

Why Does Prayer Seem So Boring?

Lesson 02 of 05 in the series: "Prayer 30"

A. Prayer may seem boring because we seldom pray.

"...you don't have what you want because you don't ask God for it." James 4:2 (NLT)

"The seeds that fell among the thorns represent those who hear the message, but all too quickly the message is crowded out by the cares and riches and pleasures of this life. And so they never grow into maturity." Luke 8:14 (NLT)

"Keep watch and pray, so that you will not give in to temptation. For the spirit is willing, but the body is weak." Mark 14:38 (NLT)

Note: As with reading or singing, the only way to become better at praying is to actually pray.

B. Prayer may seem boring because we don't know how to pray.

"Once Jesus was in a certain place praying. As he finished, one of his disciples came to him and said, 'Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.'" Luke 11:1 (NLT)

Ten things we can do to make our prayers more interesting and effective:

1. We can schedule a time and place to pray where we can be quiet and still.

"...when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private. Then your Father, who sees everything, will reward you." Matthew 6:6 (NLT)

"Be still and know that I am God!" Psalm 46:10 (NLT)

"This is what the Sovereign LORD, the Holy One of Israel, says: 'Only in returning to me and resting in me will you be saved. In quietness and confidence is your strength. But you would have none of it.'"

Isaiah 30:15 (NLT)

2. We can be authentic.

"When you pray, don't babble on and on as people of other religions do. They think their prayers are answered merely by repeating their words again and again...Pray like this:" Matthew 6:7,9 (NLT)

3. We can praise God.

"Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy." Matthew 6:9 (NLT)

"With all my heart I will praise you, O Lord my God. I will give glory to your name forever, for your love for me is very great. You have rescued me from the depths of death." Psalm 86:12-13 (NLT)

4. We can surrender.

"May your Kingdom come soon. May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven." Matthew 6:10 (NLT)

"Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done." Luke 22:42 (NIV)

5. We can ask God to provide what we need.

"Give us today our daily bread." Matthew 6:11 (NIV)

"...give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread. Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you and say, 'Who is the LORD?' Or I may become poor and steal, and so dishonor the name of my God." Proverbs 30:8-9 (NIV)

6. We can confess and forgive.

"and forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us." Matthew 6:12 (NLT)

"When I refused to confess my sin, my body wasted away, and I groaned all day long. Day and night your hand of discipline was heavy on me. My strength evaporated like water in the summer heat. Finally, I confessed all my sins to you and stopped trying to hide my guilt. I said to myself, 'I will confess my rebellion to the LORD.' And you forgave me! All my guilt is gone." Psalm 32:3-5 (NLT)

"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."

Ephesians 4:32 (NIV)

7. We can ask God to protect and rescue us from the devil.

“And don’t let us yield to temptation, but rescue us from the evil one.” Matthew 6:13 (NLT)

“Therefore, put on every piece of God’s armor so you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil. Then after the battle you will still be standing firm... Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere.” Ephesians 6:13,18 (NLT)

8. We can give God thanks.

“Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.”

1 Thessalonians 5:18 (NLT)

9. We can pray for others.

“I urge you, first of all, to pray for all people. Ask God to help them; intercede on their behalf, and give thanks for them. Pray this way for kings and all who are in authority so that we can live peaceful and quiet lives marked by godliness and dignity. This is good and pleases God our Savior, who wants everyone to be saved and to understand the truth.” 1 Timothy 2:1-3 (NLT)

10. We can talk to God about what He showed us in our Bible reading.

“Make them holy by your truth; teach them your word, which is truth.” John 17:17 (NLT)

“All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.” 2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NLT)

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Connect Group Questions:

1. Why do you think prayer seems boring to many people?
2. Read Mark 14:38 & Luke 8:14. Why are we often reluctant to pray?
3. Discuss the following ways to make our prayers more interesting and effective. Which of these seem most helpful to you?
 - We can schedule a time and place to pray where we can be quiet and still. (Matthew 6:6, Isaiah 30:15)
 - We can be authentic. (Matthew 6:7)
 - We can praise God. (Matthew 6:9, Psalm 86:12-13)
 - We can surrender. (Matthew 6:10, Luke 22:42)
 - We can ask God to provide what we need. (Matthew 6:11, Proverbs 30:8-9)
 - We can confess and forgive. (Matthew 6:12, Ephesians 4:32)
 - We can ask God to protect and rescue us from the devil. (Matthew 6:13, Ephesians 6:13,18)
 - We can give God thanks. (1 Thessalonians 5:18)
 - We can pray for others. (1 Timothy 2:1-3)
 - We can talk to God about what He showed us in our Bible reading. (John 17:17, 2 Timothy 3:16-17)
4. Pick three or four of the items from the list above, and spend 15 minutes as a group praying together (i.e. 3 minutes praising God; 5 minutes praying for needs within your group; 4 minutes giving thanks; 3 minutes asking God for protection from the evil one for our church, our leaders, and our pastoral staff).
5. Who can I be teaching to pray? What would keep me from doing so?