

The Pleading Prayer

Pray for those who do not pray for themselves. Someone prayed for you when you were yet unsaved: return that effectual prayer to the treasury of the church by pleading for other. Plead hard for the hard heart which never pleads. C.H. Spurgeon

We are much in the habit of asking God for many things. We seek Him for His blessings. Much of our praying is self centred asking God for more when we already have so much. The pleading prayer is not a selfish prayer. It is prayer that comes out of desperation. It may be for ourselves or it may be for others. Even sinners plead with God in times of desperation. However we ought to understand that, in our pleading, we cannot bargain with God for He is not a God to be bargained with. He cannot be manipulated into giving us what we want. "If you do this I will serve you for the rest of my life".

Psalm 17: 1 – 15

1) The pleading cry (vs. 1 – 2)

- The Hebrew word for cry means "a creaking or a shrill sound". It is a shout of joy or grief
- When someone is desperate or whose heart sees someone else who is in a desperate situation that they can't get themselves out of their hearts cry out in desperation. Often desperate people cry with a shrill sound that is heart wrenching to listen to.
- When someone is desperate they cry out to God sometimes in words that don't make sense but God knows the heart
 - Romans 8: 26 "In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express".
- When someone pleads for their life they don't go into a long detailed rationalization to why their life should be spared.
 - They merely cry out for mercy
 - So it is with our pleading cry – it is a cry for mercy and, sometimes, justice.

2) The pleading of the righteous (vs. 3 – 5)

- We ought to have an honest and repentant heart if we wish for our pleading to be taken notice of by God for He is a righteous God who sees all things.
 - Proverbs 15: 29 The LORD is far from the wicked but he hears the prayer of the righteous.
 - If our pleading is for God's vindication and for Him to do what is right in His sight then our lives also ought to be right in His sight.
 - People cried out for justice when they saw people parking their cars on pavements and complained about the trucks going through stop streets without stopping. The Metro police arrived and fined everyone who had parked on yellow lines and on pavements. They also caught and fined many people who went through a stop street. Among those fined were those who had cried out for justice but they themselves were doing the wrong thing.
 - Be careful about pleading for justice if your own life isn't right.

- If we live contrary to our own prayers then that would be hypocrisy.
 - Do we call out for deliverance from an oppressor for ourselves or even for others then oppress others ourselves such as not paying them a decent wage for labour done?

3) Pleading the character of God (vs. 6 – 8)

- Expecting God to answer
 - If we do not believe that God will answer our prayers then we should rather not pray as praying in unbelief mocks God and makes a mockery of prayer.
 - Spurgeon said: “Prayer knocks till the door opens. Open it will, for so runs the promise of our faithful God, “To him that knocketh it shall be opened.” If the angel opened the door of the prison to let Peter out, it was prayer that opened the door of heaven to let the angel out.”
- Plead the love of God for it is by that great love that God sent his Son to carry out justice and mercy on the world in the first place.
 - If He did so whilst we were yet sinners how much more will He listen to our pleas when we are righteous?
 - Take advantage of the fact that He is our refuge and protector in whom we, and others on behalf we are pleading, can take refuge.
 - He will hide us in the shadow of His wings
 - It is as an eagle that keeps its young in the shadow of her wings protecting them from the harsh sun and the wind.
 - So God will envelop us with His love during the storms of life.
- When times are hard remember that you are always the apple of His eye.
 - You are the centre of His focus.
 - He sees whatever you are going through
 - He remains attentive to the issues in your life.

4) Pleading for the issues (vs. 9 – 14)

- Although God knows all things we need to raise the issues of our pleading to Him.
 - Are you without a job and can't see God's provision? – plead with Him
 - Do you have family problems? – plead with Him
 - Are you stressed due to your work situation – plead with Him
 - Are you persecuted for your faith? – plead with Him
 - Are others persecuted for their faith – plead with Him
 - Do you have unsaved family or friends – plead with Him.

5) Finding rest in God (v. 15)

- Our pleading prayer moves us into the presence of God to understand His heart – how He sees and feels the issue that you are pleading
- We get into touch with the mercy seat and it is there that we find the mercy that we were crying out for.
- We gain the heart of God for the issue and our hearts are satisfied – are at rest – even if we don't get the answer that we were seeking.