

PRAY- PRAY- PRAY—KEEP IN TOUCH

II Chronicles 7:11-16 22

Today we complete our series on Practical Christian living.

TRUST GOD

TELL THE TRUTH

KEEP YOUR PROMISE

STAY FOCUSED

Today On this Presidential Prayer Sunday

I want us to look at Prayer.

PRAY, PRAY, PRAY.

I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. I Timothy 21:1-2

These are critical days for our nation.

For the church and individual Christians.

We may feel there is little we can do for our world.

But God says differently.

He says we can make a difference

When we pray.

I have a brother who never contacts me.

He's my older brother.

He doesn't call.

He doesn't email.

He just exist out west

If I want to know what going on in his life.

I email him.

Or I call.

What interesting.

Is that I don't have to find him at home.

Just leave a message.

Leave an email.

And he responds.

He a scratch.

You know. I Scratch him.

He itches.

He responds.

When we pray we scratch God and he itches.

WHEN WE PRAY

I. GOD RESPONDS

Solomon in this passage of scripture.

Was busy building and bankrolling a temple and a royal palace.

He led the richest and most powerful empire in the world.
But notice what he has time to do.

When Solomon had finished the temple of the LORD and the royal palace, and had succeeded in carrying out all he had in mind to do in the temple of the LORD and in his own palace, ¹² the LORD appeared to him at night and said: "I have heard your prayer and have chosen this place for myself as a temple for sacrifices.

II Chronicles 7:11-12

All this time Solomon had been
busy, building, bankrolling an empire
He has been praying.
When he called. God answered.

Jesus said:

"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; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened." -- Matthew 7:7-8 (NIV)

Now you may say:
I don't know what to pray.
Doesn't matter.
Doesn't matter what I put in the email to my brother.
He responds.
Doesn't matter what I leave on his answering machine.
He calls back.
But God is even better than that
His answer is not limited in resources and strength.
As a witness of his love and provision,
He has stuck a cross in the ground.

When Francis Scott Key wrote the "Star Spangled Banner after witnessing the flag surviving the British attack from 10 miles out to sea, historians had a question that begged an answer. They wondered back then how a flag pole could have supported a 40 by 30 ft high flag. Wouldn't the pole have fallen over or snapped in the wind? The answer was revealed in 1958 when the rangers unearthed two eight foot wooden crossbeams buried some ten feet underground. Those crossbeams gave that pole the stability that was needed for freedom's banner to fly.

Today it is still the cross that testifies to Gods provision:
Do the math yourself:
1 Cross + 3 Nails = 4 given

When we pray:

I. GOD RESPONDS.

II. GOD PREPARES OUR HEART.

If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land. II Chronicles 7:14

God is saying that when we pray.
 We are forced to a position of humility.
 Many people when asked to pray say:
 Why should God answer my prayer the way I have lived?
 I'M not worthy to pray.
 I haven't been a good person.
 I'm a sinful person.
 And they are right?
 God shouldn't
 But we are not God.

When they think about prayer.
 They are thinking about God.
 When we are thinking about God
 Suddenly we are thinking about how you live and act and speak.
 And just how sinful we are.
 The position of prayer prepares the heart.
 Prayer is the examination room of the heart.
 Add scripture to it
 And you find yourself down in the surgical ward.
 Getting cut deep into the very marrow of your bones
 Those things that need removing.
 Get removed.
 This is root canal time.

The power doesn't come from our faith;
 the power comes from the One in whom we have faith.
"I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you." - Matthew 17:20 (NIV)

Don't let your sinfulness keep you from God.
 That is exactly why he sent his son to die in your place
 That we might find cleansing and have a right relationship with him.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU PRAY
GOD RESPONDS
PREPARES OUR HEART
III. REPAIRS THE BODY

When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command locusts to devour the land or send a plague among my people,¹⁴ if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their

wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land. II Chronicles 7:13-14

Sin destroys the land.
Shut up the heaven
Causes drought and locust throughout the land.

Sin also destroys the body.
brings a plague upon us of disease, and violence.
19 million new cases of Sexually Transmitted Disease
8 million were teenagers: 15-24
\$13 million in medical cost
2 million Americans are addicted to Gambling.
1. 4 million violent crime were reported and.

