THE 4% SOLUTION

Let's fully utilize the incredible connection we can have with God through prayer.

KEY POINTS

- In a previous message entitled "My Focal Point" (16AUG20), it was mentioned that Peter and John went up to the temple at the "hour of prayer":
  …The 'hour of prayer' [is] the term we read in Acts 3. [It is understood] that you may not actually be spending one hour in prayer every day. It may be a focused 15 or 30 minutes that you spend with the Lord, but you *have* identified the specific time and place where you will meet with Him every day.
- However, the Lord was displeased with this. He seemed to say, "Are you really trying to excuse my people from spending an hour with Me every day? Do you know what percentage of the day one hour is?"
- So, let's do the math. Divide one by twenty-four and multiply by 100. One hour is the grand total of 4.17% of a day. And if you apply the normal rules of rounding, you'll round it down to 4%. That's it. One hour is 4% of our day. So, half an hour is 2% and 15 minutes is literally 1% of our day!
- So, how do you feel now about saying you can't spend an hour a day with God?
- Consider how a potent muscle liniment containing about 2% of an active agent is able to provide much-needed relief. Giving God 4% of our day is even more powerful and yields life-changing results.
- Let's take a look at what happened in the first hour Jesus spent in the Garden of Gethsemane on the night before His crucifixion (Luke 22:41-44):
  - He found a quiet, private place to pray
  - He detailed His desire and earnest prayer request to His Father in Heaven
  - God sent divine help (an angel) to assist Him in prayer
  - His prayer intensified and He "prayed more earnestly"
  - His prayer was all-consuming: soul, spirit and body
- Just as an athlete's workout includes a warmup, intense physical activity, then a cooldown period, our prayer time also has stages that shouldn't be rushed.
- We need time for thanksgiving, worship, intercession, listening to God (primarily through His word), submitting our will to His, and acknowledging His lordship in our lives and in our world. We can't just rush in and out of God's presence as a matter of duty or obligation, thinking that somehow this will result in a loving, trusting, life-sustaining relationship with Him.
- Some people say they're just too busy to pray for more than a few minutes a day, having taken on way more responsibilities at work than they can realistically handle. Then sometimes there's more to the story.
- Results of a survey conducted by Newswire.ca says: Canadians (in 2019) say they spend the most time on computer screens with an average of 4.2 hours per day, followed by an average of 3.1 hours per day spent looking at TV screens, 2.4 hours looking at cell phone screens, and 1.5 hours looking at tablets.

KEY SCRIPTURE:
Luke 22:39-45 (Matthew 26:40, Mark 14:37)

- The entertainment and social media time we spend every day on our devices far exceeds 4% of our time. There is absolutely no reason why we can't devote an hour a day to God!
- So, let's jump to 4% solutions. No one was ever guilted into a better relationship with their parent, spouse, child or Saviour. It has to come from a deep place of desire, which most of us already have.
  - Do you love nature? Does it increase your wonder and appreciation for the works of God? Then maybe you can apply your 4% solution to prayer walks with God, with a Bible app or worship music playing in your ears as part of your prayer time.
  - Do you find you're easily distracted, or without a lot of free time? Maybe you can be like David or Daniel and pray three times a day (Psalm 55:17; Daniel 6:10).
  - Are you like the apostles and saints in the early church who loved to pray together as a community of faith? (See Acts 1:14; 2:1, 42; 3:1; 4:23-31; 13:2-3.) Then maybe you can get involved in an online prayer group.
- If you know you're not where you want to be right now, you can be certain it will take a real effort just to get started. But the trick is to start small. As Jude 20 tells us, we need to be engaged in "building [ourselves] up on [our] most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit."
- And 1 Thessalonians 5:17 is another critical verse for us to live by: "Pray without ceasing."
- God deserves so much more of our time and attention, so let's not allow anything to steal our time with Him. May God help us!

DISCUSSION/REFLECTION TOOLS

1. Do the math. How much time do you spend per day on the following: (a) at work (b) "me" time (c) "screen time" (d) prayer (e) other daily activities? What takes up most of your time?
2. Let's try to increase our prayer percentage. Pray, following the pattern Jesus established in

THE LORD'S PRAYER

- Acknowledge God's place and position
- Pray for God's will to be done on Earth
- Intercede for personal needs
- Pray for God's forgiveness, even as we forgive those who've wronged us
- Pray for protection from the devil's schemes against us
- Acknowledge God's ultimate eternal rulership

Start-up: Do you read labels on products and, if so, what is it that you're looking for? Does reading the label influence your decision in buying a product?

WEEK OF SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2020

NOTES

Meditate as you read through/listen to this week's message. If it helps, use symbols for your notes.

(Reminds me/Confirms) (New idea) (Think about)

(Do this) (Speaks to my heart) (Must share)

PRAYER NEEDS/THANKSGIVINGS

Go deeper with your Life Group family.
CONNECT-REFLECT-DISSECT THE WORD