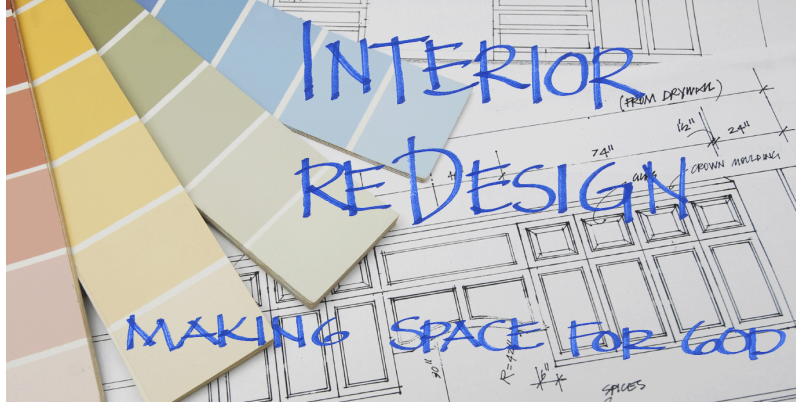


LIFE Community Sermon Notes



The Heart's True Home

Matthew 6:5-15

Prayer

5" And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. 6But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. 7And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. 8Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

9" This, then, is how you should pray:

" Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
10 your kingdom come,
your will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
11 Give us today our daily bread.
12 Forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.
13 And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one.^[a]

14 For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.
15 But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

LIFE Community Sermon Notes

Sunday, Feb 17

Big Idea: When we pray from our hearts, God changes our hearts and His will is accomplished in us and through us.

Key Verse:

Matthew 6:6

But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Opening Question: What would you like your prayer life to be like?

Questions in **bold** below are suggested focus questions.
Sections in *italics* and/or parenthesis are for the leaders.

Read the passage.

Discussion Questions

1. Discuss: “Prayer isn’t for people, prayer is for God.”
2. Why is the prayer life we desire so difficult to attain?
3. **Remind yourself of the three things Bryan highlighted about prayer from this passage. Which one stood out to you the most? Why?**
4. **How do we protect our prayers from becoming rote, ritualistic or meaningless?**
5. Foster says: “In prayer, real prayer, we begin to think God’s thoughts after Him; to desire the things He desires, to love the things He loves. Progressively, we are taught to see things from His point of view”. In essence prayer changes us from within. Are we expecting this change when we pray? How can you prepare yourself better to be changed by God?
6. **Bryan listed five ways to pray in his message: simple prayer; petitioning prayer; listening prayer; reflective prayer and breathing prayer. Which type of prayer caught your attention? Which will you try to do as a group? Which will you try to do as an individual?**
7. As a group take some time to stop and pray together. I was struck on Sunday by the drama and how each person prayed as though God was not in the room (until the last one). The actor playing God in the drama reminded me that God is waiting to speak to us, listening to our prayers, but wanting us just to stop and listen. If you had not already decided to, stop and listen as a group. Sit comfortably in your group, take some time to de-stress and clear your mind. Then read the verse from Jesus’ template for prayer: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name”. Now take some time and invite your Father in heaven to come and speak to you. Listen! After some time (you decide as a group) have someone close the prayer time and then share what you think you heard God saying.

Leaders Notes

1. *This series is followed up on Sundays with breakout classes. The booklets are called “Making Space for the Shepherd. Booklets from these classes are available online or in the office for the leader. There are some great follow up exercises in the booklet to keep your group on track.*
2. *There is a resource library in 2 Militia with some good resources to use.*
3. *Additional resources on Simplicity, Solitude and Silence:*
 - a) *Invitation to Solitude and Silence—Ruth Haley Barton*
 - b) *Celebration of Discipline—Richard Foster*
 - c) *Simplify—Paul Borthwick*

Retreat Options

- *Steve Macchia’s LTi program is one of the retreat and spiritual formation programs that Tom referenced. Their Soulcare retreat is the silent retreat the staff went on. Find out when the next retreat is and consider joining it as an individual or as a group. We will be running a retreat for Grace Chapel people on March 15th. It will be a morning retreat at the church.*
- *Grace Chapel is working on a silent retreat for individuals and groups. Stay posted for when this is available.*
- *February 12-16 will be a time of sacred spaces at Grace Chapel. At set times the church will be open for people to come in and spend some time in solitude and silence with God. Make us of this time.*

Books on Prayer

- *Prayer—Richard Foster*
- *Fresh Wind Fresh Fire—Jim Cymbala*
- *No Holds Barred: Wrestling with God in Prayer—Mark D Roberts*
- *The Works of John Wesley Volumes 11-12 contain prayers for families, children and a collection for each day of the week.*