



NEHEMIAH: A PARAGON OF PRAYER

PRAYER

JAN 19, 2020

PRAYING STEALTH PRAYERS

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Read Nehemiah 2:1-8. Nehemiah's first response was to fast & pray. It was his habit, it was his natural response. Prayer is our first response not our last resort. Is this statement true in your life? Are there specific areas where we don't think to pray as the first course of action? Share with your group some reasons why you don't come before God in prayer about certain matters.

We read in Nehemiah 2:4-5a *"then I prayed to the God of heaven"*...Nehemiah shot up to heaven a short prayer instinctively. Nehemiah prayed stealth prayers. Read Psalm 139:2b,4. Stealth prayers are not out loud, they are immediate, undetectable by people around you, targeted, they are often a single thought, they spring from one's mind (not mouth), they can be prayed in any circumstance, at any time. Stealth prayers are not to replace our intentional, consistent times of focused prayer. They come from a place of a regular practice of prayer. How does the concept of a stealth prayer fit in with your current understanding of praying to God? Is it something you do frequently, or are you more fixed into a protocol of structured prayer (i.e. before meals, beginning or end the day?) Ask God to help you open your mind to praying these "stealth" prayers more frequently and being open to communicating with Him constantly, not just at expected prayer time.

Practicing "stealth" prayers helps us to build our relationship to God by training us to realize God's presence all day long and not just at "church times". We recognize His presence in our everyday, real life, and that He is not a million miles away, up in the clouds, but very close, as if just behind a veil. In what ways does knowing that God is close and listening affect how/when you pray?



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Bill Orr encouraged us to pray in the grocery store, classroom or even the dentist chair; making prayer truly an integrated part of our everyday lives. Read John 15:4a. One of the benefits of practicing stealth prayers is that they *help me to personally build relationship with God*. As we practice stealth prayers, we abide in Jesus, we stay connected to Him. Stealth prayers help us recognize His presence in our everyday lives. How integrated is your relationship with God in your day? Would you say you bring God into your everyday life? Where/when could you implement more stealth prayers of your own?

We can serve the purposes of God with stealth prayers by a) expressing our worship to God (1 Thes: 5:16-18), b) extending the Kingdom of God (Eph 6:18), and c) edifying the people of God (e.g. Paul's constant prayers for the churches). Think of some practical ways you can serve God's purposes in your own life and and share with the group.

Our take away commitments:

1. I resolve to make a consistent daily time of prayer and bible reading (is it in your calendar?)
2. I choose to intentionally increase praying "in stealth mode" throughout my day.

Reflect upon these commitments to prayer and pray for each other.