



DECEMBER 2019



"And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. -Acts 2:42-44"

*The following article is written by Dr. Guy Richard who is an Executive Director and Assistant Professor of Systematic Theology at Reformed Theological Seminary. I felt that his understanding of the importance of prayer would be beneficial for all of us to hear as we end with the four things that are needed for an authentic Church. I hope you enjoy the article and take heed to its important message.
In His Name & For His Glory, Pastor Tim*

The Importance of Prayer

All of us as Christians readily acknowledge the importance of prayer—especially prayer for those to whom we are ministering. But most, if not all, of us struggle in actually putting this conviction into practice. We know that we ought to pray more than we do, but we fall short of actually doing it. Martin Luther once lamented that every time he tried to pray, it was as if “a hundred thousand hindrances at once intervene[d]” and the devil himself attempted to “throw all sorts of reasons for delay” into his path to keep him from praying. I, for one, can identify with Luther on this point. Far too often, I struggle to overcome the many “hindrances” that arise in my daily schedule, and I allow Satan’s “reasons for delay” to keep me from praying. And my guess is that many of you are like me in this.

It is certainly very encouraging to know that someone who was as mightily used-of-God as Luther was could struggle with prayerlessness just as mightily as we do today. It holds out hope for us that our own struggles in prayer will not keep us from being similarly used of God. And we need to remind ourselves of that, so that we don’t lose hope and give up altogether. But we also need to remind ourselves of how important prayer is not only

for our own sakes but also for the sakes of the people to whom we minister and the world in which we live. We need to remind ourselves that prayer is important because God answers prayer, because we are all busy people, and because we so easily lose our focus in ministry. And we need to let these reminders motivate us to actually spend time in prayer.

God Answers Prayer

The first thing we need to remember is that prayer is important because God answers prayer. Jesus Himself told us that this was true approximately 9 times in the Gospel accounts (see, e.g., Matthew 7:7-11; 18:19; 21:22; Mark 11:24; Luke 11:1-13; John 14:13-14; 15:7; 15:16; and 16:23); and His own example in prayer demonstrated it repeatedly as well. Outside of the Gospels, we see James baldly declaring that the reason Christians are in want is directly related to the fact that they do not pray (James 4:2); and we see John insisting that “if we ask [God] anything according to his will...we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him” (1 John 5:14-15). To be sure, in each of these passages, there are qualifications or conditions given: we are to ask “according to his will” or in the name of Jesus, and we are not to ask “wrongly, to spend it on [our] passions.” These qualifications or conditions should be enough to keep us from ever assuming that our prayers will always be answered regardless of what we ask for. Prayer is not a genie-lamp that we can rub and receive every wish we might happen to make. But we should not allow these qualifications or conditions to numb us and prevent us from feeling the weight of what the Bible is actually saying here, which is, quite obviously, that God answers prayer. As JC Ryle has said, in the Bible: *“Nothing seems to be too great, too hard, or too difficult for prayer to do.”* We need to let that sink in and motivate us to pray.

We All Lead Busy Lives

The second thing we need to remember is that prayer is important because we all lead busy lives. I frequently tell people that my life constantly feels like I am trying to fit 30 pounds into a 10-pound bag. There is never enough room in my schedule to fit everything that I want to fit. And I think most people will be able to identify with me at this point. We are all busy, and because we are busy, we do not pray as much as we ought. We think we are too busy to pray. But we need to be reminded that we are actually too busy *not* to pray. Martin Luther—the same Martin Luther who lamented his own prayerlessness—recognized this and said: *“I have so much business prayer.” I cannot get on without spending three hours daily in prayer.*”

Now, whether or not three hours is the right amount of time to spend in prayer is beside the point. The point is that it is precisely because we are busy that we need to be spending extended time in prayer. Luther realized this. He understood that God could cut the time required to do any of the tasks on his schedule and that God could move the hearts and minds of the people with whom Luther was dealing. We need to remember that God is God and that we are not. And we need to take our busyness—and our people’s busyness—to the Lord in prayer.

We Easily Lose Focus

The third thing we need to remember is that prayer is important because we so easily lose focus in our lives. We so often lose sight of the forest for the trees. We get caught up in the busyness of programs and activities. We even get caught up in the good work of sermon preparation. Believe it or not, there is such a thing as studying too much. This is most especially true when our study time keeps us from praying. We need to remember what EM Bounds reminded us in his book *Power Through Prayer*:

We are constantly on a stretch, if not on a strain, to devise new methods, new plans, new organizations to advance the church and secure enlargement and efficiency for the gospel. This trend of the day has a tendency to lose sight of the man or sink the man in the plan or organization. God’s plan is to make much of the man, far more of him than of anything else. Men are God’s method. The church is looking for better methods; God is looking for better men.”

It is so easy to get sidetracked in plans, methods, programs, and activities. We need to be reminded continually that prayer is more important than these plans, methods, programs, and activities. It is more important because God really does answer prayer, because we are all busy, and because God works primarily in and through people instead of methods or programs. We need to remember that...and pray!



"A women's prayer group is starting at FRBC. It will be called Prayer Warriors.

The group will meet every Wednesday morning at 9:30 am. EVERY woman of the church is welcome to join us. We will include prayers for our country, our church family, pastor and elders, other needs of the church organization, health needs of our church family--you get the idea ☺.

Birthdays:

4—Romy Garzon
16-Bryce Middlestead
19-Delaney Hoffman
25-Carol Smith
26-Ellen Rudzinski
30-Katie Mlodzik



Happy Anniversary

Nursery Schedule

December 1

December 8

Rhonda & Anna Dohms

December 15

Gene Pogreba & Bryce Middlestead

December 22

Jeff Middlestead & Ian Dohms

December 29



Christmas Caroling



Thursday, December 12

6:00 pm

Atrium Post Acute Care

1201 Garfield Ave

Little Chute

Deaconess of the Month:

Jan Jourdan

Communion is Sunday, December 1

Usher Schedule



December 1

Ron Van Asten & Keith Brown

December 8

Jeff Middlestead & Jerry Kroehler

December 15

Ron Kempen & Jay Hoffman

December 22

Bob Abitz & Gene Pogreba

December 29

Rob & Sam Mlodzik

St Joseph's Food Pantry

Each month we will collect
non-perishable food items.
Place your food items on the
table provided in the foyer.



Evening Service

December 1, 5 pm

December 15, 5 pm

December 8, 5 pm

December 22, 5 pm



Financial Update

November 3-24, 2019
Budget needed weekly: \$ 2606.00
Received: \$
Contact Rob Mlodzik with questions.



Advent by Candlelight



December 10, 2019

7:00 p.m.

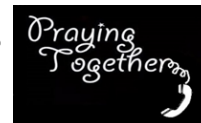
**An evening to prepare your
heart for Christmas.**

A sign-up sheet is in the foyer.

Praises & Prayers

Here at FRBC, we have a prayer
chain meant for the sharing of
prayer request needs and for
sharing praise for the awesome
& mighty work God does in our lives. Please feel
free to share any praise or request at our new
prayer request email address:

prayer@foxriverbaptist.com



Care to be part of the prayer chain? Email or
call Shari Middlestead: shari@middlestead.com
(920)209-1989 or

Renee Brown: eener654@gmail.com
(920)428-5306

Fox River Baptist Vision Statement

*We desire that everyone who enters Fox River
Baptist Church grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus
Christ and grow in authentic, loving, familial relation-
ships to make the name of Christ known in our community
and world, all for the glory of God and joy of all.*

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Office Hours:
Tuesday & Thursday, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 Noon