

## **MEN'S LIFE BLOOMINGTON & GOD @ WORK**

*Tuesday, April 10, 2018*

### **Expand Your Prayer Life**

**Definition:** Is your prayer life feeling routine? Your prayer life should be refreshing and enjoyable. This plan can help bring new life to your prayers. There are five ideas that are used to expand one's prayer life. This plan covers topics of faith stretching prayers, prayer walking, solitude, creative ideas and fresh perspectives.

**Audio Segment:** *Praying A to Z Amelia Rhodes*

#### **Segment Questions:**

- If a young believer asked you, "What is prayer?" and "How do I pray?" what would you say?
- When you hear the five titles from this devotional, what type of image does it form regarding how to "Expand Your Prayer Life?" Stretching Your Faith; Take a Prayer Walk; Solitude; Praying A to Z; Fresh Approaches.
- When is the last time you tried something different in prayer?
- Refute this statement: "Prayer is a psychological crutch consistent with a mental illness in which a person talks with a non-existent being?"

#### **Action Questions:**

- Come up with a list of ten different ways to pray. Here is the first... 1) Privately in my own quiet time. Now come up with nine more.
- From this list of ten, what is a new one that you would like to try?
- What makes it hard to try new approaches to pray?
- What might make it easier?

**Personal Application:** Who can you tell that you want to try this new approach that will check back in a week to see if you have done it?

## Expand Your Prayer Life

Men have a hard time with slowing down enough to pray. We are a bunch of doers. When we gather around the cooler on Monday mornings to talk about our weekends, the conversation often covers what we did. Yard work, the football game, the trip we took. We tend not to talk about the conversations we had or our moments of solitude. The idea of slowing down to pray goes so against our “get it done” mindset.

But it is taking a toll. A Web search of the phrase “stress related chest pain” brings up thousands of articles of this rapidly expanding health malady. A doctor said he sees multiple cases per day. We all need to do a better job of managing our stress, but can expanding our prayer life help? Or does the very thought of doing so increase your stress?

Maybe we need to move the focus off the challenge of praying more to praying better. Instead of “carving out time to pray” what if we simply brought prayer into everything we did. Or instead of focusing on an ever-growing list of prayer requests, what if we just got away in solitude to listen to God. To let him speak.

The audio portion of the “Praying A to Z” gives us another practical example of how we can “Expand Your Prayer Life” in a natural and creative way.

Take a step back and consider new ways to broaden the way you pray. The discovery of a new way to bring life to your conversations with God will be refreshing and energizing... and who knows, might change your world in the process.

**Lamentations 3:22-25** The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. “The LORD is my portion,” says my soul, “therefore I will hope in him.” The LORD is good to those who wait for him, to the soul who seeks him.

**Psalms 143:8** Let me hear in the morning of your steadfast love, for in you I trust. Make me know the way I should go, for to you I lift up my soul.

**Matthew 6:5-6** “And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

**Romans 15:2** Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up.

**Mark 1:35** And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed.

**John 17:9-10** I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them.

**1 Timothy 2:1** First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people,

**James 5:16** Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.