

# Prayer Ministry

## *The Call to Prayer*

### Lesson 1

Introduction:

*"Whatever good may be done is done and brought about by prayer, which alone is the omnipotent empress. In human affairs we accomplish everything through prayer. What has been properly arranged we keep in order, what has gone amiss we change and improve, what cannot be changed and improved we bear, overcoming all the trouble and sustaining all the good by prayer. Against force there is no help but prayer alone." --Martin Luther*

Prayer is our most important line of communication with our Heavenly Father. It is His communications network surpassing in power and complexity anything our modern technologists dream of on the "information superhighway."

It is a source of learning, a source of influence, a source of comfort, a source of action, a source of all that is needed to maintain our lives in peace, harmony, and productivity.

After faith, it is one of the most important ingredients of our religious life.

All of us pray several times a day. Our intention in this course is to give you an opportunity to enrich your prayer life and help you to organize it to a specific end. That is; the ministry of this church and your pastor.

A term we are going to be using often is "intercessory prayer." That is we are going to ask in a persistent and consistent manor for God to intercede in the events and life at (name of congregation) and Pastor (name) with regard to God's plans and countering Satan's plans.

In this study we are going to look at Prayer from a historical point of view as God revealed it to us in examples from the Old and New Testament and in the modern church. The purpose of this study is to help you to have an unshakable faith that our Father will answer your prayers and assurance that He wants and calls us to constantly, frequently, orderly and relationally pray for the church, the state, each other and ourselves.

This is also our own church heritage. Dietrich reported about Luther: "I cannot admire his extraordinary joy, steadfastness, faith, and hope enough in these miserable times; but he nourishes them constantly by zealously busying himself with the Word of God. No day passes by without him spending at least three hours in prayer, hours which would seem best suited for studying."

## God's Plan for Conducting our Affairs

### *(The Jethro Principle)*

Exodus 18:19-23

*In today's culture and even in the climate of the church, emphasis is placed on action. The question is: "What are we doing that will make our church grow?". I recall the Jethro Principle being explained to those attending a 200 Barrier Church Growth Seminar. And the emphasis was placed upon delegating responsibility. In the last year or so I have revisited this principle to discover something very interesting to me. And that is that Jethro was first interested in one's relationship to God, their prayer life, that the Word be taught, it involved the right world view and then finally, appropriate action be taken according to the spirituality, faithfulness and giftedness of the leadership. We turn this process on its head in our rush and even panic to grow and grasping, many times at straws, for a way to grow our congregation. With that, I have to conclude that the Jethro Principle profoundly involves prayer as intrigal to the ministry to which God calls us, as He called Moses.*

- 1) Verse 19: "May God be with you" and Verse 23: "and (if) God so commands,"

What does it mean for God to be with us. Indeed He is with all believers at all times.

What advice does Christ gives to us?

Matthew 28:18-20 *Acknowledge His authority, Go as I command and I will be there with you.*

John 15:9-17 *Abide in Christ and in His love and do as he commands*

John 14:23 *If you love Me you will keep my Word and I will be with you.*

- 2) Verses 19b: "Be the Peoples Representative Before God"

All endeavors of the church must begin with prayer and be constantly guided by prayer.

What were the actions of the Early Church?

Acts 1:14 *They were continually devoting themselves to prayer. This was their service to the Lord*

Acts 6:3-4 *The leadership was to pray and to teach the word*

Ephesians 6:18 *In the Spirit we are to pray at all times.*

1 Timothy 2:1 *They were instructed to pray for all men (read the verses following*

- 3) Verse 20: "Teach them the decrees and laws, show them the way to live."

What did God tell us to do?

Deuteronomy 11:18-21 learn the word, surround yourself with the Word

- 4) Verse 21: "Select the most capable, trustworthy, and honest."

How did the Early Church apply this action?

Acts 6:3-4 Looking for faithful and spiritually minded men, they delegated the tasks of ministry to them

#### IV. Framework for Prayer

##### A. Biblical

- 1) The Place of Prayer in the Old Testament

Comment on the Prayer life of the following:

Adam: Gen 3:8 Adam had a wonderful prayer life with God until he fell.

Enoch: Gen. 5:22-24 Can prayer be described as walking fellowship with God?

