

Message Outline

DEVOTION TO PRAYER
Acts 2:42-47

42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer.

43 Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and signs were being performed through the apostles. 44 Now all the believers were together and held all things in common. 45 They sold their possessions and property and distributed the proceeds to all, as any had need. 46 Every day they devoted themselves to meeting together in the temple, and broke bread from house to house. They ate their food with joyful and sincere hearts, 47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. Every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved. (Acts 2:42-47 CSB)

There are seven essentials to which the first believers devoted themselves.

(1) Apostles' teaching

(2) Fellowship

(3) Breaking of bread

(4) Prayer

(5) Giving or ministering to one another

(6) Praising God or worship

(7) Sharing the gospel or evangelism - *"the Lord added to their number those who were being saved"*.

We Must Devote Ourselves to Prayer.

- So far we have looked at the first three essentials: Apostles' teaching, Fellowship, and Breaking of Bread.
- In this message, our focus is on "Prayer." This is the fourth essential of a growing church!
- A growing church is a healthy church. In other words, a church that's healthy naturally grows. So, as a church, if we want to continue to grow, let's become healthy or healthier in our "being" and "doing", in our "faith" and "works", individually and collectively.

Leonard Ravenhill, a British Christian evangelist and author, says, "The Church has many organizers, but few agonizers; many who will pay and plenty who will play, but few who will pray; many resters but few wrestlers; many who are enterprising, but few who are interceding. Failing in prayer, the people of God will surely fall everywhere."

FOUR IMPORTANT FACETS OF PRAYER

1. **The FOUNDATION of Prayer**

<u>Definition of Prayer</u>

- The word prayer is προσευχαῖς (proseuchais) in Greek. In the context of Acts 2:42, it refers to the practice of praying as a community.
- The Bible does not give a clear and direct definition of prayer. But, its basic meaning is "to ask".
- **Prayer is a heart to heart communication with God. It's a two-way communication. It is both talking to God and listening to God.**

<u>Things about Prayer in the Bible</u>

- Genesis 4:26 recorded the first time prayer is mentioned in the Bible. Until then, earlier dialogues were initiated directly by God. ***26 A son was born to Seth also, and he named him Enosh. At that time people began to call on the name of the Lord. (Genesis 4:26, CSB)***
- The last time prayer is mentioned in the Bible is in **Revelation 22:20.** ***"He who testifies about these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon." Amen! Come, Lord Jesus!"***

- There are 650 prayers listed in the Bible, and there are approximately 450 recorded answers to prayer in the Bible.
- Jesus prays 25 different times during his earthly ministry.
- Paul, the apostle, mentions prayer 41 times in the Bible.

Prayer in Acts (Devotion to Prayer of the First Believers)

- ***12 Then they (the apostles) returned to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, which is near Jerusalem—a Sabbath day's journey away. 13 When they arrived, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying…14 They all were continually united in prayer, along with the women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers. (Acts 1:12-14, CSB)***

- ***27 "For, in fact, in this city both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, assembled together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, 28 to do whatever your hand and your will had predestined to take place. 29 And now, Lord, consider their threats, and grant that your servants may speak your word with all boldness, 30 while you stretch out your hand for healing, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus." When they had prayed, the place where they were assembled was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God boldly. (Acts 4:27-31, CSB).***

- ***21 After they (Paul and Barnabas) had preached the gospel in that town (Derbe) and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, to Iconium, and to Antioch, 22 strengthening the disciples by encouraging them to continue in the faith and by telling them, "It is necessary to go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God." 23 When they had appointed elders for them in every church and prayed with fasting, they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed. (Acts 14:21-23, CSB)***

So, the foundation of prayer is the very Word of God, the Bible.

2. **The FOCUS of Prayer**

2 He said to them, "Whenever you pray, say, Father, your name be honored as holy. Your kingdom come. 3 Give us each day our daily bread. 4 And forgive us our sins, for we ourselves also forgive everyone in debt to us. And do not bring us into temptation." (Luke 11:2-4, CSB)

<u>Five Areas of Focus</u>

- God's glory - that God's name will be honored as holy.
- God's kingdom - that God's kingdom will come to fulfill his purposes for his creation.
- God's provision - that our daily needs will be provided by God.
- God's forgiveness - that our sins will be forgiven as we forgive others who have sinned against us.
- God's protection - that we will be protected from all forms of temptation.

