

Exile and Return: The Leader's Prayer Life Nehemiah 1:1-2:8

Jerry Bridges - "To depend on God continually is to pray continually."

Paul Miller - "Learned desperation is at the heart of a praying life."

The Praying Leader:

I. Points others toward God and His Kingdom.

Ephesians 6:19 - "[Pray]...that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel..."

II. Makes prayer a way of life.

1 Thessalonians 5:17 - "Pray without ceasing."

III. Knows his public leadership is determined by his private prayer life.

Matthew 6:6 - "Jesus said, '...when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.'"

IV. Is burdened to pray for people. (Nehemiah 1:1-4)

A prayer burden is a spiritual desire of God that is given to someone the Spirit is going to use in prayer.

Luke 19:41 - "...he...saw the city, he wept over it..."

V. Prays according to God's character. (Nehemiah 1:5-6)

VI. Confesses his own sins and prays over the failures of others. (Nehemiah 1:6b-7)

James 5:16 - "Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working."

VII. Prays trusting in the promises of God. (Nehemiah 1:8-9)

VIII. Expects much fruit from prayer. (Nehemiah 1:10-11)

John 15:7-8 - "If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples."

IX. Knows that prayer and planning go together. (Nehemiah 2:1-8)

X. Understands he is an instrument to carry out God's sovereign will on earth. (Nehemiah 2:1-8)

Matthew 6:9-10 - "Jesus said, 'Pray then like this: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.'"

Luke 5:16 - "But he (often) would withdraw to desolate places and pray."

Luke 10:2 - "And he said to them, 'The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.'"

Luke 18:7 - "And will not God give justice to his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them?"

Reviewing this Past Sunday with Family and Friends

1. When do you find it easiest to pray? When do you find it most difficult to pray?
2. When you are struck with fear, anxiety, or insecurity, what is your first response?
3. In what ways is prayer strengthened by a knowing and meditating upon Scripture? Psalm 85:6, 119:50, 119:107, John 5:39, and John 15:7-8.
4. What is the relationship between feeling burdened and praying with desperation? What group of people, or area of concern, keeps you praying? What are some characteristics of a prayer burden? (Psalm 42:1-4 and 22:2)
5. Does knowing God is sovereign and will accomplish His ultimate will encourage you to pray or make you feel like it's pointless? (Discuss how these verses fit together and then pray- Psalm 115:3, Ephesians 6:18, Colossians 4:2, 1 Timothy 2:1 and John 15:7,8)