

Prayer Quest Lesson 8

Strategies for Praying in Your Area of Influence (Family or Ministry)

Personal Prayer is **absolutely essential** in the life of a leader whether a leader in ministry in the Body of Christ, a leader in business, a leader(mom or dad) in a family, or a leader in an organization. In God's Word, the definition of a leader is far different from the definition of a leader in the world. In the world the leader is one who directs, administrates, organizes, makes decisions, delegates responsibility, and generally is "in charge". A leader of God's Kingdom is one who serves. Jesus' disciples were leaders in training. Your children or those you lead in ministry are also leaders (servants) in training. Jesus mentored His disciples through His words and through His example and serves for a model for us. In Luke 22:24-27, Jesus taught them about being servant-leaders. The disciples had been arguing about which one of them was the greatest and Jesus said, *"The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them and they are called "benefactors". But not so among you; on the contrary, he who is the greatest among you let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves. For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves.* " As a leader, we are called to serve **first God** and second to **serve the people** God calls us to serve.

Servanthood requires brokenness. We are being called as leaders to **get into a right relationship with Jesus** so we will see **His power being demonstrated in our lives and in our service to others.** Our goal is to have **His victorious life fill us and overflow through us to others (those we serve as leaders).** **This happens through**

COMMUNION WITH HIM in prayer. In order to get into a right relationship with Jesus, our wills must be broken to His will. Our proud self must be broken so Jesus can be fully revealed through us. Roy Hession, in his book, "The Calvary Road" says, "*The hard unyielding self, which justifies itself, wants its own way, stands up for its rights, and seeks its own glory, at last bows its head to God's will, admits its wrong, gives up its own way to Jesus, surrenders its rights and discards its own glory—that the Lord Jesus might have all and be all. In other words, it is dying to self and self-attitudes.*" **Prayer brings brokenness.** It shows us who we are. As we enter into God's presence, He reveals our sin, our weakness, and our total hopelessness and helplessness apart from Him. Our pride is displayed as He shows us how weak and sinful we really are and as we **bow the knee** before Him in repentance, brokenness is the result. **When a leader is broken, his heart resists pride and embraces humility and the Lord can't resist embracing him and filling him and empowering him for greater service.** A.C. Dixon, a great Southern Baptist Bible expositor and speaker who ministered in big-city churches in Brooklyn, Roxbury, MA, Chicago, and London from 1890 to 1914 in told this story to illustrate God's response to our brokenness.

"A dear friend of mine who was quite a lover of the chase, told me the following story: 'Rising early one morning I heard the baying of a score of deerhounds in pursuit of their quarry. Looking away to a broad, open field in front of me, I saw a young fawn making its way across, and giving signs, moreover, that its race was well nigh run. Reaching the rails of the enclosure, it leaped over and crouched within ten feet from where I stood. A moment later two of the hounds came over, when the fawn ran in my direction and pushed its head between my legs. I lifted

the little thing to my breast, and swinging round and round, fought off the dogs. I felt, just then, that all the dogs in the West, could not, and should not capture that fawn after its weakness had appealed to my strength.’ So is it, when human helplessness appeals to Almighty God.”

As leaders we need to come daily to His presence in prayer that we may stay broken and humble. We need **daily communion** with our Lord to lead us to repentance, and also to be continually filled with His Spirit, renewed in His love, and strengthened by His power.

Servant leadership requires hearing directions, getting guidance, and responding to the wisdom of the master. In order to carry out his duties, a servant must spend time with the master **hearing** the master’s desires for the day. **We receive our “marching orders” through prayer. As we spend time in prayer, we get our direction and also the wisdom of how and when to walk out what the Lord wants us to do.** Prayer requires that we **WAIT on the Lord.** As we pray we receive **His perspectives, His solutions, His methods, His insight and His timing.** Prayer opens our spiritual understanding to see more clearly from His Word. **If we fail to pray before making leadership decisions because of the pressure of what must be done, we will usually find that it takes more time to unscramble the mess we make without prayer, that it would have taken to pray.**

Servanthood means we are totally dependent on the provision of the master and we must PETITION Him for all our needs. A servant in the Biblical sense, was a slave who had no means of providing for himself, but was totally dependent on the master to meet his needs for food, protection, clothing, and medical care. As servant leaders, we have many needs: **Food from His Word, Healing from His Hand, Clothing of the**

power and anointing of the Holy Spirit and Protection from the enemy. As leaders we are the enemy's prime targets. Prayer is the means through which we **PETITION** the Lord for all our needs. This is not self-serving, but an absolute necessity. We need His provision for money, health, wisdom, and protection in order to serve Him and others.

Servant-leadership requires that we become Intercessors for those we are leading. E. M. Bounds declared, *"Talking to men for God is a great thing, but talking to God for men is greater still"*. Intercession is placing the emphasis in prayer on others not on us. Leaders must **lay down their lives** first in prayer and then in service for their followers. As we intercede for those we serve, we die to self and welcome the burdens of others. We are commanded to **love** those we lead—that is the essence of a shepherd's heart. **Intercession has been described as "Love on its Knees"**. When we love someone, we seek his best. When we begin to pray for another person, we begin to know and to understand and to cherish him as never before.

Prayer in the lives of leaders is very valuable. The ideal for us all is a **daily block of time** for prayer set aside for spending time with the Lord. However, the ideal sometimes doesn't happen. Busy leaders may find themselves so strapped and trapped for time from the pressures and demands of people, they are not spending the time with Him they need. **Prayer, like worship is also a lifestyle.** Paul wrote that we should "pray constantly". Pray in the car (a sure antidote to Road Rage!!), pray at work, pray as you do housework and take care of your kids, Pray as you wait at a doctor's office, pray when you get up and pray when you lie down. Pray in church and pray in your home. Pray with the understanding and pray in the Spirit. Set aside a time each day just for Him. Practice eliminating distractions—turn off the phone, shut the door, and refuse to let thoughts of

all the other things you need to do take your heart and mind away from Him during this time. Children can be taught not to disturb adults when they are praying unless it is an emergency. Better yet, teach them to pray and include them in your prayer time.

Wherever, whenever and however works for you to pray, **just do it!** Remember Prayer is like a **life jacket** that will **keep you from sinking** under the weight of the load you carry, **will protect you from being overwhelmed** by the waves of adversity that come against you, and **will help you to stay afloat in peace and safety** as you travel the River of God.