

Prayer Binge

“Then He came and found them sleeping and said to Peter, “Simon, are you sleeping? Could you not keep watch one hour?” (Mark 14:37).

I don’t pray enough.

I came to this startling conclusion after a recent binge-watching experience. There was nothing wrong with the show, but there was plenty wrong with how much time I frittered away—even while producing content on my laptop through the entire series.

But this behavior did not cause conviction until my recent Greenelines interview with Dr. Dick Eastman. He is the international president of Every Home for Christ, a ministry that has planted over 4.7 billion gospel messages home to homes worldwide since 1946, resulting in over 243 million follow-up decision cards and responses.

It’s Eastman’s prayer life that shook my heart to consider my ways of prayer. I thought I prayed a lot until we discussed his book *Talking with God—A Practical Plan for Personal Prayer*.

“Over four decades ago, I resolved a very big issue in my life,” he says. “I decided to never allow a day to go by for the rest of my life that I did not spend a minimum of an hour in the presence of Jesus. I’m telling you that God allowed that to continue up to this day. And I would never ever say it in a boastful sense. But I say it now in gratitude that God drew me into that habit. It’s the most wonderful hour of the day.”

I read *Whisper* by Mark Batterson last year, and I made a note that Batterson remembered Eastman as one who “sings in a grove of trees.”

Eastman recalls how that story developed. “Back in the mid-’80s, I had a tremendous desire to spend one entire day in my life where I did nothing but praise the Lord out loud from the time I got up in the morning and went to bed at night,” he says. “I was headed to Washington, D.C., for our National Day of Prayer. They involved me in the event, so they put me up in a beautiful country club ... I woke up the next morning and sang praises to the Lord and continued all day as planned. I went to a park and was singing praises so loud that my voice became hoarse. I ended up in a grove of trees and continued to sing praises.

“And I looked up, and I said, ‘Lord, I just knew I needed to do this,” Eastman says. “And I said, ‘I’ve done everything I know to do the praise You all day.’ And He said, ‘Now there’s one thing you’ve never done in My presence.’

“A thought quickened in my spirit, and I danced before the Lord as David did,” he adds. “I jumped and kicked my legs, and even the trees must have laughed at me. But I clearly heard the Lord say to me, ‘You’ll never know how much joy you’re giving Me right now.’ And I just started sobbing, sobbing.”

Eastman says that after his day of prayer and praise, his ministry opened up as it has at almost no other time in his ministry.

We can tell a lot about a man by how he orders his binge steps.

Listen to my entire interview with Dick Eastman at this link, and subscribe to the *Greenelines* podcast on your favorite podcast platform. {eo}

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