**The Church as House of Prayer**

***Outline***

We’ll see three bible passages:

1. Matt 21:1-13  (v.13)
2. Isa. 56:1-7 (v.7)
3. 2 Chronicles 6:12-13

And, we’ll conclude by sharing some practical ways for prayer

***Historical Background: -***

1. *2 Chronicles 6:12-13 (The first reference given to a house of prayer)*
   * We see the temple of God was built in 2 Chronicles 5:1-7:22
     1. The Ark Brought into the Temple (5:1-14)
        + Solomon finished the work “Solomon did for the house of the Lord was finished.” V.1
        + They watch the Ark enter the Temple
        + The Chronicler describes the Temple as "filled with a cloud." (Fire came down from heaven /ESV/)
          - It's a sign that God is present in the Temple.
     2. Dedication of the Temple (6:1-11)
        + Solomon speech. He addresses (bless) the people.
        + Talks about his father David, but gave the credit to God.
        + He reminds the people that there's no God like their God. It's just like that time God promised that David's family would always rule in Israel. Solomon really, really hopes the Almighty will stick by that.
     3. Solomon’s Prayer of Dedication (6:12-42)
        + **Solomon’s prayer…** 2 Chronicles 6:12-13 **12**Then Solomon stood before the altar of the Lord in the presence of all the assembly of Israel and spread out his hands. **13**Solomon had made a bronze platform five cubits [[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+chronicles+6&version=ESV#fen-ESV-11296a)] long, five cubits wide, and three cubits high, and had set it in the court, and he stood on it. Then he knelt on his knees in the presence of all the assembly of Israel, and spread out his hands toward heaven,:
        + 2 Chronicles 6:18-21 **18**“But will God indeed dwell with man on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain you, how much less this house that I have built!**19**Yet have regard to the **prayer** of your servant and to his plea, O Lord my God, listening to the cry and to the **prayer** that your servant prays before you, **20**that your eyes may be open day and night toward this house, the place where you have promised to set your name, that you may listen to the **prayer** that your servant offers toward this place. **21**And listen to the pleas of your servant and of your people Israel, when they **pray** toward this place. And listen from heaven your dwelling place, and when you hear, forgive.
        + **God responded…** in 7:1 you see again the “… fire came down from heaven … and, 7:11-14 (ESV puts it… “If My People Pray”) **11**Thus Solomon finished the house of the Lord and the king's house. All that Solomon had planned to do in the house of the Lord and in his own house he successfully accomplished. **12**Then the Lord appeared to Solomon in the night and said to him: “I have heard your prayer and have chosen this place for myself as a house of sacrifice. **13**When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command the locust to devour the land, or send pestilence among my people, **14**if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.
          - Main point: the foundation for house of prayer
2. *Isa. 56:1-7 (The first reference given to a house of prayer)*
   * The two kingdom ears:
     1. The United Kingdom (I Sam. 9 to ca. I Kgs. 11). This represents about 120 years (ca. B.C. 1095 – B.C. 975, Saul, David; Solomon).
     2. The “Divided Kingdom” (ca follows this. I Kgs. 12 – 2 Kgs. 20, ca. B.C. 975 to B.C. 722, ca. 253 years). The Divided Kingdom consisted of the Southern Kingdom (Judah) and the Northern Kingdom (Israel).
        + Prophet Isaiah was primarily called to prophesy to the Kingdom of Judah.
   * Structure of the book of Isaiah (divided in two parts)
     1. Chapter 1-39 Destruction which leads to Judgment (Woe to the Wicked)
     2. Chapter 40-66 Hope for restoration (the messiah will be coming)
   * Here we find Isa. 56:1-7 … in the second part of the structure. And we see the The first reference given to a house of prayer.
     1. Isaiah 56:1-7 (ESV) **7**these I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer;  
        their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.”
        + - Main point: hope of restoration for house of prayer
3. *Matt 21:1-13  (v.13) (The Church as House of Prayer)*
   * Matthew 21 begins with Matthew 21:1-11, a passage, usually referred to as the “Triumphal Entry.” In this passage of Scripture, Jesus enters the city of Jerusalem
   * Jesus enters the city and He goes to the first place was – the temple. However, what happens here shocks everyone. Jesus begins driving people out of the temple overturning the tables of the moneychangers.
   * Jesus rebukes the leaders of the temple for the condition that is in the Temple. It is hard to imagine a more staggering contrast to the welcome Jesus had received just moments ago. (Let’s not forget that Jesus also cried for the city before he got in).
   * And, when we read Matthew 21:13  (ESV) 13He said to them, “It is written, ‘MY HOUSE SHALL BE CALLED A HOUSE OF PRAYER’,’ but you make it a DEN of ROBBERS.”
   * There are two other times in the New Testament this same verse is quoted and those are found in Mark 11:17 and Luke 19:46.
   * We see Jesus here is taking out the wickedness of the people the house of God and it is the best example of why he is there. It is for the purpose that he restoration; to fulfill what has been said in the Old Testament through the prophet like Isaiah.
   * Let’s raise a question… ‘Why would Jesus refer to His house as a House of Prayer?”

