

Prayer: Our Mysterious Power

PRAYER 101 Boot Camp Basics

- (1) The Bible emphasizes the importance of **OUR** prayers, not just **MY** prayers.
Ephesians 6:18-20 Colossians 4:2 & Acts 2:42
- (2) God responds to **RELATIONSHIP**, not **RITUALS**.
Matthew 6:9 & Galatians 4:6 Proverbs 15:8
- (3) Our **OBEDIENCE** is far more important than our **FAITH**.
Proverbs 28:9 & Zechariah 7:13 Psalm 66:18 & Isaiah 59:1-2 Luke 17:5-6 & Acts 12:1-17

FOX HOLE PRAYERS

- (1) *Pray in the Spirit* = **ALIGNMENT**.
Ephesians 6:19-20 John 14:13-14 Matthew 6:9-13 & Luke 11:2-4 1 Timothy 2:1-4
- (2) *On all occasions, with all kinds of prayers and requests for all the Lord's people* = **COMPREHENSIVE**.
Ephesians 6:18 Philippians 4:6 James 4:2
- (3) *Be alert* = **PROACTIVE**.
Ephesians 6:18 Colossians 4:2
- (4) *Always keep on praying* = **PERSISTENT**.
Ephesians 6:18 Luke 11:1-13 & 18:1-8 Matthew 26:36-46 1 Thessalonians 5:17

Food for Thought

for the week of June 21, 2015
(Questions and Scriptures for further personal study)

1. Many of us have a “solo sport” type of faith and prayer where we don’t include anyone else in our own spiritual matters. What purposes do we see in the following verses for including other people in our faith and prayer life?

1 Thessalonians 5:11 New

¹¹ Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

[NIV]

James 5:16

¹⁶ Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective. [NIV]

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

⁹ Two are better than one,
because they have a good return for their labor:

¹⁰ If either of them falls down,
one can help the other up.

But pity anyone who falls
and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.
But how can one keep warm alone?

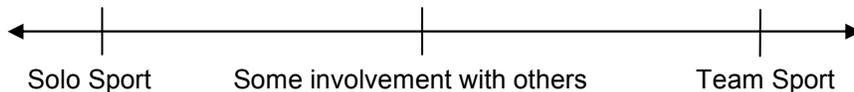
¹² Though one may be overpowered,
two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken. [NIV]

Proverbs 27:17

¹⁷ As iron sharpens iron,
so one person sharpens another. [NIV]

How would you rate your faith and prayer life on the continuum below?



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 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. This weekend we were reminded about the purpose and effectiveness of persistent prayer. In what way does the story of the death of David's son in 2 Samuel 12:15-23 illustrate the principle of persistence?

2 Samuel 12:15-23

¹⁵ After Nathan had gone home, the LORD struck the child that Uriah's wife had borne to David, and he became ill. ¹⁶ David pleaded with God for the child. He fasted and spent the nights lying in sackcloth^[a] on the ground. ¹⁷ The elders of his household stood beside him to get him up from the ground, but he refused, and he would not eat any food with them.

¹⁸ On the seventh day the child died. David's attendants were afraid to tell him that the child was dead, for they thought, "While the child was still living, he wouldn't listen to us when we spoke to him. How can we now tell him the child is dead? He may do something desperate."

¹⁹ David noticed that his attendants were whispering among themselves, and he realized the child was dead. "Is the child dead?" he asked.

"Yes," they replied, "he is dead."

²⁰ Then David got up from the ground. After he had washed, put on lotions and changed his clothes, he went into the house of the LORD and worshiped. Then he went to his own house, and at his request they served him food, and he ate.

²¹ His attendants asked him, "Why are you acting this way? While the child was alive, you fasted and wept, but now that the child is dead, you get up and eat!"

²² He answered, "While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept. I thought, 'Who knows? The LORD may be gracious to me and let the child live.' ²³ But now that he is dead, why should I go on fasting? Can I bring him back again? I will go to him, but he will not return to me." *[NIV]*

What surprises you about David's behavior?

How might someone misunderstand the main point of this passage?