

In Paul's letters prayer is central, how does Paul demonstrate the priority of prayer, for example in Philippians 1:3 - 6? What other examples can you find in the beginning of many of Paul's letters?

Does coming to prayer first and regularly characterize your prayer life?

Read Philippians 4:4 - 7:

In Philippians 4 where should prayer fit in our lives? What should be our first response to anxiety or a crisis? What do we often do instead?

Has prayer brought you comfort?

What lessons can you take away from our study today?

Each week in your study in a group or alone it is important to conclude your time in prayer.

Study 1: **Prayer – Time to Pray – Is it a priority?**
Sermon – 21st April 2024.

Reading: Mark 1:35 – 39
Acts 2:42 – 47
Philippians 4:4 – 7

Prayer is very important for our spiritual wellbeing. As in any relationship communication is key. In prayer we speak to our heavenly Father. We listen to Him in His word, the Scriptures and by the Spirit.

We can agree with the importance of prayer, yet still find little time to pray. In the busyness of modern life, with a culture that focusing on doing, spending time in prayer can be seen as a second order of business.

When do you find time to pray? How high a priority is it to you? In the gospels we read of Jesus putting time aside to pray. This is also seen with other people in the Old Testament and in the rest of the New. In our study today we will look at these examples and ponder how we can put this priority into practice in our daily routine.

If you feel comfortable share with the group, or if you are doing this study individually write down, what do you think of prayer?

Read Mark 1:35 - 39:

Why does Jesus withdraw from the crowds?

What is the response of the disciples and how does this show they have different priorities to Jesus?

Look at Matthew 6:6, 14:23, Luke 5:16, 6:12, 9:18, 22:39 -41.
What is Jesus' attitude to prayer?

When do you take time to pray? What things or other priorities stop or delay you from praying?

The Psalms are a good example of the priority given to prayer in the Old Testament. Can you think of a psalm that encourages you to pray?

We also see prayers with Abraham, King David, Solomon, the prophets and many others when they faced a crisis. Where does prayer fit in with how you handle a crisis?

Read Acts 2:42 - 37:

In Acts 2, what was the early church characterized by? Where did prayer fit in? How is this different to church today? What could we learn from the early church?

What sort of prayers do you think they prayed?