

HOW PRAYER IS THE KEY FOR TRANSFORMATION IN 2023
Next Steps Devotional Guide
January 22, 2023
Sermon Series: It's A Brand New Year, Is It The Same Old You?
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1. Many doctors and nutritionists say that breakfast is the most important meal of the day because you replenish your body with nutrients you need to get through the day. The word "breakfast" means "to break the fast." During the night you have been fasting as you slept. And what breakfast is to your body, having a daily quiet time is to your soul. Read Psalm 5:3 in your sermon outline. What kind of quiet time or daily/morning devotion do you have with God? If you do not have one, why?
2. In your sermon outline, you were given the parts to a quiet time.
 - a. The first part is reading God's Word. What value and blessings would reading God's Word give you? The good news today is we have so many different translations, formats, apps, the Internet and digital ways to read the Bible. What is your favorite translation and why? What is your preferred format to read the Bible: written copy, online, through an app, and etc. and why?
 - b. Read Isaiah 50:4 in your sermon notes. God's wisdom is one of the benefits you receive from having a daily quiet time. In which or what areas do you need wisdom from God and why?
3. The second part to a daily quiet time is eliminate noise. You get quiet before the Lord in order to hear from Him.
 - a. Read Job 3:26 in your sermon outline. Job's comments sounds like Wilmington. No peace. No quietness. No Rest. New York City's nick name is "the city that never sleeps." Meaning — it never take the time to stop to be quiet. Getting quiet before the Lord recharges your "battery" emotionally, psychologically, and spiritually. Do you require some kind of noise going on in the background or do you insist on making time to be quiet?
 - b. Read Isaiah 30:15 in your sermon outline. It is great that being quiet before God gives you confidence as a strength. Where do you need confidence in your life?
 - c. Read Isaiah 40:31 in your sermon outline as well as the explanation for the Hebrew word translated as "wait." Quietly waiting on the Lord helps you soar high like an eagle. If you do not set aside time each to be with God, by the end of the week you are going to be exhausted, moving about as fast as a sloth. Why do you think the Bible uses "flying high as an eagle" as an expression of spending time with God?
 - d. Meditation means to get quiet before the Lord. When you hear or see the word "meditation," what comes to your mind? The problem with the word "mediation," we tend to think of incense burning, sitting on a floor with our legs crossed and our hands extended with palms up. No. It is not something mystical. 74 times the Bible commands us to meditate before the Lord. When something is listed 74 times in the Bible, God wants it to be a priority in our life. Read Joshua 1:8 in your sermon outline. So, what is meditation? It is simply focused attention on the Word of God. In a spiritual way, it is rumination — what cows do. It is a form of "spiritual thought digestion." It is simply taking a verse or short passage and reading it over and over and over to gleam from it the truth from God. When have you meditated on God's Word? If you don't, would you try it?
4. The third part of a quiet time is prayer — you talk with God. Notice it didn't say, "*Talk TO God.*" It said, "*Talk WITH God.*" There is a huge difference. When you pray, do you tend to talk to God or with God and why?
5. The fourth part of a daily quiet time is you go over reviewing your day and your biblical goals with God.
 - a. Read Psalm 90:12 in your sermon outline. In comparison to eternity, we have a very short life span on this earth. You realize the the clock is ticking and your allotted time on this planet is getting shorter and shorter. What are the biblical goals you believe you must accomplish for God before you die and why?
 - b. Any time you take a test, you review your notes to reinforce and help you remember so that you can answer the questions on the test. Without review, you lose your view of your biblical goals. How consistent would you say you are to daily review your biblical goals? If you don't, why?
 - c. Read Jesus words in Matthew 6:7-8 in your sermon outline. God has never been impressed with flowery words, a huge vocabulary or vain repetition in prayer. Have you and/or do you know anyone who use either repetition in their prayers or huge words? Why do you think people do this when Jesus tells us not to do this?
 - d. Read Jesus words in Matthew 6:9a in your sermon outline. In *The Lord's Prayer or Model Prayer*, Jesus never said, "*You should pray this.*" He said, "*You should pray LIKE this.*" Meaning *The Lord's Prayer* was never meant to be a pray we literally prayed, which is okay if we do. it was given as a model, a pattern, the manner in which we pray. Do you tend to pray the same way every time or do you change it up? Why?
6. The first principle Jesus gives us from *The Lord's Prayer* is that prayer is about a connection and the best way we can connect to God in prayer is by thanking Him for how much He loves us.
 - a. Read Matthew 6:9b in your sermon outline. When you pray to God, do you pray about all the different ways God expresses His love to you? Why or why?
 - b. One of the best ways to thank God for how much God loves you is to use some of the different names for God in the Bible because they remind us different aspects to God's character. In your sermon outline, you were given several different web links that list the different names for God. Would you be willing to try this?
 - c. Read Ephesians 3:18 in your sermon outline. Notice God's love is four dimensional. Long enough to last forever. It is wide enough so you can never be out of it. It is high enough so you can't jump over it. And it is deep enough to handle whatever need you have. What does this verse say to you?

