CLA Camp Hill, PA Teacher – Jim Hoffman

Based on the "NEXT" booklet by Daniel McNaughton and Shane Wilson



First Principles



The word "discipleship" does not appear in the Bible because "sanctification" does.

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"We are saved by faith alone, but the faith that saves is never alone"

Martin Luther

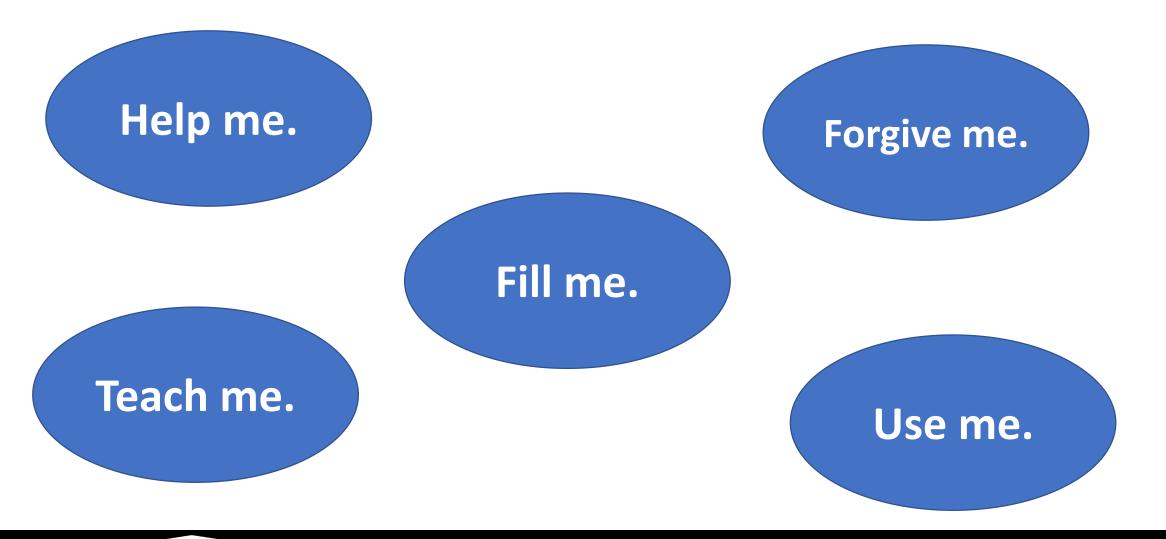


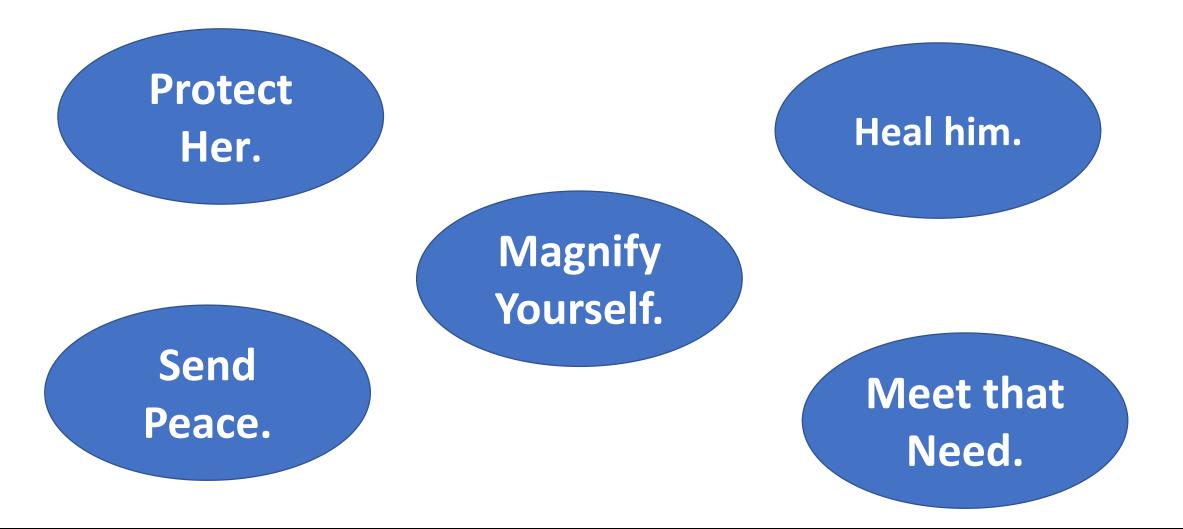
Attribute #6 – Learning to Pray

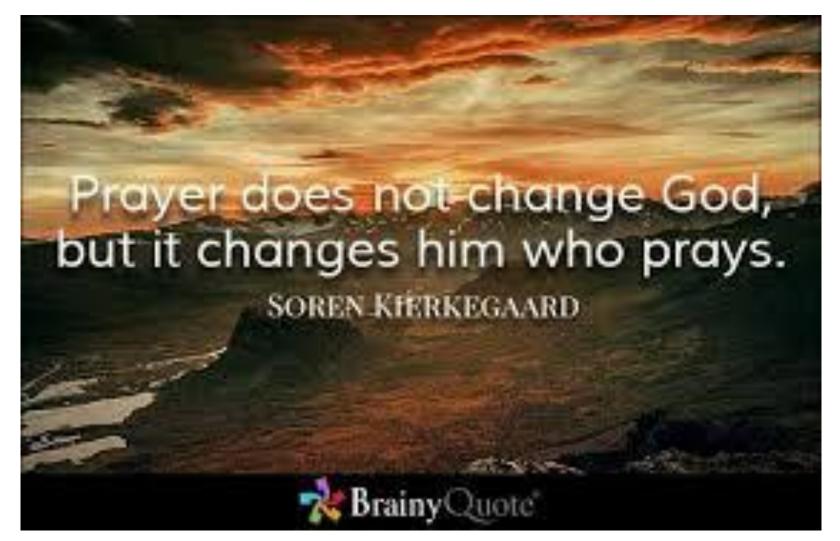


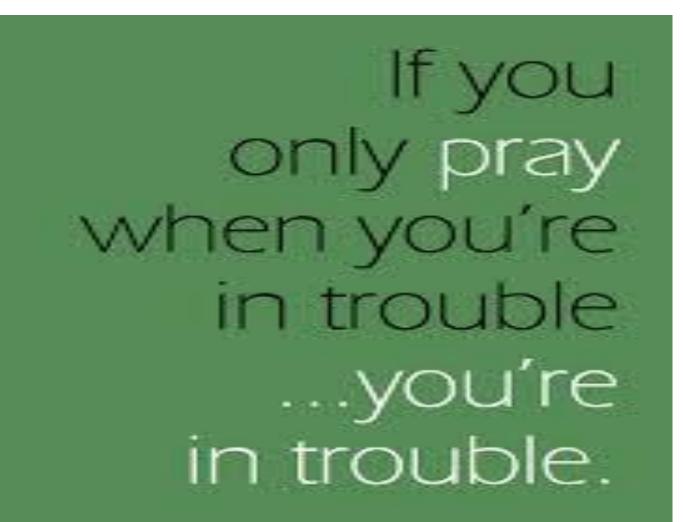
- We are asked to pray without ceasing, we are asked to pray believing, we are asked to persist, and more.
- What I have learned is that prayer is essential to my well being, and would be even if none of my prayers were answered. (there is healing in pouring out our souls)
- It is essential to my connection to God, and the more I grow the simpler my prayers have become.

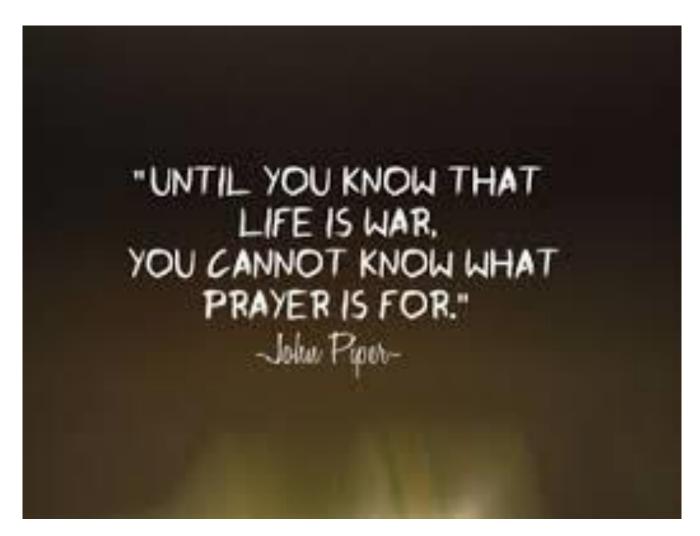
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Heaven is full of answers to prayer for which no one ever bothered to ask.

-Billy Graham



Here is a thought – the omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, sovereign God of the universe has chosen, at least to a degree, to run the world in response to the prayers of His very fallible children.



 So maybe we should take to heart that God hears and answers our prayers and begin to ask for the biggest and the best things we can imagine.

 After all, if I can have influence on the affairs of the world and on history itself, why wouldn't I pray accordingly?

Sometimes we don't have because we don't ask. (James 4)



Psalm 17:6 <u>I call on you, my God, for you will answer</u>
 <u>me</u>; turn your ear to me and hear my prayer.

• Psalm 102:17 *He will respond to the prayer of the destitute*; he will not despise their plea.

 Psalm 145:18 The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth.

- Prov 15:8 The Lord detests the sacrifice of the wicked, <u>but the</u> prayer of the upright pleases him.
- Prov 15:29 The Lord is far from the wicked, but <u>he hears the</u> prayer of the righteous.
- 2nd Chron 7:14 if my people, who are called by my name, will <u>humble themselves</u> and <u>pray</u> and <u>seek my face</u> and <u>turn from</u> <u>their wicked ways</u>, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land.



