

Prayer, Sixth Sunday after Trinity, July 28th 2019.

Luke 11:1-13, Col 2:6-13 also.

A mother saw her little boy sitting in a corner of the room saying "ABCDEFGH". What are you doing? She asked. "Mom you told me that I should pray. But I've never prayed in my life and I don't know how. So I gave God the whole alphabet, and asked him, to make a good prayer out of it."

Maybe that is how many of us feel at times. We are not sure if we are praying, or using the right words or maybe how to do it. The disciples recognise and desire to grow as prayers - as praying people - they see how Jesus prays and they ask "Lord teach us to pray." They don't want to be only taught new insights about the scriptures, of how to cast demons out of people, or to be taught how to bring good news to the people, they wanted to grow in their relationship with God. And I think that is a good place to start - to ask ourselves - do we need to pray that same prayer to the Lord? "Lord teach me to pray." At New Wine Summer Conference which ended on Friday, which some of us attended, a couple of speakers said: 'to go far with the Lord, you need to go deep first'.

As Paul put it, in Colossians: "So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and build up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught and overflowing with thankfulness." Col 2:6-7)

At times, to go farther than we have done so far in our walk with Him, we need to go deeper with him than we have before - perhaps to invite him to work more deeply within us than before; perhaps to go deeper in our personal relationship of

prayer with him - we may be praying people already but to have the desire to go deeper, 'Lord teach *me* to pray, as you prayed.' *Jean Nicholas Grou said : We are taught by His grace, in the science of conversing with God!"* Just to say, there are a few quotes in this short talk and I will put them into the church app and facebook today or tomorrow.

Another quotation as we press on.

Dallas Willard, American writer, says: "Prayer is an intelligent conversation about matters of mutual concern." Jesus encourages his followers to bring their requests - ask, seek, find - he says and promises answers will come. Perhaps not the answer they may expect but answers will come. Yet as they and we make the request, the Lord may well speak in reply. Prayer is a *conversation*. Hence the necessity for us to grow in hearing God's voice - so when we speak, knowing he listens - what Jesus promises for he encourages us strongly to pray, he really wants us to - we know he - the Father - listens, yet we need to be a people who listen when he speaks in response or reply to our concerns, questions. So "teach us how to pray", is a request not only about how to speak to the Father, but also how to listen to the Father.



Lord's Prayer in Hebrew, at the Pater Noster Church, on the Mount of Olives

We will briefly, focus upon what is known as the Lord's Prayer. Jesus says this is how you should pray. However, this is clearly not the only prayer we should pray. We read in Paul's letters, many of his prayers, and he did not use the Lord's prayer. We see Jesus himself, not use this prayer, in his own recorded prayers. So it is a prayer we can use, *and also* a model how to prayer with its themes and priorities. This leads us to another quote: Dom Chapman said : "pray as you can, not as you can't." Jesus doesn't say - this is how you all should pray, he gives teaching to encourage prayer, he gives themes to pray for and about, but the rest is up to us, how we do, when we do, where we do it and how long we do it. Jesus aim - he wants us to pray to the Father, "pray as you can, not as you can't."

The Lord's Prayer. What requests do you see in this prayer, in this form recorded by Luke, or the fuller form pray in nearly every Sunday Service?

Praying for the Father's honour - hallowed - Prayer for the Father's kingdom - rule and reign to come; pray for the Father's Provision - daily bread; For the Father's Forgiveness - trespasses; For the Father's Guidance, for the Father's Protection. Lead us not...

Which request is most meaningful for you at this time...?

The prayer invites us to call God father. Each one of us, whether we have been a Christian for a day, a minute, a year, decades. As a Christian, each of us are God's child. This is our deepest identity. It goes deeper than our national, ethnic, socio-economic, or political identity. As Jesus calls God, his Father, he invites us to do the same. We are part of God's household.

Hallowed be your name. In Hebrew, as we looked at on the last teaching day, the name revealed a person's character. To pray that 'his name is hallowed', is to pray that God will be honoured, respected revered. To make our request that God's name - who he is - would be respected, revered, treasured, loved in our city, among our streets. To pray for this, is to pray that his name would not be abused or used in vain but would be a favoured, a treasured word in the words that we hear around us. To pray for this, that in all the words we speak - in church, in sport, in a traffic jam on the A27, all the words we speak - or think in our heads - would honour him, his character, who he is. To pray this, to pray that his name, would be honoured in the colleges and the jobs we are in.

