

Prayer is Your Place of Safety
1.5.2020

Introduction

Luke 21:34-36 (Passion Translation)

Be careful that you never allow your hearts to grow cold. Remain passionate and free from anxiety and the worries of this life. Then you will not be caught off guard by what happens. Don't let me come and find you drunk or careless in living like everyone else. (35) For that day will come as a shocking surprise to all, like a downpour that drenches everyone, catching many unaware and un-prepared. (36) Keep a constant watch over your soul, and pray for the courage and grace to prevail over these things that are destined to occur and that you will stand before the presence of the Son of Man with a clear conscience."

The closer we get to the coming of Jesus, the more important your prayer life will be.

The world is becoming a very dangerous place.

For the next few Sundays, I want to talk about prayer, and how a vibrant prayer life can help you navigate through whatever comes in 2020.

Quotes:

Samuel Chadwick:

The one concern of the devil is to keep Christians from praying. Satan fears nothing from prayerless studies, teaching, and preaching. He laughs at our toil, mocks at our wisdom, but trembles when we pray.

D.L. Moody

It is more important to learn to pray than to gain a college education.

D.L. Moody:

Those who have left the deepest impression on this sin-cursed earth have been men and women of prayer.

E.M. Bounds:

How we estimate and place prayer is how we estimate and place God. To give prayer a secondary place is to make God secondary in life's affairs.

1. Jesus lived out of His prayer life.

Reading through the gospels, you get the sense that Jesus lived out of His life of prayer. He DID NOTHING without first of all praying.

If Jesus saw the need to live out of His times of prayer, then how much more do we need to do the same!

Mark 1:35 (Passion Translation)

The next morning, Jesus got up long before daylight, left the house while it was dark, and made His way to a secluded place to give Himself to prayer.

Matthew 14:23-27 (Passion Translation)

After the crowds dispersed, Jesus went up into the hills to pray. And as night fell he was there praying alone with God. (24) But the disciples, who were now in the middle of the lake, ran into trouble, for their boat was tossed about by the high winds and heavy seas. (25) At about four o'clock in the morning, Jesus came to them, walking on the waves! (26) When the disciples saw Him walking on top of the water, they were terrified and screamed, "A ghost!" (27) Then Jesus said, "Be brave and don't be afraid. I am here!"

Mark 6:46 (ESV)

And after He had taken leave of them, He went up on the mountain to pray.

Luke 6:12 (ESV)

In these days He went out to the mountain to pray, and all night He continued in prayer to God.

Luke 9:28 (ESV)

Now about eight days after these sayings He took with Him Peter and John and James and went up on the mountain to pray.

Luke 11:1 (ESV)

Now Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when He finished, one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught His disciples."

Luke 5:15-16 (ESV)

But now even more the report about Him went abroad, and great crowds gathered to hear Him and to be healed of their infirmities. (16) But He would withdraw to desolate places and pray.

Luke 22:39 (Passion Translation)

Jesus left the upper room with His disciples and, as was His habit, went to the Mount of Olives, His place of secret prayer.

John 6:15 (ESV)

Perceiving then that they were about to come and take Him by force to make Him king, Jesus withdrew again to the mountain by Himself.

2. If Jesus found it necessary to pray frequently about His life and ministry, how much more do we need to pray!

Hebrews 5:7 - ESV

In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence.

Hebrews 4:14 -16 - NLT

So then, since we have a great High Priest who has entered heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to what we believe. (15) This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses, for He faced all of the same testings we do, yet He did not sin. (16) So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most.

Hebrews 4:16 - CEV

So whenever we are in need, we should come bravely before the throne of our merciful God. There we will be treated with undeserved kindness, and we will find help.

Hebrews 4:16 - AMP

Let us then fearlessly and confidently and boldly draw near to the throne of grace (the throne of God's unmerited favor to us sinners), that we may receive mercy [for our failures] and find grace to help in good time for every need [appropriate help and well-timed help, coming just when we need it].

3. Life would be less stressful if we would take time to pray about everything that bothers us.

We often allow the busyness of life to crowd out our times of prayer!

