

Understanding God's Side of Prayer

A Study through the book of Ephesians

Ephesians 3:20-21

There is a side of prayer that once we get a good understanding of it, it will enhance our faith and enlarge our expectations every time we bring our requests to God. It all has to do with understanding God's side of prayer. Let's talk about this today.

Like a coin, there are two sides to prayer. There is our side of a prayer request and there is God's side of that same prayer request.

On our side of prayer, we bring what we are believing about God, we bring our limited perception of the need/request, we bring our expectations (spoken or unspoken), we bring our emotions attached to that need/request, and we bring our expressions of faith.

On God's side of that prayer, because He is all-knowing and all-present, He sees everything about the need/request as it really is; He knows the true cause of the need, He knows all the effects that the need is having, He knows all that would happen if the need were met or not met.

Further, because God is infinite love, perfectly wise and all-powerful; to His glory, He sees how He can answer that prayer in a way that will truly bring the greatest good and the best lasting results for all.

And there is more. After Paul shared His prayer for the believers in Ephesus in Ephesians 3:14-19 the Holy Spirit moves him to conclude the prayer in verses 20-21, in a way that gives us further revelation into how God works on His side of prayer. Let's study this out.

Ephesians 3:20a, Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine

Here we see that on God's side of prayer He answers in a way that our side of the prayer could never encompass. The term "immeasurably more" means that the good that God is bringing about because of this prayer being offered is so vast it can't be measured.

Notice the phrase "than all we ask or imagine." This tells us that God doesn't limit Himself to the scope of our prayer but uses our prayer as a springboard to bring about His greater will. The way God will answer the prayer will have a chain reaction of good that can reach to eternity.

Though there are Biblical reasons why God says no to our prayers i.e. if our prayer promotes sin and selfishness (Psa. 66:18, James 4:4), if it is out of line with God's character, Word and will (1 John 5:14-15), if it is void of love (1 Cor. 13:1-3), or if it is full of unbelieving doubt (James 1:6-7).

I wonder how often when we prayed a prayer that seemed to be unanswered, we thought it was God saying "no, it's not my will," when all along it is actuality God saying, "yes and more!"

When God's answer is "yes and more", His workings is often imperceptible to us at that point

and time. This calls for us to trust Him, to recall His goodness, His greatness, His faithfulness. And every day when we are not seeing results, in faith give Him praise for His “more!”

Ephesians 3:20b, according to His power that is at work within us,

Why is it according to His power that is at work within us? It is because sometimes, when on God’s side of prayer, when He is saying “Yes and more,” He plans on partnering with you to bring about His “more”. This requires the Holy Spirit to work His power in us in three respects.

First, the Holy Spirit gives us whatever measure of power is needed in order for us to have the capacity to receive God’s “more”.

We read in Colossians 1:11-12, “being strengthened with all power according to His glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light” (also 2 Peter 1:3)

Second, the Holy Spirit gives us whatever measure of power is needed in order for us to have the capacity to pray for God’s “more”.

We read in 1 Corinthians 14:2, “For anyone who speaks in a tongue [in his spiritual language] does not speak to men but to God. Indeed, no one understands him; he utters mysteries [God’s strategies – God’s “more”] with his spirit” (also Romans 8:26).

Third, the Holy Spirit gives us whatever measure of power is needed in order for us to have the capacity to minister God’s “more”.

We read in Acts 1:8, “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you shall be my witnesses [the word witness here implies a life fully given to God to miraculously work through]” (also 1 Cor. 12:7-11).

Ephesians 3:21 to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever! Amen.

We were all made for God’s glory. To glorify God is to reflect His greatness and goodness with our mouths in praise, with our daily conduct and with our life choices.

God calls us to give Him the glory first of all because it is a beneficial witness for all around. People are ever watching us. The greater the glory we bring God the greater our witness to them!

Secondly, God calls us to bring Him glory because it aligns our heart and life to experiencing God’s greatness and goodness, it fulfills our purpose, it deepens our joy and it transforms our actions.

On God’s side of prayer, when He is saying “yes and more” it is so His revealed greatness and goodness will be ever reflected in His church and in Christ Jesus. Let’s trust God with His “more” and in faith bring Him lots of praise for God’s side of prayer.