

Knowing God Better through Prayer

Set the Stage

-Prayer is universal!

-No matter where you go it is there.

-Anyone can pray, anywhere anytime.

-It translates all cultures and languages.

-It is a global phenomenon when you think about it.

-You ever wonder why?

Read Ephesians 3:14-19

-In Paul's prayer for these people, he reveals the power of prayer in our pursuit of knowing God.

-In our passage, what does prayer do in us and for us?

1. Strengthen the inner man.

2. Understand and be grounded in the love of Jesus

3. To be able to comprehend the greatness of God.

4. **Be filled with the fullness of God**

-To know him fully

-Prayer is what unites us with God.

-Prayer is the highway that leads us into **knowing God** and ends with us **encountering God** Himself.

Take it to the Next Level

In knowing God better through prayer, first, we learn that...

1. Prayer is instinctive.

A. **We pray because of who we are.** (Why do we pray)

-Because we are all made in the image of God, we are designed to **reflect and relate** to God, our creator.

-In creation and conscience God speaks generally to us

-There is a natural tendency to **respond** to God.

-We all have “an incurable God-sickness”

Theologian Karl Barth

-We all have an innate, divine call from God
that we cannot get rid of.

-We naturally feel the need to make the effort to
communicate. We instinctively try to call out to Him

-At this stage, the knowledge of God is so vague we are
unable to respond in real conversation.

-In Scripture, God speaks to us specifically.

-Prayer and the Word of God go hand in hand.

-Scripture allows us to move from a vague
understanding to knowing God in great
detail. The better we know God, the better
we can respond to Him.

B. We pray because of who He is. (Why is there prayer?)

-God is Trinity.

-One God expressed in three persons. Father, Son,
Holy Spirit

-Prayer exists because God exists in relationship. In that
relationship there is communication between the
Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit.

**-The power of our prayers is not found in our effort,
technique, or perseverance, but rather in our
knowledge of God.**

-The better we get to know who God is, the better our
communication will be. We will know how to
respond correctly and to get the most benefit from it

In knowing God better through prayer, second, we learn that...

2. Prayer is instructive.

A. Prayer is Knowing God

- Prayer is our response to God. God comes to us first or we would never reach out to him. God is the initiator.
- Based on our knowledge of who God is, we will fashion our thoughts and actions around that understanding. Thus our knowledge of God
- The clearer and better our understanding of God, the better our prayers will be. The more we practice prayer (responding/ communicating) with God the greater our understanding of God will be.
- Prayer is recognizing the greatness of God.
 - As we grow in our knowledge of God, we can then begin to understand who God is and how to relate to him.

B. Prayer is Knowing Yourself

- As we grow in our knowledge of God, we can begin to understand ourselves more:
 - Who we are, why we do what we do, what we should be doing (goal & purpose).
- Prayer is an active avenue to discover more about yourself, your purpose, identity,
- What about prayer allows us to get to know ourselves better?*
 - It shines a light into our heart.

- Prayer is an avenue where we experience deep change.

In knowing God better through prayer, third, we learn that...

3. Prayer is a Journey.

A. Prayer is responding to what you know.

- Based on what we know will determine how we respond.

-Prayer is answering God.

- It is communicating back to God.
- The goal of prayer is to answer God. To have a full conversation.
- It's not to get things done, that is part of it,
- It's to fully understand who He is and how we should relate to Him.

-J.I. Packer, *"Knowing God is more than knowing about him, it is a matter of dealing with him as he opens up to you, and being dealt with by him."*

-How can prayer help us grow in our knowledge of God?

- Its not just about communication, its about connection!
- Knowing God through prayer creates connection and grows our relationship.

B. Prayer is a process through which we grow.

- Prayer is a verbal response of faith to God based on His pursuit of us and revelation of who He is.
- When we **grow** in our knowledge of Him, we will know how to properly communicate with him.
- As our knowledge grows, so our prayer life grows in experience. As our prayer life grows so our knowledge of God grows.
- This does not mean that prayers of a young Christian are not effective or accepted by God. It means that prayer is a journey. A journey that is reflected in our growth in our knowledge of God.

Conclusion

-What is the goal in prayer?

- Is it to get things from God?, to help others, to check mark a box or a religious duty?
- The goal of prayer is to encounter God. (Vs. 19)

-Tim Keller, *“What is prayer then in the fullest sense? Prayer is continuing a conversation that God started through His Word and His grace, which eventually becomes a full encounter with him.”*

Taking your next step

How can you grow in faithful practice toward real prayer?

1. Plan to practice prayer.
 - Remove the regret in prayer
 - Don't leave it up to chance.
 - Plan and practice it.
 - Journal and jump into it.
2. Experiment with Prayer (2 Timothy 2:1)
Meditation, contemplation, petition, thanksgiving, confession, adoration.
3. Grow in your knowledge of God.
 - Go to the Bible - read the passages. Constantly ask, what is this teaching about the actual person of God.
 - Go to church - Listen to messages. Constantly ask, what is this teaching about the actual person of God.
 - Go to prayer - Talk and listen.

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