InterVarsity
RRR BCM

DEEPENING YOUR PRAYER LIFE

Prayer isn't a slot machine. It's a conversation. One that invites us to rely on our Savior. It's in prayer we move from desperate to hopeful. Terrified to courageous. Frazzled to peaceful. It's easy to miss a spiritual practice as accessible as prayer. We resolve to let others do the grunt work of prayer, asking them to pray because we believe they have better access to the throne room, but the truth is: we have unlimited access to the Father. He hears our prayers and they are powerful and effective. Sometimes we fret and worry never choosing a position of prayer. In worry, we spin our wheels and gain no ground. In prayer, we strengthen the soul of our faith and invite Jesus to have his way in our lives. There are no rules to prayer, but there are practices that may help connect us when we seem directionless such as:

Gratitude or Thanksgiving. *Thank Jesus for what he has done in your life. 1 Thessalonians tells us to rejoice. To celebrate what Christ has done in our lives both in our present privilege and hopes for tomorrow. (1 Thessalonians 5:17-18)*

Praise or Adoration. *Worship Jesus for who he is. Your Advocate. Your Hope. Your Truth. Your Compass. Your Savior. Your Companion. Your Redeemer. Full of grace and mercy. Abounding in love. Patient peaceful. (Psalm 48:1, 2 Corinthians 9:15)*

Confession. *Confess your sins to God. We thrive in our relationship with Jesus when we're honest. Honest with our sin, our doubt, and our fears. 1 John 1:9 instructs us, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Forgiveness and freedom in Christ are attainable in our confession and repentance.*

Intercession. *Don't just pray for yourself, pray for others. Our ears and eyes are bombarded with needs from those around us and stories from our news feeds. We aren't hopeless to help. We intercede, offering prayers to the Father to move and work on someone else's behalf. (James 5:16, Gal 6:1-2, Rom 8:26-27)*

Supplication. *Request God's help for yourself and others. Prayer isn't listing everything we want to make our life perfect and pain-free. It's communion with our Wonderful Counselor where we seek his will for life and ask for his unmistakable ways to be present in our situations. (Philippians 4:6-7)*

No matter if it's the first thing in the morning, muttered in the shower, before a meal, or throughout your day, seek a rhythm of prayer. You'll find heart and soul will flourish despite any circumstance or troubles as you confide in the Lord.

DEEPENING PRAYER

DISCIPLESHIP CYCLE:

HEAR THE WORD: Read and discuss Jesus's teaching on prayer to His disciples during the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 6:9-13. This prayer can also be found in Luke 11:1-4. How do you see examples of all five directions in this short, and simple prayer?

Pray then like this*: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.*

ACTIVE RESPONSE: Jesus goes in all five directions in this one prayer (i.e. gratitude, praise, confession, intercession, supplication, etc.). Choose one direction you typically don't follow and pray together right now as a practice. Each person pick a category and then pray out loud with each other.

DEBRIEF:
Why did you choose this direction out of the five categories?

How did it make you feel or think after praying in this chosen direction?

Believers have unlimited access to God through Jesus. What is one step you and your partner can take together to develop a better rhythm for prayer in your own life?