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Cherishing the Powerhouse of Corporate Intercession

Consider the definition of Prayer by the Puritan John Bunyan, "**Prayer is a sincere, sensible, affectionate pouring out of the heart or soul to God, through Christ, in the strength and assistance of the Holy Spirit, for such things as God hath promised, or according to the Word, for the good of the church, with submission, in faith, to the will of God.**" (John Bunyan, *Praying in the Spirit*, 1662).



There is to be greater spiritual eagerness in 2021 in the area of fervent intercessory prayer for one another before the Lord in the midst of this raging global health calamity. Paul in Phil 4:6-7 says, *'Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.'*

Prayer is the breath of godliness. 1 Sam 12:23 says, *'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.'* Acknowledging that we want to pray and knowing that we need to pray and set aside time and place to actually pray together.

Corporate and individual prayer are the powerhouses of the church. It is said that the spirituality of a church can be measured by the substance and demeanour of its weekly prayer meeting. We need to ask ourselves if there is a genuine evangelistic concern. Is there a heartfelt longing for the conversion of the unsaved? Is there a global vision and a fervent desire for revival and the propagation of the gospel to other lands? That is the expression of true fervent prayer to God.

Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, ... Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. Hebrews 4:14, 16 KJV

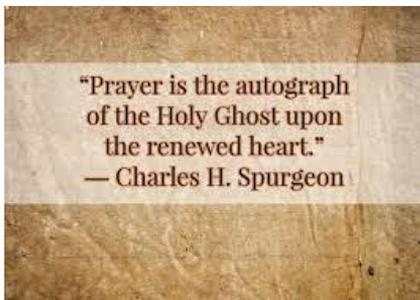


The elect of God who are redeemed by sovereign grace should rally humbly and regularly at the throne of grace, to intercede for

the lost, pray for the spiritual well-being of its church members, for the leaders of the nation and praise and thank God corporately - all to the edification of saints.

The Joy of Corporate intercession

Spurgeon, the prince of preachers in nineteenth-century England, emphasised corporate prayer: *'In 1866 Spurgeon instituted daily prayer meetings at the Metropolitan Tabernacle in London at 7 in the morning and again 7:30 each evening'* (The Life & Work of C. H. Spurgeon, Holden Pike, Banner of Truth, 1991).



The main Tabernacle prayer meeting used to take place on Monday evenings and was attended by over 3000. To provide for participation, there were supplementary times for prayer by smaller groups within the church. The church was flourishing because the people were praying and the Lord richly blessed and prospered their ministry.



The New Testament records many instances of church prayer meetings. While the disciples waited for the Day of Pentecost, *'these all continued with one accord in prayer and supplications with the women ...'* (Acts 1:14). When the apostle Peter was incarcerated it was the church that prayed for him (Acts 12:12). As they were praying for his release, Peter himself arrived - an answer to their corporate praying. It was as the elders at Antioch prayed and fasted together that the Spirit revealed his mission for Paul and Barnabas (Acts 13:1-3; see also 14:23).

Paul enjoined the Corinthians to pray for him corporately. In 2 Cor 1:11, he wrote, *'Ye also helping together by prayer for us that, for the gift bestowed upon us by the means of many persons, thanks may be given by many on our behalf'*. The first church in Europe has its genesis in a (Jewish) prayer meeting for women (Acts 16:13). Paul always asked churches to strive together with him in prayers to God. Rom 15:30 says, *'Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me'*.

Our Audience with God

It is customary for us to note engagements in our diaries (or mobile phones for some). If you are invited to meet the Prime Minister, the President or even the Queen of England, would you remember to keep the appointment? Each time we attend a prayer meeting, we have an audience with the King of kings and

Lord of lords. The prayer meeting to seek God is important and should have precedence over all other demands on our time. When was the last time you attended the church prayer meeting? Or have you never attended it at all? Let us put God first and learn. Communicate more with God and less of the world, our selfish pleasures and mobile phone distractions/games and other pastimes.

My wife and I have been attending church's prayer meetings for more than 38 years since our courting days and after we were married, we set aside Wed nights to seek the Lord in corporate prayer (unless we are sick or away). We find it needful to come regularly to join the church - to uphold one another before the Lord in prayer and to hear others share in thanksgiving to the Lord.

All churches, whatever their size, could do with more people coming to the prayer meeting in the midst of this trying circumstances, to engage in fruitful and fervent intercession for protection and safety and revival for one another before the Lord.

Unburdening our Cares Fervently

Jer 29:12-13 says, *'Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.'* We need to pray daily for the gracious intervention of God in our lives. We are not to seek signs and wonders or tongue speaking, but for God to guide us daily in situations by His grace and mercy when we pray.



