

“One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray,  
and spent the night praying to God.”  
(Luke 6: 12 NIV)

This month we are in the heart of the season of Lent. It is this month of March that we will or will not see a change in our spiritual life as a result of our Lenten observances.

My challenge to all of you this year is to try to spend an hour a day in deep prayer. For some of you that is actually less time than you currently pray. For others it will be a struggle to find the time and discipline to do this.

Each of us must find what works for us. Prayer walking works for some people rather than praying in one place. Also, short bursts of prayer are acceptable. When I go to the Fitness Center I can't always work out for as long as I want to. My legs or my back begin to bother me sometimes. So, I divide my work-out into five-minute sessions with breaks in between.

Lectio Divina is another prayer discipline that helps for some people. “Lectio Divina” are Latin words that mean “Divine Reading.” It is a practice of reading and praying over scripture. There are books and websites to help you learn how to do this. I have also printed out a short handout that is available on the table at the church.

Prayer partners and prayer groups are also helpful for some people. Some people pray over the phone with friends and family. The possibilities for increased prayer time in your life are numerous. The key is to pray and pray more. The benefits to our spiritual lives from increased prayer time are enormous. The things that many of us say we want in our lives – peace, comfort, and joy – are all the result of spending more time in prayer.

As the old hymn reminds us there is relief from the cares of this world in times of prayer:

Sweet hour of prayer! sweet hour of prayer!  
That calls me from a world of care,  
And bids me at my Father's throne  
Make all my wants and wishes known.  
In seasons of distress and grief,  
My soul has often found relief,  
And oft escaped the tempter's snare,  
By thy return, sweet hour of prayer!

Our goal during Lent is always a richer and more fuller experience of Easter. I pray that each of you will strive this month to have an increased time of prayer in your life so that Easter will be a more glorious and life changing event for you than ever before.

Have a great month and a productive Season of Lent,

Pastor Tim

