

WHEN YOU PRAY
Carried
Luke 5:17-26

For the last 4 weeks, we have been talking about the meaning and importance of PRAYER. We have learned HOW to pray, and we have even learned HOW LONG we should pray. But today, I want to spend just a LITTLE time learning about one other aspect of prayer, but I want to spend the majority of our time ACTUALLY PRAYING TOGETHER! **We need to pray.**

[Jesus said that his house should be a HOUSE OF PRAYER!]

The longer I live, the more I have learned to LOVE PRAYING FOR – and especially WITH – OTHER PEOPLE. I have seen God do some remarkable things in prayer.

[Talk about the waitress whose back was healed!]

***He meets their needs.**

***He comforts their soul**

***He strengthens their faith.**

***He INVADES their space!**

Prayer is a great way to SERVE the people around us for the glory of God. It is truly ONE WAY that we can help CARRY the burdens, sorrows, and struggles of others.

Galatians 6:2 NIV

2 Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.

-This means that we do not have to struggle ALONE with our burdens.

[Refer to man I saw at the restaurant all by himself the other night.]

-I have often felt CARRIED in my life through the PRAYERS of others!

***My PARENTS have prayed for me DAILY over the course of my life.**

***Many of YOU have prayed diligently for me during very difficult seasons!**

***Those prayers have encouraged me and enabled me to stand strong.**

-Sometimes, we actually try to CARRY ONE ANOTHER!

Some of you have been literally carrying someone else in your life, but you are growing WEARY! Let me encourage you with a great story. **Luke 5:17-19 NIV**
17 One day Jesus was teaching, and Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there. They had come from every village of Galilee and from Judea and Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was with Jesus to heal the sick. 18 Some men came carrying a paralyzed man on a mat and tried to take him into the house to lay him before Jesus. 19 When they could not find a way to do this because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on his mat through the tiles into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus.

***People can only carry you SO FAR before they wear out! The KEY is WHERE they carry you! This is the REAL POWER of INTERCESSION!**

Intercession: Bringing OTHER PEOPLE and THEIR NEEDS into the PRESENCE of GOD.

When we intercede for others, we are not just telling God about their needs (He already knows those needs anyway!) in the hope (?) that God will do something awesome for them. **Instead, our prayers can actually BRING THEM into the PRESENCE of GOD so that they can EXPERIENCE HIM in a PERSONAL and POWERFUL way! [Praying WITH them brings us there together!]**

***This is what Jesus is doing for us constantly. Romans 8:31-35 NIV**

31 What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all--how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? 33 Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. 34 Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died--more than that, who was raised to life--is **at the right hand of God** and is also **interceding for us.**

-He functions as our ADVOCATE; asking God for his BEST in our lives.

-This is not based on what we DESERVE!

*When I am at my WORST, Jesus is interceding for me AT THAT MOMENT!

[Moses's intercession for Israel] Exodus 32:9-14 NIV

9 "I have seen these people," the LORD said to Moses, "and they are a stiff-necked people. 10 Now leave me alone so that my anger may burn against them and that I may destroy them. Then I will make you into a great nation." 11 But Moses **sought the favor** of the LORD his God. "LORD," he said, "why should your anger burn against your people, whom you brought out of Egypt with great power and a mighty hand? . . . 14 Then the LORD relented and did not bring on his people the disaster he had threatened.

["Sought the favor" = "To stroke or caress the face of another to soothe"]

***This is also what the Holy Spirit does THROUGH, WITH, and FOR us when we pray! Romans 8:26-27 NIV**

26 In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. 27 And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God.

*Sometimes we do not know what to pray AT ALL. That's ok. **Just groan!**

-Truth is, we NEVER know ALL that we need to be praying for anyway!

Luke 5:20-26 NIV

20 When Jesus saw their faith, he said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven." 21 The Pharisees and the teachers of the law began thinking to themselves, "Who is this fellow who speaks blasphemy? Who can forgive sins but God alone?" 22 Jesus knew what they were thinking and asked, "Why are you thinking these things in your hearts? 23 Which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'? 24 But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." So he said to the paralyzed man, "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home." 25 Immediately he stood up in front of them, took what he

had been lying on and went home praising God. 26 Everyone was amazed and gave praise to God. They were filled with awe and said, "We have seen remarkable things today."

[Four men and a Blanket: They wanted him HEALED. He got SAVED!]

***Our Goal Today: PRAYER**

- No one will be FORCED to pray, but you will have the OPPORTUNITY to pray
- We will pray in 3 ways: All Together; At the Altar; With someone else