

- ⑦ SUM: (a) Prayer is not of our initiative or foundationally born out of our need, but rather it is born out of the fact that God has acted - towards us, is rich, and invites our response - gives us his ear.
- (b) Ultimately then prayer is not about having our needs met, but relating to ~~the~~ this God who has acted towards us, e.g., He is holy, so we worship (adoration); merciful, so we repent (confession), gracious, so we express appreciation (thanks giving); loving + caring so we petition him (supplication). But having our needs met is not the goal in his acting towards us, giving us his ear, or our very existence. These are all secondary and subservient to the ultimate goal of "having god" - that he himself would be our joy, and through these things - increasingly so.

• What is prayer?

(1 Pet 5:6-7; Ps 17:6-7)

"Prayer is communion with a transcendent and immanent God who on the ground of his nature and attributes calls forth all the powers of the redeemed soul in acts of total adoration and dedication." - Arthur Bennett (VoV)

• What best describes you - "My prayers mostly consist of..."

- Asking for things.
- Adoring God.
- Something else?
- Confessing and repenting.
- Enjoying God.

• What do you think this says about how you view and approach prayer?

• Many folks find prayer difficult. Some find it comes easy. In either case, what do you find to be most difficult about prayer?

- What are the "internal heart reasons" that keep you from prayer?
- The lies you believe when you fail to pray?
- The truths you ignore when you don't pray?

Jesus directs and

• What practical tips on prayer (from Mathis) did you find most helpful? What other tips might you add?

** [Private prayer is a litmus test of our spiritual integrity (the authenticity of our public prayer "front").]**

• Mathis lists several "profits" of praying with other believers. Which one most resonates with you? Or, what might you add?

• Provide one or two steps or new habits you want to implement/cultivate to enrich your prayer life (takeaway):

• Which statements closely describe your experience with praying in company?

- I tend to pray aloud before others quickly, with little apprehension.
- I tend to be too nervous or shy to want to pray.
- I am more preoccupied with impressing others with my prayer than genuinely speaking to God.