

Leadership Praying

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

Leadership is influence, nothing more, nothing less. As Christian leaders we are in the business of influencing men toward God. We influence men to come to salvation and live righteously in obedience to the Word of God. These things cannot be done by force. We can best accomplish this through persuasion and by setting an example. Paul said, “Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men” (2 Corinthians 5:11).

Paul also revealed that our battle is not with people (under our leadership). It is a spiritual battle. We should not have difficulty with people, but with their inappropriate actions. Our problem is with Satan’s influence in their lives. As leaders we should be careful never to attack a person, but deal with the behavior.

“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places” (Ephesians 6:12).

One way to increase our influence with those we are leading is to be involved in “leadership praying.” We often think in terms of members (followers) praying for the pastor (or leader), but little is said about the pastor (or leader) praying for the members (followers).

Prayer plays an important role in evangelism. One man has said, “Talk with God about men before you talk to men about God.”


A limited prayer and fasting base in the local church limits the power in the church. As prayer goes so the church goes.

The Book of Acts begins with leaders gathered in the upper room in an extended prayer meeting. The Holy Spirit was poured out. Souls were won through the anointed preaching of the Word of God. The church was established. Prayer remained a priority in the early church among leaders and members alike. Leadership always led the way in prayer.

Leadership Priorities

The early church leaders reemphasized their priorities in Acts 6. Prayer was placed first among ministerial priorities. Men of God stated their main concerns in the ministry:

 Give ourselves continually to prayer.

 Give ourselves to the ministry of the Word.

It's Time to Think

What kind of prayers do you think these leaders continually prayed? Were they selfish prayers asking for personal petitions? _____

God Is Looking for a Praying Man

“And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor” (Isaiah 59:16).

God looked at Israel and grieved that there was no one to intercede for them. He looks for intercessors that are willing to “stand in the gap” (for a lost world). (See Ezekiel 22:30.)

Leaders Who Prayed

1. Abraham Interceded

“Then the LORD said, ‘The outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is so great and their sin so grievous that I will go down and see if what they have done is as bad as the outcry that has reached me. If not, I will know.’ The men turned away and went toward Sodom, but Abraham remained standing before the LORD. Then Abraham approached him and said: ‘Will you sweep away the righteous with the wicked? What if there are fifty righteous people in the city? Will you really sweep it away and not spare the place for the sake of the fifty righteous people in it? Far be it from you to do such a thing—to kill the righteous with the wicked, treating the righteous and the wicked alike. Far be it from you! Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?’ When the LORD had finished speaking with Abraham, he left, and Abraham returned home” (Genesis 18:20-25, 33 *NIV*).

2. Nehemiah, a Leader Who Prayed

“When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven. Then I said: ‘O LORD, God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with those who love him and obey his commands, let your ear be attentive and your eyes open to hear the prayer your servant is praying before you day and night for your servants, the people of Israel. I confess the sins we Israelites, including my father’s house, and myself have committed against you” (Nehemiah 1:4-7, *NIV*).

Nehemiah fasted for several days, but prayed for several months. As a result, God gave him a vision of how he could minister to the people.

3. Paul Prayed for His People

“I thank my God, making mention of thee always in my prayers” (Philemon 4).

“We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers” (1 Thessalonians 1:2).

“Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers” (Ephesians 1:16).

4. Jesus Prayed for His Followers

“And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren” (Luke 22:31-32).

“Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them” (Hebrews 7:25).

Study Questions

1. According to this lesson how can we increase our influence level? _____

2. What will happen when there is a limited prayer base in the church? _____

3. What are the leadership priorities found in Acts 6? _____

4. Give three examples of biblical leaders who prayed. _____

5. Write out one verse that shows Paul prayed for His people. _____
