**SUTHERLIN FAMILY CONNECTIONS**

**WHY PRAY?**

**Why Pray? Because Jesus did!** Is He not **our example**? Did He not **command us** to do the same?

“**I have given you an *exampl*e, that ye should *do as I have done***.” **John 13:15**

**Luke 19:46**: “Saying unto them, It is written, ***My house is the house of prayer***: but ye have made it a den of thieves.”

Satan and his evil angels ***take no time off***. They ***work 24/7*** for one purpose, and one purpose only, to ***prevent God’s children from establishing a saving relationship with Christ***.

**But why did Jesus pray? How did He pray? What did He pray for?**

***Remember, Jesus’ humanity made prayer a necessity*.**

**John 1:14**: “And the ***Word was made flesh*, *and dwelt among us***, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) ***full of grace and truth***.”

”***Jesus*** Himself, while He dwelt among men, ***was often in prayer****…* ***seeking*** from His Father ***fresh supplies of strength***, that He might come forth ***braced for duty and trial****…****His humanity made prayer******a necessity and a privilege****.* ***He found comfort and joy in communion with His Father***.” Steps to Christ, 93, 94

**LET’S EXAMINE JESUS’ PRAYER LIFE A LITTLE CLOSER**

**“*LORD, TEACH US TO PRAY*, AS JOHN ALSO TAUGHT HIS DISCIPLES.**" **Luke 11:1**

“When Jesus was upon the earth, He ***taught His disciples how to pray***. He directed them to ***present their daily needs*** before God, and to cast ***all their care*** upon Him. And the ***assurance***He gave them that their petitions should be heard, is ***assurance***also to us.” Prayer, 168

**PRAYER GAVE JESUS THE STRENGTH HE NEEDED FOR EVERY AREA OF HIS LIFE**. **HE KNOWS THE SPIRITUAL BATTLE WE ARE IN**

**Eph 6:12**: “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.

”**The strength of Christ was in prayer**… With ***intense earnestness***, He ***poured*** out His supplications, and put forth ***all the strength of His soul*** *in* ***grasping*** the hand of the Infinite.” Prayer, 169

“***Few*** **will follow** the example of our Saviour in ***earnest, frequent prayer* *to God for strength to endure the trials****,* and to ***perform the daily duties***, of this life…and ***has given an******example*** to all His followers, that **watchfulness and prayer and persevering effort** **were necessary** on their part if they would ***rightly represent*** the love which dwelt in His bosom for the fallen race.” Review & Herald, February 23, 1886

**JESUS WRESTLED AND PRAYED EARNESTLY IN PRAYER**

**Matt 26:38-39**: “Then saith he unto them, **My soul is *exceeding sorrowful***, even unto death: tarry ye here, and ***watch with me***. And he went a little further, and ***fell on his face, and prayed***, saying, O my Father, ***if it be possible, let this cup pass from me***: nevertheless not as I will, but ***as thou wilt***.”

“And being in an ***agony He prayed more earnestly***… ***Many are content*** ***with******lip service***, and but ***few have a sincere, earnest, affectionate longing after God***.” Testimonies, vol. 4, 534

”**Christ wrestled in earnest prayer**; He offered up His supplications to the Father with ***strong crying******and******tears*** in behalf of those for whose **salvation** He had **left heaven**, and had come to this earth. Then how **proper**, yea, **how essential** that **men should pray and not faint**!” Review & Herald, April 1, 1890

**JESUS PRAYED TO *BE PREPARED* TO DO SPECIAL TASKS**

**Luke 6:12-13**: “Now it came to pass in those days that He went ***out to the mountain to pray***, and continued ***all night in prayer*** to God.”

“Jesus, when preparing for some ***great trial or some important work***, would resort to the ***solitude*** of the mountains and ***spend the night in prayer to His Father****…* ***We, too, must have times set apart for meditation and prayer and for receiving spiritual refreshing. We do not value the power and efficacy of prayer as we should***.” Ministry of Healing, 509

**JESUS TAUGHT US HOW TO PRAY FOR FORGIVENESS**

**Luke 23:34**: “Then said Jesus, Father, ***forgive them***; for they ***know not what they do***. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.”

“We need to ***examine our hearts*** as a preparation for coming before God in ***prayer that we may know*** what manner of ***spirit we are of****.* ***If we do not******forgive*** those who have trespassed against us, ***our prayers for forgiveness will not be heard***… Upon this petition Jesus makes a comment: "For **if ye forgive men** their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also ***forgive you***; but ***if* *ye forgive******not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses***." Signs of the Times, August 21, 1884

**JESUS LET *NOTHING* *INTERFERE* WITH HIS PRAYER LIFE AND PLACES TO PRAY**

**Matt 14:22-23**: “And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while **he *sent* *the* *multitudes* away**. And when he had ***sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray***: and when the evening was come, ***he was there alone****.*”

“Christ gave no stinted service. ***He did not measure His work by hours****.* ***His time, His heart, His soul and strength, were given to labor for the benefit of humanity***. Through ***weary days*** He toiled, and through ***long nights*** He ***bent in prayer******for grace and endurance*** that He might do a ***larger work***. With strong ***crying and tears*** He sent His petitions to heaven, that ***His human nature*** might be ***strengthened***, that He might be braced to meet the wily foe in all his ***deceptive*** workings, and ***fortified*** to fulfill His missions of ***uplifting******humanity***. To His workers He says, “***I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done***.” **John 13:15** Ministry of Healing, 500

**Matt 6:6**: “But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the **secret** **place**; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.”

