

Revivals And Church History :: Thoughts on Prayer

Thoughts on Prayer - posted by crsschk (), on: 2005/2/9 10:39

Think it's fair to post this here under this heading if we are ever going to get into agreement with the Lords will.

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From another thread spawned what I thought would be an easy answer to a question about how long we spend in more 'focused' prayer. Instead it turned into practically a book as this author hasn't the foggiest idea of what the word 'brevity' means.

So, thought I would detach it from there and move into a different area, namely "Thoughts on Prayer".

Here was the original question;

Quote:

-----IÂ'm not trying to steal your treasure.

I do not want you to boast but humbly share with me an honest time in a day that you pray ON AVERAGE.

MIND PRAYING DOES NOT COUNT.

PRAYING WITH FRIENDS OR A GROUP DOES NOT COUNT.

PRAYING WHEN YOUÂ'RE DRIVING DOES NOT COUNT.

I MEAN ACCTUAL VERBAL OR WAITING ON THE LORD KINDA OF PRIVATE PRAYER (ALONE TIME).

So how long in a day on average do you pray?

That's the Question.

WhatÂ's your answer?

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Liked this response;

Quote:

-----I think the best way to describe my prayer life is to look at it as a seamless flow or at least I desire it to be such.

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Like breathing.

One of the most significant books that rearranged how I looked at prayer is "Practicing The Presence of God" By Brother Lawrence

In it he describes how he came to 'practice' and keep his thoughts toward God at all times. Surely it's imperfect but it is a mazing in that over time you will begin to see everything in the light of eternal values. See how much wasted energy is o n temporal things. What does this matter? you will find yourself asking, more so, what does this matter to Thee, Lord?

It is also I believe what Paul was after when he said "*pray without ceasing*".

If there is anything I would desire it would be, to echo the words "make my life a prayer" I think it was Ravenhill who utter ed that. So that it is not something we do, but something we *are*. One of the problems that I keep seeing is the strange d ichotomy of separating or compartmentalizing ourselves into sub-sections and where the words of one of own here com es into play; "There is just you", your "will" is not separate from your spirit anymore than your working day from your time alone with the Lord. Certainly there is times of more *emphasis* and concentration by being alone on your knees or your f ace (preferred personally, it's just... lower :) ) Nor are we anymore away doing tasks from Gods Presence than you are i n your prayer closet. If the Holy Spirit lives in us where can we go that He is not present? If anything we can grieve Him ' away' by sheer neglect.

If you have ever had the most unpleasant experience of sensing the lifting of Gods hand from you...

Hard to express, but what we may fail to recognize is that the subtle reality of God's presence is everywhere. Again to ec

ho Paul's words, *"Rom 1:20 For since the creation of the world his invisible attributes-his eternal power and divine nature have been understood and observed by what he made, so that people are without excuse."*

For those of us who believe and walk in the spirit we have that 'knowing' that defies explanation and to sense that because of either sin or in a time of testing that 'felt' presence is lifted....

Devastating.

Went through a time of this last summer. I would rather have my eye's plucked out than to feel that sense of abandonment ever again. The idea that sometimes gets misconstrued about hell being "eternal separation" from the love of God that that is somehow a misnomer, because there is weeping and gnashing of teeth, that it is much worse than 'just' separation... Well, I disagree. It is precisely that which causes the gnashing and weeping and it ought to be a horror to fear because if and when the Lord removes the Holy Spirit's influence, that which even is so called 'natural', His *"invisible attributes-his eternal power and divine nature"* are pulled from this earth, all hell will break out as was prophesied. If and when meaning that as individuals ultimately at the Judgment and when meaning the whole of Revelation, the Bowl judgments, wishing that the rocks would fall on them, wishing for death and yet it does not come, and yet still what else could explain that; *"and they blasphemed the name of God who has power over these plagues; and they did not repent and give Him glory."*

A little off the intent here, sorry for the digression but during that time of what I now believe was a testing and you can bet I brought to mind every sin, every misdeed, all the rationalizing, was it a torment of demonic activity? Perhaps in part, but it felt like Job must have felt internally, though only in the smallest degree, certainly nowhere near what happened to him both physically and materially, the tongue lashing of his 'friends' to top it all off. It was a test of all that I believed, all the doubts, the circumstances at the time were in part of financial ruin, how will I feed my family today? All the promises I knew of scripture, everything was being brought to bear down in reality, the rubber meeting the road and feeling like I was the pavement. And the truth of "though He slay me" would not leave. It was anguish and travail and much tears, points where I couldn't even work but would just prostrate myself and plead for deliverance from the agony of it all.

Would drive around screaming out loud, Why? What is happening? Where are you Lord? Why have you forsaken me? It was the smallest taste of maybe what I could imagine of what the Lord must have felt on that cross, separated from God. I will never, ever, forget it. Where I was, how long this went on (days on end in varying intensity, but over the span of a couple of weeks) It is as vivid in my mind as if it was yesterday.

