

GOD DOESN'T WANT YOU FEELING LOUSY ABOUT YOUR PRAYER LIFE

A Biblical Guide To Prayer #2

Luke 11:1 – *“One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, ‘Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.’”* (NIV)

OBSERVATIONS ON PRAYER

OBSERVATION #1 – HUMAN BEINGS HAVE AN INBORN TENDENCY TO PRAY (to someone or something)

Ecclesiastes 3:11b – *“He has also set eternity in the human hearts.”* (NIV)

OBSERVATION #2 – MOST BELIEVERS FEEL LIKE THEIR PRAYER LIFE IS LACKING

Romans 8:26b – *“...We do not know what we ought to pray for...”* (NIV)

Luke 11:1 – *“One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, ‘Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.’”* (NIV)

OBSERVATION #3 – FRUSTRATION WITH PRAYER IS CAUSED BY MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT PRAYER

Several misconceptions about prayer:

- [1] Prayer is not a magic wand!
- [2] Prayer is not a genie in a bottle.
- [3] Prayer is not secret words or a chant or a spell.
- [4] Prayer is not a fire extinguisher!
- [5] Prayer is not bargaining with God.
- [6] Prayer is not a ritual to relieve guilt.

[PICTURE – Vince Lombardi]

FOUR PILLARS OF PRAYER

PRAYER PILLAR #1 – GOD WANTS US TO COMMUNICATE TO HIM THROUGH PRAYER

- [1] God loves you and what is important to you is important to God.
- [2] God gave you interests
- [3] God is your father and we are his children.

Psalm 103:13 – *“The Lord is like a father to his children, tender and compassionate to those who fear [reverence] him.”* (New Living)

1 John 5:14-15 – [14] *“This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. [15] And if we know that he hears us--whatever we ask--we know that we have what we asked of him.”* (NIV)

Two prayer truths:

- [1] Prayer is a conversation, not a ceremony.
- [2] Prayer is a relationship, not a ritual.

PRAYER PILLAR #2 – GOD LISTENS TO PRAYERS THAT ARE SINCERE AND SIMPLE

Matthew 6:5-8 –

[5] *“And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full.*

[6] *But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.*

[7] *And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words.*

[8] *Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.”* (NIV)

A few comments on prayer:

- [1] Don't use prayer to show off.
- [2] Keep it simple.
- [3] Avoid religious clichés.
- [4] Longer is not better.

Hebrews 10:22a – “*Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith.” (NIV)*

The two qualifications of prayer are sincerity and assurance.

PRAYER PILLAR #3 – GOD LIKES TO ANSWER PRAYER

Matthew 7:11 – “*If you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good gifts to those who ask him.*” (New Living)

Jeremiah 33:3 – “*Call to me and I will answer you. I will show you marvelous and wondrous things that you could never figure out on your own.” (Message)*

Garth Brooks: Unanswered Prayers.

PRAYER PILLAR #4 – GOD LONGS TO BE CLOSE TO ME

Isaiah 30:18 – “*The Lord still waits for you to come to him so he can show you his love and compassion. For the Lord is a faithful God. Blessed are those who wait for him to help them.*” (New Living)

Hosea 6:6 – “*I don't want your sacrifices--I want your love; I don't want your offerings--I want you to know me.*” (Living)

Psalms 25:14 – “*Friendship with the Lord is reserved for those who fear him. With them he shares the secrets of his covenant.*” (New Living)

How do I get closer to the Lord?

[1] Desire it.

[2] Make time for it.

Prayer:

Father, I pray a simple and sincere prayer. I want to know You better and love You more. I ask You to take these words to touch my heart. In Jesus' name. Amen.