

PRAY FIRST

SERMON SERIES

WEEK 1 | GETTING TO KNOW GOD THROUGH PRAYER

WHY PEOPLE DON'T PRAY MORE

1. They're not sure they know how to pray
2. They get bored or distracted while trying to pray.
3. They think their requests are too small for God.
4. They're not sure their prayers will make a difference.

WHAT IS PRAYER?

Prayer is communicating with God.

*Give ear to my words, O LORD, consider my sighing. Listen to my cry for help, my King and my God, for to you I pray. In the morning, O LORD, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation. **Psalm 5:1-3***

HOW SHOULD WE PRAY?

Talk to God with gut-level honesty.

Moses returned to the LORD and said, "O Lord, why have you brought trouble upon this people? Is this why you sent me? Ever since I went to Pharaoh to speak in your name, he has brought trouble upon this people, and you have not rescued your people at all."

Exodus 5:22-23

*"And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men.... And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words." **Matthew 6:5,7***

Pray about everything that matters to you.

*Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. **Philippians 4:6***

*Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. **1 Peter 5:7***

Pray continually.

*Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. **1 Thessalonians 5:16-18***

*As she kept on praying to the LORD, Eli observed her mouth. Hannah was praying in her heart, and her lips were moving but her voice was not heard. **1 Samuel 1:12-13***

Listen for God's response.

*And after the fire came a gentle whisper. When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave. **1 Kings 19:12b-13***

*My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. **John 10:27***

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is prayer?
2. How do you communicate with God? What is effective and meaningful to you?
3. Since we know prayer to be communication between God and us. How do you know or feel that God has heard your prayer?
4. What do you pray about the most? What's your biggest prayer need? (Spend time praying with members of your group as you discuss).