Let us recite the Lord’s Prayer together

By the way Jesus taught His disciples to pray, does is sound to you like seeking God’s Will and God’s Kingdom are important?

Good that’s what I’m preaching on today!

Jesus taught His followers that when you pray (talk to Almighty God), that we are to ask for “His Kingdom to come and His Will to be done”. Not our own…

* To ask God to meet our daily needs.
* To ask God to forgive us as we forgive others.
* To ask His help in keeping us from falling prey to the evil one.

Jesus instructs believers to do this, not because God is somehow insecure and needs to know He’s needed, but to remind us that we need Him…

We need to be reminded daily that He is in control (especially when life seems to get out of control).

That God’s Glorious Kingdom, that is without sin, and without the threat of ungodly agendas from people who are often very insecure, is coming back to stay.

Please open your Bible’s to Daniel 6 this morning…

The Bible is filled with many positive examples of those who continued to seek God’s Will when things were going well in their lives, as well as when their life was falling apart.

The book of Daniel begins with God allowing the King of Babylon, King Nebuchadnezzar, to besiege Jerusalem in 609 B.C. because of Israel’s disobedience and idol worship.

God’s Will in allowing this? To bring His people back to a place of repentance, where they obey Him and seek His Will above their own.

Again, not because God is insecure and needs people to do this, or He’ll somehow get mad, but it’s hell without Him.

Mankind needs God, His Heaven, His security, His significance and His Godly purpose that He created us for.

As the historical account of Daniel begins, we find that he is a strapping young man, with many God given gifts, especially in the areas of wisdom.

He was taken hostage along with the best and brightest of Jerusalem. They had to travel 500 miles under harsh conditions to get to Babylon.

God gave Daniel the ability to discern and interpret the dreams of Kings Nebuchadnezzar and his Belshazzar.

When we come to Daniel 6, he has served under those previous Kings and is now on his third, King Darius.

God allowed Daniel to be elevated to the position of “third highest ruler in the Medo-Persian Empire.

But no longer was he a young man, Daniel was now in his 80’s.

So he serves as an example to us, that age is not a barrier in serving Christ, and that there are no guarantees of any kind of protection or exemption to temptation or trials while we serve Him (regardless of age).

But because Daniel was someone who practiced his faith consistently, he possessed faithfulness even into his old age (he did not depart from it).

One of the greatest lessons we can learn from Daniel is what it means to enter into a lifetime of obedience to Christ and the benefits of refusing to deviate from God’s Will.

Daniel 6:10

How did Daniel begin each day? He prayed to the Lord.

How are Daniel’s prayer habits described? He prayed three times a day in a special place atop his house.

It has a somewhat familiar ring to it, of how Jesus instructed His disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane.

“Keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.” Matthew 26:41

1. God’s Will – Pray daily.

Pray early and Pray Often

Prayer was not incidental in Daniel’s life.

In fact, it was the most important intentional thing he did every day.

How do we know? He had a special place, special times, he was consistent and persistent. Prayer was Daniel’s critical link to God.

How does this compare to your own prayer life?

There are many positive examples of prayer for us in the Scriptures:

* Abraham. “Now Abraham arose early in the morning and went to the place where he had stood before the Lord;” (Genesis 19:27)
* David. “In the morning, O LORD, You will hear my voice; In the morning I will order my prayer to You and eagerly watch.”

(Psalm 5:3)

* Jesus. “In the early morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house, and went away to a secluded place, and was praying there.” (Mark 1:35) He also did that at the end of the day.

How confident are you that your personal commitment to prayer, meditation on God’s Word, and all the things which make a consistent, holy relationship with Christ, are providing the kind of foundation that will hold up when the strongest of temptations or trials come your way?

Because they are coming…whether we want them too or not.

Let’s read on now - Daniel 6:1-9

*Darius the Mede decided to divide the kingdom into 120 provinces, and he appointed a high officer to rule over each province.*

*2 The king also chose Daniel and two others as administrators to supervise the high officers and protect the king’s interests (that he might not suffer loss).*

*3 Daniel soon proved himself more capable than all the other administrators and high officers. Because of Daniel’s great ability, the king made plans to place him over the entire empire.*

*4 Then the other administrators and high officers began searching for some fault in the way Daniel was handling government affairs, but they couldn’t find anything to criticize or condemn. He was faithful, always responsible, and completely trustworthy.*

*5 So they concluded, “Our only chance of finding grounds for accusing Daniel will be in connection with the Law of his God.”*

*6 So the administrators and high officers went to the king and said, “Long live King Darius!*

*7 We are all in agreement—we administrators, officials, high officers, advisers, and governors—that the king should make a law that will be strictly enforced. Give orders that for the next thirty days any person who prays to anyone, divine or human—except to you, Your Majesty—will be thrown into the lions den.*

*8 And now, Your Majesty, issue and sign this law so it cannot be changed, an official law of the Medes and Persians that cannot be revoked.”*

*9 So King Darius signed the law.*

Sounds like nothing much has changed in the political world since 609 B.C… Amen?!

