

TWO WEEKS—LET'S TALK ABOUT PRAYER

By Bob Young

[Note: during the first two weeks of March 2021, I posted a number of videos related to prayer to my YouTube channel. The first week was devoted to "Prayer Principles." The second week explored the "Prayer Rhythms" that I use to enter God's presence in prayer each week. The notes below are brief summaries of the ideas presented in the videos. –by]

PRAYER PRINCIPLES

MONDAY—Entering God's presence

"If the soul be full of tumult and jangling noises, God's voice is little likely to be heard." – Alexander Maclaren

"Relax and drop everything, know that I am God." – Psalm 46:10

If your first priority in prayer is remembering and checking off a lengthy list of wants, making certain that you do not miss anything, you will likely struggle to listen, to hear. Can prayer be for us a formative, shaping encounter as it was for Jesus, for Paul, as it has been for many throughout the centuries? How?

*The most significant, continuing activity in my Christian life is prayer.
I continually report to the Sovereign Creator of the Universe, the Lord of Lords and King of Kings. I seek his advice, his perspective, we talk about what is working and what is not working.
Certain things are on the agendas for our meetings.
I express my gratitude and appreciation--his wisdom, his words, his works.
I am thankful for the opportunity to meet and for his help with managing life.
I ask for help, sharing my observations about weaknesses, sins, challenges.
I speak to him on behalf of others. I reflect on the past; we talk about life; I listen for my marching orders.
Sometimes I just sit in silence and humble myself in his presence.*

[My prayer life is characterized by what I call my "rhythms of prayer." Next week, each day, I will share those rhythms. This week, I share foundations, prayer that transports to the very presence of God.]

TUESDAY—Learning and Practicing God's presence

"If the soul be full of tumult and jangling noises, God's voice is little likely to be heard." – Alexander Maclaren

"Relax and drop everything, know that I am God." – Psalm 46:10

My first priority in prayer is not my prayer list – God is constantly available for another meeting if something comes up! I cannot help but adore, praise, marvel. God is God, always gracious, righteous, compassionate, protecting, delivering, saving. Ps. 116:5-7. Thus, I rest, for the Lord has acted with goodness to me, seeing and praising God for his actions, grateful.

The first priority of prayer is to enter, become familiar with, become comfortable in, God's presence. To recognize his presence, to relish his presence, unhurried, no agenda, no clock, "wasting time with God." What do I do in my leisure time? I enjoy simply spending time in God's presence.

All of this and more is involved in Ps. 46:10. Stop, recognize God, see God as God. Exalted. On my side, my protector.

[Next week, I will detail a process that focuses on God's presence. In my rhythms of prayer, over half of the days of the week are devoted to simply being in God's presence and seeking his heart, his will, his desires for me.]

WEDNESDAY—Reflecting God's presence [Word of the Week]

W.O.W. – Radiance [http://www.bobyoungrsources.com/articles/word-of-week_radiant.pdf]

[As part of this brief series focused on prayer, I share a model for rhythms of prayer. You can use it, adapt it, or develop your own rhythms. Let our first concern in prayer be to enter God's presence.]

THURSDAY—Celebrating God's presence

Introduction: Our Meeting

Here I am again, time to report in, update, review, regroup.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to help advance your cause, Lord of Lord, King of Kings. I am amazed at your wisdom, power, plans, strategies. I worship, praise and honor you – for who you are, for your words, wisdom, and works.

I want to think soberly and accurately –

[here's what I have tried to do, here's what has happened.]

Calm my doubts, forgive my lack of vision, my imperfections, my lack of focus. I want to be single-minded, tenacious in following you – loving you and loving neighbor.

I am ready for your marching orders, what is my next assignment? What should I be looking for? How do I move forward?

Whatever you give me to do, you know that I always need your help and the support of others. Help me see the future more clearly, even with my diminishing involvement, passing the baton.

I know that you already know what I want; show me what YOU want. Give me assignments to fulfill your will in this world. I am listening—silently reverent, contemplating, trying to understand, submitting, amazed that you want to meet with me personally.

I want to mention some things that make my heart heavy – illness, life-threats, struggles, those who are dropping out or weakening. Also, people who need support and encouragement – working to advance the gospel and the kingdom.

Keep me aware of eternity, reward my search for the lost, give me opportunities to advance my relationship with those you have already placed in my path.

[Remember the companion video studies next week -- seven days for unfolding the rhythms of prayer.]

FRIDAY—Recognizing and Enjoying God's Presence

An Invocation to Encounter and Reading Scripture: Welcome God

I sit alone,

Only my God is here,

Only my God is welcome.

In his presence, I seek his heart; he listens.

I open and read his book, and I listen.

And what I read and learn,

I teach.

[One more post this week, then each morning next week, seven days for unfolding the rhythms of prayer.]

SATURDAY

Today I share "Ten Priorities" around which I organize my life.

- God
- Relationships: Family, friends and Christian family, other acquaintances
- Life dynamics: Working, resting, serving
- Stewardship: I am responsible for the use of self, stuff, situation

PRAYER RHYTHMS

SEVEN RHYTHMS OF PRAYER

Developing a heart of **wonder and worship**

Developing a heart tuned by God's **wisdom**

Developing a heart that is committed to God's **will and way**

Praying for God's **work** in this world

Waiting and watching with God, with a heart listening to God's **Word**

Praying for God's **workers** in this world

Praying for our **world**