

Intro: A Barna research study reported that 84% (more than 4 of 5) adults said they had prayed in the past week! That number has remained the same since they study was begun in 1993 (almost 25 years!) Of all the “spiritual” activities people participate in, prayer is by far the most common and accepted.

Now, that said...It doesn't mean that everyone that prays does so in the same way we do, or even to the God of Bible When people in our culture say “I pray”, that could mean anything from a prayer that looks like one Jesus would pray, To those who are talking to the universe!...Hoping good Karma comes back their way!

This morning as we finish up our study on the book of Ephesians, I want us to look at prayer as Paul and the bible define it. As we do that, we are going to be laying the foundation for our next Sunday morning study, “*Learning to Pray Like Jesus*”

Turn in your bible with me to Eph 6:18-20 Eph 6:10 Page 830
The Four “All's Of Prayer

All Kinds of Prayer; All Kinds of Times and Place; All Of Your Strength; All People

1. All Kinds Of Prayers: Vs 18

When he writes Paul uses two different Greek words to tell us what he is challenging us to do: All kinds of:

- Prayers: Lit = a generic word for prayer, most common, *used to describe talking with God in general*
- Requests: Lit = a more specific word, *to request or ask for something specific*

As you think about prayer in the bible, it is fairly easy to identify at least 6 different kinds of prayer!

(Some do 4, some as many as 9) But these 6 I think are the most commonly agreed upon. They can easily be divided into one of the two general terms Paul used. Look at them with me. When Paul says, “All KINDS of prayer, he means...”

All Kinds of Prayer

- Adoration: To praise and worship God for who He is, and what He has done. Psalm 104
- Confession: To “agree with God” that my behavior is wrong and seek forgiveness. 1 Jn 1:9; Lk 18:13
- Thanksgiving: To thank God for His provision and blessing in our life Psalm 30:1-3
- Supplication: To ask God for something we or others need. Psalm 64:1ff
- Intercession: To be the “go between” for someone else with God, pray on their behalf Mt 23:37
- Profession/Faith: To pray a prayer of faith, believing God will answer before you see it John 11:38-44

What we are looking for is BALANCE in our prayer life. The tendency is for us to gravitate to one or two of the kinds of prayer that we feel comfortable with. Prayer that meets us where we are and speaks to us.

APP: What I would challenge you to do is to EXPAND your prayer life. Pick one or two new and try them on!
Try a prayer of faith; Try prayer of intercession; Try prayer of adoration

2. All Kinds of Times and Places: Vs 18

Most of us have a pretty specific time and place that we like to pray. That is a GOOD thing. The consistency and the regularity of that helps us be more effective with our prayer. But, that said, we should never allow ourselves to think that we have to be in that place...at that time...with our head bowed and our eyes closed to pray! When we look at the bible, like Paul wrote, we should be praying on ALL OCCASIONS:

- Alone Mt 1:35 Alone in a solitary/lonely place
- With others: John 17:1 With the disciples
- Garden of Gethsemane Mt 26:36 Garden
- Out in Field: John 6:11 Feeding of 5000
- Meal in Home Mt 26:26 Last Supper; Rd to Emmaus
- Mountain Luke 9:26 Transfiguration
- Graveside Mt 23:37 Lazarus

As beneficial as it is for you to have the private solitary place, it is JUST as important for you to find someone to pray with sometimes! Sunday AM, before the first Service, Sunday PM at 6 with prayer group, Day of Prayer coming up, Groups

APP: Consider adding another place or two...another expression.
IF you are always alone...w group. If w group...alone!
If you always pray at home...Start out with others around. Always out...Pray alone and at home

3. Pray With All The Strength Available!

Vs 18

Paul says to us when we pray that we are to use EVERY resource that we can find! And then he goes on to talk about 3

- *“In the Spirit”* or, With the Spirit’s empowerment or enablement! Vs 18
Prayer is a spiritual activity, so we need to be “in synch” with the Spirit of God when we pray.
Bible is very clear...God will HELP us pray as we should. We
Romans 8:26
- *“Be Alert”* or, to be on your guard, or to be watchful and awake
Mt 26:41 Jesus told his disciples this in the Garden of Gethsemane
Watch and pray so that you don’t fall into temptation. So very easy to do
Pray intentionally
- *“Keep on”* Lit = to persevere! To hang in there, to hold on, to grip and not let go! To not give up
Luke 18:1 Jesus told parable of Judge and persistent widow (even not fearing God, I will give her!)
Mt 7:7 Ask, Seek knock (keep on asking...seeking....knocking!)
(Prayers of Intercession and Prayers of Faith are usually the most long lasting)

Paul says to us, prayer is something that we have to invest time and energy into. We have to use EVERY resource available to us if we are going to be effective in prayer. Keep in mind this is the END of a section on Spiritual Warfare!

If we are going to carry the day then we need to use every single thing God has made available...and Prayer is essential

APP: Make sure that you are including those three elements in your prayers regularly!

Start praying a prayer of Faith with me.

People coming to know Jesus through our ministry...and being baptized! (If I had enough faith...52)

4. Pray For ALL The Saints. (All kinds of people)

Vs 18-20

Paul tells us here that our prayer is to be very broad. Most of us without even thinking about it have a “circle of concern.”

The closer you are to the center...(me) the more likely I am to pray for you...and the more intensely I will pray!

Paul tells us...don’t be limited! Stretch yourself!

- Pray for the “saints” (the church in Ephesus)
- Pray for Paul to share the gospel
- Pray for those hearing the gospel to know Jesus
- Pray for people you know that need support (Tychicus)

APP: Here is my recommendation as it applies to this area.

Stretch the circle! Move beyond those that you pray for most often and intensely, pray for others!

If you look there are always people you can pray for! Just this week: (Food Bank; Winter Relief; People w/o Jesus)

CONCL:

How is Your prayer life? Are there some places you can improve?

Challenge you to do implement or more of the applications I offered to you

Two other places you can pray: 1. Take the cards, and hand them out...people that don’t attend.

Look for an issue or a need...tell them...“I’m going to pray”

Invite them to come learn how!

2. Pray for Marc and the Elders

Invite Marc down front