

January 12, 2020

Pastor Steve Hardy

The Praying Church Acts

We have observed through the OT characters, by both example and writing, the central place of “calling on the name of the LORD,” seeking and trusting that he will fulfill his covenant promises. In the narratives surrounding Jesus’ birth, prayers specifically acknowledged and rejoiced in the sending of our Savior. The strong tradition of prayer by the people of faith continues in God’s new community, the church, evident in both direct statements and implicit in the accounts of the church in Acts.

I. People of faith and the TRADITION of prayer, Acts 2:42; 3:1; 10:2-3.

II. People of faith and the DEVELOPMENT of prayer, the book of Acts.

III. People of faith and a LIFE of prayer, Acts and 1 Thessalonians 5:17.

Prayer is central to the life of the church, and to the spiritual life of a follower of Christ. To be a believer is to be a child of God (John 1:12-13), and prayer is the natural communication between the child and the Father. Jesus calls his followers friends (John 15:15), and friends talk! Faith brings us into a personal relationship with Jesus, with the implication that there will be growing interaction as that relationship grows through time to maturity. This will testify to the genuine nature of that faith.



What is your family practice of prayer? Would you say that practice was related to a tradition of praying? Talk about the value of tradition as a teaching tool, helpful in developing healthy disciplines and practices, and as an expression of genuine faith that is central to life. On the other hand, talk about the dangers of empty religious tradition, and the importance of prayer flowing from faith and a genuine relationship with Jesus.

For Further Study, Thought, and Discussion:

1. Colossians 4:2 commands, “continue steadfastly in prayer” (ESV). What do other translations say? Explain what you believe this means, and what it looks like in the context of an American believer in 2020. What are some

themes for prayer that stand out in this passage, this book, or through the New Testament?

2. How or why is communication important in a relationship? What happens when people who are supposed to be in a relationship don’t communicate? How do these realities correspond to the place of prayer in our personal relationship with God? What are other aspects of our communication with God that need to be nurtured so it is two-way, enabling that relationship to be healthy and grow to maturity?

3. What seems to stand out regarding prayer in passages like Acts 1:14; 2:42-44; 4:24; and 12:5,12? What might this suggest about the practice of prayer as the body of Christ? What ideas would you have for strengthening the gathering together of the body for the purpose of prayer? Please—share your ideas with the leadership! Email steve.hardy@damascuscc.org, write them down and drop them in the offering box, or share your ideas directly with one of the elders.

NEXT WEEK: Pastor Andy McClellan
“When the Praying Church Prays for _____,”
James 5:13-18