



Vision & Values Sermon Series

Values: Scripture, **Prayer**, Generosity, Diversity, Community, Creativity, Outreach, Justice, Love.

We Value Prayer: We are committed to cultivating a life of prayer through which we pay attention to the Holy Spirit, pursue Christ's Kingdom, and submit to His lordship

Texts: Matthew 6:9-13, Psalm 130

This morning we talked about taking captivity small moments for prayer to encourage us to cultivate a life of prayer. Prayer will help us to see, hear and sense the Spirit's leading in our lives to pursue Christ's kingdom and submit to His lordship.

In Matthew 6:9-13, when Jesus teaches his disciples to pray he is giving them more than a model of how to pray, although certainly this prayer can serve that purpose extremely well. Jesus, by teaching them the Kingdom Prayer, is inviting his disciples to participate with him in his conversation with God and by extension into the announcement and enactment of his kingdom in the world.

Prayer is vital, through the leading of the Spirit, to allow us to see how the kingdom is unfolding in the place we find ourselves.

The Psalms of Ascent (Psalms 120-134) are traditionally understood to have been sung by the people as they journeyed to Jerusalem for the festivals. Many of these Psalms echo in important ways the Kingdom Prayer of Jesus in Matthew. The Psalms of Ascent are a reminder that prayer is a journey, and they gives us a guide for the journey of prayer.

It is a challenge to find the needed time and concentration to pray, but when we allow simple reminders - like the chiming of an hourly bell - to bring us into an attitude of prayer seeking God's kingdom. This is one example of a way we can begin to cultivate a life of prayer. Prayer will then allow us to listening prayerfully to the world around us and begin to see the kingdom made alive in our midst.

Questions for discussion:

1. What are your thoughts and feeling regarding the value of prayer? How do you see this value working out in your life?
2. How are you cultivating prayer in your life? Is there a new way that you intend to integrate prayer into your daily rhythm?
3. How has God shown himself faithful in your prayer life? Is there anything that you are trusting God for at the moment?
4. There are many different prayers and types of prayers in the Bible. Which prayers or type of prayers do you resonate with at the moment? Why might this be the case?
5. We talked about how the ringing of bells was a call to prayer for those in the monastery. What 'bells' might be present in your life to remind you of the importance of prayer?