



with ourselves. Jesus said you will know a tree by its fruit (Matt. 7:16). If someone says they love music or football we can usually see that evidenced in his or her life. The person will buy tickets to those events, show

an interest when speaking about them, and will want to give time to those things. The same is true for those who claim to love the Lord. Do we seek to give time to Him? Do we speak passionately about Him? If we find ourselves praying once a week, once a month, or if we can't remember the last time we prayed—we need to ask ourselves “why?” Is it because of apathy, or laziness, or lack of love for the Lord? Whatever the reason, it isn't good enough. Let us no longer deceive ourselves about this issue, and confront whatever is hindering us from spending time with our Lord in prayer.



Faithful Sayings Issue 12.49 December 5, 2010

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Welcome Visitors

We are so glad that you joined us today.
Please come again.

● Let us know if you have any questions.

ISSUE

12.49

BULLETIN OF
THE OLSEN
PARK CHURCH
OF CHRIST

December 5
2010

Faithful Sayings

Services

Sunday: 9:30 AM
10:20 AM
6:00 PM
Wednesday: 7:00 PM

Elders:

Pat Ledbetter
Jeff Nunn
Kyle Pope

Deacons:

Dean Bowers
Eddie Cook
Bill Davis
Steve Dixon
Pat Goguen
Jack Langley
Neil Ledbetter
Brady McAlister
Walker McAnear
Lance Purcell
Rusty Scott

Evangelists:

Kyle Pope
Jason Garcia



When Do You Pray?

By Jason Garcia

This is a question that deserves a thoughtful response no matter where we are in our walk with God. The fact that all personal relationships require communication in order to thrive or even function is axiomatic. God Himself has preserved His Word for millennia, and has gone to great lengths (by human standards) to reach His creation and express to us His person and will. Is it any wonder, then, that He expects us to make an effort to communicate with Him? Why does prayer to God seem to be particularly challenging for some folks, and especial-



ly for those who claim to love Him? Shouldn't we long to speak with Him as often as we are able? Let us consider the perfect example we have in our Lord, and strive to imitate the standard He set in His prayer life.

We don't have to look very far in the gospels before we



Olsen Park church of Christ

read of Jesus taking time to be with His Father in prayer. He prayed at meal time, early in the morning, at the close of a busy day, before making important decisions, and even when He was being put to death (cf. John 6:11; Mark 1:35; Matt. 14:23; Luke 6:12; Luke 23:34). Do we, as His people, make it a habit to pray before we begin our day? Do we pray and offer thanks before we take our meals? Paul admonishes all Christians that we should pray without ceasing (1 Thess. 5:17), he is not speaking of constant, un-broken verbal conversation with God. If he were, this would contradict other instructions to teach, preach, and work. Instead, we should understand him as speaking to the utmost importance of regular communication with our God. John tells us we are to walk as He walked, that is, imitate His life to the best of our ability (cf. 1 John 2:6). If Jesus, being the Son of God Most High, saw the need to speak often with the Father, should we not all the more make every effort to speak to our God? We *must* exercise our right and privilege to speak to God in order to be pleasing to Him (cf. 1 Tim. 2:1-3).

We can also learn from the Lord by considering what and for whom He prayed. Some brethren may

have limited their prayers to times of distress or in emergencies. This is not the pattern we see in our Savior. Jesus prayed for the *future* church, and for His disciples. Think about that! Before you and I were ever born, the Lord prayed for our spiritual well-being (cf. John 17:20-21) ! It is clear, then, that our prayers should not be withheld from our Father until we find ourselves in dire straits, spiritual or otherwise, but we should find occasion to pray under any and all circumstances (cf. Eph. 6:17). There is yet another lesson to be learned from Christ in that He prayed for His enemies. As He was being murdered on the cross He said “**Father forgive them, they know not what they do**” (Luke 23:34). This is perhaps one of the most challenging examples that we face as Christians. Even though we do not face the same level of persecution in the world today as our first century brethren, we still have spiritual enemies who would see our faith obliterated if it were in their power. These are the very people for whom we should be praying, and they are the same people we are called to love (cf. Luke 6:27). Furthermore, the Lord taught us that we shouldn't feel

ashamed for praying for the same thing until we receive an answer. Consider the parable of the “midnight friend” in Luke chapter eleven. Initially when the friend asks for help in the middle of the night, he is refused. The man persists in his petitions and eventually garners the assistance he needs. The point is this: If a man can acquire help from a reluctant neighbor in the middle of the night, then surely we have all the more reason to expect an answer from our Heavenly Father if we persist in our asking.

Let us close with an examination of our own hearts, and be honest