3. **The FUNCTIONS of PRAYER**

- We pray to **THANK** God.
  2 Let's enter his presence with <u>thanksgiving</u>; let's shout triumphantly to him in song.
  3 For the Lord is a great God, a great King above all gods. (Psalms 95:2-3, CSB)

- We pray to **DEDICATE OUR LIVES** to God.
  Going a little farther, he fell facedown and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me. <u>Yet not as I will, but as you will.</u>" (Matthew 26:39, CSB)

- We pray to **AGREE CORPORATELY** in our communion with God.
  <u>They devoted themselves</u> to the apostles' teaching, to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to <u>prayer.</u> (Acts 2:42, CSB)

- We pray to **WORSHIP** God.
  2 As they were <u>worshiping the Lord</u> and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have

called them." 3 Then after they had fasted, prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them off. (Acts 13:2-3, CSB)

- We pray to **DEPEND on the Holy Spirit**.
  26 In the same way <u>the Spirit also helps us in our weakness, because we do not know what to pray for as we should, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us</u> with inexpressible groanings. 27 And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because he intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. (Romans 8:26-27, CSB)

- We pray to **PRESENT OUR REQUESTS** to God.
  6 Don't worry about anything, but in everything, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, <u>present your requests to God.</u> (Philippians 4:6, CSB)

- We pray to **INTERCEDE** for others.
  First of all, then, I urge that petitions, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings <u>be made for everyone.</u> (1 Timothy 2:1, CSB)

- We pray to **EXPRESS OUR FAIT**H in God.
  The <u>prayer of faith</u> will save the sick person, and the Lord will raise him up; if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. (James 5:15, CSB)

4. The FORMS of Prayer

- We can pray by **Sitting.**
  Then King David went in, <u>sat</u> in the Lord's presence, and said, Who am I, Lord God, and what is my house that you have brought me this far? (2 Samuel 7:18 CSB)

- We can pray by **Bowing.**
  Moses <u>bowed</u> to the ground at once and worshiped. (Exodus 34:8 NIV)

- We can pray by **Kneeling.**
  When Daniel learned that the document had been signed, he went into his house. The windows in its upstairs room opened toward

Jerusalem, and three times a day he got down on his knees, prayed, and gave thanks to his God, just as he had done before. (Daniel 6:10 CSB)

- We can pray by **Lifting hands.**
  Therefore, I want the men in every place to pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or argument. (1 Timothy 2:8 CSB)

- We can pray by **Prostrating - Facing the Ground.**
  Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God, and with their hands uplifted all the people said, "Amen, Amen!" Then they knelt low and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground. (Nehemiah 8:6 CSB)

Concluding Prayers

- **Pray for Japan and the World**
  (1) For the Gospel to be preached in places where it hasn't been proclaimed.
  (2) For strength and comfort to believers who are under persecution.
  (3) For peace in places where there are ongoing wars.
  (4) For provision of relief to those who have been affected by natural calamities.
  (5) For provision of food to millions of people who are in the worst levels of hunger.

- **Pray for the Church (TBC)**
  (1) Impact Building Project - that our leaders will be given wisdom, discernment and faith to know what to build and when to build for the future generation; that the Lord will provide the necessary funds to complete the project.
  (2) Worship Pastor - that the Lord will call the right person to be our Worship Pastor.
  (3) Int'l Food Fair on Nov. 17 - that our fellowship as a church will be strengthened and many non-believers will come to know Christ.
  (4) Winter Outreach Opportunities, Dec. 7 - 11 - that many TBC members will be called to serve along with the Southcliff Baptist Church mission team, and that many non-believers will hear the Gospel and be saved.

(5) Year-End Prayer Meeting on Dec. 31 , 8:30pm-11:30pm - that we will be able to gather together to end this year with thanksgiving and welcome the new year with hope in Christ.

- **Pray for Personal Needs**
  (1) That we will have a deeper desire and commitment to spend time with God in prayer.
  (2) That we will forgive those who have offended us and love those who hate us.
  (3) That we will share the Good News with those who don't know Christ.
  (4) That we will experience hope and joy and will persevere in our sufferings.
  (5) That our sick family members and friends will be healed and will recover.

The word, "Amen", means "let it be, "so be it," "verily," or "truly". So, let's all say in full agreement for these prayers, in Jesus' Name, Amen!

Jo Kaminaga (Joel)
Tokyo Baptist Church
November 9&10, 2024

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First time guest Connection:

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Email: cc@tokyobaptist.org or visit https://t-b-c.us/cc to let us know!

TBC Life

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SIGN-UP

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UPCOMING TBC CLASSES & TRAINING

class 210 SG Training	class 402 Evangelism	class 201 Maturity
Nov 10th (Sun) 1:00 - 5:00pm	Nov 24th (Sun) 1:00 - 5:00pm	Nov 30th (Sat) 1:30 - 5:30pm

Please visit https://t-b-c.us/classes to REGISTER

Small Groups Information

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