



Bird's Eye View

Take a leaf from the Prayer Tree

In the first days of the New Year, the secular world focuses on self improvement – New Year's resolutions to encourage us to be more healthy, look after our money more carefully, study to improve our work situations or save the planet, light bulb by light bulb. Twinspire is due out at the end of January, and those new resolutions should have become habits by now, or else fallen by the wayside... Perhaps there is still time for a spiritual resolution – to encourage the habit of PRAYER.

Prayer is important. It is how we communicate with God. Communication, by definition, is a process whereby messages are sent and received between two individuals. How can we have a relationship with God if communication is only FROM Him? He desires that we communicate WITH Him and tell Him of our overwhelming appreciation of His Creation, share our worries and concerns, thank Him for his blessings and confess our wrongdoings.

Prayer is for all – not just ministers, elders, and the other leaders. People of Polmont Church - you have shown that you CAN pray. That prayer tree was covered with written prayers, and I know that this was just the tip of the iceberg – so many more prayers were not written but whispered in joyful hearts, or mouthed silently by sad faces, or muttered over fretful children and sick relatives... So many other people meant to write something but never got around to it – but the prayer was there. Our Father in heaven treasured up all those prayers, those on the tree and those in our hearts and minds that never got past our lips. Your prayers showed such a broad range of honest experience and caring thoughtfulness, as well as deep wisdom understanding God's purposes.

Prayer doesn't have to be crafted, beautiful words strung together to impress – in fact Jesus said in Matthew Chapter 6 that the hypocrites who love to be seen to be praying have received their reward in full. Jesus told us that we must not think we will be heard because of many words and babble on like pagans. But prayer does have to be sincere, and we do have to be forgiving ourselves in order to be forgiven.

We are told to pray in all circumstances – giving thanks, trusting God for help in difficult situations and just being with Him. However, it does help to understand God's will for our lives. Often, we make things harder for ourselves and struggle to understand what He could possibly want. I once heard a sermon about praying for family members who did not have a relationship with Jesus. The Minister suggested that some scripture was selected and then prayerfully applied to their lives.

So we have not stopped praying for you since we first heard about you. We ask God to give you complete knowledge of his will and to give you spiritual wisdom and understanding. Then the way you live will always honour and please the Lord, and your lives will produce every kind of good fruit. All the while, you will grow as you learn to know God better and better.

I had a prayer partner at the time and we prayed these words from Colossians for her husband who was not a Christian, and he started going to church and being more interested in things of faith. Although we are not able to pray together regularly any more, I know that he is still moving towards Christ.

You can pray alone, but praying together can be very encouraging. A prayer partner relationship with a friend or spouse allows you to be accountable to each other and to help each other to persevere with prayer. It is wonderful to be able to share the results of prayer with someone who joined with you in prayer.

My prayer for you, in this season of new beginnings is to pray... and in Paul's words from Colossians:

We always pray for you, and we give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. For we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and your love for all of God's people, which come from your confident hope of what God has reserved for you in heaven. You have had this expectation ever since you first heard the truth of the Good News...

*With all love
Jenny Wren*