

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 I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land. 2 Chronicles 7:14

I. PRAYER IS SIMPLY TALKING TO GOD. WHY DOES GOD WANT US TO PRAY?

A. To know and experience Jesus now more than ever. As the months and years unfold the pressure to move away from the biblical Jesus will only increase. It's imperative that we take the time now to have deep roots in who He is, to know Him personally.

*“Remain in Me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you **remain in Me**.⁵ Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who **remain in Me**, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from Me you can do nothing.” John 15:4-5*

The greatest human experience of pleasure is when the Holy Spirit reveals the wonder and glory of God to their heart.

—Mike Bickle

*You will show me the way of life, granting me the **joy of Your presence and the pleasures of living with You** forever. Psalms 16:11*

1. We join our Bible with our prayers. Turning Bible reading into conversation with Jesus will transform our Bible reading.

*They said to each other, “Didn’t our hearts burn within us **as He talked with us** (prayer) on the road and **explained the Scriptures** (Bible reading) to us?”⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures. Luke 24:32,45*

B. To experience His power and wisdom. We need wisdom more than ever right now!

Prayer is the key that unlocks all the storehouses of God’s infinite grace and power. All that God is, and all that God has, is at the disposal of prayer. —R.A. Torrey

*We do not cease to pray for you asking that you may be **filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding**;¹⁰ that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;¹¹ strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; Colossians 1:9-11*

*Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all **boldness they may speak Your word**,³⁰ **by stretching out Your hand** to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus.³¹ And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness. Acts 4:29-31*

C. To reach people and impact society. Always have a list of 2-3 people we’re specifically praying for (Cairo Church example).
“Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.²⁰ Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Matthew 28:19-20

*...pray for us, that **the word of the Lord may run swiftly and be glorified**, just as it is with you. 2 Thessalonians 3:1*

II. THE COMMAND TO GATHER TO PRAY

A. We most commonly expect churches and ministries to **GO** to the lost because of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20).

B. We’re also to **GATHER** in prayer, worship and teaching to encounter God.

*Blow the ram’s horn in Jerusalem! Announce a time of fasting; **call the people together for a solemn meeting**.¹⁶ Gather all the people—the elders, the children, and even the babies. Call the bridegroom from his quarters and the bride from her private room.¹⁷ Let the priests, who minister in the LORD’s presence, stand and weep between the entry room to the Temple and the altar. **Let them pray**, “Spare your people, LORD! Don’t let your special possession become an object of mockery. Don’t let them become a joke for unbelieving foreigners who say, ‘Has the God of Israel left them?’” THE LORD’S PROMISE OF RESTORATION¹⁸ Then the LORD will pity his people and jealously guard the honor of his land. Joel 2:15-18*

C. In Joel 2 the Lord urged them to (1) consecrate a fast; (2) call a sacred assembly; (3) gather the people; (4) and sanctify the congregation. To sanctify the congregation we lay aside other things to make seeking God the top priority for a period of time.

D. Jesus and the early church also modeled this. Jesus taught that there is greater authority when we gather in prayer.

*“I tell you the truth, whatever you forbid (bind) on earth will be forbidden in heaven, and whatever you permit (loose) on earth will be permitted in heaven.¹⁹ “I also tell you this: **If two of you agree here on earth** concerning anything you ask, my Father in heaven will do it for you.²⁰ For where two or three gather together as my followers, I am there among them.” Matthew 18:18-20*

