



SPIRITUAL **disciplines**

A MEANS TO AN END!

The Discipline of Prayer

August 13, 2023 1 Timothy 4:7-10

I have prepared this message with Christians in mind. I want to make some assumptions: 1) You believe God expects you to pray 2) You believe prayer makes a difference. However, these assumptions leave me with questions. Why do we pray so little or so inconsistently? Why do we struggle in our prayer lives? Perhaps the reason is we need help developing the spiritual discipline of prayer. In Colossians 4:2, Paul challenged the Colossians to be disciplined in prayer. Just as those early Christians were challenged by Paul, **today we are challenged to be disciplined in prayer.**

“The Discipline of Prayer is committing to a two-way communication between God, our Creator, and us! This does not happen overnight. It may take years to develop this discipline to become second nature, automatic, and continual. Normally, for most Christians, prayer is intermittently used for occasions when we want something, when we have the time, when we schedule it, and so forth. The Discipline of Prayer is normally scheduled, but it is so much more; it is an attitude that we put into practice. We still should do our scheduled prayer times but not let that be the only time! We do this not to just maintain our relationship with Christ, but to empower it further, to build it, and pursue Him totally and continually in a reverent attitude of prayer!”

— Dr. Richard J. Krejcir

From the apostle Paul we learn:

1. “Devote yourselves to prayer” - You are given a mandate to pray!

To devote, to continue, to be constant, persevering, and unwavering in prayer. To be in constant and unbroken fellowship and communion with God.

2. “Keeping alert in it” - You are given the manner of prayer!

Antonyms would be: sleep, neglect

The accompanying exhortation to “keep awake, be on the alert” (γρηγορέω) is drawn from the imagery of guard duty, To fight against distractions, drowsiness, sluggishness, wandering thoughts.

“When our awareness of the greatness of God and the gospel is dim, our prayer lives will be small.”

— Don Whitney

3. “With an attitude of thanksgiving” - You are given the motivation for praying!

“Thankfulness is the environment for good praying.”

4. “Praying at the same time for us as well” – You are given the ministry of prayer!

1 Samuel 12:23 (NASB95) “Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by ceasing to pray for you; but I will instruct you in the good and right way.”