

**Devotional Thoughts :: give us tears as we pray****give us tears as we pray - posted by EAGLEFLYING (), on: 2016/12/19 21:41**

Lord, Give Us Tears As We Pray

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Â Â Â "Those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy. He who goes out weeping, carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with him" (Psa. 126:5-6).

Â Â Â Tears are precious in the sight of God when they are tears of longing, shed in intercession, or tears of joy as you praise God for answered prayer. The Son of God knows what it means to weep in prayer. The shortest verse in the Bible, "Jesus wept" (John 11:35), not only speaks volumes about the love and compassion of Jesus; it also explains the relation of tears to the intercession of Jesus. He who weeps with us wept for us as He wrestled with the powers of darkness in the Garden (Heb. 5:7).

Â Â Â Let us make very clear that we are not talking about tears of self-pity. Such tears can be basically carnal. They may give relief from tension, for "a good cry" often helps the mood of a discouraged or depressed person. But recurring tears of self-pity give no testimony to spiritual depth or power. We are here discussing the power of tears resulting from deep spiritual desire.

Â Â Â You should never be ashamed of tears shed in loving intercession. In fact, they testify to God of the depth of your identity with those for whom you intercede, the intensity of longing which underlies your intercession, and serve as a testimony of the Holy Spirit praying through you. Tears add a personal and private dimension of poignancy and power.

Â Â Â Such weeping intercession is much more likely to occur when you are alone with God. Normally, our private prayer can be more deep and intense than our public prayer. Tears are so intensely personal that the praying soul can weep more naturally and freely when only God is the witness to the tears. It is possible, however, to have a weeping spirit even when no literal tear runs down your cheek. God looks on your heart above all else (1 Sam. 16:7).

Â Â Â Your tears, like your words, are very important. However, God sees and knows you as you really are (2 Sam. 7:20; John 21:17). God knows the secret depths of your longing even better than you can express it. By deeply identifying with those for whom you pray, seek to deepen your heartcry to God. But do not seek to produce outward tears. That would be hypocritical. Welcome the tears when the Holy Spirit gives them, but seek only to feel in your innermost heart the depth of yearning which the Spirit feels.

When It Is a Time to Weep

Â Â Â At times God calls us to weep (Eccl. 3:4). This is His call to empathy, to vicarious intercessory identification with others. At such times, we must be sure to pray "us" prayers and not "them" prayers. We must identify with those in need, rather than condemn and accuse. Instead of praying, "Lord, forgive them for being so cold," we should pray, "Lord, forgive us as a church for being so cold. Help us to be more loving, help us to pray more, help us to be more effective for You."

Â Â Â For several reasons, I believe our current world situation is one that calls for weeping:

Â Â Â We should weep because humanity has forsaken God! The nations have forgotten God (Psa. 9:17). They do not want to retain the knowledge of God (Rom. 1:28). They show contempt for God's constant kindness, tolerance and patience (Rom. 2:4). Often they are hardened by God's judgments and their reaping of what they have sown (Rom. 2:5; Rev. 16:21). We should weep for our world: "Lord, forgive our wayward race!"

Â Â Â We should weep because sin is multiplying! Evil people are going from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived (2 Tim. 3:13). The sins listed in Second Timothy 3:1-5 are all too evident: loving self rather than loving God, boastfulness, pride, abusiveness, disobedience to parents, ungratefulness, unholiness, lovelessness, unforgiveness, slander, lack of self-control, brutality, despising the good, treachery, rashness, conceit, love of pleasure more than love of God.

Â Â Â All these combined with the gross sins of sexual perversion, rape and pornography, have hardened our national conscience. Crime has escalated. Terrorism, sadism, and calculated cruelty have reached unimaginable proportions. War is ever more terrible, and peace seems constantly precarious. Man seems on the verge of destroying himself. How can we but weep: "Lord, have mercy on our sinful race!"

Â Â Â We should weep because as a church we are too lifeless and powerless! We can thank God for the dedicated believers in many parts of the world, and for what He is doing through them. But the world has lost its respect for the Christian church in general for we do not bring glory to God as we should.

Â Â Â We have the "reputation of being alive," but all too often we are spiritually dead (Rev. 3:1). We lack the power that should witness to the world of spirituality and godliness (2 Tim. 3:5). There is a drifting or departure from sound

doctrine, and false cults are multiplying (2 Tim. 4:3-4). Too often our spiritual condition is typified by the Laodicean church; we do not realize how lukewarm, pitiful, spiritually impoverished, spiritually blind, and spiritually naked we appear to God (Rev. 3:17).

Â Â Â What a small percentage of good evangelical churches are really characterized by revival, by constant soul-winning by the majority of the membership, and a sacrificial involvement in missionary enterprise. We need to weep for ourselves: "Lord, revive us again!"

Â Â Â We should weep because we as God's people are spiritually asleep. "Do this, understanding the present time. The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber...The night is nearly over; the day is almost here" (Rom. 13:11-12). It is a shame that we have been sleeping in harvest (Prov. 10:5). We have largely lost the witnessing, soul-winning passion of the early church. We are upset by blatant sins, but fail to be disturbed by Christians who have never won a soul to Christ, by Christians whose prayer is mostly self-centered and who seldom weep for the world. Earth's largest and whitest harvest since Pentecost is here, and we live a life of "business as usual"; we tend to play church and to treat missions as a mere hobby instead of as the major task of the church. May God move us to tears: "Lord, awaken me, and stir me and my church again and again!"

