



PRAYER FOR NORMAL PEOPLE: BEFORE YOU PRAY

Sermon Notes

Text: Psalm 1:1-6

Intro:

Psalm 1:1-6

Prayer begins with listening

When you were a child, you never spoke a word that wasn't first spoken you to.

"Listening to God is the first thing, the second thing, and the third thing necessary for successful [prayer]." ~Richard Foster

Prayer is not what we do to get God to respond to us. It's what we do to respond to God.

Does unanswered prayer begin with God's unanswered word?

Meditation

Psalm 1:1-2

We think that we need to beg and plead in prayer to be blessed by God, but the blessings begin simply by hearing what he has to say.

Prayer in Jesus' Name

Matthew 6:9

Ephesians 2:18

When I pray in Jesus' name, God's love and attention are fixed on me.

John 14:13-14; 15:16; 16:23-24

Life Group Discussion

Warm up:

1. Have you ever tried to learn a second language? What's the best way to do it? What's hard about it? How is it the same or different from learning how to pray?

Study & Discussion:

1. What resonated with you from the sermon? What challenged or surprised you?
2. Read Psalm 1:1-6. Look at the imagery in this Psalm. What happens to a person who "delights" in and "meditates" on the scriptures? Does the word "meditate" bring up images of non-Christian spirituality? How come? What does Christian meditation look like?
3. Do you tend to see prayer as a way to get God to respond to you or as a way for you to respond to God? Is it both? Other than reading the Bible, how can we hear God's voice? How might you implement some listening practices in your own prayer routine?
4. Read John 14:13-14; 15:16; 16:23-24. What does it mean to pray in Jesus' name? Are there limits on the statement "whatever you ask..."? What are they?

Practicing the Way of Jesus: Scripture Meditation

Start your time by reading your Bible. You can read just a few verses, or a longer portion.

When you finish reading, consider what you just read. Think about a truth that stood out to you, and summarize it in your own words. Then ask yourself these 3 questions:

- 1) How does this truth help me thank or praise God?
- 2) What sin does it reveal that I need to confess?
- 3) What need does it identify that I need to ask God for?

Turn this praise, confession and request into a prayer. Then if you want, you can follow this by continuing with last week's practice of riffing on the Lord's prayer.

For more information and practical tips for prayer, head over to betheltab.ca/thewayofjesus and click on prayer.