

Power Released by Prayer



David Wilkerson (1931-2011) October 13, 2020

We are seeing calamities on a scale never before witnessed: hurricanes, fires, floods, droughts, national unrest. Fear and despair abound on every side and even the most skeptical commentators say we're already seeing the beginning of World War III.

What can God's people do to move his heart in these troubled times? Surely the church is not powerless. The prophet Joel said, "'Now, therefore,' says the Lord, 'Turn to Me with all your heart' ... Return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness" (Joel 2:12-13).

All the Old Testament prophets called God's people to corporate prayer. Jesus himself declared, "It is written, 'My house shall be called the house of prayer'" (Matthew 21:13). The fact is, world history has been shaped by the prayers of Christ's church.

The Holy Spirit was first given in God's house, at the Upper Room. There the disciples "continued with one accord in prayer" (Acts 1:14). We're told that Peter was released from prison by an angel, while "many were gathered together praying" (12:12). Corporate prayer had been made continually for Peter's release.

Clearly, God releases much power because of the prayers of his church. Thus, the call to such prayer cannot be underestimated. We know the church has been commissioned to win souls, to do charity, to serve as the gathering place for God's Word to be preached. But first and foremost, the church is to be a house of prayer — this is its primary calling.

"If two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven" (Matthew 18:19).

But the power of prayer isn't reserved for large gatherings alone; we can find it in the intimacy of our own homes. Jesus practiced and recommended closet prayer to his disciples. "When you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly" (Matthew 6:6). The homes in Jesus' culture had an inner room that served as sort of storage closet, a place where they could pray in secret, so this concept was easy for them to grasp.

Jesus set the example for private prayer: "In the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed" (Mark 1:35). "When He had sent the multitudes away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray ... He was alone there" (Matthew 14:23).

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