

BFF364 Spiritual Warfare 2, Prayers for Every Knee to Bow to Jesus

Scott: Welcome to the "Building Faith Families" podcast with Steve Demme. I'm your host, Scott Moore. Thanks for joining us today. Good morning, Steve. How are you today?

Steve: I was in Washington state this last weekend and had a wonderful time with the people. I also discovered there were several people there that listen to our podcast. They were asking me about you. They say we have an interesting dynamic and = compliment each other well. It's nice when I meet people that tell me that they're listening and they're being edified.

Scott: Awesome.

Steve: As you and I know, we had a little struggle getting on this morning, but this is what happens when you do a podcast on spiritual warfare. I'm learning to expect it. When I was the student chaplain of my seminary, I invited my pastor, a real prayer warrior, to teach a series on spiritual warfare for chapel.

It was well-received, but while it was going on, we were taking hits or backlash at the church. We sponsored a Christian school at the time, and one of the teachers came down with infectious hepatitis.

We called a special prayer meeting, resisted the devil and prayed and sought God, and thankfully nobody else caught it. When you talk about the things that matter, sometime stir up the enemy in a new way. Let's jump into part two of spiritual warfare.

Father, help us now. Wash us in the blood of Jesus. Deliver us from evil and help us today. We humble ourselves. We hide behind our big brother, Jesus. We pray in His name, in the name of Jesus that You will help us today to understand one more component.

There's so much we could talk about and we're planning on talking about, but I pray that we'll each be able to strap on one more component each week as we talk and consider Your word in Jesus name. Amen.

Scott: Amen.

Steve: Last week, we were praying about what Jesus taught us to pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." This week, I'd like to talk about incense bowls, which we covered pretty much at length when we were studying the tabernacle. This was part of Aaron and his sons' responsibility.

1 Chronicles 23:13, "Aaron was set apart to sanctify Him as most holy. He and his sons forever to burn incense before Jehovah, to minister to Him and to bless in His name." In the last few weeks, we've talked about what it means to bless in His name. and about ministering to Him. Now we're going to talk about burning incense.

Ephesians 5:2, "Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God." Never thought about Christ that way, but He was a fragrant offering. He was a sacrifice. He was offered before God.

Hebrews 13:15, "Through Him," meaning Christ, "then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God. That is the fruit of lips that acknowledge His name."

Our prayers are incense. Our prayers, as we believe in Jesus, are fragrant offerings. Our prayers are adding incense before God.

Revelation 8:3, "Another angel came and stood at the altar holding a golden censer and much incense was given to him so that he might add it to the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar, which was before the throne. In the smoke of the incense with the prayers of the saints, went up before God out of the angel's hand."

There's a lot to this. There are bowls of incense that are before the altar. These bowls of incense are made up of the prayers of the saints, and there's other incense added from the altar. That's not my responsibility.

I want to add to those bowls. Every time you and I pray, and I hope we don't think we need the special gift of intercession. Every time we pray as saints, we're adding to these bowls of incense.

There's been a ton of prayers prayed against abortion. We saw the Supreme Court make a different decision last year. Perhaps, it's because those bowls filled up. They got to a certain point where God was able to answer in a different way. I don't know. I don't know how it works.

All I want to say is I want to make sure that everybody that prays does not feel in the least diminished or feel too small or feel like their prayers don't make a difference because every prayer of faith is added to these bowls of incense.

Psalms 141:1-2, "Oh, Jehovah, I call upon you. Hasten to me. Give ear to my voice when I call to you. Let my prayer be counted as incense before you in the lifting up of my hands as the evening offering." That's our prayer. "Let our prayers be counted as incense before you." This is what we want to do.

Matthew 21:12-13. "Jesus entered the temple, drove out all who sold and bought in the temple, and He overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons. He said to them, 'It is written. My house shall be called a house of prayer, but you make it a den of robbers.'"

This is what His heart was right from the start. His house is supposed to be a house of prayer, not a place to make money and sell stuff. His house is to be a house of prayer. I looked up where that verse came from because He says "It is written." It's part of a longer passage, but I think it's helpful to read the whole passage to get the sense of it.

