

**10 March 2013 - Fourth Sunday in Lent.**

**Readings:** Joshua 5:9–12; 2 Cor. 5:16–21; Luke 15:1–3, 11b–32.



**INTRO:** We continue in our series *Sacred ground - prayer*. We've looked at Centred/Closet prayer, Core prayer and Cell prayer. Today we look at Celebration or House of prayer. **Luke 19:46**, “‘It is written,’ he said to them, ‘My house will be a **house of prayer**’.”



The authors of BIRTHED IN PRAYER understand that the mother is formed and transformed by these nine months almost as much as the baby! BIRTHED IN PRAYER is a practical guide to the divine mystery in one of life's most common miracles.

### **I. A house BORN of prayer.**

**Acts 1:12-14**, “Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day’s walk from the city. When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. **They all joined together constantly in prayer**, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers. In those days Peter stood up among the believers (a group numbering about a hundred and twenty).”

“What were they praying for?”



The last words from Jesus would have been ringing in their ears.

**Acts 1:8**, “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes

**on you**; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”



## II. A house **GROWING** in prayer. From centre 2 core 2 cell...

**Acts 2:15**, “These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It’s only nine in the morning!”

**Acts 2:42, 47**, “**They devoted themselves** to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and **to prayer... praising God** and enjoying the favour of all the people. **And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.**”



One of the dominant notes in growing prayer is thanksgiving!

**Psalm 100:4**, “I will enter His gates **with thanksgiving in my heart**, I will enter His courts **with praise**, I will say this is the day the Lord has made, **I will rejoice** for He has made me glad.”

**2 Corinthians 4:15**, “All this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause **thanksgiving to overflow** to the glory of God.”

**Acts 4:29-31**, “Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus.” **After they prayed**, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.”



## III. A house **DEVOTED** to **PRACTICE**.

**Colossians 4:2**, “**Devote yourselves to prayer**, being watchful and thankful.”

**A. BEFORE we arrive** (In our Centre/Closet, Core, Cell...).

Illus. Latvian church: People used to pray before doing anything else.



**B. WHILE we are together.**

**1 Timothy 2:1-4**, “I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people— for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Saviour, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.”

**1 Corinthians 14:26**, “What then shall we say, brothers and sisters? When you come together, **each of you has** a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. Everything must be done so that the church may be built up.”

1. Something to be thankful for...
2. Something to pray for yourself...
3. Someone to pray for someone else...

**CONCLUSION: Isaiah 56:6-7**, “And foreigners... these I will bring to my holy mountain and give them **joy in my house of prayer**. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house will be called **a house of prayer for all nations**.”