

A Few Good Men

Do you believe that God answers prayer? In **James 5:16** it says, “The effectual fervent prayer of **(what kind of man avails much?)** a righteous man.” Not a listless prayer, but the fervent prayer, a prayer that comes from an active, earnest petitioner, and a righteous man means one who has obedience from the heart; one who has had his sins forgiven and is empowered by the Holy Spirit to live without transgressing the law of God. Unless this our state, how can we expect our prayers to be answered in a way that will benefit ourselves and others for whom we labor? By the way, this is a promise that applies to women and children as well. And **1 Thessalonians 5:17** says we are to “pray without ceasing”, why? Because the devil’s attacks are unceasing.

If we’re doing the right thing and not knowingly violating any of the Ten Commandments, we can be sure that God not only hears us, but that He will take into account what we’re praying about, and that’s a powerful thing when you think about it. Through our prayers God can change the course of a person’s life and even the course of a nation, and let me tell you, our nation needs a course correction. If you pay attention to the news at all, you know this country is in big trouble. In the final analysis we know that America is going to speak as a dragon and that every principle of our constitution is going to be repudiated, and we can see that this is even now in progress, but until this prophecy comes to full fruition, we need to be praying for a little more time that as many as possible might have a chance to hear the truth and be saved. Jesus said, “I didn’t come to condemn the world, but that the world through Me might be saved”, and if we belong to Him, we’ll want the same thing He wants. One day soon human probation will close forever, but until that time we have a work to do, and we should be about our Fathers business.

Several years ago I received a phone call from a man who had a question, and in the course of our conversation I made the comment that we ought to pray for the leaders of our nation. And he replied very indignantly and said, “I don’t think we should pray for them at all.” The idea being that it would be a total waste of time. At this point in the conversation, the scripture that first came to my mind were a few verses in **Romans 13**, and I read that to him and we discussed it a little bit, and I would also like to read it to you this morning.

Romans 13:1-7, “Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers **(or to the governing authorities)**. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained **(or appointed)** of God. Whosoever therefore resists the power, resists the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation **(or condemnation)**. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: for he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he bears not the

sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that does evil. Wherefore you must needs be subject **(or subordinate)**, not only for wrath **(or because of the punishment that will come)**, but also **(and I would say, more importantly)** for conscience sake. For for this cause pay ye tribute also **(that's right friends, we are to pay taxes and not cheat the government authorities)**: for they are God's ministers **(or public servants)**, attending continually upon this very thing. **(In other words, it's their duty to always take care of these matters, and they will)** Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour."

The only disclaimer I've been able to find in the Scriptures to these verses is in **Acts 5:29** where it says, "we ought to obey God rather than men." When the laws of man conflict with the law of God our duty is clear, we are to obey God and let the chips fall where they may. But at this point in time, I'm not aware of any of the laws of the land that force us to disobey the law of God, do you? So until that happens **Romans 13** remains in full force.

As this man and I continued our phone conversation, I also paraphrased a statement from **Spirit of Prophecy, volume 4, page 429**, but I'll read it to you just as it was written. "As long as Jesus remains man's intercessor in the sanctuary above, the restraining influence of the Holy Spirit is felt by rulers and people. **(and friends, if the Holy Spirit is felt by rulers and people, then our prayers can make a difference)** It **(the restraining influence of the Spirit)** still controls, to some extent, the laws of the land. Were it not for these laws, the condition of the world would be much worse than it now is. While many of our rulers are active agents of Satan, **(now listen)** God also has His agents among the leading men of the nation. **(I don't know about you, but I take some comfort from the fact that God has His chosen agents in the government.)** The enemy moves upon his servants to propose measures that would greatly impede the work of God; but statesmen who fear the Lord are influenced by holy angels to oppose such propositions with unanswerable arguments. Thus a few men **(how many men? Just a few)** will hold in check a powerful current of evil."

By the way, that's where we are right now in the history of the United States, and the whole world for that matter. Only a few good men are holding back a powerful current of evil until such time as God tells the angels holding the four winds of strife to let loose, and from everything I see happening in the world right now, I don't think that time is too far down the road.

As I continued my conversation with this man, I also quoted verses like **Daniel 4:17** where it says, "the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will", and some of them are the basest of men it says, and we'll talk about that in a minute, but didn't we just read in **Romans 13** that "the powers that be are ordained of God"? and whether you like it or not, we have to conclude from these Scriptures that the

current President in the White House is there because God gave it to him, and if God gave it to him, then that's an opportunity to pray for him?

