

We Value Outward Focus and Transformational Prayer

Message 1 of 4 in the series: "Values"

A. Our values matter.

Values = deeply held principles, beliefs, and commitments that motivate people to act one way or another. Values also guide an organization's actions, define its identity, and shape its culture. At Centerpoint Fellowship Church, our values come from God's Word, and our organizational values mirror personal Christian values because we are the church. **"All of you together are Christ's body, and each of you is a part of it."** 1 Corinthians 12:27 (NLT)

Life Application: Good values enable us to make good decisions. **"Wise choices** will watch over you. Understanding will keep you safe." Proverbs 2:11 (NLT)

Life Application: Good values enable us to work together in unity. "Is there any encouragement from belonging to Christ? Any comfort from his love? Any fellowship together in the Spirit? Are your hearts tender and compassionate? **Then make me truly happy by agreeing wholeheartedly with each other, loving one another, and working together with one mind and purpose.**" Philippians 2:1-2 (NLT)

B. We value outward focus.

1. We value telling people everywhere about Jesus because Jesus commanded us to do so.

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in **Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.**" Acts 1:8 (NLT)

"Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Matthew 28:19-20 (NLT)

2. We value serving our local community and helping people in need.

"Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'" Matthew 25:34-40 (NIV)

3. We value welcoming newcomers/visitors and showing hospitality to strangers.

"Keep on loving each other as brothers and sisters. **Don't forget to show hospitality to strangers,** for some who have done this have entertained angels without realizing it!" Hebrews 13:1-2 (NLT)

"And so my judgment is that **we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God.**" Acts 15:19 (NLT)

4. We value equipping ordinary people to serve their communities, to share the Good News of Christ, and to make disciples.

"Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. **Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ.** This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ." Ephesians 4:11-13 (NLT)

C. We value transformational prayer.

1. We pray about everything.

"Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus."

Philippians 4:6-7 (NLT)

Note: God is always more willing to listen than we are to pray. “Then if my people who are called by my name **will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways**, I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and restore their land.” 2 Chronicles 7:14 (NLT)

2. We pray for God’s will to be done and for faith to trust Him when we don’t understand what He’s doing.
“Pray like this: Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy. May your Kingdom come soon. **May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.**” Matthew 6:9-10 (NLT)

“Father, if you are willing, please take this cup of suffering away from me. **Yet I want your will to be done, not mine.**” Luke 22:42 (NLT)

3. We teach people how to pray privately and how to pray with others.
“When you pray, don’t be like the hypocrites who love to pray publicly on street corners and in the synagogues where everyone can see them. I tell you the truth, that is all the reward they will ever get. But **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. When you pray, don’t babble on and on as the Gentiles do. They think their prayers are answered merely by repeating their words again and again. Don’t be like them, for your Father knows exactly what you need even before you ask him!”
Matthew 6:5-8 (NLT)

“As soon as they were freed, Peter and John returned to the other believers and told them what the leading priests and elders had said. When they heard the report, **all the believers lifted their voices together in prayer to God...**” Acts 4:23-24a (NLT)

4. Prayer changes us.
“‘And now, O Lord, hear their threats, and give us, your servants, great boldness in preaching your word. Stretch out your hand with healing power; may miraculous signs and wonders be done through the name of your holy servant Jesus.’ After this prayer, the meeting place shook, and **they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. Then they preached the word of God with boldness.**” Acts 4:29-31 (NLT)
“Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but **let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think.** Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.” Romans 12:2 (NLT)

Life Application: Values are “caught” more than taught. “He (Jesus) appointed twelve **that they might be with him** and that he might send them out to preach.” Mark 3:14 (NIV)

“You know the saying, ‘Four months between planting and harvest.’ But I say, **wake up and look around.** The fields are already ripe for harvest.” John 4:35 (NLT)

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Connect Group Discussion Questions:

1. Have you ever read Centerpoint’s values posted on our website or on the wall in our facility in Prattville? How important are values to us as individuals? ...to us as a church? (Proverbs 2:11, Philippians 2:1-2)
2. Why do you think our church’s organizational values mirror personal values every Christian should have? (1 Corinthians 12:27)
3. Discuss the following characteristics of an outward focused church:
 - We value telling people everywhere about Jesus because Jesus commanded us to do so. (Acts 1:8, John 4:35,)
 - We value serving our local community and helping people in need. (Matthew 25:34-40)
 - We value welcoming newcomers/visitors and showing hospitality to strangers. (Hebrews 13:1-3, Acts 15:19)
 - We value equipping ordinary people to serve their communities, to share the Good News of Christ, and to make disciples. (Ephesians 4:11-13, Matthew 28:19-20)

Why does our church value these?

4. Discuss the following statements regarding our value of transformational prayer:
 - We pray about everything. (Philippians 4:6-7, 2 Chronicles 7:14)
 - We pray for God's will to be done and for faith to trust Him when we don't understand what He's doing. (Matthew 6:9-10, Luke 22:42)
 - We teach people how to pray privately and how to pray with others. (Matthew 6:5-8, Acts 4:23-24)
 - Prayer changes us. (Acts 4:29-31, Romans 12:2)
5. How have you experienced values being "caught" more than taught in your life? (Mark 3:14)