



THE GOSPEL OF

**MARK**



## Sermon Series Notes

### “A Biblical Guide For Powerful Prayer” (Mark 1:21-45)

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The Lord drew me especially to verses 35-37, and from these passages, we have paused to focus our attention on prayer. It was the key to Jesus’ life and ministry. There was something about Jesus’ prayer life that caused his disciples to ask him to teach them to pray. They had often seen and heard the prayers of the Jewish leaders of their day, but there was something about Jesus’ praying that was different. In response to the disciples’ request, Jesus gave them a model for prayer, we call it “The Lord’s Prayer.” Before we’re done today we’ll take a fresh look at that prayer and what we learn from it.

The apostles became devoted to prayer, and they led the early church in being devoted to prayer.

- Acts 1:14 They all joined constantly together in prayer...
- Acts 2:42 they devoted themselves to the apostles teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer.
- See Acts 4:23-31; 8:59-60; Acts 16; Col.4:2

The OT gives us tremendous examples of the power available to us through this thing called prayer. We noted some of those in last weekend’s message.

Anybody can have a powerful/meaningful prayer life

- James 5:17-18 Elijah was a man just like us. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years. Again he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops.
- Apostles unschooled, ordinary men

As we continue our focus on prayer this weekend, I want to get into some of the very practical aspects of prayer, and hopefully this will help us to take the next step(s) to develop & maintain a powerful personal prayer life, and also help move our church fellowship toward becoming a praying church, and not simply a church that prays.

Prayer is LEARNED. “Teach us to pray.”

A BIBLICAL PATTERN FOR PRAYER

- Jesus’ answer when the disciples asked Him to teach them to pray, we call it “The Lord’s Prayer.” Daniel Henderson gives us a great way to learn what Jesus intends to teach us from this prayer in his book “Transforming Prayer.”
- The 4/4 pattern of prayer (based on music’s most basic beat)
  - Upward Stroke = Reverence
    - “Our Father in heaven, holy is your name.”

- “If our prayers are not focused on God, we are guilty of idolatry, as we are putting someone (or something) else in God’s place.” (Transforming Prayer, p.165).
- The upward stroke starts us at seeking God’s face rather than his hand.
- “Prayer is not primarily a means of getting something done, it is a concern for the glory of God.” (Redpath, p.18).
- Downward Stroke = Response
  - “May your kingdom come, may your will be done, on earth as it’s done in heaven.”
  - “...yielding to the control of the Holy Spirit and recommitting ourselves to God’s kingdom purposes....pledged obedience to the will and Word of God, desiring the accomplishment of His purposes in our lives.” (Transforming Prayer, p.166).
  - John 7:28 I am not here on my own authority
  - John 8:28...I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me.
  - John 8:42; 12:49; 14:10
  - “The object of all true praying...is not to bend the will of God to mine, but to get my will in line with His.” (Alan Redpath, Victorious Praying, p.18).
  - Jesus = Yet not my will, yours be done
  - “The deepest need of an assembly of God’s people as they worship is not that God would touch their bodies, but that He would break into their hearts by His Holy Spirit.” (Redpath, p.18).
  - “Our prayer lists can easily become so saturated with our desires for ease, comfort, convenience, and accomplishment, that the goal of God’s glory becomes obscured. Our human tendency to avoid pain, loss, and difficulty can dilute our passion for God’s glory. When our goals and God’s glory are in conflict, it can be hard for our hearts to choose.” (Transforming Prayer, Henderson, p.93).
- Inward Stroke = Requests
  - “Give us this day our daily bread...”
  - “...we do not really know what to pray for until we have worshipped well and surrendered completely.” (Transforming Prayer, p.166).
  - Praying about “daily bread” is more than hoping we can scrape some funds together to buy a fresh bagel at Panera Bread. This idea represents all that we need to sustain life as we serve the Lord.
  - Virtually every prayer list includes a resource or relationship concern.
- Outward Stroke = Readiness
  - “Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil...”
  - “...recognize our own inability to overcome the temptations and snares of daily life.” (Transforming Prayer, p.168).

- Desire
  - Psalm 42:2 My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. Where can I go and meet with God?
  - Peter Lord – “Fellowship with my God and intimacy with my wife.”
- Discipline
  - Martha vv. Mary (Luke 10:38-42)
  - Circumcised heart – cutting away the good but unnecessary things that crowd out God.
  - I Peter 4:7...be clear minded and **self-controlled** so that you can pray.
  - Matthew 26:41 Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.
  - At Western Wall in Israel, Orthodox Jew bowing up & down...to stay alert
  - Col.4:12 Epaphras...is always wrestling in prayer for you....
  - Try journaling
  - Take prayer walks
- A Date; Must schedule time
  - The Jews had set times for prayer; Daniel prayed three times a day.
  - Priority should be first thing in the am
    - Mark 1:35 Very early in the morning, while it was still dark...
    - Psalm 5:3 In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.
  - Choose as quiet and secluded place as possible
    - Luke 5:16 But Jesus often withdrew to **lonely places** and prayed.
    - The desert is where the air is cleanest and the dew falls freshest...
    - Wendy not allowing children downstairs until her devotional time was done.
    - If I do not learn to hear God in the quiet it will be difficult to impossible to hear Him in the noise.
    - A private prayer life will lead to an attitude of prayer throughout the day.
      - I Thess.5:17 Pray continually.
- A Clear Mind
  - I Peter 4:7...be **clear minded** and self-controlled so that you can pray.
  - Acts 24:16 I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man.
  - Psalm 66:18-20 If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened; but God has listened and heard my voice in prayer. Praise be to God, who has not rejected my prayer or withheld his love from me.
  - I Peter 3:7 Husbands...be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect...so that nothing will hinder your prayers.
  - I John 3:21-24; 5:14-15
  - Virtually every prayer list includes a resource or relationship concern.
  - Last Wed pm message, King Saul verses David
- The Word of God

- Learn to pray from the Scriptures
  - 4/4 pattern
  - Col.4:12...Epaphras...that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured.
  - Eph.1:17-18
- Scripture fed, Spirit led, worship based prayer
- Express yourself biblically (lifting hands, bowing, etc.)
- Praying with the church
  - See Transforming Prayer, pp.187-193

## CONCLUSION

- Transforming Prayer, forward by Jim Cymbala
- May the Lord make us people of prayer, and our church into a praying church, in Jesus' name. Amen.