

Sermon Title: Growth Through Prayer

The Story of a man on his way to a meeting

- Every good joke has at least a hint of truth in them.
- I hope it made you laugh, I hope it makes you think next time you are driving around looking for a parking space, but most importantly **I hope that it makes you aware of God's involvement in every aspect of our lives.**
- Question: How good are you with comfortable silences?
- Is every moment that we are not praying a comfortable silence with God?

Dr. Sproul says “I don't think there is any area of the Christian life in which people are more weighed down by guilt than in the area of their prayer lives. Most Christians will readily confess that their prayer lives are not what they should be. And one major reason for this problem is that Christians don't really know how to pray effectively.”

James 5:13-18

While this passage isn't probably on anyone's top 5 list, it has some amazing things in it.

- **“The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.”**
- The story of Elijah and him praying for a drought and for rain.
 - **Prayer doesn't change God's will to match ours, prayer changes our will to match God's.**
 - A modern-day scenario to understand prayer
- Our biggest problem with prayer often arises when we think that we know better than God.

If we ask the question does prayer change things, we must answer with a resounding yes. **Prayer changes things, and prayer changes us.**

Max Lucado said, “Our prayers may be awkward. Our attempts may be feeble. But since the power of prayer is in the one who hears it and not in the one who says it, our prayers do make a difference.”

One more answer to the “Why do we pray?” question: **because prayer is a privilege.**

- Prayer is our direct link to the creator of the universe, the being that all of us are drawn to, and because of what Jesus Christ has done for us, we have direct access to God.

How should we pray?

- If you struggle with prayer, you are not alone, Jesus' disciples asked him to teach them how to pray.
- The story is in **Luke 11:1-10**
 - Acknowledge who God is
 - Confess and repent for what we have done
 - Give Thanks for all that God has done for you
 - Supplication: Asking God for what you want and need.
- If you are struggling with how to pray, think back to and use this ACTS method of prayer
- Don't just ask God for something once and give up. **Jesus says that we need to ask with shameless persistence**

A few more practical tips for this morning:

1. Set aside time each day to pray.
2. Go to a quiet place to pray.
3. Pray out loud.
4. **Pray through things.**

Challenges:

1. Pray for at least 3 minutes a day, every day this week.
 - a. You can add this to your Bible reading time you set aside last week.
2. Ask your Bible study accountability partner, to be your prayer accountability partner.
 - a. If you completed last week's challenge, this one will be quite easy.
3. **If you do not believe that prayer changes anything, then please talk to someone about that this week and ask yourself why you believe that.**

Inspirational Movie Clip

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