

BECOMING MATURE IN CHRIST

The Keys of Spiritual Development

Participation in Corporate Prayer

Acts 1:12-14

Introduction: We have a personal relationship with God and that relationship grows and develops through personal prayer. We are also, however, a part of a family: the Body of Christ. In our focus on our personal relationship we must not forget that Jesus died for His Bride which is The Church. The Kingdom is much bigger than we are and we have a much higher calling than merely satisfying our own goals. It is in corporate prayer that we reach our highest potential.

I. Corporate Prayer is Primarily About the Church & Kingdom of God

- A. My House shall be called a house of prayer (Matt. 21:13; Mark 11:17)
- B. The Church is urged to pray that the Word of the Lord will spread rapidly (2 Th 3:1)
- C. The Church is urged to be devoted to prayer for open doors to the Gospel (Col 4:2-4)

II. Jesus is Uniquely Present When Two or Three Have Gathered in His Name for Prayer

- A. The authority of binding and loosing (Matt. 18:18-20)
- B. God is able to do more than we ask or think when the Church prays (Eph 3:20-21)

III. Corporate Prayer Brings Unity to the Body of Christ

- A. We are called to one Body and to unity of the Holy Spirit (Eph 4:1-6, Gal 3:27-29, Col 3:9-11)
- B. It is difficult to pray together and hold prejudice or fight at the same time

IV. Corporate Prayer Builds Faith and Prepares for the Manifestation of God's Presence

- A. God reveals Himself and His will to the Church in corporate prayer (Acts 13:1-4)
- B. The choice of spiritual leadership is revealed through prayer (Acts 1:23-26)
- C. Historically, revival comes through corporate prayer as the church becomes desperate

V. Prayer is the Primary Work of the People of God

- A. A Biblical truth and a corporate value of the Christian & Missionary Alliance
- B. We are called to be devoted to prayer (Rom 12:10-13)
- C. Without prayer in total surrender & dependence, we can do nothing (John 15:4-8)

VI. Corporate Prayer Brings Correction & Clarifies Direction

- A. The Macedonian vision comes to Paul as the group seeks direction (Acts 16:6-10)
- B. The challenges of Gentile believers (multiculturalism) (Acts 15:23-29)
- C. Gives warning and builds authority in spiritual warfare (Eph 6:12-18, 2 Cor 1:8-11)

Conclusion: The primary work of the people of God is prayer (C&MA core value). We can do nothing until we have prayed; after we have prayed there is nothing we cannot do (Armin Gesswein).

Prayer is truly the most important work of the people of God. While it is true that God cares deeply about each and every one individually, He is closest in heart to those who understand His eternal goals and are concerned about His glory in the Gospel and the Kingdom. God loves the human race and wants to save people from every tribe and tongue and nation. This is the mission of the Church and those who catch this vision and pray together for its accomplishment enjoy the mighty manifestation of the power of God.

SCRIPTURES

12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away.

13 When they had entered the city, they went up to the upper room where they were staying; that is, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas the son of James.

14 These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer, along with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.
(Act 1:12-14 NAU)

2 Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving;
3 praying at the same time for us as well, that God will open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned;

4 that I may make it clear in the way I ought to speak.
(Col 4:2-4 NAU)

18 With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints,

19 and pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel,

20 for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in proclaiming it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.
(Eph 6:18-20 NAU)

