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One statement I hear repeated over and over by members of our congregation is this; "Early morning prayer is the most impacting thing I have ever been involved in." When a person finally takes that step and commits to consistent praying, it is sure to have a profound impact on that individual's life. To go one step further and rise early before the break of day as our Lord did is taking it to another dimension. Many examples in scripture point to a divine season for maximum impact with praying early before the break of day. Ps 49:14 states: *...the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning!*

Introduction...

Before the days of satellite guiding systems, navigation on the open sea took a great deal of skill and understanding. In order to point the ship in the desired heading the Navigator had to know more than where he desired to go, he had to know the ship's present location. Since no landmarks are visible on the open sea, stable points of reference had to be discovered before the Navigator could accurately triangulate the ship's position. The night sky offered these reference points in the form of stars and celestial patterns. The Navigator would study the stars with a few simple calculations determine the approximate longitude and latitude of the ship. But the night sky offered no visible horizon to head the ship toward. For the proper horizon to be found, the Navigator needed the light of day, which, with it's coming would wash away the visibility of the stars.

The Nautical Hour was soon discovered as the most crucial hour of the Navigator's day. The only time of day when the stars of night and the horizon of the coming day were both visible to the Navigator was the period of time when night was changing into day before the sunrise. Once the sun was up, the Navigator loss the ability to calculate the location of the ship, but during the Nautical Hour, the Navigator could determine not only the location of the ship but also the proper heading.

Through the hectic schedules of our busy days we often can only point our ship in the direction of what appears to be the right horizon and hope for the best. At night we are able to reflect on the day's events and decisions and to evaluate our present position. But, during that early hour before the rising of the sun we can determine both our position and direction if we are willing to spend time with our Lord Jesuschrist!

Notes:

Key words: morning, early morning, before the break of day

The day has 12 daylight hours, 1st hour, second, third hour of the day... starting at 6am.

(For example: the ninth hour is 3 pm)

When the bible refers to morning, early in the morning... is that time of day between 12am and 6am!

Part 1: Blessings from Early Morning Prayer

The lone, simple act of obedience to the Word of God will, without fail, produce powerful results. Samuel's understanding of obedience allowed God to for him what God desires to do for all who are faithful to His Word. The Bible explains why Samuel was feared as one of the greatest Prophets who ever lived:

“And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground.” (1 Samuel 3:19)

Whatever Samuel said, God would make sure that it came to pass. It was the Prophet's grasp on the principle of submission and obedience that enabled him to walk in a place of great spiritual authority. Samuel tried to teach King Saul this principle but to no avail. Hear his words:

“...Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.”

(1 Samuel 15:22)

Obedience is the life giving force that resurrects dead faith. The act of obeying, adds works to faith bringing it to life and living faith pleases God. (See James 2:20, Hebrews 11:6) The Apostle James basically teaches the essentiality of taking action on the Word of God in order to produce positive spiritual results in life. By taking action and being a doer of the Word, the promises of God become a reality of life.

Simple obedience to God's Word by consistently praying early each morning will give life to many promises and blessing. These promises and blessing of God will just begin to be manifest in the lives of those who practice submission and obedience.

“And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the LORD thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: 2 And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God.”

(Deuteronomy 28:1-2)

Promised Blessings from Early Morning Prayer

Direction for Life

One of the greatest blessings that can be derived from faithful obedience to early morning, prayer is finding God's direction for life. Since the steps of the righteous are ordered of the Lord, knowing what those steps are and where those steps will lead is paramount. This type of knowledge is granted to those who seek Him early.

Because of traditional mindsets, it is easy to restrict the ways that God can speak. God may use any number of methods to give specific direction to those who obey His Word by praying in the early morning hours. Regardless of how the information comes, the scriptural evidence is clear on this one point, it will come.

Heb 1:1-2 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

John 10:27 My sheep hear my voice,

Revelation 2:7 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; From time to time God speaks to His people by varying means. The Word of God is clear on these three points:

1. God has and continues to speak to His people.
2. His people recognize His voice regardless of how He speaks.
3. It takes a spiritually sensitive ear to know when God is speaking.

God may speak through a *still small voice* but then again He may speak through the *whirlwind*. God may speak through a simple impression coming into your human spirit. God speaks to His people through His Word, both written and spoken. God can speak through His ministers and His saints. God still chooses the medium of preaching to save those who believe. Several spiritual gifts enumerated by the Apostle Paul were spoken. God still gives direction through many various

methods. The greatest need of the hour is not for God to speak but for His people to develop an ear that is spiritually sensitive to His voice.

