

### What Is So Important About Mornings?

There is one verse that for years has served as my greatest motivation for praying when I first arise in the morning. It is found in Mark 1:35 and says, "And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed." This seemed to be the practice of Jesus. He had just experienced, what Bible students call, the busy day at Capernaum. He had performed more miracles on this one day than any other day of our Lord's recorded life. I am convinced the reason many of us feel depleted and on the verge of "burning-out, wiping out or dropping out" is because we do not begin our next day with God after serving Him. We see in the Scripture, "And the whole multitude sought to touch him: for there went virtue out of him, and healed them all" (Luke 6:19). The word for virtue is "dunamis" which means "miraculous or dynamic power." It is the root word for our words "dynamic" and "dynamite." When we minister in the Spirit, we give out in dynamic power that which is given to us by God. Therefore, we need to get into that secret place and draw from God His fullness. The main thing in your life is to maintain a deep, vital growing relationship with God. I find the morning is my best time to do so. Two men who made an indelible impression on me for ministry were Drs. Robert G. Lee and W.A. Criswell. Both of these men would rarely be seen before noon because they would give their mornings to God. It was standard practice for Dr. Criswell to not even get out of his pajamas until noon because he did not want anything, even dressing to take his mind away from prayer and meditation in God's Word through study. So, you might ask, what is so important about mornings?

#### 1. God is at our bedside talking to us when we awaken in the morning.

The Bible says, "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." (Isaiah 50:4). Prophetically, this is speaking about Jesus. John said, "...as he is, so are we in this world." (I John 4:17). We would do well to see that God also wants to share His life with us and He gives us a boon to our day by allowing us to hear His voice, if we will just listen for Him.

In the most ancient book of the Bible, Job declared, "What is man, that thou shouldest magnify him? and that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him? And that thou shouldest visit him every morning, and try him every moment?" (Job 7: 17, 18). Three verses down, Job said, "...thou shalt seek me in the morning..." (Job 7:21). Job seems to be speaking something that sounds like common knowledge in his day: God is longing to visit with us every morning when we awaken.

#### 2. The Lord is talking to us when we awake to remind us of His faithfulness.

Jeremiah said, "It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness." (Lamentations 3:22,23). I have heard it said, "Every morning is a good morning when we wake up six feet above ground." In truth, even the Lord's taking us to Heaven will be gain (Philippians 1:21), but in thanks for his life-giving strength that is renewed day-by-day, we should be thankful. In view of that, why not give Him the opening portion of the day that He has, in His mercy, given to us?

#### 3. Our response to the voice of God in the morning shows priorities.

This venue is far too short to exhaust this study, but let us allow the easily understood Scriptures to convict and convince us of this practice that illustrates where a follower of God's priorities are: Abraham seemed to have a morning place for prayer: "And Abraham gat up early in the morning to the place where he stood before the LORD" (Genesis 19:27). Jacob dedicated his Bethel in the morning: "And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it." (Genesis 28:18). David enthusiastically embraced his mornings with God: "My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up." (Psalm 5:3). "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." (Psalm 59:16).

#### 4. If you don't hear the Lord's voice, begin communication anyway.

Sometimes our Lord will test our faithfulness to Him by seeing if we will continue the dedicated life with or without His obvious promptings. The old English word, "prevent" means "to precede or to anticipate." Keeping that in mind, observe the Psalmist's determination to begin the day with God with or without expeditious instigation, "But unto thee have I cried, O LORD; and in the morning shall my prayer prevent thee" (Psalm 88:13). "I prevented the dawning of the morning, and cried: I hoped in thy word" (Psalm 119:147). We see James 4:8 says, "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you..." thus showing us God longs for us to often show initiative in this matter of walking with Him.

#### 5. Give your mind to God when it is uncluttered.

Ezekiel said, "And in the morning came the word of the LORD unto me, saying" (Ezekiel 12:8). Later the prophet said, "Now the hand of the LORD was upon me in the evening, afore he that was escaped came; and had opened my mouth, until he came to me in the morning; and my mouth was opened, and I was no more dumb" (Ezekiel 33:22). It appears that clarity was given to Ezekiel in the morning. Haven't we all said, when facing an important decision, "Let me sleep on it?"

Warren Weirsbe encouraged me in my youth to read the classics. He said they were classics for a reason because of the eternal truths they illustrated. Here is a perfect example from J.M. Barrie's, *Peter Pan*, "Mrs. Darling first heard of Peter when she was tidying up her children's minds. It is the nightly custom of every good mother after her children are asleep to rummage in their minds and put things straight for next morning, repacking into their proper places the many

articles that have wandered during the day. If you could keep awake (but of course you can't) you would see your own mother doing this, and you would find it very interesting to watch her. It is quite like tidying up drawers. You would see her on her knees, I expect, lingering humorously over some of your contents, wondering where on earth you had picked this thing up, making discoveries sweet and not so sweet, pressing this to her cheek as if it were as nice as a kitten, and hurriedly stowing that out of sight. When you wake in the morning, the naughtiness and evil passions with which you went to bed have been folded up small and placed at the bottom of your mind and on the top, beautifully aired, are spread out your prettier thoughts, ready for you to put on." Although this is fiction, I believe our Lord has allowed the night's rest to clear our minds and tidy them up for the next day. Can you think of a better gift to God than our mind responding in prayer every morning?

-Pastor Pope-