Isaiah 56:1-7, "This is what Jehovah says, 'Be just and fair to all, do what is right and good, for I am coming soon to rescue you and to display my righteousness among you. Blessed are all those who are careful to do this. Blessed are those who honor my sabbath days of rest and keep themselves from doing wrong.

"Don't let foreigners who commit themselves to Jehovah say, 'Jehovah will never let me be a part of his people,' and don't let the eunuch say, 'I'm a dried-up tree with no children and no future.'"

These are people that didn't feel much about themselves. They thought, "Oh, I can never do this. I could never be a part of God's plan for the end times," but it keeps going.

"This is what Jehovah says, 'I will bless those eunuchs who keep my sabbath days holy and who choose to do what pleases me and commit their lives to me. I will give them within the walls of my house a memorial and a name far greater than sons and daughters could give. For the name I give them is an everlasting one. It will never disappear.

"I will also bless the foreigners who commit themselves to Jehovah, who serve Him and love His name, who worship Him and do not desecrate the sabbath day of rest and who hold fast to My covenant. These I will bring to My holy mountain and make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar. For My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples." It's a little bit long. I hope we get the point. There were these people. They were eunuchs. They were foreigners. They didn't feel like they were a part of God's team. They thought, "Ah, what we do doesn't make a difference."

He says, "No, no, no. You choose the things that please Me. You keep My sabbaths. You keep My commandments. You do the things that are right and I'll bring you into My holy mountain. Your burnt offerings, and sacrifices, and prayers will be accepted on My altar."

This is like a big encouragement to us, "Yes. We can be part of God's prayer team. We can be part of those that are standing by the Lord, part of His priests and His people." Let me read again Revelation 8:3-4, "Another angel came and stood at the altar having a golden censer. Much incense was given to him so that he might add it to the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar, which was before the throne. The smoke of the incense with the prayers of the saints went up before God out of the angel's hand." Our prayers count. Our prayers matter. Our prayers are being added to the smoke of the incense.

1 Timothy 2:1-4, "I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people for kings and all who are in high positions that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good. It is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior Who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."

This is for people in authority in our courts, in our halls of power, in our state capitals. I pray for my state. I pray for Washington, DC. I pray for my country.

If you've wondered whether it's God's will for certain people to come to Christ, all you have to do is read that last verse because it covers all the bases. He desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. That is fact. I've heard some people say, "Well, I don't know how to pray for people because I don't know if they're part of the chosen. I don't know if it's limited atonement or unlimited atonement."

You know what? You just need to turn off your brain a little bit and believe the Word of God, which says, "Who desires all people to be saved." 1 John 5 declares, "This is the confidence which we have before Him, that if we ask anything according to His will He hears us. If we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked of Him."

We just read what His will was. His will is that everybody be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. Here are four verses that I frequently appeal to for God to save all people and bring all people to a knowledge of the truth.

Isaiah 45:22-23, "Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth. For I am God, and there is no other. I have sworn by myself. The word has gone forth from my mouth in righteousness and will not turn back, that to Me every knee will bow. Every tongue will swear allegiance."

We see similar language in Romans 14:11, "It is written, 'As I live,' says the Lord, 'every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God.'" This is God's will, that every knee bows, every tongue confesses and all are saved and come to the knowledge of the truth.

Habakkuk 2:14, "The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of Jehovah as the waters cover the sea." That's a fact. This is going to happen. The earth is going to be filled with the knowledge of the glory of Jehovah as the waters cover the sea.

I'm going to close with this one before we mix these with faith in our closing prayer. Philippians 2:9-11. "Therefore, God has highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every tongue should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth. Every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God, the Father."

It's simple. And it's sublime. I believe there's a bowl up there, a bowl that's collecting the prayers of people that are praying according to His will, that are praying according to His word, asking God to see that every knee bows and every tongue confesses that Jesus shall be Lord. Let me pray. Then we'll talk about it.

