
Sunday, January 22, 2017
Did You Know?

15 Minutes a Day

Commit to pray at least 15 minutes a day. This is a great goal for this year and everyone can do it. If you're like me, when life gets busy and my mind gets distracted the first thing to go is prayer. I wish that weren't the case, but it often is. Here are some tips to help you achieve this goal:

1. Commit this to God in prayer. Only God, through the Holy Spirit, can deepen our prayer lives, so we must pray that God would help us to become better at prayer. I can't think of any reason why God wouldn't want to help us achieve this goal.
2. Remember that prayer is relational. Prayer is more than just going through our grocery list of prayers, it is our privileged means to commune with God. Talk to him as a person because that is what he is. To be a person is to be personal, that is, relational. Approach him with reverence as our Father.
3. Develop a pattern. New habits are best formed in the context of life rhythms and habits. If you are going to pray in the morning it helps to wake up at the same time every day, which means you should try to sleep at a reasonable hour. In university I prayed every evening at 11pm. As an older dude I find that I pray best in the morning.
4. Use the Bible. Sometimes our prayers get dull and repetitious. If you use the Bible and pray the Bible back to God or reply to God based on what you just read, that can help you pray with freshness every day.
5. Create a prayer list. Think of the many people that need your prayers. Unsaved friends, children, spouse, co-workers, church friends, pastors, people in government, missionaries. You probably cannot pray for all of them every day. Spread them out over the week and that way you'll pray for all of them every week. And, pray for yourself last.
6. Pray specifically. Remember when you were a kid and prayed, "Bless all the people in the world"? A great prayer, but not very specific. To pray specific prayers you may need to ask those for whom you wish to pray (and ask them to pray for you, too). You can pray a Scripture for that person. "Father, I pray that my child will seek first your kingdom and righteousness as it is written in Matthew 6:33, especially as he navigates the challenges of being a teenager...etc."
7. Use the acrostic ACTS to guide your prayers:
Adoration, **C**onfession, **T**hanksgiving, **S**upplication
8. Buy the book, *The Valley of Vision* which is a collection of amazing prayers, some of which we've prayed during Sunday worship. At first, it was a bit odd praying prayers written by someone else, but I've grown to appreciate this more and more.

15 minutes a day? No sweat!

Pastor Peter