

In One Accord

Our One Cry Makes a Difference

By Byron Paulus

Indelibly etched in my memory are a number of agonizing cries. As a teenager, I will never forget, in particular, the heartbreaking cry of my mother as I watched two army officers approach the back door of our farmhouse to tell our family about the death of my older brother in Vietnam. That piercing cry still echoes in my heart.

Have you ever experienced a deep, heart-rending cry? Sometimes our cries are born out of anger—cries at or cries for or cries because of. . . .But there is one cry that goes beyond those kinds of cries.

It is a cry up. It's a vertical cry. It's the cry of Moses when he asked God to spare the nation of Israel from destruction. Or when the Israelites came together to grieve after the ark of God had been stolen and the nation had lost the glory of God.

It is reminiscent of the cry of Psalm 85, when broken hearts looked toward heaven and pleaded, "Will you not revive us again, that your people may rejoice in you?" (v. 6, esv). Or when Isaiah cried with prophetic passion, "Oh, that you would burst forth from the heavens and come down!" (Isa. 64:1, nlt).

A vertical cry is not always a corporate cry for a beleaguered nation, a hurting community, a lifeless church, or even a messed-up family. Sometimes it's a very personal cry erupting

from deep spiritual need. And that is where it must begin, in the circle of our own heart.

It is a cry like Allison's story that follows, and thousands more in our nation who cannot stop weeping over the condition of their own troubled soul:

God found me not only broken but completely shattered. I was a truly pathetic mess for years. Rape, thoughts of suicide, pot and alcohol abuse, and self-inflicting harm. I was ashamed of all that and more. I tried my hardest to deal with it on my own. How would my parents be able to face the church if their own daughter wasn't leaning on God for her problems? My father, a pastor, shouldn't have a daughter doing those things. I called upon God when He had about 33% of me. Now, I'm all His. I am slowly telling my parents, and without the passion I now have for God, I wouldn't be able to do anything. I can't do it alone. I never should have tried. – Allison

No matter how difficult or hopeless the situation, God is waiting for our cry, our one cry. And this one cry is the cry of the soul that longs for God to come in all His glory.

Seeking Fervently at All Costs

This kind of heartfelt, passionate cry, this anguish of soul, is what it means to seek God fervently. The late David Wilkerson emanated this type of cry when he poured out his heart in anguish over the condition of our nation. (Go to onecrybook.com for the book containing his powerful prayer.)

It is this kind of cry that Jesus poured forth when He wept over the city of Jerusalem. This anguish of heart and soul is also reflected in the intensity of the cry of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane (Luke 19:41; Heb. 5:7). As Jesus

experienced, seeking God earnestly may require great personal sacrifice.

But some things are so important that they are worth the cost. And once we see the value of the power and presence of God in our lives, as well as consider the alternatives without Him, I believe we will cry out to God like never before—for everything.

The cry of a God-seeker is not a morbid, defeated cry. It is a cry of hope. A cry that looks to heaven and changes the way we live on earth. A cry that resets priorities and rearranges schedules. A cry that will turn you from a prayer spectator into a prayer warrior. A cry that will take you to places you've never imagined, and demand sacrifices on a level you never anticipated.

But it will also cause you to love and live more like Christ than you ever thought possible. This cry, this one cry, is a turnaround moment. It's a moment when we admit that we don't have the answers. We don't have solutions. We can't fix what's broken in our world. Our one cry upward to God, borne in humility, is our ultimate admission of our need before Him.

And when we admit our need, when we humble ourselves before the Lord, He gives grace. And everything changes. Not because of us, but because of Him.

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