

PRAYER

After reading the book entitled: ***Prayer: The Timeless Secret of High-Impact Leaders*** by Dave Earley, I felt compelled to write the following article. The statistics listed and most of the quotes used in this article come from this book.

As Christians we all know the importance of prayer. After all, Jesus said in Isaiah 56:7, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a *house of prayer*'..."(Matt. 21:13 NKJV). Most followers of Christ will tell you about the value of prayer. However, the following survey results reveal something quite different:

- The average pastor prays only 7 minutes a day.
- 80% of pastors spend less than 15 minutes a day in prayer.

*Please note: Pastors/Clergy, this article is in no way meant to be condemning or disrespectful to those of you fulfilling your calling to the ministry. I have too much respect and admiration for that, as I believe you have one of the most difficult and demanding jobs in the world. It was written, rather, to emphasize the absolute necessity of prayer and to solicit the continual, fervent prayers of our partners and readers for the ministry to the young people in Windber. **We long to be more effective and see more fruit in the lives of our youth.**

Could our lack of prayer be the reason these next statistics are true?

- 85% of American churches are declining in size
- Of 15% that are growing only 1% are growing through conversion

How can this be when we ponder Bill Bright's thought-provoking question, "Have you ever considered that you have immediate access to the most powerful Person in the universe? What an amazing truth/privilege that you and I..."What is man that You are mindful of him..." can have immediate access to the Creator and Sustainer of all the world. Think of the invincible power, the inexhaustible wisdom, and the indomitable authority that we can plug into by way of prayer.

"Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need," Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV). But there seems to be a disconnect from what God offers us, to what we operate in. Why? Availability – no; Accessibility – no; Laziness – maybe; Busyness – perhaps; Pride – be careful.

Acknowledging our need to pray and being empowered through prayer are two vastly different things. One takes only recognition, the other takes time and effort – effort that our world can't afford for us to be without. So let's take a stand by falling to our knees and making an impact for Jesus.

MAKING PRAYER A PRIORITY

May the following quotes from these very recognizable and impactful spiritual leaders encourage and inspire you to make prayer a greater priority in your life:

- **Billy Graham:** "More can be done by prayer than anything else."
- **David Jeremiah:** "Everything God does in the work of ministry, He does through prayer."

- **John Wesley:** “God will do nothing on Earth, except in answer to believing prayer.”
- **Bill Bright:** “Prayer is God’s appointed way of doing God’s work.”
- **Hudson Taylor:** “It is possible to move men through God by prayer alone.”
- **Charles Spurgeon:** “Prayer (is) the slender nerve that moves the muscles of omnipotence.
- **Frank Laubach:** “Prayer (is) the mightiest force in the world.”
- **Andrew Murray:** Prayer should be regarded...”as the highest part of the work entrusted to us, the root and strength of all other work.”
- **E.M. Bounds:** “Talking to men for God is a great thing. But talking to God for men is greater still.”

INFLUENCING OTHERS FOR CHRIST

Well, feel like praying? If you do I hope that it’s not just for this moment in time but for all time. Much like Paul, I implore you, pray for us and the ministry of the Windber Youth Center (The Construction Zone). Our mission statement continues to be – To Build God’s Kingdom One Life at a Time. But I would like to expand our vision to include a fourth statement:

- Investing in Relationships
- Imparting the Love of Christ
- Interceding in Prayer (newest addition)
- Impacting Lives

While prayer has always been important to this ministry, it can never be overstated, overemphasized, or overused. For as stated by Pastor John Hagee: “Some prayer – some power; More prayer – more power; Much prayer – much power.” And finally J. Oswald Sanders: “Prayer influences men by influencing God to influence them.” So please join us in influencing others for Christ, to Him be all the glory. Thank you for partnering with us in building God’s Kingdom.

In His Service,

Gary L. Rowles, Jr.