Your kingdom Come. His rule and reign, complete when he comes again. But we remember how in the days when Jesus taught and spoke, he declared the Kingdom had also come. It was here and not yet, near and to come, were the teachings he shared. So to pray for the kingdom to come, is also asking the powers of the future age, to break into the here and now, to pray for people to be converted to Jesus - to be transferred from the dominion of darkness into the kingdom of God's Son, as Paul writes in Colossians. Praying for people to be healed, to become more like Jesus, to set free from evil, for God's active rule to be present among us on a Sunday. So praying for the coming of Jesus, and praying for the future kingdom to break into people's lives in increasing ways.

Our daily bread. Practical provision we pray for. As Martin Luther said: "everything necessary for the preservation of this life, like food, a healthy body, good weather, house, home..." Can I say, in the Anglican Prayer Book of Kenya, there is a prayer for rain as many Christians are farmers and depend on harvest and the

unpredictable rains? And this topic, theme, draws us to thanksgiving - we give thanks for daily bread, thanksgiving for how he has provided so far and the way he has done it.

Forgive us our sins. Why do we need to do it? Some people say that. We come to the cross, we are forgiven for everything. Yes that is true. We are totally forgiven for everything past present future - on the cross, which we remember and give thanks for in bread and wine - is that on the cross, Jesus took all our sins on himself on the cross. No matter what they were. Secret sins, public sins. Sins that affected only us, sins that hurt, damaged changed many others. Jesus took all our sins on himself on the cross. Yet knowing he will do this, he says, When you pray say "forgive us our trespasses / sins."

A good passage is John 13. Jesus is to wash Peter's feet. Peter says No you won't wash my feet. Jesus says unless I wash you, you have not part of me. Peter - in that case wash my whole body. Jesus says - a person who has had a bath needs only wash his feet, his whole body is clean. This is a picture of forgiveness. When we come to the cross in repentance belief and trust, we are made totally clean, we are forgiven, everything is dealt with. but as we go through life, work, family, holidays, we do think say and o things that tarnish, our friendship with God. Our status is secure - we are his beloved children - yet our friendship is affected, made dirty perhaps you could say - with the dirt we pick up as we walk through life. Each day we pray, 'Lord cleanse me from the dirt. We don't need to have a bath again, but a measure of cleansing is needed usually each day.'

Lead us not. We bring to God the requests the weaknesses we know we are in. As Paul reminds us in Galatians, we are a walking civil war - inside us our sinful nature wages war against

the desires of the Spirit. We can pray for situations we are coming into - I remember, at New Wine, one young mum who got to know a Christian student at the university, and would let her know, she was praying she wouldn't get drunk - for when she would, things could happen the student would regret later. Sometimes it is looking at a work situation, a study situation, and being authentic and honest before the Lord and saying "I'm going to find it really hard to be God honouring to you in that place or conversation etc - I want to be God honouring but I am weak. Please help.

It is a profound prayer. It models for us, in what identity we pray from, the priorities for our prayers, how we trust and depend on the Lord for provision and protection, and how we can always come for forgiveness.

Teach us how to pray, is where we began. To go far you need to go deep. To be rooted and build up in him. Four ways that may help you grow in prayer.

1. Ron and Nienke Westerbeek are leading 6 reflective and prayerful walks through nature (appr. 1,5 hrs), listening to God, hearing his voice in various ways. It will be on Monday evenings, from mid Sept to end of October. Where: Birkhoven/Monnickenbos. More information - see below:

## The Emmaus Walk – Listening to Jesus

- What:** Six reflective and prayerful walks through nature (appr. 1,5 hrs), listening to God, hearing his voice in various ways.
- When:** Monday evenings, 16-9, 23-9, 30-9, 7-10, 14-10 and 21-10. Gathering at 19:20 hrs; start at 19:30; ending around 21:00.
- Where:** Birkhoven/Monnickenbos, parking and assembly point at the Bosbad Parking.
- Who:** Everyone at All Saints is very much welcome to join, and by all means do bring your friends or neighbours along with you. The walks are led by Ron and Nienke Westerbeek.
- How:** After a brief plenary introduction, we will quietly and prayerfully do a walk through the woods (1 – 1,5 hrs), alone or in twos, opening ourselves to the presence of God and hearing his voice. There might be silence or sometimes conversation, prayers, and personal reflection.

