

Moments of Prayer

There is no greater example to follow when praying than Jesus' life. We have learned that it is through our prayers to Jesus we can reach our Heavenly Father- 1 Timothy 2:5.

- a) Jesus prayed often and under all kinds of situations.
- b) Jesus prayed all night before choosing His Apostles - Matthew 10.
- c) Jesus prayed earnestly before His death in great agony- Matthew 26:42.
- d) He prayed earnestly for His Apostles as well as for us- John 17.
- e) Even as He was dying a horrible death, He prayed for others- Luke 23:34.

Several times we read in the gospels that Jesus went to pray to His Father. He prayed for strength to face the day each morning- Mark 1:35, Psalm 143:8. Jesus probably kept prayer on His heart throughout the day just to get through each day- Luke 5:16. And Jesus prayed in the evenings, a time to relax with His Father and share the events of the day with joys and sadness's- Matthew 14:23, Mark 6:46, Luke 6:12.

Have you ever found it hard to wake up and pray in the morning first thing? It's already hard to wake up at a decent time to get everything needed to be done before you have to take your kids to places, maybe a job yourself, and the many to do things that have piled up. Maybe your mind is just not awake enough to focus in on prayer. Yet David seemed to have something to say about mornings and prayer. "Oh God, you are my God; Early I will seek you."- Psalm 63:1a. Why did David find that was a good time to seek God? "Tell me in the morning about your love, because I trust you. Show me what I should do, because my prayers go up to you."- Psalm 143:8.

David realized there was a lot he'd have to face each day and knew he needed the strength from God to face it. He knew he needed to invite God into his heart in the morning to help him and walk with

him. Jesus wants to be part of our daily life. We need a prayer each morning so we can meet God before we meet the devil and so we can meet God before we meet the circumstances of life.

We can spend the first few minutes with Jesus seeking His plan for our life that day and He can help us tackle our days filling us with the strength to face what will come our way. Praying first thing in the morning your heart is fully focused on Christ, you have yet to face people, your home, the family. Your mind is still sharp without distractions of the day and your focus can be solely on Jesus because you have not filled it with the worldly thoughts, moments, ideas, news or more yet. This is when your heart is fully Jesus', and He can reach you the clearest. This is the time you can be most connected with the Lord. Starting the morning with God is the best way to start the day.

People wake up early to exercise, eat, get to work, and so on. But far too easily we begin these activities without a word to our Father in Heaven. Henry writes, "It is our wisdom and duty to begin every day with God." We always have something to talk to God about. We always have something to praise him for or ask him for.

For more on this chapter buy the book...

Armor of Prayer

Each day we get up, go through our routines, spend time with family and friends and go on with life as if things are good. We know there are bad days, but the good days usually outnumber them and we live our lives in a routine. Although, this is how we need to live, it's easy to forget that this world is still a battlefield. Day by day, hour by hour we still are in a spiritual war and the enemy is very real. An enemy who wants to bring defeat with the aim to steal, kill, and destroy.

The Bible has said we are in a war between God and satan for our souls- Revelation 12:7-9, 1 Peter 5:8. Although God's desire and will is salvation for all men to live in the Kingdom with Him- John 3:16, satan knows he is doomed to destruction, so he is determined to take anyone and everyone with him to the end- Ephesians 6:12.

It's easy to believe that God has a plan for our lives, He's told us He knows our beginnings to our ends- Jeremiah 29:11, Job 14:5. Guess what, satan too has a plan for our lives. Each day we wake up we have the choice to choose which voice we're going to listen too and follow. If we don't wake up and determine in hearts and minds to follow Jesus, we will easily fall into satan's traps set for us each day.

Watching the world fall apart around us, even in our own country it is easy to see the battle unfold in each person's life and the war of good verses evil. Paul the Apostle shares a passage in Ephesians 6 that helps bring the reality to our minds that we are in a spiritual war and how the devil's schemes are real and destructive when we are not equipped in God and with God.

Like soldiers today who go into battle with the right armor to protect them we have been given a spiritual armor to protect us from the devil. God has given us his Word and Spirit, powerful and true, so we'll have the wisdom and protection to stand against the enemy. Our focus each day should be putting on His armor, staying alert, and praying that God will equip believers everywhere to "stand strong."- Ephesians 6:10-18.

The Lord's Model Prayer

“Lord, teach us to pray” was a request of the disciples to Jesus 2000 years ago. It seems today we are still asking the same request from our Lord. It doesn't matter how many sermons are preached, books written, thoughts put to the computers, people are still wondering, “How do I pray?” and “I don't know how to pray.”

Many think that when you become a Christian you automatically have your prayer life in the Lord's hands, and you know what to pray and you pray often. Yet that is not the case. Even as I spend my studies and walk with God, I still find myself finding ways to pray more like Jesus and I still fall short daily on my own prayer life. So, let's all open our Bible's to Matthew 6:9-13 and walk through what I like to call Jesus' Model prayer for all His creation.

