

“Prayer: An Invitation to Intimacy”

August 3, 2025

John 11:41-42, Luke 11:1

Introduction:

Christianity is not first and foremost a religion, but a living, breathing relationship.

How is your relationship with Jesus?

“Lord, teach us to pray” (Luke 11:1):

“Now Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.”

A Disciple recorded in Luke 11:1

- The disciples had spent much time with Jesus, they had seen him perform healings, casting out demons and other wonders. They had sat at his feet as he taught with authority.
- Yet, they don’t ask, at least it’s not recorded, to be taught how to heal, cast out demons or perform other miracles. But they do ask “Lord, teach us to pray”?
- What’s so remarkable about this request?

The Stages of Prayer:

1. Talking to God
 2. Talking with God
 3. Listening to God
 4. Being with God
- In our broken condition, we struggle with prayer. It can seem elusive, difficult and awkward. It can feel extremely discouraging.
 - Prayer is intensely spiritual.
 - Yet, this is where we meet, and grow in our relationship with God.
 - We never mature beyond any stage, we will always need to “talk to God” and “talk with God” and “listen to God” - it’s the essence of relationship.

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Prayer Block: We Can Be An Easily Distracted People:

“Attention is the beginning of devotion”

- We have many things vying for our attention. What we give our attention, consistently, over a period of time is what it means to be devoted to something or someone.
- Distractions come at us around every corner. The hectic nature of life keeps us from even thinking of prayer, and when we do sit down to pray, we become distracted very quickly.

Prayer Pathway:

1. Get adequate sleep
2. Find a “secret”, or quiet place with minimal outside distractions.
3. Engage the body as you pray.
4. Transforming, or renewing our minds to see God in the everyday.

“If you then have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things that are above, not on things that are on earth”.

Colossians 3:1 (See also Romans 12:2)

How does this conversation connect to the larger context?

Prayer Block: We Can Be A People Consumed by “Doing”

“Let’s be honest, in our culture, here in Lancaster we are very comfortable, and feel good about ourselves, when we feel like we are being productive.”

- Prayer is intensely spiritual, and doesn’t produce tangible results. When we finish praying, the yard needs mowed, the email needs sent, and dinner isn’t made. In this sense, we can believe “prayer doesn’t get anything done”

Prayer Pathway:

- We renew our minds by recognizing that the **purpose of prayer** isn’t to get something, **but to be with someone**.

Let’s Join in the Practice of Prayer Together - Weekly Prayer Guide

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