

Struggles in Prayer

February 23, 2020

Pastor Mark Turner

Ephesians 6:10-20; Rom 10:17

Oakbrook Community Church (PCA)

I. Prayer Basics

- Prayer starts with God as our Father
- We pray through faith in Jesus because Christ is always good enough
- Spirit enables us to pray, He helps and translates our prayers
-

II. Struggles with Prayer

- Calvin: prayer is the chief exercise of faith
- So when we struggle to pray we are lacking faith
- Rom 10:17 faith comes from hearing from the Word of Christ
- Prayer in faith: Illustrated: Daniel 9:1-3, 19 (Jer 25:12)
- Our hope: God's Word to strengthen our faith... and prayers!

III. Will I Pray? Why don't I Pray?

- We think we don't have time. We think we don't need prayer. We're intimidated by what we think prayer should be.
- Jesus – often prayed all night Lk 6:12, "I can't do that"
- Word never rebukes for not praying all night, just for not praying Mt 26:40-41, in fact warning against long, repetitive prayers Mt 6:7-8

IV. Battle is to Simply Start Praying

- Ephesians 6:10-20 follows practical living instructions
 - note prominence of Spirit & prayer
 - emphasis on life as battle and normalcy of prayer in life
- You are NOT alone – other believers, 2nd person plural, church
- You have the Holy Spirit

V. How to Get Started in Prayer

Prayer is understanding the WHY God has saved you – for His glory so that you can become part of WHAT God is doing – living for His glory

- Pray at set times
 - don't be afraid to set specific times: when you get up, meals, bedtime. Use easy times to remind you to talk to God
- Pray throughout the day
 - just talk to God in all you do, ask for guidance, wisdom, the ability to be like Christ to others
- Pray with others
 - get with other believers regularly to pray.
- Pray God's Word
 - Visit www.oakbrookpca.org/prayer-resources/ and read Luther's A Simple Way to Pray. Visit matthewhenry.org and use Pray the Bible which is an electronic version of A Method for Prayer.
- Pray with a Plan
 - Use Herbert Lockyer's All the Prayers of the Bible to study and teach yourself what Biblical prayer looks like. Develop a plan to pray to God to serve Him in all you do

A Prayer from Philippians 1:3-11 from Tim Chester, You Can Pray, 120

Our God, we thank you for all those who partner with us in the gospel. We are confident that You who began a good work in us, will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ. They are in our hearts because we share together in your grace. You can testify how we long for them with the affection of Christ Jesus. We pray that our love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth and insight, so that we may discern what is best and be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ to your glory and praise. Amen.