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“Leadership is the art and science of inspiring others to reach their full potential in the pursuit of a common vision”

Dr. James Bultman

Today Reference



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Leaders Go Deep & Alone in Prayer

A TCL E-Leadership Resource

I Peter 3:12 For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil."

Matthew 6:5 And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

God continues to shape the lives of His leaders and He is still shaping my time with Him. Today I want to focus on a kind of growth that can occur from your deep moments with God during prayer. I am not trying to have you duplicate my experience. However, I am trying to suggest a way and time to approach God that one would not necessarily think of or try. Here are two approaches to my time with the Lord that has helped me hear Him better. I hope they might help you.

For five out of the last 8 days I have been awakened at 3 am with an uncommon level of alertness. Wondering what to do, each night I left the bedroom and went to the family room couch, figuring the difference would spur some sleepiness. Each time it did not, and each time I turned the light on and spent some time in scripture and equal time in prayer. For a period of time in the 1990's He would "awake" me at 4 am, nudging me to meet with Him. I could not help remembering those days and considered my recent "awakenings" at 3 am (awakened every night within 15 minutes of 3 am) as from Him wanting to speak with me. These are the times I would suspect you would think like my first thought, which was "how am I going to make up the sleep I lose if I have this devotion time?" You might guess what happened. Those same days I felt rested at my office, and even felt a sense of God's presence when I had to deal with some difficult people those same days. Friends, our Lord is faithful and knows what we need. However, He wants you to tell him, preferably when you and He are alone. In our American culture it is very hard to find that time alone. If you are having a hard time finding time in your day for this kind of prayer, try setting your alarm for 3 am, get out of the bedroom and find a room to be alone. I will guarantee you will wake up in the morning rested, and better prepared for the day.

My second experience in prayer came recently after exiting my shower. I sat on the edge of my bed and began to pray. Not paying attention to the fact I had not dressed yet, I just began to speak to the Lord about life. Only a few sentences into my prayer, I began to feel an increasingly emotion of shame and/or embarrassment before Him, realizing the extent of my exposure before Him. I can now connect with Adam as he hid from the Lord in the Garden of Eden. Even in this state of embarrassment I continued to pray. Then my embarrassment turned into learning as I began to realize the depth of God's grace in my life. My physical exposure taught me about my spiritual nakedness before Him. As I prayed, I continued to learn and experience this truth. Then I began to wonder why He would be so gracious as to continue to listen to me. Yet I knew He was listening to me. I began to be challenged to align His listening grace to a person who has inflicted much pain in my own life. My planned behavior was being changed. I don't know He is listening to me every time I pray. However, in these instances my ability to repel my own sinful nature did have a positive impact in Him "turning His ear" toward me, and letting me sense that He was there. These prayer times remain a reminder of how I am completely known to Him, yet He continues to make himself available to listen to me. It really goes against every human instinct.

Three things you can learn from my experience.

1. He is always near you.
2. He listens to those whose lives are lived within His favor.
3. Deep prayer improves our behavior.

As a practical example, I cannot remember a meeting that began with extended prayer that ended with guilt and remorse over behavior in the meeting. However, I can remember many meetings where just the opposite took place. Friends, I know that prayer also spurs us on toward more good behavior, and good behavior spurs on more righteousness, and more righteousness keeps the ear of our Lord turned toward us. If you would like to understand this a bit more, begin to pray alone, and then maybe even pray naked.

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