

AN ANTIDOTE FOR PRAYERLESSNESS

1. Recognize the sinfulness of prayerlessness and honestly and sincerely confess this sin before God. Romans 12:12; Philippians 4:6; Colossians 4:2,12; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; 1 John 1:9.

2. Practice systematic and daily Bible reading.

Prayer is an outflow of a life of faith. If our prayer life is to be enriched, our faith must be enriched. This can be done only by reading and living in the Word of God. Romans 10:17; John 15:7.

"The great people of the earth today are the people who pray. I do not mean those who talk about prayer; nor those who say they believe in prayer; nor yet those who can explain about prayer; but I mean those people who take time and pray. They have not time. It must be taken from something else. This something else is important. Very important, and pressing, but still less important and less pressing than prayer. There are people that put prayer first, and group the other items in life's schedule around and after prayer. These are the people today who are doing the most for God."

3. Make special studies of Biblical characters and note the part prayer played in their lives: Moses, David, Daniel, Paul, and especially the Lord Jesus.

4. Make a special study of prayers recorded in the Bible.

Genesis 18:23-33	Jonah 2:1-10	Philippians 1:9-11
Exodus 32:11-14	Acts 4:23-31	Colossians 1:9-14
Exodus 32:30-32	Ephesians 1:15-23	
Daniel 9:3-19	Ephesians 3:13-21	

5. Pray with others as well as privately.

Matthew 18:19; Acts 12:5,12; 2 Corinthians 1:11; Philippians 1:27.

6. Spend time in intercessory prayer as well as praying for personal needs. Romans 15:30; Ephesians 6:18-19; Colossians 4:2-4; 1 Thessalonians 5:25; 2 Thessalonians 3:1; Hebrews 13:18.

7. Have a regular prayer time.

Psalms 55:17; 86:3; Daniel 6:10.

8. Make your prayers definite.

Note the specific requests that are found in Bible prayers. Prayer lists may be helpful here.

9. Seek a right understanding of the place of prayer in the program of God.

"When we think about prayer, we think, as a rule, instinctively of its limitations; the mind of Christ seemed always to be occupied with its possibilities."

"There is a lesson which the Christian Church is slowly and painfully learning. It is that the highest service a man can render to his fellow man is to pray for him. Until a man has learned to intercede, he is not much use to the Kingdom of God. Work backed up by prayer is too often

the practice, if not the ideal, of the Church. If the world is to be won, that order must be reversed, and the Church learn to depend on prayer backed up by work. Christian work that thinks and plans and bustles and toils, but forgets to pray, is an almost pathetic spectacle."

"The greatest thing anyone can do for God and for man is to pray. It is not the only thing. But it is the chief thing. A correct balancing of the possible powers one may exert puts it first. For if a man is to pray right, he must first be right in his motives and life. And if a man be right, and put the practice of praying in its right place, then his serving and giving and speaking will be fairly fragrant with the presence of God."

10. Read richly-devotional Christian literature.

Biographies of great men and women of God are very stimulating and have been used to build up a hunger for a deeper life with the Lord.

Books on prayer and the spiritual life are often greatly used by the Lord to convict and correct lives.

11. Take note of prayer mottoes.

There are many good prayer mottoes in Scripture which can be used to motivate us in our prayer life. Prayer mottoes of great men are also helpful.

1. William Carey: "Expect great things from God and attempt great things for God."
2. D. L. Moody: "The world has yet to see what God can do through a man wholly yielded to Him."
3. Unknown: "If there should arise one utterly believing man, the history of the world would be changed."

12. Acknowledge answered prayers with thanksgiving.

Prayer is to be accompanied by thanksgiving (Philippians 4:6). In addition, thanksgiving makes us more mindful of answered prayer and thereby becomes an incentive to a greater prayer ministry.

13. Recognize the truth that prayer and the spiritual life are intimately related. These two cannot be divorced; they are interdependent. 2 Chronicles 7:14; Isaiah 59:1-2; Zechariah 12:10a; Acts 13:2-3; Ephesians 6:11-18.

Adapted from a paper by Dr. George Peters by the Faculty Spiritual Life Committee.