INTRODUCTION

Last month we started a series of devotions on the “P’s” of prayer. Last month was on the Purpose of prayer. This month is on the Power of prayer.

1. Jesus anticipated that people would become slack in their prayers -
   a. Telling the parable of the persistent widow, that people might always pray
      Luke 18:1-7  ...I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.
   b. Wondering if He would find faith on earth (i.e., people praying) when He returned
      Luke 18:8  ...when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

2. Paul frequently exhorted Christians to be diligent in their prayers -
   Ephesians 6:18  Praying always with all prayer and supplication.
   Colossians 4:2  Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving.
   1 Thessalonians 5:17  Pray without ceasing.

3. If we have become slack in our prayers, might that be an indication that we do not appreciate “The Power Of Prayer”? Have we forgotten what a privilege it is to pray?

    Consider then, an example of the power of prayer...

4. **Local Bar Sues Local Church**

   In a small Texas town, a new bar/tavern started a building to open up their business. The local Baptist church started a campaign to block the bar from opening with petitions and prayers. Work progressed, however right up till the week before opening, when a lightning strike hit the bar and it burned to the ground. The church folks were rather smug in their outlook after that, until the bar owner sued the church on the grounds that the church was ultimately responsible for the demise of his building, either through direct or indirect actions or means. The church vehemently denied all responsibility or any connection to the buildings demise in its reply to the court.

   As the case made its way in to court, the judge looked over the paperwork. At the hearing he commented, "I don't know how I'm going to decide this, but as it appears from the paperwork, we have a bar owner who believes in the power of prayer, and an entire church congregation that does not."

   Okay…but what does the Bible have to say about the power of prayer???
The Power Of Prayer

EXAMPLES OF THE POWER OF PRAYER

THERE IS FORGIVENESS FROM GOD...

1. The Christian can find forgiveness through the blood of Christ –
   
   **1 John 1:9** If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

2. Thus the erring Christian is told to repent and pray –
   
   **Acts 8:22** If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
   
   -- Do we want forgiveness from God? What do we do?

THERE IS PEACE FROM GOD...

1. The antidote to anxiety is to pray –
   
   **Philippians 4:6** Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

2. The Christian will find their hearts and minds guarded by the peace of God –
   
   **Philippians 4:7** And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.
   
   -- Do we want peace from God? What do we do?

THERE IS STRENGTH FROM GOD...

1. Paul prayed that the Ephesians might be strengthened in the inner man –
   
   **Ephesians 3:14-16, 20** For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,
The Power Of Prayer

2. When we need to be strong, Christians can likewise pray for themselves!
-- Do we want strength from God? What do we do?

THERE IS OPPORTUNITY FROM GOD...

1. Paul realized that God provided him opportunity to teach others –

   1 Corinthians 3:5  *Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?*

2. He therefore requested prayer that such opportunities would continue –

   Colossians 4:3  *Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds:*

-- Do we want opportunity from God? What do we do?

THERE IS BOLDNESS FROM GOD...

1. When the apostles needed boldness, they prayed and God delivered –

   Acts 4:31  *And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.*

2. When Paul needed boldness, he asked for prayers in his behalf –

   Ephesians 6:19-20  *And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.*

-- Do we want boldness from God? What do we do?

THERE IS WISDOM FROM GOD...

1. Wisdom is not knowledge, but insight that makes the best use of the knowledge one has

2. The Christian is promised wisdom through prayer without doubt –

   James 1:5-8  *If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But*
The Power Of Prayer

let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.

-- Do we want wisdom from God? What do we do?

THERE IS HEALING FROM GOD...

1. Those who are sick should ask elders to pray for them –

   James 5:14-15  Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

2. Those who have sinned should confess, and we should pray for one another –

   James 5:16  Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

-- Do we want healing from God? What do we do?

CONCLUSION

1. The power of prayer can indeed be a blessing...
   a. To the one who prays in faith
   b. For those for whom prayers are offered

2. There is help in time of need from God...
   a. We have a wonderful High Priest who understands our problems –

   Hebrews 4:14-15  Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.
The Power Of Prayer

b. Thus we can at anytime approach God boldly in prayer, to obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need –

Hebrews 4:16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

-- Don’t you want mercy and grace whenever needed, for yourself and for others?

3. Indeed, the effective fervent prayer of a righteous man –

James 5:16 Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

a. avails much
b. can accomplish much
c. has great power
d. is powerful and effective

-- If such is true of one righteous man, how about the prayers of many righteous?

4. Do we believe in the power of prayer...?

a. Then let us pray always
b. Let us continue earnestly in prayer

-- Yes, let us pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17)

But not all have the privilege of “The Power Of Prayer”. In our next study, we will see why...