

Central Idea: What do you think is the central theme of chapter 7?

Developing Trust

1. a. Read Nehemiah 4:6-9. In what two ways did the Israelites respond to the threat of attack?

b. What does their response indicated about their understanding of the relationship between prayer and prudence?

2. Meditate on Philippians 4:6-7.

a. Describe a time when you experienced a great deal of anxiety.

b. When you are anxious, do you pray more or less than usual?

c. Is this the way it should be? Explain.

3. a. When we are trusting God and have a peace that comes from Him alone, our prayers are different from when our prayers flow out of anxiety. How are they different?

b. Which way do you pray most often?

c. Choose a difficult situation for which you are presently praying. Write a prayer for that situation from a mindset of trust.

4. a. Since God is in control and His purpose will inevitably prevail, why do we need to pray?

b. Why do we need to make every effort to act with wisdom?

5. Read Acts 4:23-31

a. What effect do you think this prayer had on the believers who were praying?

b. What specific requests did the believers make?

c. How does Matthew 28:19-20 help explain their confidence in prayer?

d. What specific applications to your own prayer life can you make from the example of this prayer?

6. Read the account of a violent storm, recorded in Acts 27:13-44

a. When God revealed that He would deliver Paul and all his shipmates, Paul trusted God and His promise of deliverance. Even so, Paul didn't passively expect God to do the work that He had equipped the sailors to do. Make a list of all the actions that were taken that helped fulfill God's promise that they would all reach land safely.

b. What relationship does this story show between God's sovereignty and our responsibility?

7. Read Psalm 127:1

a. Are you currently involved in building anything? (this need not be a physical building; it could be an organization, a relationship, etc.) If so, what is it?

b. How is the Lord involved in your building?

c. In what area(s) of your life are you like a watchman guarding a city?

d. How is the Lord involved in your watching?

e. How do you think you should feel and respond, knowing God's involvement in these situations?

8. a. Describe a time when you felt very dependent on God.

b. What did you do for yourself at the time?

c. Did any of your efforts make you less dependent on God? Why or why not?

Trust in Action

1. Read through the book of Proverbs in a modern translation, looking for lessons on prudence. Copy into your journal those verse that especially speak to you.

2. Memorize Philippians 4:6-7

3. Start a prayer notebook with your requests and God's answers. This can be done very simply, with just a few words for each request. From time to time you may want to write out whole prayers to the Lord. The process of writing prayers cause us to think more seriously about what we are saying to God.

4. Before you go to bed tonight, tell God that you entrust each of your current concerns to Him. Name them. Ask Him to give you wisdom in dealing with each one. Then read Psalm 127:1-2, and go to sleep.