



Christian Life Fellowship
Becoming fully devoted followers of Christ



What If We All Prayed?

January 4, 2009

Rev. David Koch

Introduction:

Happy New Year! I greet you this morning with the thought that the God who was faithful to us in 2008 will be faithful to us in this New Year. God wants to bless His people with peace, joy and strength. When we come to Christ, He makes all things new. Old things pass away and all things are made new. Throughout our faith journey we face every day with new mercies from God's hand. Here we are into the first few days of the New Year. There is not one of us who sits here this morning who knows what it will hold. I can assure you that God who was present in 2008 will walk with us through each and every moment of 2009.

This day, this week, this year is fresh. It is untouched and so with God's help, we can do things and go places that we never have gone before. This week is a week of prayer. I think in every church where I have pastored, we have tried to set aside the first full week of the New Year for special prayer. Seeking God for His direction, favor, blessing and provision for the weeks and months ahead is important as we walk into this New Year. That doesn't mean that we don't pursue Him throughout the year. But at the start of this year, we want to seize the freshness of this opportunity before the Lord and see what He desires to make out of it.

So here we are again. Prayer is one of the most basic disciplines in the life of the believer. It is the place where the relationship of love, trust and confidence between us and God is made stronger. Over the next few weeks, I would like to dream with you. I want us together to dream about what CLF would look like if we all truly prayed Biblically, if we all truly gave Biblically, and if we all truly witnessed Biblically. If that happened CLF would change incredibly. I believe people would be impacted in ways we cannot even imagine. I believe we would regularly see people coming to Christ. I believe we would have excess finances and be so blessed that we could not contain His blessing.

So what keeps us from all doing these things? Over the next few weeks, I want to invite you to dream with me. Dream what it might look like if we all truly prayed Biblically.

2 Chron. 7:14 - Then if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, I will hear from heaven and will forgive

their sins and heal their land. It is amazing to me the promises that God has made for those who will humble themselves, pray, seek His face and turn from their wicked ways. He promises to hear,

forgive and heal their land. As we begin this week of prayer, I want us to focus on what it would be like if we all truly prayed Biblically. What would it look like and what are the possibilities that would happen as a result?

I. Pray with confidence.

Hebrews 4:16 - **So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it.** When we approach God, we are to have boldness. Other words for boldness that come to mind are frankness, bluntness and assurance. God wants us to be that honest and direct with Him. Sometimes we beat around the bush with God. We don't pray with the confidence that we need to. Are we convinced that God is in control? Are we convinced that He has given us prayer as a means of communicating with him and He with us?

This is what is happening in my life God. Your Word says if we know the promises of God, then we can stand on God's word to fulfill those promises. At times our confidence lacks because we aren't sure if we have a leg to stand on asking God for this or that.

During this week of prayer, get out the scriptures and remind God of His word which never changes and is alive. If His word promises you that your whole house can be saved, then stand on that promise with confidence. If His word promises you healing, then stand on that promise with confidence. **I John 5:14-15** – **this is the confidence that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us and if we know He hears us then we know we have the petitions we desire of Him.**

II. Pray in secret.

Matthew 6:5-6 - **"And now about prayer. When you pray, don't be like the hypocrites who love to pray publicly on street corners and in the synagogues where everyone can see them. I assure you, that is all the reward they will ever get. But when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father secretly. Then your Father, who knows all secrets, will reward you.**

When we look in the Book of Acts, we see that the disciples did come together at the temple to pray at the hour of prayer. There is a lot to be said for coming into agreement with other believers in seeking for God to pour out His blessing, to direct, to meet and so on.

Jesus told His disciples not to be like the Pharisees who would stand on the street corner and pray aloud. Instead, He instructed them to pray in secret and the Lord would reward them openly. Get into your secret place, the place where only you and God go. Go there and shut yourself away from the busyness of the world, from the confusion, from the pull of business, pleasure, finance, job, family and get alone with God. What might it look like if we truly did this? Can you image as you dream with me the release of anointing in your life, in this ministry, in your family? God would reward openly, He has promised to do that.

