

AMEN Week 1 – Is Anybody Even Listening?

There are many people in the world who pray on a daily basis. At the same time, there are just as many people who live with less confidence in fear that their prayers may not be heard. Prayer is an important part of every belief system. Communicating with the divine gives us a chance to be in community with our Creator.

As Jesus spent time with the disciples, there came a moment of discovery as they asked Jesus to teach them how to pray. The fact that the disciples themselves were unsure about how they should talk with God really gives us a chance to be vulnerable with our insecurities over prayer.

Over the next 7 weeks we're going to answer the most prevalent questions that we've all had about prayer. Today we want to approach the question, "Is anybody even listening?"

One of the most famous prayers of all time comes from Jesus himself. The prayer can be found in Mark 6.

The Lord's Prayer

"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. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one." Mark 6:9-13

As a young man I grew up with a love for cars. One night on an impulse I decided to drive thru the night to visit my first love. It was a long trip and somewhere around 2am on the GS PKWY my car broke down. In those days there was no cell phone. Without anyway of fixing the problem I knew I needed help. So at 2:30am I made a collect call to my dad. I'm grateful for my dad and I knew he would help me.

1. Prayer Begins with Calling on Dad

Prayer begins with a call to dad, our Father. When Jesus taught on prayer in this passage it was a revolutionary thought. The idea that we could speak to God as our dad and enter into a son to father conversation was socially unthinkable. To call God Abba Father or Abba Daddy was unthinkable.

God is our Father and gives us the permission, authority, and privilege to enter into a Father Son relationship with him. Jesus blew the roof off of conventional thinking and cleared the air on the most important aspect of prayer; we have a direct line to our loving and caring Father who is very much listening.

Question: What areas of your life are you trying to handle on your own that you have not trusted God with in prayer?

2. Dad Wants to Be Called

Luke 11:9-10 And so I tell you, keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you. For

everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened.

The flaw of our earthly father sometimes invites doubt and insecurity into our conversations with God. Your Father may be absent, uncomfortable, distant, abusive, hurtful, demanding, or disconnected but it cannot overcome the truth that God will never impose those qualities on his children. A perfect father always listens and does the right thing whether we understand what he has done or not.

Question: How has the relationship you have with your earthly father affected your expectations on your Heavenly Father?

3. Dad Wants to Meet You Where You Are

Luke 11:11-13 - You fathers—if your children ask for a fish, do you give them a snake instead? Or if they ask for an egg, do you give them a scorpion? Of course not! So if you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him.

Jesus invited us into a deep truth about prayer. Who is even listening when you pray? Your Father is listening. He wants you to call. He wants to be there because that's what a good father does.

Question: How has God already answered your prayers and provided for you in ways you didn't even think to ask from Him already?

Additional Help

A specific time to practice focused prayer is an important routine in the life of a believer. Setting a time to be with Dad helps us stay connected, not just when it's easy, but when life makes it difficult. Knowing that Dad wants to be called and wants to meet us where we are at should give us permission to create a consistent time to check in.

"Don't pray when you feel like it. Have an appointment with the Lord and keep it. A man is powerful on his knees." ~ **Corrie ten Boom**

What moment of your day are you most free from distraction and least pressed to be busy?

Where is your sacred place to be with God in your home?

How can that space and time be filled with the real conversation that you want to have with Dad? Fill that moment intentionally and make it a regular moment with your Father.