

SOW IN TEARS ||| JULY 9TH, 2023

“O generation, see the word of the Lord! Have I been a wilderness to Israel, Or a land of darkness? Why do My people say, ‘We are lords; We will come no more to You’ Can a virgin forget her ornaments, Or a bride her attire? Yet My people have forgotten Me days without number.

Jeremiah 2:31-32 NKJV

What if we lived on less oxygen? We can become Hypoxic. Confusion, difficulty breathing, rapid heart rate, lack of oxygen to vital organs and tissues. Long term can lead to chronic respiratory failure. Not recommended.

What if we stop eating? Short term the body compensates for a few things but...as the lack of food is prolonged things get more dire as our body begins to breakdown its own proteins so it can use their amino acids to form glucose, eating away muscle tissues to stay alive.

What if we stop drinking water? Dehydration, extreme thirst, fatigue, ultimately organ failure and death.

*My people say, ‘We are lords; We will come no more to You’ Can a virgin forget her ornaments, Or a bride her attire? Yet **My people have forgotten Me days without number.***

Jeremiah 2:31-32 NKJV

What is it like when we live with out coming into the presence of God? We become puffed up believing we are God. Our pride swells up. We decided to no longer come before him. We fail to clothe ourselves in his righteousness and rather walk in shame.

One commentator shares it like this:

Israel's rejection of God was unnatural. It is only natural for a young woman to treasure her ornaments, or for a bride to value her clothing. When God's people forget their God - who has done so much for them - It is an offense against all that is good and right.

How have we learned to live without prayer? Our money can fix it, my talents can fix it, my charisma can fix it. We are Lord's....We are in need of him.

Recent studies on Christians prayer lives approximately...

- 2% of Christians report a high degree of satisfaction with their prayer lives
 - But what steps are we taking to change that?
- 68% say they pray daily
- 17% pray only on a weekly basis, leaving 15% who pray either monthly/seldom/never
- Men were less likely to pray than women

- Half of all Christians in the United States spend less than 15 minutes of their day in prayer

A far cry from “Pray without ceasing”

Conversely in the United States we spend on average:

- 61 minutes on Netflix
- 46 minutes on Youtube
- 47 minutes on TikTok

Per Day...

How can we love someone and never spend time alone with them?

Five love languages - My wife likes when I learn what she likes

God is a person - He might like us to learn what he likes

God seems to like when we pray to him and inquire of him:

If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.

James 1:5

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Phil. 4:6-7

*Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in **prayer**.*

Romans 12:11-12

The early church after Jesus ascended to heaven...

“They all joined together constantly in **prayer**”

Acts 1:14

Following the outpouring of the Holy Spirit...

“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to **prayer**.”

Acts 2:42

Come near to God and he will come near to you.

James 4:8

Like the promise to Jeremiah God says to his people today...

Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.

Jeremiah 33:3

We have access to the throne of God, but we then decide to stay away.

What if our souls cried out...

*O God, you are my God, earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you, in a dry and weary land where there is no water...**I think of you through the watches of the night.** Because you are my help, I sing in the shadow of your wings. **My soul clings to you;** your right hand upholds me.*

Psalm 63

One of the songs we sang earlier touched on the heart of Matthew chapter 7 where it says...

Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

PEOPLE WHO ASK ARE THOSE WHO RECEIVE; PEOPLE WHO SEEK ARE THOSE WHO FIND; AND PEOPLE WHO KNOCK ARE THOSE WHO HAVE DOORS OPENED.

FOCUS ON OUR PART LET HIM TAKE CARE OF THE RESULTS.

Luke 18 shares the parable of a woman who persistently asked for justice and acquired it. Had she not asked the judge would never have acted.

God calls his people to pray and not give up. That is the actual stated reason given in the Gospel account for that parable.

When Jesus returns will he find faith on the earth?

Start with our lives and let God transform the world around us through time in his presence.

Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.

Psalm 51:10

The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

James 5:16

IT STARTS WITH THE SEEMINGLY LITTLE THINGS...DAILY AND CONSISTENT PRAYERS AND COMMUNION WITH HIM LEADS TO LIFE-ALTERING MOMENTS OF FAITH THAT CAN CHANGE THE WORLD.

Hudson Taylor Story/Illustration

- There is a story of a mother praying for her sons salvation **having attained assurance** that it had come ended hours of prayer. "I know my boy...I have been rejoicing."

- 1854 - Current pulling a ship of sailors towards a reef and island of cannibals. 4 young men prayed for a wind and were firmly convinced that God answers prayers. **Having attained assurance** that the wind was coming a young man went up.

The young boy was Hudson Taylor who would go on to become one of the most well known missionaries of the 1800s. His mother's foundation of prayer and waiting for answers changed the course of his life. Time spent in prayer with God transformed his heart and impacted lives around him.

*When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dreamed. Our mouths were filled with laughter, our tongues with songs of joy. Then it was said among the nations, "The Lord has done great things for them." The Lord has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy. Restore our fortunes, Lord, like streams in the Negev. **Those who sow with tears will reap with songs of joy. Those who go out weeping, carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with them.***

Psalm 126

Great things have been done but there is a prayer for complete restoration.

Restore us with streams in the desert produced by heavy rains

- Sudden rush of life, much like our undeserved salvation

Seeing the life we have received mixed with the reality that the world is not as it should be we must continue to pray all the more fervently

- Like Nehemiah...
"The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire." When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven."

Nehemiah 1:3-4

Let us not be discouraged by life

Let us sow even through tears the beautiful seeds in prayer that the Lord has given us that we may rest assured that his promises will come to pass.

Let us come to go so frequently and hear from God so clearly that we can find assurance that he will accomplish the work needed.

May we be filled with boldness through prayer and communion with God to tell the world around us to hoist the sail as the God of heaven is answering his people.

Let us be different.

Let us be committed to lives of prayer.

What if we considered time with God in prayer as important as oxygen, food... Baptisms took prayer...Make a list...Pick some people...Wait for assurances