

Pray!

Isaiah 62

Pastor Guy Gray

Hope

Root your prayers in hope. This is the Biblical way of life-changing—world changing prayer. Isaiah 62 is a chapter that is filled with hope. The hope comes from a vision of what is to come. God has a purpose and a plan. God is at work in the world, doing amazing things. God paints a picture of a future that is vibrant—radiant—beautiful. Then, in the middle of all this hope and promise, God calls His people to pray.

Yes, prayer changes our lives and our world. Prayer works! But hope is the root of effective prayer. Read Isaiah 62:1-5. Hope! Read 62:8-12. Hope! There in the middle of the chapter, in verses 6&7 is this word about “watchmen on the walls of Jerusalem.” The watchmen are assigned to a ministry of prayer. Day and night, never silent, they are to lift up their voices to God in prayer.

So God calls us to pray—but we cannot pray without hope. So God gives a vision of what He has planned and it is awesome.

Believe

Those who pray believe that God is at work in our lives and our world. They also know that God has made promises. Prayer is about believing the promises of God. In prayer we bring those promises back to God. This is what we see in Isaiah 62:7 “Give Him no rest till He establishes Jerusalem and makes her the praise of the earth.” They simply take up the promises laid out in Isaiah 62 and bring them back before God, asking Him to take action on His promises. To grow stronger in prayer you must also grow deeper in God’s Word so that you know and understand the promises and the purposes and plan of God.

There is something else to strengthen our faith here—something deep and mysterious. In 62:1 it says, “For Zion’s sake I will not keep silent.” Who is talking in this verse? Who is not going to keep silent? The prophet Isaiah has been pointing through his book to the Savior, the “Servant of the Lord.” The New Testament shows us that this is Jesus Christ. It is likely that the one praying in 62:1 is none other than the Servant of the Lord, the Savior, Jesus. This fits perfectly with what we know about the ministry of Jesus on our behalf. The Bible tells us that “He ever lives to make intercession for us” (Hebrews 7:25). This is the greatest faith booster of all time. When we pray, we know that Jesus Himself is interceding too. He is our great heavenly High Priest. When we pray, we are caught up in a world changing work that involves the purpose and plan of God, the promises of God, Jesus – the Son of God and the Spirit of God.

Ask

Jesus taught us to “ask, seek and knock” (Matthew 7:7). With these words He showed us that our prayers do make a difference. Of course prayer impacts our own hearts as well. We are transformed through prayer from the inside out. But it doesn’t end there. God has designed a world in which what we pray actually impacts the way things go. So even though God has made promises about His purpose and His plan, He still directs us to pray. Prayer is the greatest power, privilege and responsibility in our lives as Christians. Jesus never taught His disciples to preach or run an organization but He did teach them to pray. So pray! Ask, seek and knock!

Persist

“Give yourselves no rest and give Him no rest” (Isaiah 62:6-7). That’s called persistence. Jesus also taught about persistence in prayer (Luke 18:1-8). Persistence—it’s a mark of faith and hope. Because we have this vision of something better, we

persist in prayer. Because we believe the promises of God, we persist in prayer. Because Jesus taught us to ask, seek and knock, we persist in prayer. So let's pray! Let's grow deeper in our praying. Let's grow in faith and hope and persistence. As we do, God is going to do incredible things in our lives and in our world—in Jesus Name!

For Further Reflection:

This week as you read through Isaiah 62, make your prayer life a focus. Try keeping a prayer journal this week. Look for answered prayer in your life. What are the promises of God that you need to remember today? Pray for those things.

RW Happenings:

Wednesday, August 27th • Global Missions Prayer Group Community Center @ 7:00pm

This is the perfect opportunity to find out how God is reaching out to other parts of the world through River West Church. Join Pastor Chris on the last Wednesday of each month. Contact Pastor Chris at 699-2226 or chris@riverwest.org

Wednesday, September 3rd • Parent Prayer Group River West Church @ 7-8pm

Come and join other parents of Jr. High or High School students on the first Wednesday of each month to pray for our students and the Student Ministries leaders. For more information contact Cynthia Weston @ 515-1464 or cwweston@juno.com

El Salvador 2009 •

Signups for the Spring 2009 El Salvador mission trip to Nuevo Renacer are now open. Trip dates are March 20th—28th 2009. Applications are available in the foyer or can be emailed to you. There will be an information meeting on September 14th, 7pm at the Community Center. Contact Pastor Chris at 699.2226 or chris@riverwest.org

Sunday, September 7th • Jr. High Youth Group 5:30-7pm

Returns to Sundays starting September 7th

Coming September 7th •

French Toast & Sausage Sunday & Community Group & Bible Study Sign-ups