

# These Kinds of Prayers Cause God's Glory to Strike the Darkness

Life involves many ups and downs, trials and tribulations, winds and waves. This is the normal Christian life: "We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22b, NIV). In God's economy, our hardships work for us, not against us. But this does not mean that the outcome is up for grabs; and for sure, it does not depend on our own strength.

Christ's victory: This is the perspective from which we must live and pray.

As intercessors, the one to whom we pray has already won the spiritual battle once and for all. Jesus is the victor! As long as we are on this earth, we will have a vital role to play—to help enforce the victory of Calvary. However, we do not have to worry about the final outcome, because it was already decided a long time ago when Jesus, nailed to the blood-soaked cross, declared, "It is finished!" (John 19:30b). Those three words resound across the universe and down the epochs of time. Jesus's death and subsequent miraculous resurrection secured and sealed the victory over the darkness of rebellion and sin forevermore.

## **Proclamations of Victory**

This perspective keeps our prayers from falling to the ground before they strike their intended target. It makes many of our prayers sound more like proclamations than humble pleading. Like court heralds, we proclaim God's sovereign greatness and we announce good news. (Well, it is bad news to the demonic forces over whom Jesus has won the victory.)

Proclamations of God's victory are powerful, and that is why

we find them throughout the Scriptures. Just like those who penned such proclamations, we must align our hearts with God's heart of victory, expressing our trust in His fatherly oversight even when the way ahead looks dark and foreboding.

The kingdom of God is speech-activated. As we store up His Word in our hearts, we have an abundance of truth to proclaim with our mouths. Even in the face of fear, we can speak from faith. We can proclaim, "Freedom!" in places where nobody knows the meaning of the word anymore. We can proclaim God's extravagant mercy from the rooftops, declaring His lordship over our cities and their people (see Matt. 10:27.)

### **Proclamations of Praise**

Purposefully, the writers of Scripture frequently proclaim God's greatness. Putting aside their needs and requests, they simply praise Him for His own sake:

"I will proclaim the name of the Lord; how glorious is our God! He is the Rock; his deeds are perfect. Everything he does is just and fair. He is a faithful God who does no wrong; how just and upright he is!" (Deut. 32:3-4, NLT).

Praise is a sacrifice as well as a joyful sound, because it will cost you something. "With Jesus' help we will continually offer our sacrifice of praise to God by telling others of the glory of his name" (Heb. 13:15, TLB). The sacrifice of praise is worth it—always—because praise is a spiritual warfare weapon, a means of deliverance from the strongholds of darkness. "He who offers a sacrifice of thanksgiving honors Me; and to him who orders his way aright I shall show the salvation of God" (Ps. 50:23, NASB). Sometimes we simply need to praise our way out of the entrapment of the enemy by releasing the high praise of God from our hearts—out loud. (One of the reasons it is good to store up the Word of God in our hearts is so that our high praises have something to flow from.)

From a position of victory, we pray prayers of victory. We proclaim the all-sufficiency of our God, and we draw heaven's blessings down to earth, saying, "Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6:10, NKJV). We pray expecting God and His angels to break up the darkness with the brilliant light of His glory. "For God, who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ" (2 Cor. 4:6, NIV).

Do we see His glory every time? No. Often, we pray in the dark. But we keep on praying because He has furnished us with indomitable faith. "Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you. See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the Lord rises upon you and his glory appears over you" (Isa. 60:1-2).

Eventually, our prayers shift again. I can't tell you how this happens or how quickly it will occur. All I know is that there comes a time when you actually stop asking. This is because of an almost fierce and well-won peace that, even when the darkness still seems to prevail, makes you sure that your prayers have been heard and God's best answers are bound for their destination. You start to thank Him and praise Him for the provision that may not yet be visible, confident that in due time, it will become manifest.

At that point, all you can do is praise Him anew, and you do. Your prayers are striking the mark! {eoa}

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