

# **“OBTAINING HEAVEN’S ATTENTION”**

**Text:** II Chronicles 7:1-16

**Subject:** “Aligning Ourselves with the Purposes of God”

## **Introduction:**

**Question:** How many of you believe God’s purpose for you is good?

**Question:** How many of you want to align yourself with the purposes of God?

## **God says in Jeremiah 29:11**

“For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

## **God also says in I Peter 5:8**

“Be self-controlled and alert, for your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.”

## **In Other Words**

- ◆ On one hand, God wants to fulfill His purpose in you.
- ◆ On the other hand, the devil wants to fulfill his purpose in you.

## **And the one who wins -**

- ◆ Is determined by who we align ourselves with!

## **The Setting of our Text:**

- ◆ II Chronicles details the reign of Solomon
- ◆ In Chapter 1, Solomon sacrifices at Gibeon
- ◆ In Chapters 2-4, the building of Solomon’s Temple
- ◆ In Chapter 5, the glory of the Lord fills the house.

(V. 14) “So the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud, for the Glory of the Lord had filled the house of God.”

- ◆ In Chapter 6, Solomon prays at the temple dedication.
- ◆ In Chapter 7, the evening encounter between the Lord and Solomon.

(V. 12) “And the Lord appeared to Solomon by night, and said unto him, I have heard thy prayer.”

(V. 13) “But Solomon, if you experience a drought in the land, or if your land is being devoured.”

## **(I want you to know something)**

(V. 14) “If you will align yourself with Me, I’ll hear from heaven, forgive your sin, and heal your land.”

## **(And Solomon)**

- ◆ This is how to align yourself with God, and live under an open heaven.

## Three Requirements to Obtain Attention from Heaven

### I. Proper Attitude (Of Humility)

**Question:** What is the first thing listed by God to Solomon (in this process of an open heaven)?

**Answer:** The first responsibility on our part that is listed is humility.

#### **“Shall humble themselves.” (v. 14)**

**Question:** Is humbling ourselves before God that important?

**Answer:** “**Humble** yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time.” (I Peter 5:8)

“**Humble** yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up.” (James 4:10)

“Whosoever therefore shall **humble** himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 18:4)

“God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the **humble**.” (James 4:6)

**Question:** How does humility open the windows of heaven and align us with the purpose of God?

**Answer:** The answer is found in Luke 18:9-14

#### **It’s an Awesome Revelation**

- ◆ How a haughty spirit closes heaven
- ◆ How a proud spirit distances us from God
- ◆ How a Pharisee spirit is exposed in Scripture

#### **The Pharisee’s Failure**

(V. 11) “The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this Publican.”

(V. 12) “I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.”

**Question:** What are the symptoms of a proud heart?

#### 1. A Censorship Spirit

- ◆ He focuses on the extortioners, unjust, adulterers, other men and the Publican.
- ◆ He is bent on looking at (censoring) what everybody else is doing.

#### 2. A Critical Spirit

- ◆ He is bent on pointing out the faults of the Publican.
- ◆ He ruins his own spirit by pointing out the “appeared weakness” in someone else.

#### 3. A Comparison Spirit

- ◆ “I am not as other men” reveals that he is measuring himself by someone else.
- ◆ He is bent on “looking good” and appearing “better than” the Publican.

#### 4. A Congratulatory Spirit

- ◆ “I fast...I give” reveals how it is possible to congratulate your own importance.
- ◆ He somehow feels that God owes him an answer to prayer.

#### **The Publican’s Favor**

“And standing afar off, the Publican would not so much as lift up his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying; Go be merciful to me a sinner.” (V. 13)

**Question:** How did the Publican find an audience with God?

**Question:** Why did he experience an open heaven?

1. “He stood afar off” (which means)
  - ◆ He refused to be “familiar” in the Holy place.
  - ◆ He approached God in humility of heart.
  - ◆ He had no inflated view of his own importance.
2. “He smote his breast” (which means)
  - ◆ He was grieved over his own condition.
  - ◆ He was conscious of his own short comings.
3. He prayed, “God be merciful to me a sinner” (which means)
  - ◆ He refused to pretend to be anything.
  - ◆ He realized his great need for God.

