

Pointless Prayer

*"How long, Lord, must I call for help, but you do not listen?
Or cry out to you, 'Violence!' but you do not save?"
Habakkuk 1:2 (NIV)*

Some of us have found certain seasons in life to be times when we had pointless prayer. We sought the Lord for something we felt we needed yet God did not respond to our request. We wondered if our prayers did not rise above the ceiling of our home, or if the Lord's attention was directed elsewhere.

The problem is that God does not always give us what we desire even though the request is for something good. Take the case of Habakkuk as an example. This godly man was seeking the Lord to come and stop the progress of evil in the nation. Our verse shows us how frustrated and grieved he was that his prayer went unanswered. Do we not pray something similar in many situations we see around us? We seek protection of our children and grandchildren from evil, from suffering but the desired answer does not come.

Take the case of the man born blind as recorded in John 9. His parents seemed to be God fearing people and we might imagine that they had prayer

that their son might see. Or they might have asked the Lord for a reason for their son being born blind. They might have asked what sin they committed that their son suffered in this manner.

Jesus told his followers that the blindness was not because of sin in the lives of the parents or their son. It seems they followed the Lord but still had to endure this affliction year in and year out. There was no cure and no reason given for the sad situation.

God allows some of His most devoted followers to endure great sorrow for decades and their prayers for release from the issue are not answered. What is to be done in such a case?

I encourage people to go on seeking a good thing from the Lord and ask why the difficulty is in their lives. God will sometimes explain His mysterious ways to us and sometimes will not. When no answer comes humble submission honours the Lord. Instead of an answer, the Lord graciously gives the gift of faith to trust Him when we cannot understand Him.

Perhaps you struggle today with a painful circumstance that you neither deserve nor invited into your life. Bring your confusion to the Lord. Ask that the thing might be removed. All the time looking to your Father in heaven to make endurance possible for you. His grace is indeed sufficient and we shall know why this is our portion some day in the future. Meanwhile we honour Him by believing the trouble will bring Him glory somehow, sometime.

Jesus' words can bring assurance to us in our day of tribulation. John 9:3 (NIV)
"Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him." Pray to be like the man born blind. Pray that some work of the Lord will be displayed in your life through this issue. You can be assured that prayer will indeed be answered!

© Rumford Ministries 2014
www.RumfordMinistries.org
All rights reserved