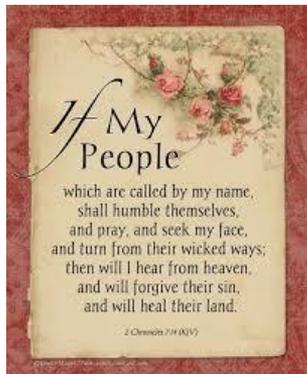
John 16:24 says, *'Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.'* Matt 17:20-21 says, *'And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.'*

We stand in urgent need of personal and corporate revival - in ourselves and in the church and our families and our nation too. Less of arrogant pride in ourselves and unedifying words and actions and more of humble supplications before the Lord. Revivals always seem to have their genesis in prayer meetings. How can a church grow and fulfil its calling effectively unless the members commit it to the Lord in frequent prayer, both privately and corporately?

We thank God for those who have been attending the church weekly prayer meeting regularly, including brethren from London and Bangalore, India. Let me urge and strongly encourage you to unite with the church in intercessory prayer once a week - to testify to God's goodness and guidance in our lives and pray together as a church family. Come, and be blessed also by the clear teaching of the Word and collective worship of the Most High God. Be a blessing

to others as you testify and share God's grace in your lives, so that others will be encouraged and exhorted too.

Talk to God about men before you talk to men about God. May the Lord provoke and spur us to cultivate consecrated and prayerful lives, both individually and corporately in the midst of a crisis. Pray as a family and attend the church weekly corporate prayer meeting and grow in deeper love and devotion for the Lord and care and concern for the spiritual well-being of His people, the source of spiritual power!



Conclusion

Solomon reminded us in 2 Chr 7:14 says, *'If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.'* Thank God for this great prerogative that God has given to us. Imagine we have the mobile phone number or the email of God (that is how someone described Jeremiah 33:3 – God's phone number is 333) and we can call upon Him for help daily (Heb 4:16). What a great honour and privilege! Do you make full use of this privilege daily?

Something to think about and act upon and to pray about.

Jack Sin



Lessons in Godly Prudence from a Wise King

Studies into Ecclesiastes



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04
APRIL 2021

- 2 Good Friday: Who killed Jesus? (Luke 23:1-26)
- 4 The Implications & Impact of the Resurrection (1Cor 15:1-21,51-58)
- 11* The Matters of the Heart (Eccl 1:1-18)
- 18 The Meaningless of Labour under the Sun (Eccl 2:18-26)
- 25 The Opportune Time for Everything (Eccl 3:1-12)

05
MAY 2021

- 2 The Beauty of Two in God's Economy (Eccl 4:4-21)
- 9* The Management of the Tongue (Eccl 5:1-13)
- 16 The Mindless Pursuit of Wealth (Eccl 6:1-12)
- 23 The Basis for True Spiritual Discretion (Eccl 7:1-17)
- 30 Reverence and Fear of God (Eccl 8:1-13)

06
JUNE 2021

- 6 The Intervention of God (Eccl 9:7-18)
- 13* Speech and Danger of Laziness (Eccl 10 :12-20)
- 20 Wise Counsel for Young and Old (Eccl 11:1-10)
- 27 Gospel Sunday: Fruitful Aging and the Chief Purpose of Man (Eccl 12:1-13)

Memory Verse

Ecc1 6:12 For who knoweth what is good for man in this life, all the days of his vain life which he spendeth as a shadow? for who can tell a man what shall be after him under the sun?

Announcements

1. Welcome to our Worship Service! For our visitors, do leave us your contact numbers in our guest book before you leave.
2. Pastor Jack speaks today on “***The Mindless Pursuit of Wealth***” (**Ecc1 6: 1-12**), continuing the quarterly sermon series on “Lessons on Godly Prudence from a Wise King – Studies in Ecclesiastes”.
3. Pastor Jack speaks next Sunday on “***The Basis for True Spiritual Discretion*** (**Ecc1 7:1-17**).
4. In compliance with the Covid19 Phase 2 (Heightened Alert), the following Sunday School classes will be suspended till 13 Jun 2021 or when the heightened measures are lifted:
 - WCF Shorter Catechism Class – Pastor Jack
 - New Testament Survey – Dn Choo Siang
 - Studies in Numbers – Dr Kwong Leen
5. Chinese Fellowship meets on Sunday night at 7pm via Zoom with both local and overseas brethren.
6. Do send your prayer items to Pastor and join us for Church Prayer Meeting on Wed at 8pm via Zoom. The May prayer list is available from Dn Choo Siang.
7. Monthly Neighbourhood Bible Class meets on the first Friday of each month in church on the study of 2 Samuel. Do come and join us for a time of learning God's Word. This is also suspended till 13 Jun 2021 in compliance with the Phase 2 (Heightened Alert).
8. The Pandemic book can be purchased through Dn Yue Kay (Hp: +65 97450311) or via email at sovereignhopebpc@gmail.com.
9. Do kindly observe the safety measures of the church and assist with the weekly cleaning of the premises.
10. Love gifts, Offering and Tithes to the Lord can be given in the following ways:
 - **Cheque** payable to **Sovereign Hope Bible Presbyterian Church** and mail to church address. (Kindly write the full name of the church as indicated.)
 - **Fund transfer** to Church **UOB** Account **392-308-825-1**
 - **PayNow** to Church UEN: **T19SS0116FSOV**
