

Finding Our Authority In Prayer

¹⁶ For this reason the Jews persecuted Jesus, and sought to kill Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath. ¹⁷ But Jesus answered them, “My Father has been working until now, and I have been working.” ¹⁸ Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God. ¹⁹ Then Jesus answered and said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner. ²⁰ For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself does; and He will show Him greater works than these, that you may marvel. (John 5:16-20)

My aim for this message is that we would recognize the authority that Jesus had through His relationship with His Father (which is prayer), and understand how deep and constant devotion to prayer brings wisdom and revelation to every situation and everything we pray for. I believe this passage has direct parallels to what this prayer room is all about, and how we ought to live before the Lord in our calling to prayer.

I. The Context

- A. Jesus heals a man on the Sabbath and, by doing so, breaks the rules and traditions that the religious leaders had either created themselves or misinterpreted from the Law of Moses. Jesus not only admits to His actions but also claims to be the Son of God, which, to the religious leaders, was blasphemy. Jesus addresses their misunderstanding of what the Sabbath really was for by emphasizing that God Himself is continually at work and that He must do the same. Jesus also points out that He can't do nothing unless He first sees His Father doing it.

II. Understanding That God Never Stops Working and Neither Should We

- A. From the beginning of creation God has not ceased to sustain all things. ***And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. (Colossians 1:17)***
- B. Ever since the fall of man God has not stopped working to bring about redemption to the earth. ***“My Father has been working until now, and I have been working.” (John 5:17)*** Jesus came to earth to do the will of His Father, and that work is constant. Jesus labored to redeem us and give us eternal life, that we would know God, Like really know Him!
- C. After Jesus ascended into heaven, He has not stopped praying for us ...***He always lives to make intercession for them. (Hebrews 7:25)*** Jesus is always working the will of His Father and is calling us to do the same.***but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner. (John 5:19)***

III. Breaking With Religious Views of the Day to Prioritize Prayer

- A. For Jesus to do the work of His Father and heal a man on the Sabbath, it meant breaking with the traditional religious views of the day in order to be obedient to His calling. The Sabbath was, and still is, intended for our benefit. God created it so that we would learn to set apart time in our busy lives to be with Him and enjoy the fruits of His labor. ... ***Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.” (Exodus 20:11)*** God has blessed the idea of resting in Him that we would be holy and do holy things all time.

- B. To put this in our context, there are some in the Body of Christ who view prioritizing prayer above everything else as controversial or even unbiblical. Some might say that house of prayer, day-and-night prayer, or organizing and encouraging people to commit themselves to prayer is cult-like activity. Many may sneer at the idea of the Church sitting in a room and talking to God instead of going out and reaching the lost. There are even leaders in the Church who may try to convince us that we are doing something wrong. But Jesus was not intimidated by the rules and regulations of His day because He knew the will of His Father. He not only knew what to do, but He also had intimate insight into God's heart and desires, which gave Him the confidence and authority to do it. As Jesus said, ***"The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works" (John 14:10).***
- C. I think it's important for us to understand that giving ourselves to a life of prayer is not disconnected from the great commission ***Therefore **PRAY** the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."*** (Matthew 9:38)

IV. Jesus Couldn't do Anything Without First Looking to Heaven

- A. ...***"Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner. ²⁰ For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself does; and He will show Him greater works than these... (John 5:19-20)***
- B. Jesus committed Himself to doing only what He saw His Father doing. In other words, every action Jesus took flowed from time spent in God's presence. This reveals the depth of investment and intimacy that characterized His relationship with the Father. Jesus didn't spend time with God simply to accomplish God's works. Rather, He spent time with God because He loved the Father, and from that intimacy flowed a deep desire to do His will.
- C. Prayer is where we are meant to spend most of our time in relationship with our Heavenly Father. It is where we are called to gaze upon the Lord so that He can show us all that He wants us to know. We are to look to Him for our authority in what we do, what we pray, and how we carry out our ministry before Him. As the Body of Christ, we cannot truly accomplish anything apart from this reality. As I reflect on these things, I find myself asking: If I were to look at Jesus right now, what would He be doing? And how would that give me insight into what I should do? The answer is simple: He is praying, and we should join Him. The truth is that, as the Body of Christ, we cannot accomplish anything apart from this reality.
- D. I want to encourage us to follow Jesus in the same way that Jesus desired relationship with the Father. Let that be our primary focus, because the end result will produce a genuine desire in us to do God's will. What Jesus had with His Heavenly Father brought confidence, power, and anointing. This is why we need prayer.