

Speaker: Pastor Buster Brown

Today's Message: The Abiding Life

Today's Text: John 15:1-7

"I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. 2 Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. 3 You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. 4 Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. 5 I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. 7 If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you." **John 15:1-7**

FOUR REASONS WE DON'T PRAY

- 1) We don't see the i_____ of prayer. (only d_____ people pray)

"If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him." **James 1:5**

- 2) We make prayer too d_____.

What is prayer? Answer: Prayer is pouring out our hearts to God in praise, petition, confession of sin, and thanksgiving. **NEW CITY CATECHISM**, Question 38

Praise>Petition
Confession of Sin
Thanksgiving

"And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them 3 and said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. 4 Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven." **Matthew 18:2-4**

"A praying life isn't simply a morning time; it is about slipping into prayer in odd hours of the day, not because we are disciplined, but because we are in touch with our own poverty of spirit." **Paul Miller**, A Praying Life: Connecting with God in a Distracting World

- 3) We try to "figure out" the m_____ of prayer.
- 4) We a_____ the Gospel and live out of our obedience (performance) instead of basing ALL on the glorious forgiveness of sins through Christ alone.

"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. 15 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. 16 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**

ANSWER KEY: importance, desperate, difficult, mystery, assume

PRINCIPLES FROM JOHN 15

- 1) There is a taking-away process and a pruning process. (v. 2, 6)
- 2) Those who constantly abide in Christ (v. 5,7):
 - Tenaciously cling to the reality of Christ.
 - Continuously strip away the horror, ugliness and putrid nature of personal and corporate sin. (Isaiah 30:20-following, 1 Peter 3:7)
- 3) Abiding involves allowing God's word to be rooted in our hearts. (v. 7)

The Father delights in the prayers of his broken, needy, dearly loved children who come to him in the name of Jesus.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Of the four reasons we don't pray, which one seems to be most prevalent in our culture today?
2. What do we mean when we say "slip away for 3-5 minutes in prayer"?
3. Why is it important to confess our sins and run to the cross daily?
4. How do we "assume the gospel" and go on to live based upon our performance?
5. Do you understand the concept of a pseudo-Christian versus true salvation, or a pseudo-disciple versus true discipleship (John 6:66)?

HELPS TO PRAYER

- 1) A 5- to 7-minute praise>petition.
- 2) Carry a card or list of pertinent prayer requests, based upon your hand/fingers.
 - > *Family*
 - > *Those who need to be pointed to the Savior*
 - > *Leaders*
 - > *Those in need*
 - > *The next generation*
- 3) Pray with your spouse/family/friends (A Psalm or Scripture reading of the day).

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