Direction came to King David when he was praying early in the morning through the Man of God.

2 Samuel 24:11 For when David was up in the morning, the word of the LORD came unto the prophet Gad, David's seer, saying,

Although it is not clear if God spoke to Ezekiel with a loud audible voice, a still small voice or an impression in his spirit, God ultimately spoke.

Ezekiel 12:8 And in the morning came the word of the LORD unto me,

Every morning God teaches a Bible class. The most effective Bible College that anyone could ever attend would be to sit in the presence of the "Author and Finisher of our faith." (Hebrews 12:2)

Zephaniah 3:5 The just LORD is in the midst thereof; ...every morning doth he bring his judgment to light...

Isaiah 50:4 The Lord GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned.

Being Used of God

Jesus explained to His disciples a powerful principle of being used in His kingdom. It seems that God does not choose His instruments of use by the same merits that men do. God's choice is not based as much on what talent or ability someone may have to offer as it does on someone simply being available.

Matthew 20:1 For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard.

God goes out early in the morning to find the workers that He will use in His service. If you want to be used of God you must be at the labor-pool early in the morning, when God is looking for those He will use for the day.

John 8:2 At dawn he appeared again in the temple courts, where all the people gathered around him, and he sat down to teach them.

Even a casual reading of the Bible provides enough evidence to discover that those who were mightily used of God sought Him early.

Following the example of his predecessor Joshua rose up early in the morning to follow the Lord's instructions;

Joshua 3:7 And the LORD said unto Joshua, This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee.

Joshua 6:12 And Joshua rose early in the morning, and the priests took up the ark of the LORD.

Joshua 8:10 And Joshua rose up early in the morning, and numbered the people, and went up, he and the elders of Israel, before the people to Ai.

David, a man set apart by several distinctions, including slaying the giant, and being called “a man after God’s own heart” sought the Lord early.

Psalm 57:8 ...I myself will awake early.

NIV ...I will awaken the dawn.

Psalm 63:1 O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee:

Why should “I rise before dawn and cry for help”? Because, “I have put my hope in your One of God’s most educated and eloquent prophets realized that he could not rely upon natural abilities to do the work of God. Isaiah understood that there was a time and place to present himself before the Lord for the most optimum benefit.

Isaiah 26:9 With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early:

WHY???

“for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.”

When the devil accused God of having a hedge built around Job and all that belonged to him, God could not deny it being true. In fact, God’s response and the ensuing discussion concerning Job and his family indicates that Satan’s perspective seemed to be extremely accurate. The only question about the devil’s concept would be, “who actually built the hedge?” According to the Angel that was sent to Cornelius, it is the act of prayer coupled with sacrifice that performs the construction work. (Acts 10:3-4) And the life of Job was a life of early morning prayer and sacrifice.

Job 1:5 And it was so, ...that Job ...rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt

Early Morning Prayer is the “Key”

The chambers and treasuries of the Lord’s house are accessible to those who have the key and use it. The charge of the key was given to those who made the house of God the center of their life and would come into it early every morning.

1 Chronicles 9:26 NIV They would spend the night stationed around the house of God, because they had to guard it; and they had charge of the key for opening it each morning.

Building a Relationship with God

Adam, where are you???

Adam’s heart must have run the gauntlet of emotional extremes when he heard the voice of the Lord calling his name. Trying his best to hide from his Creator, Adam apparently never suspected that God would come searching for him. It seems that Adam did not realize just how important his relationship had become to God. This event exemplifies the extent that God will go to in order to salvage a relationship that has been forged through intimate early morning fellowship.

The message comes through loud and clear: once a relationship with God has been developed, if something should happen that would cause you to stumble, God will come looking for you. God will not leave you in your dilemma wondering if He still loves you, but He will come to rescue you and do everything within His power to restore the relationship that has been established.

Genesis 3:8-9 And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden. 9 And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?

Abraham, Friend of God

In the process of obtaining the position as the “Father of Faith” Abraham became a “Friend of God.” The position essentially became Abraham’s when he initially obeyed the voice of God by leaving Ur. The relationship developed by Abraham’s consistency in the act of early morning prayer.

Genesis 19:27 And Abraham gat up early in the morning to the place where he stood before the LORD:

Moses Built an Altar Early in the Morning

process of openness over a period of time. The more transparent you are the less time it takes to build trust thereby building a relationship. Moses had just such a relationship with God. It is obvious that since their first encounter at the burning bush until the deliverance of Israel, Moses had developed a deep moral trust in God. It is also obvious that God had concluded that He could put His trust in Moses.