Something that came out of all of this was a wondering of what might happen if someone was to get up in front of a crowd and pray instead of "Lord presence thyself" that the Lord *lift* His Presence?

The point in all of this was that I learned what was meant in Act 17

"God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;

Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;

And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;

That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us:

For in him we live, and move, and have our being;"

Another illustration was of how the Sheppard's would sometimes break the leg of a wayward sheep in a twofold purpose, one, because it made it difficult to run away and had to be carried and secondly that when that leg healed that sheep never left the side of the Shepperd. What seemed cruel was the best thing that could have happened.

As it relates personally, I didn't think I was running away at all, was always praying and seeking the Lord, filling my mind with His word and listening to inspiring and challenging messages. But I was missing something and what I think it was at that time was that I didn't know what it was that I needed and that for all that I was 'doing' I still had to die to myself. To whatever little scheme I had cooked up in my mind, good as the intent of it might have been. It was still not *"the Lords will I be done on earth as it is in Heaven"*.

That was the lesson that had to be learned and what I am trying desperately in this overabundance of words to convey. Sorry, still haven't figured out how to shorten the verbiage.

Maybe a button got pushed when it was stated that

Quote:

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It all counts, in fact would say that if it is only the opposite that we 'do', something is terribly amiss as we have now broke n down what our lives in Christ are all about. And frankly find that is what is terribly wrong with much of our modern day appeal in giving the gospel. That it is a 'part', will let the Doctor Tozer spell it out better than I could;

CHRIST IS NOT DIVIDED

Jesus answered, If a man love me, he will keep my words. (John 14:23)

Much of our full gospel literature and much of our preaching tend to perpetuate a misunderstanding of what the Bible sa ys about obedience and Christian discipleship.

I think the following is a fair statement of what I was taught in my early Christian experience and before I began to pray a nd study and anguish over the whole matter:

Â"We are saved by accepting Christ as our Savior.Â"

Â"We are sanctified by accepting Christ as our Lord.Â"

Â"We may do the first without doing the second.Â"

What a tragedy that in our day we often hear the gospel appeal made in this way:

Â"Come to Jesus! You do not have to obey anyone. You do not have to give up anything. Just come to Him and believe in Him as Savior!Â"

The fact that we hear this everywhere does not make it right! To urge men and women to believe in a divided Christ is b ad teachingÂ—for no one can receive a half or a third or a quarter of the divine Person of Christ!

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Now of course to get at what the intent of the question was. I knew what you meant brother and sorry for the whole spilli ng forth here, just felt compelled to preach? :-?

Absolutely, the time spent alone in quiet reflection, worship and prayer is an *emphasis* on what we should be all the time just in a more concentrated and focused form. Do you/we pray while reading scripture as well? I hope so. What I am find ing more and more is that often times just to literally do nothing but to sit at the Lords feet as it were and be silent, to list en, to let "the Spirit himself intercedes with groans too deep for words,..." even as the names and faces, the people and country's, the persecuted and a million other intercessory thoughts come through or are subdued as the stillness takes c ontrol or the Lord brings them to bear. But in all things it is that we come into agreement with what the Lords thoughts ar e on the matter. If that which I would like to see come to pass doesn't square with the Lords intent, then I am the one wit h the problem and the heart needs to be brought under His submission and gladly I might add.

Something that I had heard somewhere along the line and makes even more sense now is in what the Lord meant when He said "Truly, truly I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I am doing. He will do even greater works than these because I am going to the Father.

I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.
If you ask me for anything in my name, I will do it."

"If you love me, keep my commandments. I will ask the Father to give you another Helper, to be with you always. He is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, for it neither sees him nor recognizes him. But you recognize him, for he abides with you and will be in you." Joh 14:12-17

As well as,

"On that day, you will not ask me for anything. Truly, truly I tell you, whatever you ask the Father for in my name, he will give it to you." Joh 16:23

The only way this could ever be true is if we have *"the mind of Christ"* How much of our prayer is on what we want, not what the Lord may want. How can the desires of our heart be brought to bear if they are still focused on the wrong agenda, ours. There is so much truth in and where we get off track by missing the extent of the words *"so that the Father may be glorified in the Son"*

Let us pray...

Re: Thoughts on Prayer - posted by AgesofWar (), on: 2005/2/9 11:20

Amen

Re: Thoughts on Prayer - posted by Spitfire, on: 2005/2/9 16:19

Quote:

-----For in him we live, and move, and have our being;"

Isn't this what it's supposed to come to? I go to sleep praying. I wake up praying. I pray all throughout the day. I'm finding I can't move without him. Nothing else I desire compares with Him. My gaze is ever toward him. I couldn't say how much I "pray". It wouldn't matter if I had camel's knees if I hadn't found myself in Christ. Love, Dian.