

Prayer Series #1 – Psalm 111:24 – THE IMPORTANCE OF PRAYER!

Scripture: Matthew 21:12-13 “House of Prayer”

Introduction

1. Difficulties
2. A man out fishing just about drowned. He said God, I haven't bothered you in fifteen years and I'll not bother you for another fifteen if you save me!
 - How often do we pray?
 - A Nun when asked said ~ two hours in the morning
 - ~ one hour at noon
 - ~ one hour in evening
3. I don't want to tell people how often that I pray because my prayer life is not what it should be.
 - Can anyone identify?
4. The world plays down prayer
 - Neil on Steel Magnolia
5. God shows prayer is important through His commands
 - Prayer shows in everything, Philippians 4:6
 - “ ” on all occasions, Ephesians 6:18
 - “ ” continually, I Thessalonians 5:17
 - “ ” persistently, Luke 18:1-5
 - “ ” devotion to God, Colossians 4:2

** If this Church will ever be what God expects it to be, first it will become a house of prayer!

***Six things that happen when we pray**

When we pray

- I) We enter the throne room
 - A) The Majestic throne, Revelation 4
 - B) Read Hebrews 4:14-16 (Grace)
 - 1) Usually Kings are not approachable
 - (a) Appointment months in advance
 - (b) May not want to see you
 - (c) In Old Testament a veil separated the outer sanctuary of the temple and the Holy of Holies.

- (d) God's people had limited access
 - 2) But Jesus died on the cross and the veil or separation was removed and just like the Hebrew writer says "Now we have access"
 - (a) Open door policy
 - 3) As a child of God we can come before the creator into the Holy of Holies
 - (a) And in confidence approach our Father.
- T.S. Coming before God helps us realize something

When we pray

- II) We acknowledge our dependence on God.
 - A) People like to be independent
 - 1) Jeremiah 10:23 (not self sufficient)
 - B) God's design is that man would depend on Him.
 - 1) Followers, Matthew 16 – Deny self – take up cross and follow me
 - (a) Need guidance, Jeremiah 42:3
 - (b) Need leader, fiery pillar – look to Him
 - (c) So that he would take care of us.
 - C) When we pray we are reminded that we depend on God
 - 1) We tend to forget
- T.S. Prayer helps us find our place and when we find our place, then we can't help but to be closer to God. Which brings us to our next point.

When we pray

- III) We draw near to God.
 - A) Read Hebrews 10:19-22
 - 1) When we pray we draw near to God
 - (a) Sharing your heart with someone draws you closer to them
 - i. When we tell each other our problems
 - ii. When we share our hurts and pains
 - (a) When we tell someone our dreams and goals
 - We can't help but to draw close to them
 - It's the same with God and Prayer
 - B) Read Deuteronomy 4:7
 - 1) When we draw near to God in prayer
 - (a) He draws near to us.
 - (b) Here we see God right there in our prayers.
 - i. Often we think it's a one-sided phone conversation (We think God records all prayers and checks then later for important messages)

- ii. God is there when we pray!
 - He hears our voice
 - He knows our heart.

T.S. Being with God has great Power!

When we pray

IV We can accomplish great things in prayer

A) Power in prayer

1) Mark 9:28-29

- a. Demons can only come out by prayer
- b. There are changes in our lives that can only be made through prayer.
- c. Prayer in and of itself can change lives.

2) James 5:16 "Prayer of a righteous man availeth much"

- a. When we pray for rain do we bring an umbrella?
- b. When you get on your knees before God things will happen.
- c. Acts 4:24, 31 (Peter and John arrested) There ought to be a whole lot of shakin' going on!

B) Often times we try to change thing on our own.

- a. God did NOT plan it that way!

T.S. When I think of prayer I can't help but to think about Christ

When we pray

IV) We are molded into the likeness of Christ.

A) Read 2 Corinthian 3:18

1) Likeness

- a) Portrait or Image

B) How can we be like Jesus?

- a) Prayer! Jesus was a man of prayer! Always talking to the Father
- b) Luke 5:15-16 – Made time to pray
- c) Luke 6:12 – Before deciding on the twelve apostles
- d) Luke 22:31-32 – For other souls
- e) Matthew 26 – In the garden
- f) Matthew 26 - Thanks for the bread

* If we are going to be like Jesus we need to be a people of prayer!

C) Surely our only chance to get to heaven will be to follow the example that Christ set for us.

* We must be a people of prayer!!

T.S. When we are in the likeness of Christ, God is pleased!

When we pray

IV We please God.

A) Read Proverbs 15:8

1) Did you ever stop to think that God is pleased when you are praying?

C) Which one of us would care less if our children wanted to talk to us, ... to communicate with us?

1) It makes us feel great!

2) We like to make people pleased

(a) Wives

(b) Children

(c) Bosses

**** - What about God?

Conclusion

A. Prayer - puts us before God

" - reminds us of our dependence

" - gets us close to Him

" - is powerful

" - makes us like Christ

" - pleases God

**** - There is not one of us here today that can live without prayer.

B Prayer characterizes God's people

2) Sometimes the Church is known for:

a. Good fellowship

b. Encouragement

c. Bible views

d. Singing

e. Lord's Supper

While these are great and important – Do you see us as a house of prayer?

** - Let's be a people of prayer**