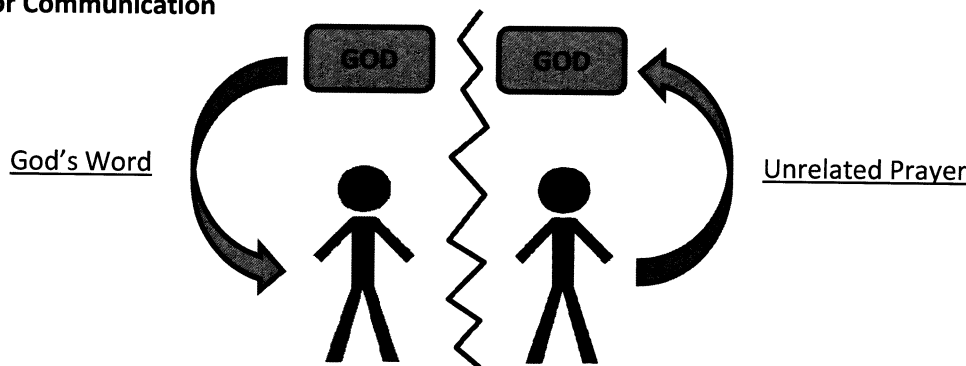


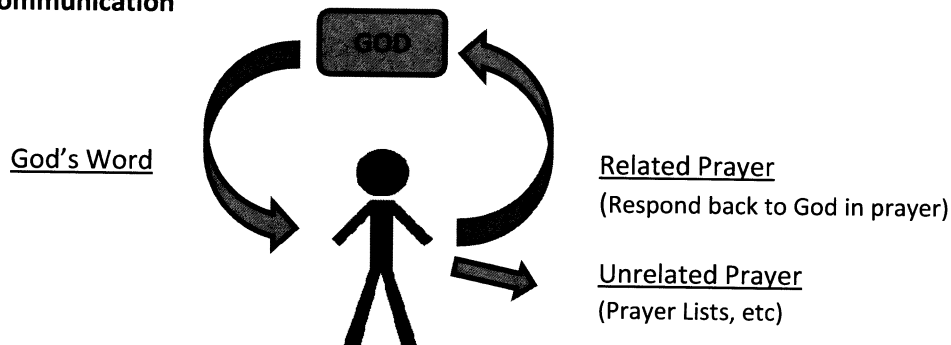
• **What is Prayer?**

- Bible - personal, communicative response to the knowledge of God...simply put conversation with God
 - David's Prayer (2 Samuel 7:18-27)
- Prayer:
 - Is properly recognizing our relationship with and to God
 - Is a nourishing friendship
 - Changes ourselves and others as well as things/situations/circumstances
 - Is a journey
 - Helps us endure
 - Is a refuge - Prayerful dependence on the grace of Jesus is the only refuge from sin
 - Allows us to enter God's presence if we depend on Christ's forgiveness and righteousness
 - Unites us with God
 - Awe, intimacy, and struggle yet the way to reality
 - Tim Keller – "There is nothing more important, or harder, or richer, or more life-altering. There is nothing so great as prayer."
- Responding to God
 - Scripture calls us into fellowship with God (1 Cor 1:9, 1 John 1:3)
 - What are the fewest elements you can have and still have fellowship with someone?
 - They talk to me as I listen and I talk to them as they listen
 - This applies to our relationship with God as well. God speaks to us through our daily reading in the Bible, and we talk to God by praying

Poor Communication



Effective Communication



- As you read and pray, listen for nudges from the Holy Spirit in your mind/heart. You become more adept at "hearing" God after months of personal time with Him in Scripture and prayer.

