

Prayer

Motivation to Pray Without Ceasing (Part 2)

February 13, 2011

Text - Various

Scripture Reading - Psalm 27:1-14

God did a work in my heart two weeks ago at the DGM Pastor's Conference

- Hope he'll do the same for you
- <http://www.desiringgod.org/resource-library/conference-messages/by-conference/2011-pastors-conference>

4 truths that changed my prayer life, *hopefully* forever

- 1) We are completely and totally DEPENDENT on God to do anything worthwhile for Him, therefore there is NOTHING more important that we can do than pray
- 2) Though we should ask God for EVERYTHING in prayer, the main reason we should pray is to FELLOWSHIP with Him
 - a. When I go to pray the first thing that comes to mind are the needs of myself and other people
 - i. Morning - myself and family (including extended)
 - ii. Day - Church (including outreach)
 - iii. Night - Both
 - b. Though I knew, prior to the conference, that an important part of praying is fellowshiping with God, I didn't practice it like I should
 - i. ACTS
 - ii. I ACTed quickly to get to supplication
 1. I thought it was the most important
 - c. *ACTing is not only the most important thing we do in prayer, it is the greatest thing we can do for other people as well*
 - i. ACTing is the most important thing we can do in prayer because it is fellowshiping with God and that's what eternal life is all about
 1. **Matthew 13:44-46 (ESV)**
⁴⁴ "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure

hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. ⁴⁵ "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, ⁴⁶ who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it.

2. **1 John 1:3 (ESV)**

³ that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.

3. **John 17:3 (ESV)**

³ And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

4. **Philippians 3:7-8 (ESV)**

⁷ But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸ Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ

5. **Philippians 1:21 (ESV)**

²¹ For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

6. **Romans 11:33-36 (ESV)**

³³ Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! ³⁴ "For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?" ³⁵ "Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?" ³⁶ For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

- ii. ACTing is the greatest thing we can do for others as well

1. The greatest gift we can give to others is to know our God in a deep, personal, and intimate way.
 - a. "The greatest need of my people is my personal holiness." Robert Murray McCheyne
 - b. **Exodus 33:7-11 (ESV)**

⁷ Now Moses used to take the tent and pitch it outside the camp, far off from the camp, and he called it the tent of meeting. And everyone who sought the Lord would go out to the tent of meeting, which was outside the camp. ⁸ Whenever Moses went out to the tent, all the people would rise up, and each would stand at his tent door, and watch Moses until he had gone into the tent. ⁹ When Moses entered the tent, the pillar of cloud would descend and stand at the entrance of the tent, and the Lord would speak with Moses. ¹⁰ And when all the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the entrance of the tent, all the people would rise up and worship, each at his tent door. ¹¹ Thus the Lord used to speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend.
 - c. **Exodus 34:29-35 (ESV)**

²⁹ When Moses came down from Mount Sinai, with the two tablets of the testimony in his hand as he came down from the mountain, Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God. ³⁰ Aaron and all the people of Israel saw Moses, and behold, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come near him. ³¹ But Moses called to them,

and Aaron and all the leaders of the congregation returned to him, and Moses talked with them. ³²

Afterward all the people of Israel came near, and he commanded them all that the Lord had spoken with him in Mount Sinai. ³³ And when Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil over his face. ³⁴ Whenever Moses went in before the Lord to speak with him, he would remove the veil, until he came out. And when he came out and told the people of Israel what he was commanded, ³⁵ the people of Israel would see the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses' face was shining. And Moses would put the veil over his face again, until he went in to speak with him.

d. **Acts 4:13 (ESV)**

¹³ Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus.

e. **2 Corinthians 3:18 (ESV)**

¹⁸ And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

- iii. Francis Chan agreed that the greatest gift we can give to others is to know God is a deep, intimate, and personal way.
1. That's what people are looking for when they come to church
 2. It was why Francis inspired me the most

3. Francis' Challenge - Pray ONLY Psalm 27:4 for one week
 - a. **Psalms 27:4 (ESV)**
⁴*One thing* have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple.
4. What is the one thing we keep asking God for?
5. Note the crazy context of David's prayer
 - a. **Psalms 27:1-4 (ESV)**
¹Of David. The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? ²When evildoers assail me to eat up my flesh, my adversaries and foes, it is they who stumble and fall. ³Though an army encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war arise against me, yet I will be confident. ⁴*One thing* have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to inquire in his temple.

3) If we're ABIDING in Jesus we should be confident that He WILL answer our prayers

- a. Francis Chan spoke about his own personal journey in prayer shared a bunch of wonderful stories of answered prayers in His life
 - i. *"Jesus loves me this I know because He answers my prayers"*
 1. vacation \$ ("Francis spend this on your family")
 2. driver (for an honorarium)
 3. car rental guy (broke down in a minute)

4. garage (don't let me waste these two hours)
 5. drifting girl and gas pedal (mom was mad)
 6. book sale (2 million)
- b. He is surprised when God DOESN'T answer his prayers
 - i. Praying with elders for a sick person
 - c. He didn't believe the key was his praying *but his abiding*
 - i. **John 15:5-7 (ESV)**
⁵I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit,.... ⁷If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.
 - ii. Expand on this next Sunday
 - d. Abide in Jesus, pray with confidence, and WATCH (Miller)
 - i. **Isaiah 64:4 (ESV)**
⁴From of old no one has heard or perceived by the ear, no eye has seen a God besides you, who acts for those who wait for him.
 - ii. Paul Miller's been watching 50 prayers for more than 10 years. It's exciting; they're building; God's working.

4) We need to ORGANIZE and PRIORITIZE our petitions

- a. *If prayer really matters, if prayer is truly our ultimate weapon, then we need to make sure we're using it well.*
- b. Do you ever feel like you have so many people to pray for you don't know where to start?
 - i. Pray through church directory
 - ii. Prayer cards for those closest to you

How this week was different

- Prayed more individually than ever before
- Prayed more with Jess and the kids than ever before

- o Talk more about this in two weeks
- Tried to make prayer half my quiet time
 - o Read, prayed, read, prayed
 - o Only agenda fellowship with God
- Scheduled prayer first each work day last week (despite having been gone)
- Didn't attempt anything for God without prayer
 - o Prayed before every e-mail, phone call, etc.
- Tried to make prayer half my sermon prep
 - o Spent as much time praying as prepping for men's retreat
 - o Forgot my bag and didn't matter!
- Organized and prioritized my petitions
- Prayed with as much fervency and faith as I could muster *believing that my prayers REALLY mattered*
 - o David Ronoh's time off
 - o Lots of answered prayers at men's retreat
 - Robert