

Practice Intentionality in Your Walk of Faith

Every Sunday we have an early morning prayer meeting at church. We pray from a psalm for 30 minutes (without asking for anything—a time purely for praise), then we walk the sanctuary in prayer for 15 minutes, and finally we meet back together to intercede for the services and ministry of the day.

Since we started this intimate time in 2007, we have never ceased to be amazed at how the Holy Spirit always meets with us. We never leave without a feeling that we have been in the sweet presence of Jesus.

One week, however, was a bit of a challenge. The prayer room is just off of the platform, and the praise team has practice at the same time that we are praying. That has never been an issue. In fact, the muffled music often adds a “worship” dimension to our time.

For some reason that week, the amp for the electric guitar had been turned and was not only facing the wall of the prayer room, but it was also right up against it. It was deafening! That is really the only way to describe it. The sound was decibels above noisy.

I’m sure there was a technical reason for it that someone who is tone deaf like me would never understand. However, it *felt* as if the amp was in the room with us. The walls shook. Our chairs vibrated. You could *feel* the “music” (I use that term loosely).

Amazingly, a wonderful thing happened: The distraction brought a new level of focus and diligence to our prayers. We moved in closer to each other. We became very intentional about concentrating on the prayers and praises being expressed by

others in the room. Our minds pressed in on the purpose for which we had gathered.

The apostle Paul knew about distractions. In Philippians 3, he shared that he was “forgetting what lies behind [good and bad] and straining forward to what lies ahead, I *press on* toward the goal”(vv. 13-14, AMP, emphasis added).

Dr. Tim Clinton often says that the “pain, pressure and pace” of life are issues that can make the wheels come flying off. When Jesus taught the parable of the seed and the sower, it was the “cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches” that choked out the good seed (Mark 4:19).

Everyday activities distract us from an intimate relationship with our Father. Our endless pursuit to “get ahead” takes our *focus off of the real goal*. Even just trying to make ends meet—pay the weekly bills, put food on the table and gas in the car—causes such stress and mind-consuming anxiety that our time in the presence of Jesus takes a back seat.

The rush of other things always tends to obscure our needed concentration on God. The world has turned the “amp” toward the wall of our lives, and we too often struggle to hear God’s voice over the sound of the noise of the world.

This week in your Christ walk, focus. You will need to be intentional about this thing we call a Walk of Faith. It doesn’t just happen. Let other things (even good things) come and go as they may, but you keep your focus and never allow *anything*—or *anyone*—to obscure the life that is a result of an intimate, personal, vibrant relationship with your heavenly Father.

Never be hurried out of the relationship of abiding in Him. The most difficult thing in a believer’s walk is to learn to be diligent and consistent in worship and prayer—*personal* worship and prayer, a *lifestyle* of worship and prayer.

As you press in, seeking Him, drawing near to Him, you will sense and feel Him *drawing near to you* ... I promise.

Prayer Power for the week of May 19, 2014

This week, focus on the real goal of cultivating your relationship with God by spending time with Him in personal worship and prayer. Make this a priority above everything else, and thank Him for ordering your steps and empowering you to accomplish all He's ordained for you with others.

Remember those who are suffering through personal losses and pray for those ministering overseas and at home to spread the gospel and provide food, clothing and medical care where needed. Pray that we as believers would be constrained to fast and pray for our nation to fulfill God's purpose, stand with Israel and continue to be a blessing to the world (Phil.3:13-14).