

DO YOU PRAY IN FRONT OF OTHERS?

JEHOSHAPHAT

2 CHRONICLES 20:5-6

Day 19

When the king was afraid of the approaching armies, he called the people together & prayed out loud. I was asked in a 7th grade Sunday school class to open the class in prayer once. I refused. I told the teacher never to do that to me again. It took me an entire school year to muster up the courage to pray in front of people. I was too young to analyze the benefits of praying out loud; all I could focus on was not humiliating myself in front of my peers.

Since those days I have been enriched beyond words from the oral prayers of people. I heard a prisoner ask the Lord to forgive him for killing his father in a drunken rage; he talked about his selfishness and godless attitudes, and he told God he was willing to live His way. It is hard to cry with your eyes closed, but I did. I heard my pastor crying out to God to protect his grandson; the love & anguish I heard in that prayer gripped my heart (it still does). When I hear my wife thank the Lord for me, and commit her love to me no matter what, I can hardly contain the emotions within myself. I remember the night I was attending a men's conference; there were about 50 men present. During a share time, I sat in the middle of the group & shared a major struggle I was going through at that time. Before I was finished, all those men got up out of their chairs & stood all around me with their hands touching me. They began to pray out loud for me. The memory of that moment still melts my heart to tears.

Hearing people hurt & cry before the Lord encourages me to do the same thing. It reminds me that God is eagerly waiting for my tears; no matter what mess my heart is in, He has promised to mend it. I can still see the arms of Jesus wrapped around those praying people, I can hardly wait for those arms to wrap around me.

Well, what do you know. His arms are already around me. Pray out loud with others so that they will see the arms of Jesus wrapped around you.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. Describe some meaningful times when you have prayed out loud & really emptied your heart before the Lord (with people listening).
2. What are the benefits to the other people when they hear you being honest & vulnerable before the Lord?

A PRAYER OF COMMITMENT

What do you need to say to God as you face the topic being discussed in this devotional? Write out your prayer word for word just as if you were praying. Use separate lined paper to record your prayer. Make sure you actually pray this prayer to the Lord. Be honest & be personal. After all, you mean business with God here. You want this area of your life either fixed, strengthened, added, or removed.