



Problems with Prayer

St. Luke Lutheran Church
Fall, 2008
Home Group Discussion #2

Encouragement for Greater Involvement in Prayer

The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. James 5:16

This four part study is designed to do two things.

First, it serves to help us continue in a “life on purpose.” Each session will accent five purposes in life:

Worship: live to please God

Fellowship: be connected into God’s family

Discipleship: become like Jesus

Ministry: serve others

Evangelism: share Jesus

Second, it leads participants into a discussion on various prayer issues. Good communication is crucial to any relationship—that includes our relationship with God! A robust prayer life helps our relationship with God flourish.

A TIME OF FELLOWSHIP (connected to one another)

Share with one another what you are thinking about your prayer life as we begin our second session.

Share with one another any answers to prayer you have received in the last week.

A TIME OF WORSHIP (pleasing God)

Talk about something that happens in nature that speaks to you about the goodness of God.

Taking turns reading a verse, have the group read out loud Psalm 65.

Spend some time in prayer thanking God for his blessings.

A TIME OF DISCIPLESHIP (becoming like Jesus)

“Jesus... went off to a solitary place where he prayed.” Mark 1:35

A PROBLEM WITH PRAYER: DON’T LEAVE IT TO THE PROFESSIONALS!

Tonight we are going to consider prayer as something any Christian can “do.”

Discuss this statement, “One of the problems I have with prayer is that I am never really sure I am doing it correctly.” Is that true in your life or not?

VIEW THE SECOND DVD SEGMENT

What makes prayer intimidating? What keeps prayer from being intimidating? How does this definition of prayer make prayer more accessible? Prayer is a heart to heart conversation with words and thoughts between the Heavenly Father and his forgiven children.

We do not pray to tell God what he does not know, nor to remind him of things he has forgotten. He already cares for the things we pray about... He has simply been waiting for us to care about them with him. When we pray, we stand by God and look with him toward those people and problems. When we lift our eyes from them toward him, we do so with loving praise, just as we look toward our oldest and dearest friends and tell them how we care for them, though they already know it... We speak to him, as we speak to our most intimate friends—so that we can commune together in love. Prayer: Does It Make Any Difference? p. 58

Discuss the sentiment shared by Philip Yancy. Compare it to Matthew 7:9-11.

Read each of the following passages. What do they have to say about hearts connected to God? What do they have to say about prayer as something any Christian can “do”?

- I Samuel 12:24
- II Kings 22:19
- Psalm 9:1-2
- Psalm 51:10-12
- Psalm 62:7-8
- Matthew 22:37
- Romans 8:9-11, 15-16, 26-27
- Hebrews 10:19-22

Talk about the prayers you “use.” Do you make them up yourself (ex corde—from the heart) or do you use prayers that others have written? Does it matter?

Luther wrote about Jesus’ invitation to pray Our Father who art in heaven, “With these words God tenderly invites us to believe that he is our true Father and that we are his true children, so that with all boldness and confidence we may ask him as dear children ask their dear father.”

How does tonight’s conversation help you to see prayer as something any Christian can do? When would or should you ask the Pastor—a professional?—to pray for you?

A TIME OF MINISTRY (serving others)

One of the ways we serve others in the congregation is through prayer. In the coming week have each participant “adopt” a ministry at church for which to pray.

A TIME OF EVANGELISM (sharing Jesus)

Discuss whether or not you shared with an unbeliever this last week a way that God answered a prayer.

In the coming week focus on an individual or group outside of the congregation and commit that person or group to prayer.

CLOSING PRAYER

In your closing prayer please pray for people to see *the power and the peace of the cross* through our congregation.

CYBER CONVERSATION ABOUT PRAYER

All are invited to join in an online conversation about the book Prayer: Does It Make Any Difference. Copies of the book are available at the Sign In Center at church or from a local book store.

Go to our web site for more information. www.stlukehas.com/chat