Now let me just say something without getting too involved with politics here, but at the same time we should all be aware of what's going on in our Republic. There are several things about President Trump that I wish were different, but that being said, I do believe that he is much better than the alternative, because this country is fast heading toward socialism, and socialism is akin to atheism. Karl Marx said, "religion is the opium of the masses", and later on Vladimir Lenin said, "atheist convictions are quite necessary in a socialist society", and "There can be nothing more abominable than religion." Then Joseph Stalin, his successor, who was a declared atheist, did everything he could to destroy religion in the Soviet Union. These three men are the heroes of the modern day liberal socialist agenda, and unfortunately that's where the democrat party is heading by their own admission.

President Trump makes no bones about believing in God and that God had everything to do with the formation of America, and he upholds the Constitution, which can't be said about the other side right now, and it doesn't help that 90% of the media is biased toward the liberal agenda when they should just simply report the news and keep their personal opinions to themselves, but unfortunately that's not the way modern journalism works today.

But as I think about the fact that one day in the not too distant future that there is going to be enforced Sunday worship, and you would think it would have to come through the conservative religious class and possibly have something to do with the environmentalists, which are pushing the worship of nature by the way, but we'll have to wait to see how all that will develop, because I think we're all going to be surprised at how it all develops in the end. But anyway, we should include the leaders of our nation in our daily devotions that God will bless the few good men who are trying to do the right thing and confound and expose the many who are only creating division simply because they can't accept the results of the last election. If God is the One who sets up kings and takes them down, and there are those who are doing everything they can to get rid of this President, then who are they really fighting against? They're fighting against God! And friends, when you fight against God you're going to lose.

Those of you who are on my mailing list may recall I had a sermon a few months back titled "America's Second Civil War", and I want to tell you that in the midst of the current attempt to impeach the President, that that's where we're headed if the effort is successful, which tells us that we need to be more in earnest than ever in fortifying our minds with the word of truth so we will be able to stand through the last great conflict without caving in to Satan's efforts to blot out the remnant of God's seed, because that's really what it's all about when you look at the bigger picture. We shouldn't get all caught

up with all the corruption we see going on and miss the point that it's those who are giving the third angel's message who are really the ones in the devil's sights. Everything else going on in the world is simply a distraction to get our focus off the three-fold union of the papacy, apostate Protestantism, and spiritualism that are the big players in last day events and the fulfillment of Bible prophecy. That's not our subject this morning, but we should be aware of these things so we don't become confused about who the devil is using behind the scenes in these last days to catch us off-guard. But what we can always safely do is pray, because prayer changes things.

Now, if it's true that God is the One who sets up kings and takes them down, and I believe He does, then that also means the ruthless dictators of this world are also in power because God gave it to them, for whatever His divine purpose might be. A person might question that, but isn't that the way it was with Nebuchadnezzar? A few minutes ago we read in **Daniel 4:17** that, "the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men." Now that doesn't mean that all the men God sets up are the basest of men, but wasn't this the case with Nebuchadnezzar?

Before Nebuchadnezzar was sent into the field to eat grass for seven years, he was the basest of men, was he not? Today he would be accused of acts against humanity. He would be labeled as a ruthless dictator, and his regime would be considered the axis of evil, and rightly so, because he was a wicked man! He was willing to murder a significant number of his cabinet just because they couldn't interpret a dream he had. He threatened his own people with genocide in the fiery furnace if they refused to bow down and worship him as a deity. Nebuchadnezzar was a bad man! He was "the basest of men", and yet God allowed him to come to power; but for what purpose? It was to punish his chosen people Israel for their disobedience and rebellion. That's why Daniel and his three friends were captives in Babylon. By the way, the Spirit of Prophecy indicates that Nebuchadnezzar was truly converted in the end and I'm pretty sure we'll see him in heaven. It just goes to show you that anyone can be saved if they truly surrender all to Jesus and do what they can to redeem the time they've wasted.

But even before his conversion, Nebuchadnezzar was an instrument in the hands of infinite power in order to bring God's people to repentance. That's why he was given the position as king of Babylon, and it also worked out for his own benefit in the end. In **Jeremiah 27:6** God calls Nebuchadnezzar "My servant", and no doubt God has allowed certain base men to come to power today to open our eyes to the fact that we need to get right with God as a country and that the end is near, because to a large extent this nation has turned its back on God.

Think of all the errors that have developed just over the last few years with the totally crazed LGBTQ community, and with trying to abort babies even after they've been born,

and with immorality of every kind, and with unspeakable crimes and the blatant disregard of human life, and the list goes on and on. Ever since sin entered this world it has been bad, but lately it has reached a point that is almost unthinkable.

