii. Col 4:3-4

e. When prayer is active in the hands of those working for the glory of God in Missions it glorifies God. When missions are pursued without prayer is glorifies man and his programs.

- i. South Korean brother who quipped, “I am impressed that you can accomplish so much without the Holy Spirit!”

Conclusion:

Remember, remember, remember that our goal is not merely missions, but rather it is that God would be known and glorified for the great God that He is. We are in a battle, a war, with conflict without and conflict within. Struggle is the word that would sum up much of how we live in this society, trying to be missional, but struggling to be. Even Paul struggled to be who he wanted to be. We all struggle because the Spirit of God

within is battling the flesh and all of its self-centered desires. We need His great and infinite power to proclaim Him truthfully and we need His great and infinite power in order to be transformed into missional proclaimers of His great glory. WE NEED HIS PRESENCE AMONG US!

Prayer brings us into the necessary power behind missional living and the revelation of the Glory of God: His Spirit, His power, His Glory. Like Daniel and all others who have been called by God to reveal to the world His glorious gospel, we have been given His very presence to accomplish the impossible task of living missionally and proclaiming His glory to the world. Remembering these two promises: that nobody is beyond God's reach, for "all things are possible with Him," and that you are never called by God to do something that Jesus will not be with you to do, for after He commanded us to witness of Him, He gave us this promise of comfort and assurance: "I will be with you always, even to the end of the ages." Go audaciously and ask for the all the spiritual, emotional, and physical resources necessary to live missionally to the glory of our great God and Savior!