- d. Read Ephesians 3:19 in your sermon outline. Once you begin to internalize and thank God for how much He loves you, then you will experience fullness of life and God's power. Ephesians 3:19 is based on Ephesians 3:18. Why do you think you get the result in Ephesians 3:19 that Ephesians 3:18 talks about?
7. The second principle Jesus gives us from The Lord's Prayer is that prayer is about surrender. You offer all of your life to be used for God's purpose.
 - a. Read Matthew 6:10 in your sermon outline. The word translated as "kingdom" can also be translated as "rule" or "reign." Does this change the impact and emphasis of Matthew 6:10 for you? If so, how?
 - b. One of the temptations we face when we pray is when we try to include God in our plans rather than asking God to include us in His plans. Which do you tend to do and why?
 - c. Read Jesus' words in Matthew 6:33a in your sermon outline. If you did what this verse says, what would be for you "*and all these things will be added to you*"?
8. The third principle Jesus gives us from The Lord's Prayer is that prayer is about trust. You tell God you trust Him to meet all of your needs.
 - a. Read Matthew 6:11 in your sermon outline. Praying "*give me my daily bread*" is more than just asking for food. In that day, bread was considered essential and vital to have life. Therefore, Jesus is telling us to pray, asking God to help us sort out the urgent versus the important, the demanding versus the essential. Pray asking God to help you focus on what really matters most. What would that be for you?
 - b. Jesus used the phrase "*daily bread*." He did not say "*weekly bread*" or "*monthly bread*." Why?
 - c. Read Philippians 4:19 in your sermon outline. How does this verse help you with each individual 24-hour cycle? Do you really believe and live that God takes care of your needs? Explain.
9. The fourth principle Jesus gives us from The Lord's Prayer is about forgiveness.
 - a. Read Matthew 6:12 in your sermon notes. As we ask God to forgive us, we promise to forgive others who have hurt or wronged us. How intentional are you in doing this?
 - b. Read Jesus' words in Matthew 6:15 in your sermon notes. If you refuse to forgive anyone or you are holding on to a grudge, what does Jesus say happens to you?
 - c. Read James 3:18 in your sermon outline. There are two awesome things we reap when we forgive: peace and righteousness. Why do you think this is true?
10. The fifth principle Jesus gives us from The Lord's Prayer is about protection. You ask God for the strength to reach your biblical goals:
 - a. Read Matthew 6:13a in your sermon outline. Two of the best weapons the devil uses against us in accomplishing our biblical goals for God are distractions and temptation. Distractions can be obstacles, struggles, setbacks and etc. Temptation is in the areas we are weak and vulnerable. When and where have you seen this in your own life and how did you handle it?
 - b. Read Ephesians 6:12 in your sermon outline. Comedian Flip Wilson made lots of money and a name for himself in a character he portrayed who said, "*The devil made me do it*." The truth is the devil can't make you give into temptation. All he can do is play to where you are weak and vulnerable. You need God to defeat temptation. So, you pray something like this: "*God, I am in debt because I bought things with money I did not have to impress people I don't even like. God that was my temptation. God, it's my fault I'm in debt so I am establishing a biblical goal to get out of debt and I need Your power to do it*." Or, "*God, I am not in shape. It's my fault. I have eaten food that is not good for me and I have not eaten food that is good for me. I don't exercise so I am establishing a biblical goal to get in shape for you. And I need Your power to do it*." What would this be for you and why?
 - c. Read Philippians 4:13 in your sermon outline. If you are genuinely saved, you have the greatest power in the universe in you. Where do you need to apply Philippians 4:13 in your life and why?
 - d. Read 1 Corinthians 10:13 in your sermon outline. One point this verse is making is this: there are no new temptations — only newer ways to do them. A second point this verse is making is when you are tempted, God always provides you a way of escape. Would you memorize this verse in a translation you like?
11. The sixth principle Jesus gives us from The Lord's Prayer is about victory. You thank God that in the end, you get the ultimate victory.
 - a. Read Matthew 6:13b in your sermon outline. You thank God by praying, "*God, no matter what happens today, good or bad, nothing can take away my salvation. Thank You God that one day there is going to be no more pain, no more suffering, no more insecurity, no more loneliness and depression, no more sickness, sorrow or sadness in my life. No more jealousy and resentment in my life. No more broken bodies, no more broken minds, no more mental illness. One day God, you're going to solve it all and restore it all. One day God you're going to make perfect my physical body, my emotional health, my mental issues and I am going to live with you forever and ever because Yours is the kingdom, the power and glory forever. Amen!*" What does this mean to you and how can it help transform you in 2023?
 - b. Read Romans 8:38-39 in your sermon outline. What does this say to you about your ultimate victory and how can this transform you in 2023?
 - c. Read 2 Timothy 1:12 in your sermon outline. The promise of the ultimate victory here is you do not have to keep yourself saved. Once saved, always saved. What would it be like if you had to keep yourself saved?
 - d. At this step, you have both a carrot and a stick. The carrot is John 13:17. Read it in your sermon outline. You get blessed by God for having a daily quiet time. How is this a "carrot?"
 - e. Read James 4:17 in your sermon outline. This is the "stick." How is this a "stick?"