

'If My People'

General Assembly

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'Every crisis is a call to seek God'

With this pandemic, millions have cried out to God asking for protection and intervention. All these prayers are being heard in heaven.

Humanity is all eyes on God today, unfortunately, man is inconsistent. Many stories in the Bible tell us that God would give a wake-up call to His people, people would start to obey God's command, but they slowly go back to their old ways, forgetting God.

Will this crisis truly turn us back to God for good, or will it only last as long as the crisis is present?

Reading: Thus, Solomon finished the house of the Lord and the king's house. All that Solomon had planned to do in the house of the Lord and in his own house he successfully accomplished. Then the Lord appeared to Solomon in the night and said to him: "I have heard your prayer and have chosen this place for myself as a house of sacrifice. When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command the locusts to devour the land, or send pestilence among my people, **if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and forgive their sins and heal their land** (2 Chro. 7:11-14).

Four things God is telling us to do in times like these:

1. If they humble themselves.

- This deals with PRIDE. In the Old Testament, pride is translated as 'to swell up'.
- A man of pride thinks more of himself and his abilities. A proud person says, 'I don't need God, I call the shots in my life, nobody can tell me what to do'.
- Pride makes us resolve to function without the help of the Lord.
- Pride destroys man from the inside without man knowing it.
- God hates the proud that is why He called His people to humble themselves.
- God is calling us to put ourselves under Him.

Who is Lord?

- Who is dictating our choices, influencing our decisions, filling up our minds? Who is leading our journey? These are the questions that we should ask ourselves.
- To humble ourselves before the Lord, we are to recognize and acknowledge His lordship and headship in our lives. He is the one in control. He is the one telling us which way to go.
- We are admitting our weaknesses, incapacities; we cannot do this, but the Lord can.

- Humility allows us to put ourselves aside and finally obey God. It makes us realize that we are nothing when He found us, and yet He still died for us.
- For who makes you so superior? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not? (1 Cor. 4:7)
 - Human nature - we want to be on top where everybody looks up to us.
 - Everything we have comes from God.
 - We cannot accomplish anything without God.
- It is about time we realize that there is a God above us. If we want God to hear our prayers and finally get us out of this pandemic, we must deal with pride NOW.

2. If they pray. The context of prayer in this passage:

- Prayer is a way of being.** Being in the presence of God; being in an intimate relationship with Him. We can be in a prayer mode, but our hearts are far from God (Mt. 15:8).
- Prayer is relating.** It is a conversation with God; connecting with God. Pray not because you need something but because you need God. He wants us to continue relating with Him even after the struggle, even after we get an answer to our prayers.
- Prayer is a way of life.** It should be consistent. It is our lifeline to God. We cannot go about a single day without being in His presence.

3. If they seek my face. In Greek, seek means 'to reach/search out by any method'. Face means countenance. The face is the representation of who you are.

- When God says to seek my face, He means that you are to look toward His direction.
- We are to seek God whether we need something or we are blessed.
- Do not be caught up with what God can do or can give rather than just seeking Him because of who He is.
- Healing does not come to people who seek healing but to people who seek God.
- We have neglected to seek God because of our pursuits and desires. The Lord is often overshadowed by our human condition and fleshly desires.
- Stop seeking for relief that the world offers, for the things of this world is here today but will be gone tomorrow.
- The things that we seek here on earth have no guarantee and have no eternal benefit.
- We need to seek what is eternal, and that is God.
- Seeking God should be continuous, a conscious choice every day.
- The good thing about seeking God is that when we find Him then we are done searching. He is more than enough.
- One thing I ask from the Lord, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life (**Psalms 27:4**) as prayed by David during a painful situation in his life, but he thought about one thing, and that is God.
- Ask yourself: What is your topmost priority in life? Is it your job, hobbies, bank accounts, family, or is it the Lord?
- God is calling us to be in that place where He alone is our focus; He alone is our one desire.

- Everything is nothing without God, so do not waste time, energy, effort, passion, and other things that will not last, but seek the face of God for He is more than enough.
- He is the God who provides and is true to His promise.
- Nothing in life is more important to us than having God and all that He has to offer.

4. If they turn from their wicked ways. Turn in Greek is REPENT - change your mind; turn away from sin.

- We need to have a definite or deliberate breakaway from our sinful nature, and change our direction toward pleasing God.
- God does not want a list of promises, what God wants is for us to change our minds in regard to sin. When we do that then we also change the way we view God and life.
- Examine our lives; identify the things that do not please God; the habits that are against the Word of God; and then, we get rid of those from our lives.
- Before God can bless us, He must first change us.
- Jesus did not just come here on Earth to take our sins, die on the cross, and perform miracles, but also, to change us. He came to give us new life.
- Before God can bring us out of this pandemic, we need to turn from our wicked ways. We need to change our ways.

God's Promises:

- I. To hear our prayers from heaven
- II. Forgive our sins
- III. Heal our lands

God is true and faithful!

Note: Take notice of the important keyword – **IF**.

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