

BUILDING A LIFE OF PRAYER

Part 2 of YOU ARE ALWAYS ON MY MIND. Various Passages.
Peter Foxwell. Cornerstone Church. April 30, 2023.

A LIFE OF PRAYER

The apostle Paul wrote, “Pray without ceasing” (1 Thessalonians 5:17).

- We can make prayer a daily habit.
- We can pray anytime, anywhere, for any reason.
- We can make prayer an ongoing conversation with our Father in heaven.
- We can build a life of prayer.

A life of prayer is possible because Jesus made a way for us.

Hebrews 10:19 (NLT) And so, dear brothers and sisters, we can boldly enter heaven’s Most Holy Place because of the blood of Jesus.

Jesus saved us from a self-centered life of sin to live a God-centered life of prayer.

FOUR BENEFITS OF A LIFE OF PRAYER

After prayer, we can handle life’s challenges.

Hebrews 4:16 (ESV) Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

After prayer, we can face life’s stressors.

Psalms 55:22a (ESV) Cast your burden on the LORD, and he will sustain you.

After prayer, we receive God’s wisdom for life’s dilemmas.

James 1:5 (ESV) If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God ...

After prayer, we are protected from from our enemies - seen and unseen.

Ephesians 6:18 (ESV) ... praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. (See Psalm 59:1-2).

HOW AND WHAT TO PRAY

The disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray.

Luke 11:1 (ESV) “Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.”

Jesus taught his disciples how and what to pray - Matthew 6:9-13.

- Draw near to God - *“Our Father.”*
- Expect an answer - *“in heaven.”* God is infinitely good, infinitely powerful.
- Worship God - *“hallowed be your Name.”*
- Align your heart with God’s heart - *“your kingdom come.”*
- Ask for help - *“Give us this day ...”*

WAYS TO BUILD A LIFE OF PRAYER

Do this if you are new to prayer:

1. Pray for help building a life of prayer.
2. Make prayer a habit - pray every day for two months. Use a habit tracker.
3. Use the Lord’s prayer as your template. Build prayers on it.

Do this to make time for prayer:

4. Make time: get up earlier, scroll social media less, etc.
5. Put prayer into your daily schedule - like an appointment.

Do this if you are figuring out what to pray:

6. Trust the Holy Spirit to help (Romans 8:26-27).
7. Use a prayer journal.

8. Create prayer lists.

9. Turn Bible passages into prayers. Write your own prayers.

Do this to take your life of prayer to the next level:

10. Read books and articles on prayer.

11. Start a family tradition of prayer.

12. Join or start a prayer group.

13. Start praying out loud in small group, etc.

14. Pray out loud over friends in need.

15. Pray for “impossible” things.

16. Dare to use world-changing prayers. (<https://operationworld.org/>)

17. Come early on Sundays to pray.

18. Join our Prayer Ministry Team.

Do this if you sense a call to the frontlines of strategic prayer:

19. Step up. Be bold. Be devoted to prayer. Sacrifice time, sleep, food, energy, and emotions to stand in the gap.

I WILL BUILD A LIFE OF PRAYER

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, and by God’s grace ...

■ I confess my sinful lack of prayer. Forgive me, Lord. Change me!

■ I choose to build a life of prayer. I will make prayer a daily habit.

■ I choose to take my life of prayer to the next level. I will: _____

■ I believe I am called to serve as a world-changing intercessor.

CORNERSTONE GROUPS - TALK IT OVER

Pick one or more of these questions to discuss this week.

Review Sunday's teaching on multiple topics.

- Review Sunday's study guide or watch Peter's teaching on YouTube.
- What part of the teaching most impacted your thinking?
- Summarize the main ideas in your own words.

Prayerfully apply the insights of the teaching.

- In your opinion, why is it so challenging to build a life of prayer? Why do so many of us feel like failures in prayer? Why does it take so much energy to pray? Why can't we think of things to pray?
- In your experience, what have been the most helpful aids to building a life of prayer, e.g., using the Lord's prayer as a template.
- What do you think are the most strategic prayers we can offer at this time - given God's plans for the world, as well as the state of the world, of families, communities, church, etc?
- Take some time to pray together for these strategic issues. Be bold!

Pray together. Be bold.

This space is blank this week because your group is coming up with strategic prayers.

Preparation for Next Sunday - again :).

- Read and review Revelation 1-7.
- Read Revelation 8 several times.