

Food for Thought

For the week of September 7, 2014
(Questions and Scriptures for further personal study)

1. When life throws us a challenge, we sometimes forget the power prayer has to change things. We can miss out on God's blessing by failing to bring him into the situation soon enough. What do the following verses reveal can be accomplished through prayer?

Colossians 1:9-13

Ephesians 3:16-18

Hebrews 13:18

Philemon 1:6

2. Nehemiah was a man whose prayer life went far beyond just asking God for what he wanted. Read Nehemiah 1:1-10 and jot down anything you find that gives you insight into Nehemiah's relationship and communication with God, and how it might impact or help you to grow in your own prayer life.

3. Chris gave us three tips for understanding prayer. What additional motivation or helpful instruction do the following verses give us about prayer?

Philippians 4:6-7

Romans 8:26-27

Psalms 145:18-19

Matthew 6:7-8

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1. When life throws us a challenge, we sometimes forget the power prayer has to change things. We can miss out on God's blessing by failing to bring him into the situation soon enough. What do the following verses reveal can be accomplished through prayer?

Colossians 1:9-13

9 For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, 10 so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, 11 being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, 12 and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light. 13 For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, [NIV]

Ephesians 3:16-18

16 I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, 18 may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, [NIV]

Hebrews 13:18

18 Pray for us. We are sure that we have a clear conscience and desire to live honorably in every way. [NIV]

Philemon 1:6

6 I pray that your partnership with us in the faith may be effective in deepening your understanding of every good thing we share for the sake of Christ. [NIV]

2. Nehemiah was a man whose prayer life went far beyond just asking God for what he wanted. Read Nehemiah 1:1-10 and jot down anything you find that gives you insight into Nehemiah's relationship and communication with God, and how it might impact or help you to grow in your own prayer life.

Nehemiah 1:1-10

Nehemiah's Prayer

1 The words of Nehemiah son of Hakaliah:

In the month of Kislev in the twentieth year, while I was in the citadel of Susa, 2 Hanani, one of my brothers, came from Judah with some other men, and I questioned them about the Jewish remnant that had survived the exile, and also about Jerusalem.

3 They said to me, "Those who survived the exile and are back in the province are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire."

4 When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven. 5 Then I said:

“Lord, the God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with those who love him and keep his commandments, 6 let your ear be attentive and your eyes open to hear the prayer your servant is praying before you day and night for your servants, the people of Israel. I confess the sins we Israelites, including myself and my father’s family, have committed against you. 7 We have acted very wickedly toward you. We have not obeyed the commands, decrees and laws you gave your servant Moses.

8 “Remember the instruction you gave your servant Moses, saying, ‘If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the nations, 9 but if you return to me and obey my commands, then even if your exiled people are at the farthest horizon, I will gather them from there and bring them to the place I have chosen as a dwelling for my Name.’

10 “They are your servants and your people, whom you redeemed by your great strength and your mighty hand. [NIV]

3. Chris gave us three tips for understanding prayer. What additional motivation or helpful instruction do the following verses give us about prayer?

Philippians 4:6-7

6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. [NIV]

Romans 8:26-27

26 In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. 27 And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God’s people in accordance with the will of God. [NIV]

Psalms 145:18-19

18 The Lord is near to all who call on him,
to all who call on him in truth.
19 He fulfills the desires of those who fear him;
he hears their cry and saves them. [NIV]

Matthew 6:7-8

7 And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. 8 Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. [NIV]