

A Lesson about Prayer

Read 1 Kings 18: 41-46

Introduction

If you love someone, if you have an intimate friendship with them, it's easy to talk with them. Conversation is not a burden, but something you enjoy and to which you look forward. Prayer is simply that same kind of intimate conversation with God. He loves you and wants not only to hear from you, but also to speak to you. Just like Elijah - when you pray, He will guide you and begin to change you into someone who wants what He wants, who understands and actually desires to do His will.

Prayer is not just asking God to give us things. Rather, prayer is an opportunity to shape our character and strengthen us spiritually. It builds our relationship with God. For God reveals His thoughts and will to our minds when we enter into intimate communication with him. Prayer should help us align our will with God's will, our requests and needs with His mission. And it's in prayer that we come before a God who knows us completely, all the good and the bad that is a part of who we are as sinful persons made in the image of God. That means that confession will naturally be a regular part of our prayers.

Often when we pray for the needs of others we may find that God is prodding us to be a part of the answer to that prayer. One way we do this is by serving others. People grow closer when they serve together. How could you serve someone in need? If nothing comes to mind, spend some time praying and asking God to show you who needs your help.

Getting Started

1. What one point resonated with you from this morning's sermon?
2. What does it mean to pray specifically? What makes that challenging?
3. In this passage, Elijah squats down to pray. What is he asking God for? Why was he squatting or, as the text says, putting his face between his knees?

Let's Get Personal

1. Would you describe your prayers more as aligned with God, or arguing with God?
2. Elijah prayed seven times for rain. What keeps you from persisting in prayer?
3. Describe a time when you got an unexpected answer to prayer.

Take the Next Step

1. What's one step you could take to build your endurance for labouring in prayer?
2. What is God leading you to pray for? (A person, a situation, a dream?)

Renew Your Mind

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective. James 5:16