I watched a cabinet meeting at the White House recently and I have to say that I was duly impressed with the fact that it was opened with heart felt prayer for this country and that God would guide this President in his decisions as he has to deal with world leaders and so forth, and I highly doubt if most the candidates running for the highest office in the land today would do the same if they were elected. You might question some of the decisions the current administration has made, but have you ever thought that maybe, just maybe many of these leaders are living up to all the spiritual truth they understand? That's not ours to judge! But I say, if our current President has enough courage to confess Christ openly and ask for the prayers of the public, then we ought to take him up on it and pray that the Lord will teach him truth and give him wisdom. That's the kind of patriotism we can all participate in as Christians, and we should. To do any less would be to deny what the Scriptures plainly teach.

Well, as this man and I continued our phone conversation, it seemed the more I tried to explain what seemed clear to me, the more indignant he became until the phone call ended rather abruptly. Later on as I was sharing this experience with the rest of the family, my son Andy said, "Did you tell him to read **1 Timothy 2:1-4**, Dad?" and I said "no! what does it say?" and we read it, and I'd like to read that to you, because it would have been an excellent thing to call this man's attention to.

1 Timothy 2:1-4, "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."

That makes it pretty clear, doesn't it? God doesn't ask us to agree with all the decisions the leading men of our nation make, but He would have us pray for them, especially them that fear Him, that they might give unanswerable arguments and thus hold in check a powerful current of evil. As I have studied this subject, I believe the statesmen who fear the Lord have something to do with the accomplishment of **Revelation 7:1-3**. Let's take a look at what it says there.

Revelation 7:1-3, "And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the

sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.”

By the way, you might want to do a study sometime about what the earth, the sea, and the trees represent in these verses. These things are highly symbolic, and I believe you’ll find that they represent people in desolate areas, people in heavily populated areas, and individuals. If you find that they could represent something different, you can let me know.

Now, let’s put that together with what it says in ***Spirit of Prophecy, volume 4, page 429***. I read some of what’s on this page earlier, but we’re going to add one more sentence, and here it is: “The opposition of the enemies of truth will be restrained that the third message may do its work.” The question is, how are the enemies of truth going to be restrained? And does it have anything to do with **Revelation 7:1-3**? It becomes quite clear that the leading men of the nation, who are God’s agents we read about earlier, will with the words given them by the Holy Spirit, restrain the enemies of truth so the third angel’s message of **Revelation 14:9-12** can accomplish its work and while the four winds are being held. By the way, what angel is represented by the angel who ascends “from the east, and having the seal of the living God?”

Well, we don’t have to guess at it, because we’re told what angel it is in ***Early Writings, page 118***. “I then saw the third angel. Said my accompanying angel, ‘Fearful is his work. Awful is his mission. He is the angel that is to select the wheat from the tares, and seal, or bind, the wheat for the heavenly garner.’” And who or what does the third angel represent? ***Testimonies for the Church, volume 1, page 77***, “I was shown that the third angel, proclaiming the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, represents the people who receive this message and raise the voice of warning to the world.” In other words, the third angel is not a literal angel, but people like you and me. Now, if the third angel represents people, could the leading men of our nation, who are God’s agents, and perhaps leading men or women in a few other nations, be represented by the “four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, and holding the winds that they should not blow”? Makes sense to me!

Spirit of Prophecy, volume 4, page 429 continues by saying, “When the loud cry shall be given, it will arrest the attention of these leading men through whom the Lord is now working, and some of them will accept it, and will stand with the people of God through the time of trouble.”

No doubt some of the leading men or women will be senators, or congressmen, or supreme court justices, or perhaps whoever is the President at that time. And it might be the very man and woman we might not think will ever accept the message and stand with the people of God. I don’t know about you, but I have made this mistake in the past more than once. The very person I thought would never accept the truth was the very one who

did, and the one I thought would, turned out to turn their back on it, and so we don't want to judge whether or not a person is a good or bad candidate for heaven based on our poor finite judgment, but sow beside all waters and let the Holy Spirit do His work.

The early church never thought the apostle Paul would turn out to be God's man of the hour, did they? In fact, they were afraid of him as he searched out Christians and had them killed or thrown in jail. Only God knows the end from the beginning, and only He knows the hearts of all men. In the Bible we're told that man looks on the outward appearance, but God looks upon the heart, and that's something we can't do. God has not given us the job of judging character and motive, has He? No. And neither are we to evil surmise.

