

Arey's Devo for Fast: Prayer

To read after dinner Thursday night:

1 Samuel 1

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Did you know that Paul lays out God's will for our life in 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18? One of the three things that he says is God's will for our life is to pray continually! Prayer is communion with God. It's pouring out our soul before the One who made it, just like Hannah did in 1 Samuel chapter one. Hannah was experiencing grief, and she knew that only God was her hope and could bear her burdens. Not only do we see God remember Hannah and answer her prayers, but we see Hannah's prayers impact the next generation through her son Samuel, whose name means "God heard." We can give our grief, our anxiety, our fears, our heartache, our every thought and emotion to God by communing with Him through the avenue of prayer. If your burdens weigh heavy and you don't know how to pray, look to Hannah's example in 1 Samuel 1:13, and be reminded that Romans 8:26 tells us, "In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans."

Reflection: What does your daily prayer life look like? Are you continually pouring out your soul to God?

"Trust in him at all times, you people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge."
Psalms 62:8 NIV

To read when you wake up Friday morning:

Matthew 6:5-15

Luke 1:26-38

Jesus clearly lays out the things we should pray for in Matthew 6. One of the things that really sticks out to me is, "Your Kingdom come, Your will be done." Our prayers aren't supposed to be us asking God to give us what we want; instead, it's bringing our requests before Him while submitting to His authority and asking Him to align our wants with His will. I love Mary's response to the angel when he tells her that her life is about to completely change. As crazy as the news she received from the angel may have sounded, she remembers that her identity is first as a servant of the Lord, and her response reflects her submission to His will for her life. "Be it unto me, according to Your Word," Mary says. What an incredible response AND what incredible plans God had for Mary to bring Jesus into the world to save us! No matter how God chooses to answer the prayers we're praying, we can rest assured that His ways and His thoughts are higher than our own, according to Isaiah 55:8-9, AND that Romans 8:27-28 says, "he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God. And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." May we remember as we fast that the Spirit of God intercedes for the people of God in accordance with the will of God and that He is working things out for good!

Reflection: Are we praying like Jesus teaches us to pray — Praising His Name, Seeking His Will, Asking for His Provision, Asking for His Forgiveness and Deliverance, Praying for others and their Salvation?