Sin destroys our relationships:
Somewhere in America, a woman is **raped** every 2 minutes,
And most time by someone she knows.
Murder is on the rise.
And we have crimes are becoming so heinous that
We can't even talk about them in public.
If you turn away and forsake the decrees and commands I have given you and go off to serve other gods and worship them. Then I will uproot Israel from my land, which I have given them and will reject this temple I have consecrated for my Name. II Chronicles 7:19-20

That's why on this Presidents day we are thankful
To have a president that prays
And who desires our nation to come back to God.
This past week I watched a program called politics and religion On Kelo.
And I was so pleased to see John Thun and Tim Johnson both profess their personal faith in Jesus Christ.
You may disagree with them about his politics,
But you are under command of God to pray for him.
When we do prayer heals our land,

A GOOD EXAMPLE OF THIS was of a young visiting pastor
came to a church that had sever drought. They ask him to pray for rain.
The next day there was a torrential downpour that ruined the crops.
One of the Farmers upset and said: "Well, that's what happens, when you get a pastor that ain't familiar with agriculture."

Prayer heals our land and
It heals our bodies.
What if we didn't believe that?
We would be
An new young pastor that was called to see one of his members

who had been bitten by a snake.
 When he arrived the man asked him to pray,
 and he took out his prayer book and began to search through it.
 After a while he stopped, said to the man,
 "I'm sorry, I can't find any prayer in here for snake bite;
 all you can do is die!"

If prayer can't heal the body then all you can do is die.
 But our bodies which become the temple of the Holy Spirit.

PRAY, PRAY, PRAY PEOPLE.

That is our redemption:

God says:

If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land. II Chronicles 7:14

WHEN YOU PRAY

IV. PRAYER EMPOWERS OUR SPIRIT

Bring the presence of God into our midst.

¹⁵ Now my eyes will be open and my ears attentive to the prayers offered in this place. ¹⁶ I have chosen and consecrated this temple so that my Name may be there forever. My eyes and my heart will always be there.

Pray we open the eyes and ears of God
 To see our needs
 To answer us.

Jesus said Revelation 3:20 Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.

Can you trust God enough to invite him into your life?

Into your needs?

To empower your life?

When you need a miracles.

Pray and God will use it to strengthened and empowered to walk through the valley.

Let me tell you about Rev. Jones a retired United Methodist pastor

Who was caught in the hurricane on the coast of Mississippi,

His daughter had called and said: for her father to come and stay with them in

Atlanta. There was only one problem, the storm hit before he got out. He didn't have any money. He had money in the bank, but it wasn't open. They were penniless. He couldn't get to Atlanta. He had no place to go. So they went to a shelter to wait out the hurricane. After the storm had passed, they were allowed back into the city to grab a few belongings. When they entered their house, the water was still knee high, but Rev. Jones was determined to see what he could salvage. As he went into his flooded house, he saw several framed family photos floating in the water. He really didn't see anything else to save, so he grabbed the pictures and left. Back at the shelter, he took the photos out of

their frames so they could dry out. When he removed his father's picture, money fell out of the frame. He couldn't believe his find as he counted out \$366. Even more astounding was the fact that his father had died in 1942. Rev. Jones was only 12 years old at the time. He had no idea that the money was in the frame. He doesn't know how it got there or when it was put there, but it was enough to pay for him and his wife to make their way to Atlanta.

Some of you who have been in financial need.
 Some of you have been physically challenged by deadly diseases.
 Some of you are battling emotional difficulty.
 Others have had relationship that has been destroyed.
 Others have had to find a new job.
 This past week four families have dealt with the death of a loved one.
 God calls us to pray.
 And when we pray we discover a lifeline to God
 That meet our needs
 And enables us to walk on to higher ground.
 Will you make that decision today
 To start and maintain an open relationship with almighty
 God.

PRAYER

Thank you Lord for your availability.
 That when we pray we are able to walk
 into the very presence of the living God.
 Thanks you for the strength and power to meet every day with grace.
 And to allow our lives to be an example of a spirit filled. Life.
 Challenge us in a daily walk with you.
 I pray this in Jesus Name.