MESSAGE NOTES

Different: How The Church Lives – Part 13

***Talking With God***

**Matthew 7:7-12**

How do you and I pray? -- Do we pray with passion and persistence, expecting God will answer our prayers?

**If I am his disciple follower, Jesus tells me that…**

1. **I should ask God in prayer for the things I need because he promises that I will be heard and answered.**

Matthew 7:7-8: **7**“Keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you. **8**For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened.

**If I am his disciple follower, Jesus tells me that…**

**2. Because he is our father, God will not answer my prayers cruelly or capriciously, but God will give us good gifts when we ask him.**

Matthew 7:9-11: **9**“You parents—if your children ask for a loaf of bread, do you give them a stone instead? **10**Or if they ask for a fish, do you give them a snake? Of course not! **11**So if you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good gifts to those who ask him.

The Story of Abram in Genesis 15:1-3…

The story of the widow and the unrighteous judge in Luke 18:1-8…

The rest of the story of Abram in Genesis 15:4-9…

**Some reasons why my prayers may not be answered:**

* **Is there unconfessed sin in my life?**

Isaiah 59:1-2: Listen! The Lord’s arm is not too weak to save you, nor is his ear too deaf to hear you call. **2**It’s your sins that have cut you off from God. Because of your sins, he has turned away and will not listen anymore.

* **Am I living in obedience to God?**

1 John 3:21-22: 21Dear friends, if we don’t feel guilty, we can come to God with bold confidence. 22And we will receive from him whatever we ask because we obey him and do the things that please him.

* **Is my motive right in asking God?**

James 4:3: 3And even when you ask, you don’t get it because your motives are all wrong—you want only what will give you pleasure.

* **Is what I am asking consistent with God’s will?**

1 John 5:14: **14**And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us.

* **Do I have an uncaring attitude toward those in need?**

Proverbs 21:13: **13**Whoever closes his ear to the cry of the poor will himself call out and not be answered.

* **Is there any unresolved relational conflict in my life?**

1 Peter 3:7: **7**Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner *(meaning the more emotionally vulnerable partner)* and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

Every follower of Jesus who has had a crushing disappointment that prayer didn’t fix has at some point felt like giving up on prayer. When you and I feel like that, what are we going to do? Are we going to give up on God?

Instead of giving up on God, we’ve got to regroup and say, “What do I believe about this thing called prayer?” I would point us to Jesus’ words to ASK, SEEK, KNOCK, and hear Jesus speaking to some people whose shoulders may be sagging about the prayer thing. Jesus was saying, “I plead with you. Don’t lose heart in praying. Keep on praying.”