For signing up (or any questions), please send a message to Nienke: 06-20302177 by Whatsapp and we keep you posted. (You also can send an [email: nienke.westerbeek@gmail.com](mailto:nienke.westerbeek@gmail.com))

If meditation and conversational prayers are new for you, just feel free to join in and try it out!



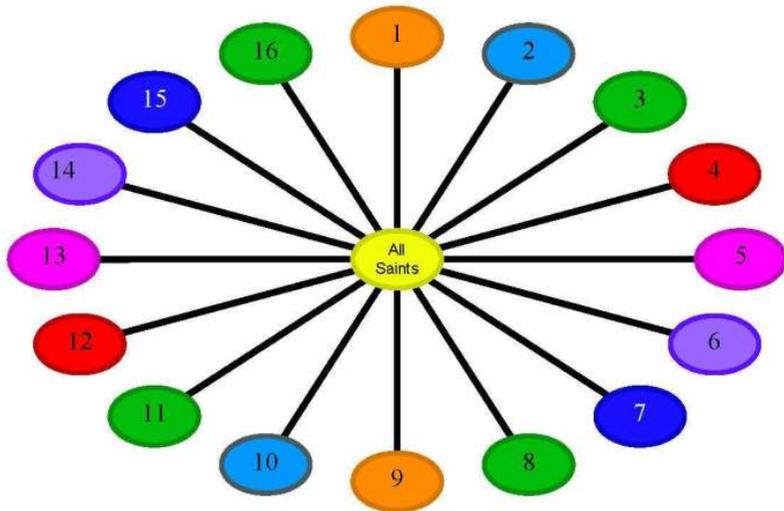
2. This autumn, the home groups will spend the autumn following a study called 'prayer and listening'. 6 sessions exploring what is authentic prayer and genuine listening - how we can go deeper so we can go further.

3. There are various Prayer Apps online - for example, there is Operation World - a free app, which enable you daily to pray for a different country in our world. See the below link.

- <http://www.operationworld.org/prayer-app/>

4. On the back cover of the bulletin - our church prayer wheel - how you can pray for our community on a daily, weekly basis. A different topic for each day, or your family prayers etc. All Saints needs people praying for it. Here is a good tool - many of you have seen it and use it already.

**PRAYER WHEEL FOR ALL SAINTS AMERSFOORT**  
**A prayer rhythm to use. Can you intercede for one item per day?**  
**Every 16 days you can pray through different important areas of All Saints life. We need your prayers as we continue to grow.**



- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All Saints discovered by others...</li> <li>2. Our involvement in the local community</li> <li>3. Finances - thanksgiving &amp; provision &amp; wise stewardship</li> <li>4. Streets around the Nieuwe Erven</li> <li>5. TACA - Church Leadership Team</li> <li>6. Evangelism by All Saints (by the members and by the congregation)</li> <li>7. Our Overseas Connections</li> <li>8. Neighbours of Church Members</li> <li>9. Chaplain and his family.</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10. Creche and Sunday School (the children and the leaders)</li> <li>11. Home Groups - the members and the group leaders</li> <li>12. Pastoral Care in All Saints.</li> <li>13. Stewards, Set up teams, readers, intercessors, coffee teams, sound technicians.</li> <li>14. Worship Services each Sunday</li> <li>15. Our Musicians</li> <li>16. There to be a warm welcome to all, from our congregation.</li> </ol> |
|--|---|

It is staggering how the Lord invites us, encourages us to pray. They just wanted the how to pray. Jesus gives them that and

much more. The Father's heart is that we come often regularly in prayer, about all things and anything.

Shall we pray...

Lord of heaven and earth, we thank for the gift that we can pray to you and call you Father and know you listen;  
as Jesus taught his disciples to be persistent in prayer,  
give us patience and courage never to lose hope,  
but always to bring our prayers before you;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.