

Our focus in 2012 is - Love God, Love People

- one of the ways we show our love is through our words/communication - true for people/God
- two months ago we did the first part of this series on prayer
 - saw that road to experiencing God's promises is walked through prayer **2 Chronicles 7:14-15**
 - saw that God is able & willing to answer our prayers
 - talked about roadblocks to answered prayer (pray/sin/cheating God/broken rel./uncaring/faith)
 - ASIDE: GOD DOESN'T OWE US ANYTHING - ALREADY GIVE US EVERYTHING (KIDS)
 - to degree we are/become praying people = to degree we can expect to see God move**

Since then I've given you different tools to help you develop your prayer life...

- set aside an hour on Monday nights = time to learn & practice prayer ("your prayer thing")

My desire for our Spiritual life is that we don't settle for less than God desires

- just like many marriages settle for just being two people who live together
- many Christians settle for a spiritual life that fizzles as time goes on, until little more than ritual
- I want us to know & live in the power of the Holy Spirit at work in & through us daily
- I want us to experience the transformation that comes from wholeheartedly surrendering to X
- I want us to discover that without a vital prayer life, we remove ourselves from God's power

"Prayerless people cut themselves off from God's prevailing power, and the frequent result is the familiar feeling of being overwhelmed, overrun, beaten down, pushed around, defeated. Surprising numbers of people are willing to settle for lives like that." Bill Hybels

Do you feel overwhelmed/overrun/beaten down/pushed around/defeated - how's your prayer life?

The enemy of prayer is not prayerlessness but the thing that leads to prayerlessness - busyness

- and at no other time in history has busyness influenced our lives more than today
- our busyness distracts us/ throws off our priorities / destroys God's work in us and through us

Two passages reveal what needs to happen if we're going to communicate w/God (esp. hear God)

- Psalm 46:10** (want to know/hear God - Get still) God will not compete with other voices or force U
- 1 Kings 19:9b-13**

Point: Knowing the truth about prayer / having tools for prayer is great...

- but no good if we don't make slowing down and being still before God a priority in our lives
- but Ed I'm too busy! That's when you need to slow down the most
- but Ed I just pray on the run! How well would your marriage do, if you just built it on the run?
- there are times, days, where all we have is "on the run" - but if that becomes norm - rel. will suffer

Question, what kind of things can you do to slow down?

- Force yourself to take the time out of your schedule - too important! Monday Nights (marriage)
- 15 minutes with God / one of the other tools I've given out on prayer (welcome table)
- our daily bread / journaling - "yesterday"

Better question, why should/must we do those things? (not to appease God/ tick off prayer box)

- shut down the busyness long enough to hear God's still small voice in our life
- a lot of people abuse this, and they make it seem like God speaks audibly to them everyday (that)
- but the more you learn to be still & listen to God, make room for him - more you'll grow/reflect X
- next week we'll spend some time talking specifically on how to listen
- until then - will you continue making slowing down a priority in 2012? (for me 6:30 - your plan)
- don't know how - commit to start with one hour a week that's set out for you on Mondays.