

The Power of Collective Prayer

Matthew 18:18-20

Introduction

Prayer is relational communication with God – listening and talking to Him. Prayer gives us the opportunity to give thanks, repent of our sin, and make our requests known to God. While we can certainly pray on our own, alone and in private, there is an additional authority that we are granted with God when we legally go to Him together. Prayer gives earthly permission for heavenly interference. Our interactions with God allow us to engage in the act of binding and loosing, permitting and forbidding, on God's behalf. Prayer is not just casual communication. It is authoritative communication for Him to act on earth and in history from heaven.

Collective prayer takes the concept of prayer to another level. The Bible states in Matthew 18:19 that "if two of you agree on earth about anything they may ask, it shall be done for them..." Prayer between two or three believers that are in harmony represents a legal agreement between those believers of the church and God. Just like credible witnesses in a courtroom can better sway the attention of a jury, believers praying in concert with each other and God's will, can better move the heart of God. There is power in collective prayer when believers come together to talk to God and exercise their rightful spiritual authority.

In order for our collective prayers to reach the ear and heart of God, Jesus must be in our midst. He is the means by which we can connect with God in prayer. It is not enough to connect with other believers for powerful answers to prayer if Jesus is on the periphery of our lives. As we keep Jesus as the centerpiece and the focus of our lives individually, we access more power and authority collectively when we call on His name.

Getting Started

1. *What one point resonated with you from this morning's sermon?*
2. *When was the last time you prayed with a group of believers...even if it was just two or three?*

Let's Get Personal

1. *Is it easier for you to pray by yourself or in a group? Why?*
2. *Have you ever seen God work in a special way when a group of people have chosen to function in prayer with a spirit of oneness? If so, share your experience.*
3. *We should pray with authority and expectancy as we have a right to make requests according to God's Word and His will. How would you describe your level of comfort praying with authority? Do you pray expecting God to answer?*
4. *Read 2 Corinthians 1:20. Why is it important that you know "the promises of God"? What should you do if you are not confident in your knowledge of God's Word or His will?*
5. *Read John 16:23-27 and 1 John 5:14-16. What are key ingredients in making our requests known to God?*
6. *It is difficult to pray with a mindset of authority if we are not sure what we are praying for is God's will. The more we know God's Word, the more confident we can be in His will for our lives. How committed are you to reading and studying God's Word?*

7. *Who are your two or three? Tell your group. Maybe it's your spouse or a few close friends.*

Take the Next Step

1. This week, make it a priority to connect with other believers who can be in agreement and in spiritually harmony with you as you make your requests known to God together. Make plans to meet in person or set a day and time to pray on the phone. Share your plans with your group so that they can hold you accountable to following through.
2. Make it a priority to study God's Word personally. Share your plans for study with your group. If you are not sure of where to start, here are a few ideas to get you going:
 - Our Daily Bread - <http://odb.org/> or pick up a copy in our church bookstore.
 - Bible reading plans - <http://www.biblegateway.com/reading-plans/>
 - Bible devotionals - <http://www.biblegateway.com/devotionals/>.

Renew Your Mind

"For where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am there in their midst." Matthew 18:19
