

A TRANSFORMATIONAL APPROACH TO PRAYER

STUDY GUIDE

TRANSFORMING FAITH MINISERIES | MAY 26/27, 2018 | PASTOR J.C. HEIDEN | 1 THESSALONIANS

5:16-18, MATTHEW 11:28-30, JOHN 15:1-17, ACTS 4:13

"Pray continually" (1 Thessalonians 5:17)

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." (Matthew 11:28-30)

"I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you." (John 15:15)

"When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus." (Acts 4:13)

I. What's the story with prayer?

II. A picture of our prayer life: "Take my yolk upon you and learn from me" (Matthew 11:28-30)

III. A picture of our prayer life: "I am the vine; you are the branches...remain in me" (John 15:1-17)

IV. The prayer life and practices of Jesus

V. The prayer life and practices of _____.

1. Have you ever done something or experienced something that you enjoyed so much that you could say that you felt God's pleasure while you were doing it? What is it about that activity or experience that you found so enjoyable, amazing or compelling?
2. Have you ever felt this way about your prayer life with Jesus? What are some words that you would use to describe your current prayer life with the Lord?
3. When you think about your prayer life with the Lord, what have you found to be enjoyable and helpful? What have you found to be difficult or challenging about prayer?
4. Has there been a time when your prayer life with the Lord felt especially encouraging, effective, refreshing or beneficial? As you think back on them, what made those times of prayer that you spent with the Lord so good?
5. Take some time to begin your study in prayer. Ask the Lord to speak to you through your study, and read 1 Thessalonians 5:17 and then read through Matthew 11:28-30 out loud. Think about this passage in the context of your prayer life with Jesus. How does Matthew 11:28-30 give us hope as we seek to develop a transformational prayer life with Jesus?
6. As you reflect on Matthew 11:28-30, how can Jesus become your "Intimate Ally" according to this passage? How does this impact your daily prayer life? Does this sound like good news to you?
7. Read through John 15:1-17 out loud. What are some truths that we learn about our relationship with Jesus in this passage? What are the best ways that you have found to stay connected to the vine?
8. Look at John 15:15. Do you think of yourself as a close friend and ally of Jesus? How does this truth impact and transform our prayer life with Him?
9. Do you look forward to spending time in prayer with Jesus each day? Why or why not? How can we let these passages change our approach to prayer so that we look forward to our time with Jesus?
10. Have you gone through different seasons of prayer in your life? If so, how did your prayers look and feel different during these different seasons?
11. Read Acts 4:13 out loud. Isn't that amazing! Do you feel like your prayer life is so transformational that people around you can tell each day that "you have been with Jesus?" What could you do to have a more vibrant prayer life with Jesus?

TAKE IT FURTHER: Read a book about getting to know Jesus better or growing in your prayer life with Him, such as:

100 Days with Jesus: A Daily Glimpse into the Person of Christ by Diann Cotton

Hearing God: Developing a Conversational Relationship with God by Dallas Willard

Beautiful Outlaw: Experiencing the Playful, Disruptive, Extravagant Personality of Jesus by John Eldredge