

Prayer

Luke 22:39-46

FINDING
RHYTHM

LIFE UNDER JESUS' EASY YOKE



Prayer is talking to God. We all know that—but we might not appreciate is how necessary and *natural* it is to have this conversation. Have you seen those adorable videos on YouTube? “Dad Has Full Convo with his Baby” or “A Babbling Conversation with Dad.” (Take a moment and watch them right now!) These are children learning to talk to their father who is the image of God. Is any skill more vital? Communication and relationship make life rich. They help us enjoy the good times and endure the bad times and make all our times meaningful. So too does our communicative relationship with God.

1. Watch one or both of the YouTube videos above and then list all the parallels you can see between these children learning to talk and we children of God learning to pray.
2. Peter Kreeft says, “Prayer is the most realistic thing in the world to do. It is our acknowledgment of reality; our honesty with reality; our right response to reality.”
 - Do you agree with him? In what ways is his assertion true?
 - If his assertion is true, how realistic are you being in this season of life? Is your prayer life reflective of “capital R” Reality?
3. Read the story of Jesus’ prayer in Gethsemane. What do you find most striking and instructive about it? List all the good lessons about prayer that this incident offers.
4. We note in Gethsemane that Jesus first prayed for the cup of God’s wrath to pass from him, contrasting his will with the Father’s will. Then, a short time later, he simply prayed, “If this cup cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done”—not even mentioning his will. We likened this to the difference between what some call “Stage 1” and “Stage 2” spirituality:
 - Stage 1: certainty; knowledge in the mind; obedience by discipline of the will
 - Stage 2: mystery; knowledge of the heart; obedience from deep transformation of the will
 - Have you experienced growth into Stage 2? How so?
 - In what ways do you still struggle with Stage 1?
5. Another way to see these different stages is in the definition of prayer offered in the Westminster Shorter Catechism: “Prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God.” In Stage 1 we offer our desires as prayer requests; in Stage 2 we offer our desires in surrender. What is one area of life in which God might be calling you to Stage 2 surrender?
6. Yet another lens is AA Recovery Step 11: “Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, praying only for knowledge of His will and the power to carry that out.”
 - If this were your real aim in prayer, how would it change the way you pray?
 - Close in prayer by presenting your requests, but also by surrendering your will to God and seeking contact and communion with him.