

The Old-Time Evangelistic News

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We Need To Pray! (Part 7)

I Timothy 2:1-2, 8

In considering this great subject of prayer, we have focused on The Process of Prayer and The People for Prayer. Now we turn our attention to **The Practice of Prayer**. In discussing the previous topics, we talked about how and who we can pray for. As we discovered, the activity of prayer is a wonderful thing where we can spend time with our Creator and Savior, praising Him for Who He is and what He does, and asking Him to meet the needs of ourselves and others. Prayer is a marvelous privilege that I hope we have been encouraged to do more of than we do now.

But in discussing the subject of prayer, we must ask, “Where can we pray?” We can answer that question with one word—Wherever. I Timothy 2:8 says, “*I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.*” In the passage that we began with, Paul tells Timothy and all believers that we can pray wherever we are. That means in a building or outside. That means in the United States or in any other country in the world. There is no place that we cannot pray.

I like praying in a church building when no one else is around. Oftentimes, we park our trailer at a church. I will go into the building in the morning, and do my private devotions in the auditorium. It is my private time with the Lord, and I love praying in the building where I will be preaching. But the building itself does not put me any closer to the Lord. It is the activity of prayer that makes a difference, not the building.

You may not have access to a church building as often as I do. But you can practice prayer as effectively as I can. You can pray in

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your home. It may be in the living room before everyone else gets up, or you may pray in your bedroom all by yourself. You could have a building that is not connected to the house. That may be the place where you pray. All of these are wonderful places to pray unto the Lord. Again, the place is not important. Praying is!

I am so glad that we are not limited as to the location of prayer. Wherever we are, we can have access to God. What a wonderful privilege we have in prayer. But are we praying? We can talk to God in our home. But is our home a place of prayer? We can talk to God in our office. But do we? God has given us this marvelous privilege. O that we would take advantage of it!

I have focused on buildings in describing that we can pray wherever, but I must also mention that “wherever” involves both inside a building and outside in the open air. I have a friend that talks about his “prayer place.” It is along the bank of a river near his hometown. For him, that is his special place where he can get in touch with God. That is a wonderful thing—having a place where one can spend time with God.

I know some other preachers who live in the mountains of North Carolina. They feel that the special place to pray is in the mountains. That is great. But everyone does not live close to a mountain or a river. If you feel that is where you should pray, then by all means claim it as your place and pray! But we serve a God who can answer when one prays by a river, in the mountains, in their house, or in the church. God is not restricted by your place of prayer. We can pray wherever!

But do you realize that God hears His believers no matter where they are in the world? Some friends of mine seem to think that people in the Southeastern section of the United States are the only ones who can “get a hold of God.” As blessed as the southeast may be, they do not have a monopoly on God. A believer in South Dakota, North Dakota, California, or Maine, has as much access to

God as one in the South.

The same is true of a believer in another country. We American believers think that we have something that other people in the world do not. That is because we are often narrowminded and focus only on the United States. But a believer in Africa, Asia, Europe, or South America has the same privilege that we do. It does not matter where we are, we can pray. The problem is not the location of our body because God can hear us from any place. The problem is the location of our heart. Do we desire to spend time with the Lord?

I may mention this again, but it is worth mentioning more than once. There are some religions that teach confession must be made to a priest. They also seem to imply that a “lay” person, or one who is not in the ministry, does not have as much access to God as the minister, or whatever they may call him. That is not taught anywhere in Scripture. What I have tried to show in this message is that every believer has equal access to God. The non-preacher, if I can use that term, can pray with as much power as the preacher. When you sin, you can confess your sin to the Lord yourself. You do not have to go to anyone else. Every believer, based upon Hebrews 4:14-16, I Peter 2:9, I John 1:9, and other passages, can pray to God themselves. We do not have to go through another person because Christ Himself is the access for every believer.

But not only can we pray wherever, we can also pray Whenever. I Thessalonians 5:17 says, “*Pray without ceasing.*” We often see that as a burden to bear—we must always be in a continual state of prayer. But that should not be a burden. It should be a blessing. We can stay in continual contact with God. We can also see the truth of praying whenever in Ephesians 6:18. I mentioned this verse earlier in connection with praying for fellow believers in their service to the Lord. But this time I want to focus on one word—always. We have the wonderful privilege of having direct access to God at any time.

I mention this illustration. It may seem silly, but I believe it will

show us the truth of praying whenever. God did not give us a schedule of prayer time when we were saved. He did not say, “Your time is 3:15-3:30am. That is the only time that you can pray. I have someone else for every other time slot. If you do not pray then, it is too bad. I am busy with someone else.” As I said, we may think that is silly, but it brings home the point. We are not relegated to a certain time of prayer. I can pray any time of the day. We can say along with the psalmist, “*Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice.*” God has given us a wonderful privilege in prayer. May we take advantage of it.

We can add something else in connection with praying whenever. God is available at any time that we call upon Him. At some point in our lives, we may have needed help and when we called for a person to aid us, we could not reach them. They may not have intended to ignore us, but we could not reach them. I remember a song that I heard when I was growing up. It used the instrument of the telephone as a picture for prayer. The song began, “Central’s never busy, always on the line.” Before the advent of call waiting or voice mail, if the number that you called was in use, a beeping sound indicated that the person you were calling was talking to someone else. Today we would have to rewrite the song and say, “There is no voice mail, He always answers,” or whatever would rhyme. But the point that the writer of the song was making was that God is always available at all times. He will never say, “Wait your turn, or wait until I am done with Harry.” God is so great that He can listen to prayers from all believers all over the world at the same time and answer each prayer in the right way. He never gets mixed up.

Sometimes we may ask someone for help, and they may not be able to help us. They may have every desire to meet whatever need is at hand, but the problem is beyond their power to do anything with. But that situation never arises when we pray to God. He may not answer the prayer as we want it answered, but that is not because He cannot do it. There is nothing beyond the power of God. God Himself asked in Genesis 18:14, “*Is any thing too hard for the*

Lord?” God answered that question nine months later with the birth of Isaac. About 2,000 years later, He sent Gabriel to answer it with these words to Mary in Luke 1:37, “*For with God nothing shall be impossible.*” God may not answer our prayer exactly as we want, but it is not because He cannot. He may have something better in store for us.

So what can we learn about the practice of prayer. We can pray wherever—inside, outside, north, south, east, or west. It does not matter. Wherever we are is the place to pray. Also, we can pray whenever—early in the morning, late at night, in the middle of the day. Again, it does not matter. Whenever we pray is the time for prayer.

Next month we will conclude the message with our fourth thought—**The Product of Prayer**. We will look at three passages that discuss the subject of prayer and then give the result if prayer is made. Hopefully, it will cement in our hearts the necessity of prayer. Combined with what we have already seen, when we see what happens when we pray, I hope our cry will be, “We need to pray!”