

# Prayer: Developing a Lifestyle of Communion with God

## Intro

- God is for us! He genuinely wants us to “bear much fruit!” (John 15:2, 5, 8, 16)
- God’s desire and design is that we be powerful and effective ambassadors for Him.
- Salvation is only the beginning! We are on the greatest adventure - to advance the kingdom of God on the earth - to live in the fullness of God - to reveal Jesus to this dying world!
- One major aspect of bringing heaven to earth is through effective prayer. (Matthew 6:5-15)

## How Do We Experience Effective Prayer?

### 1. Remain in Jesus

- “**If you remain in me** and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish and it will be given you.” John 15:7
- “remain” - Greek (meno) = to stay in a given place, state or relation; to abide, to continue, to dwell, to endure, to tarry (Strong’s)
- Jesus teaches that the first part of learning how to be effective in prayer has nothing to do with words, places, lists, or requests. **It has everything to do with our relationship!**
- So how do we actually dwell or remain with Jesus in our practical daily life?
  1. Have a genuine salvation experience - Repent from your life of sin, believe on Jesus’ death as the only way, receive His forgiveness, and declare Him your Lord.
  2. Enjoy the Holy Spirit - John 14:16,26
  3. Choose Obedience! - John 15:9, Psalm 15

#### 4. Live a Lifestyle of Confession and Repentance - 1 John 1:9, James 5:16

## 2. Jesus' Words Remain in You

- “If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish and it will be given you.” John 15:7
- “remain” - Greek (meno) = to stay in a given place, state or relation; to abide, to continue, to dwell, to endure, to tarry (Strong's)
- Jesus is teaching that the second part of effective prayer still has nothing to do with what we say or how we say it. Instead it has everything to do with what He has said! If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer. (Mathew 21:22)
- So how do we practically get Jesus' words to remain in us?
  1. Ask God for an increased hunger for His Word - the Bible.
  2. Be disciplined to consume God's Word - read it, memorize it, meditate on it.
  3. Surrender our lives to the leadership of the Holy Spirit - He reminds us of “everything” Jesus has said, teaches us “all things,” and guides us into “all truth.” ...how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him! (Mathew 7:9-11)
- But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. (James 1:6-8)
- But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things... (John 14:25)

## 3. Ask Whatever You Wish

- “If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish and it will be given you.” John 15:7
- “wish” - Greek (thelo) = to determine, to choose, to prefer, to be inclined to (Strong's)
- Of course, God is not a genie that blindly grants our every wish.
- However, if we are remaining in an obedient relationship with Jesus, and His words remain in us, God will answer our determined prayers.

- If (to the best of my knowledge) I am remaining in Jesus and His words are remaining in me, and my prayers are still ineffective, what should I do?
  1. Actually ask! - worrying and thinking about something is not prayer! (Phil 4:6, James 4:3)
  2. Honestly check for hindrances - offense with others, doubt, grieving the Spirit with sin?
  3. Keep asking! - sometimes God is testing our faith and perseverance. (Matt 7:7, Lk 18:1-8)

## **How May I Respond?**

- Submit to the fact that God can use you and wants to bear much fruit through your life.
- Repent, and be saved by Jesus' death and resurrection.
- Commit to dwell in Jesus' presence daily through obedience, righteous living, and a lifestyle of continual repentance.
- Commit to put Jesus' word into your life.
- Commit to not give up on prayer, but to pray Biblically and expect things to happen.