

Good Habits: Prayer – Sermon Outline

Read: Ephesians 6:10-20

Intro is to talk about the Christian life and how prayer plays an important role

Why Must We Pray?

Where are some places God commands prayer?

"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God...Take up the whole armor of God...praying at all times..."

Ephesians 6:10-18

"Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer."

Romans 12:12

Then go into the reason for God's commands

"You shall not steal" Exodus 20:15

"Do nothing from selfish conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves."

Philippians 2:3

God Commands us to Pray for Our Good and His Glory

For Our Good

Ultimately Prayer Sanctifies Us (makes us more like Christ)

Prayer is less about changing God's mind and more about changing us. So how does prayer sanctify us? How does prayer help us look more like Christ? Well it all has to do with our communion or fellowship with God.

Through prayer we continue to grow in our intimate relationship with God.

We come to Him in our frustrations, regrets, tiredness, confessions and for forgiveness, but we also come to Him with praise and thanksgiving, for empowerment to continue running the race and wisdom for navigating through it.

In our quiet times alone with God we get to be open and real about what we are thinking and feeling, there is no need to filter anything out because God will not love you any less. The closer we draw near to God the more we can be made like Him.

IMAGERY-SPOUSE: It's speaking with your spouse or bestfriend, you end up sounding like that person. And why is that? Because you love that person and the more time you spend with each other the more time you begin to look and speak like that person.

In the Bible, there is no man who enters into the presence of God unchanged.

Today, we encounter God's presence through His Word and through prayer. Our encounter with God in prayer is not and cannot be separated from our encounter with God in Scripture.

Prayer is rooted in the fact that we believe in what God has said and promised in His word.

PROCESS OF SANCTIFICATION:

And from the beginning until the end we will continue to see more of who Christ is in His word, we will continue to ask the Holy Spirit to be like whom we've seen, and we will pursue Christlikeness in that area as the Holy Spirit empowers us.

That is why Jesus says,

"They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth."

John 17:16-17

George Muller says "In order to enjoy the Word, we ought to continue to read it, and the way to obtain a spirit of prayer, is, to continue praying; for the less we read the Word of God, the less we desire to read it, and the less we pray, the less we desire to pray"

So then one reason we must pray is because through prayer we are made more like Christ.

For His Glory

The reason God gives the Israelites their commands is because God wanted to separate them from the idol worshiping nations and He did this For His Name's Sake, meaning he did this in order to show that He was all that He says He is and therefore glorified for as He is.

Throughout the Bible you can find the same reason for Why God does something and it's "For His Name's Sake"

Psalm 23:3 He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

Ezekiel 20:22

But I withheld my hand and acted for the sake of my name, that it should not be profaned in the sight of the nations, in whose sight I had brought them out.

Psalm 31:3

For you are my rock and my fortress;
and for your name's sake you lead me and guide me;

Matthew 10:22 . . . and you will be hated by all for my name's sake. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.

Acts 9:16 For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name.

1 John 2:12 I am writing to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven for his name's sake.

God is glorified when He's seen to be exactly who He says He is.

So how does prayer glorify God?

God is glorified in our obedience, our dependence, and our witness.

When we pray we are making a declaration to the world that our hope, wisdom, and strength comes from God and not ourselves. We pray believing that God is sovereign over all creation, that He is the one who rules the universe. We also show a submission to His will. More than this, we can actively glorify God in praising Him and giving thanks to Him directly!

It's this ultimate dependence on God in prayer that glorifies his name. Our dependence on God is seen in prayer because prayer is the greatest expression of our faith in God. This is why

Jesus says you must have childlike faith, because a child is totally dependent on their parents just as we are to be with Our Father.

“A prayerless life is a faithless life. You will find that when prayers go down self-reliance goes up.”

Micahel Reeves

As we grow in our Christian life you shouldn't feel more self-sufficient but ever more needy. Prayer then is enjoying the care of a powerful Father instead of being left to a frightening loneliness where it is all down to you. Prayer is the opposite of self-dependence.

How Must We Pray?

"praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,"

Posture

At all times

We have communion with God at all times. Don't treat prayer as just another activity, instead focus on the whom you're praying to.

Prayer is for every circumstance, we mustn't think prayer is just for the wonderful times or the bad times, think again to the marriage illustration!

In the Spirit

We must pray in the Spirit. This doesn't mean we have to say some magical words, or think really hard about the Spirit, or channel some kind of energy, it simply means that you are to pray as an adopted son or daughter of God. It is only by the blood of Christ through the adoption in the Spirit that we can come bold before the throne of God as our Father.

Romans 8:15 For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!"

With all prayer and supplication

This is repeating all to mean that this posture of prayer is for each and every prayer you pray whether it be for yourself or for others.

With all perseverance

Firstly, We must pray as one expectant of God to do all He said he would do and be all he said he is. We mustn't be discouraged when God responds with "no" or "not yet" but we must continue to pray that God would align our desires in prayer to His.

We cannot twist God's arm to make him do what we want, but It is true that God is either going to give you exactly what you ask for, or something far better.

Now that doesn't mean you ask for a new honda and he says no to give you a porsche, but it does mean that God knows exactly what we need that will make us more like Him and have the most Joy.

Secondly, have hope

The Parable of the Persistent Widow and the unjust judge

making supplication for all the saints

We are never just to pray for ourselves, but also for the needs of others. In this way we carry each other's burdens and so fulfill the Law of Christ, to love each other.

We ask on behalf of those near to us and those far away. Do not neglect to pray for other Christians around the world who are suffering.

Practice (A.C.T.S)

Adoration

Confession

Thanksgiving

Supplication

Why is it hard to pray? Is it because you don't feel ready to pray? Maybe it is because you just don't feel in the mood for prayer. Or maybe it is because you feel God won't answer your prayers anyways. Whatever the reason, know that Your Father is waiting for you to talk to Him. For you to take advantage of this great privilege we have in Christ to come with all that we have

to Him unashamed to be met by wisdom, comfort, and grace. If you don't know Christ as your personal savior, know that He has made a way for you and all you need to do is accept this free gift of life in prayer.

I will leave you with this last story

My heart Christ's Home:

The Living Room

From the dining room we walked into the living room. This room was intimate and comfortable. I liked it. It had a fireplace, overstuffed chairs, a sofa, and a quiet atmosphere. He said, "This is, indeed, a delightful room. Let us come here often. It is secluded and quiet, and we can fellowship together."

Well, as a young Christian I was thrilled. I couldn't think of anything I would rather do than have a few minutes with Christ in close companionship. He promised, "I will be here early every morning. Meet me here, and we will start the day together." So morning after morning, I would come downstairs to the living room. He would take a book of the Bible from the case. We would open it and read together. He would unfold to me the wonder of God's saving truths. My heart sang as He shared the love and the grace He had toward me. These were wonderful times.

However, little by little, under the pressure of many responsibilities, this time began to be shortened. Why? I'm not

sure. I thought I was too busy to spend regular time with Christ. This was not intentional. It just happened that way. Finally, not only was the time shortened, but I began to miss days now and then. Urgent matters would cancel those quiet times of conversation with Jesus. But I remember one morning rushing downstairs, eager to be on my way. I passed the living room and noticed that the door was open. Looking in, I saw a fire in the fireplace and Jesus was sitting there.

Suddenly, in dismay, I thought to myself, "He is my guest. I invited Him into my heart! He has come as my Savior and Friend, and yet I am neglecting Him." I stopped, turned and hesitantly went in. With downcast glance, I said, "Master, forgive me. Have You been here all these mornings?" "Yes," He said, "I told you I would be here every morning to meet with you. Remember, I love you. I have redeemed you at great cost. I value your fellowship. Even if you cannot keep the quiet time for your own sake, do it for mine." The truth that Christ desires my companionship, that He wants me to be with Him and waits for me, has done more to transform my quiet time with God than any other single fact. Don't let Christ wait alone in the living room of your heart, but every day find time when, with your Bible and in prayer, you may be together with Him.

Brothers and Sisters Do not neglect this great privilege you have of prayer.