

## **“WHY PRAY”**

To ask “Why Pray?” may sound like a fairly simple question to raise, yet the reasons we pray are more important than the fact that we do pray. The most obvious answer to “why pray” is because prayer is the method we use to talk with God and have fellowship with him.

Other reasons we pray are to tell God what we think about him (adoration); to acknowledge the sin in our lives (confession); to thank God for what he’s done for us and given to us (thanksgiving); and to also ask God to do certain things for us and others (supplication). These reasons are also correct and valid.

However, I would like for us to look beyond these answers to “Why Pray?” and examine even more important reasons for praying. The most important reason for praying is that through praying we get to know God more fully and become more and more like him. Recently I read the following statement, “Five years from now you will be pretty much the same you are today except for two things: the books you read and the people you get close to”.

It is through spending time with God that we experience the joy of intimacy with him and our lives are impacted and changed. In the time we commit to being with him we discover that his will and desire for our lives is the very best of all possible options available to us.

To know God is to love him and to love God is to obey him. (John 15:10). Through obeying him we find that the character of our lives begins to resemble his. (Gal. 5:22-23).

We also pray to express needs and desires that we have, not because God doesn’t already know them because he certainly does, but because we need to be reminded daily that we are dependent on him for our very livelihood. (Acts 17:28). Someone has aptly labeled prayer as our “Declaration of Dependence”. God is pleased when we acknowledge him as our father-provider who desires to give his best to his children. As we mature in our prayer life we begin to experience more and more answered prayer because more and more we are prone to ask God for these things he truly desires to give us. (I John 5:14-15).

Finally, we pray because it is by our praying that we prompt God to do certain things in the lives of others. This kind of praying is called intercession. God always takes notice when we begin to genuinely love and care about others instead of just ourselves. When we pray for others we exhibit Christ-like character.

Praying for the right reasons will not only result in answered prayer, (James 4:2-3) but will be the avenue by which we experience intimacy with our heavenly Father and discover his very best for our lives. Through prayer we are able to experience more fully than any other time God's love for us and his presence in our lives.

“Believe somebody is listening. Believe in miracles. That’s why Jesus told the father who asked him to heal his epileptic son. Jesus said ‘All things are possible to him who believes.’ And the father spoke for all of us when he answered, ‘Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!’ (Mark 9:14-29) What about when the boy is not healed? When, listened to or not listened to, the prayer goes unanswered? Who knows? Just keep on praying, Jesus says. Remember the sleepy friend, the crooked judge. Even if the boy dies, keep on beating the path to God’s door, because the one thing you can be sure of is that down the path you beat with even your most half-cocked and halting prayer the God you call upon will finally come, and even if he does not bring you the answer you want, he will bring you himself. And maybe at the secret heart of all our praying that is what we are really praying for.”

Frederick Buechner