



Mustard Sermon Discussion Questions - August 1, 2021

Scripture Passages:

Psalm 28:7 (NLT) The Lord is my strength and shield. I trust him with all my heart. He helps me, and my heart is filled with joy. I burst out in songs of thanksgiving.

Romans 3:21-22 (NLT) But now God has shown us a way to be made right with him without keeping the requirements of the law... We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ..

Matthew 6:5-10 (NLT) When you pray, don't be like the hypocrites who love to pray publicly on street corners and in the synagogues where everyone can see them. (6) But when you go pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private. Then your Father, who sees everything, will reward you. (9) "This, then, is how you should pray: 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.'

John 8:19 (NIV84) Then they asked him, "Where is your father?" "You do not know me or my Father," Jesus replied. "If you knew me, you would know my Father also."

Matthew 26:39 (NIV84) Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will."

Warm Up:

Last week, Pastor Tom introduced the idea that *Faith is our connection to God*. What are some ways that you uniquely connect to God, through faith? (ex. nature, reading, people, etc.) How do you see your faith at work through those things?

Discussion:

1) This week's message focuses on the topic of prayer.

What are some of the things that come to your mind when you think about praying? How have you learned to pray?

2) In the beginning of his message, Pastor Tom reviewed the pillars of faith we have learned this summer:

Definition - Faith is the confidence that Jesus is who he says he is and he will keep every promise he has made to us.

Foundation - Faith is based on Jesus alone, who He is and what He has already done for us.

Directive - Faith always leads to action.

How do you see each of these at work in your life? How do you see them build on each other? If faith was removed from your life, what would remain? What connection do you see between these pillars of faith and prayer?

3) Pastor Tom told of a quote about the connection between the "with God" life and prayer. St. Teresa of Avila said, *"For prayer is nothing else than being on terms of friendship with God."*

What might it look like to have a friendship with God? How might you see that reflected through prayer?

4) Read Romans 3:21-22.

What does this passage say about our relationship with God and faith? How might these insights impact our attitudes toward prayer?

5) Excerpt from Pastor Tom:

Prayer is first about position, then about petition... We are getting ourselves in a posture, through prayer, of surrender to the will of God and in that place, we offer our requests, only then.

Do you find this to be easy or difficult? Why? Why is the order of position and petition important to your relationship with God?

6) Read Matthew 6:6, 9-10.

Why do you think Jesus used the word "Father" in these verses? What stands out about the position of prayer from these verses? What can we learn from Jesus' model here?

7) Excerpt from Pastor Tom:

The only thing, we truly have to offer God, the giver of all things, is our will... We do not say our children owe us. But at some point, the child will use his or her will, and will begin to make personal decisions to love you back. They decide.

Why might your personal decision of choosing to align with God's will be important for your relationship with Him? How might this impact your prayer? How might this impact your faith?

Next Steps:

Excerpt from Pastor Tom's message by Tozer:

What you think about when you think about God is the most important thing about you.

What do you think about when you think about God? How has this effected your prayer? How has this effected your faith? How has this effected your relationship with Him?

At the end of his message, Pastor Tom gave a couple of next steps:

***Pray through the Gospels** - Study the life of Jesus and pray as you read about what he said and what he did. Ask God to make you more like Him. Listen for checks to your will over God's will.*

***Learn God's will** - As this personal relationship with Jesus unfolds, you may find yourself struggling with what you want and what you believe God wants. This doesn't have to be complicated, at least in learning what God's will is. The battle will be in embracing God's will. (Inner prompting, affirmation of scripture, affirmation of healthy Christian community)*

Take some time this week to begin reading through the life of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew.