**THE PRAYER QUADRANT**

While in quarantine mode we are forced to do some things we might not have had as much time in our “previous life” to do. Like Bible reading. Like communicating to loved ones. Like prayer. Which brings me to my text and subject.

First the text:

​“*Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, 2 for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. 3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, 4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth*.” (I Timothy 2:1-4)

Now the subject.

If I had but one blessing to take with me if exiled on an island it would be prayer. You know why? Read verses 3-4 for my answer.

*3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, 4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth*.

Prayer opens doors to God’s desire that “*all men*” be saved. He is not willing that “*any*” should perish but “*all*” come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9). And the first step toward that dream-come-true for God is when Christians pray. Jesus said, “*Pray the Lord of harvest to send out laborers into His harvest*” (Matthew 9:38). The harvest of souls begins with prayer that God send workers, then continues when that prayer asks for doors to be opened to reach the lost. “*Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving; 3 meanwhile praying also for us, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ*” (Colossians 4:2-3).

See? Everything starts with God, not man. Jesus never made a decision, chose an apostle, or went to the cross without first praying to His Father. Neither should we. But, what do we pray for? That takes us back to verses 1-2.

According to Paul prayer is a quadrant. There are four things we should do when we come before God. Let’s take them in order, then make our application.

1. “*I exhort first of all that* ***supplications****”* – (Greek *DEESIS*). Defined as “seeking, asking, entreating, petitioning, requesting.” You get the idea. Paul once wrote, “*Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer* (*DEESIS* - supplication) *to God for Israel is that they might be saved*” (Rom. 10:1). That was not a half-hearted request but was backed by this earlier statement in Romans 9:2-3, *“I have great sorrow and continual grief in my heart. 3 For I could wish that I myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my countrymen according to the flesh.”*

What are you supplicating God for? What is your heart’s desire? What is your continual grief in your heart? Do you have a list? Is it something you take serious enough to “*ask, seek, knock*” until you “*receive*… *find*… *have* *opened* (Matt. 7:7-8)? If it’s serious to you it’s serious to God. What do you need? What is continually on your heart? Tell Him.

2. “***prayers***” – (Greek *PROSEUCHE*). Defined as “prayer addressed to God; a place set apart for offering prayer to God; a synagogue.” The implication here is to locate a strategic place to come before God. A place you can focus, concentrate, pour out your heart. Jesus sometimes chose a mountain (Matt. 14:23). Sometimes a special room behind closed doors (Matt. 6:6). Sometimes a garden (*Judas knew the place* – Jn. 18:1-2). Where is your special place to get alone with God and talk one-on-One? We eat in the dining room, gather in the family room, sleep in the bedroom. Where is our prayer room? Just you and God. Don’t’ make prayer arbitrary and secondary. Make it priority and primary. Choose your prayer “room” and pour out your heart to God.

3. “***intercessions***” – (Greek *ENTEUXIS*). Defined as “a meeting with; to visit, come together; a conference or conversation.” The idea is bringing others into your “visit” with God. You speak on behalf of others that are on your heart. How many times have I said, “I’ll be praying for you,” only to forget or never do it? Guilty as charged. That’s where, at least in my case, and probably in yours too, I need a prayer list. To rely on my faulty memory will disappoint me, and God. Carry an index card or pocket notebook. Write names, needs, and when answered. In these days of tribulation it is a necessity to be praying fervently, and specifically, for other’s needs. It’s not “what’s in your wallet?” but “who’s in your heart?” Let us say with Paul, “*We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers*” (I Thess. 1:2). Build your “To Pray For” list.

4. “***giving of thanks***” – (Greek *EUCHARISTIA*). Defined as “thankfulness; to give thanks; grateful language to God.” You see the word Eucharist in that word. That is often used by many regarding the taking of the Lord’s Supper. We are expressing a thankful heart to God for His love and sacrifice for us. We do the same when we make “supplications, prayers and intercessions” and then see God’s answers to those requests. We are like the one leper who *“when he saw that he was healed, returned, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at His feet, giving Him thanks.”* (Luke 17:15-16). This was not a casual “thank you,” as if one had just passed the salt, but a down-on-your-knees heart-felt pouring of his soul for what He had just done (saving his life, restoring his honor in society). Do the same for all God has done for you.

**Application:**

Let’s sing a song together. Then, find your prayer room and read Philippians 4:6.

When upon life’s billows you are tempest tossed, When you are discouraged thinking all is lost.
Count your many blessings, name them one by one, And it will surprise you what the Lord has done.

So amid the conflict whether great or small, Do not be discouraged God is over all.
Count your many blessings, angels will attend, Help and comfort give you to your journey’s end.

Count your blessings, name them one by one. Count your blessings, see what God has done.
Count your blessings, name them one by one. Count your many blessings see what God has done.

Until tomorrow… I’m praying for you. You are one of my blessings.

I love you.

Rick