

three|prayer

31 And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.

Acts 4

It is easy to believe the lie that...

Our prayers are powerless and therefore meaningless.
Praying for someone's salvation is merely well-wishing.
Prayer is a desperate last resort, not an offensive strategy.

Instead, we can believe that:

1) Our prayers are heard and answered.

If this is true, why can we struggle with prayer so much? It seems that at least part of the answer is found in our inability to thank God for his sovereignty in saying no. We want a 'yes' and we want it now! But what if some of the prayers we begin to plead for our neighbors take years to finally get a 'yes'? Deep communion with God is found in part through the persistence of our prayers.

2) Prayer heightens awareness.

As you begin (or continue) to pray daily for your neighbors, there will be a natural attentiveness that grows to them. Outside of God answering prayers, this is one of the greatest benefits of fruitful times of prayer.

3) Prayer is not an option.

Pray without ceasing is just one of the commands found in the scripture as it pertains to prayer. Pleading to the throne of God is an act of obedience and a result of reliance upon the character of God. If the 'command' aspect of prayer takes an element of life out of it, then rest in the fact that God allows us to commune with him...grace upon grace.

Question to consider:

If prayer is commanded, how can the beauty of prayer be embraced as an act of loving obedience in your life?

Actions to take:

> The more you get to know your neighbors, the more specific your prayers will be. As the relationship grows, do not be fearful of asking how you (and family) can pray for them. What may feel awkward at first, might be a massive open door in sharing the love of Christ.

- > Keep a prayer journal so that you can track answered prayer.
- > As neighbors share specifics, be sure to follow up so they know you care.