

Raymond T. Richey Column

Prayer: The Need of the Hour

If there is one single thing needed more than any other single thing today, it is PRAYER. Not sermons on prayer, not lectures on prayer, not books on prayer, but PRAYER.

It is the greatest force known to man, for by prayer-things are brought to pass, things are "made to happen".

Jesus said to His disciples "Men ought always to pray and not to faint." In giving to Christians the privilege of prayer, He placed in our hands the most powerful weapon against the forces of evil. The great tragedy of this hour is that so few avail themselves of that weapon at all, and fewer use it effectively.

Our Lord said: "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do, because I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. IF YE SHALL ASK ANYTHING IN MY NAME, I WILL DO IT." John 14:12-14.

In a world gone mad over money, power and pleasure, the child of God wrings his hands helplessly and moans "signs of the last days—it's too bad, but what can I do?", when the one thing he not only *can* do, but is *commanded* to do is left undone.

"Men ought always to pray." We read of Elijah and his power with God and marvel at his faith and forget the one thing recorded in God's book regarding Elijah that is not only a challenge but a rebuke to us: "Elijah was a man subject to like passions as we are AND HE PRAYED EARNESTLY that it might not rain and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six

months. AND HE PRAYED AGAIN and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit."

If Elijah, a man 'subject to like passions as we are' could pray and close the heavens to natural rain, and pray again and open the heavens, what can you and I do, if empowered with the baptism of the Holy Spirit, we pray in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, asking God to open the windows of heaven and pour out on this poor old thirsty, sin-weary world a mighty deluge of the Heavenly rain of His Spirit, convicting men and women of sin, convicting Christians of prayer-lessness, of dearth of power, of dearth of faith—

MEN OUGHT ALWAYS TO PRAY!

Samuel said, ". . . , God forbid that I should SIN AGAINST THE LORD IN CEASING TO PRAY FOR YOU." 1 Sam. 12:23. This when the people had sinned. How many of God's own children are *sinning against the Lord* by ceasing to pray for those who have sinned, for those who have failed God, for those who have fallen by the wayside!

Paul said; "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit . . . for all saints; and for me that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly . . ." Ephesians 6:19. How many of God's own children are *sinning against the Lord* by failing to pray for God's preachers, ministers, teachers, leaders today.

Let us early in this New Year pledge ourselves anew to God that we will pray! Earnestly, fervently we will petition God for our brothers and sisters in Christ, for our fellow-laborers in the Gospel, for "those in authority" and for the lost!