

## Pastor's Corner

*Do You Know What STOP Means?*

*April 16, 2008*

Dear Friend,

Ever feel like you pray too much? Or not enough? I guess this *Pastor's Corner* is for those of you that are in the last category, since I can identify with you. As I look back over my life and see the changes that have happened since I made it a habit to pray for a set portion of time every single day, I am convinced that prayer works, not just because I've heard others say it does, but because I've seen it work in my own life.

And then I read quotes from the inspired writers that say stuff like, "*Pray without ceasing,*" "*The Lord is near to all who call on Him,*" and "*The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.*" And that's not all; here are some more: "*If there were more praying among us...we would be far in advance of where we are today in spiritual intelligence.*" "*By your fervent prayers of faith you can move the arm that moves the world.*" "*Prayer is heaven's ordained means of success in the conflict with sin and the development of Christian character. The divine influences that come in answer to the prayer of faith will accomplish in the soul of the suppliant all for which he pleads.*" Makes you want to spend even more time in prayer each day, does it not?

I remember when I was just a young boy, and I was riding with my Uncle Jerry in his truck. Now, in my family, everybody—and I mean *everybody*—looked up to and admired Uncle Jerry. My mother would tell stories of how strong he was, and wise, and what a great businessman; and not only that, he was a great father and had a great family. And the list would go on and on. But the reason I thought Jerry was the greatest was his pickup. He always had a full-size pickup truck with a back seat and a huge camper on the back. So in the rare times we saw him, I would always ask to ride with him; and it was like a giant moving playhouse. There was this cool little sliding window that opened from the cab to the back camper; and while we were driving, I would join his kids and we would climb through that window and go to the back and make faces at the other cars from the camper windows. I've always wanted a big truck with a



camper!

But one day stands out in my mind, and I remember it distinctly. I was sitting right beside Uncle Jerry as he was driving, and my little legs were all crammed up against the shifters for gears, four-wheel drive, and everything else big trucks have. There were a lot of people in the cab, and we were waiting at a stop sign. Uncle Jerry turned to me and said, "Mark, you know what that means?" And he nodded toward that red sign that says STOP. I proudly answered "Stop," knowing Uncle Jerry would undoubtedly see what years of homeschooling had done for me. But he answered, "No, it says more than that. Stop To Offer Prayer. Every time you see a stop sign, it's to remind you to S-T-O-P; Stop To Offer Prayer." And then, to make his point clear to his nephew, he bowed his head and prayed (again) for our trip.



That made such an impression on me that I never forgot it, and over the years I have tried to make it a habit to prayer before I drive. I know that God doesn't leave me when I drive unless I pray, but it's a reminder to pray; and I sure need all the reminders I can get to remind me to pray more!

Yesterday I was in a hurry to run down to the post office and get some stamps for mailing some brochures, so I hurried out of the house with my mouth full of food. I hopped in my car and bowed my head and thought a prayer in my head, since my mouth was full. I started to drive away, and then I thought, "That was lame. Too busy to empty your mouth and pray respectfully? The pope gets the biggest welcome in all of history at the White House on Wednesday, and you can't even talk to the God of the Universe right?" So I stopped the car, chewed my food, and then bowed my head and prayed. Immediately, as soon as the prayer was over, I was impressed that I was leaving something behind. I looked around; and sure enough, my wallet was still in the cabin. I went back and grabbed it; and as I was leaving, I realized that by taking an extra ten seconds to chew my food and pray, God impressed me to get my wallet, which saved me about 30 minutes in driving back to get my money.

Why should the sons and daughters of God be reluctant to pray, when prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock heaven's storehouse, where are treasured the boundless resources of Omnipotence?

—*Steps to Christ, page 94*

Make time to S-T-O-P today!

Mark