

Praying the Heart of God Bible Study

Week 3

Joining God in What He's Doing

1. Reminders and Catching Up
 - Goal for the summer: To know and understand the heart of God so that our prayers line up with who he is, who we are in him, and what he is doing.
 - For the first two weeks we focused on who God is and who we are in him from Paul's prayer in Ephesians 3:14-21
 - He is our loving heavenly Father who wants us to know him
 - He knows us perfectly and we don't need to hide from him
 - As we grasp this, praying moves from talking with God to meeting with him to being with him
 - Our prayers consist both of times of intentional prayer and prayer throughout the day
2. Today's Focus: What God is doing from the heart
 - What we do reflects our hearts
 - *What are some examples from your own life of how what you do reflects your heart?*
 - God's One Thing: God is creating a people for himself by reconciling them to himself through Jesus Christ for his glory.
 - We see this in the entire story of Scripture
 - God has a role for you to play in what he's doing!
 - God invites you into his "grown up" world
 - *What are some examples of this from your own life?*
 - *Can you think of any places in Scripture where you see God doing this?*
3. The specifics of joining God in what he's doing (2 Thessalonians 1:11-12)
 - Their context was a lot like ours
 - Vs. 11: "With this in mind..." = Jesus is coming back!
 - Vs. 11: Pray that God would make you worthy of his calling
 - *What examples of "signs of grace" can you think of from Scripture?*
 - *How does having these desires change you as you interact with others?*
 - Vs. 12: Pray that God would bring to fruition your every desire for goodness and every deed prompted by faith
 - *How does this change your goals and what you spend your time doing?*
 - Vs. 12 – This glorifies Jesus! And you are glorified with him!
 - Vs. 12 – It's only and all by his grace

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“Brothers and sisters in Christ, at the heart of all our praying must be a biblical vision. That vision embraces who God is, what he has done, who we are, where we are going, what we must value and cherish. That vision drives us toward increasing conformity with Jesus, toward lives lived in the light of eternity, toward hearty echoing of the church’s ongoing cry, ‘Even so, come, Lord Jesus!’ That vision must shape our prayers, so that the things that most concern us in prayer are those that concern the heart of God. Then we must persevere in our praying, until we reach the goal God himself has set for us.”

This week:

1. What did you hear this week that really impacted you. How and why did it impact you? In what ways does it change how you think, feel, and what you’ll do?
2. If you are reading *Praying with Paul*, this week’s lesson lines up with Chapter 3 “Worthy Petitions.” Feel free to read it and answer the questions at the end of the chapter.
3. Pray 2 Thessalonians 1:11 for yourself. In what specific areas does God want you to grow so that you are “worthy of your calling?” Remember, this means that there will be signs of grace in your life, that you’ll become more like Jesus.
4. Pray 2 Thessalonians 1:12 for yourself. In what ways does God want you to be involved in what he’s doing? How does this prayer sharpen the ways you’re already doing this? Is there anything new he’s wanting you to do? Think in terms of within the church (with brothers and sisters) and in the world (those who don’t yet know Christ).
5. Remember that these are prayers, and that Paul says we have God’s strong grace to do these things. That means that you can’t change your heart or do it yourself, but that God is willing and able to enable you to become and do these things! How does knowing that you need God, and that he’s on the edge of his seat to give you all that you need, help as you pray these things?
6. Look back at the goal for this class. In what ways do you want your prayers to line up with God’s heart?