



Prayer: The believer's high calling

Luke 11:1-13

Introduction

Jesus was alone with His disciples and was deep in prayer. His praying revealed an intimacy with the Father that the disciples had never known. When He re-joined them they said, "Lord, teach *us* how to pray."

That should still be our hearts-cry today. Prayer is the most potent, but most under-deployed, weapon that Christians possess. A quick glance over the gospels shows that Jesus constantly taught, exhorted, encouraged and inspired His disciples to prayer. Prayer was the breath that He breathed, the driving force of His life. So it was with the apostles – throughout the New Testament letters we see phrases like, "I bow my knees before the Father..." and "We have not stopped praying for you..."

And throughout the centuries, prayer has been the distinguishing mark of all the great men and women of faith. George Whitfield famously went to bed on the stroke of 10pm so that he could rise early at 4pm to pray. John Wesley spent two hours in prayer a day and commonly said, "God does nothing but in answer to prayer." William Temple, replying to his critics, said, "When I pray,



coincidences happen, when I don't, they don't". Paul Yonghi Cho, the pastor of the largest church in the world, when asked about the secret of his success, answered, "I pray...and they I obey!"

Prayer works!

God invites us into a place of intimacy through prayer that changes our hearts and aligns our desires with His. The Holy Spirit helps us to to pray 'according to His will' (1 John 5:14-15). Then, as we truly pray 'in

Jesus' name' we are given authority to partner with the Lord in literally changing the world (Mark 11:22-25)!

A big question that people ask is: 'Does God always answer our prayers?' The simple answer to that question is 'yes He does.' God *does* always answer our prayers...but

not always in the way we expect: Sometime He answers 'yes,' sometimes He answers 'no,' and sometimes He answers 'not yet!' God sees the big picture, and although we don't always get those things for which we ask, we can trust that He is the perfect Father and knows best; He will always act in love and for our best interests.

Life Group questions...

- 1. What is prayer?**
- 2. The disciples needed to ask Jesus to help them pray. Spend some time sharing struggles you have experienced with prayer. Discuss some of the things that have helped you to pray.**
- 3. Read Phil 4:6 & 1 Tim 2:1. There are a number of different ways we can pray...which type of prayer do you find easiest. Why? Which do you find hardest?**
- 4. In Matthew 6:5-13, we see how not to pray. What are the two things that Jesus discourages us from doing when we pray? Why do you think he taught us this? How, then, does Jesus want us to pray?**
- 5. Compare John 14:13-14 and 1 John 5:14-15. What do you think it means to pray in Jesus' name? What happens when we pray like this?**
- 6. Look at 1 Thess 5:16. What do you think it means to 'pray continually?' How does this apply to our everyday lives?**
- 7. Do you have a quiet time with God each day? How can you make sure you spend quality time with God in prayer? Think of ways we can encourage one-another to be more prayerful as a Life Group?**