



Pray with...

Week 2: Pray with Presence

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Big Idea from the Message

We are told in Scripture that we are to pray with authority, but how is this possible? It's possible when we remember that in prayer, we are entering into God's PRESENCE. There are times that we approach prayer casually, forgetting to Whom we are praying. Our prayer life will be transformed when we understand and believe in the authority given in the name of Jesus.

Connect

1. Have you ever met a high-profile person? Think of a time you were in the presence of someone famous, whether an author, actor, athlete, or politician. Tell your story, and include how you were affected by meeting them. Were you nervous? excited? scared? silly?

Discuss

When we pray, we are ushered into the presence of the Creator of the Universe. How awesome is that! Read the following passages before reflecting further:

- *But I, by your great mercy, will come into your house; in reverence will I bow down toward your holy temple. Psalm 5:7*
 - *And since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith ... Hebrews 10:21-22*
 - *Therefore God exalted Him to the highest place and gave Him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Philippians 2:9-11*
2. This week's Prayer Principle is: "Pray with authority, recognizing you are entering into God's PRESENCE when you pray." When you think about your own prayer life, how do the passages listed above encourage you? How do they challenge you?

3. Sometimes as Christians we approach prayer too casually, forgetting to Whom we are praying. In what ways might your prayer life be transformed, by having a deeper understanding and belief in the authority given in the name of Jesus?
4. Read the account in Acts 3:1-16. When questioned, the apostles insist that their own skill and strength were not responsible for any great acts accomplished through them. What source do they say is responsible for the man's healing? How might this same source be drawn upon more fully in your life?

Live It Out

5. Although we may pray rightly (with authority, in the Presence of God and in the Name of Jesus), not every prayer is answered in the way we ask. Why do you think this is?
6. One author poses a pointed question for us: *What if you're living by faith and yet you don't see God's promise to you fulfilled in your lifetime? Can you dare to believe that he will still keep his promise, even if you don't get to see it during your time on earth? Is it possible that you might grow so intimate with God that you're able to keep loving and serving him despite your disappointment? Craig Groeschel, 'Hope in the Dark'*
 - How would you answer this question? What actions or practices, over time, might help change your initial answer to this question?
7. Discuss the following quote: *If you think God has forgotten you, then you have forgotten who God is. - Anonymous*
8. Psalms 77 and 147 (among others) set a pattern for Pursuing God's Presence:
 - We must continually return to what we know about the CHARACTER of God;
 - And we must repeatedly rehearse the powerful past ACTIONS of God.

Make it real: How are you accomplishing each of these this week?
How might your small group pursue these actions together?

Lifting it up

It's sometimes easy to talk about the topic of prayer, without actually dedicating time for prayer! Make sure to take what you've heard - and thought, and felt - during today's discussion to form the content for your prayers.