

Soul Strong Study – Week 5 “SERENITY”

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(Chapter 4 “Pray Always” in *Soul Strong*)

“I live a praying life, bringing all to the God who answers”

“But blessed is... the woman who sticks with God... serene and calm through droughts, bearing fresh fruit in every season.” Jeremiah 17.7-8 MSG

STILL

Praying Breath Prayers

Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Ephesians 6.18

“If we think of prayer as the breath in our lungs and the blood from our hearts, we think rightly. The blood flows ceaselessly, and the breathing continues ceaselessly; we are not conscious of it, but it is always going on. Prayer is not an exercise, it is the life.” (Oswald Chambers *“My Utmost for His Highest”*)

Breath prayers from the Psalms

Psalm 57.1 *“Have mercy on me, O God.”*

Psalm 42.1 *“I long for you, O God.”*

Psalm 27.14 *“I wait patiently for you, Lord.”*

Psalm 18.1-2 *“I love you Lord, You are my strength.”*

ESTABLISHED

Praying Always

Never stop praying. 1 Thessalonians 5.17

“A praying life is a life actively engaged with the heavenly realms all day every day. Prayer is always rising from our hearts, and God hears it as though it were perfectly articulated. God is not so much a lip reader as He is a heart reader. Your heart’s cry is always in His ears. Never is there a moment when you do not have his full undivided attention. His heart is set on you. He responds to your requests. He invites and welcomes your petitions.” (Jennifer Kennedy Dean)

RESTORED

Praying Repentance

*Against you, and you alone, have I sinned....
Purify me from my sins, and I will be clean.* Psalm 51.4, 7

EMPowered

Praying with Authority

The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results. James 5.16

Jesus' Prayer Commands:

- Compelling the wind and waves to stop – “*Quiet, be still.*”
- Commanding the lepers – “*Be clean.*”
- Touching blind eyes – “*Be opened.*”
- Ordering the paralytic – “*Get up.*”
- Commanding dead Lazarus – “*Come forth.*”

NurTured

Praying Intercession

I urge you, first of all, to pray for all people. Ask God to help them; intercede on their behalf, and give thanks for them. 1 Timothy 2.1

Inspired

Praying Petition

Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Philippians 4.6

Thankful

Praying Praise

I will thank the LORD because he is just; I will sing praise to the name of the LORD Most High. Psalm 7.17

Yielding

Praying Surrender

Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take. Proverbs 3.5-6

“Praying with expectation is praying with our heart set on our best idea. Praying with expectancy is praying with the certainty that God is working on our behalf and that He is working out details we aren't even aware of. It is knowing He will come through at the perfect time in the perfect way. Praying with expectancy, at its core, is some variation on these words: Not my will, but Yours be done.” (Jennifer Kennedy Dean)

Night Prayer of Examen

- Become aware of God's presence.
- Review the day with gratitude
- Pay attention to your emotions.
- Choose one feature of the day and pray from it.
- Look toward tomorrow.

Watch, O Lord, with those who wake, or watch, or weep tonight, and give Your angels and saints charge over those who sleep. Tend Your sick ones, O Lord Christ. Rest Your weary ones. Bless Your dying ones. Soothe Your suffering ones. Pity Your afflicted ones. Shield Your joyous ones, and all for Your love's sake. Amen.

Closing Prayer – singing over you

1. What a friend we have in Jesus, All our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry Everything to God in prayer!
Oh, what peace we often forfeit, Oh, what needless pain we bear,
All because we do not carry Everything to God in prayer!
2. Have we trials and temptations? Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged— Take it to the Lord in prayer.
Can we find a friend so faithful, Who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our every weakness; Take it to the Lord in prayer. -Joseph M. Scriven, 1855

Small Group Discussion

1. Could anyone share something new about prayer you learned in tonight's teaching?
2. What part did prayer play in your life this past week as a result of our study on learning how to dwell deep and spend daily time with God?
3. Did anyone try to end their day with the prayerful reflection of Examen as described on pages 74-75? If so, share what that meant to you.
4. Do you have a routine for praying for your own family? Would anyone like to share how they do that or how they want to do that in the future?
5. On pages 80-82, we looked at different times of prayer in Jesus' life. Could several of you lift up several of those scripture instances and share about Jesus praying and how it applies to us?
6. I included many of my favorite prayers in **Soul Strong**. Did you find yourself praying any of the ones in this chapter this week? Would anyone like to share why a certain written prayer might have ministered to you?
7. **Let's spend most of our remaining time in prayer.** Group leaders are welcome to direct this session, whether asking each person to pray conversationally, or taking requests and having someone pray over each one. Remember that nothing is impossible with God!

HOMEWORK – Please try to complete chapter 5 “Overcome Pain” before we gather again next week. Pray for those in your group.