



Begin With Prayer

Prayer was not only how Jesus began each day – it was how he began his entire ministry (Luke 6:12-16).

- Jesus doesn't assume that he knows who his Father wants him to choose as his apostles. So he prays. He listens for guidance. God speaks. And Jesus chooses.
- The ones that he chose were men that we would have probably ignored, or overlooked or maybe even shied away from. But Jesus began with prayer. And it changed the world.

We see this same commitment to beginning with prayer in life of Paul.

- Devote yourselves to prayer with an alert mind and a thankful heart. Pray for us, too, that God will give us many opportunities to speak about his mysterious plan concerning Christ. That is why I am here in chains. Pray that I will proclaim this message as clearly as I should. (Colossians 4:2-4)
- Why is Paul so insistent that we be persistent in prayer? It is because prayer changes what is possible. He really believed this.
 - He really believed that doors would be opened for the gospel through prayer that would remain closed otherwise.
 - He really believed that, because of prayer, a timid declarer of the gospel could be made bold.
 - He believed that, because of prayer, a vague presentation of the gospel could be made clear. So he says, pray.

If we want to love our neighbors well and help them find the greatest blessing in their life – a relationship with Jesus Christ, we must begin with prayer.

- Begin asking God, "Where are you already at work? Where do you want me to join you in work you are doing in my family, friends and others are seeking to draw to yourself?"
 - ⇒ Think about and jot down the names of the people in your life who need God, your neighbors, co-workers, sit with at kids' activities, at the gym, store...
 - ⇒ Pray over this list of people and ask God to draw you to the 3-5 names of those he wants you to pray for daily. Write those names down someplace see on regularly.
- Begin praying for the people on your list every day. What should you pray for them?
 - ⇒ Pray that God would create spiritual curiosity in them.
 - ⇒ Pray for divine appointments with these people.
 - ⇒ Ask for God to show you ways to further develop these relationships.
 - ⇒ God would give you opportunities to do good for them.
 - ⇒ God give youe wisdom to make most of opportunities.
 - ⇒ That you would listen well, and when given opportunity, boldly share God's story with love.