**SERMON OUTLINE**

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| **SERMON TITLE:** | How to Pray for America |
| **SERMON REFERENCE:** | Daniel 9:3-21 |
| **LWF SERMON NUMBER:** | #2482 |
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1. INTRODUCTION
   1. America is at a crossroads, and we dare not be careless or lazy.
      1. Frances Schaeffer once said that if we do not change, then one day we will wake up and find that the America we once knew will be gone.
   2. We need to pray for America.
      1. We need to pray a revival prayer.
   3. Our greatest resource is prayer, and our only hope is God.
   4. In our Scripture today, the prophet Daniel is praying to the Lord and asking Him to deliver the children of Israel.
      1. God’s people had been taken captive by the Babylonians.
         1. Babylon was the ancient name for modern-day Iraq.
      2. America has also been taken captive.
         1. America has been taken captive by the world, the flesh and the devil.
         2. We need a national, moral and spiritual revival.
            1. Without that, there is no hope.
   5. Only prayer can hold back the judgment of God.
   6. God is merciful; but if we do not pray, then we will get exactly what we deserve.
   7. In today’s message, we will focus on the kind of prayer that God answers.
2. pray with serious concentration (daniel 9:3)
   1. Many of our prayers have little effect.
      1. It’s not the arithmetic of our prayers; how many.
      2. It’s not the rhetoric of our prayers; how eloquent.
      3. It’s not the geometry of our prayers; how long.
      4. It’s not the emotion of our prayers; how sweet.
      5. It’s not the logic of our prayers; how argumentative.
      6. It is the faith and fervency of our prayers.
   2. The time has come that judgment must begin at the house of God.
      1. Churches need to repent.
      2. Churches across our country are only playing church.
         1. We pray without fasting.
         2. We witness without tears.
         3. We give without sacrifice.
         4. Is it any wonder that we sow without reaping?
   3. Prayer is the order of the day, but not just any prayer; we need to have prayer and fasting.
      1. Matthew 6:5
         1. Jesus tells us not to pray to be seen of men.
      2. Matthew 6:16
         1. Our Lord did not say, “If you fast;” He said, “When you fast.”
      3. The Bible is not against fellowships.
         1. God established His great feast days.
         2. John 21:12
      4. The Bible also calls us to fast.
   4. What is fasting?
      1. Fasting is not merely going without food.
      2. Fasting is going without food and certain pleasures for a spiritual purpose.
         1. It is not dieting or cutting down on our eating for our health’s sake.
      3. It is like a spiritual string tied around our finger, and every hunger pain reminds us to pray and seek God’s face.
      4. In the Bible, God links fasting with spiritual activities.
         1. Fasting and prayer
         2. Fasting and watching
         3. Fasting and worshipping
   5. Daniel’s prayer was a concentrated prayer; it was a prayer with fasting in sackcloth and ashes.
      1. Sackcloth and ashes speak of humility before God.
   6. The motivation for fasting is just as important as the fasting itself.
      1. It is possible to fast for the wrong reasons.
      2. There are certain things we need to be aware of when we fast.
         1. Self-centeredness
            1. We should not boast about the fact that we are fasting.
            2. Jesus warned about giving money, praying and fasting in public to be seen of men.

This does not mean that we cannot pray, fast or give money in public.

We are not to be like the Pharisee.

Luke 18:11-12

* + - 1. We are to avoid exhibitionism.
      2. We are to avoid legalism.
         1. We cannot buy a blessing through fasting.

Blessings are because of God’s grace and mercy.

* + 1. The devil has abused fasting, which is why we do not hear much about it in the modern church.
    2. Fasting is to be done unto the Lord.
       1. Zechariah 7:5
  1. What can fasting do?
     1. Fasting will strengthen your prayer life.
        1. Joel 2:12
        2. One of the ingredients of turning to God is fasting.
        3. Jeremiah 29:13
           1. Half-hearted praying is an abomination to God.
        4. When we fast, we’re letting Heaven know that we are serious and that we are seeking God with our whole heart.
     2. Fasting holds back judgment.
        1. America is ripe for judgment, but God will hold back the judgment we deserve if we fast and pray.
        2. Jonah 3:5
           1. Jonah preached judgment to Nineveh.
           2. But the people of Nineveh proclaimed a fast and humbled themselves before God.
           3. God then stayed the judgment that Nineveh was due.

Jonah 3:10

* + - * 1. Nineveh was the capital of Assyria and was ripe for judgment.

God had rather show mercy than judgment.

God wants to forgive.

* + - * 1. It is not too late for America.

Jeremiah 18:7-8

Exodus 32:14

Repentance means a change of mind.

The people of Israel deserved judgment, but God changed His mind.

Psalm 106:23

God may give us some people like Moses who will stand in the gap and pray that He will have mercy upon America.

We are in a cosmic battle, and our weapon is prayer.