III. Pray with faith – when you pray believe.

Mark 11:22-24 - **Then Jesus said to the disciples, "Have faith in God. I assure you that you can say to this mountain, 'May God lift you up and throw you into the sea,' and your command will be obeyed. All that's required is that you really believe and do not doubt in your heart. Listen to me! You can pray for anything, and if you believe, you will have it.**

I have heard people say, "I can't believe God answered that prayer of mine." How do we ever think that if we offer prayer in doubt, God will answer it? I think sometimes He does so because He knows that we struggle over faith issues.

God wants our faith to be strong. Faith is made strong and developed by hearing the word of God and when we pray, we are to pray with faith, believing that God is listening and that He will respond according to His word and will. In the book of James we read that those who doubt should not think they are going to get anything from God. God responds to honesty and faith. There is the story of the man who came to Jesus, asking for something and Jesus questioned whether he believed. The man said "Lord I believe, help my unbelief."

The friends, who brought the quadriplegic to Christ for healing, acted in faith. They did not let the crowd stop them; they did not let the shingles on the roof stop them. They did not let their friend's illness stop them; they were determined and acted in faith. When they got their friend to Jesus, He got healed.

We need to have the same level of faith and show the same determination in prayer. We can bring our friend, our spouse, our children, our co-worker, our neighbor to God in prayer and faith and see God change their lives. What would CLF look like if we prayed that way?

IV. Pray with authority – In Jesus Name.

John 16:23-24 - At that time you won't need to ask me for anything. The truth is, you can go directly to the Father and ask him, and he will grant your request because you use my name. You haven't done this before. Ask, using my name, and you will receive, and you will have abundant joy.

What do you want God to do? Ask Him with the authority of Jesus name. Listen friends, we have been given the name of Jesus for a purpose. There is no name that is more powerful and more comforting. At the name of Jesus every knee will bow and every tongue will confess Him to be Lord to the glory of God the Father.

Jesus said "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go and heal the sick in my name, cast out demons in my name, preach the kingdom of heaven is at hand in my name."

The authority of Jesus' name is something that is supernatural and all heaven and earth take notice of His Name when it is used. What would CLF look like if we all prayed with the authority of Jesus' Name?

V. Pray always – continually.

1 Thes. 5:17 - Keep on praying. I fear that too many times we stop praying, just before the answer

is given. Don't stop. Don't quit. We will reap if we don't give up or faint. It is easy to get discouraged. It is easy to look at the circumstances and figure out in the seen realm that things are not working. Beloved, God is always at work and often it is in the realm where we don't see with our physical eyes.

This doesn't mean to stop everything that you are doing and get on your knees 24 hours a day. But it does mean to keep a constant open channel of communication between you and God. When you see something in your day that needs God's power, or attention, bring it to God in prayer right there and then. While you are traveling, or doing housework, you can be praying. While you are doing your job at work, your heart can be praying. What would CLF look like if we kept on praying and didn't quit?

VI. Pray fervently.

James 5:16-18 - Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and wonderful results. Elijah was as human as we are, and yet when he prayed earnestly that no rain would fall, none fell for the next three and a half years! Then he prayed for rain, and down it poured. The grass turned green, and the crops began to grow again.

The efficient, active, mighty prayer of the righteous has great force and the ability to accomplish much for the kingdom. There are many things that we can do and should do in our faith journey, but there are some things that only God can do. Those things require that we connect with Him in faith and prayer to see those things are accomplished for His sake and glory. There are times that I think we pray generic prayers. We are not fervent as though we had to get through to God. God is always listening but there is a story about the persistence of the person who went to the unjust judge. Because of their fervency and determination the judge answered the door and provided what was being asked for.

Conclusion:

What would CLF look like if we all truly prayed Biblically? I suggest that we would observe God moving like we have not seen Him move here before. He stands ready. So what will be our response to this sermon? This is a week of prayer. Let me ask you to focus on one area of prayer this week and ask God to strengthen you in that one area. Let me ask you to take the book marker in your bulletin and use that as a guide each day this week. I am anticipating some tremendous breakthroughs in 2009. **WHAT IF WE ALL PRAYED?**