

## **Weekly Study of Sunday's Message.**

**Sunday February 9, 2020 "Don't Stop Believing: How to Pray Bold Prayers. What is prayer."**

### **I Intro.**

Welcome to the weekly devotional that gives you some specific things to work thru from the message this past Sunday. Whether you were able to attend the worship service or not, this devotional is free-standing and you can still use it to help you dig deeper into your own spiritual walk. Take as long as you need to dive into this material and feel free to share it.

### **II Sunday.**

Sunday we began our three week series on the study of prayer: "***Don't Stop Believing: How to Pray Bold Prayers***". Now you've got the song stuck in your head for the rest of the day. Studying ABOUT prayer is always such an unusual endeavor. It's like blueprints about dancing. Yes it's good to know some of the mechanics and specifics of prayer. But, prayer is as much a 'felt' thing as it is knowing all the info and the in's and out's of prayer. Knowing details about prayer can turn it into a kind of routine and passionless act, rather than having a conversation that builds and grows a relationship. So, in that tension we want to both talk about prayer, and also have a moment where we walk through the practice of prayer.

So, first...to awaken your perception of what prayer is.

**What is prayer to you?**

**What helps your ability to pray, and what inhibits it?**

Sunday we used the very familiar passage in **Luke 11:1-3** to give us a model prayer, called "*The Lord's Prayer*". And an understanding of why we should feel open to pray. So, read that passage and we'll use it to give you an opportunity for a guided prayer.

**What jumped out to you about this teaching about prayer?**

**What does it reveal to you about the nature of prayer?**

A few truths that come out of this passage are elements that Jesus said can make prayer more powerful. These are; focusing on the nature of God, who he is, whatever work he has been doing to right and restore all of creation, help us be a part of it. Grow within us a contentment that is satisfied with only what we need...daily. And to live a life of radical forgiveness and a well-formed spiritual maturity. This is the life God calls us to. And Jesus says comes from a vital and active prayer life.

**How do those look for you in a healthy meaningful prayer life?**

The following section of that passage simply stated that if we pray in the spirit, for the things God desires for us, then God will give us exactly what we need.

**What does that look like for you?**

**And what helps you in your prayer life distinguish between needs and wants?**

Kal did this during the service, and we want to give you some time to actually walk through a time of guided prayer. In the elements below, do one section at a time, spending as long as you need walking through the questions for each thought.

**1. Think and meditate on God.**

**Who is God, what does he mean to you?** What is your understanding of, relationship with, God right now? If you're struggling with your closeness to God, then voice that.

**2. What are some of the things happening around you you're concerned about.**

What is heavy on your heart/spirit. **Family, friends, our city, the country, the world.** How are you carrying those, and what do you need in the midst of them? Talk with God about those things.

**3. What are some personal needs.**

What are you struggling with in your regular needs? What are some things that keep you awake at night? **Health, finances, relationships, important or life changing decisions.**

Identify and pull these things out in the open, set them before God, what you're wrestling with, options you have, how God can help you.

**4. Where have you messed up...SPECIFICALLY?**

What things have you allowed, crept into your life that ought not be there? Habits, practices, patterns of behavior, and how have you been justifying them. Ask for honesty of spirit, and courage, to see what might be painful to see. Ask God for help to grow the ability to see them before they take hold. And the strength to not let them take root or turn into actions.

**5. Where have others hurt you.**

These may be open wounds or sensitive scars. You were betrayed, lied to, judged, abandoned, disappointed, or just wronged. Where are you chained to things that happened in the past, but you just haven't been able to let go of them yet? Where are you harboring resentment and bitterness, unforgiveness and you can feel it turn parts of your soul your heart, dark...hardened...cold?

Bring them out into the light and talk to God about them.

**6. Lastly, where is sin crouching at your door.**

Where do you think you could, are moving into, or just struggling in an area you know isn't healthy for you or wise? There is a relationship you know you shouldn't enter but you're sliding there? You're holding grudges, bitterness, resentment, judgmentalness, and it's taking root and turning into behavior. You've acted or said things you shouldn't have because of that hurt. Where do you need insight, wisdom, discernment, courage to finally say "no" to some unhealthy things? And possibly saying "yes" to some healthy, better habits, people in your life, and lifestyle that you've been avoiding for too long. Where can God give you what you need to build strength within you to fend these off.

**7. Close with gratitude.**

Lastly, where can you identify, feel, express to God, some things you've taken for granted, and just in a heartfelt way thank God for those things. What in your life do you take for granted, think you've earned or you're owed, and you haven't stopped and just expressed gratitude for those things.

Go over all the things you can express gratitude for, and let God know you know it's from him.

This is rooted in The Lord's Prayer and is a template to help walk through an effective time of prayer.