

## “Prayer as Relationship”

Romans 1:9-10, I Corinthians 1:4, Ephesians 1:15-16, Philippians 1:3, Col. 1:9, I Thess. 1:3, II Thess. 1:11

Sunday, November 29, 2009

### Digging Deeper:

For personal devotion or small groups, November 29, 2009

### Getting to Know You

1. Of your various priorities, which one is most important to you?
2. Do you think your best friend would say the same thing about you?
3. Have you ever wondered if God had priorities? If he does, what do you think might be most important to God?

### Getting to Know the Scriptures

1. Pastor Sam suggested that The Garden of Eden, The Nation of Israel in the Old Testament, The coming of Jesus Christ, and Heaven all have one thing in common. What did he say that was? (If you forget, take a look at your sermon notes).
2. God has literally moved heaven and earth to have a relationship with you. John 3:16 reminds us of the great cost of this friendship to God. If you think about what it takes to make and keep a good earthly friend, would you classify yourself as a good friend of God? Do you talk often? Get together? Share secrets? Make plans?
3. II Timothy 3:16 reminds us that all scripture is the very life-breath of God. Have you ever considered that the scriptures are God’s primary way of communicating with you? Have you generally thought of Bible reading and praying as 2 separate things?
4. Psalm 32: 6-8 helps us to understand that prayer is the assumed method of living the Christian life. But, appropriately, we learn this truth in the scriptures. What if God’s intention is that the Bible is His half of the conversation and our prayers are intended to be a response to what we learn in his Word? How would that change your prayer life?
5. How often do I barrage God with my thoughts (nothing wrong with that by the way Philippians 4:6) without ever talking with God about what is important to Him? How can I know what is important to God? He has given me his revelation through the scriptures! The principles outlined there teach me what God values. Therefore, how can I pray without reading God’s word?

### Some Practical Application

1. Prayerfully consider if you have been a “good friend” of God. Have you talked frequently? Spent time together? Shared dreams and plans? Or have you largely ignored the offer of his friendship? This would be a good time to remember the part of the Lord’s Prayer which says, “...forgive us our trespasses...”
2. Spend some time reading in Psalm 119 and notice that the scriptures are mentioned in nearly every verse.
3. Go to Psalm 18, read one verse at a time, and then begin by thanking God for what you learn in that verse. If you really try, you’ll be surprised at how much you and God have to talk about. (Psalm 18 is pretty long, so if you don’t do more than a few verses at a time, its ok).

4. Spend some time listening. Simply ask God to speak to you through his Spirit and His Word. Don't forget to say thank you as you respond.
5. Save these notes! Perhaps the Lord will use them to teach you even more.

## Prayer as Relationship

### I. From Shot in the Dark to \_\_\_\_\_

- a. "I prayed once and it didn't work, so...I quit."
  - b. Our happiness is not the most important thing in God's world...\_\_\_\_\_ is! And God always blesses his mission!
  - c. We talk to God all the time about what's important to us, but what's \_\_\_\_\_ to him?
  - d. If you study prayer in the scriptures, you can know.
  - e. God is all about His Mission, What is It? Living in \_\_\_\_\_ with His People!
  - f. The mission of God has always been to live in right relationship with his people
    - i. Garden of Eden, Israel, Jesus Christ, Eternity
  - g. The prayers of the Bible orbit around the Mission of God
  - h. I should pray about everything, The scriptures clearly teach this. (Philippians 4:6)
- But as my prayers fulfill the mission of God, they are blessed by God. If in the course of his mission I have ease, then good. If in the course of his mission I have suffering, so be it, but the most important thing to God is not my happiness, it's his mission!

### II. From Checklist to \_\_\_\_\_

- a. What if we viewed our relationship with God more through the lens of friend?
  - i. Talk regularly, hang out, share secrets, listen, do stuff...
  - ii. One problem, God doesn't "tweet" and we won't run into him at the mall
  - iii. I need a daily reminder to pray, then spend the day with my friend.
  - iv. Romans 1:9-10, I Corinthians 1:4, Ephesians 1:15-16, Philippians 1:3, Col. 1:9, I Thess. 1:3, II Thess. 1:11, etc...

### III. From Textbook to \_\_\_\_\_

- a. We've been taught to separate our Bible reading and our prayer
- b. What if we embraced God's word less as a textbook, and more as his \_\_\_\_\_?
- c. We are suckers for special revelation
- d. But God has given us his inspired word God not as apt to \_\_\_\_\_ in your ear as he is to speak to you in the way he has always chosen to speak to his people, through his \_\_\_\_\_—his written word.
- e. God is not obligated to do anymore than he has already done. (II Tim. 3:16)

- IV. From Ignore to \_\_\_\_\_
- a. [If I pass you in town...] how rude if you speak and I ignore you
  - b. God's word is \_\_\_\_\_ of the conversation. He has spoken to you, are you being rude?
  - c. (Psalm 119: 10-16)
  - d. Our prayers are simply intended to be our \_\_\_\_\_ to his word.
  - e. Maybe less about what's on my mind, and more about what's on \_\_\_\_\_?
- V. From my Ideas to \_\_\_\_\_
- a. Praying Scripture—an exercise.
  - b. Psalm 16
  - c. Cure for wandering minds, not knowing what to say, not knowing where to begin, wondering if I'm doing it right...