

1 Timothy 2:1-8

The Priority and Power of Prayer

Intro: I spent a good part of Friday & Saturday working on my Study for today.

A) Finally stopped last night at 10pm – Bed – A good study on prayer – 4 points – All T's

- 1) Types of Prayer
- 2) Targets in Prayer
- 3) Tone of our Prayers
- 4) The Touch of our Prayers

B) This morning I scrapped that – See My heart is not to preach a good study about Prayer

1) 1000's of Books written on Prayer & sermon's preached about prayer – Read many –

Bb) Prayer is one of those things you Just need to do it

1) My hope is that you will be motivated to pray more.

C) Area that many of us including myself can grow in!

1) One of the weakest areas of my life –

Ask myself some hard questions:

A) How much time do I spend in prayer vs. – Working out? Entertainment? / Yard work?

B) How fervently am I praying for my kids/ for our Church?/ The Property situation? / Lost

1) Don't get me wrong – I pray daily – But something is lacking there. Challenged lately

C) Prayer is vital – Disciples saw the importance that Jesus placed on Prayer} Teach us to Pray!

1) Not preach / not do miracles

D) Prayer is Vital: #1 Mark of our dependency upon God – Seen in the place prayer has in our lives

E) Prayer is one of the Keys to our fellowship w/ God

1) Prayer keeps us sharp -

A young man approached a logging crew and asked for a job. The foreman asked for a demonstration of his skill. The young man quickly stepped forward and felled a selected tree. The foreman was impressed. **“You can start Monday.”**

Monday #1 – Most trees – but by Thursday let go!

A) Young man was puzzled -

“I don't understand. I thought I was doing OK.” “You were—at first, “ the foreman replied. **“Our charts show that you've dropped from first place on Monday to last place on Wednesday in the number of trees cut.”**

“But I'm a hard worker. I don't understand. I arrive first, leave last, and even have worked through my coffee breaks!”

The foreman then asked a telling question, “**Have you been sharpening your ax?**” To which the young man replied, “I’ve been working too hard to take the time.”

The foreman then explained the difference between working hard and working smart.

He pointed out that the sharpness of the ax is as important as the strength of your swing.

Prayer is what makes our lives Sharp

E.M. Bounds said, "**What the church needs today is not machinery, not new organizations or more and novel methods, but men and women whom the Holy Spirit can use - Men and women mighty in prayer. The Holy Spirit does not flow through methods, but through men and women of prayer.**"

Samuel Chadwick said, "**The one concern of the devil is to keep Christians from praying. He fears nothing from prayerless studies, prayerless work and prayerless religion. He laughs at our toil, mocks at our wisdom, but he trembles when we pray.**"

So After dealing with False teachers in Ch1 & warning Timothy about avoiding spiritual Shipwreck

A) Paul turns now to the subject of Prayer. RD v.1-8

B) Paul mentions 4 types of prayer that should be a part of our prayer life. -

1) How biblical is your Christianity- Match up

C) Supplications: carries the idea of “offering a request for a felt need.”

1) Idea of coming to God with our needs – revealing the burdens and concerns that are on our hearts

C) Awesome thing about this: God doesn’t tire of our coming to Him in this way

1) Have to admit that there are times when I cannot hear another problem –

D) All day – Problems – come home – More – Overload – can’t hear this right now !

1) God is never that way: *Thoughts out number the sand – Thoughts of good not of evil to give you a future and a hope.*

Number of hairs on your head

1 Peter 5:7 – *Come to Him and cast your cares upon Him because you know that He cares for you!*

E) Awesome blessing – but that is only one form of prayer

1) but many people that is the only form of prayer they know – they stop there – Supplications

2) They unload on God – then go their way.

My wife and I are going to celebrate 19 awesome yrs of marriage tomorrow.

A) She is my best friend – confidant – Love of my life – favorite person in the world to be with.

B) But a week or so ago – I did something I rarely do to her-

1) I had a week where I was stressed & burdened about some ministry things{ **Hard decisions wrestling with.**

C) That morning I proceeded to just dump all this weight that I had been carrying on Denise – for about 45 minutes I just vented!

1) This left her all worried about me – concerned – But I felt great just getting that load off my Chest. { Being able to share with HER – wonderful!

D) Now if that is all our relationship consisted of – that we are there to dump on each other when stressed – burdened –

1) Our relationship would not be very healthy! – Being able to share that way is important and has it's place but there must be more.

