



Vertical With God Through Prayer – Message 1

Announcements

- **Second Saturday SERVE** // Thank you to everyone who participated in SERVE Day 2016! Because of you, we were able to impact our community for Jesus. You can continue transforming lives by serving the Second Saturday every month. Go to ChurchoftheKing.com/satserve.
- **Step Four - Small Groups** // Learn about why and how we do small groups at Church of the King. Find out how you can help the people you know grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ. ChurchoftheKing.com/growthtrack

What is the biggest personal roadblock that keeps you from praying as much as you would like to?

We often speak of the power of prayer, knowing that through prayer God not only can change circumstances, but he can also change us. Yet, there are still things that tend to hold us back from praying as much as we could. Today we are going to begin our series and discuss how we can go *Vertical* by connecting with God through prayer.

When we really focus on our prayer life, each of us may find that we have something that holds us back from being a more powerful prayer warrior. Let's look at **Four Reasons Why People Don't Pray More**:

1. We are not really sure *how* to pray.
2. We get *bored* and distracted when trying to pray.
3. We think our requests are too *small or big* for God.
4. We are not sure our prayers make a *difference*.

Which of these four reasons has the most impact on your prayer life quality and what can you do to change that?

Prayer is so much more than a call to action on God's part. It is our means of communication with our heavenly Father. The way we connect with God is personal and unique because our relationship with Him is personal and unique. But all healthy relationships require healthy communication. Connecting in close relationship with God can be accomplished in the following:

Four Simple Ways to Communicate and Talk with God

1. *Talk to God with gut-level honesty.*

Read Exodus 5:22-23.

Have you heard the expressions, "Let's Get Real" or "Let's Be Real"? God wants you to be "real" with Him, communicating with Him with complete authenticity. When being completely open and honest with God, we should demonstrate respect when communicating with our Heavenly Father, always wanting to be: **reverent**, **worshipful**, and **submissive** to Him.

What do you believe prevents us from being completely honest with God?

2. *Talk to God about everything that matters to you.*

Read Philippians 4:6.

God wants you to share with Him *everything* that is important to you. What are some things that you have not prayed for because you thought they were too insignificant or too big to talk with God about?

3. *Talk to God continually.*

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18.

We should have an ever-awareness of God's presence and invite Him into our day continually. In what ways can you open your life more to communicating with God?

Scripture has shown us how God responds to persistent prayers, such as in the lives of King David and Hannah. Be encouraged when praying, always **P-U-S-H** through. **Pray Until Something Happens.**

4. *Listen for His response.*

Read 1 Kings 19:12.

God not only wants us to hear us, He wants us to hear him. Healthy relationships require two-way communication. He may speak to us in different ways, such as through His Word, through others, or through His gentle whisper. In what way(s) have you heard God's direction in your life in response to your prayers?

What will you do differently this week to help you grow in how you communicate with God?

Close in prayer with praise and thanksgiving for having a heavenly Father that wants to be in close relationship with

us. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal anything that may be hindering a deep connection with the Lord. Pray that eyes and ears will be opened so that we hear God's voice so that His will, purpose, and Word in our lives will be clearly revealed to us and understood. Pray for specific needs of group.