

## Quail West MGF Group

### The Power of Prayer – Our Daily Bread

Do not stop crying out to the Lord our God for us, that he may rescue us.—[1 Samuel 7:8](#)

One day, when I was deeply concerned about the welfare of one close to me, I found encouragement in part of the Old Testament story of Samuel, a wise leader of the Israelites. As I read how Samuel interceded for God's people as they faced trouble, I strengthened my resolve to pray for the one I loved.

The Israelites faced the threat of the Philistines, who had previously defeated them when God's people didn't trust in Him (see 1 Samuel 4). After repenting of their sins, they heard that the Philistines were about to attack. This time, however, they asked Samuel to continue praying for them (7:8), and the Lord answered clearly by throwing their enemy into confusion (v. 10). Though the Philistines may have been mightier than the Israelites, the Lord was the strongest of them all.

When we ache over the challenges facing those we love, and fear the situation won't change, we may be tempted to believe that the Lord will not act. But we should never underestimate the power of prayer, for our loving God hears our pleas. We don't know how He will move in response to our petitions, but we know that as our Father He longs for us to embrace His love and to trust in His faithfulness.

*Father God, the way You hear and answer my prayers amazes me. Strengthen my faith, that I will always believe in Your goodness and love.*

- Do you have someone you can pray for today?
- How solid are we in our faith that we really believe that God will answer our prayers?
  - Do we understand that what we may want is not what God wants for us.....and what he wants maybe far greater reward? Do we see reward as our journey to heaven?
    - Do you have examples in your life that God answered a prayer directly or maybe in a way you had not expected that was really better for us that we now recognize?
    - Are we waiting for God to answer on his timeline not ours? Is this really the hard part for many of us ?

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### Growing Gratitude

For from him and through him and for him are all things.—[Romans 11:36](#)

Would you like to cultivate a greater sense of gratitude? George Herbert, a seventeenth-century British poet, encourages readers toward that goal in his poem “Gratefulness”: “Thou that hast given so much to me, give one thing more: a grateful heart.”

Herbert recognized the only thing he needed in order to be thankful was simply an awareness of the blessings God had already given him.

The Bible declares Christ Jesus as the source of all blessing in Romans 11:36, “For from him and through him and for him are all things.” “All things” encompasses both the extravagant and the mundane, everyday gifts in our lives. Everything we receive in life comes directly from our heavenly Father (James 1:17), and He willingly gives us those gifts out of His love for us.

To expand my awareness of God’s blessings in my life, I am learning to cultivate a heart that acknowledges the source of all the joys I experience each day, but especially the ones I often take for granted. Today those included a crisp morning to run, the anticipation of an evening with friends, a stocked pantry so I could make French toast with my daughters, the beauty of the world outside my window, and the aroma of freshly brewed coffee.

- What is the “so much” that God has already given to you? Opening our eyes to those blessings will help us to develop grateful hearts. —Lisa Samra
- Take a few minutes to thank God for what comes to your mind right now. Try to do that throughout the day as well. Some do it hundreds of times a day. Should we?
- Do you tend to think of yourself as more or less thankful than other people? Consider how the apostle Paul used that question to set a love-trap for some of his readers. Early in his letter to the Romans he describes those who have no interest in worshiping or giving thanks to their Creator (Romans 1:21). For the rest of chapter he describes the unraveling lives of those who refuse to acknowledge the goodness of their God.
  - Then it happens. Paul anticipates that someone has taken the bait. With no warning he asks his readers whether they really think they are any different than the unthankful sinners he has been condemning (2:1). Paul then spends much of the rest of his letter giving his readers reasons to give thanks to God for revealing in Christ the greatest good news the world has ever heard. Just before erupting in his great expression of worshipful praise to God (11:33-36), Paul concludes, “For God has bound everyone over to disobedience so that he may have mercy on them all” (v. 32).
- Do we sense the joy in the everyday events of our lives....do we just take them for granted....or do we praise him?