

Greetings to all the beautiful Saints at Manatee Life,

**SCRIPTURE:**

Ephesians 3:14 (MSG) – Larger reading: Ephesians 3:14-21  
*“My response is to get down on my knees before the Father”*

**STORY:**

Neil Marten, a member of the British Parliament, was once giving a group of his constituents a guided tour of the Houses of Parliament. During the course of the visit, the group happened to meet Lord Hailsham, then lord chancellor, wearing all the regalia of his office. Hailsham recognized Marten among the group and cried, "Neil!" Not daring to question or disobey the "command," the entire band of visitors promptly fell to their knees!

**OBSERVATION:**

There are ample examples in scripture of kneeling before the Lord in prayer and supplications. There are numerous instructions through the church that when we bow in prayer we should kneel as well. A number of denominations include this practice as a regular part of their worship experience. When serving churches that had an altar rail I have regularly invited people forward, as I have done at Manatee, during the morning prayer to kneel with me as we go to God in prayer. Kneeling in prayer is a part and partial of the spiritual disciplines. My arthritic knees makes it a little more challenging now. I can get down, it's the getting up part that becomes rather challenging. I'm always thankful when I discover that the chancel rail is well anchored. I need all the help I can receive, but even in these challenging times – Covid and all – kneeling before the Lord is a good practice to honor.

Some time ago I was surprised by the comic strip, “CURTIS” by Ray Billingsley when it referred to the father being witnessed by his oldest son kneeling in the evening for prayer. I was surprised on two fronts – one that the father did that and by his own testimony in later strips, that he did it regularly, and two, that since it was a “regular” habit that one of his sons wouldn't have known that. Curtis, the oldest son, later observed that he didn't think adults had any difficulties in life that should cause them to kneel in prayer as if that is the only reason one would pray.

Thus, my question – why do we have a tendency to pray only when there is a problem and, depending on the magnitude of the problem, only kneel when it is a BIG problem... like Covid-19 or during a difficult election or facing surgery or dealing with cancer? Paul's general response to all situations was to kneel in prayer as indicated in the scripture I used from Ephesians. I am taken by the word, “response” – it was Paul's general, regular, normal response in all situations to kneel in prayer. Now I confess, as I already have, that arthritic knees do not always permit me to kneel, or at least that is the excuse I use. If we were to do a time management of our daily activities how much of it would we discover is dedicated to prayer or is most of our prayer time a “catch-as-

catch-can” kind of situation? Maybe if we would set aside a time to kneel for prayer we would be more discipline in our active prayer life.

**QUOTE:**

*“The measure of a man is not so much how tall he stands but how low he kneels.” – J. Otis Yoder*

**PRAYER:**

Guide us in the path of the spiritual disciplines, especially in those rich opportunities to speak with you as a child speaks with their parent. Guide us down this path and may our spiritual disciplines begin to reflect our relationship with you. In Christ’s precious name, Amen.

And the faith journey continues, Pastor Jim  
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***My prayer is that you made it through the storm without any damage or anxiety. May the peace of God continue to give you strength.***