

A LIFE OF PRAYER

I just recently stumbled upon a book of John Wesley's prayers that I have had for years. It is a very small book and has many prayers and writings from John Wesley. He often states that good works are not enough that believing that good works are the way to salvation is not true. Good works are the result of our faith not a substitute for faith. That is building your house on sand. It is said that John Wesley rode more than two hundred thousand miles on horseback to preach more than forty thousand sermons. But underlying all of his amazing achievements was his devotion to prayer. "Prayer is truly, in Wesley's words, "the most useful of all pastimes."" My prayer life sometimes suffers from my lack of attention. I always thank God for the day and pray for those I love and those in need of prayer, but I fail to thank him for all those souls that touched my life that day. Last week I wrote of the kindnesses I had been shown by strangers, that has continued this week. While walking through Kroger's and trying to remember why I was there, a woman walking past me said to me, "Your hair is beautiful." Then I went to a restaurant and as I struggled to get out of the booth after eating a chicken salad croissant the size of a small country and holding my purse and cane and the bill and money and a book, a gentleman from a few feet away asked if I needed help getting up and then if I needed help going to my car. People can be so kind, and we need all the kindness we can find in this world right now. How often do we observe something about a stranger but say nothing, never knowing if our observation might lift that person's spirits. I need to do those simple kindnesses and I need to include those done for me with gratitude in my prayer life. John Wesley believed in prayer and was a man of prayer. A John Wesley prayer that is familiar to us follows:

Lord, I am no longer my own, but yours. Put me to what you will, rank me with whom you will. Let me be employed by you or laid aside for You, exalted by you or brought low by You. Let me have all things, let me have nothing. I freely and heartily yield all things to Your pleasure and disposal. And now O glorious and blessed God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, You are mine and I am yours. So be it. Amen

John Wesley died in London in 1791. Having murmured, "God be merciful to me, a sinner," he passed into his Master's presence crying, "Best of all, God is with us."

Lord, we thank you for each day you give us, may we use it in your service. May we share our faith with others always praising and thanking you for the things you have done in our lives and for those souls who touch us with kindness and thoughtfulness. Be with our Pastor as he is on a mission trip and be with those with him. Grant them your strength and resourcefulness as they serve in your name far from their homes, keep them safe. May they feel your presence in their serving as they truly are the hands and feet of Jesus Christ. Be with those who are ill and those who grieve, grant them your mercies. We ask Lord for your blessing on our church and our staff and leaders, guide us always in every action we undertake and may our actions be pleasing to you. In Jesus name we pray. Amen

"O praise God for all you have and trust Him for all you want." John Wesley.

Portions taken from "How to Pray." "The Best of John Wesley on Prayer."

Barbour Publishing 2007

Grace Epperson