

Passion for Prayer

I was recently helping a pastor and his administration team with some reorganization and restructuring questions for their church. In the midst of our discussions, I had to stop and ask them if it was okay if I prayed. It was one of those times where you knew that you were not going to figure it out on your own.

As I talked to the pastor at a later meeting, he described me as a person with a "passion for prayer". This description surprised me as I do not think of myself as having a passion for prayer. What I do have is a desperate need for prayer. What I have noticed is that prayer has started to permeate more and more of my life. At MBMSI, prayer is an essential part of almost everything that we do. I can't imagine trying to know what to do without prayer. Prayer is the ministry. We can do nothing without prayer.

I have been reading some books by Dutch Sheets on Intercessory Prayer and Authority in Prayer. These books have provided some incredible insights into the power of prayer in ways that I never really understood or thought about before. Prayer changes so many things. And just as we have to learn to crawl before we can walk or run, I am realizing how much there is to learn as we grow from crawling with God to actually walking with Him, to eventually running the good race for Him.

In my previous newsletters, I have thanked you for praying for me, my family and the ministry. I don't think those words of thanks were enough. As I have come to understand more about prayer, I realize how great a gift your prayers truly are. They are one of the most treasured gifts that we can receive. They are a blessing whose value can never be truly measured. And I know that it is the power of your prayers that are helping us each and every day as we serve in ministry here in Abbotsford.

We are truly blessed by your prayers. And I want to boldly ask you to continue to pray for us. I know there are still many great battles ahead. We go forth in great faith in the God who called us.

-Please pray for spiritual protection over our family, especially for Sam, Katie, Sarah and Matthew. We know there are constant battles being fought and I try to pray through Eph 6:10-18 for our family each morning.

-Please pray for discernment for our MBMSI leadership team. We need to be disciplined and focused as we are being pulled in so many directions as a mission. We desire to know God's will and calling specifically for MBMSI.

-Please pray for work balance and Sabbath rest. I know that we should serve out of rest, but there is much to do, especially in the next two months. Ministry work can be all consuming, but I know that this is not God's plan.

My closing thought is something that the Lord has been teaching me as I pray. Wisdom or knowledge without discipline is meaningless. (This, of course, spoken by someone who's favourite book in the bible is Ecclesiastes.) While the Holy Spirit may reveal things to us as we pray, if we do not have the discipline to carry out what we have learned, it becomes meaningless. So my prayer for all of us is that we will not just be disciplined in our prayer life, but that we will also be disciplined in our actions.

Serving with you for Christ,
J.P. Sam Matthew Katie & Sarah