

THE LORD'S PRAYER: WEEK ONE

The Disciples ask Jesus to teach them how to pray; the Lord's Prayer was his answer. Why did they ask? Were they FRUSTRATED by prayer? Why would you ask for his help? What drives you to your knees? Just fears/worries that impact you or do you hunger for something more? Face it: we are all over the map in prayer. We have questions:

How does it work? Is there a correct way? What is its purpose? Are any subjects out of line? Do we pray only for those we know? If God already knows what we need, why pray at all?

WHEN JESUS PRAYED...they had a FRONT-ROW SEAT to see the GREATEST PRAYER-ER who ever lived. Prayer drove Jesus. It was as natural for him as breathing. Prayer wasn't an ISOALTED ACTIVITY but a WAY OF LIFE. He didn't focus on using the right words but being honest with God. The intimacy he had with God was so contagious that it prompted their request.

What moves you the most about Jesus' praying?

PRACTICING HEAVEN NOW...yet many people lack discipline. They barge in on God, unload their load and give God a few seconds. To them, prayer is like a VERTICAL E MAIL, just firing off emergency messages to God.

Quote...Richard Rohr on prayer:

Prayer has been trivialized, turned into a way of getting what we want. It isn't a technique for getting things, a pious exercise that makes God happy, a requirement for entry into heaven. It is more like practicing heaven now.

Practicing heaven now! The Lord's Prayer is fine-tuning a method; it is a reminder of PRAYER'S TRUE AUDIENCE. We are seeking God, a God who is holy and worthy of our trust. It takes practice, intentional focus, and time for reflection. We must center ourselves and remove distractions.

What is your biggest struggle in prayer? Staying focused? Does it feel more like a monologue than a dialogue? Do you struggle with low expectations? Having come to think that nothing will happen, nothing does happen.

DOES PRAYER WORK...prayer isn't about results but BEING WITH GOD. The only result that concerns God is a changed life. Prayer works not by changing God but by changing us. God may answer "YES, NO, NOT IN THIS LIFE" but we won't know unless we pray. No prayer goes unanswered. His answers are revealed in our lives, not sudden reversals of fortune.