



Teach us to Pray - Pray First
Sermon Discussion Questions – Jan. 29

Scripture Passages:

Hebrews 11:1

Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.

Hebrews 11:3

By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.

John 1:3

Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.

Philemon 1:22

And one thing more: Prepare a guest room for me, because I hope to be restored to you in answer to your prayers.

Acts 7:58

dragged him out of the city and began to stone him. Meanwhile, the witnesses laid their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul.

Acts 9:1

. . . Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples.

1 Timothy 1:12-16

I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me faithful, appointing me to his service. 13 Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief. 14 The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. 15 Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst.

1 Corinthians 13:4-7

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. 5 It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. 6 Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. 7 It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

2 Corinthians 13:7

Now we pray to God that you will not do anything wrong.

Philippians 1:9-11

And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, 10 so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ,

Ephesians 3:16-17

I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love

Warm Up:

1. This is the last full week of our prayer and fast. How has your time been with the Lord as you have disconnected from the world and connected with God? What is one thing that you have learned about prayer or fasting during this time?

Discussion:

1. Pastor Tom starts this week off talking about how we use the word faith. How have you used the word faith? Have there been times in your life where you leaned on faith or seen faith as a last resort?
2. Pastor Tom rightly defines faith as to believe to the extent of complete trust and reliance. Do you believe in God and His abilities to the extent of complete trust and reliance? What might that look like practically to completely rely on God?
3. Read Hebrews 11:1 and Hebrews 11:3. Through faith we know that God established the world into existence and sustains everything. Though we live as people who lack faith in the day to day concerns of life.

Are there areas where you recognize that you are lacking faith in? How might these Hebrew verses challenge you?

4. Pastor Tom shows Paul's faith from the book of Philemon which can be read above. Paul lived in bold faith because he knew his God and he had faith in the power of prayer. When faced with a challenging situation in your day to day life, what is your common response or action? How might prayer speak into your situation?
5. Pastor Tom continues to highlight Paul's life and God's transforming power in his life through the Acts verses, 1 Timothy verse, and 1 Corinthians verse. God changed Paul's heart which changed the trajectory of his life completely. How has the Lord changed your heart? When is the last time God challenged your heart or wanted you to surrender something in your heart?
6. "When Paul found himself in prison, when Paul found himself in a trial, when Paul found himself discouraged or alone, his response was to Pray first, because Paul knew who he was talking to and Paul knew the God he was praying to had already saved him, so why would he not do it again" – Pastor Tom. What posture do you think one has to be in for their first response to be to pray? What are some ways that you could practice praying first?
7. "Beware in your prayers, above everything else, of limiting God, not only by unbelief, but by fancying that you know what He can do. Expect unexpected things 'above all that we ask or think"- Andrew Murray. What are your thoughts about this quote? What might it mean to expect unexpected things?

Next Steps:

1. Begin by reflection on the way you have used or reference faith recently. Be honest about how you really interact or use this word in your life.
2. As you are reflecting grab a notebook or journal and write down why you might have believed faith to be the way you have used it.
3. Next remember how Pastor Tom defines faith. To believe to the extent of complete trust and reliance. Begin to write down what is holding you back from having true faith.
4. Finally pray to God about what things you might need to surrender to live in true faith.