So later that night – I came home – we went out to dinner – went on a date and just had a great time of fun / fellowship –

A) Didn't talk about that other stuff at all. - Just building our relationship and intimacy

B) Well that is what this 2nd word – Prayer is all about: A word that speaks of Intimacy / friendship / Worship and Devotion that we have w/ God.

C) Isn't that an amazing thing: The Creator of the Universe wants to spend time with us.

1) Love to be around new believers – they are just astounded that God would be interested in them at all. –

Cc) Those of us who have been in the Lord for a while can sometimes take that for granted. –

1) God likes it when We talk to Him !

2) He ENJOYS FELLOWSHIPPING WITH US !

D) This 2nd word for prayer that Paul uses here is all about that – Not petitioning – not dumping – Just talking – sharing

1) **Communicating with God.**

Paul mentions is *Giving of thanks*:

A) This definitely speaks of having a heart of gratitude & Praise – that we cannot approach God at all.

B) Thankful for who He is / Who we are in Him / All He has done / All He has promised to do.

And Paul mentions Intercessions – This speaks of the ministry of Prayer

A) Intercession is when we pray for others – It is the ministry of bringing people and ministries to the Lord

B) *“Can do more than pray but we cannot do anything until we pray!”*

C) Intercession is coming to God on behalf of another – VITAL

1) **So thankful for those of you who are intercessors in this Church.**

Please don't stop – Powerful effective ministry.

Who should we be praying for ? Targets

A) All men: This means we should pray for the unsaved and the saved, for people near us and people far away, for enemies as well as friends.

B) We live in a time of challenge -

"Paradox of Our Time."

* The paradox of our time in history is that we have taller buildings but shorter tempers, wider freeways, but narrower viewpoints.

* We have more degrees but less sense, more knowledge, but less judgment, more experts, yet more problems, more medicine, but less wellness.

* We spend more, but have less. We buy more, but enjoy less.

* We have bigger houses and smaller families, more conveniences, but less time.

* We have multiplied our possessions, but reduced our values.

* We've learned how to make a living, but not a life. We've added years to life not life to years!

* We spend too recklessly, laugh too little, drive too fast, get too angry, stay up too late, get up too tired, read too little, watch TV too much, and pray too seldom.

* We've cleaned up the air, but polluted the soul.

* We've learned to rush, but not to wait.

We live in this hustle and bustle crazy world – one of the best things we can do for the people around us – caught in the think of it is Pray for them

**Pray for all men: Prayer List – Stirred - Paul's list Pray w/out ceasing –
A) Only way I pray effectively – Many people – list!**

People in Govt. Kings

A) This is very enlightening in light of who was in power when Paul wrote these words – NERO – maniac

B) Full on Persecuted Christians – Declared himself to be worshipped as God

1) Paul says Pray for him

B) Now I don't know what you think about our current president 100,000 times better than Nero

–

C) All day long we can watch TV programs or listen to programs on the radio or read editorials in the paper – Critique or criticize the President

1) We are so opinionated and our opinions lead us to be so **Critical and complaining** –

D) Wonder what would happen if we stopped **critiquing and Criticizing and really put our time and energy into Prayer**

1) I wonder how this country would change if we did that !

E) City Council Mayor / Planners

F) People in Authority – Pastors / Bosses / Parents

The Tone of our Prayer: V.8

I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting;

There are many postures of prayer mentioned in the Bible –

A) Kneeling / Prostrate / Heads bowed down / sitting / standing /

B) Paul highlights the **lifting of Hands** –

C) It was a common custom, among the Jews, to lift up or spread out their arms and hands in prayer.

1) It is properly the action of entreaty and request; and seems to be an effort to embrace the assistance requested.

What type of Hands – Holy hands

A) The hands symbolize the activities of life, thus holy hands represent a holy life.

B) That is a prerequisite for effective prayer - Holy translates "unpolluted," or "unstained by evil."

1) Speaks of one who is not engaged in Sin -

"Without wrath"

A) Their relationships have to be right.

B) They must not be bitter or resentful against somebody, angry about something that has never been brought out or discussed.

C) God won't hear you!

Without doubting: Jesus ask in Faith / His Name

James 1:5-6

If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind.

James 5:14-17

14 Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.15 And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

Our Prayer is to be marked by a confidence in God's ability and a fervency in our hearts!

A) Describe your prayer life ?

