

***“Shall I hide from Abraham what I am doing, [18] since Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him??” GEN. 18:17-18 Part 1***

Questions:

- Does prayer begin with God or with man?
- Are your prayers really just bringing your plans before God and asking Him to bless them?
- Do your prayers ever represent your crawling out on a limb and then asking God not to cut it off?
- Do you sense God enlisting your partnership with Him in prayer to accomplish what He wants to do to have done?
- Can you say that God frequently enlists you as His partner, resulting in your praying for that?
- Are your prayers always based on a promise, or a warning, or a conviction of God's will?

*Gen 18:16 Then the men rose from there and looked toward Sodom, and Abraham went with them to send them on the way.*

*[17] And the LORD said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am doing, [18] since Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? [19] For I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the LORD, to do righteousness and justice, that the LORD may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him." [20] And the LORD said, "Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grave, [21] I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry against it that has come to Me; and if not, I will know."*

- First, we see that **prayer begins with the proposal of God: The Lord said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do?**

This marks a **very important fact** concerning prayer:

- **Prayer never begins with man; it begins with God!**
- **True prayer is never a man's plans which he brings to God for Him to bless. God is always the one who proposes.**
- **Prayer enters in when God then enlists the partnership of man in carrying out His program.**
- In other words, **unless we base our prayers on a promise, or a warning, or a conviction of God's will, we have no right to pray.**
- Some people feel that the **prayer of faith is crawling out on a limb and then begging God to keep someone from sawing it off**, but that is **not real prayer**, that is **presumption**. If God makes it clear that He wants you out on a limb, fine -- you will be perfectly safe there. If not, it is presumptuous of you to crawl out on a limb, expecting God to keep you there.
- The difference is simply this: **The prayer of faith is acting on a previous knowledge of what God wants. It is always founded upon a promise. It begins with a proposal which God makes, or a conviction He gives, or a warning He utters.**

- On the other hand, the **prayer of presumption** is **discovering something we would like to do, and then asking God to bless it**. That kind of thing is doomed at the outset. In fact, this is why so many "works of faith" fail, when they otherwise might have been wonderfully blessed of God.
- Now **when God proposes something**, as he does here in proposing to destroy the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, He always **enlists a man as His partner**. So we have here a picture of God talking to Himself; He says, "*Shall I hide from Abraham the thing I am about to do?*" and He begins to list to Himself the reasons **why He should include Abraham in His plan**. The reasons God lists might be called, "**the rights of friendship**." Here is where **Abraham earned the title** which is given to him in both the Old and the New Testament, "*...the friend of God*," (2 Chronicles 20:7, Isaiah 41:8, James. 2:23).

## **SUMMARY**

- **Is your prayer life a reflection of God's enlisting you as a partner with Him? Seldom or never? From time to time? Frequently?**
- **Do you claim His promises as a central part of your prayers?**

### ***Holy, Holy, Holy- London Orchestra Festival***

*1. Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!  
Early in the morning our song shall rise to thee.  
Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty,  
God in three persons, blessed Trinity!*

*2. Holy, holy, holy! All the saints adore thee,  
casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;  
cherubim and seraphim falling down before thee,  
which wert, and art, and evermore shalt be.*

*4. Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!  
All thy works shall praise thy name, in earth and sky and sea.  
Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty,  
God in three persons, blessed Trinity.  
AMEN!*

### ***Sweet Hour of Prayer – Sandy Patti***

*Sweet hour of prayer! sweet hour of prayer!  
That calls me from a world of care,  
And bids me at my Father's throne  
Make all my wants and wishes known.  
In seasons of distress and grief,  
My soul has often found relief,  
And oft escaped the tempter's snare,  
By thy return, sweet hour of prayer!*

### ***I Need Thee Every Hour***

*I need thee every hour, most gracious Lord;  
no tender voice like thine can peace afford.  
Refrain:  
I need thee, O I need thee;/every hour I need thee;  
O bless me now, my Savior, I come to thee.*

### ***Just as I am, Without one Plea***

*Just as I am, without one plea,  
Just as I am, without one plea,  
but that thy blood was shed for me,  
and that thou bidst me come to thee,  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.*

### ***Turn Your Eyes on Jesus***

*Turn your eyes upon Jesus,  
Look full in His wonderful face,  
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim,  
In the light of His glory and grace. (3X)*

