

Mid-Week Message

April 29 2020

Christ is Risen

With a lot of time to myself I have been going through my library. I have been rereading many books that I have found inspiring and helpful. I cracked the binding of a book that was given to me as a gift a few years ago. I rediscovered the writings of O. Hallesby on prayer. This gentleman was Norwegian. He studied in a seminary but refused ordination and went on to be a prominent professor and speaker. His book on prayer was always kept on Roosevelt's desk in the White House during the war. I wanted to share with you what Hallesby wrote about praying with the name of Jesus.

"To pray in the name of Jesus is, in all likelihood, the deepest mystery in prayer. It is therefore exceedingly difficult for the Spirit of prayer to explain this to us. Furthermore, it is easier for us to forget this than anything else which the Spirit teaches us.

"The name of Jesus is the greatest mystery in Heaven and on Earth. In Heaven the mystery is known; on Earth it is unknown to most people. No one can fathom it fully.

"The longer a sinner stands in the Heavenly light which the Spirit of God has shed upon him.....the more he feels that God cannot have anything to do with anyone who is as impure and dishonest as he is.

"To him the Spirit of prayer says, "Come, in the name of Jesus, that name gives unholy men access to a Holy God". Hallesby wrote these lines in 1931.

To pray in the name of Jesus is to pray in the strength and power of that name. In the business world we call it branding. Naming a name often gives entrance and a recommendation. The power lies in the name and not in the person who repeats it. So lets take this another step . To enter into prayer in the name of Jesus is to come into the kingdom in a different nature. Hallesby said that it is so different that it is frightening and awe inspiring

if we dared to take time and meditate on what we are doing. How can we approach God, the Promiser who never fails? How can we expect to pray when we are such strangers to that kingdom of love and mercy and so ego-centered in our prayers? Do we dare link ourselves with the name of Jesus in the solitude of our prayers?

We not only dare to pray in the name; we are commanded to do so. That name of Jesus, embodies for us the grace to come in prayer, “to pour out our hearts like water”, before God, thanking God that we know this grace. We know the love of God in the name of Jesus that overcomes all our fears, even the fear of not being heard.

I thought Hallesby’s words were a nice continuation from last Sunday’s sermon. I realized that I have been praying the Jesus prayer for the last thirty years . Invoking my Lord’s name in my personal prayers has been with me that long. It has brought me much comfort in difficult times and assurance in the good times. I certainly do not understand it. It is very much a mystery as Hallesby says. I do not think the mind can fully comprehend the power or gravity of praying in the name. We are just encouraged and told to do so. God Bless and have a prayerful week, Pastor D