Listen to this quote from R. A. Torrey's *How To Pray*:

Some men are so busy that they find no time for prayer. Apparently the busier Christ's life was, the more He prayed. Sometimes He had no time to eat (Mark 3:20), sometimes He had no time for needed rest and sleep (Mark 6:31, 33, 46), but He always took time to pray; and the more the work crowded the more He prayed.

Many a mighty man of God has learned this secret from Christ, and when the work has crowded more than usual they have set an unusual amount of time apart for prayer. Other men of God, once mighty, have lost their power because they did not learn this secret, and allowed increasing work to crowd out prayer.

I begin each day with some alone time in prayer, and I usually pray about everything ahead of time.

4. Jesus' prayer life brought Him through His most challenging time of life - the crucifixion and His being made our sin.

Notice another quote from R. A. Torrey's *How to Pray*:

As He drew nearer and nearer to the cross, and realized that upon it was to come the great final test of His life, Jesus went out into the garden to pray. He came "unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here while I go and pray yonder." (Matt. 26:36) The victory of Calvary was won that night in the garden of Gethsemane. The calm majesty of His being in meeting the awful onslaughts of Pilate's Judgment Hall and of Calvary, was the outcome of the struggle, agony and victory of Gethsemane. While Jesus prayed the disciples slept, so He stood fast while they fell ignominiously (shamefully).

Many temptations come upon us unawares and unannounced, and all that we can do is to lift a cry to God for help then and there; but many of the temptations of life we can see approaching from the distance, and in such cases the victory should be won before the temptation really reaches us.

5. When you get specific in prayer, worry fades away and confidence rises within!

I want to encourage all of us to take some extra time to pray about everything that concerns our lives: our marriage, our children, our relationships, our job, our finances, our health, our future, our church life, everything.

Philippians 4:6-7 (Passion Translation)

Don't be pulled in different directions or worried about a thing. Be saturated in prayer throughout each day, offering your faith-filled requests before God with overflowing gratitude.

Tell him every detail of your life, (7) then God's wonderful peace that transcends human understanding, will make the answers known to you through Jesus Christ.

Philippians 4:6-7 - CEV

Don't worry about anything, but pray about everything. With thankful hearts offer up your prayers and requests to God. (7) Then, because you belong to Christ Jesus, God will bless you with peace that no one can completely understand. And this peace will control the way you think and feel.

Philippians 4:6 - J.B. Phillips

Don't worry over anything whatever; tell God every detail of your need in sincere and thankful prayer.

1 Peter 5:7 - AMP

Casting the whole of your care [all your anxieties, all your worries, all your concerns, once and for all] on Him, for He cares for you affectionately and cares about you watchfully.

6. The Word builds a basis for expecting God to answer your prayers.

These scriptures have been the basis for answered prayer for my own life for over 43 years.

Matthew 21:22

And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.

Matthew 21:22 (MSG)

Absolutely everything, ranging from small to large, as you make it a part of your believing prayer, gets included as you lay hold of God."

Mark 11:24

Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.

Mark 11:24 (NLT)

I tell you, you can pray for anything, and if you believe that you've received it, it will be yours.

John 15:7

If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.

John 15:7 (NLT)

But if you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, and it will be granted!

John 16:23-24

And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you. (24) Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

1 John 3:22

And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.

1 John 3:22 (NLT)

And we will receive from Him whatever we ask because we obey Him and do the things that please Him.

1 John 5:14-15

Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, 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 the petitions that we have asked of Him.

1 John 5:14-15 (NLT)

And we are confident that he hears us whenever we ask for anything that pleases him. 15 And since we know he hears us when we make our requests, we also know that he will give us what we ask for.

R. A. Torrey quote:

Our whole life should be a life of prayer. We should walk in constant communion with God. There should be a constant upward looking of the soul to God. We should walk so habitually in His presence that even when we awaken in the night it would be the most natural thing in the world for us to speak to Him in thanksgiving or in petition.

Action Points:

1. Do you live out of your prayer life, or do you wait until a crisis to pray?
2. Get specific in prayer and pray the details out before the event occurs.
3. What scripture can you use to form a foundation for faith in answered prayer?

