Did You Ring the Bell?

We have a bell outside! (I've been called a "ding-a-ling" but that's a different story.) It's a loud, medium size brass bell that has a very important purpose - when there is an emergency, we ring the bell and it can be heard for hundreds of yards away on a normal day. We live in the forest and few neighbors wouldn't even hear our bell, so it's really just for us (my wife and I). If the bell rings, we drop everything instantly and come running. The bell is very seldom used for simple communication, but for serious situations. One or two "dings" can mean "Where are you?" but continued ringing means a serious situation, very serious.

One day I was filling the weed spray tank on my ATV, but a storm was brewing, quite abruptly. The wind began to howl, the sky darkened and BOOM! Lightening hit right on our property. The thunder was deafening and I almost jumped out of my skin. Sandy ran outside on our second level deck; I was under it by the outside water faucet and she was yelling for me, but I could not hear her over the screeching wind. She was in a panic thinking I might have been struck by the lightning bolt (not an unwarranted assumption).

I regained my wits and resumed filling the weed spray tank which takes a few minutes. Obviously, I wasn't going back out to spray in the storm, so I came in, ran upstairs only to find Sandy in a dither, "Where were you? I was shouting for you, thinking you might have been killed!" I asked, "Did you ring the bell?" After a puzzled look, she replied, "I forgot about it!"

Have you ever been there, afraid, panicking, terrified, not knowing if something terrible had happened, or was about to? Human yelling makes little or no difference and no one else is close enough (or powerful enough) to help. Life itself might be on the line, but no one hears!

Finally, someone asks, "Did you ring the bell?" You answer, "What bell?" "***The prayer bell!"*** **"No… I forgot about it!"**

If we do *not* live close to Jesus, if prayer is only for bad *emergencies,* then most likely we will forget to call on the only One who can help in times of trouble. However, if we live close to our Savior and we *have a little talk with Jesus* on a daily basis, then prayer comes as naturally as "good morning" to a spouse at the breakfast table.

Yes, I believe in *emergency prayer,* but no more so than daily prayer, throughout the day, many times a day. He is with us, He cares, and prayer changes things… ***"The effective prayer of a righteous man accomplishes much, (James 5:16).*** To be faithful, we simply *must* commune with God regularly, daily, as a friend who is always present.

And when really tough times come, no matter how sudden, no matter how scary, we will remember, "*But the salvation of the righteous is from the Lord, He is their strength in time of trouble," (Psalm 37:39).*

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Further study: Psalm 46:1; 9:9; 27:5; Isaiah 33:2; Hebrews 13:5, 6.