

Discuss these statements with a neighbour:

‘Prayer is the *easiest* thing in the world... , prayer is the *hardest* thing in the world’

Intro

1. What is Prayer

-Speaking to God as our heavenly Father

2. Why do Christians Pray...?

-Because our God is a speaking God, and his people have always spoken to him,

-We are commanded to pray:

Romans 12 v 12: *be constant in prayer*

Colossians 4 v 12: *continue steadfastly in prayer*

Philippians 4 v 6 : *do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be known to God.*

-Because of Jesus - Jesus is our model prayer

-God hears and acts on our prayers

There is no tension or inconsistency between the teaching of scripture on God’s sovereign foreordination of all things and on the efficacy of prayer. God foreordains the means as well as the end, and our prayer is foreordained as the means whereby he brings his sovereign will to pass.

Packer, J (1993)

-A note on God’s will in prayer

-Prayer shows we depend on God, we are his creatures, it shows our thanks

-We are commanded to be thankful to God:

And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the father through him. Colossians 3 v 15-17

-We pray to praise and bring glory to our Great God

Praise the Lord! Oh give thanks to the Lord for he is good., for his steadfast love endures forever Ps 106

3. Who do we pray to and how?

-To God the father Romans 8 v15 Matthew 6 v 9

-In the power of the spirit – Galatians 4 v 6, Romans 8 v 26-27

-In the name of the Lord Jesus

4. What Stops us Praying – Why Prayer is a Struggle

-All Christians struggle to pray - including the apostle Paul!

I appeal to you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the love of the spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God. Romans 15 v 30

-Our fallen human nature affects our desire to pray

-Prayer is central to how we grow in grace

Prayer is part of the lifelong process whereby God weans us from the silliness and selfishness in which we live by our own fallen nature, and introduces us to the life of grace and glory.

Randall, J. (2020)

-Prayer is where the spiritual battle we face is fiercest - Satan hates prayer

*Satan dreads nothing but prayer. His one concern is to keep the saints from praying. He fears nothing from prayerless studies, prayerless work, prayerless religion. He laughs at our toil, mocks our wisdom, **but trembles when we pray.** Chadwick in Randall (2020)*

5. How can we encourage each other to pray

-The holy spirit strengthens us to pray:

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the spirit himself intercedes for us with groaning too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. Romans 8 v 26-27.

-Ask God to give you a desire to pray!

-Pray with other Christians, wherever and whenever

-Use the pattern of the Lord's prayer

- Use scripture in prayers

-Use resources to help you

-ACTS, adoration, confession, thanksgiving and supplication

-Don't give up

-Long standing problem? try kneeling..

'What a man is on his knees before God, that he is, and nothing more'

Robert Murray McCheyne