

More Than Words: A Season of Prayer

Did you ever wonder about prayer? I know, prayer is a part of our lives, something we take for granted. We say one before meals, before meetings, before Chemistry tests. It's assumed that it will be part of every worship service, and if it isn't, we feel something's missing. But, seriously, haven't you ever asked yourself any questions about the whole idea of prayer? You know: questions like these:

Does God really alter the course of time and events just because we ask? Because wouldn't that imply that God doesn't actually know what he's doing? If God's open to suggestions from people like us, isn't that pretty well scraping the bottom of the barrel?

Even if God does sometimes answer big prayers, what about those prayers before Chemistry tests? Or silent prayers before shooting foul shots? Does God really help with stuff like that? Even for people who haven't studied or practiced? That would make God sort of petty, wouldn't it?

Why is it so important for us to get a lot of people praying for the same thing at the same time? Is God keeping count? Does God answer prayers on the basis of volume?

Are some people's prayers more likely to be answered? Do pastors' prayers have more weight? If not, then why do we always ask them to lead prayers? And what is a "prayer warrior"? No, seriously.

Is God most impressed with eloquent prayers? That would make God kind of a literary snob, wouldn't it? So why do people feel the need to use all those ten-dollar words in prayer?

When we're all praying aloud together, like when we say the Lord's Prayer in worship, is that really prayer? Because, face it, most of the people – including whoever's leading it – are thinking of something else. Why do we even do this?

Have you ever wondered about prayer? You have, haven't you? I thought so.

As Christians, we seem to have inherited a lot of unspoken ideas about prayer, and every one of them implies something about how we see God. If our conception of prayer is that God answers whichever prayers the greatest number of people pray, that implies that we think of God as a bean counter, or a Facebook user waiting until a post gets enough "Likes" before replying.



So in September and October, let us explore prayer – not just in the sermon series but in the way we pray during worship and how we incorporate prayer in the rest of our lives. Prayer matters, and what we believe about prayer matters – because what we believe about prayer says much about what we believe about God.