

Prayer

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I. Introduction.

A. Text: John 15:1ff.

II. It is through prayer that we acknowledge our dependence on God to produce fruit in our lives. We have no plan B. (Galatians 5:22-25; Luke 11:5ff)

A. Abiding in Christ means that we renounce any self-sufficiency and experience and wisdom that we have and recognize our dependence on God.

1. We tend to be self-reliant and depend on ourselves to handle things.
2. We also tend to ask God for help in the things we think we can't handle, but not in the things we think we can handle.
3. We need God to enable us to live the Christian life. We look to Jesus for everything we need- we don't have to find it in ourselves.

B. Prayer is the tangible expression of our dependence on God. Our battles are won in dependence on God, not by our strength. (Exodus 17:8ff)

III. Prayer is an expression of confident trust in God. (Hebrews 10:19ff, 9:7)

A. Because of Jesus' blood, we have confidence to enter the throne room of God in prayer with boldness.

1. We tend to have confidence before God based on our performance.
2. The spiritual disciplines are helpful to us, but they do not gain us merit points with God.
3. Jesus' blood never changes depending on our performance and that is why we can have confidence in our relationship with God even when we have failed. Jesus bought and paid for every prayer that you will ever have answered. (2 Corinthians 1:20; Matthew 28:20ff; Acts 1:8; Genesis 12, 22:18)
 - a) Any success that we have in ministry is because God has promised that all the nations will be blessed.

B. We can pray for God to fulfill His promises with confidence through Jesus.

1. There are some general promises in the Bible that we all have inherited.
2. There are some specific promises that are made to certain people that we do not have a claim to. But sometimes God subjectively lays these promises on our hearts for us to claim- we need to be careful with this, but it does happen. (Isaiah 43:3-7)

Application questions:

1. What does it look like to renounce self-sufficiency in our lives?

2. What are some practical ways that we can depend on God for everyday life?

3. Why can we pray to God with confidence whether or not we have failed morally or spiritually?
