

Volume 1, Day 29: PRAYER: Enjoying Our Friendship

Today, I find that sharing my thoughts with God and Him sharing His with me are much more part of my prayer time than lists of needs. It's about knowing more of what He is doing and thanksgiving for what He does. It is not a discipline worshipping God. It is not about sucking up to the big man by telling Him I like Him.

I'm actually overwhelmed often by the things God is doing around me. I'm captivated by the things He has put into my life. Gratefulness just becomes due course in this dynamic, rich sharing of our hearts with each other. And then I explore my day with Him. If I've got things coming up, I'm telling Him about those things and what I think of those things. Does He already know? Of course, He knows! But He likes hearing it from my perspective. He likes looking at it through my eyes.

So I do talk about circumstances coming up. I talk about people that are difficult in my life. My neighbor is one of those. At the moment, we're having a lot of conversation about my neighbor and how I'd like to ring his neck. And I know God wants me to love him in a way that I don't know how to do yet in times of anxiety.

Now, instead of praying all my worries to God, I'm just asking, "God, what is it about you that I don't know, that if I knew it, I could trust you in this?" Now, He doesn't usually answer right away. Sometimes He gradually awakens my mind and heart to the answer. But you know what? When He's with you as a companion on this journey, you need fewer answers than you thought you needed. You're more content to just let things be in His heart and mind. And knowing this, that when He wants me to know something, or when He wants me to do something, He's able to make that crystal clear to me.

Volume 1, Day 30: PRAYER: with Eyes Wide Open

Now some people ask, “Wayne, do you have a prayer closet that you do this in every day?” My answer to that is, “I really don't. I don't see this as a daily ritual, but an ongoing conversation. So it happens throughout my day whether I'm driving, whether I'm listening, whether I'm on the phone, I'm still listening and talking to God as best I can.” I have times when I don't do any of that. I just enjoy the day, whatever I'm doing. But my heart is somehow always turned toward Him. It listens to hear what God is doing.

Now, there are times when something particularly critical is going on or I'm feeling a bit distant that I'll get away to have a concentrated time with God. My prayer closet might be a walk in the foothills near here. It might be sitting in Sarah's garden for a bit and just asking God some questions and listening. I don't always get the answers I want right then, but somehow over the next few days those answers will kind of soak through to my heart if I need them. There are times when I don't need them.

I considered unanswered questions to mean there's nothing I need to do about it right now, so just keep walking with him. At other times, it really is up to me. God doesn't want to control every detail of my life. He wants to share my life with me. So sometimes that means, “Wayne, do what you want to do and I'll do it with you. I'll be in it with you.” And that's often how it works as well.

Lean into your dialog with God just as you would with a significant other or good friend. God is more interested in you than you likely think. He loves to hear your voice even when He already knows what you will say. And as in relationships with family, consider God at table with you and include Him in the conversation. And look His direction and don't close your eyes to talk to Him!

Volume 1, Day 31: Live in Freedom from Condemnation

What you need to do to have an effective life in a growing conversation with God is to have the freedom to fail. I know that sounds strange, but the performance basis of receiving God's affection must be recognized as false information. The thinking that, "I've got to get this right. It always has to be perfect." "If I ever miss God and do something wrong, my whole world will blow up and my life in Him will end," is neither Biblical nor relational.

When you go on this journey with God, believe me, it creates quite a bit of struggle. It's quite a learning curve to learn how to listen and how to follow without hesitation. It is no different than children learning to talk. They may stammer or call things by the wrong name for a while. And as we help them learn what exactly things are called, we do the same thing now in our journey into intimacy with God. So you will struggle. You will make mistakes. And you may still be struggling with a particular sin in your life. But don't let your sin consciousness creep in. We'll talk about that later, but those who think, "I can't have a relationship with God as long as there's sin in my life," will never know the freedom from self condemnation that comes from living in Him.

The best thing you can do about your sin right now is simply to thank Him for the forgiveness already given and to immediately concentrate on your love affair with Him. Listen to what He's saying. He is not going to remind you of sin. It has already been fully paid for. He's inviting you into a relationship with him where you feel His affection for you and then let Him guide you in all of the experiences of life. John 16 states clearly that the Holy Spirit's role for unbelievers is to convict them of sin. His role for those who are 'born again' of the Spirit, is to guide you into all truth. That includes, "...no condemnation to those who are in Christ."

Volume 1, Day 32: The Awesome Power of Prayer

When a mortal can talk to God almighty
and know that His voice is heard,
what a wonder it is that He understands
my sighs and tears as if they were words.
High above the chaos, a whisper is so clear.
The sweetness of His presence echoes He is near.

He already knows what I'm gonna ask
and what His answer will be.
But He loves the communion of father and child.
And more than an answer it's Him that I need,
to give me new perspective, breathe purpose to my soul.
So I keep coming back to Him and releasing my control!

So, I pray in the morning.
And I stay in touch with Him all through the day,
whatever I'm doing, wherever I'm going.
regardless of what anybody may say!

I wouldn't waste my time if I didn't believe it.
I tell you it works because I have seen it.
It's unexplainable, yet so incredible,
attainable anytime, anywhere,
the simply marvelous, supernatural,
awesome power of prayer!

Songwriters: Marcia Henry / Rachel McCutcheon

Prayer without ceasing is being:

Aware of His Presence constantly,
Available to Him instantly and
Accepting His assignments joyfully.

ENGAGING God -- Alan - Jacobsen