

## What makes you pray?

Do you walk through your day prayerfully? Or is it hit and miss?

Just like anything there's a balance between regimen and flexibility when it comes to our time with our Lord.

“Time with the Lord” – meaning the time we set aside where nobody and nothing will disturb us.

We are determined to be quiet before the Lord, whether that quiet time lasts 5 hours or 5 minutes!

We are determined to follow the declaration of God in Psalm 46:10:

“Be still, and know that I am God”

A regimented time with the Lord is needed - that is making the time to stop everything and be with God through the reading of His Word, listening to what He wants to say to us for the day ahead.

It's just as if you are seeking orders or direction from your boss: If you don't meet with your boss to let him speak to you the things that he is going to expect of you, then how will you know what his expectations are for your time and effort?

God has expectations of you – not harsh things, not grievous things, but simple expectations, and He's better than a boss, because God gives us everything we need to accomplish His expectations.

A flexibility comes into play in our attitude toward what our expectations and desires are, during our time with the Lord. It's OK to have desires and expectations, but they should be able to be set aside as we look to the Holy Spirit to either change or affirm those expectations.

Some thoughts about flexibility:

- Our time with the Lord should not be:
  - Obligatory – it shouldn't be, “I gotta read or God will be mad at me.”
  - Rigid – it's great to have a reading plan, but commit that plan to the Lord and let him direct it.
    - “A man plans his way but the lord directs his steps” Proverbs 16:9
    - Watch out for the anxiousness of not “getting through my reading”
  - Timed – we ought not to put too much of a time limit on our time with the Lord – either long or short.
  - Formulaic – Let God's Holy Spirit show you how to act, how much to read, how much to praise Him, how much to worship Him, etc.
    - We ought to be willing to stop all that we're doing and stay in that quiet-time quiet-place for as long as it takes (or rather as long as God wants to take) for God to speak to us. We want to be receptive to the Spirit of God.
    - I want to be receptive to the Spirit of God specifically calling me to stay still as long as He desires me to. Isn't that what we would like to say we would choose? Then why not just DO THAT!?!?
    - If you sense the thought to drop to your knees or get into a prostrate position, just do it. We usually know when a line is crossed if we in the Spirit; we know when not to “bark like dogs”. But to kneel before Him physically is not a bad thing. **The main thing is the posture of my heart.**
- What should our time with Him be like:
  - Meaningful
  - Open
  - Honest
  - Patient

We don't want to be so rigid that our time with the Lord is spent being anxious about “getting our reading done”. For example, I have a reading plan, but “oh no... I'm behind... Oh I have to catch up or else...” What am I thinking about? Certainly not hearing what He wants to say - I'm worried about the act of reading as if it's some obligation to God.

Ultimately, I truly want my daily quiet time with Him to be meaningful, so that He would be able to get through to me; but He won't be able to unless I drop all of my rigidness and even let Him empty me and fill me with Himself.

If I read one verse and He stops me with reason and meaningful understanding, it would be better than reading 20 chapters just to check a box. However, there may be times when He leads us to read 20 chapters.

There are times of heavy reading from which God blesses and brings wonderful understanding and revelation; and there are other times of reading one verse of His glorious Word and He stops us in our tracks, and causes us to be awestruck before Him. *Let's let Him decide how He wants it to be.*

### **What happens after the quiet time?**

Our hearing from Him ought not to stop with our leaving our prayer closet. The truth is that God goes with us every single step of every day.

But that quiet time is what prepares us for those steps. We see things in light of what God showed us that morning. And the more we learn to walk this way, while applying the belief that we're totally dependent upon Him, the more He will direct us.

The truth is, saved or unsaved, God will not force anyone to be blessed.

Through the day, a true intercessor will be walking with the Lord and continually asking him in a way that Abraham did about the circumstances in the lives of people as they live unaware of the danger of destruction. "Lord, will you destroy this city if there are 50, 40, 30 10, 5 righteous men found in it?"

We may never know what our prayers have done in the lives of those around us. But most of us are all too aware of what it feels like to regret missing opportunities to speak when we need to, to pray when we should have, etc.

### **Exhortation:**

Let's agree to pray for each other; to exhort each other – not to guilt each other – but to call each other out on these things, in love, to "take earnest heed to the things which we have heard [and believe], lest at any time we should let them slip away" (Hebrews 2:1).

Hebrews 2:1-4 (NKJV)

<sup>1</sup>Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. <sup>2</sup>For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, <sup>3</sup>how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard [Him], <sup>4</sup>God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?

Let's agree to remind each to be led by the Holy Spirit, rather than our flesh! (Galatians 5:18, 22-25, 19-21)

Right now, I proclaim that if you ask me if I've prayed today, and I haven't, I will not feel unnecessarily convicted!!

The key word here is "unnecessarily". I don't have any problem with conviction where it is necessary; in fact I welcome it – for example, if I said I would pray for you, and I didn't; then I ought to be convicted about making a rash vow. That conviction ought not to be a lasting thing though - I need to turn back to God and be honest, and even thank Him for the conviction.

Thus, I also proclaim that I want God to move me to any healthy conviction that I need in order to turn me to the correct direction according to His Word and Wisdom, and according to the understanding and knowledge of Jesus Christ, my Lord and my Savior.

### **Does anyone else want these things?**

### **I'm calling all real men – Godly men – and I exhort you to MAN UP!**

For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps.  
- 1 Peter 2:21