

Day 31 - Expectantly Prayerful

Today, we will focus on Stonegate's core value of being *Expectantly Prayerful*. We believe that God desires to actively engage in every aspect of our lives, and we are consistently striving to obey His voice and experience His grace. Prayer is the means through which we draw near to and communicate with God. It is less about our requests and more about being with our Creator. We are invited to be in communion with God continuously throughout our day, not only at meals, upon waking, or before sleeping.

What prompts you to pray or pursue God throughout your day?

Our focus scripture for today is 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

“¹⁶ Rejoice always, ¹⁷ pray constantly, ¹⁸ give thanks in everything; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.”

Throughout the day, we face constant distractions. From temptations to look at our phones during a meeting, to the flood of alerts from smart devices, to thousands of ads per day - everything seems to be trying to disconnect us from Jesus. If we pray, prayer is usually reactive and a list of wants. But Jesus connected with the Father in prayer and lived by the power of the Holy Spirit. If we want to follow Jesus' example, we need to do the same. Prayer becomes our surrender, a realignment of our hearts, and a place of empowerment as we anticipate God's attentive presence, grace, and active involvement in every aspect of our lives. We want to be a people marked by expectant prayer.

Pause to consider what keeps you distracted and disconnected from God or just reactive in prayer. What would need to change in your life to connect with God in prayer more expectantly?

As a spiritual practice—a way to say “yes, Lord,” we encourage you to pray intentionally throughout your day. Start by offering everything that comes to mind to God. Set a timer to remind you to pause throughout your day to express your worries, thanksgiving, praise, and requests to Him.

Prepare to walk with God into the day before us, the Lord who loves us says in:

Philippians 4:6 “Don't worry about anything, but in everything, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.”

Father, help us discern where you are leading us as a church - making Your invitation clear.

Jesus, help us become worshipers, friends, apprentices, and guides who live as disciple-makers in all areas of our everyday.

Spirit, help us become a disciple-making hub, loving the lost and proclaiming Jesus in all we do and say so our communities will flourish.