

Prayer Exercise: Palms Down, Palms Up

As we mentioned a couple of weeks ago, prayer is the primary way we tune-in to God is through prayer. And yet it's our connection to God that brings us wholeness. One exercise that people often find helpful is a prayer called "Palms Down, Palms Up."

Find a comfortable place where you can sit a while without having to shift around much. Start by taking a few deep breaths and hold your hands out in front of you with your palms down.

In your mind, imagine yourself letting things drop out of your hands. Just as kneeling before God in prayer is a way to symbolize our submission to God, palms down is your symbol of letting go of any sins, hurts, anger, bitterness, pride or anything else that is keeping you from knowing God's peace. Take all the time you need.

Now stay in the same position but turn your palms up to symbolize your willingness accept from God what He wants to give you. You don't have to ask for anything, just quiet your heart and allow the thoughts that come through your mind to disappear and listen to what God is saying to you.

This may not be natural for you. We are often so busy, we don't know what it means to slow down. But it's in the slowing down that we are able to hear from God. Take the time to practice palms up, palms down regularly until it becomes more natural for you. The purpose is not to be good at the exercise, but to help you restore wholeness to your life and connection to God.

Roots: The Grown-Up Church

Sermon Notes and Takehome

August 1st, 2010

Ephesians 4:1-13

Everyone gets older, but some never _____ !

Review:

- When we come to Jesus we all get spiritual _____.
- We can either be too _____ of ours or wish we had a different gift.

Paul's model for a mature church.

1. Unity

- "Unity of the Spirit"
- Through the bond of "peace" (_____)

2. + Diversity

- Diversity _____ and _____ us.
- Diversity gives us a broader _____.
- Diversity _____ us.

3. = Maturity

- Maturity is the ability to accept _____.
- Maturity is the ability to act with _____ when things don't go our way.
- Maturity is _____ by Christ.

Further Study and Application:

1. Have you ever known someone who you would say has never matured? What are the signs of their immaturity?
2. What are the signs of a mature Christian? What are the signs of an immature Christian? Are the signs different for an immature Christian and an immature person?
3. Why do you think some people never grow up?
4. Read the following verses. What does each say about "growing up" or "maturing?"

Colossians 1:9-14

Colossians 2:16-19

Philippians 3:12-15

Hebrews 5:11-14

James 1:2-4

5. Peace (shalom) means an inner completeness or wholeness. Do you sense you have that inner wholeness in your life? If not, what do you feel you are missing? What is incomplete?
6. What desire do you think this incompleteness comes from? (To determine this: What are you jealous about? What do you feel you can't live without? What makes you angry? What disappoints you about yourself? What is disproportionate in your life?)
7. In what ways do you think you have denied the truth in your life? What do you need to confess? To whom do you need to confess or apologize?
8. To whom or in what situation have you been unwilling or unable to give grace?
9. What is one "hard thing" you will commit to doing to bring wholeness to your life?