From the inspired statements that we have read this morning, we know for sure that there are "A Few Good Men" as leaders in this nation who are doing God's bidding and doing what they can to "hold in check a powerful current of evil," and while they are doing what they can, don't you think we need to be doing what we can, as insignificant as that might seem? We don't know what will prosper, this or that, but we should do it nonetheless for that very reason.

We're told that the close of human probation is going to come at a time when we least expect it. In fact, we won't even know when it happens, not right away at least. So, if the Holy Spirit has been prompting you to talk to a certain individual about the truth for this time, I suggest you do it! If you've been convicted to pass out literature or send a packet in the mail to someone, then get busy! If you have some unfinished business that needs to be resolved, don't delay any longer! If you have a particular sin that so easily besets you, plead with God for victory! We need to clear the king's highway so the third angel's message can do its work while the four winds are being held; while a "Few Good Men" are being influenced by Holy Spirit and holy angels to oppose the propositions of the agents of Satan with unanswerable arguments.

By the way, who are the ones that will be giving the third angel's message that some of these leading men will accept? It's going to be from someone who knows that message, don't you think? It will come from people like you and me! How important then that we understand this message and do what we can now to prepare to give it? How important that we experience the third angel's message, which is a righteousness by faith message. We're told that some will be brought before the courts of justice to vindicate the truth. Will it be you? Will it be me? Who knows? But we do know one thing, the one who is called upon to give the last message of mercy this world will ever hear has to know something about it beforehand, else the wise men of the earth will make us look like fools. Lawyers can twist your words around and make you doubt yourself, and if we don't have an experimental knowledge of the truth for these last days, what's going to happen? We'll be confounded in front of judge and jury and we will not be the witness we could

have been had we taken quality time on a daily basis to gain an understanding of end time prophecy.

In **Luke 12:11,12** Jesus told the disciples, “when they bring you unto the synagogues, and unto magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say: for the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say.” But here’s the thing, I don’t think the Holy Spirit is going to bring to our mind the right things to say if we haven’t taken the time to put the word of God in our heads beforehand. We can’t just sit back and do nothing and think the Holy Spirit will magically put words in our mouth that will glorify God when the time comes for us to give an answer of the hope that’s within us.

In ***Spaulding and Megan, page 25*** it says, “Our duty is to obey God. When you are arrested, take no thought what you shall say or do. You are to follow Christ step by step. You need not commence weeks beforehand to examine the question and lay plans as to what you will do when the powers shall do this or that, neither need you think what you are to say. Study the truth, and the Spirit of the Lord will bring to your remembrance what you shall say.” Remembrance means bringing to your mind something that’s already in there. And so, only if we study the truth now will the Holy Spirit be able to bring it forth from our mind when it’s needed.

As we wind down this morning, I want you to think about an important point, because it’s extremely important. Even though we should pray for the leading men and women in our country, and even though we want our government to do the right thing and to uphold our constitution, we know that government alone is not the answer to the ills of our nation, because the government has no power to change the heart. Only the Holy Spirit can do that, and that’s the reason Jesus didn’t get involved in Government issues or try to work through the government to bring about reform.

Notice what it says in ***The Desire of Ages, pages 509, 510***, “The government under which Jesus lived was corrupt and oppressive; on every hand were crying abuses, extortion, intolerance, and grinding cruelty. Yet the Saviour attempted no civil reforms. He attacked no national abuses, nor condemned the national enemies. He did not interfere with the authority or administration of those in power. He who was our example kept aloof from earthly governments. Not because He was indifferent to the woes of men, but because the remedy did not lie in merely human and external measures. To be efficient, the cure must reach men individually, and must regenerate the heart.

“Not by the decisions of courts or councils or legislative assemblies, not by the patronage of worldly great men, is the kingdom of Christ established, but by the implanting of Christ's nature in humanity through the work of the Holy Spirit.”

And so, this is where our work lies. To reach people individually with the truth so the Holy Spirit can then take that truth and regenerate the heart, and the reason we want to pray for the rulers of our nation is so we will have more time to work, because the time is coming when no man can work. In **Amos 8:11, 12** it says, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD: and they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it."

That day is coming friends, and we're called to give a last day message before the day of spiritual famine comes. Do you want to be a part of it? I know you do, or you wouldn't be listening right now. But we have to realize the preparation that is necessary in order to be successful in the Christian warfare, because that's what it is. It's a spiritual warfare we're involved in and we've got to be prepared for the combat that is coming. God has a few good men in high positions who are holding back a current of evil, and while they are doing their part, we need to be doing ours. May God help us.