**Question:** How can we find favor like the Publican?

**Answer:** By humbling ourselves before God.

- ◆ Taking the **low road**      ◆ Despising all **pretending**      ◆ Look only at **Jesus**
- ◆ Refusing to **compare**      ◆ Confess that we are **sinners**      ◆ Seek no **recognition**

#### II. Proper Action (Of Prayer)

“...And pray, and seek My face.” (V.14)

**Question:** What is prayer?

**Answer:** Prayer is communion of my soul with God.

- ◆ It is not to twist God’s arm to do my will on earth, but to align my heart with God to do **God’s will** on earth.
- ◆ Prayer is my spirit panting after **God**.
- ◆ Prayer is **taking hold** of the willingness of God
- ◆ Prayer is my need connecting with God’s **storehouse**.
- ◆ Prayer is the greatest **weapon** against the powers of darkness.
- ◆ Prayer is a fervent **mind** settled upon God.
- ◆ Prayer is the virtue that leaves me with poise and **calmness**.
- ◆ Prayer is my highest privilege and most treasured **joy**.
- ◆ Prayer reaches beyond time and deals with **eternity**.

- ◆ Prayer is **humility**, it says, “God I can’t make it without You.”
- ◆ Prayer is the **breath** of the soul; when I breathe, I live, when I cease to breathe, I die!

**(How can we pray with balance and effectiveness?)  
Five Types of Prayer**

1. **Worship** (Which is adoration and praise for who God is)  
“O come let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our maker; for He is our God and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand.” (Psalm 95:6, 7)
2. **Confession** (Which is repentance of any known sin)  
“I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will **confess** my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.” (Psalm 32:5)
3. **Thanksgiving** (Which is gratitude for the many blessings from God)  
“Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with **thanksgiving.**” (Colossians 4:2)
4. **Petition** (Which is praying for your own specific requests)  
“And if we know that God hears us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the **petitions** that we desired of Him.” (I John 5:15)
5. **Intercession** (Which is praying for others and the work of God)  
“I exhort therefore, that first of all, supplications, prayers, **intercessions** and giving of thanks be made for all.” (I Timothy 2:1)

**Two Prayer Secrets That Will Protect You from Strife, Contention and Defeat**

- ◆ If we prostrate ourselves before the Lord, we will never be prostrated before the enemy (and)
- ◆ If we learn to wrestle with God in secret, we will never have to lower ourselves to wrestle with men in public.

**III. Proper Abandonment (of Sin)**

“...And turn from their wicked ways.”

**Question:** What does it mean to turn from our wicked ways?

**Answer:** It means to turn from everything questionable and to deal thoroughly with sin.

**In Other Words**

- ◆ Obedience is the essential quality that prepares us to pray effectively.
- ◆ Obedience aligns us with the purposes of God.
- ◆ Obedience leads us to a clear conscience and the ability to pray in faith.
- ◆ Obedience will cause us to live holy, pure and separated unto God.

**It is the certificate of Christian character.**

“If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God or whether I speak of myself.” (John 7:17)

“If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” (John 14:23)

“If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land.” (Isaiah 1:19)

**Every growing Christian knows this:**

- ◆ Our progress in God will go no further than our obedience takes us!!!
- ◆ The measure we live in obedience to God will be the measure we have the manifestation of the Spirit’s power!!!

**Conclusion**

**Question:** What is the glorious result of aligning ourselves with God’s purpose?

**Answer:** We will have heaven’s attention.

“...Then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.”

**Fact:** We will have the attention of the Lord!

**Fact:** The Lord will have the attention of us!

**Fact:** And we will be able to walk hand in hand and enjoy communion and fellowship (uninterrupted with the Lord).

AMEN!  
Bill Kirk