

Dangerous Prayers part 3



Over the last few weeks we have been on a journey and looked at prayers that Paul called “dangerous prayers” - firstly asking God to **make us ‘bold’** and secondly to ask **God “speak to me”**. Often when we pray we focus on ourselves and what makes us comfortable, our attitude to God can be: “if you love me you will make my day easy”. As humans we don’t like to be inconvenienced, but dangerous prayers can make us uncomfortable and challenge us.

1. *How do you normally pray - is it more about your own comfort or about knowing what God wants for you to do?*
2. *How do you feel about praying ‘dangerously’?*
3. *What makes these prayers ‘dangerous’?*

Our third ‘dangerous’ prayer is **“Lord, break my heart for what breaks yours.”** This is asking God to “... give me the heart that You want me to have, strip me of what makes me comfortable and burden me with Your burdens.”

Read Jeremiah 8:18 - 9:1

Jeremiah was known as ‘the weeping prophet’. He wept over the nation of Israel just as God wept over them. The Israelites had rejected God and gone their own way, taking advantage of the poor and were even sacrificing children to idols. In verse 19 Jeremiah asks “is the Lord no longer in Zion?”

In the New Living translation Jeremiah speaks in verse 18: “My grief is beyond healing; my heart is broken” ... and in verse 21 and 22: “I hurt with the hurt of my people. I mourn and am overcome with grief ... Is there no physician there? Why is there no healing for the wounds of my people?”

4. *How emotional can you get when praying?*
5. *Do you think that emotion should have a part in our prayer life?*

Put it another way, we are praying: “ Lord, what is important to You? ... because I want that to be important to me too.” This kind of prayer recognises that we exist to please God. Often our usual prayers seem to be imply that God exists to make us happy.

6. *Do you think that our church prayers and individual prayers reflect a willingness to know and do what God wants us to do? Or are they more about what we want God to do for us?*

7. *How do you feel about praying like this? Is it too uncomfortable for you?*

There are 2 things that God will give us if we pray like this:

Firstly, He will give us a cause bigger than ourselves. If God shows us what hurts him, we will need to act on it. We may have feelings that don't go away, a pain that doesn't go away until the pain of not doing it becomes greater than the pain of doing it. Like David when confronted with Goliath and Nehemiah when he heard of the broken walls and destroyed temple of Jerusalem. They needed to DO something because they were offended by what had happened to God's people and they desired strongly to do the right thing, in spite of the potential cost to themselves.

Secondly, our hearts will break for the lost.

In verse 20 the people cry out: "The harvest is finished, and the summer is gone, yet we are not saved!" And Jeremiah's response in chapter 9 verse 1: "I would weep day and night for the slain of my people." Jesus wept over Jerusalem (Luke 19) because he knew the destruction that would come. This kind of weeping is from a heart that is caring and strongly concerned for the troubles of the people - it is not weak or self-pitying.

8. How often do our hearts still break for those who don't know Jesus - or have we become so disconnected that we forget them?

9. When did you last pray for someone who is not saved - with conviction?

Will you dare to pray to have the compassion of God for his people? Remember, God WILL stir us with a desire and burden that you can't ignore and your heart will ache.

The greatest blessings come after we have been broken the most. What will happen if we pray like this and God breaks us - what is in store for us? What blessings could come from our brokenness?

"It is better to hurt for a purpose than live without one." Do you dare to ask God to break you, to know what hurts God and to hurt along with Him? If we are brave enough to pray dangerous prayers, to align ourselves with God and His purposes, then we will see miracles happen and He will give us strength to do what He desires.

Are we brave enough to pray dangerously?

These are the last study notes until September!

We hope you enjoy reading 'The Gospel according to a sitcom writer' and join in with some of the summer services.

Please pray for Paul and the family as they enjoy a break over August.

Please also pray for the many people who will be working in the building over the summer, for their safety and for them to experience the love of Jesus through the people they meet.

God bless, Penny