Father, in Jesus' name, I'm full of faith. I love marinating in Your word. I love getting my eyes and heart around each of these inspired phrases. You're the one that put them together. You're the one that told us to pray. You're the one that told us to pray for kings, all who are in high positions, and for all people. That's what we're praying for this morning. In Jesus name, let every knee bow.

High places, low places -- all over this planet from the north to the south to the east to the west -- we believe that every knee is going to bow and every tongue to confess. We pray for that to happen today.

We pray that You'll work by Your Spirit, that You'll work through the hosts of heaven, that You'll work through angels, that You'll move mightily and see that every knee bows, every tongue confesses, that You are Lord. That's what we're praying for. We're praying that the people of this earth will turn to You and be saved.

All the ends of the earth, that they'll see Jesus, that they'll know Jesus, that they'll give glory to Jesus. They'll say, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord."

We know that You're not coming back until we say that, and I pray for people to start to say it. We say it, right now, and we believe for a day when every knee is going to bow and every tongue is going to confess that You are Lord.

Hands will be lifted and they'll be saying, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord." I pray that You'll defeat all the works of the devil to stop that from happening. We're going to pray more about that in the future, but today, we're adding our prayers to that bowl of incense to see that this world believes in Jesus. That every drop of blood which You shed for it will be satisfied, and that You will see the result of Your work and You will be satisfied.

We know that You're sitting right now at the right hand of the Father, that You're expecting these things to happen, and we're praying for them to happen. We're seeking to do our part to preach the gospel, to live out the gospel, but we're also praying for Your will done, this will, on earth, as it is in heaven. In Jesus' name, amen.

Scott: Amen.

Steve: What's your response? Represent the people in Washington state and all over the planet.

Scott: I think this is one of those things that the devil will try to stop us any way he can from praying. You hear it so often. I don't mean this as a criticism to anybody. I'm as guilty as anybody on doing this. "Oh, I'll pray for you," and then you don't get around to doing it because you get distracted or whatever.

Then there's, "Oh, we've got the prayer team working on it," as if there's some special team of people that are the only ones allowed to add their prayers to the bowls of incense. It's like, "No, it all counts."

God is almighty, and even your little prayer, however little you think it is, it still matters when it's being prayed to the God of the universe. It's not the prayer that has the power, it's the God that we're praying to.

Steve: Amen. I'll give you a bizarre, encouraging illustration. Have you seen the movie Elf?

Scott: Yeah.

Steve: Do you remember how Santa couldn't get his sleigh up over Central Park because James Caan was not singing? He was just liping. His son says, "You're not even singing." He says, "Yes, I am." He says, "No, you're not."

So he begins singing, and that's when Santa's sleigh begins to rise and fly. That one song, that one prayer made the difference. I told you, it's a bizarre illustration, but I feel that way sometimes. I feel like we have no idea what it means for each of us to add our one prayer of faith to that bowl of incense. It might be our prayer that tips the balance. We don't know.

Steve: This is an honor that all the saints share and we can all participate in seeing every knee bow to Jesus. Like you said, the devil does everything he can from trying

to get us to not believe that we have some power, and we do. Every prayer of every saint is a part of that incense bowl.

Father, thank You for these wonderful words and this invitation. We don't want to be hearers of the word, we want to be hearers and doers, so help us to pray in Jesus name. Amen.

Scott: Amen.

Steve: One last point when you said that how we say, "I'll pray for you." When I was in seminary, I had a wonderful professor, Dr. Christy Wilson Jr. He told us, "When somebody asks me to pray for them, and I tell them that I will. I pray for them right at that moment, so that I fulfilled my commitment to them. Then if I think about them later, I will continue to pray for them, but I want to pray silently right at that moment." Sometimes when I'm with somebody, I'll say, 'Do you mind if we pray right now?' Just jump in and pray." I met some people at the conference who asked me to pray for them, and I prayed right then. This is the only way to do it, especially when you get older and forget stuff.

Scott: Amen. That's our show for this week, folks. Thanks for joining us for the Building Faith Families podcast with Steve Demme. If you have a question for the show, email Steve at spdemme@gmail.com. If you have a question for me, you can reach me at scott@unsocializedmedia.com. Thanks for joining us. Have a great week.