Exodus 34:2 & 4 And be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning unto mount Sinai, and present thyself there to me in the top of the mount. 4 ...and Moses rose up early in the morning, and went up unto mount Sinai, as the LORD had commanded him,

Mary Saw Him First

The dispensation of Law ended with the death of the “Lamb of God”. Jesus told the High Priest that there would never be a need for another lamb to be slain because the lamb that was being offered would cover the sins of all men, forever. The dispensation of Grace had not yet begun. It would be introduced with the outpouring of the Holy Ghost on the Day of Pentecost.

There was no designated approach to God, but Mary desired Him. She longed to be with Jesus and her craving for His presence brought her to the place where His body lay in the grave.

Even with no opened avenue of approach to the presence of God, Mary found a way in. While Jesus was telling Mary not to touch Him, she was holding on to His feet. How could this be? Simply because Mary was there at the right time. The right time was then and is now at the rising of the sun. It is possible to find a way into the presence of God by just showing up at daybreak. Mary established a special relationship with God by seeking Him out before the day began.

Mark 16:2 And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun.

Ananias

The most remarkable Scriptural illustration of mutual trust between God and man is found in the ninth chapter of the book of Acts. Found hidden among the miraculous conversion of Saul of Tarsus

is the story of a man in which God has extreme confidence. God apparently knows Ananias well enough to speak for him. Because of the deep relationship established through consistent prayer, God was able to commit Ananias to a potentially dangerous situation, totally confident that Ananias would follow through.

Acts 9:10-12 And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. 11 And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, 12 And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight.

These several blessings that have been mentioned are not an exhaustive list of what can be inherited through the act of early morning, prayer. These things have been listed simply to whet the appetite for greater spiritual life. All of the blessings that God will bring into a life that is committed to rising early to seek Him first can never be exhausted.

Scripture References to Early Morning Prayer

Genesis 19:15	Psalm 49:1-14
Genesis 19:27-28	Psalm 57:8
Genesis 22:3	Psalm 59:16
Genesis 28:11-13	Psalm 63:1
Genesis 40:6	Psalm 88:13
Genesis 41:8	Psalm 90:14
Exodus 7:15	Psalm 92:1-2
Exodus 8:20	Psalm 119:147
Exodus 9:13	Psalm 143:8
Exodus 14:24-27	Proverbs 8:17
Exodus 16:7	Ecclesiastes 11:6
Exodus 16:19-21	Isaiah 17:11
Exodus 19:16	Isaiah 26:9
Exodus 24:4	Isaiah 33:2
Exodus 34:2-4	Isaiah 50:4
Joshua 3:1	Lamentation 3:22-23
Joshua 6:12	Ezekiel 12:8
Joshua 7:14	Zephaniah 3:5
Joshua 8:10	Matthew 20:1
I Samuel 1:19	Mark 1:35
II Samuel 24:11	Mark 16:2
II Kings 19:35	Luke 21:38
I Chronicles 9:26-27	John 8:2
I Chronicles 23:27-30	John 21:4
Job 1:5-6	Acts 5:21
Psalm 5:3	

God promises to hear and to be found in Morning

Prov 8:17 - I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me.

Ps 5:3- My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up.

Ps 88:13 - But I cry to you for help, O LORD; in the morning my prayer comes before you. (NIV)

Ps 119:147 - I rise before dawn and cry for help; I have put my hope in your word. (NIV)

Start your day in the best possible way -with praise and thanksgiving

Ps 57:8 - Awake up, my glory; awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early. 9 I will praise thee, O Lord, among the people: I will sing unto thee among the nations.

Ps 59:16 - But I will sing of thy power; yea, I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning: for thou hast been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble. 17 Unto thee, O my strength, will I sing: for God is my defence, and the God of my mercy.

Find strength and joy in the morning

Ps 63:1 - O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; 2 To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary.

Ps 30:5 - "... weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."

Find direction for your life

Ps 143:8 - Cause me to hear thy lovingkindness in the morning; for in thee do I trust: cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee.

Get the Victory in the Morning, just like the children of Israel at Jericho.

Josh 6:15 - And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they rose early about the dawning of the day, and compassed the city after the same manner seven times: only on that day they compassed the city seven times. 16 And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout; for the LORD hath given you the city. 20 So the people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every

man straight before him, and they took the city.

Find God's forgiveness in the Morning

Job 1:4 - And his sons went and feasted in their houses, every one his day; and sent and called for their three sisters to eat and to drink with them. 5 And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually.

Starting out your day, connecting with God, will change your life and those that you pray for.