

UGHH!!!

Uncomfortable/Grit Your Teeth/Hard/Holy
Sometimes Hard Things Are The Best Thing For Us

Prayer – An Ongoing Conversation

“And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. “This, then, is how you should pray: “‘Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.’ For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.”

MATTHEW 6:5-15

“Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.”

ROMANS 12:12

“The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.” **PHILIPPIANS 4:5b-6**

“Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.”

COLOSSIANS 4:2

“Who is the Almighty, that we should serve him? What would we gain by praying to him?” **JOB 21:15**

Prayer is hard. Even for those who recognize its essential importance and privilege, no one does it enough, no one does it just right. But the power of prayer is not in its performed perfection but in our personal practice. Often weak and barely articulate, our prayers are meant to be a bridge for real communication in real relationship toward real ends. It is better to think of prayer not as something we do and make perfect, but as a conversation we have that grows and deepens. When Jesus taught on prayer He warned against making it non-relational and encouraged pursuing our conversation with God with a certain attitude and focus. In light of His teaching we can confidently say that the key to effective prayer is:

1. not volume but voice
2. not words but will
3. not listing but listening
4. not coercion but confidence
5. “start somewhere & stick with it”

NEXT WEEKEND: UGHH!!! - “Participation”