

Devoted: Mentored by the early church

...Prayer in the book of Acts

Focus: *calling us to mark our practice of prayer with devotion and hopeful faith.*

- Here is the script from Paul Miller's "visit to a prayer therapist":
 - *Let's begin by looking at your relationship with your heavenly Father. In 2 Corinthians 6:18, God said, "I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me." What does it mean that you are a son or daughter of God?*
 - *I guess it means that I have complete access to my heavenly Father through Jesus. I have true intimacy, based not on how good I am, but on the goodness of Jesus. Not only that, it also means that Jesus is my brother. I am a fellow heir with him.*
 - *(smiling) That's right. You've done a wonderful job of describing the "doctrine of Sonship." Now tell me what it's like to be with your Father. What is it like to talk with him?*
 - *(tentatively) Well . . . it's difficult even to be in His presence for just a couple of minutes. My mind wanders. I'm not sure what to say. Sometimes I wonder, Does prayer make any difference? Is God even there? Then I feel guilty for my doubts and I just give up.*
 - *I'm probably telling you something you already know. Your relationship with your heavenly Father is dysfunctional. You talk as if you have a relationship, but you don't. In theory – it's close. But practically – it's distant. You need help. Fortunately, I've seen this condition many times before. I have just the remedy you're looking for.*
 - *What would a prayer therapist say that your prayer life reveals about your relationship with your heavenly Father?*
- Read Acts 1:13-14; 2:42; Rom. 12.12 and Col. 4.2. What does it mean to be devoted to prayer? How ought that look in our lives? How is devotion to prayer related to devotion and love for God? what would it take for you to move to the next level of devotion in prayer?

Saturday, August 22, 2015

- Read a couple of the amazing answers to prayer recorded in Acts (e.g. 9:40-42; 10:1-5; 12:5-17). What would it look like for you to pray hopefully about something “only God can do”?
- What would your take away be from the example of the early church’s devotion and hopeful expectancy in prayer? (follow up on these in the weeks ahead!)