

UPPER ROOM PRAYING

The Key To Revival

When Jesus left earth, all He left behind was a prayer meeting. In fact, it was an Upper Room prayer meeting. His sole strategy to impact the planet was limited to a handful of distressed disciples in an Upper Room. These humble beginnings were the springboard to Pentecost. What took place in the Upper Room would determine the course and destiny of the early church. Since everything in the Bible is recorded for our learning, there is no question that we can discover things there that will help us here. So what kind of praying took place in the Upper Room?

Obedient Praying

Jesus told his followers “Not to depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father.” The word used here is a military term. He literally “charged them” to wait and abide in prayer. Essentially, Jesus commanded them to pray. They waited in prayer and the fire fell!

No revival has ever taken place apart from obedience. Obedience is instantly doing all God tells me to do with the right attitude. What about it? Is there something you know you should do, but have yet to act on it? Is there a prompting you have neglected? A word waiting to be spoken? A witness that needs to be given? A violated conscience which needs to be cleared? A forgiveness that should be granted? An apology which needs to be made? A gift of encouragement to someone in need?

Obedience may not be convenient, but it is always profitable. God has chosen to work in unison with His people. Had the 120 failed to “wait” and “pray,” things would have turned out differently. This is why some things can be put off, but obedience cannot!

God desires a praying people and a praying church. The duty of prayer is inferred throughout the entire Bible. “Pray without ceasing” (1 Th. 5:17). Paul exhorted, “Praying always with all prayer” (Eph. 5:18). Jesus’ central definition of the church is a house of prayer.

Obedience brings blessing. The Pentecostal fire landed on those who were walking in the light they had received. God's power came to those who obediently prepared their hearts. They were not laid back in their theological easy chairs. They were not analyzing, theorizing, or criticizing; they were busy on their knees.

Honest Praying

Not only had Peter denied the Lord multiple times, they all forsook Him. Despite their pledges of undying loyalty, they had done their absolute best and utterly failed!

Their dreams were dashed. Their preconceived notions had been demolished. Yet they huddled together in that Upper Room. No longer were they vying for the seat at Jesus' right hand. Their aspirations for greatness had given way to brokenness and humility. Self-seeking was over and God-seeking was their singular desire.

What would motivate these devastated men and women to wait on the Lord in a ten-day prayer meeting? Here we find the soul of all heart-felt prayer: A SENSE OF NEED! Before the crucifixion, they could not even watch one hour. But now they are spiritually wide awake and persevering in prayer for ten days!

No doubt they did own up to their personal failures during this prolonged season of prayer. Is there any doubt that they spent a good amount of time lamenting and confessing their sins? I can hear them individually and collectively "taking the witness stand against their own hearts" and agreeing with God. I don't believe for a moment that this was a casual prayer time.

After they had cleared themselves, they were ready to get down to the business of crying out to God for the next step.

Unified Praying

Scripture states they were in "one accord in one place." Having shared the same experience, their lives were closely knit together. Their hearts were in close proximity as well as their bodies. Doubtless, they had opened their innermost being to God in the presence of one another. This openness led to brokenness, which in turn produced supernatural oneness.

In revival the masks come off. Pretense crumbles along with the walls of self-preservation. The fear of man fades in the light of the fear of God. It was my privilege to be in a testimony meeting with Roy Hession. One man began to weep and mourn his weak spiritual condition. Brother Hession commented after this man had finished, "Brethren, I think we are all in the same boat!" This disarming and affirming comment gave a green light to the entire group to open our hearts. Church should be a place where people can hurt out loud. Humans are "need machines" and when needs arise we can find help at the throne of grace. One accord is the result when the spiritual environment is saturated with love, acceptance, and forgiveness.

One heart and one soul set the atmosphere for powerful praying. Agreeing in prayer multiplies the results. Again I say unto you (If Jesus is saying this again, that means He had said it before!), That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them (Mat. 18:19-20). Jesus Himself is in the middle of those who practice mutual, focused faith. The key to receiving is like-minded believing.

The 120 were together in one place. They had been together in failure. For ten days they were together in prayer and fellowship. Now they were together in faith. They lifted up their voices in unison for the promise of the Father! Who can predict what would happen if a group of Christians would get in one accord and storm the throne of mercy in believing prayer?

Expectant Praying

Jesus had promised He would send the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Upper Room was filled with obedient, cleansed, and unified disciples. The stage was set for God's new thing! Can you imagine the anticipation as they lingered? Faith was not waning, it was increasing. Seeing the risen Christ had supercharged their hearts with expectancy.

These men and women were not saying their prayers, they were praying their prayers. Ablaze with desire, they knocked at heaven's door with a zeal that would not be denied. They saw, heard, and believed the resurrected Christ. This was not one of those "If it be your will" type of prayer meetings. The only option was the reception of the promise. Jesus said they would receive and they knew good

things were just around the corner! Here are faith-filled prayers from desiring, dependent, desperate disciples.

Brothers and sisters, shake off the spirit of unbelief and believe God for great and mighty things. The song says, It is no secret what God can do; and it is no telling what God will do when we get down to Upper Room praying.

Most of us know what it's like when God stirs us up to pray. But how many of us know what it is to stir up ourselves to take hold of God? The thing that perplexed God was when He could not find men who would stir themselves to lay hold on God. He wondered there was no intercessor (Isa. 59:16).

Something phenomenal happened 2,000 years ago in an Upper Room in Jerusalem. The repercussions of what took place there is still being felt today. The midnight hour is upon us. Are we not in need of a divine breakthrough? With so many promises to plead, let's get down to Upper Room Praying!

Harold Vaughan