

This week, in my daily meditation time, I read Mark 12:30 (ESV). Jesus says, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.” Heart. Soul. Mind. Strength. They are four components of every person, including us! And, the Holy Spirit reminded me how important it is for us to care well for our self: our heart, our soul, our mind, and our strength.

Today, as we continue “CrossFit: The Path to Spiritual Growth”, let’s look at the second inward discipline to get us into “spiritual shape”, The Discipline of Prayer. Richard Foster, in his book, The Celebration of Discipline, says, “Prayer catapults us onto the frontier of the spiritual life. Of all the Spiritual Disciplines, prayer is the most central because it ushers us into perpetual communion with the Father.”

Why pray? First, Prayer is our breath! Richard Foster says, “For all who have braved the depths of the interior life, to breathe was to pray.” Philippians 4:6 (CEV) says, “Pray about everything.” 1 Thessalonians 5:17 (ESV) says, “Pray without ceasing.” In the Lord’s Prayer, Jesus says “when” you pray, not “if”. Thomas Kelly says, “Prayer takes no time, but it occupies all our time.” As we live and breathe, we pray!

Second, Prayer is our business! Mark 1:35 (ESV) says, “Rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he (Jesus) departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed.” Jesus prayed, ear-

ly and often! And, Martin Luther once said, “I have so much business I cannot get on without spending three hours daily in prayer.” As His disciples, prayer should be our daily first thoughts, not afterthoughts.

Finally, Prayer is our battle! Luke 18:1 (NIV) says, “We should always pray and not give up.” Romans 12:12 (ESV) says, “Be constant in prayer.” Ephesians 6:11 (ESV) says, “Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.” Leonard Ravenhill once said, “Prayer is not a preparation for the battle; it is the battle!” We pray with God’s purpose, passion, and power!

In response... This week, begin to pray! Richard Foster says, “Nothing draws us closer to the heart of God than the adventure of prayer.” William Carey said, “Your prayer-secret, fervent, believing prayer-lies at the root of all personal godliness.” Prayer is an incredible discipline that requires us to learn and listen. Along the way, it’s easy to get off track, get intimidated, or give up! Every single time, just get going!

Let’s pray. Lord God, Frank Laubach said, “I want to learn how to live so that to see someone is to pray for them.” Lord God, help us by Your Holy Spirit to pray in such a way! Lord God, in 2 Timothy 1:7 (ESV), Paul says, “Give us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.” This week, by Your grace, help us begin to pray every day. And, give us a belief, a burden, and a boldness to pray!