

# House of Prayer

January 18, 2014—Pastor Steve Berger

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## Introduction

- Grace Chapel will begin a new Tuesday night prayer meeting beginning February 17, 6:30 PM in the sanctuary.
- We will encourage fervent, effective, productive, passionate, and faith-filled praying

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## Jesus' Zeal for Prayer

- John 2:13-17
  - Jesus begins His ministry with a bang and a startling reaction to the people and leaders in the Temple
  - A sacred spirit was ruining a sacred place. Profiteering replaced praying.
  - Jesus' actions demonstrated how completely offensive it was, and is, to Him when empty religious activity supersedes primary spiritual practice. He hates "Sacrifice" without substance, activity without anointing, and practice without priority.
- Psalm 69:9
  - Zeal for His Father's House still eats Jesus up—what happens and what doesn't happen when we gather together is of utmost importance to Him. It's evidenced by His outburst.
- Mark 11:15-17
  - This is three years later and we see the same response for the same reason—a secular spirit ruining a sacred place. They didn't learn the lesson from three years earlier.
  - Isaiah 56:7 and Jeremiah 7:11
    - Jesus is saying, "You're missing the point and intent of what should be happening in this place because your empty religious activity has overtaken the primary spiritual purpose of this house."
    - As necessary and needed as praising and preaching are, Jesus said that God's House is to be called a House of Prayer—where prayer is practiced and a priority.
  - Revelation 5:8
    - **The very atmosphere and aroma in our church services is to be that of prayer.**

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## Early Church's Zeal for Prayer

- The church was born in the midst of obedient, expectant prayer.
- Walk through the book of Acts
  - Acts 1:14—continual prayer
  - Acts 2:42—continued in prayer
  - Acts 3:1—went to Temple at hour of prayer
  - Acts 4:31—prayed when threatened
  - Acts 6:4,6—given to continual prayer/deacons
  - Acts 8:15—prayed for Holy Spirit to fall
  - Acts 9:11—Saul praying after conversion

- Acts 9:40—Peter prays raises Dorcas
- Acts 10:2—Roman Cornelius prayed always
- Acts 10:9—Peter went to pray (11:5)
- Acts 12:5—constant prayer for Peter in prison
- Acts 13:3—prayed and sent disciples
- Acts 14:23—prayed and sent disciples
- Acts 16:13—place of customary prayer
- Acts 16:16—Paul prayed when harassed
- Acts 16:25—Paul prayed in prison
- Acts 20:36—Paul prayed when departing
- Acts 21:5—Paul prayed when departing
- Acts 28:8—Paul prayed for sick
- **The early church was a praying church—for everything, for everyone, and everywhere!**

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### **Paul's Zeal for Prayer**

- 1 Timothy 2:1,8
- 1 Thessalonians 5:17
- 1 Thessalonians 5:25

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### **God's Invitation**

- Jeremiah 33:3
- Matthew 7:7-11
- Hebrews 4:15-16

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### **Grace Chapel's Response**

#### **Our Increased Vision**

- Pre-service—join someone to pray for yourselves and the service.
- During service—become equipped to be on prayer team and come for prayer.
- Post service—when a need arises based on the message and what God is showing you, grab someone and pray.
- Tuesdays—come and pray for all men, everywhere, and always

#### **Our Reachable Goal**

- We want to lift the lid and raise the bar for prayer at Grace Chapel. We want to equip and inspire you to pray as never before.

#### **Our Heartfelt Longing**

- Luke 11:1: "Lord teach us to pray."

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## Discussion Questions

1. What do Jesus' words and actions in John 2:13-17 tell you about His character and priorities? What do they tell you about His mission?
2. Profiteering had replaced prayer as a spiritual practice. How can you make sure your life is focused on the priority of prayer?
3. When you read Mark 11:17 and Isaiah 56:6-7, why do you think Jesus was so upset at the marketplace atmosphere in the "Court of the Gentiles"?
4. How would you describe a House of Prayer? How was the Temple different? How are many churches today different? Why?
5. Read Revelation 5:8. How does knowing that your prayers are stored in a valuable, golden vessel and are a sweet aroma to God change your prayer life? How can this graphic picture help you confidently overcome the enemy's desire to have you think your prayers are lost or not heard?
6. What are some of the things that break God's heart? How can regular and spirit-filled praying help you to better recognize those things and have them break your heart? How can prayer help you reach others who are broken-hearted?
7. In what ways was the early church a praying church? How can this apply to your church today?
8. Read 1 Timothy 2:1, 8. Look at Paul's words. How do these strong words challenge you? What can you do to make those words part of your prayer life?
9. Describe what it means to come boldly before God. How could you change your prayers and praying so that you are always coming boldly to Him?
10. How can you involve yourself in Grace Chapel's heartfelt longing and reachable goal for prayer?