

The First Sunday in Lent ~ Sunday, February 18, 2018

“A House of Prayer ~ The Priority of Prayer”

Mark 11:15-19

Lent is a season of _____ and soul searching; penitence and prayer; as we _____ our hearts, minds, and lives, and ready ourselves to once again _____ the death and resurrection of Jesus. We do this by intentionally engaging in the spiritual _____.

What role does prayer play in my life?

What role does prayer play in this church?

God has called His house a house of _____; and prayer should have a prominent role not only in the life of the believer, but also in the _____.

Simply put, prayer is "_____ to God." It's the communication of the human _____ with the Lord who created it. Prayer is a _____, wherein we _____ communicate, worship, and sincerely seek God's face, trusting that He _____ us, loves us, and will respond.

Prayer is the _____ of every vibrant congregation; and where there's little or no prayer, God's purposes cannot be _____. Prayer, then, is one of the most powerful _____ that we've been given by God. Instead of being our last _____, prayer should be our go-to; our first line of _____; our top priority.

“And he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple. And when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.” (Mark 11:11)

The temple was the _____ place in the land and the _____ of the nation's worship and corporate identity.

What Jesus observed during His inspection _____ Him greatly. He saw religious ceremonies carried out with no relationship to the _____. He saw commercialism, injustice, _____, hypocrisy and a disregard for the _____ of His Father.

The outer court of the temple was also called the _____, a place where non-Jewish people were allowed to come to pray and praise God.

“And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold and those who bought in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons.” (Mark 11:15)

Drive out = *ekballo* =

While many of His followers wanted Jesus to attack the _____ and set up His kingdom, Jesus launched a surprise attack against _____. Like an OT prophet, He acts out a parable—consumed by righteous _____ and indignant at this _____ of His Father's House

Because many of them travelled long distances, it was _____ for them to bring their own _____ animals with them, and so they could instead bring money and purchase animals from merchants when they arrived. (Deuteronomy 14:24-26)

Exodus 30:13 also required a temple _____ to be paid annually by every Jewish male 20 years of age or older. However, they couldn't use Greek or Roman currency because the graven images on them made them ritually _____—this is where the money changers came in! And so, all of this activity was _____ and _____.

What wasn't acceptable was that this section of the temple, which was reserved for the _____, had been turned into a combination of stock exchange and flea market. Not to mention, the merchants and money changers took advantage of the situation and _____ the people.

Jesus not only stopped the sale of animal and the exchange of money, He also halted the entire _____ system. He was essentially _____ the entire sacrificial system, which was the centre of the people's faith—and how they were made _____ before God. This is highly symbolic because in just a few days, Jesus would become the final _____ for sin, rendering all other sacrifices _____. This system—and eventually the temple itself—would be destroyed; and Jesus would become the _____ between sinful man and a holy God; where our _____ were dealt with once for all; and people were made right with God.

“It is not written: My House will be called a house of prayer for all nations? But you have made it a den of thieves” (Mark 11:17)

“Has this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your sight? You know, I too am watching, says the Lord.” (Jeremiah 7:11)

Robber = *lestes* =

Jesus' purpose in cleansing the temple that day was clear: He was placing prayer back where it _____ belonged.

One of things that you'd notice is the high _____ that Jesus placed on prayer throughout His ministry.

"Devote yourselves to prayer with an alert mind and a thankful heart." (Col 4:2)

If we pray God's _____ will be manifested in and through our life and ministry, but if we don't it _____. This isn't because God can't act if we don't pray, rather it's that God will act through _____ else if we don't pray.

If we have no prayer life as a church we have no _____ to accomplish the task God's called us to. The _____ condition of a church can be _____ by its prayer meetings.

How would you rate your prayer life?

How would you rate the corporate prayer life of this church?

What does the prayer-gauge say about our spiritual health?

THE PROBLEM, PRESCRIPTION, AND PROMISE

I. The Problem in the House

The purpose of God's house is to be a place a prayer—a place of _____ between God and His people. This is accomplished primarily through:

How are we doing in fulfilling God's purpose for His House?

We can sometimes turn God's house into something other than what it was _____ to be. Often we do this because we're _____ and we want _____. Prayer then, is seen as _____. We bow as churches in prayer and make our requests known to God only to rise up and try to figure out what we need to do in our _____ to accomplish what we want to accomplish.

Rather than meeting God at His House people through the motions of _____ ritual and call it worship.

II. The Prescription for the House

If we want to see the _____ of the Spirit fall in our lives and in our church we need to become a people of prayer—we need to make God's House a House of Prayer.

"Sow for yourselves righteousness; reap steadfast love; break up your fallow ground, for it is the time to seek the Lord, that he may come and rain righteousness upon you." (Hosea 10:12)

It's time for the people of God—for you and me—to fall on our _____ before God and _____ His face.

"...if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land." (2 Chronicles 7:14)

The power of God is _____ when the people of God _____ themselves and pray.

The single most important activity that we can do to effect _____ in our lives and in the lives of others is to pray!

III. The Promise to the House

When we pray God will _____.

- "From there you will seek the Lord your God, and you will find him if you search after him with all your heart and soul." (Deut 4:29)
- "So I say to you, Ask, and it will be given you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened." (Luke 11:9-10)
- "Before they call I will answer, while they are yet speaking I will hear." (Isa 56:24)

God has promised that the _____ prayer of a _____ person will _____ much. Prayer is the _____ that unlocks the storehouses of God's power and _____. When we pray we can sense the power of God being manifested in our lives and we will know His _____.

"Call to me and I will answer you, and will tell you great and hidden things that you have not known." (Jeremiah 33:3)

When we pray, God promises to not only hear us, but to do _____ and marvellous things.

When God's people commit themselves to prayer God will unleash His _____.

And when God unleashes His power, He is able to do "far more abundantly than all that we ask or imagine, according to the power at work within us..." (Eph 3:20)

**What at *LW* needs to be driven out so we can put prayer in rightful place?
What things do we need to give up so we can pray more?**