

Today we are looking at chapters 2 and 3 of Before the Throne of God.

As believers, we have received the gift of faith and now we enjoy the great privilege of being adopted into the family of the living God of the universe. This leads us to the desire to worship and obey Him. Scripture tells us that God “hears” the prayers of a believer but John 9:31 tells us “We know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is God-fearing, and does His will, He hears him.”

Look at page 23 – the quotation from Jeremiah 29:12 & 13 beginning with “You will call upon Me...” and down to “reduce prayer to presumption”

What does this mean to you? What about the unbeliever’s prayer of confession in seeking salvation? How is that different from “unbelieving prayer?”

Let’s look at the second paragraph on page 29 from “He was besieged by a cruel “thorn” down to “amid fierce opposition.”

What does this mean? How is God’s power perfected in our own weakness?

What do you think – how does a focus on the glory of God give energy for our Christian walk?

Let’s examine some scriptures and identify what they teach us about how we should pray: what things can we identify in these prayers?

3 John 2, 3 & 4 “ Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health, just as your soul prospers. 3 For I was very glad when brethren came and bore witness to your truth, that is, how you are walking in truth. 4 I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth.”

2 Corinthians 5: 6 & 7: “Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord-- 7 for we walk by faith, not by sight—“

Philippians 1:27 “ conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ; so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;”

Look at the quote from A. W. Pink on pages 32 and 33. (bottom of 32 and top of 33)
What is he saying?

Continue on p 33 with the Notes section, number 3 on the “means of grace” What do you think – how does using prayer as a means of grace help us to walk in a manner worthy of our high calling in Christ?

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Let's look at Acts 4, verses 24 – 29. This takes place after Peter and John had been arrested and held in custody for preaching the gospel and finally released with instructions to stop teaching in the name of Jesus:

"23 And when they had been released, they went to their own companions, and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them.

24 And when they heard this, they lifted their voices to God with one accord and said, "O Lord, it is Thou who didst make the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all that is in them,

25 who by the Holy Spirit, through the mouth of our father David Thy servant, didst say, 'Why did the Gentiles rage, And the peoples devise futile things?

26 'The kings of the earth took their stand, And the rulers were gathered together Against the Lord, and against His Christ.'

27 "For truly in this city there were gathered together against Thy holy servant Jesus, whom Thou didst anoint, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel,

28 to do whatever Thy hand and Thy purpose predestined to occur.

29 "And now, Lord, take note of their threats, and grant that Thy bond-servants may speak Thy word with all confidence,"

What beliefs, and underlying themes do you see here? What is their focus? What is the result in their lives of this focus?

God's purpose in giving us prayer is to further develop our love for Him and it is used as a means of grace in our sanctification. The more we practice Biblical prayer rooted in scriptural understanding, the more His is glorified as we are drawn into relationship with Him and blessed by Him to truly be used in ministry and to enjoy Him forever.

Praying from Scripture:

Ephesians 3:14 – 19 "For this reason, I bow my knees before the Father,

15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name,

16 that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man;

17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth,

19 and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fulness of God."

Colossians 1:9 – 12 "For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,

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10 so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

11 strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously

12 giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.”

Psalm 139 :12 – 17”Even the darkness is not dark to Thee, And the night is as bright as the day. Darkness and light are alike to Thee.

13 For Thou didst form my inward parts; Thou didst weave me in my mother's womb.

14 I will give thanks to Thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Wonderful are Thy works, And my soul knows it very well.

15 My frame was not hidden from Thee, When I was made in secret, And skillfully wrought in the depths of the earth.

16 Thine eyes have seen my unformed substance; And in Thy book they were all written, The days that were ordained for me, When as yet there was not one of them.

17 How precious also are Thy thoughts to me, O God! How vast is the sum of them!”

Romans 8:35 – 39 “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

36 Just as it is written, “For Thy sake we are being put to death all day long; We were considered as sheep to be slaughtered.”

37 But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us.

38 For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers,

39 nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Homework: Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 up through the top of page 52 (down to “learning stillness”)

Bryan Chapell : “When the Holy Spirit renews our heart supernaturally, our greatest longing is to be and do all that God desires.”

