

Pastor's COLUMN

March 2018

Lent - A Prayer Journey

So often when we are in the 40-day journey of Lent our reflections fall on the path that Jesus was on to the cross, reflections of solemnness and our struggles within this broken world, and how we can best cope and succeed throughout each day. Jesus, being both human and divine, experienced the same types of emotions, pain, suffering, heartache, but also the blessings of seeing the gospel message save many people during His earthly ministry.

Likewise, as Jesus journeyed toward the cross, and as we reflect on His journey during these 40-days, one thing for Jesus was His dependence upon His Heavenly Father. As we observe His path in the Scriptures, Jesus Himself ponders and reflects on the journey ahead but does not tackle it alone. He spends a great deal of time in conversation with His Father.

You may ask, how can Jesus spend time with His Father when He is in heaven? This is a very good question. Jesus not only showed His disciples how important it was to spend time with people and develop relationships, but He modeled a consistency of conversing with His Dad throughout His earthly ministry.

Ok – I'll get to the point. Prayer for Jesus was a major component of who He was. Being able to talk with His Father gave Him strength and encouragement for this journey we call Lent. Without prayer Jesus would not have been able to survive the onslaught of this broken world as well as the Devil's attacks upon Him.

For example, before Jesus walked on the water in Matthew 14 He “went up on the mountain by Himself to pray” and in John 17 Jesus prayed that the Father would continue to take care of His disciples and those who believe in Him. All throughout the New Testament we can find Jesus speaking about prayer and the importance of it. In fact, it was so important to Him that He taught us how to pray by teaching us the Lord's Prayer. Telling us that if we don't know what to pray that we should pray the prayer He taught us.

Of course, we all have a solid prayer life – right? I, myself, have often struggled to talk to my Heavenly Father, or to my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ and make a conscious effort to just sit down and pour out my heart to Him. How much better would my day or situation have been if I had placed my life in the hands of the one who experienced the pain, suffering, and joys of this life? I believe I may not have lost sleep at night worrying about what happened during the day of dealing with a sensitive issue.

With this in mind, and the 40-day journey that has begun toward the greatest event in human history, let us all take a huge breath and think about how much God loves us and wants us to rely upon Him as Jesus did. Wouldn't it be great to start out each day knowing that you have had a conversation with the greatest Father-ever! A Father who loves us so much, He sent His one and only Son to die for us with the intention of showing what love is all about. Even when He knew that we were sinners!

In essence, God does nothing but show grace, mercy, and love for each and every one of us and this is why we reflect on this Lenten journey each year. It is to celebrate how much God loves us and know that He wants us, like Jesus, to talk to Him about everything and anything going on in our lives. How about taking some time each morning and saying “Hi” to Dad and letting Him know how much you love and appreciate what He has done for us through His Son, Jesus Christ.

In Christ's Love and Service,

Pastor Rich