

A Flourishing Prayer Life

Psalm 92, Luke 18:1

It is a presumptuous person who thinks they can live without prayer. Some people call themselves Christians but they never take the time to communicate with God. As a result, their relationship with him fails to flourish in the way that it could or should.

God created us to know and enjoy the blessing of a personal relationship with him. In the Garden of Eden, Adam walked and talked with God without inhibition, and it was only when sin separated him from God that he hid himself. Many people still hide from God today, not realizing that through Jesus Christ they can be perfectly reconciled. This is what the Bible says: "Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart." (Luke 18:1)

Sadly, there are many who find prayer difficult and the reason why they lose heart is because wrong perceptions or traditions about prayer keep them starved of a personal relationship with God.

Jesus was in constant communication with the Father and never acted without his instruction. We can also read how Jesus communicated with those who were close to him. He didn't only teach his disciples spiritual truths, but he also talked naturally with them. They were able to be honest and open, and ask him anything.

This is a wonderful pattern of what our relationship with God can be like. Your communication with him need not be based on repetitious, religious prayers but instead you can enjoy a close, intimate relationship with him. You can enjoy taking time out to speak with the Lord while out running, driving your car or even sitting on an aeroplane. When your prayer life flourishes, you feel its effect across every area of your life.

Church Highlights

- The upcoming release of our new Hillsong Worship Album "Open Heaven / River Wild"
- Ps Brian's Book "Live, Love, Lead"

Pray Together

- **Salvations - that people come to know Jesus.**
- **Pastors Brian and Bobbie Houston and the launch of "Live, Love, Lead" across the world.**
- **For the multiplication of Connect Groups and Connect Group leaders.**

Nation Builders

We can make a difference as a connect group by praying for the Nation Builders causes we support and by giving together. Our offering extends the reach of our church locally to reach and influence the world for Jesus.

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Connection and Action

Questions to promote conversation and connection

Prayer

- Q** What's been the most life-changing thing you've learned about prayer this year?
- Q** Tell us about a prayer you've had answered this year.
- Q** Describe some of your most memorable best prayer moments.
- Q** How would you rate your prayer life at the moment? Are you happy with it? Why?
- Q** Are there things in your prayer life you can tweak? What are they?
- Q** What keys have you discovered to having a consistent and intimate prayer life?
- Q** Do you ever find it hard to communicate with God? What do you do to overcome that?
- Q** What things are you praying for at the moment? (**Leader:** Use this to pray for each other)

Bible and Belief

Questions to help believers develop a biblical world view

Read Matthew 6:5-15

- Q** What important lessons about the attitude and practice of prayer can we learn from v5-8?
- Q** Make a list of the items covered in the Lord's Prayer (v9-15), and the order in which they appear. What can we learn from this?
- Q** What does Jesus mean in v9 where he says "This, then, is how you should pray"?
- Q** What changes or encouragements do you draw from this passage for your own prayer life?

Read Matthew 21:22, Mark 11:24

- Q** What is the relationship between prayer and believing?
- Q** Why is believing necessary when praying?
- Q** How do we develop this kind of believing?
- Q** What do we do in the face of unanswered prayer?

Growing Leadership

Questions to help people grow as leaders

Leadership and Prayer

- Q** What things can you do as a leader to keep your prayer life fresh and moving forward?
- Q** From time-to-time, as leaders we need to lead a group in prayer. What are the keys to doing this successfully?
- Q** How can we help someone who finds it difficult to pray out-loud in a group?
- Q** What can you do to increase the prayer life of your connect group?
- Q** If you were teaching a new believer about prayer, how would you go about it?
- Q** How can we help people deal with unanswered prayer?

Pastoral Care

- We have a pastoral care team at church to walk alongside people through life's challenges
- With their permission, should anyone in your connect group experience sickness, death of a loved one, marriage challenges, or surgeries, please contact our church office:
Sydney 02 8853 5353, Melbourne 03 9720 2099, Brisbane 07 3422 8500, Newcastle 02 4927 1888