

# If my people pray...



## When Should I Pray?

*Always* - "Pray without ceasing." (1 Thessalonians 5:17)

The sense of Paul's admonition is that we should include God in all of our thoughts as we go through the day. These prayers don't have to be formal, extensive or made on our knees...at least on our physical knees! God wants us humbly to acknowledge Him in all that we do in our lives. He is as close as we allow Him to be. Recognize His presence with a humble heart, a heart that is "on its knees."

*Daily Time Alone With God* - "Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, [Jesus] went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed." (Mark 1:35)

This passage is one among many that let us know that Jesus' habit was to spend time alone each day with His Father. It is an example He sets for us and confirms in *Matt 6:6a*, "But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen." It is that special time when we shut out the world and hear directly from God. We should consider what He says to us as we read His Word and pray back our response to Him. It is two-way communication with the Creator of the universe...who also happens to be our loving Heavenly Father. What a privilege!

These divine appointments with God are not always easy to keep. The pace of our lives is rapid and accelerating each day, but if our hearts are truly humble, we will be drawn to Him each morning, and feel a sense of loss if we are unable to meet. Make it routine, make it a habit. How? Here are a few suggestions.

- Set a regular time to meet with God. Morning, noon or night—but it must be achievable! Plan 15 minutes to start. It will grow as you grow.
- Find a suitable place. Quiet, private and available for your regular time. It should be comfortable, well lit, and free from noise and interruptions.
- Have a plan for Bible reading and a plan for prayer. God has something in His Word for you every single day. Have a reading plan that allows you to know where to go each time you sit down. Have a prayer plan that includes God and not just you and your needs! Spend time worshiping, praising, confessing and thanking God before you start asking for things.

The blessings that come over time from drawing closer to Him each day are hard to imagine until you experience them for yourself

*Corporately* - "After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly." (Acts 4:31)

The book of Acts alone reveals over 20 instances where believers came together to pray. God answered these prayers and promises to honor our sincere corporate prayer as well. Consider the power of corporate prayer in light of *Matthew 18:20*, "For where two or three come together in my name, there am I [Jesus] with them." Jesus is constantly interceding for us from the Father's right hand but here He promises to intercede from among us. A look at the history of God moving in revival demonstrates the incredible power of His people's prayer when they are drawn together to humbly seek His face and His will.

You should consider joining like minded men and women in your community to come together regularly to pray. Pray for God to touch hearts, convicting of sin and convincing of righteousness, so that His people can be blessed with the relationship God planned for us before the beginning of time.

*Forty Days of Prayer* - with thousands of others beginning September 1st. "...pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective." (James 5:16)

This will be a time of intercession for the hearts of Christians and for the hearts of our countrymen. We know that unless we turn to God first our national life cannot be healed.

∴ But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. (Matthew 6:33)