

were devoted to prayer praying about many different things related to their personal lives. For example, Paul taught Christians to cast the sources of their anxiety upon God so as to experience the peace of God (Philippians 4:6-7). So, there are many things we are taught to pray about that are deeply personal (i.e. Matthew 6:9-13).

Prayer is intercessory. Those who are devoted to prayer do not just use prayer selfishly. Rather, we see examples throughout the Bible of people who are devoted to prayer petitioning God on behalf of others. As we have already seen, devotion to prayer should include such intercession today (1 Timothy 2:1-2; Ephesians 6:18-20). This includes people of all sorts – including world leaders, church leaders, brothers and sisters in Christ, and the lost! We should view prayer as our opportunity to help others in their spiritual war as well as ourselves.

Prayer is opportunistic. Prioritizing prayer will require you to devote yourself to prayer in whatever situations you find yourself in (1 Thessalonians 5:17). In fact, we see people who were devoted to prayer praying in various contexts throughout Scripture. First, you need to be opportunistic with your own personal and private prayers (Matthew 6:5-6), setting aside the appropriate times to pray and taking advantage of various opportunities throughout the day. Second, you need to be opportunistic with the prayers offered in a church assembly (Acts 12:5, 12), setting aside the time to assemble with the church and diligently involving yourself in the prayers. Third, you need to be opportunistic to pray with others outside of a church assembly (Acts 20:36), setting aside time to gather and pray with brothers and sisters.

Conclusion

Prayer is much too great of a blessing God has provided to His people to not devote yourself to it! Yet, if you are not careful in making prayer a priority in your life and in your faith, it can easily be pushed to the background and simply be something that you are occasionally or habitually involved with. Rather than this, you should challenge yourself to take full advantage of the opportunity God has given you to approach His throne in prayer!



Prayer is a great privilege that has been given to God’s people. In addition, prayer is powerful in its effect whenever righteous people pray according to the will of God (James 5:16; 1 John 5:14-15). These basic facts about prayer ought to have a dramatic impact on how often we pray – and the fervency of that prayer. For, it should not be that God’s people pray to “check the box” of something God wants His people to do. Rather, God’s people should have the burning desire to devote themselves to prayer! In fact, God wants His people to recognize prayer as an integral part of fighting and winning our spiritual war!

The purpose of this lesson is to learn how to be devoted to prayer by learning that God wants His people to be devoted to prayer, considering prayer warriors of the Bible, and evaluating some characteristics of being devoted to prayer.

God Wants His People To Be Devoted To Prayer

Devoted. God’s people should not just be moderately interested in prayer. Rather, they must give continual attention to it. For example, this is one of the first things we read about Christians doing (Acts 2:42)! Furthermore, it is also something that God expects Christians to do (Romans 12:12; Colossians 4:2). But, this steadfast devotion to prayer goes beyond just being patient with God (Luke 18:1). Rather, it is a deep sense of commitment to the value and practice of prayer!

Pray always. God’s people should strive not to just be people who pray on certain occasions (i.e. before bed, before meals, with other members of the church, etc.). Rather, they should be so devoted to prayer that it is a constant element of their lives (1 Thessalonians 5:17; Luke 18:1). While prayer is not the only thing God desires from our lives, we should

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have a constant prayerful attitude that is quick to go to God in prayer and that utilizes many opportunities to pray.

Prayer warriors. “Prayer warriors” is a term that is used to describe people who are devoted to prayer, including prayers for others. This is a fitting description for what God wants of all His people – not just a select few. For example, as God teaches how to overcome Satan’s challenges in Ephesians 6, He teaches us to pray always (vv. 18-20). Being successful in our spiritual war requires a commitment to prayer – on behalf of yourself and others (for both other Christians and non-Christians, 1 Timothy 2:1-2). The Bible also presents the concept of striving, struggling, or wrestling for others in prayer (Colossians 4:12)!

Prayer Warriors Of The Bible

David. Not only do we see David praying at different points through the Biblical record of his life, but we also have the book of Psalms that contains many of David’s prayers to God. For example, when David was facing a physical enemy, he inquired of the Lord to know what he should do (1 Samuel 23:10-12). Or, when David faced trouble from his son Absalom, he prayed to the Lord for deliverance (Psalm 3:1-4).

Daniel. Daniel’s devotion to prayer was tested in a major way whenever the king issued an edict that forbade the calling on any god (or God) other than the king, threatening any violators would be thrown into the lions’ den (Daniel 6:6-9). Yet, whenever Daniel learned of this, he continued his normal practice of praying to God three times a day, on his knees, with his windows opened toward Jerusalem (Daniel 6:10)! Then, Daniel 9 records Daniel’s prayer when he understood the captivity of the people would last for 70 years, petitioning God and confessing the sin of the people (vv. 3-6).

Jesus. Jesus is the ultimate example of one who was devoted to prayer, fighting in prayer for Himself as He strove to do the will of God and for others. For example, we see Jesus praying at many different times and even for long lengths of time (Mark 1:35). Then, we see Jesus praying to the Father throughout John 17 concerning Himself (vv. 1-5), His disciples at that time (vv. 6-19), and all who would believe in Him through His disciples (vv. 20-26). In fact, Jesus’s devotion to prayer can be seen in that He was praying in the moments immediately preceding His arrest and crucifixion (Matthew 26:36-46).

The apostles. The apostles undoubtedly learned from Jesus’s personal devotion to prayer, and asked Him to teach them how to pray (Luke 11:1-4). However, their devotion to prayer did not end when Jesus

ascended to Heaven. Rather, upon their return to Jerusalem after Jesus ascended, the apostles were all continually devoted to prayer (Acts 1:14). Furthermore, the apostles considered devotion to prayer and the ministry of the word as primary works (Acts 6:4). Then, the apostle Paul can also often be seen praying and writing concerning a devotion to prayer (Colossians 4:2).

Characteristics Of Being Devoted To Prayer

Prayer is prioritized. Prayer takes time. Although time is the most precious resource we have on this earth, God repeatedly demonstrates that prayer is worth the time spent on it. Those who are devoted to God have given prayer a prominent place in their schedules, even when it means sacrificing other things (Psalm 55:17; Mark 1:35). Interestingly, prayer is also often coupled with fasting in the Scriptures (Daniel 9:3; Acts 13:3). So, whether with fasting included or not, prayer must be given a significant place in your schedule and you must take advantage of whatever opportunity you can to pray (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

Prayer is sincere. True devotion to prayer is not making sure you recite a form/memorized prayer at designated times. Although there is nothing inherently wrong with repeating the same prayers, we must always make certain that we are meaning the words that we pray so that they are not empty/meaningless babble (Matthew 6:7). But, as you consider the examples of Scripture, you should be impressed that the prayers recorded in its pages sincerely express the thoughts of those praying (i.e. Acts 4:23-31). This is how we are to pray always in the spirit (Ephesians 6:18, whether in our own sincere spirits or according to the teachings of the Spirit as He helps us be in a right relationship with God).

Prayer is desired. Those who were devoted to prayer in the Bible always appear to desire to pray (not something they were forced to do). God wants people to pray to Him who desire to approach His throne and come into His presence (Hebrews 4:14-16; 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3). Although there are many things we can become distracted with in this life, the pursuit of all those things will end in devastating ways. But, those who truly delight in the Lord will seek refuge in Him (Psalm 73:26-28). One way we do this will be through prayer. In fact, there should be a yearning that we develop to draw near to God by approaching Him in prayer.

Prayer is personal. Those who are devoted to God pray about anything and everything that is significant to them. As you search throughout the pages of Scripture, you can see the people of God who