

When Leaders Pray

“Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you:
but I will teach you the good and the right way:”
(1Samuel 12:23).

In the Book of Exodus alone more than fifty prayer conversations between God and Moses are recorded. His famous prayer is recorded in Exodus 32:31-34.





“And Moses returned unto the LORD, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin--; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written. And the LORD said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book. Therefore now go, lead the people unto the place of which I have spoken unto thee: behold, mine Angel shall go before thee: nevertheless in the day when I visit I will visit their sin upon them” (Exodus 32:31-34).

God had decided to kill His people and start again with Moses. The leader interceded for the people, and God changed His mind. Prayerful leaders have influence with God.

Stuart Lassetter in *Manna from Moses* says, “Powerful forces are unleashed when a leader travails in prayer before God. The leader has access to God and, like any other child of God, can come boldly into the throne room of God’s presence. When a leader will be burdened for the needs of the people, God will listen to his unselfish, intercessory prayer. Tremendous benefits and blessings to the people can be directly attributed to a leader’s prayer.”

How Do You Measure Up?





Vesta Mangun, in her lesson, “Leadership in Prayer—Indispensable Example” tells us that you can:

-  Measure your love for your people by your prayer life.
-  Measure your concern for your people by your prayer life.
-  Measure your vision for your people by your prayer life.
-  Measure your leadership of your people by your prayer life.

How Can We Increase Our Level of Influence?

John Maxwell in *The 21 Most Powerful Minutes in a Leader’s Day* informs us that leadership impact rises as influence increases. Most leaders are anxious to increase their leadership impact. They realize that when there is little influence, little is accomplished. On the other hand, with much influence, much is accomplished. How can we increase our level of influence? How can we make maximum impact and assure that much is accomplished? One important way is through leadership involvement in prayer and fasting. (This is not to suggest that a leader




does not need to develop leadership skills.) Following are some ways to more efficiently organize your prayer life and amplify your level of influence.

-  **To remember the various needs of your people compile a “prayer list.”** This list will become your “prayer planner.” It will help you be organized in your prayer life.
-  **Find a personal “prayer partner.”** If married, your spouse should be your prayer partner. You can also have another person (of the same sex) that you pray with on a regular basis. It is always good to be around people who motivate you to have a deeper walk with the Lord. Such people are “growth partners.” They will help you grow.
-  **Have a regular “prayer time.”** Give God the best time of your day. If you are more alert in the morning, pray in the morning.
-  **Have a quiet “prayer place.”** This needs to be a place where you can communicate with heaven without earthly disturbances.


“Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour” (Acts 3:1).




Notice three things about this Scripture.

Prayer Partners	Peter and John
Prayer Place	Temple
Prayer Time	Hour of prayer, ninth hour

-  **You may want to have a “prayer team,” a group of prayer warriors.**
-  **Research and pray for unreached areas.** This could be countries, cities, towns, and communities that are yet to be reached. Be involved in “prayer evangelism.” Prayer should precede evangelism.
-  **Jesus often asked, “What do you need?”** Find out what prayer needs your people have. Take note of the needs and pray for each one until something happens. Focus in on the specific prayer requests. When you pray specifically, God answers specifically.

“People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.” Prayer is a great way to express that you care.

-  **When you see someone that you prayed for mention, “I prayed for you (today).”** When possible, mention the need that you prayed for. It is also encouraging when you send an occasional note to someone you have been praying for. Let them know that you care and that you have talked to the Father on their behalf. Let your members (followers) know that you understand and care about their needs.

-  **Have a prayer agenda.** When you get together for national, regional, or local board meetings, make sure prayer is a major part of the agenda. When you pray, you show that you are dependent upon God. To discuss and decide things concerning the kingdom without prayer shows that you are depending on your abilities. Make prayer a priority!
-  **Have a regular prayer meeting with your leadership team.**
-  **When a member verbally mentions a prayer need, take advantage of the present and pray for that need immediately.** You are a minister. Take advantage of each opportunity to minister.

Warren Wiersbe in *On Being a Servant of God* states that ministry takes place when, “divine resources meet human needs through loving channels to the glory of God.” Ministry takes place when needs are met by God, through you and your prayers.

Leaders also should be committed to fasting. Fasting is a regular, normal activity of leaders. Each of the three extended fasts (of forty days) recorded in the Bible were completed by leaders (Jesus and twice by Moses.) Paul indicated that he was involved in “fastings often” (2 Corinthians 11:27).

“The POWERHOUSE for the church is not the BOARDROOM, but the PRAYER ROOM.”
(Rev. Harry Scism)

Leadership Prayerlessness Is Sin

The Prophet Samuel considered it to be a sin not to pray for the people that he was leading.

“Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way” (1 Samuel 12:23).

Dan Southerland in *Transitioning (Leading Your Church Through Change)* “The problem with not spending time in prayer is simply this: those who talk with God . . . hear God best. The number one hindrance to answered prayer for...leaders today is prayerlessness. We just don’t pray.”





The leader that lasts is the leader that fasts.
The leader that stays is the leader that prays.

Arnold L. Cook in his excellent book, *Historical Drift*, writes concerning a church he visited, “After the service, I commended the senior pastor’s wife on their accomplishment. She responded quietly, “My husband leads from his knees.”

Prayer is the Christian’s vital breath and native air. We all promote it verbally. Every new initiative is launched with the reminder: “We must bathe this ministry in prayer.” But our talk too often fails to match our walk.

Prayer is the very essence of Christianity. It was the only thing Christ's disciples ever asked Him to teach them (Luke 11:2-4). Prayer is to be the heart of the Church. Jesus declared: "My house will be called a house of prayer" (Matthew 21:13).

Cook suggests that the following test will show how effective we are at leading from our knees:

-  **Personal Life:** How important would your children consider prayer to be based on what they see in your private and family prayer life?
-  **Marriage:** Would your spouse describe your leadership as "leading from your knees"?
-  **Professional Life:** Is your prayer life commensurate with your sphere of ministry responsibility?
-  **Leadership:** How would your staff rate the importance of prayer in ministry based on what they see in your leadership?

From the Mouth of Babes

"Every morning we have seen (*and still see*) our parents on their faces pleading with God on the people's behalf, interceding and crying out to God to become better leaders. We have been blessed with such parents who love the Lord with all their heart and set such an example." (Melinda Poitras, age 12.)

**"The devil is in constant conspiracy against a preacher who really prays, for it has been said that what a minister is in his prayer closet is what he is, no more, no less."
(Vance Havner)**

Study Questions

1. How many prayer conversations between Moses and God are found in Exodus? _____

2. Name two things that you can do to improve your prayer life. _____

3. What three things (about prayer) can we learn from Acts 3:1? _____

