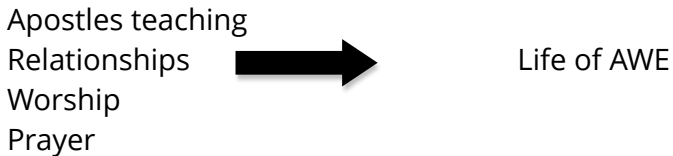


**East Cooper Baptist Church**  
**October 2, 2016**

**Devoted to Prayer**  
**Acts 2:42-43**

*<sup>42</sup> And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the BREAKING OF BREAD and the prayers. <sup>43</sup> And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles.*

AWE: to be gloriously overwhelmed at the goodness, greatness, and mercy of the triune God ultimately expressed in the cross of Christ.



**What is prayer?**

Prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God **(1)**, for things agreeable to his will **(2)**, in the name of Christ **(3)**, with confession of our sins **(4)**, and thankful acknowledgment of his mercies **(5)**. Westminster Shorter Catechism Question 178

**(1)** <sup>5</sup> For God alone, O my soul, wait in silence, for my hope is from him. <sup>6</sup> He only is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be shaken. <sup>7</sup> On God rests my salvation and my glory; my mighty rock, my refuge is God. <sup>8</sup> Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before him; God is a refuge for us. **Psalm 62:5-8**

<sup>28</sup> Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. <sup>29</sup> He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength. <sup>30</sup> Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted; <sup>31</sup> but they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint. **Isaiah 40:28-31**

**(2)** <sup>14</sup> And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. **1 John 5:14**

**(3)** <sup>14</sup> Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. <sup>15</sup> For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. <sup>16</sup> Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. **Hebrews 4:14-16**

<sup>12</sup> In whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him. **Ephesians 3:12**

"Prayer mirrors the gospel. In the gospel, the Father takes us as we are because of Jesus and gives us the gift of salvation. In prayer, the Father receives us as we are because of Jesus and gives us his gift of help."  
Paul Miller, *A Praying Life*, p. 55

**(4)** <sup>8</sup> *If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.* <sup>9</sup> *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* **1 John 1:8-9**

<sup>18</sup> *If I had cherished iniquity in my heart, the Lord would not have listened.* **Psalm 66:18**

**(5)** <sup>6</sup> *Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.* **Philippians 4:6**

*Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name!* <sup>2</sup> *Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits,* <sup>3</sup> *who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases,* <sup>4</sup> *who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,* <sup>5</sup> *who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.* **Psalm 103:1-5**

"When you stop trying to control your life and instead allow your anxieties and problems to bring you to God in prayer, you shift from worry to watching. You watch God weave his patterns in the story of your life. Instead of trying to be out front, designing your life, you realize you are inside God's drama. As you wait, you begin to see him work, and your life begins to sparkle with wonder. You are learning to trust again." Paul Miller, *A Praying Life*, p. 73

### **Questions for Discussion:**

1. Why does the "kingdom of noise in 2016" make prayer difficult? Where is a private place and a set aside time to wait upon the Lord?
2. How does prayer mirror the gospel? Why is Hebrews 4:14-16 essential in understanding the privilege of communicating with the Father?
3. Read Psalm 66:18 and 1 John 1:8-9. Do these verses teach that: a) we must be sinless and perfect to pray or b) we must confess and flee from sin on a regular basis?
4. What are "breath prayers"?
5. How is a life of thankfulness the opposite of cynicism?

### **Upcoming Prayer Opportunities at ECBC:**

- First Tuesday Prayer, October 4, 6:30pm
- A Day of Prayer and Fasting, November 7, Churchwide prayer time, 6:30pm