“Our Father in Heaven, hallowed be your name” – Our prayers should always begin by addresses or Father, our Creator. (Our Father)-We are related: Prayer begins with our shared relationship to God. (In heaven)- We are present: Our prayers reach God's presence in heaven. (Hallowed be Your name)- We are reverent: Prayer leads us to worship.

The Struggle is Real

Prayer Most Needed When We Least Feel Like Praying—When we feel the least inclined to commune with Jesus, let us pray the most. By so doing we shall break Satan's snare, the clouds of darkness will disappear, and we shall realize the sweet presence of Jesus. Ellen G. White, *Lift Him Up*, 372

It seems that praying should be as simple as breathing, right? We have learned prayers; we have our list of prayers. We have our journals and Bible and have found a place to make our prayer closet. Finding time with Jesus and talking to Him should be easy now, right?

Let's be honest, how many find it hard to wake up in the morning and find that extra time to add a deeper prayer walk with God than just the simple, "Help me through the day" kind of prayer. Once we wake up, we are faced with the demands of work, our children, our spouse and getting everyone out the door on time. Through the day we are distracted with work, errands, taking our kids to their needed appointments. Then evening rolls around and we have dinner, homework, preparation for the next day, spouse who needs attention, kids who need help, and then maybe we find a couple hours just to sit and relax before we have to head off to bed to start it all over again eight hours later. Where can we fit in the extra time for a deepening prayer life with Jesus?

Tools for Your Prayer Life

The question has been asked, “What tricks do I have for staying rooted in prayer despite my schedule?”

The answer, “There’s no “secret sauce.”

When you begin your prayer journey with God, you will begin to form ideas and ways that work for you and your life. I can give you ideas from my time and experience and you can use them as you change them to fit you, but prayer is your time with God and how you use it is up to you.

What I can tell you is that it’s important to set aside time to pray, but it’s also important to live a life of prayer. Pray in the car, on the plane, and when you’re in the midst of making a stressful decision.

“Don’t limit God to your schedule. Just like you call your spouse or best friend when you have an exciting moment, a hard decision, or a few extra minutes, do the same with God. Living in prayer will help you stay committed to prayer.” -David DeWolf, Lead with Humble Confidence

When we set out to do any job or hobby there are certain tools, we need to get the project done, right? Power tools for around the home, if you sew you need needles and thread. Scrapbooking you need pictures and paper. Cooking, you need pots and pans. Prayer can be a lot easier when we go into it with the right tools. Bible, pen, paper, these are just the start. Following are some other tools you can use when you begin your prayer journey with God that can help keep you focused and in line with your goals.

1. Create a Place

Finding a place to pray with God is important because it can pull you into God’s presence each time you are there. In this place you can keep your journals, spread them around you and surround yourself with God. In this place you can remove all distractions and focus on God. Having a special place to pray with God is important. But remember you can still talk with God anytime, anywhere. If it’s in the garden on your favorite chair you feel God, go there daily. If there is music that inspires you to pray, listen to God through it.

Unanswered Prayers

This can be a hard pill to swallow. When we've done everything right and God still says no or simply isn't answering. It is hard not to question God why, maybe lose a little faith. What could be some reasons God is not answering or He has said no, what can we do in those times?

“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you”- Matthew 7:7. This prayer fills our time with God as we go to Him, yet diseases still rage, loved ones walk away from God, jobs are lost, and marriages fail.

What happens when we do not get what we wanted, or when it feels like we have been handed a stone instead of bread or a snake instead of a fish? Do we turn away from God and stop believing in His Word that He walks with us and gives us the things we need- Matthew 6:25-34.

Prayers can be very frustrating when we don't receive answers to our prayers. Prayers can be very difficult to have when we feel God will not answer them. The challenge is not the way Christian's pray, it's the way we receive the answers to our prayers. Do we get discouraged and let our prayer life begin to slack or do we believe, and trust God is still working in our lives and that He still has something good for us?

Prayer Ideas

Prayer begins with you and your walk with God, but as you take time in prayer you can also use it to teach your kids, your nieces and nephews, your grandkids and even kids in church to pray. By being an example in your prayer time they can learn to follow and learn to have the same faith and trust in God as you do. Let's look at some prayer ideas that could help you kick start your prayer walk, add some variety or make it fun for younger ones.

ACTS Prayer

Adoration: Praise God for who He is

Confession: Confess your sins

Thanksgiving: Thank God for small and big things

Supplication: Present your requests to God

5 Finger Prayer:

Thumb: Pray for those closest to you (family & close friends)

Pointer: Pray for those who lead & guide you (teachers, pastors)

Middle: Pray for those in authority (president, mayor, governors)

Ring: This is the weak finger. Pray for those ill, lost, lonely, or weak

Pinky: Smallest & last. Pray for yourself.

Teaspoon Prayer

A simple way to prayer remember 3 phrases.

Thank you,

I'm Sorry,

Please

- just like a teaspoon TSP