

P.E.O.P.L.E.
PRAY
1 SAMUEL 12:23

INTRODUCTION:

1. Illustration
2. Do you pray? How do you pray? What do you pray?
3. The church exists for people.
4. We are here to serve people.
5. They are not here to serve us.
6. We are here to help people; everyday people with everyday problems.
7. It is developing a mindset and focus on others.
8. How do we do that?
9. Today, I am beginning a new series of messages about how we minister to people.
10. Our ministry to people begins with prayer.
11. How should we pray?

I. PRAY FOR OTHERS

- A. 1 Samuel 12:23, "As for me, I vow that I will not sin against the Lord by ceasing to pray for you."
- B. Samuel, because of his relationship to God, felt bound to pray for Israel.
- C. He followed Moses' example of intercessory prayer.

- D. If he failed to pray, to bring the needs of others to God, he would sin against the Lord.
- E. We sin against the Lord when we do not pray for others.

II. PRAY FOR THOSE WHO HURT YOU

- A. Mt. 5:43-44, "You have heard that it was said, Love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."
- B. The true test of genuine Christianity is how believers treat those who hurt them.
- C. Our natural inclination is to hurt them in return.
- D. We might be an enemy to them, but they can never be an enemy to us.
- E. We do not merely cease to hate and then live in a cold neutrality. We love where hatred seemed inevitable.
- F. When people observe this behavior, they are drawn to Christ.
- G. This radical, godly, behavior begins by praying for them.
- H. Prayer brings your heart to the throne of God.
- I. It is there you will see the nail-scarred feet of Jesus and realize how much you hurt Him, yet He forgave you.
- J. That will motivate you to pray for those who hurt you and love them with the love of Christ.

III. PRAY FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK

- A. James 5:13-16 (print text)

B. There are three types of sickness:

1. Emotional

- a. v.13 “suffering” vs. “cheerful”
- b. This person is sad in their spirit; depressed, anxious, etc.
- c. We are to pray for their emotional healing.

2. Physical

- a. v.14, “sick.” Same word is used in other places in the N.T.
- b. Different word in v.13.
- c. Notice the pattern:
 - i. Call the elders – spiritual authority.
 - ii. Anoint with oil – used for medicinal purposes but represented God’s healing power.
 - iii. Pray
 - a. Pray with power – “in Jesus name.”
 - b. Pray with pure motives – “prayer of faith.”
Praying “in Jesus name” also means you are praying according to His perfect will.
- d. This pattern of prayer moves the church to the person who is sick.
- e. They feel isolated, alone, nobody cares.

3. Spiritual

- a. v.15-16, “and if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The intense prayer of the righteous is very powerful.”
- b. “If” – sometimes, there is a connection between our sickness and our sin.
- c. We are to pray for those who are struggling spiritually.
- d. V.16, “The intense prayer of the righteous is very powerful.”
- e. You need the right person praying with the right motive to the right person.
 - i. Who is praying for you?
 - ii. Why are they praying?
 - iii. Who are they praying to?
- f. We must be a praying church for those who are sick.
- g. When this happens people will know we care.

IV. PRAY FOR THOSE WHO ARE GROWING SPIRITUALLY

A. Phil. 1:9-11

B. These are often the forgotten.

C. How should we pray for them? Those who are growing spiritually.

1. Grow in Love

- i. self-sacrificing – Pray they not become selfish
- ii. unconditional

2. Grow in Knowledge

- i. Personal knowledge of God and others – easy to become discouraged and withdraw.

3. **Grow in Discernment** – focus on what is important.

4. **Grow in Character** – “pure and blameless.”

D. People are strengthened and encouraged when we are praying for these qualities in their lives.

V. PRAY FOR YOUR SPIRITUAL LEADERS

A. 2 Thess. 3:1-2, “Finally, pray for us, brothers, that the Lord’s message may spread rapidly and be honored, just as it was with you, and that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men, for not all have faith.”

B. Paul says, “pray for us.”

C. How should we pray for our leaders?

1. Delivery

- a. True message – “the Lord’s message” many messages
- b. Timely message – “spread quickly”
 - i. Timely for all.

ii. Timely for all times.

c. Trusted message – “honored”

2. Deliverance

a. Pray for God’s protection.

CONCLUSION:

1. 1 Sam. 12:23, “As for me, I vow that I will not sin against the Lord by ceasing to pray for you.”

2. I renew my vow to you and the Lord that I will pray for you.

3. Will you vow to pray for me.

4. Will you vow to pray for each other.

5. Our ministry to people begins with prayer.