

## How Often Do You Pray For Your Church?

This is a good question for us all that God has put on my heart through studying for my sermon this week. I will be preaching Sunday from Colossians 4:2-6, and prayer figures very prominently in this passage. In these verses, Paul is asking the Colossians to pray for God to open doors of opportunity and to give him the words so that he can preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. His request for prayer is also a reminder to the Colossians of what they should be pursuing in their own witness for Christ.

This is one of many passages that reminds us that prayer is absolutely critical for the life of a church. It is one of the most intimate acts of worship, it is personally transforming, and it is humbling in that through it we acknowledge our utter dependence upon God for everything. Corporately, prayer has a unique way of clarifying our vision of God, unifying us in His Spirit, and empowering us to minister and serve for the spread of His kingdom. It is both an amazing privilege and an amazing responsibility.

If there is one way we misuse prayer in our lives, it is by praying for selfish reasons. Now don't hear me wrong at this point. We are to cast all of our cares upon the Lord. We are to take our burdens and lay them before Him. But how often are we merely using prayer to take a laundry list of "wants" before the Lord? How often do we go before Him seeking His gifts and blessings more than we seek His glory and will? Like John Piper said in his text, *Let the Nations Be Glad*, we too often use prayer like a domestic intercom to call for more comforts in the den rather than viewing it as a war-time walkie-talkie whereby we contact headquarters to receive guidance and resources to engage the world with the gospel.

I hope you will take some time this week to evaluate your own prayer life and the priorities expressed therein. I also hope you will make it a point to intercede on a daily basis for our church. God is doing so much here that we are thankful for, and we need to maintain our humble dependence upon Him as we move forward. With that in mind, here is a brief list of things you can pray for in the days and weeks ahead.

1. Pray for God to continue to bring a spiritual awakening to our church and our city.
2. Pray that Morningview Members would be daily drawn into God's presence through the Word and thus continually transformed into greater students, servants, and witnesses.
3. Pray for our entire church as we read through the Scriptures together in 2007.
4. Pray for our *Reflecting His Glory* campaign, and the standard of membership involvement we hope to develop through it.
5. Pray for our M.I.T. ministry. We now have about 110 students enrolled. Pray for wisdom and strength for the teachers and delight and perseverance for the students.
6. Pray for our Children and Youth, for they are the future of our church and we desire that they love the Lord with all their heart, mind, soul, and strength.
7. Pray for your leaders – Ministry Staff, Deacons, and Teachers – as we seek to be wholly consumed with God's will and diligent as we serve His purpose in our church family.
8. Pray for our Senior Adults, and especially those who are shut-ins or infirmed. They are God's gifts to our church family of wisdom and godly example, and we need to lift them up to our Lord.
9. Pray for Fathers and Grandfathers in our congregation to be servant leaders in their homes, rightly administering the Word and setting godly examples for wives and children.
10. Pray for God to continue to grant us all a vision of how to grow into a church that is truly consumed with a passion for the Lord, for His Word, and for the lost.

