



Sermon Series Notes

“The Most Important Thing You Can Do For Someone In 2015” (Selected Scriptures)

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The prophet Ezekiel ministered at a time when the people of Israel were sinning greatly. Idolatry abounded, sexual immorality was commonplace, people were full of greed and self-indulgence, and they had “forgotten the Lord.” (Ezekiel 22:12b). Things were so bad that God was planning to pour out his wrath on the land.

Ezekiel 22:30 I looked for someone among them who would build up the wall and stand before me in the gap on behalf of the land so I would not have to destroy it, but I found no one.

What can be confusing about this verse is that Ezekiel was no doubt praying for the people. With that said, Ezekiel’s primary calling was as a prophet, a voice that confronted the people about their sin. Ezekiel 22:30 looks beyond the prophetic voice of Ezekiel for an intercessor, and among so many people, not one was found.

“Everyone needs someone to persistently and consistently pray for them.” (Cymbala, Storm, p.143)

Read Luke 13:1-8 The point of Jesus’ words here are that everyone is going to die, and it’s not so important how they die as the fact that they will die. And if they die having not repented, they will suffer eternal consequences.

My heart grieved for the 162 on board Air Asia flight 8501 that crashed this past Sunday. I especially grieved when I heard that 14 on board were children, and one was an infant.

15 year old Chiara Natasha lost her entire family in the tragedy. Chiara’s parents and two brothers were flying to Singapore to visit her for the holidays. She had just moved there in November to study at the Methodist Girls’ School; One mother lost her 13 year old son; Her son was with his aunt & uncle & their 3 year old daughter; Charly Gunawan, described as a jovial textile businessman in his late 40’s, was travelling with his wife, three children, his daughter’s fiancé, and the fiancé’s mother; The captain of the plane’s 22 year old daughter posted on social media: “Bring back my papa. Papa, please come home.” One pastor lost 41 members of his congregation who were on the flight.

Pic of man on PP: This man hold up a picture of his 22 year old daughter. She was a flight attendant; He said about his loss: “We accept God’s will. She belongs to the Almighty. We will see her again one day.” That sounds like a father who pad prayed regularly for his daughter.

The fig tree represents the people of Israel in the time of Jesus' first coming, The spiritual condition of the nation was much like that of Ezekiel's day, there was a need for repentance and national revival. It was so bad that they deserved to be "cut down," but the judgment was delayed as a result of an intercessor.

Intercessor: Attempt to help someone by persuading authorities.

As a result of this intercessor, the fruitless fig tree got a reprieve.

Reprieve: To halt or delay the punishment of somebody, especially when the punishment is death.

During the reprieve, fertilizer would be applied to the fig tree in an attempt to make it fruitful.

Illus: My grandmother putting horse manure on the fig tree behind the horse stable.

God's fertilizer:

- Financial troubles (Haggai 1:3-11)
- Physical infirmity (I Cor.11:30-32)
- Calamity/Personal Tragedy (Amos 4:6-11)
- Donkey problems (Numbers 22)

Psalm 119:67 Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I obey your word.

We can intercede for individuals, and we can intercede for groups of people.

We can intercede for people who need to repent, and we can intercede for those who have repented.

"Thirty minutes of Spirit-aided intercessory prayer is more effective than all the new programs and stylistic changes we are constantly tinkering with. Human ingenuity can't be compared to God's power." (Cymbala, Storm, pp.137-38)

Rom.1:9-10a; Eph.1:15-19; 6:18; I Thess.1:2; 3:10, 13; Philemon 4

Rom.15:30-32; II Cor.1:10-1; Eph.6:19-20; Col.4:2-4; I Thess.5:25; II Thess.3:1-2

Requirements for effective intercessory prayer:

- Discipline (I Peter 3:7; Col.4:12)
- Fervency (Luke 18:1-8; 11:5-10)
- Righteousness (James 5:16b; I Peter 3:7; Psalm 66:18)