

The PRIORITY of PRAYER

PREMISES

- * We intuitively know that prayer is the LIFEblood: Where ROOTS are dug, PLANS made & RELATIONSHIP deepened.
 - * An accurate GAUGE of the spiritual LIFE & HEALTH of a church is how vibrant & dynamic is its PRAYER LIFE.
 - * PRINCIPLE: If you want to CATALYSE something, PROPEL the WORD straight it.
- Why is prayer the lifeblood, both of the church & your own personal walk?
- How do you personally gauge the health of your spiritual life? How does prayer fit into that?

The WHY: 7 Inspirations to Pray

1. Prayer ensures the Lord is ON THE THRONE

= Worship (Psalm 22:3, 1 Chron 29:11, Matt 6:9-10)

- * When we pray, we are INVITING Him in, DECLARING His sovereignty & REALIGNING our lives.

→ Why is this the starting point? How does worship set the stage for every type of prayer?

2. Prayer increases our DEPENDENCE ON GOD

= Surrender (John 15:5, Phil 4:19, Prov 3:5-6)

- * Every time we pray, we SURRENDER & SUBMIT, loosen the grip of our own INDEPENDENCE & take an intentional step CLOSER to Him.

→ How does prayer challenge your independence and, in turn, deepen your dependence?

3. Prayer prepares the way

= Commitment (Mark 1:35-38, Prov 16:3)

- * Prayer is like laying down a ROAD before walking it.
- * Prayer sows seed NOW for harvest you'll reap LATER.
- * Prayer paves the way for BREAKTHROUGH, divine INTERVENTION, the outworking of His PROMISES, invokes the PRESENCE & POWER of God.

→ "The life you're living now is the consequence of prayers you prayed earlier ... or not as case may be." Discuss!

→ Are there areas in your life where you feel God is calling you to prepare the way through prayer now?

4. Prayer BREAKS DOWN WALLS

= Spiritual Warfare (Josh 6:20, Acts 12:5-7, Eph 6:10-18)

- * In front of us there are WALLS, because we have an Enemy actively working AGAINST US.
- * Prayer is how we INVOKE the miraculous power of God and spiritual OPPOSITION requires spiritual POWER.

→ Can you share a time when persistent prayer helped topple a 'wall' or overcome an obstacle?

→ How does knowing prayer invokes God's power change the way you pray?

5. Prayer INSERTS His PROMISES into our PROBLEMS

= Petition, confession, faith (Mark 11:22-24, 1 John 5:14-15)

- * In Mark 11:23, God doesn't say talk ABOUT your mountain; He says, talk TO it & TELL IT where to go.
- * When we pray the promises, we literally INSERT His truth directly INTO the very situations that trouble us.

→ How do you practically 'insert God's promises' into your own struggles when you pray?

→ How does speaking God's truth to a problem differ from just asking Him to fix it?

→ Can you share a Scripture promise that has been particularly powerful in your prayer life?

6. Prayer shapes our hearts

= Consecration (Psalm 139: 23-24, 51:10-12)

- * Prayer is not so much about changing GOD'S mind, as changing OURS. Prayer is not just about OUTCOMES; it's about INNER TRANSFORMATION.
- * The real wins are not ease & comfort, but CONFORMITY to His will, ALIGNMENT with His purposes, catching His HEART & PEACE in His PRESENCE.

→ How has prayer changed your perspective or attitude more than the circumstances or outcomes themselves?

→ What areas of your heart do you feel God is still shaping through prayer?

7. Prayer draws God's people together

= Prayer of Agreement / United Prayer (Matt 18:19-20, James 5:16, Ps 133)

- * Scripture teaches that prayer ADDED results in answers MULTIPLIED.
- * Hearing another Christian pray, you get to know their HEART, PASSIONS & VULNERABILITIES & it draws you CLOSER.

→ How does praying with others strengthen bonds of love & fellowship?

→ Why does 'agreement' multiply power?