* First of all, Christ himself was a house of prayer and he was teaching his disciples to become one by modeling this for them when He continually withdrew and was talking with Church is primarily who we are in relation to Him.
* Church is primarily who we are in relation to Him. Pictures of the Church
* We then relate to one another and to the world out of our relation to Him.
* We then relate to one another and to the world out of our relation to Him.

1 Peter 2:5 5 you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. A Royal Priesthood

* + So, then, what is prayer?
    1. Prayer is that longing and intimacy restored and brought back to life which was dead in our sinful state, apart from Jesus Christ.
       - Paul says in Eph. 2: **1-**And you were dead in the trespasses and sins **2**in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— **3**among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+2&version=ESV" \l "fen-ESV-29216a" \o "See footnote a)] and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+2&version=ESV#fen-ESV-29216b)] **4**But[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+2&version=ESV#fen-ESV-29217c)] God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, **5**even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—
    2. So, prayer is the intimate communication with the Father in heaven and the house of prayer is the earthly expression of what is in heaven.
* **The Church as House of Prayer**
  + In many of our modern churches, there is much focus on the music, the sermon, or both, but prayer life often seems like out of the circle.
  + But don’t forget when we say a church we mean that we all individual members. So that means prayer should be the center of every activity of the church and it should be exercised in everyday life of an individual.
  + I want to appreciate TBC leaders and Sunday school coordinators for the emphasis they give upon prayer at the beginning of the year.
* In this church prayer ministry is just one of the ministries of the church.



* This church passionately practices and participates in prayer as the foundational or cornerstone ministry of the church. Not only does each ministry find its strength in prayer, but it in turn refocuses its attention back to strengthen the prayer life of the church (the individual prayer life)



Taken from “**Prayer is not Important; *It is Essential” material***

***https://rickwadholmjr.wordpress.com/2016/03/06/why-prayer-is-not-important/***

***Conclusion***: -

* I want to conclude with two points as to clarifying what I’ve been saying so far.
  1. After we receive Jesus Christ as Savior, you become the temple of the Holy Spirit.
* I Corinthians 6:19 say, “Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own.”
  1. As we assemble together we are the corporate expression of prayer.
* Matthew 18:20 says, “For where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am in their midst.” Hebrews 10:24-25 puts it this way, “And let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.”
* 1 Peter 2:5 says it this way, “You also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”
* Let’s us ask our Lord to teach us how to pray so that we could grow in our prayer life.
  + Luke 11:1 Jesus’ disciples came and asked Him, “Teach us how to pray”. We see in Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 11:1-4 Jesus gives them insight and instruction into what He has been praying all along and this has become known to most of us as “The Lord’s Prayer.” Many of us learned this prayer growing up and could recite it at will or could at least enter into it when the congregation was reciting it. This is not the only thing that Jesus prayed but he gave it as instruction or as a “how to.” To Jesus, prayer was a joy and that’s why the scriptures say there will be, “Joy in My house of prayer.”

Braking in to small groups (3, 4, or 5) people and ask each member to share to the group about their passion and challenges…. So, the group will pray about them.

Note: The ‘Practical ways for prayer” hand out will be distributed.