



"Prayer" (Ephesians 6:18-20)

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OUR EXAMPLE IN PRAYER

* Mark 1:35-36; Luke 5:15-16; Jesus made a choice to make prayer a priority in His life. Jesus prayer life was such a priority that His disciples asked Him to teach them how to pray (See Luke 11:1; Matt.6:9-10).

* Note: A Consistent prayer life keeps my mind on heaven while I live here on earth (see Col.3:1-4).

HINDRANCES TO PRAYER

* Busyness/Distraction

- Martha & Mary (Luke 10:38-42)

* Lack of self-control (discipline)

- I Peter 4: 7 The end of all things is near. Therefore be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can pray.

- Matt.26: 40 Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. "Could you men not keep watch with me for one hour?" he asked Peter.

41 "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak."

* Sin

- Psalm 66: 18 If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened; 19 but God has surely listened and heard my voice in prayer.

- King Saul when he would not repent

* Marriage Conflict

- I Peter 3: 7 Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

* A spirit that is not broken/humble

- Psalm 51: 16 You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings. 17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

BIBLICAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR PRAYER

* "On all occasions"

- I Thess.5: 17 pray continually (KJV = "Without ceasing")

- When times are bad (James 5:13; Phil.4:6-7)

- When times are good (Daniel 6:10)

* With all kinds of prayers and requests

- See I Tim.2:1

- Pray for those I love and who love me (III John 2 Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well).

- Pray for your enemies (Matt.5: 43 "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' 44 But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you).

* Praying "in the Spirit"

- See Jude 20; I Cor.14:14; Romans 8:26-28

- I always ask the Holy Spirit to guide me in my prayer

- See Rom.8:5; This is a conscious commitment to the will of God. If someone is praying "in the Spirit," they are praying with a conscious commitment to God's will ("Thy kingdom come, they will be done"; "Let this cup pass from me, yet not my will, yours be done.").

- Praying in the Spirit is praying for God's will to be done on earth, not my will done in heaven.

- I John 5: 14 This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. 15 And if we know that he hears us--whatever we ask--we know that we have what we asked of him.

* Psalm 95: 6 Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker...

* I Tim.2: 8 I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer, without anger or disputing.

* Matthew 14: 19 And he directed the people to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and **looking up to heaven**, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people.

PRAYER & THE EARLY CHURCH

* Jesus' instructions before His ascension (Acts 1:4-5, 12-14); Jesus appeared to the disciples over a period of forty days after His resurrection (Acts 1:3), and the Holy Spirit came upon them on the day of Pentecost (50 days after Passover). So we can conclude that the disciples' prayer meetings lasted ten days.

* Acts 2:42; 4:23-31; 12:1-5; 13:1-3; 16:16-34

PRAYER & CCSP

* Pray for me!

- Paul asks them to pray that he may be courageous; In Col.4:4 he asks for prayer that he may share the message clearly.

- Courage & clarity. Would you pray that for me?

* Report on Houston 6:4 fellowship

- Matthew 21: 12 Jesus entered the temple area and drove out all who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves. 13 "It is written," he said to them, "My house will be called a house of prayer,' but you are making it a 'den of robbers.'"

- My commitment to make prayer an integral part of this church

* Once per month elders prayer meetings.

* The week of prayer we will pray in small groups, but we will also meet at the church building every morning for prayer.

* Once we complete our study of Isaiah, Wed pm prayer meetings; worship, teaching as the Spirit leads, end time for child care (8:15 pm?), but the prayer meeting may go on after this...perhaps Wed prayer meetings will continue indefinitely, and we either move it to Tuesday or Thursday pm, or move mid week teaching service to Tuesday or Thursday pm. We'll see how the Lord leads...