

LIVING IT OUT

SESSION 18 PRAYING WITH MY LIFE

I learned a tremendous amount about prayer when our house was full of children and company, even though I was only mildly aware at the time. Two of those prayer practices occurred while cooking or doing laundry.

When I prepared pasta or rice for a family meal or family plus invited guests, I used my hand for the measuring device. Over time, I came to know approximately how many scoops each person might eat; then, perhaps with a heart hopeful for Elijah's visit or just knowing that company was frequently a possibility, I added two or three more handfuls. I prayed for each person, known and unknown, as I measured his or her portion and added it to the pot.

Laundry resurfaced almost as often as the need to cook. For a time, my attitude was not one of gratitude, but somehow that changed. I began to pray for each member of the family as I folded or hung his or her undies or shirts. I prayed for the people who would use or might use the towels as those rectangular pieces of terrycloth were folded one more time.

I am not certain exactly what effect my prayers had upon the persons for whom I prayed, but I know that over time, those prayers made me more grateful for family, company and home. I know that those times of prayer made me more mindful of people in my life and formed my heart to be more loving. In time, I learned that it was not the pasta or towels that were the crucial vehicles, but it was praying with the daily routines and chores of my life that mattered. They were steps along the continued journey of praying with my life and opening to a deeper relationship with God.

Invitations for prayer this month:

1) Consider activities in your life where conversation or computation is not necessary. It may be in your home, or at a copy machine, or on your morning walk. Give thanks to God for the loved ones and guests in your life. Ask that your heart be formed into a more loving and patient sanctuary for each of them.

During these prayer times, you might try addressing God with a name different than you normally use for the Holy One.

2) Search a current newspaper or news magazine and find two articles about issues that are troubling to you. Choose one article about a local issue and one about a global issue.

Cut out the two articles and secure them in an area where you will see them often or near where you can carve out time for prayer.

Each day for the next month, when praying with this news, pray only these two questions:

God of love, what would you have me learn?

Merciful God, how can I offer your compassion?

You might close each time of prayer with singing “Spirit of the Living God” by Daniel Iverson.

Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me.

Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me.

Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me.

Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me.

Spirit Of The Living God, written by Daniel Iverson © 1935, Renewed 1963 BIRDWING MUSIC (admin. by EMI CHRISTIAN MUSIC PUBLISHING c/o: MUSIC SERVICES). All Rights Reserved. Used By Permission.

– Cynthia Langston Kirk