

## A Royal Priesthood – A Holy People: Becoming a Praying Church

Jerry Cisar — March 10, 2024

Text: Romans 12:12; 1 Tim. 5:5; Psalm 68:1-6, 18-20

### Introduction



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### LIVE THE STORY

*The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.*

- Read Romans 12:11-13. Discuss why everything in the paragraph will require persistence (faithfulness) in prayer.
- What evils do you face do you need to begin to realize are wax models that the inbreaking kingdom of Jesus will melt?
- Hebrews 10:19-23 describes the confidence we have in prayer and instructs us to hold tightly to the hope we profess. In Hebrews, what is the hope professed by the person of faith? (Hint: the next chapter)
- In your experience, are Christians noted for their hope in the midst of a dark world or their *doomsday predictions*? Why should we be, of all people, the most hopeful?
- Read 1 John 5:13-14. How have these verses helped or hindered you in prayer in the past? How should we understand “God’s will” in these verses? (Support that answer from the rest of that letter.)
- How might James 3:13-18 inform what is meant by lacking wisdom in the midst of trials in James 1:5?
- Discuss the Barth and Wells quotes near the top of pg. 3 of this outline. Does the Barth quote almost seem blasphemous? Explain why you think it is or it isn’t?
- What steps will you take for us as a church to be becoming a praying church?

### I. To be faithful in prayer, we must be joyful in hope.

Romans 12:11-13; 15:13

Hebrews 10:19-23

A. To be faithful in prayer, we must be joyful in hope.

*To “be joyful in hope” is the positive way of saying to “not lose heart.”*

Dieumeme Noelliste: “Hope is not superfluous to existence; it is an essential commodity for the sustenance of life. Hope sustains the human spirit; it lifts the human psyche, and keeps it from sinking in even the direst of situations.”

i. Paul’s comment on hope: 1 Cor. 15:13-19

ii. Peter’s comment on hope: 1 Pet. 3:15

iii. 1 Cor. 13:12

- B. Without hope, prayer becomes a religious exercise in futility.
  - i. James 1:5
  - ii. James 3:13-18

## II. To be faithful in prayer, we must be confident that God answers!

1 John 5:14-15

- A. Heidelberg Catechism, Q & A 129:
  - Q. What does that little word “Amen” express?
  - A. “Amen” means: This shall truly and surely be! It is even more sure that God listens to my prayer than that I really desire what I pray for.

B. 1 John 5 Context

- C. “If we ask anything according to God’s will...”
  - i. The only condition that must be met for prayer to be answered is that we pray according to God’s will.
  - ii. John means, God’s will for how we live out His kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. God’s will, as John speaks of it, is God’s desire or yearning for the world; restoration and redemption.

➤ 1 John 3:16-18

D. Prayer according to God’s will is a cry for the kingdom.

Stanley Grenz: “By its very nature, prayer is... the cry to God for the kingdom. It is the voicing of our petitions, which ultimately are all related to the in-breaking of the reign of God to meet the needs of the present.” (*Prayer: The Cry for the Kingdom*)

Karl Barth: “God answers. He is not deaf, he listens; more than that, he acts. He does not act in the same way whether we pray or not. Prayer exerts an influence upon God’s action, even upon his existence. This is what the word ‘answer’ means.”

David Wells: “Nothing destroys petitionary prayer (and with it, a Christian view of God) as quickly as resignation.”

## III. To be faithful in prayer, we must recognize what is wax.

- A. Creation is groaning in the pains of childbirth.
  - i. Rom. 8:22

ii. Gal. 4:19

B. What does hope look like?

C. Prayer is essential to hope, and hope is essential to the inbreaking of God’s kingdom.