Â Â Â We should weep because Christ's coming is so near and our task so incomplete! Among the conditions stated in the Scriptures as necessary to occur before our Lord returns, only one appears to be lacking: "This Gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come" (Matt. 24:14). The great assignment Christ gave to His assembled disciples as the representatives of the church of the ages was to reach the whole world. Probably one-fourth of all of the people in the world have never even heard the name of Jesus Christ. At least one-half of them would not be able to make an intelligent decision to receive Him as their personal Savior. Cold statistics may not move us, but we should remember that each number represents a real individual who will spend eternity in either heaven or hell.

Â Â Â Some years ago while I was serving as a seminary principal in India, my students and I spent a field term going from village to village with the Gospel message and Christian literature. We made it a practice to camp occasionally in the villages in order to witness and minister to the people.

Â Â Â One night at a village meeting, I read the Christmas story from Luke chapter 2. As I began to speak, an old villager seated on the ground interrupted me. "How long is it since that great day when God's Son was born?" I told him it had been approximately two thousand years. He pointed an accusative finger at me. "You say you have known for nearly two thousand years! Who has been hiding that Book all this time?"

Â Â Â How would you have answered him? If he were your brother, what kind of excuse would you have accepted for his not having been given a single chance to be saved? What will God accept as an adequate excuse for our not making this an earnest daily prayer burden?

Â Â Â The condition of our world should drive us to tears. One of my most precious memories is of my mother weeping day after day as she prayed for the salvation of comparatively unreached nations. "Lord, give us tears as we pray!"

#### Those Who Have Wept

Â Â Â Job testified, "Have I not wept for those in trouble? Has not my soul grieved for the poor?" (Job 30:25). Moses and others of the children of Israel wept over the sin of their people (Num. 25:6). David testified as to how he wept and fasted for God's people (Psa. 69:10). Isaiah wept for the need of his people (Isa. 16:9). God told King Josiah: "Because your heart was responsive and you humbled yourself before the Lord and because you tore your robes and wept in My presence, I have heard you, declares the Lord" (2 Kgs. 22:19).

Â Â Â When Ezra wept for his people, they began to weep and pray also (Ezra 10:1). Nehemiah "sat down and wept . . . for some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven" (Neh. 1:4).

Â Â Â Jeremiah was known as the weeping prophet because of the great prayer burden he carried for his people. "Since my people are crushed, I am crushed; I mourn and my head weeps like a spring of water and my eyes a fountain of tears! I would weep day and night for...my people" (Jer. 8:21; 9:1). "If you do not listen, I will weep in secret because of your pride; my eyes will weep bitterly, overflowing with tears" (13:17). "Let my eyes overflow with tears night and day without ceasing; for my virgin daughter and my people have suffered a grievous wound, a crushing blow" (14:17). "My eyes fail from weeping, I am in torment within, my heart is poured out on the ground because my people are destroyed" (Lam. 2:11). "Streams of tears flow from my eyes because my people are destroyed. My eyes will flow unceasingly, without relief, until the Lord looks down from heaven and sees. What I see brings grief to my soul" (3:48-51).

Â Â Â Paul, the great missionary apostle, was also known for his ministry of tears. "I wrote you out of great distress and anguish of heart and with many tears" (2 Cor. 2:4). "You know how I lived the whole time I was with you...I served the Lord with great humility and with tears" (Acts 20:18-19). "Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears" (20:31).

#### God Calls Us to Pray with Tears

Â Â Â God called through the prophet Joel, "Return to Me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning" (J

oel 2:12). He calls Christian leaders to pray with tears for their people: "Let the priests, who minister before the Lord, weep between the temple porch and the altar. Let them say, 'Spare Your people, O Lord' Why should they say among the peoples, 'Where is their God?' (2:17). God knows and records our tears: "List my tears on Your scroll 'are they not in Your record?" (Psa. 56:8). Our day is similar to that faced by Isaiah. "The Lord, the Lord Almighty, called you on that day to weep" (Isa. 22:12).

It will take more than tears to make prayer effective; but a burdened heart, a soul crying out to God, is the very essence of intercession. It is a spiritual crime to be calloused while the world goes to hell. It is spiritually criminal to pray casually, dry-eyed and burdenless, while a world is in sin and pain. It is Christ-like for your heart to weep with those who weep (Rom. 12:15). It is Christ-like for you to be so filled with loving compassion that you pray with tears for those broken, fettered, and destroyed by sin.

Prayer is not recreational or arbitrary for the Christian. Prayer is the very business of Christ's kingdom. Prayer is joining with God the brokenhearted Father, Christ the weeping High Priest, and the tender, interceding Holy Spirit by sharing their heartbeat and bearing with them the same burdens which they carry in their loving hearts.

To pray with tears is to make an eternal investment. To pray with tears is to sow your tears with eternal harvest. No tear shed in burdened intercession for others is ever forgotten by God, unrecorded, or in vain. Intercession watered with your tears is one of the most powerful forms of prayer known. As surely as God is in heaven, "Those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy. He who goes out weeping, carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with him" (Psa. 126:5-6).