

# Discussion Questions

September 3, 2023

## The Practice of Prayer

### A Journey through Prayer - Steve Michiels

1. What was your first memory of prayer?  
When did you first begin to pray?
2. What was the greatest answer to prayer you have ever received?
3. What prayer (in your opinion and mind) has never been answered?
4. Which is easier for you – praying alone or praying with other people?
5. What tends to paralyze you when it comes to prayer?
6. What is your greatest distraction when it comes to prayer?

**Opening Prayer**

Dear Lord, I come before you today with a humble heart, seeking a deeper prayer life. I know that prayer is the foundation of my relationship with you, and I want to cultivate a rich and meaningful prayer life. Lord, I confess that sometimes my prayers are selfish and shallow. I often focus on my needs and wants, rather than your will for my life. Help me to let go of my ego and to pray with a humble and contrite heart. Give me the grace to persevere in prayer, even when I feel distant from you or my prayers seem unanswered. Help me to trust in your goodness and to know that you are always with me, even in the darkest moments of my life. Bind the Evil One when he tries to invade my thoughts. He has no power over me! Teach me to pray with patience and endurance and to seek your will in all things. Help me to pray for others as well as for myself and to seek your kingdom and your righteousness above all else. Lord, I ask that you bless my prayer life and make it a source of strength and comfort. Help me to draw closer to you through prayer and to experience the joy and peace that only you can give. In your holy name, I pray, Amen.

**Matthew 6:6-7**

"But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. 7 And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words."

**Acts 10:1-5**

At Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion of what was known as the Italian Cohort, a devout man who feared God with all his household, gave alms generously to the people, and prayed continually to God. About the ninth hour of the day he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God come in and say to him, "Cornelius." And he stared at him in terror and said, "What is it, Lord?" And he said to him, "Your prayers and your alms have ascended as a memorial before God. And now send men to Joppa and bring one Simon who is called Peter.

**God Fearing**

- Cornelius is what is known as a "God Fearer"
- By either instinct, nature or pre-disposition - or other factors, they have a bent towards God.
- They are not rebellious in nature, like some of us were
- Not fully knowing him but yet seeking Him
- They exhibit what Romans Chapter 2 says about the law being written on their hearts

**S. D. Gordon**

"The greatest thing anyone can do for God and man is pray. It is not the only thing; but it is the chief thing. The great people of the earth today are the people who pray. I do not mean those who talk about prayer. Nor those who say they believe in prayer; nor yet those who can explain about prayer; but I mean those people who take the time to pray."

## **Books that have made impressions on prayer**

- *Does Prayer make any difference* by Philip Yancey
- *Hudson's Taylor's Spiritual Secret* by Greg Lewis
- *The autobiography of George Mueller*
- *Abide in Christ* by Andrew Murray
- *Secret Power* by Dwight Moody
- *The works of E. M. Bounds*
- *God's Chosen Fast* by Arthur Wallis

## **Encouragements to Pray**

*"Seek the LORD while he may be found; call upon him while he is near... Isaiah 55:6*

*Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. 1 Thessalonians 5:16 – 17*

*Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working. James 5:16*

*Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. Romans 8:26 – 27*

*Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality. Romans 12:12 – 13*

*....praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints.... Ephesians 6:18*

## **Steve's Principles of Prayer**

- 1) Prayer seldom, if ever, just happens – you have to start, you have to try!
- 2) If you are waiting until you are Holy enough you will never pray
- 3) Prayer and purity go together! It's that Holiness thing!
- 4) It's a conversation not a tally sheet
- 5) Be impudent!
- 6) Be honoring
- 7) Be grateful
- 8) Stay steadfast
- 9) Come humbly
- 10) Trust no matter what