

Let's Discuss...Prayer

PART 3_Devotion vs Obligation



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Scriptures mentioned:

Then He returned to His disciples and found them sleeping. "Couldn't you men keep watch with me for one hour?" He asked Peter. "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."
Matthew 26:40-41 NIV

...pray without ceasing...
1 Thessalonians 5:17 ESV

Episode Summary

In this episode we discuss the length of our prayers, and how that can differ between us as we develop that muscle. We also talk about shifting from viewing prayer as an obligation to an act of devotion. Rather than prayer being a "tick box" activity that we do in the morning and then move on, it should be something that comes from a place of love and "never ceases".

Let's Discuss...

- Have you ever fallen asleep praying? Yeah, us too.
- Has prayer ever become a "tick box" exercise for you? How do devotion and discipline differ from obligation? What do we do if we don't "feel" like praying?

Don't burn out; keep yourselves fueled and aflame. Be alert servants of the Master, cheerfully expectant. Don't quit in hard times; pray all the harder. Help needy Christians; be inventive in hospitality.

Romans 12:11 MSG

- Greg said that he changed his mindset toward prayer after he sensed God say to him, "I don't care about that one hour if you're not going to give me the rest of your time". What does it look like to give God the rest of our time?
- Jemima says, "Prayer isn't for God, it's for us". Why do you pray? What does prayer accomplish?
- Tito mentions that even if we're struggling, we can come to God and have a real conversation with Him in prayer. Do you find it easy to do this? To talk to God as honestly and openly as you would a good friend?
- The Psalms offer many great examples of being brutally honest with God. Sometimes, in the process of doing so, the psalmist is reminded of the goodness of God. Check out the journey David takes in Psalm 13...

*How long, LORD? Will you forget me forever?
How long will you hide your face from me?
How long must I wrestle with my thoughts
and day after day have sorrow in my heart?
How long will my enemy triumph over me?
Look on me and answer, LORD my God.
Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death,
and my enemy will say, "I have overcome him,"
and my foes will rejoice when I fall.
But I trust in your unfailing love;
my heart rejoices in your salvation.
I will sing the LORD's praise,
for He has been good to me.*
Psalm 13 NIV

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Let's Pray...

Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly.
Matthew 11:28-30 MSG

- Have you burned out on prayer as an obligation or religious duty? God invites all of us who have been worn out to come to Him, to find real rest in His Presence. Ask God to reveal the unforced rhythms of His grace to you. The fruit of His Presence is freedom, and as we spend more time with Him our lives will be evidence of His love for us.

Let's Go Deeper...

- ***Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God*** by Timothy Keller [book]
- ***Praying Like Monks, Living Like Fools*** by Tyler Staton [book]
- ***How To Pray*** by C.S. Lewis [book]
- ***The Way of Ignatius: A Prayer Journey Through Lent*** by Gemma Simmonds [book]
- **Brian Morykon – Crafting Authentic Prayers** by *Renovaré Podcast* with Nathan Foster [podcast]