

The “Other” Prayer

Introduction: - Robert E. Lee

1. In all the forms of prayer, if there is one that is totally “other” centered...
2. In the prayer of suffering we leave behind our needs and wants with God.
3. We also voluntarily take into ourselves the griefs and sorrows of others in order to set them free.
4. It is here that we give our difficulties & trials, asking Him to use them **redemptively**

I. There is no greater image

A. Jesus on the cross showing suffering love that redeems...

“Father, forgive them... **Luke 23:34**

1. Jesus has invited us to share in His sufferings & participate w/ Him in the redemption of the world
2. Paul clearly understood this: in **Col 1:24**
3. We are invited to be partners w/ Jesus by sharing in the “fellowship of his sufferings. **Phil. 3:10**

B. Jesus’ suffering was a redemptive suffering--

1. There is a kind of suffering that has purpose and meaning.
 - a. Healing
 - b. Parents
Probably why rebellion of a teenager is so hard-- (sacrifices will be for nothing)
2. It’s hard to grasp the idea of redemptive suffering --
 - a. Difficulty with Jesus teaching about bearing our crosses (**Luke 14: 27**)
 - b. Jesus’ life shows us the compatibility of grace and suffering
 - c. Paul’s life shows it as well **Rom 8:18**
3. We stand with people in their sin and in their sorrows--
 - a. Our hearts are enlarged to receive and accept people
 - b. We begin to see that they and them are really we and us... **Eph 2:1-5**
 - c. Joy and not misery is the compelling energy behind redemptive suffering **Heb. 12:1-2**
 - d. This is why Peter’s words make sense to us- **1 Pet. 4:13**

II. The Value of the “Other” Prayer

A. It saves us from boasting-- **Augustine: “How deep in the deep are they who do not cry out of the deep”**

1. Jesus prayed the prayers of suffering **Heb. 5:7**
2. Paul did not boast, but lived the prayer of suffering... **Rom 8:35-39** (Will Penn-No Cross, no Crown)
3. Christian, it comes with the territory!
4. But do not miss the wonder of it all: The suffering is not for nothing! **John 16:33a/ 16:33b**

B. It becomes the starting point for ministry

1. Love sandpapers our hearts, we become exposed to the sufferings of others
2. What ministry is made of... recognizing the suffering in our world-- pray!/minister!
I would rather teach one man to pray than ten men to preach. (Charles Spurgeon)
4. The best way to love me and minister-- is to first pray for me!

III. So what do we do now?

A. It would be easier for us if we were dissecting the problem of evil. (which has no easy answer)

1. Ask “how do I enter into the suffering of others in a way that is redemptive and healing?”
2. The question of practice... what do we do?

B. We can do like Daniel-- **Jeremiah 29:10-14**

1. Daniel prays the prayer of suffering- **Dan. 9:18-20**
2. He ends his prayer with the right perspective... vv. 18-20

Conclusion:

A. This form of prayer, if there is one that is totally “other” centered, is the prayer of suffering.

1. We leave behind our needs and wants with God
2. We voluntarily take into ourselves the griefs and sorrows of others in order to set them free.
3. This is not meant to be borne by us, but rather we are to release them into the arms of the Father
4. This kind of prayer puts us in the middle of God’s continual workings of His justice and His mercy!
 - a. So we agonize, we cry out, we pray with sobs and tears.
 - c. We pray the “other” prayer

Prayer

Scot Poirier
Minister
Chelmsford Church of Christ
205 North St.
Chelmsford Ma.
978-256-8901