

# ***The Things That Matter***

**Christian Life Assembly**

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# Pray

**What is the purpose of prayer?**

# Pray

- John 17:1 After saying all these things, Jesus looked up to heaven and said, “Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son so he can give glory back to you. 2 For you have given him authority over everyone. He gives eternal life to each one you have given him. 3 And this is the way to have eternal life—to know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, the one you sent to earth. 4 I brought glory to you here on earth by completing the work you gave me to do. 5 Now, Father, bring me into the glory we shared before the world began. 6 “I have revealed you to the ones you gave me from this world. They were always yours. You gave them to me, and they have kept your word. 7 Now they know that everything I have is a gift from you, 8 for I have passed on to them the message you gave me. They accepted it and know that I came from you, and they believe you sent me.

# Pray

- 9 “My prayer is not for the world, but for those you have given me, because they belong to you. 10 All who are mine belong to you, and you have given them to me, so they bring me glory. 11 Now I am departing from the world; they are staying in this world, but I am coming to you. Holy Father, you have given me your name; now protect them by the power of your name so that they will be united just as we are. 12 During my time here, I protected them by the power of the name you gave me. I guarded them so that not one was lost, except the one headed for destruction, as the Scriptures foretold. 13 “Now I am coming to you. I told them many things while I was with them in this world so they would be filled with my joy. 14 I have given them your word. And the world hates them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world.

# Pray

- 15 I'm not asking you to take them out of the world, but to keep them safe from the evil one. 16 They do not belong to this world any more than I do. 17 Make them holy by your truth; teach them your word, which is truth. 18 Just as you sent me into the world, I am sending them into the world. 19 And I give myself as a holy sacrifice for them so they can be made holy by your truth. 20 "I am praying not only for these disciples but also for all who will ever believe in me through their message. 21 I pray that they will all be one, just as you and I are one—as you are in me, Father, and I am in you. And may they be in us so that the world will believe you sent me.

# Pray

- 22 “I have given them the glory you gave me, so they may be one as we are one. 23 I am in them and you are in me. May they experience such perfect unity that the world will know that you sent me and that you love them as much as you love me. 24 Father, I want these whom you have given me to be with me where I am. Then they can see all the glory you gave me because you loved me even before the world began! 25 “O righteous Father, the world doesn’t know you, but I do; and these disciples know you sent me. 26 I have revealed you to them, and I will continue to do so. Then your love for me will be in them, and I will be in them.”

# Pray

- I think it is fair to say that, at it's core, prayer is communication with God.
- Since it is communication we are free to make requests, express needs and feelings, or just simply talk to God.
- If prayer is communication, does it make sense then that we build some true 'quiet time' into our prayer time solely for the purpose of listening to God?

# Pray

- **Math 6:5** When you pray, don't be like the hypocrites who love to pray publicly on street corners and in the synagogues where everyone can see them. I tell you the truth, that is all the reward they will ever get. <sup>6</sup> But when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private. Then your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.

# Pray

- Jesus had some words of caution about prayer before he gave them instructions for praying.
  - Don't fake it! Math 6:5 (street corner)
  - Personalize it. Math 6:6 (closet)
  - Be more like Elijah and less like the prophets of Baal. Math 6:7 (Eccl 5:2b ... God is in heaven and you are on earth, so let your words be few.)

# **Pray is simple, yet so complex.**

**“Sometimes prayer is as simple as a transaction between a two year old and his father, and at other times it as complex as anything known to man. I love it when it’s simple, but I grow when it’s complexities go beyond my understanding.”**

# Pray is simple, yet so complex.

- How is it that some of my weakest prayers get some of His strongest answers.
- Conversely, why is it that sometimes my strongest prayers, seem to get either a 'no', or a 'not yet' reply?
- Why is it that God is so unpredictable in this matter of answering 'yes' to our prayers?

# Pray is simple, yet so complex.

- We read 'if you ask anything in my name I will do it', but what did Jesus mean?
- I know it's His will to save and I know that I have asked (at times at least) with a pure heart and right motives, yet many of the lost are still lost.
- It seems that there are some things that He will not change even when it's His will. I have never seen Him override the will of person in order to save their soul.

# We Can Change Things By Praying.

- You and I have been given the power to change history – not what is in the past, but that which is yet to be written.
- Daniel 9:23 The moment you began praying, a command was given.
- Our prayers cause things to happen that otherwise would not.

# When God Doesn't Seem to Answer.

- The assumption of Jesus' words here assume an unanswered prayer.
- Luke 11:9 "And so I tell you, keep on asking, and you will be given what you ask for. Keep on looking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened. 10 For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And the door is opened to everyone who knocks. NLT
- Above all else, make sure that you are never found to be guilty of not asking!

# When God Doesn't Seem to Answer.

- Sometimes we do not ask.
- Sometimes we wouldn't want a 'yes' if we knew what it would cause.
- Sometimes it's our sin.
- Sometimes we ask for the wrong things.

