

Stop Ministering in Our “Best We Can Do” Strength

In a recent interview with Outreach magazine, Washington D.C. pastor Mark Batterson hit the nail on the head in describing the difference between a praying church and one that does not really pray.

“Prayer is the difference between the best you can do and the best God can do. So if we’re not praying, then the best we can do is the best we can do, and that’s not good enough. When we get on our knees, the Holy Spirit does the heavy lifting. Prayer creates the culture and gives people a heart for evangelism, because when you get into God’s presence, you start to get His heartbeat. “

My ministry for the past 20 years has been to try to get pastors and church leaders to understand that prayer will make a difference in their ministries. They need to fight for it and convince reluctant and belligerent leaders who do not value it or recognize its importance (or remove them from leadership if possible if they won’t buy in).

So many churches—in fact, probably most churches in the Western world—are simply operating in their “best we can do strength.” They are ministering out of obedience to the Word, but not out of dependence on the direction and presence of the Holy Spirit and His power. They see some results, so they think they are fine.

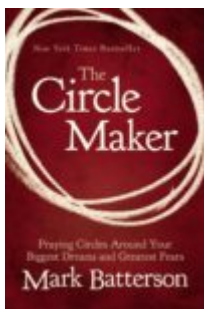
But imagine what each church could do if they actually moved beyond their own strength, into the realm of relying on God’s strength for ministry. I still remember when Tommy Barnett spoke at a Prayer Quake prayer leaders’ convention a decade ago. He talked about his church’s struggle to get people involved in corporate prayer, praying for direction and power of the Spirit for their church. But that emphasis had a

profound effect on the ministry of First Assembly of God. He said in the four years that they had been significantly praying, his church saw more people come to faith in Jesus Christ through their ministry than in his previous 42 years of ministry combined!

Pastor, prayer leader, church leader, as we enter 2013, I challenge you to consider prayer. Fight for it in your church! It will change the way you do church, as it invites the power and presence of God in your midst.

Jonathan Graf is the publisher of Prayer Connect magazine and the president of the Church Prayer Leaders Network.

I recommend three resources to you in your quest to grow prayer in your church:



The Circle Maker by Mark Batterson will inspire you of the power of prayer. It is available at prayershop.org



Be Jesus in Your Neighborhood and Shine His Light will inspire your people to pray for, care for and share Jesus with neighbors and friends