

GRAND MARAIS PRAYER INITIATIVE

July 2021 Newsletter / Issue 4

MISSION

Cultivate an urgency for unified prayer through its committed/disciplined practice.

VISION

Holy Spirit-led prayer movement makes disciples & transforms the community by radiating Christ-like character.

PRAYER MAP FOR JULY 2021

The central concept for this month's prayer map is "Maintaining a Constant State of Readiness". The Bible provides many examples of the need for being prepared to face personal trials and, ultimately, judgment upon Jesus' return. Psalm 32:6 states the following:

"Therefore let everyone who is godly offer prayer to [God] at a time when [He] may be found; surely in the rush of great waters, they shall not reach him." (ESV)

This verse implies there is an unknown point in time when it will be too late for a person to receive the assurance of salvation that would provide him/her peace in the face of overwhelming calamity. In anticipation of such calamity, the reader is advised to pray for God's mercy in a timely manner.

In Matthew 24:44, Jesus warns His disciples about the need to be prepared for His return by stating:

"Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect." (ESV)

At His second coming, Jesus states He will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats and that only the people represented by the sheep will inherit the kingdom prepared for them; the people represented by the goats will be sent away into eternal punishment (see Matthew 25:31-46).

The prayer map for July 2021 (provided as an attachment to this newsletter) includes actions participants can pray over to be found a faithful and wise servant of Jesus. Questions participants might ask themselves prior to entering into their focused prayer time include the following:

- Would I take steps to protect someone in peril at a serious risk to my own safety?
- How would I respond to being treated unfairly? To incurring extreme misfortune? To being rejected by my friends?
- Am I presenting my body as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God? (Which the Apostle Paul states is our "spiritual worship"; see Romans 12:1-2).

Without exercising discernment borne of the Holy Spirit many of us might not respond in a way we would want our Lord and Savior to observe. How can we increase our likelihood of responding as a faithful and wise servant? Reading and meditating on the Scriptures is a great start. Praying that God would provide us wisdom as we anticipate and prepare for encountering difficult moral dilemmas is another solid step. As the Apostle Paul states in Romans 5:14:

"...solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil."

We pray the July 2021 prayer map will help each participant maintain a constant state of readiness for Jesus' return!

JUNE 13TH PRAYER INITIATIVE MEETING

Prayer Initiative participants met on June 13th to discuss insights on Christian unity, the central concept around which participants' prayer-time commitments were to be focused. Two sections of Scripture – John chapters 6 and 17 - were used to show that followers of Jesus must “become perfectly one” before the world can do the “works of God” (see the June 2021 newsletter to see how this conclusion is logically derived). Those attending the meeting discussed the unfathomable reality Jesus identifies in John 17:21; that just as God the Father and Jesus are one in each other, we as believers are in them. The ESV Study Bible states the following about this relationship:

“Jesus shows the kind of profound unity that should be the norm among genuine believers. As the following verses indicate (through John 17:26), this is to be a reflection of the unity that has existed eternally between the Father and the Son (John 17:11), namely, the unity of a common mind and purpose, an unqualified mutual love, and a sustained comprehensive togetherness in mission, as revealed in the Father-Son relationship characterized by Jesus' own ministry. Such unity is the result of Jesus' active work of “keeping” (John 17:12,15) and “guarding” (John 17:12); it results in believers being filled with joy (John 17:13; see also John 3:29; John 15:11; John 16:24; and 1 John 1:4); it is rooted in the truth of God's word (John 17:14, 17, 20); it involves “sanctification,” that is, in the sense of consecration to serve (John 17:17, 19); it becomes a witness to the world so that “the world may believe” (John 17:21); it is for the revelation of God's glory (John 17:24); and it results in the experience of the indwelling love of God and the presence of Christ (John 17:26). The kind of unity that is central to Jesus' high priestly prayer is not organizational but is an all-encompassing relational reality that binds believers together with each other and with their Lord—a unity that can be achieved only through the regenerating and sanctifying work of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Although individual Christians, and the church in general, tend to fall short of the fullness of unity that the Lord intends, whenever such unity is even partially realized (never at the expense of truth or holiness; John 17:17) the result will always be deep joy (John 17:13), a persuasive witness to the world (John 17:21, 23), and a display of God's glory (John 17:22).” (*ESV Study Bible, English Standard Version*, Crossway 2008, Wheaton, Illinois page 2058-9)

A brief discussion between those present at the meeting centered around how to increase participation in the Initiative. The unanimous consensus was that increased participation should be pursued.

WANT TO KNOW MORE? WANT TO ADD SOMETHING TO THIS NEWSLETTER? HAVE OTHER SUGGESTIONS?

Prayer-ers are encouraged to contribute input that would provide for the outgrowth of Spirit-led prayer in the community. Email the editor a note at online@grandmaraisfree.church if you have something that should be shared to encourage others' growth in prayer!

**Grand Marais Prayer Initiative:
Maintaining a Constant State of Readiness
July 2021 Prayer Map**

