

COMMITTED TO PRAYER

We envision being a church utterly dependent on God, where prayer is like breathing.

¹⁶ Always be joyful. ¹⁷ Never stop praying. ¹⁸ Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus. **1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 NLT**

⁵ "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 tell you the truth, that is all the reward they will ever get. ⁶ But when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private. Then your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.

⁷ "When you pray, don't babble on and on as the Gentiles do. They think their prayers are answered merely by repeating their words again and again. ⁸ Don't be like them, for your Father knows exactly what you need even before you ask him! **Matthew 6:5-8 NLT**

WHY PRAY IN PRIVATE? To establish the proper focus.

SHUTTING THE DOOR SHIFTS THE FOCUS OFF OF OTHERS.

- No one to impress, imitate, or evaluate, we can simply focus on God.
- We can still intercede for them.

SHUTTING THE DOOR SHIFTS THE FOCUS OFF OF SELF.

With no one to impress we can be a little less self-conscious and more God-conscious. In private focused prayer, God's Holy Spirit may reveal more of who we are, more of who He is, and how to walk in light of His Word.

⁸ The Lord is good and does what is right; he shows the proper path to those who go astray. ⁹ He leads the humble in doing right, teaching them his way.

¹⁰ The Lord leads with unfailing love and faithfulness all who keep his covenant and obey his demands. ¹¹ For the honor of your name, O Lord, forgive my many, many sins. **Psalm 25:8-11 NLT**

IF WE ARE COMMITTED FOLLOWERS OF JESUS WE MUST BE COMMITTED TO PRAYER.

- Jesus modeled private time in prayer for the disciples and us.
- **After the feeding of 5000**

²² Immediately after this, Jesus insisted that his disciples get back into the boat and cross to the other side of the lake, while he sent the people home.

²³ After sending them home, he went up into the hills by himself to pray. Night fell while he was there alone. **Matthew 14:22-23 NLT**

But Jesus often withdrew to the wilderness for prayer. **Luke 5:16 NLT**

- **Before the cross**

⁴¹ He walked away, about a stone's throw, and knelt down and prayed, ⁴² "Father, if you are willing, please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine." ⁴³ Then an angel from heaven appeared and strengthened him. ⁴⁴ He prayed more fervently, and he was in such agony of spirit that his sweat fell to the ground like great drops of blood. **Luke 22:41-44 NLT**

SHUTTING THE DOOR REVEALS GOD'S PLACE OF PRIORITY.

"My Utmost for His Highest" Oswald Chambers August 23rd entry:

"Unless you learn to open the door of your life completely and let God in from your first waking moment of each new day, you will be working on the wrong level throughout the day. But if you will swing the door of your life fully open and pray to your father who is in the secret place, every public thing in your life will be marked with the lasting imprint of the presence of God"

WHY PRAY IN PUBLIC? To lead.

THE LORD'S PRAYER (MODEL PRAYER) OF JESUS

⁹ Pray like this: Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy.

¹⁰ May your Kingdom come soon. May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

¹¹ Give us today the food we need,

¹² and forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us.

¹³ And don't let us yield to temptation, but rescue us from the evil one.

Matthew 6:9-13 NLT

FIVE BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES FOR CORPORATE PRAYER:

1. **Desperation**
2. **One Focus**
3. **One Voice**
4. **Invoking the Presence of God**
5. **Agreement**

Next Steps for me today...

- I will commit to meet with God in prayer each day.
- I will establish a consistent place and time of prayer to start my day.
- I will seek to eliminate all distractions during my time of prayer.
- I will commit to pray for my church and with my church.