

Glory to God in the Church Through: Unceasing Prayer

Text Jeremiah 33:3

“Fervent, faith-filled prayer is a prerequisite to God’s manifest presence in a church.” James MacDonald The Vertical Church

What is a vertical church? One in which our focus and priority is God first doing what He desires vs. horizontal church doing whatever it takes to makes things appealing to the congregants

Look at that statement again ... “Fervent – Faith-filled prayer is a prerequisite to God’s Manifest Presence in a church.”

The manifest glory of God is when Almighty God shows up in so tangible a way that he becomes visible on the faces of the people as they worship as they give joyfully, in their prayers and in breaking of his Word

Today our focus is on prayer

Personal – private prayer – your daily prayer time

Corporate - prayer gathering together to pray

Some of you are saying I’m not good at this – prayer just isn’t my thing

Isn’t it? There are all kinds of prayers ...

- the sinners prayer of confession you did that
- you pray for God’s protection over your children and family – you do that
- you pray when frightened ...”Oh God” has escaped your mouth often

We’re talking about increasing the power – consistency and persistence of those prayers – by connecting to God’s spirit in a New and Living Way

So, friends, we can now—without hesitation—walk right up to God, into “the Holy Place.” Jesus has cleared the way by the blood of his sacrifice, acting as our priest before God. The “curtain” into God’s presence is his body. **Hebrew 10: 19-22** (NKJ)

We enter into the God’s Holy presence, confidently by faith using prayer

This is Fervent, faith-filled prayer

Jeremiah 33:3 “Call to me and I will answer you and show you great and mighty things that you do not know.” (NKJ)

Think about those words recorded for us in Jeremiah ...

This is God speaking: “Call to Me and I will answer you ... and show you things that will blow your mind. (My own paraphrase)

These past three weeks we have listened to inspired preaching dealing with a church looks like that is Vertical

Unashamed Adoration- Worshiping God freely from the heart soul and mind

Unapologetic Preaching – Hearing Spirit filled – anointed preaching from God’s Word

Unafraid Witness - empowered with boldness – authority, Holy Spirit influenced and directed

Today **Unceasing Prayer**

The first three complement each other but none are possible without prayer - let me be clear not just the prayers of pastors and leaders but the entire church body!

“You can do more than pray after you’ve prayed, but you cannot do more than pray until you have prayed.” John Bunyan

Prayer is the vehicle that brings an outpouring of God’s presence and blessing on your life and this place

Jim Brennan could not be here today to share Men’s Ministries or to give the treasurers report in the Business meeting. He has been ill to weak physically to get here for a couple of weeks.

Most of you know that he had to be rushed to the hospital last week by ambulance – lost half of his blood from internal hemorrhaging. Ulcer on esophagus corrected but another discovery brought news of a mass on the lung that has moved into lymph node – there will be a biopsy follow up this Wednesday. The ulcer seems unrelated to the mass discovered – this may have been the Lord getting Jim in to identify this serious threat.

What can we do? We will do what God told us to in Jeremiah 33:3 “Call unto me (lift your voice up to God and I will answer you ...

Can you see it? God is asking us – *imploring* us to pray –can you get the boldness of this invitation? *And ... I will answer you* – and show you ... not something you can do on your own ... but something so great you haven’t even imagined it!

This is the kind of prayer that God is calling you to calling us to ... confident, persistent, faith-filled prayer

It’s begun here at Patchogue – some are already consistently praying for Annette Neff and the challenge she and family are facing

Now the Men’s Ministry and Prayer team have committed to dedicate a least one hour in Prayer for Jim, some have committed to fasting.

So God is turning an awful situation into an opportunity for Him to demonstrate His love and power

“Prayer is the process by which God makes us spiritually fit to receive what he is already willing to do.” James Mac

Proverbs 29:18 “Where there is no vision, the people perish ...”

What is your vision – what is your hope your wish for this church? That may be a question you have never considered – but now it’s time to.

A Long Island church west of us has incorporated concert affects, including strobe lights and smoke and fire on the stage for worship band. Trying horizontal solutions to attract a younger generation of Christians

Staying current with our times and changing culture is sensible – but what difference will it make if God doesn’t show up?

A.W. Tozer said *“Prayer is not the preparation for the work, it is the work.”*

☆ We can’t save anyone, accomplish anything of significance without God’s direct involvement.

People don’t need more of what has already failed them – People are searching for something that is real - only God’s manifest presence can bring that kind of change

When should we pray?

Individually - setting a time a side each day to seek God’s face – Pray throughout the day reminding of yourself of God’s presence *“Practice the Presence of God”* Bro Lawrence

Corporately – Sunday mornings

- Ushers meet and pray for the morning service at 9:15
- Group prayer at 9:30 am for the morning service
- Prayer team at 9:45
- Women’s prayer 7:00pm Tuesdays

How should we Pray?

I encourage you not to be afraid to open your mouth and let your praises ring out to God – don’t pray so others can hear but pray to the Lord.

After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly. **Acts 4:31 (NIV)**