They sound like the very reason why Darius had chosen to re-organize his government! Drain the swamp!

The leaders were stealing from the king and covering it up, giving themselves to a “divide & conquer” agenda.

Shhh! Don’t tell the king…

Daniel’s consistent, daily, holy walk with God resulted in a faithful life that was above reproach. Jesus called that being “Salt & Light” in the world.

When one intentionally draws closer to God (which is what the season of Lent is about), He promises to draw close to us and His Holy Spirit speaks and teaches us deeper truths to apply, through His Word.

The second aspect of God’s Will that we see in Daniel is;

1. God’s Will – Serving God with Excellence.

Faithfully doing whatever we do as if we are doing unto the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Colossians 3:23

In every area of life. And as we do “as unto the Lord”, the Lord does amazing things, and the rest of the world watches in amazement.

So what is their problem with the amazing Daniel?

Daniel was out performing them because God’s Will was his intentional focus.

As a result God used King Darius to bless Daniel beyond anything he could have imagined (over-seeing the entire Medo-Persian Empire).

Daniel simply “leaned into” the King’s problem of “suffering loss” (V2).

He made it his personal mission to prevent it.

As a result, the ability of the those under him to steal in the part of the kingdom (40 provinces) that Daniel oversaw, dried up. They were no longer able to “profit” at the King’s expense.

From a business standpoint, it made absolute perfect sense to put Daniel in charge of the entire Kingdom (not just part) because it was obvious that he had the King’s best interest in mind.

From God’s standpoint, it made absolute perfect sense to put Daniel in charge of the entire Kingdom, because it was obvious that he had the King of Glory’s best interest in mind.

And if the other leaders had not been corrupt (divided in their loyalty, pretending to be focused on the King’s agenda, while promoting their own agenda when the king wasn’t around…), they would have understood & acknowledged that King Darius made a very wise decision.

But jealousy and envy are rooted in spiritual deception… Finding no earthly weakness that they could exploit, they resorted to inventing a spiritual issue.

So, they put their corrupt heads together and thought; “is there something that Daniel does faithfully every day, that he will never change, not even for King Darius?”

They knew just enough about Daniel and the Law of God to be dangerous.

So they devised a spiritual attack that would not be a test of Daniel’s “faith”, but His “faithfulness to God”.

Read: Daniel 6:10-23 NIV

1. God’s Will – Trust Him V23

This passage proves that the only safe place that exists is in the will of God. Daniel would rather die in obedience to God’s Word/ways than live outside the will of God.

And while it’s not always God’s will to deliver every believer from danger, and many have given their lives to declare Him in the most dangerous of places, what a reward God promises even in that circumstance!

Revelation 2:10 reminds us - ‘Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

Because Daniel faithfully prayed, trusted and sought God’s Will every day…, trusting God when things got tough was a natural reaction for him.

And because of Daniel’s example…, who also started trusting God?

King Darius!

It sounded like King Darius may even have fasted and prayed to God all night for Daniel! And God answered!

A good New Testament reminder comes to us from Paul, who faced more “lion’s den” situations than just about anyone in Scripture… He said in Philippians 4:6-7

*“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”*

Read - Daniel 6:24-28 NIV

1. God’s Will – Transformation

God transforms us out of being “happy” when “ungodly” people seem to get what was coming to them… because we too were once ungodly…

We should be deeply saddened when people don’t turn God… He isn’t willing that any should perish, but that all would come to repentance…

As His followers we should be transforming into that same mindset.

And when one turns to God, like King Darius, it is cause for great celebration!!

God transformed Him from a conquering King…, focused on himself…,

to a preacher, proclaiming the “Good News” of God!! If that’s not a miracle, I don’t know what one is.

* How far along in the transformation process are you?
* Are you seeking His Will above your own yet?
* Is prayer your intentional/critical link with God?

If not you’re missing out on amazing miracles & blessings…

but the “Good News” is you can turn to God and change that today!!