***PRAYING* BIG**

(May be used in connection with “Praying Boldly” & Praying Revelation”)

 *(Develop and personalize this theme)*

*Prayer time 20 minutes*

Psa\_111:10 *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his precepts have good understanding. To him belongs eternal praise.*

Continuing the theme of eternal God, praise Him with other of His character traits which are eternal because He is eternal (love, goodness, etc)

*Devotional talk—15 minutes*

**“BIG” prayers**

Here is a dangerous question. What are you praying for today that will require a miraculous answer from God? What are you asking for that only God can do? Are you “taking risks” in prayer? Or are you asking for what you think, if you try hard enough, you can actually do yourself.

You remember the story of Zechariah and Elizabeth. The whole story shows God’s involvement. He blessed them with a child in their old age. Not just any ordinary child. The one who would prepare the way for the Messiah, for Jesus Christ Himself. But look at Luke 1:13: “Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son.” YOUR PRAYER HAS BEEN HEARD! Obviously they had been praying for a child. They knew the story of Abraham and Sarah; they knew how God has worked down through history and they prayed a prayer that would require a miracle.

Does God want you to pray “big”? in Jeremiah 33:3 he promised, “Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know? God was saying, “Go ahead and call out your biggest requests because there is no way you are ever going to drain my resources. You have no idea how much I can still do for you.” And this was to a nation which had really messed up (maybe comparable to how we Baptists have messed up this last decade?!). They were on the verge of exile, they had rejected God. Still He called out to them and promised them.

 Through the prophet Isaiah, God declared, “Then you will call, and the Lord will answer; you will cry for help and he will say: Here am I” (58:9) “Surely the arm of the Lord is not too short to save, nor his ear too dull to hear” (59:1). And God told the intercessors for Israel, “I have posted watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem; they will never be silent day or night. *“You who call on the Lord, give yourselves no rest, and give him no rest till he establishes Jerusalem and makes her the praise of the earth”* (62:6-7). Think of what a promise that is. It is like God is saying, “I want you to bombard heaven with your prayer. Don’t let up until I come through in every last detail!

Jesus could not have been more emphatic about His belief in prayer. We don’t have time to read his claims for prayer but the following is a list of references you can go back to:

 Matthew 6:6

 Matthew 7:7-8

 Matthew 18:19-20

 Matthew 21:22

 John 14:13-14

 John 15:7

 John 15:16

 John 16:23-24

Then He gave the parable of the unrighteous judge and the widow to urge us to persistence in prayer, the Lord’s prayer with very specific requests. All you can say is that Jesus wants us to ask God for His very best. Why was He so emphatic about prayer? Jesus knew that His disciples’ success depended on prayer and that they would never see any impact for the Kingdom without it. He knew His church would never be built without prayer.

Here are a few reasons for you to constantly be seeking big things from God:

* “Big” prayers humble you. It reaches out beyond anything you can do or manipulate. It shows you how little you are.
* “Big” prayers make you dependent on God. When the church in Acts 12 was praying for Peter’s release from prison, they knew they couldn’t go and break Peter out of jail. All they could do was pray. The rest was up to God. And that is precisely where Kingdom work gets done. You do all you can do, but then it is up to God for a Kingdom-level miracle.
* “Big” prayers drive you to the Bible. If you are asking God to move a mountain for you, be sure you are on solid Biblical ground. “Big” prayers can be given in confidence only when you know that the Bible has endorsed your asking.
* “Big” prayers increase your faith. When you venture out and make a “big” request of God, faith is required. Then, when God comes through, faith increases. The entire exercise is on big spiritual faith builder. When you repeatedly go before God with Kingdom-sized requests, you’ll see that your hope and confidence in God’s provision increase with every venture into His holy presence. Praying “big” prayers and seeing God’s even bigger answers grow your faith.
* “Big” prayers enlist you in Kingdom pursuits. Spiritual walls are torn down in prayer. Captives are set free through prayer. Mountains are blown away by prayer. The Kingdom is built one prayer at a time.. Praying “big” prayers is not just a pastime or hobby of the spiritually minded. It’s the critical tool of true Kingdom builders.

So, let’s turn to prayer and think “big”. What does that mean in your situation right now. What do you see standing in the way of your leading a NL group? Of others getting involved? Of people getting saved?