



Outward Prayer

Week 5 – Prayer – 3/29/26

Outward Prayer – Praying the Bible

Problem

One problem many people have in prayer is just, getting in a “rut,” feeling stuck with prayer.

- This can be the case with Outward, but also Upward and Inward.
- We tend to pray the same old things about the same old things.
- This causes a lack of motivation and our minds to wander.
- That ever happened to you? It has happened to me!
- It’s not that bad to pray about the same things, that is our life.
- But we often get bored when we pray the same way, over and over, about the things in our life.

Solution

A great solution to this is, – pray the Words of Scripture.

- Read the Bible and pray it as God’s prayer book to us!
- A helpful resource on this is *Praying the Bible* by Donald Whitney.

In the book, Whitney says that praying the Bible is, “a simple, permanent, biblical solution” to the problem of being bored with prayer. (p.26)

Why is Praying the Bible so Impactful? (Benefits)

1. Confidence

When we pray the Bible our prayers, we gain confidence because our prayers are based on God’s inspired Word.

“Praying the Word of God means your prayers include inspired words...there is a supernatural quality to the words of Scripture that you pray. Jesus said, “The words

that I have spoken to you are spirit and life” (John 6:63). When you pray the Bible, you aren’t just praying ordinary words; you are praying words of spirit and life.”

(Whitney)

The Psalms are a great to pray Scripture because they were inspired for the purpose of being reflected back to God.

- God gives us the words he wants us to say, sing, and pray.
- Someone once said, “There is a Psalm for every sigh of the soul.” In the 150 Psalms there is the whole range of emotions we experience.

2. Freshness and Newness

It is easy to get in a “rut” with prayer, saying the same things in the same ways. When we pray the Bible, our prayers seem more fresh and new.

- We pray Biblical topics about the things going on in our lives.
- And we start to see new things to pray as we work through a passage in prayer.
- We pray new things that are on the heart of God.

3. Relationship (conversational prayers)

When we pray the Bible, our prayers begin to take on more of a relational quality.

- We read God’s words to us and we respond by reflecting them back to God.
- So it feels more like a conversation with the Lord, working through a passage in prayer helps us interact with God in new ways.

So how do we practice Praying the Bible?

The process is basically taking the words of the Bible and using them to inform and prompt your own words back to God.

- I have modeled this a few times in class, start or end.
- A great place to start is the Psalms because they are a book of prayers.
 - Psalms to start with are 23, 51, 103, 139, and 145.
- Read a couple verses, and then pray back the truths to God... whatever comes to mind.
- It may be a praise, confession, or a request for you or someone you know.
- If nothing comes to mind or the verse doesn’t apply, just move on.
- When you are done with what comes to mind, don’t wander, just read the next verse and then pray your prayer based on what you see, and then repeat the process until you are done.

Try it out!

- Stay in this room or quickly go somewhere in the church/outside, Psalm 117 may be open or hallway or lounge.
- 15 minutes.

How did it go?

- You can also pray other parts of Scripture, like a rich New Testament letter, and you can also do this in a group or with a friend or spouse.

Class Summary

There are three categories of prayer,

1. **Upward Prayer** - adoration and thanksgiving. Praising.
2. **Inward Prayer** - confession, repentance, assurance. Confessing.
3. **Outward Prayer** - asking, supplication as bringing requests to God. Asking.

Check in

- To wrap-up our series I would like to finish where we started.

When we started this series we used Tim Keller's boat metaphor, book *Prayer*

- This is to check-in on how prayer is going in our lives.
- He says think of your soul as a boat.
- Think of one of those Viking ships with sails for catching the wind and also people who rowed to get more speed.
 - So this boat has rows and sails.
- There are four categories of the prayer life in this boat metaphor.
 - **Sailing?** Going well, but lack some consistency,
 - **Rowing?** Disciplined, but feels like doing it on own strength.
 - **Drifting?** Lack motivation, consistency, and a plan.
 - **Sinking?** Prayer life non-existent and feel like spiritually sinking.

We said that healthy prayer is combining sailing and rowing.

- Healthy prayer is rowing, hard work, as you sail, relying on the Spirit.

- Prayer takes work and discipline, which is the rowing part.
 - But it must be empowered by the Spirit, which is the wind in the sails.
 - And we have been praying that, during this series, God will give us a fresh wind in our prayer sails as we row.
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- One encouragement for us is to return to this metaphor from time to time to help us evaluate how things are going.
 - But hopefully you have received some helpful ideas and good encouragement in this prayer series.
 - And I pray that the Spirit would continue to work in us, to help us stay refreshed and encouraged in our prayer lives.

Resources

Praying the Bible, Donald Whitney

Whitney Videos: <https://vimeo.com/showcase/3940017>