* 1. How should we fast?
     1. Examine our motivations.
        1. Pray to God, and ask God about your fast.
        2. Isaiah 58:6
        3. Ask God what He would have you to do; prayerfully choose your fast.
     2. Avoid extremism.
        1. Don’t try to fast for a certain number of days if you’re not used to fasting.
           1. Set aside just one day, and find a day when your activities are light.
           2. Plan ahead.
           3. A one-day fast is a good beginning.
        2. If you’re sick, on medication, or pregnant, talk with your doctor before fasting.
        3. Don’t brag about fasting or be ashamed of the fact that you’re fasting.

1. pray with steadfast confidence (daniel 9:4)
   1. Our confidence is in Almighty God.
   2. Face your problem, but focus on God.
      1. Daniel set his face with sackcloth and ashes and fasting to pray.
         1. He did it with great confidence.
            1. Daniel 9:4
            2. Daniel knew that God was mighty, but He’s also full of mercy.
   3. Daniel 9:9
   4. The basis of our prayer is the greatness and mercy of God.
      1. It is impossible to see the greatness and mercies of God and not pray with confidence.
   5. The basis of Daniel’s prayer was the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.
      1. Daniel 9:20-21
         1. The “evening oblation” was when a sacrifice was made in the temple of God.
            1. The temple had been destroyed 70 years before Daniel prayed this prayer.
         2. The evening oblation was the same time that Jesus died upon the cross.
            1. Evening oblation was about 3:00 PM to 4:00 PM.

In the New Testament, it is called the “ninth hour.”

* + - 1. Daniel was looking backward to a sacrifice and also looking forward.
         1. When we pray today, we look backward to Calvary.
         2. Every Old Testament sacrifice was a picture and a prophecy of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is the blood of Jesus Christ, God’s Son, that cleanses us from all iniquity.

* 1. We must pray with confidence that God can save us as a nation.
     1. Have confidence that God can change your life.

1. pray with sincere confession (daniel 9:4-7)
   1. Sin brings judgment; confession brings forgiveness.
      1. We must confess.
   2. Daniel 9:20
      1. Daniel confessed both personal sin and national sin.
   3. Not one sin is recorded in the Bible against Daniel.
      1. This does not mean that Daniel never sinned.
         1. 1 John 1:8
      2. If we confess our sin, God is faithful and just to forgive our sin and to cleanse us.
         1. 1 John 1:9
      3. There is no sin that is beyond God’s forgiveness.
   4. In addition to praying for forgiveness for personal sin, Daniel prayed for forgiveness for national sin.
      1. These national sins were not sins that Daniel had committed.
      2. This was an “identification prayer”.
         1. Daniel identified himself with a nation.
            1. We can identify with America and pray for this nation.

The sinful, wicked people of a nation are not going to pray for themselves.

* 1. We need to make confession for America.
     1. We need to confess our greed.
        1. We are a materialistic nation.
     2. We need to ask God to forgive us for neglecting the poor.
        1. We have bread enough to spare, but we spend money on so many frivolous things.
        2. We have forgotten the poor and the needy.
     3. We need to confess our racism.
        1. Racism has divided our country.
     4. We need to repent of the sexual immorality of this nation.
     5. We need to repent of the killing of the unborn.
     6. We need to repent of the humanism that has invaded and pervaded our schools.
  2. We also need to make personal confession.
     1. This is no time for finger-pointing; it is time for repentance.
  3. America is a God-ordained nation, and no nation has ever had such a Christian beginning.
     1. But we are turning from our faith, and our freedoms are quickly receding.
     2. It is time for national confession and repentance.

1. Pray with spiritual concern (daniel 9:11)
   1. Daniel expressed two concerns when he prayed.
      1. The removal of guilt
         1. Daniel wanted guilt removed.
            1. Daniel 9:16
         2. America has so much, and we have done so little with it.
            1. Many nations know America only by our military might and materialism.
            2. America needs revival, and we need guilt removed.
      2. The restoration of glory
         1. Daniel 9:17, 19
         2. We need to pray for the glory of God.
         3. Most of us simply want to have revival so that we can return to our own ways once God gets us out of the difficulties we’re in.
            1. We should, instead, desire to see God’s glory spread over this land.

This is true revival; and it’s not for America’s sake but for the glory of God.

1. CONCLUSION
   1. It is prayer time in America.
   2. James 5:16
   3. If our hearts are not inclined to prayer, then we should ask God to change our hearts.
   4. The most patriotic thing we can do is not to say, “My country, right or wrong,” but to give our hearts to the Lord Jesus Christ.
      1. There is a deeper reason than patriotism for turning to the Lord Jesus.
         1. There is a death to die.
         2. There is a judgment to face.
         3. Soon, we will stand before Almighty God.
   5. Have you been saved?
   6. Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
   7. Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
      1. Romans 3:23
      2. Romans 10:9-10
      3. Romans 10:13
      4. Acts 16:31
      5. John 3:16