“Have a place for ***secret prayer***. Jesus had ***select places for communion with God****,* ***and so should we***. We ***need often*** to retire to some spot, however humble, ***where we can be alone with God***.” Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, 84

**JESUS PRAYED ON OUR ACCOUNT**

John 17:9-10: "***I pray for them***. I do not pray for the world but for ***those*** whom You have given Me, for ***they are Yours***.”

**John 17:20, 24**: “Neither pray I for these alone, but ***for them*** also which shall ***believe on me*** through their word;” **24** "Father, I desire that ***they also*** whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that ***they*** may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.

“Jesus was often weary from incessant toil and ***self-denial*** and ***self-sacrifice*** **to bless the suffering and needy**…He knew that **you** would be indifferent in regard to your **dangers and** **would not feel your need of prayer**. It was on ***our account*** that **He poured out His** **prayers to His Father with strong cries and tears**.” Testimonies ,Vol.3, 379

**JESUS FASTED AND PRAYED**

**Mark 9:29**: “So He said to them, "This kind can come out by nothing but ***prayer and fasting***."

“When Jesus was led into the wilderness to be tempted, He was ***led by the Spirit of God***… He went into the wilderness to be alone, to contemplate ***His mission and work***. By **fasting and prayer** He was to brace Himself for the ***bloodstained path*** He must travel.” Manuscript 155, 1902

”If the Saviour of men, with His divine strength, felt the ***need of prayer***, how much more should feeble, sinful mortals feel the ***necessity*** of prayer—***fervent,******constant prayer***!... Those who ***profess the truth*** for these last days, above every other class of professed Christians, should ***imitate******the great Exemplar in prayer****.*” Prayer, 174

**JESUS TAUGHT THE IMPORTANCE OF THE LORD’S PRAYER**

“Jesus taught His disciples that only that prayer which arises from ***unfeigned* *lips***, prompted by the ***actual wants of the soul, is genuine***, and will bring heaven’s blessing to the petitioner… None will pray in vain if in their prayers are incorporated the ***principles*** contained therein**.** *Our* ***prayers in public should be short, and express only the real wants of the soul***, asking in ***simplicity*** and ***simple trusting faith*** for the very things we need. ***Prayer******from the******humble, contrite heart*** is the ***vital breath*** of the soul ***hungering for righteousness***.” Signs of the Times, December 3, 1896

**JESUS PRAYED, COMMANDED, AND TAUGHT US TO PRAY FOR OUR ENEMIES**

**Matt 5:44**: “But I say unto you, ***Love your enemies, bless them*** that curse you, ***do good*** to them that ***hate you***, and **pray for them** which despitefully ***use you***, and ***persecute you***;”

**Luke 6:28**: “**Bless them** that **curse** you, and **pray** for them which **despitefully use you**.”

“Let us strive to **walk** in the light as Christ is in the light… **Let us pray**, not only for ourselves, but for **those who have *hurt us***, and are ***continuing to hurt us*. Pray, pray**, especially in your mind. Letter 88, 1906

**WE ARE IN A WAR, A SPIRITUAL WAR, THAT IN THE END DETERMINES OUR ETERNAL DESTINY!**

“Though He is the Son of God, He ***strengthens His faith* by prayer**, and by **communion** with heaven gathers to Himself ***power to resist* evil and to minister** to the needs of men. “ Acts of the Apostles, 56

“***Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend***… Prayer does not bring God down to us, but ***brings us up to Him***.” Steps to Christ, 93

“**The Holy Spirit seeks to abide in each soul**. If it is welcomed as an ***honored guest***, those who receive it will be **made complete in Christ**. Counsels on Health, 561

**FREEDOM OF CHOICE** – The ***Holy Spirit impresses and convicts us*** before we pray, but the Spirit will **never fill us and empower us until we pray**.

**“*Prayer and faith* *will do what no power upon earth can accomplish****. We* ***need not******be so anxious and troubled***.” 8 MR, 218

“**Nothing but the baptism of the Holy Spirit can bring up the church to its right position, and prepare the people of God for the fast approaching conflict…We hold in our hands the promise of His Spirit**, and ministers may be qualified to give the trumpet a certain sound, to ***arouse* the *sleeping******people*** and set them at work for ***themselves and for others*** out of the fold.” Letter 15, 1889

“Then you shall ***call****,* and the ***Lord will answer***; you shall ***cry***, and He will say, ***'Here I am***.” **Isa 58:9**

We are told to “***pray without ceasing***”. When prayer becomes ***secondary*** in our life then we are ***putting God second*** in our life.

