

The Essence of Prayer 2018-04-08

Luke 11:9-13

And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ¹⁰ For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. ¹¹ What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; ¹² or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? ¹³ If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

Core value: Reliance on God through prayer

- Two hardest things to start and maintain in church/personal life is prayer and evangelism.

Some reasons we struggle to maintain and grow in prayer:

- Satan...our enemy resists us. Ephesians 6:11-19, James 4:7-8, 1 Peter 5:8
- Busyness, lazy & ease of life. Luke 8:14, Matthew 26:40
- Question prayer's effectiveness.
 - Interpreted nothing happened or outcome not what/when you wanted.
- Theological.... Why pray if God already predetermined everything.
 - Hope to address these issues & give answers to other questions.

Prayer is divine mechanism whereby we can communicate with God of universe any time, anywhere, under any circumstances. John 9:31, Luke 11:9-11, James 5:16a-17

- Cross is the foundation of all prayer and gives Christians confidence to approach God.
- Only prayers God promised to "hear" (listen w/sympathetic ear and answer when according to his will) are Christians prayers offered thru Jesus Christ. John 14:6
 - Kids request to his father vs. stranger/enemy
 - May answer unbelievers prayers out of mercy, demonstrate His goodness or desire to bring to salvation. Psalm 145:9,15; Matthew 7:22; Luke 6:35-36
 - Always answers unbelievers plea for salvation. GOSPEL

Essence of prayer is expressing our dependence on God through requests but it's much more than just asking.

- Prayer is way for us to commune and communicate with God.
 - Christian life without prayer is like a marriage without communication.
 - You have bond but lack intimacy.
- Prayer 2-way conversation with God that should include ingredients in all excellent interpersonal communication:
 - involves both talking/listening to know God more and be known by Him.

God could just read our minds yet He commands us to pray because praying glorifies God and is for our benefit. John 14:12-14, Romans 8:31-32

- Glorifies God because our delight in/dependence on Him affirms His greatness
 - Prayer proclaims we are genuinely convinced of God's wisdom, love, goodness, and power.
- God ordains prayer because He wants us to see hHm as gloriously self-sufficient and ourselves as totally needy.
 - Far more glorious to be a Giver than a getter. Romans 11:33-36
 - God is always the Giver & that is what He loves to be.

All that God does is first for His glory and for our benefit.

- Prayer provides us with sweet fellowship with our living, loving Creator God.
 - It binds us to God and that's why we tell God what He already knows.
- Also part of God' sanctifying/ transform process.
 - Prayer teaches us humility and reliance on God and develops fruit of Holy Spirit (patience, love, etc) and spiritual maturity.

Prayer is 2-way conversation with God that glorifies Him and blesses/benefits us.

- My hope is that the Lord use this series to increase our passion for prayer so we delight more in Him and as a result have our hearts more aligned with His heart.

Psalm 37:4-7