

Confessions of a Prayerless Pastor

Today is the national Day of Prayer, and people will gather all over the nation and pray for this country, its leaders and its families. We will pray for those who protect and serve. And we will pray for this nation's direction. I have personally been doing a lot of soul-searching in preparation for this day. I have concluded that now as much as ever there is an urgent need for those of us who call upon the name of the Lord to pray.

That's as easy for me to say as it is for the many other voices saying it. The problem is most of us are talking about prayer a lot more than we are experiencing God by doing it! Today in this fast paced world full of fancy gadgets my heart groans for the simplest of disciplines, time alone with the Author of my life, and time together with fellow pilgrims who are fed up with pathetic prayerless Christianity.

It's not that I don't pray- I do! My flesh wants to cry out in pride, "Danny, you pray more than most people, perhaps more than many pastors- stop this foolish talk about being a prayerless pastor." Oh but my spirit testifies against my flesh, and in my heart I know my greatest need is even more time alone with my loving God, more time with others spent in His presence! With the apostle Paul I cry out, "that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings..."

As a Pastor I know that facing life's trials without much time in prayer is like trying to put out a fire with a water pistol! The fire rages on. But when God's people begin faithfully going into their prayer closets, and begin gathering with others to pray, the resources of Heaven come to bear on life's trials. And when God wills to answer our persistent prayers yes, it's as if a water plane comes over the fire and drops thousands of gallons on the fire from above.

Perhaps a better way to say it is that a prayerless life is a powerless life.

A prayerless family is a powerless family.

A prayerless church is a powerless church.

And a prayerless nation is a powerless nation.

One case study of this comes from a marriage retreat that one of our couples attended. The speaker told them that he has worked personally with hundreds of couples over the years. Only once has he seen a couple get divorced who regularly prayed together.

Now please don't misunderstand me: God is not a genie in a bottle, to be sought so we can have our will done on earth. The main thing that happens in prayer is not a greater likelihood of getting what we want. The main thing that happens in prayer is the peace and joy and love that come to a person who spends much time with Jesus. Then we are able to appreciate when His will is done on earth, and become the kind of people more likely to be part of the solution instead of the problem.

I love the worship song that says: "I'm getting back to the heart of worship- it's all about You. It's all about You Jesus. I'm sorry Lord for the thing I've made it, when it's all about You, It's all about You Jesus."

"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

Danny Campbell <><

P.S. Feel free to join me at the Stuarts Draft Rescue Squad Building from 12-1 today for prayer. In Waynesboro others will gather at The Solid Rock Café. In Staunton at the National Guard Armory.