We ***must*** develop an ***attitude of prayer***. “Pray without ceasing.” **1 Thess 5:17**

**Col 4:2**: “***Continue*** in prayer, and ***watch*** in the same ***with thanksgiving***;”

When we ***neglect to pray*** we are ***easily misled*** by Satan.

Praying saints are ***God’s agents*** for Him to carry on His ***saving work*** on earth.

God wants ***true* revival** **and *true* reformation** so His kingdom can ***expand***. The ***Spirit of Prayer* is the *Spirit of Revival***.

Pentecost was a ***prayer* *meeting* *in the Upper Room*** with 120 Christians ***praying in one accord***. There the ***Lord gave us the standard and pattern of true revival*.**

“Let us ***allow God* *to control our minds***. Let us not say or do ***anything*** that will turn a fellow being from the ***right way***.” 20 MR 154.5

We have to ***invite*** ***the Holy Spirit in*** ***daily*** to allow Him to **work through us**. It’s a ***free* *will* *choice***.

“***It is through the Spirit that Christ dwells in us***; and the Spirit of God, received into the heart ***by faith***, is the beginning of the ***life eternal***.” Desire of Ages, 351

**Matt 21:22**: “And ***all things***, whatsoever ye shall ***ask in prayer, believing***, ye shall receive.”

**James 5:15**: “And the ***prayer of faith******shall save the sick***, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they ***shall be forgiven*** him.”

“I was ***led through the life of Christ******to see His meek, self-denying life***. This ***great sacrifice*** was to obtain for us a ***great salvation***. And if we obtain this great salvation it ***must be by our making a sacrifice on our part***. As ***Jesus sacrificed for us, we must sacrifice for Jesus***. ***As He denied Himself*** for us, we must**deny ourselves for Jesus*. As he endured privation and suffering for us, so we must endure privation and suffering for Jesus***… ***As Jesus endured agony and often was in lonely prayer and in agony of spirit pleading with His Father, so we, if we are truly Christ's followers, will often feel agony of soul, and will pour out our earnest prayer to our Father***.” 21 MR, 252.4

How ***important*** is it to have ***baptism of the Holy Spirit*** in our lives**?**

***He’s the power*** that works ***through us*** to give us the ***victory******of Jesus***.

And ***how do we obtain*** the indwelling of the Holy Spirit? ***Only by earnest prayer******and surrendering our will******as He leads and teaches us***.

The issue ***is****,* ***and******always*** has been, ***worship and obedience through******love***. Who do I worship? Who do I obey? ***What*** do I obey? ***Who do I love***?

**John 14:15**: “**If ye love *me*, keep my commandments**.”

**1 John 2:3-5**: “Now by this we know that ***we know Him, if we keep His commandments***. He who says, "I know Him," and ***does not keep*** His commandments, is a ***liar***, and the ***truth*** is not in him.”

**1 John 3:24**: “Now he who ***keeps His commandments******abides in Him, and He in him***. And by this we ***know*** that He ***abides in us, by the Spirit*** whom He has ***given us***.”

**Rev 12:17**: “And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to ***make war with the remnant*** of her seed, which ***keep the commandments of God****,* ***and*** have the ***testimony of Jesus Christ***.”

**Rev 14:12**: “Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that ***keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus*.**”

Our prayers can be an ***abomination*** to God?

**Prov 28:9**: “One who ***turns away******his ear*** from ***hearing the law***, even his ***prayer is an* *abomination***.”

**Hearing** - **OT:8085** - shama` (shaw-mah'); to **hear *intelligently***, often with implication of attention, ***obedience*, understand**.

“***We are to seek for the pearl of great price****,* ***but not in worldly marts or in worldly ways***… God calls for your **willing obedience**. He asks you to ***give up your sins***. "To him that ***overcometh***," Christ declares, "will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as ***I also overcame***, and am set down with My Father in His throne." Revelation 3:21. Christ Object Lessons, 117

“The child of God ***must* search out** ***the sin*** which he has petted and indulged himself in, and ***permit God to cut it out of his heart***. He ***must overcome*** that one sin; for it is ***not a trifling matter*** in the sight of God.” Message to Young People, 91.1

“The ***prayer of faith* is the *great strength* *of the Christian and will assuredly prevail against Satan***. This is why he insinuates that we have ***no need of prayer***. The name of Jesus, our Advocate, **he detests**; and when we ***earnestly* *come to Him for help, Satan's host is alarmed***. It serves his purpose well ***if we neglect the exercise of prayer***, for then ***his lying wonders are more readily received****.*” Testimonies, Volume 1, 296

Remember, Jesus’ victory is an ***accomplished fact***. He did it for us. We are ***justified*** while God is ***fitting us*** for heaven. Now that is ***good news***!