

## Prayer (cont.)

- How do you practice Paul's command to "pray without ceasing?"
- What happens inside you when you are quiet with God?

## Prayer Exercises:

- Make prayer the first thing you do in the morning.
- Start with confession. Ask God to reveal sin to you. Don't think of God as condemning you, but forgiving you and giving you the grace to "go and sin no more."
- Pray for the needs of others and then your own needs.
- Spend some time just listening for God's voice. It may take some time before you sense its "working."
- Try stopping at various points throughout the day to acknowledge God through prayer (breaks, lunch, meals, etc.)
- Get together with other friends for the expressed purpose of prayer.

## Obedience

Jesus says the difference between the wise and foolish builder is not hearing Jesus' words, but obeying. When we are conscious of obeying, it trains us to be naturally obedient.

- When you read scripture, find one thing you need to do so that your life lines up with scripture. Make a plan to do it. How did it feel for you to obey? Did you learn anything in particular?
- Try an obedience experiment. If you sense in prayer that God is telling you to do something, even if you're not sure, if it lines up with scripture, do it. After doing it, do you still believe God was speaking to you? Why or why not?
- Is there someone God has placed in your life He wants you to share the love of Jesus with? What would it mean for you to do this? How can you make one step toward him or her?



## Fruit Happens

### Sermon Notes and Takehome

September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2010

John 15:1-17

1. I connect by \_\_\_\_\_.
2. I connect through \_\_\_\_\_.
3. I connect through \_\_\_\_\_.
4. I connect through \_\_\_\_\_.
5. I connect through \_\_\_\_\_.

### Bearing Fruit

Salvation is not just going to \_\_\_\_\_ when we \_\_\_\_\_.

The "Kingdom of God" is anywhere God's \_\_\_\_\_ is being done.

Fruit happens \_\_\_\_\_ us.

Fruit happen \_\_\_\_\_ us.

Fruit only happens when we are \_\_\_\_\_ to the vine.

## Questions for Reflection:

1. In what way has your view of “salvation” been inadequate?
2. Look at the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23. Which fruit would you say you exhibit? Which fruit are not present in your life?
3. Which of the five ways of connecting are most natural for you?
4. Which do you think will be most beneficial for you?

## Connection Exercises:

### Disconnecting

First, plan a time where you can take from ½ hour to 1 hour to reflect honestly about your life. Get a notebook and write down your thoughts.

Ask:

- What is taking up a disproportionate amount of my time, energy, or thoughts?
- What hurts, anger or bitterness I’m holding onto as a result of a broken relationship?
- In what ways do I seek to serve myself and meet my own needs rather than the needs of other?

When things come to mind, pray about them and make specific plans to change what needs to be changed. If you need to simplify your schedule or your budget, do it. Get help if you need it. If you are holding on to hurts, anger, or bitterness, go make it right. Give grace and let go.

### Worship

Worship is the practice of putting God at the center of life. When we disconnect from other things, worship helps fill this void with God. We can do this through corporate worship or personal worship. Here are some disciplines you can practice:

Ask:

- How did a particular style of worship—charismatic, traditional, contemporary, liturgical—shape you and your image of God?
- How does a particular form or style of worship shape you now?
- What about God moves you to worship?

## Worship Exercises:

- Spend the first 15-30 minutes of your day in prayer. Acknowledge that God goes before you wherever you go. Ask Him to give you continual reminders of this throughout the day.
- Have personal times of worship. If you are musical, play and sing songs to God. If not, put on a worship CD and close your eyes and worship God along with it.
- During corporate worship, resist the urge to evaluate the service. Focus on God during the singing time. Our body posture in worship can help us when we worship. Close your eyes. Lifting your arms signifies surrender to God. Kneeling demonstrates humility.
- Worship with your mind and your emotions. No form of worship is effective for everyone, but try different forms of it.

## Scripture

We read scripture for more than just information. We read for transformation. Take time to read scripture and allow it to form you. The following suggestions are adapted from John Ortberg’s “The Life You’ve Always Wanted.”

- If you’re not accustomed to reading the Bible, start with the book of Matthew or Mark.
- As you sit, ask God to meet you in scripture.
- Read the Bible in a repentant spirit. Where your life doesn’t match up with scripture, be ready to conform your life to scripture.
- Read a small passage of scripture. A story, a parable or section of scripture.
- Read it through the passage a couple of times, then read it again slower and more deliberately.
- Take one thought or verse with you throughout the day. Memorize it or write it down and hang it up in your office or kitchen. Come back to it throughout the day.

## Prayer

Questions:

- Do you have an inward sense that being quiet with God is a waste of time? Why?