

C3 LEADERS' QUESTIONS

S2022-WEEK 4

2/20/22

Listen to, Learn about, and Love on one another

- Please share with your group something you performed or accomplished recently that benefited or will benefit someone else.

Getting Started with a Warm-Up:

- Please share with your group a recent change in the way you usually pray. Or in what way has prayer changed you?

Getting Down to Business:

The following questions are following this format: Scripture/Observation, Application, and Prayer (SOAP).

1) Scripture/Observation:

A) Read Psalm 50:7-12 (see passage and commentary below). How can we approach God in our prayers balancing our reverence of him and our relationship with him?
[Remember: He is God and he is our heavenly father]

7 “O my people, listen as I speak. Here are my charges against you, O Israel: I am God, your God! 8 I have no complaint about your sacrifices or the burnt offerings you constantly offer. 9 But I do not need the bulls from your barns or the goats from your pens. 10 For all the animals of the forest are mine, and I own the cattle on a thousand hills. 11 I know every bird on the mountains, and all the animals of the field are mine. 12 If I were hungry, I would not tell you, for all the world is mine and everything in it. (Ps. 50:7-12 NLT)

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Psalm 50:7-12

The Heartless Worshippers (vv. 7-15). “Hear, O my people” has a majestic ring to it (Deut. 4:1; 5:6; 6:3-4; 9:1; 20:3; 27:9). The Lord speaks first to those who are indeed His people, but their hearts are not in their worship. Their devotion is faithful but only routine. Like the church at Ephesus, they had “left thy first love” (Rev. 2:4) and were worshipping the Lord out of habit and not from the heart. Outwardly, they were doing what the Lord commanded and honoring the daily sacrifices (Ex. 29:38-42), but inwardly they lacked love and fellowship with God. They forgot that God wanted their hearts before He wanted their sacrifices (Isa. 1:11-15; Jer. 7:21-23; Hos. 6:6; 8:13; Amos 5:21-26; Mic. 6:6-8; Mark 12:28-34).

The sacrifices that the Lord commanded were indeed important to the spiritual life of the nation, but they did no good to the worshippers unless there was faith in the heart and a desire to honor the Lord. The animals they brought belonged to Him long before the worshippers ever saw them! The world and everything in it belong to Him (v. 12; 24:1; 89:11; Acts 17:24-25; 1 Cor. 10:26), and there is nothing we can give to God.

(Warren Wiersbe BE Bible Study Series, accessed 2/16/22,

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ps.+50%3A7-12&version=NLT>)

B) Read Numbers 23:19 (see passage and commentary below). Are you praying consistently and persistently with confidence hoping that God will change his mind?

“God is not a man, so he does not lie. He is not human, so he does not change his mind. Has he ever spoken and failed to act? Has he ever promised and not carried it through?” (Num. 23:19 NLT)

Numbers 23:19

1. Two things Balaam in this discourse informs Balak of, sorely to his grief and disappointment:—

(1.) That he had no reason to hope that he should ruin Israel.

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[1.] It would be to no purpose to attempt to ruin them, and he would deceive himself if he expected it, for three reasons:—

First, Because God is unchangeable: God is not a man that he should lie, Num. 23:19. Men change their minds, and therefore break their words; they lie, because they repent. But God does neither. He never changes his mind, and therefore never recalls his promise. Balaam had owned (Num. 23:8) that he could not alter God's counsel, and thence he infers here that God himself would not alter it; such is the imperfection of man, and such the perfection of God. It is impossible for God to lie, Heb. 6:18. And, when in scripture he is said to repent, it is not meant of any change of his mind (for he is in one mind, and who can turn him?) but only of the change of his way. This is a great truth, that with God there is no variableness nor shadow of turning. Now here, 1. He appeals to Balak himself concerning it: "Hath he said, and shall he not do it? Said it in his own purpose, and shall he not perform it in his providence, according to the counsel of his will? Hath he spoken in his word, in his promise, and shall he not make it good? Can we think otherwise of God than that he is unchangeably one with himself and true to his word? All his decrees are unalterable, and all his promises inviolable." (Matthew Henry's Commentary, accessed 2/16/22, <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Numbers+23&version=NLT>)

C) Read 2 Corinthians 12:7-10, with attention to verses 8 through 9 (see passage and commentary below). As you are praying to God do you find yourself seeking to change your perspective as opposed to your circumstance?

'7 even though I have received such wonderful revelations from God. So to keep me from becoming proud, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger from Satan to torment me and keep me from becoming proud. 8 Three different times I begged the Lord to take it away. 9 Each time he said, "My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness." So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me. 10 That's why I take pleasure in my weaknesses, and in the insults, hardships, persecutions, and troubles that I suffer for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong.' (2 Cor. 12:7-10 NLT)

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2 Corinthians 12:7-10

V 7–10: CONCEIT Paul has a God-given affliction, a 'thorn in the flesh', to prevent him from becoming conceited about the revelations he received from God. On three occasions, he unsuccessfully requested its removal, but was told by God that His grace was sufficient for him. Instead, he would experience God's strength being perfected in his weakness. (The Bible Panorama commentary, accessed 2/16/22,

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2%20Corinthians+12&version=NLT>)

2) Application:

A) Which passage from scripture has inspired you to change your approach and perspective when praying to God?

B) How has this series on prayer inspired you to align yourself with God's sovereignty or perspective?

C) What is the most helpful truth you have learned or have been reminded of during this series on prayer?

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3) Prayer: Thank God for his general and special revelation on how we should approach his presence with our prayers and requests.