- Proverbs 30:8 - Give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread.
 - Poverty - I resent you. Riches - I forget you
 - The US seems to imply that all people would have what they truly need
- Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors
 - We cannot forgive others and to seek good for them , if we don't see our sin and haven't sought radical forgiveness from God
 - Regular daily confession to God should increase confidence and joy in life because we increasingly understand salvation by Grace and how amazing it is
 - Links our relationship with others tightly with our relationship with God
- Lead us not into temptation
 - Should not be led into temptation not that we should not be tempted
 - 2 categories of temptation:
 - Excess/Wealth which can lead us to think we don't need God
 - Adversity which can lead us to despair, give up hope, and become angrily estranged from God
- Deliverance from the evil inside us
 - Deliver us from the evil inside us
 - Deliver us from the evil outside of us
- For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever
 - Returns to the truth of God's complete sufficiency after focusing on self
 - Reminder nothing can snatch the kingdom, power and glory from God.
- 2 Types of Prayer
 - Individual Prayer
 - Can be done silently or aloud - just you and God
 - Group/Corporate prayer
 - 2 or more people praying together the same prayer
- **What Keeps Us From Praying?**
 - Lack of understanding of what prayer is
 - Incorrect view of prayer
 - The clearer our understanding of who God is and knowledge of him, the better our prayer life
 - Lack of faith in or love for God
 - Not spending time in His Word
 - Only talking to ourselves if we are not letting Him speak to us through His Word
 - Busyness
 - Self-sufficiency – we don't think prayer is important because we think we don't need God
 - Distracting thoughts
- Prayer should be both a job and a joy... a duty and a delight. It's a command but it is also talking with our loving Father, God of the Universe.

Resources on Prayer:

- Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God – Tim Keller
- A Simple Way to Pray – Martin Luther
- John Calvin's Four Rules of Prayer
- Online sermon series:
 - Vacate: The Secret of Prayer and Intimacy with God
www.watermark.org/dallas/series/100

Conversational Prayer

A Simple Way To Pray in Small Groups

A. Definition

- Talking to God in the same way we would talk to a friend who is in the room with us. We are less concerned with the wording and structure of the prayer and more interested in sincere, open communication with God.

Matthew 18:19-20

"Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them."

- Talking in a small group. 4-6 is optimum
- Talking in an informal, conversational style using our normal conversational patterns, tone of voice, and vocabulary. Say "I" when you mean yourself, "we" when you mean the group.
- Talking not only with God but also with others present. As we pray, we invite and expect that the Holy Spirit to be praying with us as well, guiding and edifying our prayers among us

Requires the art of listening both to the Holy Spirit and to one another

B. Basic Guidelines. Not rigid rules

- 1) Stick to the subject. Pray back and forth on a SINGLE subject, one person or situation at a time, in agreement until the subject is completed.
- 2) Everyone participates who so desires, but no one is forced.
- 3) No one monopolizes. Keep it brief, a sentence or a short paragraph. Silence is OK. Don't rush to fill it. Rest in it.
- 4) Listen actively. Pray silently with the person who is praying. Discipline ourselves to not think about what we will pray next.
- 5) Build upon the prayers of one another, as in conversation, so that you are knitting the short prayers into a broader and deeper one.
- 6) Don't close each short prayer in "Jesus' name, amen." This will foster continuity and the leader will close the entire prayer time at the end.
- 7) Use everyday language.
- 8) Pray spontaneously, not in a circle.
- 9) Pray loud enough so that others can hear you. Keep your head up.
- 10) Leader typically introduces topics or may solicit topics from the group. The leader also generally closes the prayer time as appropriate often when there is extended silence or if time constraints.

Topic for prayer today:

Pray about the things you learned at this conference (possibly the 1 thing that really struck you/convicted you and that you want to apply to your life going forward) and that God would help you be successful in them.

Some Other Possible Topics for Prayer:

- Thanksgiving. Thank God for His love, His forgiveness, the beautiful day, ways he is working in different lives, etc.
- Thank God for something that has happened in the past 24 hours.
- "Please help..." (yourself or someone else)
- Thank God for how He will meet those desires and requests, for His will to be done.