

## **When All We Have Left is Prayer**

I was thinking of people I had had in my life that were nearing the end of their journey on earth and I thought about the many times I had heard, “All we have left is prayer.” I heard it often when someone was diagnosed with a terminal diagnosis, I thought it myself when faced with the death of a loved one and when faced with my own mortality. If prayer is all we have left, then we have a powerful tool in our lives. Prayer that goes to God is powerful, but prayer should be our first resort. An active presence in our lives. It should be the beginning of our day and the end of our day. Our morning and our evening. In the morning we thank God for another day, another chance to get it right. In the evening we thank God for having been with us for another day and we pray to get right those things that we have messed up. And in the light of day and the dark of night when we are faced with illness and hurt of our loved ones, God is there waiting for our prayers. God is on call every moment of every day. We praise God for being in our lives and we ask him for his continued presence in our lives. When I had cancer and had seen friends suffer with it and die, my prayers became a bargaining tool. But then something changed within me. I surrendered. My prayers were still asking for a reprieve, a chance to see my children married but ended with “not my will but your will.” And as I did this a change came. I prayed for those I would leave but surrendered my life and the giving and taking of it to God. This was a pivotal moment in my faith journey. I learned that I didn’t have all the answers, that I didn’t even have the questions. I learned that there is a God that loved me from morning to night to morning. A God that had given me life and would not take it away just when it was getting good! I was going to be a grandmother! God had put wonderful people in my life, people of faith and courage and they gave me the gift of their caring and comfort and their prayers and God was with me. Thanks be to God.

Romans 12:9-12 Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the day, for another chance to show your love to others. Comfort those that are ill and those who grieve. Be with our church may we be but a reflection of your love so others may come to know you. Be with Pastor Don, bless his ministry and be with him and his family. Be with our Staff and Leaders bless their work. May our church be a welcoming place, and may our service be a beacon that draws others to you. In Jesus name we pray. Amen

Grace Epperson