# Praying in Jesus name.

- **John 14:13-14** You can ask for anything in my name, and I will do it, because the work of the Son brings glory to the Father. 14 Yes, ask anything in my name, and I will do it! NLT
- This of course, begs the question of “how do I pray in Jesus’ name?”
- I am certain of (2) things in this regard ..... It is more than words I tack on to the end of a prayer and less than a lengthy prescription.

# Praying in Jesus name.

- To pray in Jesus' name is to pray for the things that He would pray for and for the same reason he would pray for them.
- John 15:7-8 If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. 8 By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples. NKJV
- Delight yourself in the LORD and he will give you the desires of your heart. (Psalm 37:4)

# Praying in Jesus name.

- Praying with a pure heart.
- Praying for the things that glorify God.
- Praying with confidence.
- Praying with a knowledge of what Jesus wants because we have been close to Him.

# Why Pray?

- **Jer 33:3'Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.' NKJV**
  - **We see the power of God.**
  - **We learn things we did not know.**
  - **We understand that He is the God who hears.**

# Why Pray?

- **Matt 26:41 Watch and pray , lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." NKJV**
  - **We are easy prey for the enemy's traps.**
  - **We are weak, but He is strong.**

# Why Pray?

- **Luke 10:2-3 Then He said to them, "The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest. NKJV**
  - Somehow we help to move the hand of God in winning souls.
  - Clearly here we are assigned some sort of responsibility.

# Why Pray?

- **2 Cor 13:9 We are glad to seem weak if it helps show that you are actually strong. We pray that you will become mature.**
  - It seems that we have responsibility to pray for the spiritual growth of others.
  - It is also good (and powerful) to let others know that we have expectations for them and that we are praying for them.

# Why Pray?

- **James 5:16 The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. NKJV**
  - Prayer works.
  - Prayer enlists divine help.

# Faith and Prayer

- **Nehemiah 4:9 But we prayed to our God and guarded the city day and night to protect ourselves.**
- **Notice they prayed AND guarded?**
- **A part of any discussion of faith has to be ‘believing God for what we cannot do, while doing what we can on our own’.**
- **Do not pray for that which you can provide for yourself.**

# Faith and Prayer

- There is very definite link between faith and prayer .... (believing what you have not seen)
- Mark 11:24 Therefore I say unto you, All things whatsoever ye pray and ask for, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.
- There is ample scriptural evidence that God responds to faith. (Heb 11:6; Without faith it is impossible to please God.....)
- However, I do not believe that we have blank check that is cashed for anything that we want if we just have enough faith.

# Faith and Prayer

- Perhaps the most important thing about prayer and faith is the answer to this question ..... *How much do I trust Him when the answer is no?*
- Job said ‘though He slay me, yet will I trust Him’ (Job 13:15)
- Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego are also examples of trust in a God who knows best. (we are asking God to protect us, but if he doesn’t that’s OK too)

# How Much Faith Is Enough?

- We live in a day where some believe that you can have anything you want if you just have enough faith.
- It's almost as though faith were currency that if built up enough can be traded for anything you want or need.
- Is God really a commodities broker?

# How Much Faith Is Enough?

- **Matt 17:20** So Jesus said to them, "Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you. NKJV
- According to Jesus, a little faith in the right person is all that we need to accomplish great things.
- Faith cannot be measured by itself, it must be measured by it's object.

# Faith Does Work!

- Heb 11:32 Well, how much more do I need to say? It would take too long to recount the stories of the faith of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, and all the prophets. 33 By faith these people overthrew kingdoms, ruled with justice, and received what God had promised them. They shut the mouths of lions, 34 quenched the flames of fire, and escaped death by the edge of the sword. Their weakness was turned to strength. They became strong in battle and put whole armies to flight. 35 Women received their loved ones back again from death. NLT

# And it works even when it doesn't look like it works!

- *Heb 11:35 But others trusted God and were tortured, preferring to die rather than turn from God and be free. They placed their hope in the resurrection to a better life. 36 Some were mocked, and their backs were cut open with whips. Others were chained in dungeons. 37 Some died by stoning, and some were sawed in half; others were killed with the sword. Some went about in skins of sheep and goats, hungry and oppressed and mistreated. 38 They were too good for this world. They wandered over deserts and mountains, hiding in caves and holes in the ground. NLT*

# Faith always prevails ....

- Heb 11:39 All of these people we have mentioned received God's approval because of their faith, NLT
- Some triumphed in this life and others triumphed on their way out of this life, and the common thread is their faith.
- In the spiritual realm sometimes winners and losers cannot be identified by the natural eye. (Lazarus and the rich man of Luke 16)

# Can we identify with ....?

- **Mark 9:23-24** Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes." Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief !"
- **We should not try to hide our doubt from the Lord, but confess it and ask for His help.**
- **Believing prayer is not gritting our teeth and trying to suppress our doubts; Believing prayer comes when we compare the problem to the Problem Solver.**

# *Questions*