

Pray First: Prayer our First Response not our Last Resort

A Lifestyle of Prayer
John 15:4-5

READING John 15:4-5

“Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.”

Summary

Prayer is the main way we remain in Jesus, and experience a supernatural lifestyle. It is not just an activity but a lifestyle which is reflected in four key characteristics: Priority (Daniel 6.10); Place (Mark 1.35); Plan (Luke 11.1-2); Persons of prayer: - the forgiving grace of Jesus, the love of the Father, the breath of the Holy Spirit

“Lifestyle” tends to be associated with possessions, activities or appearance, linked to an aspiration to portray an image which is discerned by our behaviour or values. When commenting on someone whose behaviour we either approve or disapprove of, we may hide behind references to their “lifestyle” to impersonalise our views. But a lifestyle of prayer is not like that – you don’t have to be a monk or a nun.

Prayer should come to us as naturally as breathing. If you stop breathing, you risk a mortal death. If you stop praying, you risk a spiritual death. It’s that important.

Questions:

Conversation Starter

1. Which lifestyles are you critical of, and which lifestyles do you advocate? Why?

Start thinking and sharing

2. Where does prayer rank in your priorities for daily life? Could it be higher?
3. Where do you find it easiest to pray? At what times of the day?
4. When you pray, do you plan what you are going to pray about in advance?
5. Do you find it helpful to pray through God the Father, Jesus or the Holy Spirit?

Start praying

6. Imagine you are breathing the breath of the Holy Spirit as you pray.

Start doing

7. Consider adopting one characteristic of prayer in a way which is new to you.