

Grace Guide



AUGUST 31 – SEPTEMBER 6

“Too Busy Not To Pray”

MONDAY
8/31

ISAIAH 65:17-25

The prophet Isaiah gives us a remarkable picture of God's relationship with his people: God is not distant or reluctant when they call upon him. In fact, God says that he will answer before they even finish calling and that he will hear while they are still speaking. Prayer, then, is not about trying to get God's attention, it is about responding to the invitation of a God who is already attentive to us. We can bring our joys, fears, questions, needs, and even our uncertainties to God because he is willing to listen. As you pray, resist the temptation to think that your concerns are too insignificant or your words too inadequate for God. He is listening.

1. What do these words from Isaiah (especially v 24) say to you about God's attitude toward your prayers?
2. Would it change your prayer life if you approached prayer as if God is already listening? Why or why not?

TUESDAY

9/1

LUKE 11:5-13

Jesus tells a surprising story about a man who goes to his friend's house at midnight asking for bread. The friend initially refuses, but the man continues asking until his need is met. Jesus uses the story to encourage his disciples to be persistent in bringing their needs to God: "Ask... seek... knock." Yet Jesus' point is not that we must wear God down until he finally gives in. Instead, he reminds us of the goodness of our heavenly Father. Even imperfect human parents know how to give good gifts to their children, so how much more does God desire to give what is good to those who come to him? Prayer is an expression of trust that keeps turning toward God, confident in his goodness even when his answers don't come in the way or time we expect.

1. What do these verses show you about the nature and character of God?
2. Why do you think persistence, as Jesus talks about it here and elsewhere, is an important part of prayer?

WEDNESDAY

9/2

1 THESSALONIANS 5:16-17 & COLOSSIANS 4:2-4

The apostle Paul's instructions to the churches in Thessalonica and Colossae remind us that prayer is not meant to be confined to a particular place, time, or circumstance. "Pray continually" does not mean that we must spend every moment with our eyes closed and our heads bowed. It means that our lives can remain turned toward God throughout the day. Paul connects prayer with rejoicing, gratitude, watchfulness, perseverance, and concern for others. We can talk with God while driving, working, preparing a meal, facing a difficult conversation, celebrating good news, or noticing someone who needs our prayers. Rather than adding prayer as one more task to an already crowded schedule, we can learn to recognize the countless moments in our ordinary lives when we can turn our attention toward God.

1. What does "pray continually" look like in the ordinary routines of your day?
2. Which is more difficult for you: remembering to pray, making time to pray, or staying focused when you pray? Why?

THURSDAY

9/3

HEBREWS 4:14-16

Because Jesus has entered fully into our human experience and now stands as our great high priest, we do not have to approach God timidly or wonder whether we belong in his presence. The writer of Hebrews tells us to approach the throne of grace with confidence, knowing that we will find mercy and grace when we need it. This is not confidence in ourselves or in the quality of our prayers, rather it is confidence in Jesus, who understands our weakness and makes a way for us to come to God. When life exposes our failures, fears, temptations, and needs, our first instinct may be to hide but the gospel invites us to do the opposite. Because of Jesus, we can come into God's presence honestly and expect to find grace.

1. What makes it possible for you to approach God with confidence rather than fear?
2. What does it mean to you that Jesus understands your weaknesses and struggles?

FRIDAY

9/4

PSALM 116

The psalmist's love for God is rooted in a deeply personal experience – God heard his voice and listened to his cry. Because God “turned his ear” toward him, the psalmist says, “I will call on him as long as I live.” His prayer is not merely a religious obligation, it has become an integral part of his relationship with God. He has discovered that when he calls, God listens, and that experience changes the way he approaches God in the future. We can easily become so accustomed to prayer that it becomes routine, or we can neglect it because we wonder whether our words make any difference. This psalm reminds us to remember the times God has met us, carried us, comforted us, or simply given us the assurance of his presence. Remembering God's faithfulness can give us reason to keep turning toward him.

1. Can you remember a time when you sensed that God heard you or met you in a particular need? What happened?
2. What do you think it means for your relationship with God to “call on him as long as I live”?

**SATURDAY/
SUNDAY**
9/5-6

MATTHEW 7:7-12

Jesus' words are remarkably simple: "Ask... seek... knock." Each word describes an active response: bringing our needs to God, looking to him for what we need, and continuing to approach him. Jesus follows these commands with a picture of a father who gives good gifts to his children. The point is not that God will give us everything we request exactly as we request it, but that we can trust the heart of the One to whom we bring our requests. God is not annoyed by our coming to him, nor does he need to be persuaded to care about us. He knows what is good, he knows what we need, and he welcomes us into his presence. Prayer begins with that trust: we come because God invites us to come.

1. What does Jesus' comparison between earthly parents and the heavenly Father teach you about God's character?
2. How can we continue to trust God's goodness when his answer to a prayer is different from what we hoped for?

VERSE OF THE WEEK

"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened."

(Matthew 7:7-8)