• Phil 4: Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: **Rejoice! 5 Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is** near. 6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.



- Surely if anyone knows how to pray it is Jesus, and when His disciples asked Him to teach them to pray He said -
- Matt 6:9 In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. 10 Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. 11 Give us this day our daily bread. 12 And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors. 13 And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

- Matt 6:9 In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name.
- The definition of "hallow" is to honor, to revere, and to respect.
- So our prayers are to begin, if not in words, at least with an understanding that it is God who matters most in this world.



• When God's name is honored, all of life will be better for me and everyone else as well.

- There is a certain fundamental order to life that must be in tact in order for life to work as it should.
- Whether it is an individual, a city, a state, or a country placing God, and all that He is, as our top priority will never disappoint.



- 3 R's of Prayer
 - Relationship "Our Father"
 - Respect "Hallowed be your name"
 - Reign "Let your kingdom come"
- 3 F's of Prayer
 - Food "Give us our daily bread"
 - Forgiveness "Forgive us...as we also have forgiven"
 - Freedom "Deliver us from the evil one"

- The "Lord's Prayer" can be viewed in this way -
 - May Your name be honored.
 - May Your Kingdom come.
 - May Your will be done.
- And to that end, give me -
 - Strength to serve you (daily bread)
 - A clear conscience (forgiveness)
 - Holiness (deliver me from evil)

 John 15:7 If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.
 (The condition is "remaining" (abiding) in Jesus)

 1st John 5:14 <u>And we are confident that he hears us</u> <u>whenever we ask for anything that pleases him</u>. 15 And since we know he hears us when we make our requests, we also know that he will give us what we ask for. (the condition is what pleases Him)

- What I am about to say may sound like I am trying to limit my power in prayer, but I assure that is not my intent.
- Both of the scriptures on the previous slide are rock solid promises from God that He will hear and answer our prayers, <u>but there are conditions</u>.
- I must "remain" in Him, and my request must be in harmony with His will.



• Psalm 37:4 Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.

 This does not mean that God has obligated Himself to give me whatever my flesh wants.

 What is in view here is that if I will make myself pliable (the Hebrew meaning of "take delight") in the God's hands like clay, then He will shape my thoughts, and desires according to His will and I will ask for the right things.

Rom 8:26 In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. <u>We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans</u>.
27 And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God.

 Again, I often do not know how to pray, or what to pray for so God has ordained that His Holy Spirit will be my intercessor, and translate what I ask into what He knows is best.

 So you could say that my power in prayer is limited to the things that are according to the will of God – as a matter of fact, that is exactly what I am saying.

 And to those you meet who say that such thinking shows a lack of faith, I would ask, "under what conditions would I not want the will of God?".

• Ultimately, which is better – my will or His?

- I want to be very careful that we don't begin to think that prayer is useless because it all depends on the will of God anyway.
- To that I say this we would be fools to think that the will of God is always happening in our lives and in the lives of the people we care about.
- So now with a little bit more understanding of our power in prayer, let's revisit the verses we saw before.

- John 15:7 But if you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, <u>and it will be</u> <u>granted!</u>
- If you want a robust, powerful prayer life get close to Jesus, and stay close to Jesus.
- When we are abiding in Jesus we will ask for the right things and we will receive the right things – it is a promise!



 1st John 5:14 And we are confident that he hears us whenever we ask for anything that pleases him. 15 And since we know he hears us when we make our requests, <u>we also know that</u> <u>he will give us what we ask for</u>.

• When we pray according to His will we can be certain (know) that He will give us what we pray for.

• We need to grow to that point where we begin to understand that what pleases God will also be pleasing to me.

- So what if we do not know the will of God in a given situation?
- We may well not know God's will in given situations more often than we know His will – this is where faith comes in.
- We can simply pray, "Lord I do not know how to pray for Jane Doe, but you do, and I ask that you work in her life according to your will".

- Matt 7: 7 "Keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you. 8 For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened". 9 "You parents—if your children ask for a loaf of bread, do you give them a stone instead? 10 Or if they ask for a fish, do you give them a snake? Of course not! 11 So if you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good gifts to those who ask him."
- Here Jesus is clearly telling us to persist in prayer AND He is also telling us that we have a Father who can sort through all that we ask and give us the best things for us.



• Lest you think that this path is a lack of faith, I would say it is a path that proves my faith.

• When my trust in God reaches the place where I want His will over my will, I would say that I have a deep understanding of who He is, and who I am.

• When Jesus was hurting and exhausted, He prayed, "not my will, but thine be done".

- Here are my best pieces of advice for praying
 - Train ourselves to want God's glory more than we want anything else!
 - We've been access to the throne room of God so never, ever, never be guilty of not asking!
 - Speak truth to the Truth!



Challenges from Pastor Shane

• Large Groups – Pray for the preacher.

• Small Groups – Pray for the leader(s).

• One-on-One – Pray for each other.

• Alone – Pray.



Questions / Comments

