

Pipeline of Power

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The Trans-Alaska Pipeline System was built to move oil from the northern slope of Alaska to the most northern port in Valdez. The pipeline is 800 miles long, crosses three mountain ranges and 800 rivers, and cost \$8 billion to build in the mid-1970's.

Some 20 billion barrels of oil have moved through the pipeline to supply the power needs of the world. One of the engineers responsible for designing the pipeline said it is the "best example in the world of getting a source of power from point A to point B."

While I agree that the Trans-Alaska pipeline is a great reminder of human ingenuity, I'd take issue with the statement that it's the best way to get power from one point to another. I'd argue, instead, that we disciples have the best means of power movement at our fingertips, and that would be prayer.

So often we underestimate the potential of prayer and that's a shame. We ought to pray with the understanding that prayer can change circumstances. Quite often in Scripture, our Lord sovereignly moved in coordination with His people's prayers.

Moses prayed and the overmatched Hebrews, under the leadership

of Joshua, defeated the Amalekites (Ex. 17.8-13).

Hezekiah prayed and God delivered His people by destroying 185,000 Assyrians just outside the city walls (2 Kg. 19.14-37).

The disciples prayed and God sent an angel to deliver Peter from a maximum security prison (Acts 12.1-11).

Prayer also has the potential to change you and me. Truthfully, prayer is more about changing the one who engages in it than anything else.

Someone likened prayer to a boat hook which might be used to pull a boat onto land. Like that boat hook, prayer is a tool to pull us closer to God. The more we pray, the clearer our sense of God's will becomes.

Finally, prayer also has the power to change Satan's influence in our culture. You don't need to look far these days to see the work of the enemy. He is a roaring lion looking for people to devour. His strategy is "to steal, to kill, and to destroy" as many people as he can.

However, Satan is on a leash and that leash is held by our Lord! When we pray, we access the spiritual ability to change the enemy's influence, which is why the devil trembles when he sees us on our knees before the Lord.

Now let me be clear about this: I don't think prayer itself is some sort of talisman that has the ability to change life. I do believe, however, that prayer connects us to God who has the power and goodness to change circumstances, to change us, and to change the influence of the devil.

This leads me to the obvious question of why we pray so little. In these uncertain days, let's not forget to look to the certainty of our God and pray for His glory to show clearly in the midst of the mayhem.

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