

Prayer and the Community of the Spirit Study Guide by Pastor Dixon
Pray Without Ceasing Series
Second of Four Presentations ~ Fall 2022

Overview

Prayer is a team sport. We pray for our community (narrowly and broadly defined), and we pray as a community. We see the communal dimension of prayer in the words Jesus taught us--"Our Father, who art in heaven...." We also see in Scripture numerous examples of individuals praying not only for others, but for people whom one might reasonably consider enemies! Prayer is community-focused from the ground up. While we often think of prayer in a very limited way as the gratitude or requests we direct to God, prayer is our response to a conversation or relationship initiated by God. Only because God drew us into relationship with the divine do we even have the ability or inclination to participate in that relationship through prayer. We are then encouraged to deepen and enrich our relationships with each other through prayer as an extension of God's love and care for us.

Scripture

[Luke 23:32-34](#) - Jesus praying for those who crucified him!

[Matthew 6](#) - Jesus teaching the disciples to pray the Lord's Prayer (Our Father) and at the same time warning them to pray in private.

[Luke 6:27-35](#) - Love, bless, and pray for even those who would curse you. This is what it means to pray as Jesus would have us pray!

Questions

1. When was the last time you prayed for an "enemy"? What did that prayer sound like? Was it more likely to change your heart or theirs or both?
2. In Matthew 6, we are given a very specific warning to keep our prayers private, but we pray together every Sunday in worship. Perhaps this is partially a warning about turning prayer into a show or a performance. How can we keep prayer sincere even when we pray together? How can we make sure we are talking to God (whether alone or communally) and not to each other, or simply for the benefit of those in earshot?
3. Who are the people in your life who have taught you the most about prayer? What have you learned from your team of prayer partners?