



Life Principles Notes™

Living the Extraordinary Life

Part 7: A Life of Prayer

Summary:

I'll never forget that day when, as a young man, I heard God speaking to my heart. This was His message to me:

"Whatever you accomplish in life you will have to accomplish on your knees."

If you want to live an extraordinary life in this world, you will never achieve that goal from your education, from your wealth, or from your own set of talents. To do great things for God,

you must make prayer a priority of your life. That's exactly what Jesus did. Mark 1:32-38 records an occasion when He must have been extremely tired. He had been ministering to sick and needy people all day. Yet God's Word tells us that early in the morning Jesus rose, walked to a secluded place, and spent time in prayer with His Father.

There are several powerful reasons that you and I should follow the example of Jesus Christ and live a life of prayer.

Scriptural Principles:

1 The definition of prayer. First, we need to clarify just what we mean when we use this word *prayer*, because people offer many definitions. As most would agree, prayer refers to conversing with God. It is the practice of speaking to Him as well as hearing from Him. But there is much more to be said about the true nature of godly prayer. When you pray, you are opening the door of your life to Jesus Christ. You are sharing your heart with Him so that He may exercise His power in dealing with your needs in His way and in His time. Our prayer lives are ineffective when we simply supply Him with a list of our demands, telling Him what He should do, when, and how He should do it. True prayer is opening our lives to where, how, and what God wants from us as we become servants of His will.

2 We pray because of the example of prayer in Jesus' life. The first reason to make prayer the priority of our lives is simply that our Lord and Savior established it as our model. As busy as He was, and as focused as He was on His mission, He made prayer the very center of His life. He rose early and prayed in a solitary place. On His knees, He spoke to His Father and sought His will. He agonized in prayer, wrestling with Satan in the wilderness. We also notice that, as close as He was to His disciples, He often prayed alone. If Jesus Christ Himself was so completely dependent on prayer, how could you or I ever think we could get by in life with any less commitment?

3 We pray because Jesus commands us to pray and teaches us how. Jesus clearly commands us to pray, just as He taught His disciples to do. An insufficient prayer life is nothing less than disobedience to God. Jesus saw prayer as a way of life rather than an occasional activity. All that we do should flow from a focus of prayer. The Lord's Prayer is the model that Christ gave us showing us how to pray. As believers, we should go to our Father with every issue that might otherwise worry us, and we should pray confidently. We are to avoid "vain repetitions" because they are not prayer at all. And we should ask, seek, and knock—prayer involves activity as well as conversation.

4 We pray because prayer to God through His Son is the most powerful force in all creation. Jesus Christ is the “King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light” (1 Timothy 6:15-16). He is the Lord of the entire universe, and His power and knowledge are infinite. Do you realize that you and I have an awesome, intimate connection with the sovereign Lord of creation? We can go boldly and confidently to the throne room of the Living God. (Hebrews 4:16) Why should any of us ever fret or worry about the problems of this world, when we have access to the greatest power in all the universe? And why would we ever think that we could handle any detail of life better than that same Lord who holds all power and authority in His hand?

5 We pray because of the clear promises of God to answer our prayer. It is perhaps most amazing of all that God gives us His promise that He will answer our prayers. Matthew 7:7 commands us to ask, seek, and knock, and also assures us that He will respond. He wants to answer our prayers. John 16:23 promises us that if we ask for anything in His name, He will give it to us. We receive the very authority of heaven, under the condition that we ask according to His will, as 1 John 5:14-15 tells us. Finally, Mark 11:22-23 gives us the assurance that we can “move mountains”—that is, we will be able to do even things that do not seem possible—because nothing is impossible with God. We need only to have faith in God and to align our desires with His own.

6 We pray because it is essential to a godly life and fruitful service. How could anyone possibly face a single day of life without the many benefits that prayer affords us? We begin each morning with three enemies facing us: the world, the flesh, and the Devil. Without the weapon of prayer in our arsenal, we have no hope of standing up against the assault of such dangerous adversaries. Every single facet of the spiritual life is accomplished through prayer: salvation, spiritual growth, strength to face daily temptation, receiving forgiveness for sins, discovering God’s will for your life. Not one of these goals, however, is available to the believer who neglects the life of prayer, which is the Christian’s strength and fortress. On the contrary, prayerlessness increases the troublesome burdens that we carry. The less we pray, the more we struggle.

7 We pray because it brings rich rewards. Finally, you and I have the greatest of all motivations to devote ourselves fully to the life of prayer—namely, we know that such a life brings more wonderful rewards than anyone could ever imagine. God answers when we pray scripturally, and that in itself is all the reason we require. He meets our material needs as we go through life. He hears us and sympathizes with us in any situation we could possibly face. (Hebrews 4:14-15) He renews our strength and confidence. He shields us from the kind of stress and anxiety that we see burdening people around us. (Philippians 4:6-7) He provides us with the power of the Holy Spirit—the very power that raised Christ from the dead! Through our prayers, He gives us the privilege of having an impact upon others, and the comfort only He can give. Perhaps best of all, our prayers convey us into the wonderful presence of Almighty God Himself. There is no greater joy in life.

Conclusion:

My friend, I hope you have some understanding of the amazing gift that is yours. The Creator of the universe wants you to know Him intimately. He wants you to have the incredible power that comes simply from enjoying His presence daily.

Nothing else could possibly compare to such an adventure. Nothing in this world could take the place of the awesome, loving relationship of unconditional love that is yours to experience

as you and Almighty God spend time together in His throne room.

There is only one way for you to claim that daily experience—through the committed, disciplined pursuit of His presence through prayer. Nothing else could possibly be more important to your life and growth as a Christian. Will you make it your greatest priority today? 

Contact us:
1-800-789-1473

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