



Summer of Prayer

How to Improve Your Prayer Life Week 4

These weekly studies are loosely based on the previous Sunday's sermon. If you missed it, you will find a recording on our website (www.knaphillbaptist.org.uk). They are designed for both Home Group discussion and/or personal reflection. Don't necessarily try to cover all the questions and discussion topics in your group at one sitting. You may like to think about them later in your own time.

Mountain Moving Faith



Read Ephesians 6:10-18

This is the fourth in our Summer of Prayer series 'How to Improve Your Prayer Life.' During this series we are looking at various encouraging and challenging Bible passages that will help to re-boot, re-motivate, re-new, re-inspire and re-energise our prayer life. We are thinking this week about the importance of faith in our praying. When we pray, we are to pray in faith, confidence and trust. Faith is the most powerful force that God has given us. With it we can move mountains, receive remarkable answers to prayer, and experience the impossible - "Nothing is impossible to those who BELIEVE."

Questions and pointers for discussion/reflection

1. If someone asked you the question, 'What is faith?', how would you answer?
2. The episode of Jesus and the fig tree is referred to as an 'enacted parable' or 'prophetic sign-act.' Can you think of other examples of this in the life and ministry of Jesus, in the rest of Scripture or in church history?
3. Jesus pronounced judgement on the fig tree to illustrate the judgement that was to come upon Israel. There is a link between Jesus cursing the fig tree and the cleansing of the temple. The temple was meant to be a 'house of prayer for all nations' (Isaiah 56:7) but in reality it was a den of robbers (verse 17). In what ways might we be accused of hypocrisy?
4. God's Old Testament people were called to be a light to the nations (see Isaiah 49:6) and they failed. Jesus came to fulfil the Law and the Prophets (Matthew 5:17), he is the 'Light of the world' (John 8:12) and he now in turn calls us to be (Matthew 5:14-16). How can we best fulfil this calling?
5. We have been saved by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8-10). Can we be in danger of turning the Christian life into a 'work'? Have you ever made the mistake of trying to live the Christian life in your own strength or to work and strive for more faith?
6. To be effective in prayer we have to believe that we will receive what we have prayed for (verse 24). For this we need the gift of faith (1 Corinthians 12:9). Does this mean we need more faith or to better use the faith we have? Compare Matthew 17:20,21 with Luke 17:5,6.
7. Why is the fruit of faith or faithfulness (Galatians 5:22,23) i.e. consistency and stickability so important?
8. What are the essential doctrines of the faith (Jude 3) that are unchangeable?
9. What bearing does unforgiveness have on the effectiveness of our prayers (see verse 25). Do you find it easy or difficult to forgive?

Is there anything in your life or in the Christian faith and worldview that you stumble over? Leslie Weatherhead wrote, 'rather than stumble over unanswered questions, put them in a little box in your head marked 'awaiting further light.' Do you find this helpful?