

Luke: The Inside Out Gospel

Week 18

Luke 18:9-14

“When Prayer Goes Bad”

OPEN WITH PRAYER

GETTING STARTED: What was the most important thing you learned about prayer from last week’s message on the parable of the friend at midnight?

LEARNING & APPLYING GOD’S WORD

Together, read Luke 18:9-14 together

1. What was the main idea of Steve’s message?
2. What is your immediate, gut-level reaction to . . .
 - The Pharisee
 - The tax-collector
3. Why would this parable be surprising to the original listeners?
4. What did Steve say is the one essential ingredient of prayer?
5. Why is humility so important in prayer and for that matter, our relationship with God? How do you define humility?
6. How do we become humble?

LIVING OUT “REAL LIFE”

1. Do you have difficulty being dependent on God? What makes being dependent difficult? What makes dependence up God easier?

2. What happens in your life when you are humble before God? What happens when you are prideful or try to live life independently before God?

SHARING AND PRAYER (Prayer Requests)

Take some time to share prayer requests, where you need to find God’s grace and peace. Be sure to give thanks for each other and pray for one another’s needs. When we pray together, we find the power of God.

Prayer is an unnatural activity. From birth we have been learning the rules of self-reliance to achieve self-sufficiency. Prayer flies in the face of those deep-seated values. It is an assault on human autonomy, an indictment of independent living. To people in the fast lane, determined to make it on their own, prayer is an embarrassing interruption.

Prayer is alien to our proud human nature. And yet somewhere, someplace, probably all of us reach the point of falling to our knees, bowing our heads, fixing our attention on God and praying. We may look both ways to be sure no one is watching; we may blush; but in spite of the foreignness of the activity, we pray.

*From Too Busy Not to Pray
By Bill Hybels.*