

Communicating with God First

1 Timothy 2:1-10

Introduction

Many Christians use prayer as a last resort. God is not invited into our lives on the front end. His involvement in our day to day experiences is sometimes an afterthought. But communicating with God should have high priority in our lives (1 Timothy 2:1). When we make the effort to talk with Him first about our circumstances, we honor His position in our lives as Lord.

Prayer is earthly petition for heavenly intervention. It is simply asking for heaven to invade earth. Paul lists in 1 Timothy 2:1 a variety of prayers, including entreaties (requests for our own needs), petitions (intercession for the need of others) and thanksgiving (praise offered to God for who He is and what He has done). Prayer then becomes an on-going conversation with God throughout our day. We talk to Him about our needs and the decisions we face, we raise up the needs we see in the lives around us, and all of this bubbles up into grateful praise for His gracious, loving intervention in response to our prayers. Through this constant communication with God, we not only call on Him to help, but we also set the stage for our own spiritual growth as we put Him first and acknowledge His central role in shaping our desires and guiding our decisions.

This privilege of prayer is made possible because of the mediator between God and man, Jesus Christ (1 Timothy 2:5). Because of His finished work on the cross, we have access to heaven. However, we must also do our part to make sure that nothing comes between God and us. Paul says that prayer should be lifted up with “holy hands...without anger and disputing” (1 Timothy 2:8). While Jesus is forever able to intercede on our behalf (Hebrews 7:25), we must also be willing to deal with sinful actions or attitudes in our lives that break the fellowship we have with Him and hinders His response to our prayers.

Getting Started

1. Share one take-a-way with your group that you received after listening to today’s sermon on prayer.
2. If prayer is an on-going conversation with God, who (besides God) do you have good conversations with on a regular basis? What are some of key elements of good conversations?
3. How might these elements of good conversations become a regular part of your life of prayer?

Let’s Get Personal

1. Based on what you heard from today’s sermon, why should prayer be a priority in your life?
2. When you are facing a decision, what do you typically do first? 1) Wrestle internally with the issue? 2) Process the concern with a friend or acquaintance? 3) Pray?
3. What are some of the struggles or obstacles you face in making prayer a priority in your life?

Take the Next Step

1. What could making “prayer as a priority” look like in your life? What kind of practices or disciplines could help prayer to become a priority in your life?
2. What will you do this week to make prayer a priority? How can your group help you with your action plan?
3. Today we heard about the importance of positioning ourselves so that our prayers can be answered? What actions or attitudes do you need to address to correctly position yourself?
4. While we should definitely make prayer a priority as individuals, we should also make it a priority in community. Take time to share one prayer request with your group so that you can pray for each other this week. Perhaps your group

would also like to try pairing off group members as prayer partners for the week. The assignment would be to follow up by phone with your partner during the week to check in on their prayer request and to pray one on one with them.

Renew Your Mind

"I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people..." 1 Timothy 2:1