Abraham: Gen. 12:8; Gen. 15:1-6; 18:23-33; James 2:23 Prayer seems also to be descriptive of a relationship. We talk with our creator. We talk because we believe. Our belief or trust is seen as God promises to see it: our righteousness. Because we believe we will talk with God because He is also our friend.

Moses: Exodus 3:5; 4:10-15; 17:10-13; 32:11-14; 33:12-13 It is important not to trivialize this relationship by imagining that we stand on equal ground with God. God is the Holy One.

David: Ps. 6, 8 The Lord hears us in our sorrow

Solomon: 1 Kings 17:22ff God does listen to His children.

Daniel: Daniel 9:23 God is quick to answer

(Just for reference)

Hannah 1 Sam. 1:10, 15-18; 2:1-10

Elijah: 1 Kings 18:36-37

Elisah: 2 Kings 6:15-17

Hezekiah: 2 Kings 19:14-19

Nehemiah: Nehemiah 1:4-11

Isaiah: Isaiah 26:7-9; 33:2

Jeremiah: Jeremiah 14:7-9; 20-22

Ezekiel: Ezekiel 3:17-21; 11:13-21

- 2) The Place of Prayer in the New Testament

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, prayed frequently. We should have even greater need. (Observe when Jesus prayed and for what he prayed in the following passages.)

Matthew 6:5-6 *Prayer is very personal and the Lord hears in secret*

9:37-38 *Pray for the faithful through which the Lord may work*

14:23 *Jesus Himself sought the place of prayer*

Mark 1:32-35 *Jesus made time in a busy schedule to spend time in prayer*

John 17:1-26 *the high priestly prayer: Jesus approaches the cross and real trial and yet He prays and intercedes for others*

Heb. 5:7 *A picture of Jesus' prayer life. Would we today receive this as acceptable?*

(Others)

Luke 5:15-16

Luke 6:12

The Apostles: Comment on the Apostles Prayer Life

Ephesians 1:15-18 *There is constant prayer for the saints*

3:16 *Paul's prayer (vs 14) is that the saints be strengthened in the inner man.*

6:19 *Prays that the Gospel be communicated effectively.*

The Early Church: For what did the Early Church pray?

Acts 2:42 *They studied the Word, Worshipped and prayed for the salvation of other people.*

4:24 *to worship*

13:3 *for ministry and missions*

4:6-7 *for the power of the Holy Spirit*

12:5 *to intercede for people in trial*

James 5:13 *for comfort from God*

B. St. Mark, Lake Jackson, Prayer Experience

Started in the fall of '89

Specifically to pray for Pastor, his work and family and for the work of the church and its workers.

Results:

- Encouragement to Pastor in times of discouragement
- Growth in his ministry and technique
- Quieting of dissention and selfish results
- Building of new sanctuary in harmony
- Growth in giving
- Development of more committed laborers
- Desire of congregation to follow God's will
- Harmonious results of separately working groups.
- Establishing prayer as a powerful part of everyday life
- Supplying people and skill needs

V. Objectives (of some congregations)

- 1 to surround the pastor with prayer
- 2 to build up the ministry of the congregation
- 3 to build spiritual leadership in those praying

What are some of your objectives?

1

2

3

VI. The Cost

- 1 Commitment to Bible Study (daily)
- 2 Commitment to Weekly worship
- 3 Commitment to financially support congregation in giving and tithe
- 4 Commitment to set time aside to pray
- 5 Commitment to Openess to God's Word and the Spirit's leading.

VII Prayer Time

A doration \_\_\_\_\_

C onfession \_\_\_\_\_

T hanks \_\_\_\_\_

S upplication \_\_\_\_\_

**BIBLICAL REFERENCES**

House of Prayer

Isaiah 36:7

Matthew 21:13

Is. 58:1-9

Solomon's Prayer

1 Kings 8:22

Taught by God

Jer. 31-34

Daniel 9:3, 23; 10:2-3,12

Paul's Prayers

Phil. 1:9ff

Col. 1:9ff

2 Th. 1:11

Eph. 3:16-19

Ask in My name, I will give

John 16:23-24

Pray for Workers to step forward

Matthew 9:37-38

Pray with thanksgiving,

Phil. 4:6

Pray for effective evangelism

Col. 4:2-6

2 Thess. 3:1-5

Pray with confidence

Jas 5:15