

PRAYER A DIVINE NECESSITY

Watchman Nee:

(The following is an excerpt from an article by Evan Roberts. It originally appeared in *The Overcomer*, Vol. 4, published by The "Overcomer" Office, Leicester, England, February 1912. The paragraphs below reflect the order in Watchman Nee's publication.)

If God can do things without prayer in the church, why does He not carry them out in His own time instead of delays and hindrances?...And why does God lay a complaint against the church that she does not pray?...Why did Christ say, "Pray ye the Lord of the Harvest to send forth labourers?" Why did He not send them apart from prayer?

...There is value in the expression of prayer. What is the meaning of "Ye have not because ye ask not"? Is it God's unwillingness—i.e., you shall not "get" if you do not ask? Or is it that God sees the need, and He cannot meet the need, until the prayer is made?

The cycle of prayer moves in this wise: (1) God wants a thing done; (2) He moves the believer to pray that that thing might be done; (3) God does it in answer to that prayer....There is a thought abroad in the church: "Oh! God works so slowly." He does not. HE WORKS ACCORDING TO THE PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH, and according as there is co-operation with Him. Did God work very slowly in Egypt in delivering the bound nation? He did not. He worked for a prolonged season in getting the instrument ready in the wilderness—forty years....God's work is rapidly done when the instruments see to it that the divine conditions are fulfilled. There must be conformity to the laws of God before God can work; and according to the absolute conformity to God's will and laws there is a fulness of operation.