

Strengthening Prayer – Mark 1:21-39

1. Some years ago Bill Hybels wrote a book entitled: *Too busy not to pray*. What do you think he was getting at with that title?
2. Read Mark 1:21-39, what kind of life is Jesus living and how does prayer fit into that life?
3. Why did Jesus choose to pray early in the morning while it was still dark? What can we learn from this?
4. What do you think would happen to our lives, to our faith and to our church if we stopped praying?
5. What evidence is there from the Bible and from the history of the church that speaks to us of the importance of prayer?

The Pinkie Prayer Plan

Is this really a silly name?

Discuss the following:

- a. **Pursue:** (read Ephesians 6:18). It needs to be our intention to pray, because prayer is far too important to wait until we feel like it.
 - b. **Plan:** (read Proverbs 16:3). Prayer is far too important to be left to the mercy of our good intentions.
 - c. **Persist** (read Romans 12:12). Jesus knows that prayer needs to be more than just a once in a while activity but a life-long choice.
 - d. **Push through** (read Matthew 26:41). Be prepared for times when prayer is a struggle and you will have to push through.
 - e. **Press in** (read Psalms 63:1). Ultimately, the secret of prayer is not about the thing we do but about the one who we do it with.
6. What is God calling you to do with your prayer life?

Prayer is a precious way of communicating with God, it gladdens the soul and gives repose to its affections. You should not think of prayer as being a matter of words. It is a desire of God, for an indescribable devotion, not of human origin, but the gift of God's grace. (John Chrysostom: Homily 6 on prayer)