

Psalm 86:1-10, 16-17
How to Pray- Part 2

It was not my plan to preach a two-part sermon on prayer. However, following conversation with my wife about the message I recognized there were at least two additional things that really needed to be said regarding prayer revealed in our text. Last Sunday, I shared that prayer is contextual, that is the situation or circumstance should dictate how and what we pray. David is in a dire situation, and he prays a passionate and urgent prayer. Next, I shared that the particulars or specifics of the situation should justify the content of the prayer. Or stated this way, should justify our request, our ask of God. The point I was trying to make is that we cannot be in places of disobedience facing situations that are a result of that disobedience and pray to God for deliverance, provision, protection, etc. We first must deal with the sin that has led to the situation. David was just in his request because he was not in this dire situation due to disobedience to God. So, he could pray for deliverance with confidence. Finally, I shared prayer should appeal to the character of God because God always acts in accordance with his character. David understood who he was talking to. He was talking to GOD! Creator of all things. And in his prayer, he lets God know that he knows who He is. Now, two final things on prayer drawn from the text, a prayer of King David.

First thing. Prayer should be as common to the disciple as breathing air, sleeping, eating, walking, etc. To far often we revert to prayer only in dire situations. Yes, we should pray in dire situations but that should not be the only time we pray. **V3,**

17 “Be merciful to me, O Lord, For I cry to You all day long.... Because You, Lord, have helped me and comforted me.” I gather from these portions of David’s prayer that prayer was not something he attended to casually. David knew what it meant to pray without ceasing. He understood the need to be in constant communication with God. How often do we pray? Does our prayer life reveal to us that we fully understand what a gift and privilege prayer is? Does our prayer life reveal to us that we understand its necessity in our walk with Jesus Christ? Or does it reveal to us that we view prayer as a last-ditch effort when all else fails?

Luke 18:1 “One day Jesus told his disciples a story to show that they should always pray and never give up.”

Acts 2:42 “⁴²All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord’s Supper), and to prayer.”

Romans 12:12 “¹²Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying.”

Ephesians 6:18 “¹⁸Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere.”

Colossians 4:2 “²Devote yourselves to prayer with an alert mind and a thankful heart.”

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 “¹⁶Always be joyful. ¹⁷Never stop praying. ¹⁸Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.”

Maybe we lack fortitude because we do not pray enough. Just imagine how different some or, maybe, many of things we have faced in life may have turned out if our first instinct, if our knee-

jerk reaction was to pray. Prayer should be as common to the disciple as breathing air, sleeping, eating, walking, etc.

Second thing. Prayer is experiential. That is to say, the more we pray the more experience we garner with God/Jesus Christ. And experience is necessary to our growing in faith, to our developing confidence in prayer. **V6-7** “Give ear, O Lord, to my prayer; And attend to the voice of my supplications. ⁷In the day of my trouble I will call upon You, For You will answer me.” I think we miss a considerable number of opportunities to recognize God moving amid our various life situations because we do not take these situations to God in prayer. It’s not that a lack of prayer keeps God from moving on our behalf, rather it’s our lack of prayer the results in us not realizing that it was God who moved. So, we chalk up favorable outcomes as good fortune. The more we do this the less likely we are to pray to God; thus, we experience minimal to no growth in our faith, in our trust of God. And so, we soon start to believe that life is a game of chance, where God is not actively involved, and we don’t pray. Instead, we live with fingers crossed hoping for the best. Brothers and sisters, uncross your fingers and put your hands together and pray! Pray at all times to God about all things in the name of Jesus Christ. Let us not forgo the opportunity that prayer offers us to gain first-hand experience with God/Jesus Christ.

Psalms 17:6 “I am praying to you because I know you will answer, O God. Bend down and listen as I pray.”

Psalms 18:6 “But in my distress I cried out to the Lord; yes, I prayed to my God for help. He heard me from his sanctuary; my cry to him reached his ears.”

Psalm 34:17 “The Lord hears his people when they call to him for help. He rescues them from all their troubles.”

Psalm 118:5 “In my distress I prayed to the Lord, and the Lord answered me and set me free.”

Psalm 145:18 “The Lord is close to all who call on him, yes, to all who call on him in truth.”

Proverbs 15:29 “The Lord is far from the wicked, but he hears the prayers of the righteous.”

1 John 5:14-15 “¹⁴And we are confident that he hears us whenever we ask for anything that pleases him. ¹⁵And since we know he hears us when we make our requests, we also know that he will give us what we ask for.

Church, the more we pray the more experience we garner with God/Jesus Christ. Make prayer as common as breathing air, walking, eating, sleeping and pray to God at all times about all things in the name of Jesus Christ and watch your confidence, your trust, your faith in God/Jesus grow. In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.