

Mary Craig

From: Mary Craig
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Mary Craig Ministries, Inc.

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We talk about true Christian fellowship, getting together and having Jesus as the center of our conversation. We talk about spending time with God in prayer. We talk about getting away, coming apart from the busyness of our daily lives, going off alone to meet with God. Sometimes, you just have to plan it; and so we did.



Saturday, May 15th, a group of us from MCM met at Fern Forest Park in Coconut Creek, FL for a half day in prayer. We showed up with our water bottles, a few snacks, sun screen lotion, Bibles, note pads and pens, journals, maybe a favorite devotional book, a watch, song sheets, and whatever else we thought to bring, like maybe a family or personal budget or calendar.



After talking with the person in charge in the



Nature

Center, we headed out into the park along a boardwalk path. Dale Steinmetz, who loves botany, led the way, providing us with lots of information about what plants and trees we were seeing and inspiring us with a bit of Florida au natural. It was Florida Appreciation Day, for sure, but no “fad” or fading glory.

We would walk and then come to a resting place, get out song sheets, and worship. We repeated that pattern until we came to a place that looked like a good meeting place. Pastor Jim gave each of us something to follow on “How to Spend Extended Time in Prayer” based on *How to Spend a Day in Prayer* by Lorne Sanny of the Navigators.

Why do it? One reason is for extended fellowship with God because God has called us into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 1.9). This fellowship needs to be nurtured by taking the time to actually spend time with the Lord.

Another reason is to give opportunity to renew our perspective from God’s point of view. Maybe we are going through some difficulty and need God’s perspective to sharpen our vision of the unseen. Maybe we need to get all that is going on in our world into a proper priority. Such times strengthen us as we “fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For...what is unseen is eternal.” (2 Corinthians 4.18)



A third reason is just plain taking the time for intercession. We tell people we are praying for them and all, and hey, we actually pull that off!

Extended time in prayer and fellowship with the Lord also helps us as we evaluate our lives, when we are facing important decisions, when we need to take personal inventory, etc.

A fifth reason is for adequate preparation. Preparation is made when we get alone with God.



Okay. We were convinced. We were to divide our 35 minutes or so apart into three segments: waiting on the Lord through worship, confession, etc; intercession for others; and praying for ourselves. So as not to spend the entire time absorbed in our own problems, we were asked to make a worry list, listing whatever was bugging us, causing us concern, frustrating us, etc. Lift it to God, and listen for His response. Thus prepared, we each went our separate ways to meet with the Lord.



So, here we go. I myself had to change positions, sitting awhile, walking around, then sitting again. I read the Scriptures and then prayed and then took some notes for an MCM world missions policy statement our Board is working on right now. With that out of the way, I turned to intercession and to worship and to listening for the Holy Spirit. I sang some songs internally and waited. I had two main questions: “Who are You, Lord? Reveal more of Yourself to me.” and “What do You want me to do?”

The Holy Spirit directed me to Psalm 94 and to Psalm 89. God has been giving me a strategy and insight into the kings of the earth and the kingdoms of this world at war with the King of kings and Lord of lords and the Kingdom of God. He’s been directing me to “preach the gospel of the kingdom” and to “war the warfare” against the kings of the earth. I’ll begin teaching on this sometime this summer.

In Psalm 89 God confirms His covenant with David.

But My faithfulness and My mercy shall be with him: and in My Name shall his horn be exalted. I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers. He shall cry unto Me, Thou art my Father, my God, and the rock of my salvation. Also I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth. My mercy will I keep for him forevermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. Psalm 89.24-28



The time passed quickly and soon our little group of ten was gathering together again to share. No one had been expecting bells and whistles or some extraordinary experience, but our day turned out to be “a God thing.”

It turned out that one woman in the group had been married in this park. For her, this day was a time of healing and an opportunity to give glory to God for His faithfulness to her over many years. We hadn’t known when we planned this;

but God knew and she knew that this was “her day” from the first notice we sent out.

One man gained further insight into 1 Thessalonians 1.8-10 about turning to God from idols to serve the living and true God and to waiting for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.



Pastor Jim was given increased revelation and insight into the Gadarene demonic, how this man was drawn by God’s grace in spite of the demonic. “But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshiped Him, and cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with You, Jesus Son of the most high God? I adjure You by God, that You torment me not.” (Mark 5.6, 7)

Another woman found herself singing hymns. She thought of gardens and this resting place and the resting place that is Jesus, of quiet, and of our quiet confidence in Christ.



As people shared, we all began to realize that God had been and was doing something wonderful in our midst, quietly but deeply moving. A friend of Dale’s, Pastor Mike, from another local church, joined us for awhile and then we closed and those of us who could, headed over to Ana and Ani’s for a spectacular Puerto Rican dinner and more fellowship with a twist of fun, hanging a mirror and helping those tomato plants to grow.

Why don’t we do this again? We will, probably next fall, God willing. But don’t wait to spend extended time with the Lord until then; plan a half day or a day for yourself and maybe some other Christian friends. You might be surprised at the unexpected blessings it brings. We were!



Saturday June 5 we have a Barnabas Project Distribution in Belle Glade, Florida, at the Mt. Zion AME Church there. Live that way? Join us. Noon until everything is gone! E-mail me for directions.



Our Saturday Summer Socials begin June 26th at

6:00 p.m. This year we're having Tacos and fixings along with our famous version of Bingo with prizes for everyone. It's a lot of fun and the buzz at Craighouse is growing louder. I don't know; people just love this summertime event.

Check e-flyers for Bible teaching and other things going on at Craighouse@.

Love one another. Preserve the truth. Promote justice.

Mary Craig, DPM

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Pastors:
Rev. Jim Craig
Dr. Mary Craig

