

THE POWER OF A PRAYING PEOPLE - Brady Boyd

- Where have you seen God at work in your life this week? (Share any brief examples and encouragements).
- Was there anything from Sunday's message which you found particularly inspiring or challenging?
- Was there anything else you particularly noticed?

Pete Greig introduced Brady as one of the overseers of Emmaus Rd. His church reflects our values and vision and his wisdom and experience will help our leaders and church grow and develop further.

1 John 5v13-15

John was writing to a church facing persecution, aggravation and hurt and he reminded them - they are born again. Likewise, we were lost but now we're found. We need to be reminded to pray.

Jesus talked about prayer 42x and prayed 28x. If Jesus, as Holy-God-Man, was devoted to prayer, we should be likewise. The world doesn't need an angry church, but a praying church that understands what God is doing in the world. Wesley: "God does nothing but in answer to prayer".

1. God wants you to pray

The number 1 reason we don't pray is our sense of shame, guilt and embarrassment about our human condition. This was Adam and Eve's place, too. They hid from God, retreating from him. But God came looking for them (Gen 3v8ff). Rev 3v20 says Jesus comes knocking. He wants to come into our messy houses. God has done all he can to come toward us - incarnation, resurrection, ascension. God is near and he wants us to come near to him. When we seek, we will find.

2. Prayer is asking (v14)

Pray in private but not in silence. God wants to hear us pray. We can speak life or death. Matt 7v7-8 says "Ask... Seek... Knock..." 3 active verbs. Ask for God's presence, seek his will, knock for action. Lift your voice and speak over the situation. Prayer puts us on the offensive. Eg. Speak peace over France and ask that hearts are healed. Don't just watch the news, influence the news by your prayers.

3. Knowing God's will means knowing God's way

We pray better prayers when we know God's nature better. Just as a child knows when to ask Dad for something! Remember: God wants to bless your enemies so that's how we should pray! "Your Kingdom come... as in Heaven". Prayer is not a "to do list" for God!

The first questions in prayer are "What are you doing on earth right now?" "What are you doing where you've placed me?" "How can I help?" Ask God to help you understand what he's doing. Don't curse or deny situations, ask to be a peacemaker. Lack wisdom? Ask for it! You can't solve the problems of the world but you can solve the problems of your world - "God, what are you doing in me?" Aim: to be like Christ.

4. God still answers prayers

The enemy discourages us to pray but God hears all our prayers. God's working on our behalf. Brady and Pam longed for a child and were able to adopt their son. God then challenged Brady to pray for a red-headed, blue-eyed girl. Through a friend he met a 19yr old of this description who was pregnant and she offered her baby to Brady and Pam. After adoption, this second child is a red-headed, blue-eyed girl. Brady had been praying for his daughter even before she was conceived. So, keep praying. Don't get weary. Take risks in prayer. Don't be discouraged. Press in. God is working for you, right here, right now.

For Reflection in Collective:

- How are we being challenged to pray as individuals, families and as a Collective?
- In the context of prayer changing things, discuss J Ortberg's comment, "History belongs to the Intercessors".
- Make extra time this week to pray in Collective .
- Encourage one another to sign up for slots in the Prayer Room.