

AVENUES TO VICTORIOUS PRAYER

TEXT: Hebrews 13:18: Pray for us: for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly.

Introduction:

In this brief sentence, the writer of Hebrews does three things:

1. He shows humility. This leader is not above asking others to pray for him and for his co-workers.
2. He declares his intent to live in the center of God's Will.
3. He states his faith in prayer.



I. HUMILITY

A. He admitted his need of prayer.

1. He knew that he, as each of God's children, had certain limits to his human capability.
 - a. It is a mistake to bury even one talent, but it is also wrong to think one talent can do the work of ten!

*"I'm glad I am not bound
To make the world go round;
But only to discover – then to do
The work He bids me to."*

- b. Knowing our limitations is not an excuse for laziness. Rather, it is a call to make our ability count for the most possible!
Find your best area of work — then work!

Illustration:

1. The difference between operation and co-operation.
2. The quality of humility is a blessed attitude which lets us rest when we have done our best!

Edward Hale has said:

*I am only one, but still I am one.
I cannot do everything, but still I can do something
And because I cannot do everything
I will not refuse to do the something I can do.*

II. Paul was living a life above reproach

“We trust we have a good conscience.” He and his fellow-workers “willed to will the Will of God”.

Acts 23:1: And Paul, earnestly beholding the council, said, Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day.



He Believed in the Power of Prayer

A. He met two conditions for effective prayer.

1. He was humble.
2. He was living in God’s Will, and seeking to continue in this will.

B. It is a joy to pray for folks who have met these conditions.

If these conditions have not been met, pray that this be done, even before going on to the specific petition requested!

C. He realized the value of intercessory prayer.



1. We need to pray more for each other.

- a. Members of the congregation for one another.
- b. The pastor for the congregation; the congregation for the pastor.

2. Prayer is a key to Christian Fellowship.

- a. Christians become more concerned for others when they pray for them.

- b. Often, after prayer, God reveals how we can be His instruments in handling an opportunity to be of service. We can become part of the answer!
- c. We are not to pray that God will do for others what we, ourselves, should do for them.
- d. We pray for God to direct us how best to help, and to wait upon His leading without anxiousness or worry.

Conclusion:

Can we, with the author of Hebrews, ask our fellow-Christians to pray for us, knowing — in humility of spirit, yet with confidence — that there is a power available through prayer?

Christians need to support each other in prayer now, thereby providing evidence to the world that there is truth and joy in the old words, *“Behold, how these Christians love each other!”*



The Greatest Preacher

The world’s greatest preacher, outside the Godhead, is not Charles Spurgeon, or Dwight L. Moody, or John Wesley, or Billy Graham, or Oral Roberts. This preacher is as ageless as God, and as universal as sin. His ministry began in the Garden of Eden. He cried out against the shedding of Abel’s blood. He preached in David’s palace, and stood to accuse Judas and Pilate.

This preacher is Conscience.

CONSCIENCE

He preaches to every man, and no one refuses him an audience, although they do not always heed his message.

Conscience is your best friend.

It allowed Daniel to sleep with lions, and Peter to sleep in chains before his execution day.

Conscience, if improperly treated, can be your worst enemy.

Illustration:

Saul would not heed Samuel’s sermons. Ultimately, Conscience caused

him to drive a sword between his ribs and take his own life.

Judas Iscariot walked and ate with Jesus and saw His miracles. Yet Jesus' love, mercy, and ministry did not sway Judas — but Conscience did. It caused him to place a rope about his neck and commit suicide.

Conscience – in Heaven or in Hell — will bless or condemn. For example, Jesus taught His disciples about the rich man in Hell:

Luke 16:19-31:

19 There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day:

20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,

21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;

23 And in Hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

24 And he cried and said, father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.



26 And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.

27 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house:

28 For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

29 Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them.

30 And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the

dead, they will repent.

³¹ And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

Paul had a good conscience, and continually asked for prayer:

Hebrews 13:18: Pray for us: for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly.



Be not deceived. If you sow peas, you will reap peas; if you sow corn, you will reap corn. If you sow wheat, you won't get peas. If you sow sin — you will reap the consequences.

Romans 6:23: For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Conclusion:

1 John 1:8-9:

⁸ If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

⁹ If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Romans 8:1: Therefore, there is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Won't you accept Him today as *your* Lord and Savior?

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