

Burlap Believer-Reliable Pray-er!

Daniel 6:6-19

March 4, 2018

3rd Sunday of Lent

Reliability is huge for me in my life.

I want to get my information or news from a reliable source.

I purchased our recent vehicle based on its long history of reliability.

I give my money to businesses or restaurants that are reliable in their service and product quality.

I choose my friends based on how reliable they are in their word, lives and friendship.

There are only certain people I will ask to pray for me because I know that they will, not just once, but till the issue is resolved.

Today, as Burlap Believers, we are going to take a look at how huge reliability is with God.

More specifically, how important our being reliable pray-ers.

I want to ask you to think about that person or persons in your life that are reliable pray-ers. Who do you go to when you need someone to pray you up regarding something you are going through in your life? Who is that person or persons you can rely on to pray you up?

It was so God cool, or maybe I should say so God reliable, that as I was working on this message, one of the people I call on to pray for me, one of my reliable pray-ers, texted me to listen to a song on youtube.

Who is your reliable pray-er(s)? I would challenge you to thank them this week for being a reliable pray-er in your life.

Now the big question! Would you be mentioned as someone's reliable pray-er?

As Burlap Believers, God calls on us to be reliable pray-ers!

One of the most reliable pray-ers in the scriptures, next to Jesus, was a guy by the name of Daniel. Now I would imagine that as soon as I mentioned his name many of you went to the lions' den or fiery furnace moments in his life. I want to suggest to you that you are really missing who Daniel was if you only focus on those amazing miracles in his life.

Daniel was a right hand official to King Darius. He was the envy of the other vice-regents and governors. They plotted to remove him from his high government position. There were no skeletons in his closet so the only way to get to him was through his religion.

They asked the King to decree no one was to pray to anyone for 30 days except to the King.

In our bible reading we discovered that Daniel was a reliable pray-er.

When Daniel learned that King Darius had issued this decree banning prayer to God...

"...he continued to pray just as he had always done." vs.10

The King was called on the carpet to issue the decree against Daniel. He did.

Did you hear what the king said about Daniel's reliability of prayer and faith?

"Your God, to whom you are so loyal (reliable), is going to get you out of this." vs. 16

Here is someone outside of the faith who had recognized the reliable faith and prayer life of Daniel. Anyone outside the faith recognize your reliable faith and prayer life?

It was a long and agonizing night for King Darius. He could not sleep or eat. He was so distraught over what he had done to his reliable servant, Daniel.

As soon as the sun peeked over the horizon, the King ran to the lions' den and called out anxiously to Daniel, "**Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve so loyally, saved you from the lions?**" vs. 19

From the lions' den scene we see a reliability of obedience in Daniel. We witnessed the reliability of his prayer life. What was there about Daniel's reliable prayer life that we can pick up on for our own prayer life?

We go to Daniel chapter 9 and discover highlights of this reliable pray-er.

In sackcloth and ashes, a burlap believer, he fasted and prayed. vs. 3

He meditated on the scriptures...God's Word. vs. 2.

He didn't blame others but included himself in the confession of the sins of the people. There was the me in the we of his prayer of confession. Vss. 5-16.

There was a complete surrender to God's will.

There was an openness to what God was saying and to His will for his life.

He realized he couldn't allow his past disobedience to keep him from coming to God in prayer. He knew of God's love that desired him to come to him in reliable prayer. vss. 4-6.

His was a pray-er of passion and compassion. He was pouring his heart out to God, not a simple rote memorized prayer. His heart was being poured out in deep feelings for God and his people.

He realized that the compassion of God was their only hope in the future. vs. 18.

He prayed for mercy, not for help, because he knew that his people deserved God's wrath and punishment. God helped because He wanted to display His mercy. The reaction was one of praise and reliable faith.

Reliable obedience to God is evident in reliable pray-ers. Daniel demonstrated this to us.

Obedience to God in the pressures and stressors of day-to-day living comes through the reliable prayers of reliable pray-ers. Reliable pray-ers trust in God's word and ways. They are willing to risk their own lives to remain faithful in their daily prayer life. When given the choice between compliance to culture or prayerful loyalty to God...they go counter-culture and remain reliable pray-ers.

Our prayer life is usually interrupted not by some government decree or law.

Our prayer life is most often interrupted by the pressures and demands we put on ourselves in our daily schedules.

We feel we are just too busy to pray. The reality is we are too busy not to pray.

We feel too upset to pray. The reality is that we are too upset not to pray.

We may be too confused to pray. The reality is that we are too confused not to pray.

Reliable pray-ers don't offer excuses of why they can't pray. They pray as they always have prayed throughout the day.

Are you a reliable pray-er?

Another lesson we learn about reliable pray-ers comes from Moses. The scene is where he has led the people to the Red Sea. The enemy is fast approaching. The people are beginning to freak out in their faith. Moses had prayed to God for deliverance. God told him to get up and get going...He would save the people. (Exodus 14:13-22)

The lesson of prayer we learn here is that a reliable pray-er doesn't just sit around and wait. Get up and do what God is calling you to do. Put legs to your prayers. Put your prayers into action. Prayer is vital as it leads us to move on God's will. Prayer aligns us back into the will of God and His word.

Another lesson of prayer that a reliable pray-er gleans from Hezekiah is that prayer is to be the first responder in crisis and not a last ditch effort. The enemy was coming to defeat him. He called out to God in prayer as a final hope. (II Kings 19:1-19)

Pray up! Cover your day in prayer before you enter the day. Don't wait till things seem hopeless before you pray. Reliable pray-ers go into the day, or the long agonizing nights, prayed up. Our problems, our lions' den, our fiery furnaces, are God opportunities through our prayer.

Are you a reliable pray-er?

The final reliable pray-er we can learn from is the Apostle Paul. He learned to pray to God for God's people. He was one people could rely on to pray for them and he could rely on his friends to pray for him.

I have shared these daily points of prayer that I pray each day for my family and myself that I gleaned from Paul's prayer for his brothers and sisters in Christ in the Colossian community of faith. (Colossians 1:9-12)

I have written them down and have them in my daily bible reading journal. After a few months of praying this prayer I have put it to memory.

I want to challenge you to be a reliable pray-er of this prayer for you and your family and friends.

1. They would seek and understand God's will for their lives.
2. They would desire God's spiritual wisdom over the world's material wisdom.
3. The choices they make in life would please and honor God.
4. They would bear good spiritual fruit. (Read Galatians 5:22,23)
5. They would grow in the knowledge of God.
6. They would rely on God's strength.
7. They would have endurance and patience.
8. They would stay full of Christ's joy.
9. They would give thanks always.

All of us believers have these basic needs in our daily journey with Jesus.

Be a reliable pray-er of this prayer for yourself and for those who look to you as their reliable pray-er.

We serve a reliable source of love...Jesus Christ.

We serve a reliable God who hears and listens and answers our prayers according to His will.

How huge is reliability in your life?

How reliable will you be each day in your prayer life?

Who will rely on you to be their reliable pray-er?

May it be said of us as it was of Daniel:

"You continued to pray just as you have always done!"

