

Good and Bad Habits - Prayer Sermon Outline

Share briefly about a **pattern** of communication that you have with someone.

In any relationship, communication is critical. We need to make space in a relationship to express our thoughts, to share our needs and to communicate our love and appreciation. We also need to make space to listen and to hear from others, to absorb their perspectives, to understand their needs and to adjust our behaviours. A relationship cannot exist without communication. When our lives are busy, we develop patterns of communication, or habits, that keep us connected.

Prayer is communication between God and people. Prayer is crucial in our relationship with God. God longs that we spend time with him. We need to spend time with God. Just as Jesus needed to spend time in prayer to gain strength and wisdom and compassion.

1. Pray persistently and consistently

- Good communication needs to be consistent and persistent. This doesn't mean constantly pestering someone for something or being in each other's space all the time, but about consistently being willing to deepen our understanding of each other, our awareness of each other's needs, our movement towards each other and our common goals.
- Matthew 7:7-8, 1 Thessalonians 5:17

2. Pray privately and in community with others

- *Share about a time when the prayers of another person have encouraged, comforted, or strengthened you.*
- Private prayer is good for the soul and allows us to present our personal thoughts, needs and emotions to God. Praying in community unifies us and brings us closer together as the body of Christ.
- When we pray together, we:
 - Encourage and build each other up.
 - Strengthen each other.
 - Comfort each other.
 - Provide each other with accountability.

3. Pray with purpose!

- Jesus taught his disciples how to pray with purpose (Matthew 6):
 - Give praise to God.
 - Pray for God's will to be done in our world.
 - Ask for the things you need.
 - Pray for forgiveness.
 - Pray for your relationship with others.
 - Pray for strength to live like Jesus.

Conclusion

- How will you continue to develop prayer habits that deepen your relationship with God?
- I love the Lord because he hears my voice and my prayer for mercy. Because he bends down to listen, I will pray as long as I have breath! Psalm 116:1-2