We Are Glad *You* Are Here

Sunday, November 8, 2026

sermon: "The What, How, and Why of Prayer" - Ephesians 6:18-20

Big Idea: "Lord, teach us to pray" (Lk. 11:1).

I. The What of Prayer (vv. 18-20)
- A. For many people prayer can be seen as nebulous or abstract, but prayer is meant to be very practical and relational. Prayer is not about formulas, but about a humble heart dependent on God (cf. Lk. 18:9-14).
- B. In prayer we are:
  1. Communicating with God (cf. Matt. 6:5-8) – Prayer is relational in that we are focusing exclusively on God.
  2. Dependent on God (cf. Matt. 6:9-13) – Prayer is a recognition of our need for God's power, provision, and presence.
- C. The what and how of prayer can seem mysterious, but prayer itself is not meant to be a mystery reserved for a special class of spiritual elites. Prayer is a joy for all of God's people.

II. The How of Prayer (vv. 18-20)
- A. There is no one way to pray. We see many examples and types of prayer in the Bible (petition, intercessory, worship, thanksgiving, etc.). Some common elements we see are:
  1. Praying in the Spirit (v. 18) – This is a reliance on God's presence and direction as we submit to His Word.
  2. Pray always (v. 18) – Regular times of prayer are crucial, but this is more about a consistent attitude of prayer.
  3. Perseverance in prayer (cf. Lk. 18:1-8) – Don't. Give. Up.
  4. Praying attentively (cf. Matt. 6:7-8) – Be wary of rote, repetitive prayer that avoids engagement.
  5. Praying in faith (cf. Js. 1:5-8) – Trust in God's goodness.

III. The Why of Prayer (vv. 18-20)
- A. We pray for several reasons: To connect with God, to bring our needs before Him, to lift others in need, to cry out to God for mercy and justice, to name a few. But all prayer should seek to:
  1. Glorify God.
  2. Strengthen our faith and witness (vv. 19-20).
  3. Build up the church (cf. Eph. 1:15-18).
  4. Grow in our relationship with God (cf. Lk. 11:1).

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