

Week 3 Handout on “Prayer”

If prayer is about “abiding relationship” with God, living in God’s heart, are you “praying without ceasing”? Reflect on the following quotes:

- Frank Laubach – missionary to Philippines in 1915; “to live in this hour in continuous inner conversation with God and in perfect responsiveness to his will.” Experiment on thinking of God each moment, each minute, each hour, each day?
- Madame Guyon (1648-1717) – “a continuous inner abiding.”
- Julian of Norwich (1343-1413) – “Prayer unites the soul to God.”
- Brother Lawrence (1611-91) – “an habitual sense of God’s presence”; “actual presence of God” = “an habitual, silent, and secret conversation of the soul with God.”
- Richard Foster calls us to “a practiced habit of divine fellowship” (128).

Outside the psalms, prayers and praying occur 140 times in the First Testament in prose sections. If you add the impromptu prayers of Jesus and the written prayers of Paul, Peter, and John, we have lots of examples to follow on how to pray. Reflect on the samples below on what they teach you about prayer.

- Numbers 12:13
- Genesis 32:10-13
- Jonah 1:14
- 2 Kings 18:14
- 2 Samuel 24:10
- 1 Samuel 1:10-11; compare 1 Samuel 2:1-10
- Nehemiah 1:4-11; compare Nehemiah 2:4 in context.

Do you have a plan for prayer that includes time, place, requests, answers? List your plan or determine one and write it down.

Bibliography

Richard Foster. *Prayer*. HarperSanFrancisco, 1992.

Richard Foster and James Bryan Smith, eds. *Devotional Classics: Selected Readings*. HarperSanFrancisco, 1993.

Moshe Greenberg. *Biblical Prose Prayer*. Berkeley: UC Press, 1983.

Rosalind Rinker. *Prayer: Conversing with God*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1959.

Phyllis Tickle. *The Divine Hours*. New York: Doubleday, 2000 (3 volumes). Or, annarborvineyard.org/tdh/tdh.cfm for online version that is free.

Philip Yancey. *Prayer: Does It Make a Difference*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006.

www.24-7prayer.com (see Prayer Wall).