

2020/05/17

Prayer Brings Us On Target

Greetings and Announcements:

Birthdays:

May 17, Maya Tittle

May 29, Nick Dahlman

Bible Study:

May 21 at 7:30 (connecting with Zoom, to join group please contact Tim Taylor)

Study is – The New Covenant, Part 2

Title: Prayer Brings Us On Target

Series: Covid-19...10

Text: James 4:1 - 7

vs 3, "You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions."

Introduction:

I think that this is our 9th Sunday fellowship time using electronic media. Jill and Howard Blenkin did an outstanding presentation of their ministry in Mexico; and with the tech team using their gifting the slide presentation was made available.

Review of the last several weeks:

March 22 – Fear, Presumption and Faith

March 29 – Prayer Summit

April 5 – Where Is God In This?

April 10, Good Friday – Victory Through A Lamb

April 12 – Jesus, I Am The Resurrection

April 19 – Burdens

April 26 – Anxious About Nothing

May 3 – In The Father's Hand

May 10 - Mother's Day with the Blenkins

The events with Covid-19 has resulted in a renewed interest and participation in PRAYER! For the next few weeks we will examine the Holy Scriptures to receive more guidance in the ministry of prayer.

Please turn in your Bibles to James 4:1 – 7

"What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you?

You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask.

You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.

You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

Or do you suppose it is to no purpose that the Scripture says, "He yearns jealousy over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us"?

But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

Reviewing my personal prayer life by the counsel given in James 4:1 – 7 helps me to **stay on target**. Sometimes I find my prayer can best be described by an old cartoon; there is an older monk watching a much younger monk paint Bull's eyes around arrows that he has shoot into a fence. The caption has the young monk speaking to the elderly monk, "First I fire the arrows then I take the paint brush. This way I do not miss."

Sometimes I am praying out and asking God to answer!!!

When I really need to lift up others more, seek His will more and pray His Word more.

1. Prayer Reveals My Heart:

1.1) Am I asking wrongly?

James 4:3, "You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions?"

Wow! That one hurts; how often I ask out of want rather than need!
How often I demand rather than wait.

1.2) Am I asking with thanksgiving (Am I even thinking, "Please")?

1 Thessalonians 5:16 – 18, "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

Am I asking with a sense of entitlement, like God owes it to me?

1.3) Am I asking from a grateful heart or a heart of greed?

1 Timothy 6:6, "But godliness with contentment is great gain,"

Am I at peace with what God has given me or am I seeking THINGS of this world over HIM?

2. Prayer Reveals Father's Heart:

2.1) Do I understand that God loves me and is jealous for me?

James 4:5. "Or do you suppose it is to no purpose that the Scripture says, "He yearns jealously over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us"?"

2.2) Do I understand that He desires to give me more grace?

James 4:6, "But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."

3. Prayer Builds Trust:

3.1) Prayer teaches me to submit to God!

Proverbs 14:12, "There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death."

3.2) Prayer teaches me to cry, "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done." (Luke 22:42)

Is the focus of my prayer life on releasing His Kingdom or satisfying my own desires.

Do I really believe that I am His workmanship created for good works (Ephesians 2:10) and that no soldier goes to war at his own expense (1 Corinthians 9:7).

It is easy to say that I trust God when all is going well. The test of trusting God is praying

through for His will when nothing seems to make sense and circumstances seem to be against me.

Paul said in 1 Corinthians 16:9, “for a wide door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.”

4. Prayer Is A Call To Action:

4.1) Consider the words of the Holy Spirit through James in chapter 2:17 – 19

4.2) Two men of faith and prayer that have moved my soul:

George Muller, The Christian History Devotional by J. Stephen Lang, page 73

William Booth, The Christian Devotional by J Stephen Lang, page 105

Conclusion:

Sweet Hour Of Prayer by William Walford