The Discipline of Prayer

Brent Moody · Matthew 6:5–15

INTRODUCTION

- Prayer is essential to spiritual growth. That being said, I don't want us to think about it as like a law to keep or something to check off our to-do list.
- It is about relationship, it's about communication. It is about drawing near to God and him drawing near to us, and that is really the goal, not just a ritual to keep.

1 If We Are Unwilling to Change, We Will Abandon Prayer

- If we are unwilling to change, we will abandon prayer. If we aren't really willing to listen or submit to the Father's will, we don't really want to talk to him.
- When we don't want to do it, is probably when we need to do it the most.
- God is not afraid of our imperfections. He already knows them.

2 Prayer Without Regular Discipline

- What people tend to do is in desperation or in moments of weakness, when they realize they can't do anything themselves, that's when they cry out to God.
- That's a little bit like deciding I'm gonna go to run a marathon when I haven't run it all. I haven't trained for it.
- Without regular discipline, I mostly recognize my weaknesses in moments of trial that drive me to prayer. But the reality is I desperately need God when life is going well too.
- What God is really looking for is a relationship to build with us where we're seeing the quality of that relationship and the benefit of that relationship for our life.

3 Disciplined Prayer Is Frequent and Purposeful

Luke 18

- Disciplined prayer is going to be prayer that is frequent and purposeful. It's just a part of our daily life.
- Frequency in prayer will reveal any shallowness in my prayer life.
- It is a life of prayer expressed in multifaceted ways in all parts of our life. That's what it means to pray without ceasing.
- The important thing is that we're establishing a habit of communication, that there is a channel open between me and God at all times.

4 Disciplined Prayer Welcomes God's Presence in My Heart

Matthew 6:8; 1 John 5:14

- Disciplined prayer is prayer that welcomes God's presence in my heart.

- When we don't want to submit to the will of God, we are so hesitant to want to pray to Him.
- The point of prayer is not to inform God on the things in my life.
- It is an effort for us to lean on him rather than leaning on ourselves. And when we lean on ourselves, things just don't go very well.

5 The Elements of Jesus' Prayer

Matthew 6:9–15; 2 Corinthians 3:18

- He begins by honoring God. Hallowed be your name.
- Then he focuses on the progressing of God's kingdom in the world. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
- Give us this day our daily bread. Don't give us bread for the next month, year. Just today.
- In the nature of deliverance and mercy and even provision, there is an element of this that has to do with am I living like Jesus Christ?

6 We Need to Make Prayer Personal

Matthew 6:33; 1 John 5:16

- The way I go about this may be different than how you go about it, and that's totally fine.
- Pray with scripture. Read and meditate on a text prior to prayer. It'll keep us centered on things that are true and right.
- Be real with God. Be honest and open and trusting.
- Think about praying for people, not just events or things.
- Prayers for ourselves should emerge from recognizing our own weaknesses or needs. Our prayers for others should emerge from compassion and love and concern.

THE CHALLENGE

If we truly want to follow Jesus Christ and we truly want a relationship with God, then we'll want to talk to him.

MY NOTES