Aa) Extreme reaction to the Word faith movement – In Jesus Name be healed

B) We pray apologetically{ Pray make excuses for God – Not heal – give strength / help handle.

C) Paul and James and Jesus – urges us – Pray in faith believing

1) The effective fervent prayers of a righteous man avails much

ILL.- Charles Spurgeon said, "**I would rather teach one man to pray than ten men to preach.**"

D) The Power of One !

In 1872 the famous American preacher, Dwight L. Moody, went to England, not to preach but to listen – but when he was asked to preach in a London pulpit. He agreed to do so- but it went poorly. He confessed afterwards that he never had such a hard time preaching. **Everything seemed dead.** He said to himself. "What a fool I was to consent to preach. I came here to listen and here I am preaching."

Then the awful thought came to him that he had to **preach again that night**, and only the fact that he had given his promise to do so kept him faithful to the engagement.

But when Moody stepped into the pulpit that night and faced the congregation, he was conscious of a new atmosphere. He said, "The powers of an unseen world seemed to have fallen on the audience."

AND ABOUT 500 PEOPLE STOOD UP to receive JC

Story behind the Story !

When Dwight L. Moody preached at that morning service there was a woman in the congregation who had an invalid sister at home. When she returned home she told her invalid sister that the preacher had been Mr. Moody from Chicago.

"What!" she exclaimed, "*Mr. Moody from Chicago! I read about him some time ago in an American newspaper, and I have been praying for God to send him to London, to preach in our church.*"

If I had known he was going to preach this morning I would have eaten no breakfast. I would have spent the whole time in prayer. Now, sister, go out of the room, lock the door, send me no dinner. And no matter who comes, don't let them see me. I am going to spend the whole afternoon and evening in prayer."

And so it was that Sunday night when Dwight L. Moody preached that there was a completely different atmosphere and 500 people said they wanted to accept Jesus as their Savior.

Prayer is Powerful – Berlin wall. 1989

Many of you recall the pictures of that day in 1989 when the people of East Germany literally began to take down that wall stone by stone.

At the center of the events that led up to that day, stood the St. Nicholas Church in Leipzig, East Germany.

As the people of East Germany began to grow restless under the yoke of communist oppression, they began to look for a place where they could give voice to their longings for freedom, and they turned to the church.

Each Monday evening at St. Nicholas, there was a prayer service for peace. Believers and nonbelievers alike began to attend, and non-believers, for the first time, were exposed to the Gospel.

The crowds began to grow, and the communist officials began to worry.

They began to post roadblocks and detain people to try to prevent them from going to those services. But the services continued, and the crowds continued to grow until finally, on October 8, 1989, the secret police decided to form into an armed force and were prepared to shoot and kill in order to stop that demonstration.

That night the church was packed with more than 2,000 people, and another 10,000 were on the streets outside.

The crowds left the church and they began to march toward the City Hall, where the armed guards were waiting to meet them with violence.

The commander of the Secret Police awaited his orders from Berlin or Moscow, but those orders never came.

And so the troops retreated inside of the City Hall and they watched as the marchers placed their candles on the steps of the City Hall and stood there in a silent vigil for peace.

The commander of those troops stared out the window at that crowd and he was heard to mutter to those around him, "We planned for everything, we prepared for everything, except for candles and prayers."

Within a month, history shifted and the wall came down.

Prayer is powerful – Changes lives / situations / Us

A) Direct link between our Attitude and actions

B) Paul says pray – for leaders / pray for situations

So we can lead quiet and peaceable lives

1) marked by Godliness and reverence

#4 The touch of our Prayers – The affect it has on our lives

A)That you may lead a quiet and peaceable life –

1) Pray more we are going to Protest less

2) Cry out to God less inclined to complain to others

B) Paul wants us praying because He knows it will affect our actions

1) Life marked by godliness and reverence

C) The more we commune with God the more godly we become

1) They could tell the disciples had been with Jesus

When Christians lives are marked by those things –

God is blessed: Acceptable

A) their impact is Huge on the lost ! – Key

3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior,⁴ who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.⁵ For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus,⁶ who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time,

B) God desires all men to be saved – Sent Jesus to be the Mediator – Go between

C) OT Priest – Hebrews – Jesus – Come boldly

D) One Mediator between God and Man –

1) Not Mary / Not Priest / Pastor / Not Guru

JESUS

If God desires all men to be saved – Why aren't they?

A) Choice – Choose Life -