

The Marks of a Man after God's own Heart

February 3, 2010

Mark 1:35....Very early in the morning , while it was still dark, Jesus got up , left the house, and sent off to a solitary place, where he prayed.

Each of us needs to pray, "Lord, just like the disciples, teach me to pray." Maybe you've been a Christian for a while and prayer has seemed kind of boring to you. The problem isn't prayer. The problem is you just don't realize how much God loves you. It's not to be a duty, it's to be a delight. Not something you endure, it's something you enjoy. Would you pray, "Dear God, teach me how to pray. Jesus Christ, thank you for calling me Your Friend. I want to have a friendship relationship with you. Help me to understand what that means. I want You to direct my life. Father, I want to see miracles happen in my life, things that can't be explained by my own effort. I want to see impossible situations made possible through prayer."

NOTES:

Prayer is an act of _____
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DISCUSSION POINTS:

To pray is to change – have you ever experienced a change in your own life that came about because of prayer?

Abraham, Moses, David, Solomon, Daniel, Nehemiah, the apostles, Paul...How can we keep from being discouraged by the example of the "giants of the faith"?

Frank Laubach said, "I want to learn how to live so that to see someone is to pray for them."

Experiment with that approach to life for the rest of the day and consider what you learn from the experience.

What should we do when we don't feel like praying?

Applications:

Misconceptions about prayer:

- 1) The notion that prayer mainly involves asking things from God. Answers to prayer are wonderful, but they are secondary to the main function of prayer, which is a growing, perpetual communion.
- 2) The view that prayer must always be a struggle. Prayer should be a joy – it is that we are becoming friends with God.
- 3) The idea that we live in a closed universe, that everything is fixed. We think, 'Since everything is set and God knows the end from the beginning, why pray?' But Paul said, "We are fellow workers with God – I Cor. 3:9"
- 4) The fear that our faith will crumble if our prayers are not answered the first time every time.
- 5) The common teaching that we should pray once. Any more than that shows a lack of faith. This flies in the face of a great deal of biblical experience and teaching, especially Jesus' parables on importunity.

On Your Own:

The pattern of prayer	Matthew 6:5-15
The prayer of worship	Psalms 103
The prayer of repentance	Psalms 51
The prayer of thanksgiving	Psalms 150
The prayer of guidance	Matthew 26:36-46
The prayer of faith	James 5:13-18
The prayer of command	Mark 9:14-29