

The Simple Prayer

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[0:00] Just to say hello again, welcome. If this is your first time, my name is James. I'm part of the community here. Actually, today is a special day because we've been here in this place doing this for one year now.

This is technically week 52 of what we've been doing. Well, yeah, that's great. Yeah, we've... No one's died yet here.

We've not run away from... Had to run away from any fires just yet, but we're praying the Lord will continue to bless us. But you know, there's one reflection that I had about this year. I was like, you know, I love this time that we get together.

I love this time that we get to just come to worship together. But honestly, we're not doing anything that different. If you think about the service that we are putting on on a Sunday, it's pretty similar. You come in, and then we put some lyrics on, and then we all sing karaoke for a little bit. And then we do some announcements, and then someone comes up and shares for a while.

[1:02] And then we have one response song that we like to sing. So instead of responding to the sermon with our lives, we choose just to do it with a song first and just sometimes leave it at that.

And then we pray, and then we leave, and we have lunch, and then we go play volleyball, and that's kind of it. And it made me think, you know, I think we're still young enough as a church. Or did I just get cut off?

Should I try this one? I think we're still young enough as a church to really keep asking ourselves, what are we doing? What are we doing? Why are we here?

Do you agree? Can we do that? Like, we read those gathering statements because we're asking ourselves, do you know why you're here? Why did you choose to come here on a Sunday morning? What is it for? And, of course, the answer sometimes is always different. But for us, can we keep reminding ourselves that? So we're at this place where we're like, you know what? Lord, we want to focus on you. We want to be here for the right reason.

[1:58] And I've told you before that I have this fear that we turn up to church, and it's a memorial service. We're talking about a guy who lived a long time ago who was a good guy, and that's it. And then last week I shared with you I have another fear, which is that we're basically running a birthday party and ignoring the person whose birthday it is.

So we all gather and say, hey, we're here for Jesus. We're here to hang out. We just worship him. And then, to be honest, we spend the whole time not really thinking about him, wanting to hear from him, and we leave. And that seems sad too, right?

Does that seem sad to you? If you've come here and you've not been able to encounter Jesus, then that's sad. Because that's what we're here for. And so then, actually, myself and a few of our leaders were like, you know what?

We want to focus on prayer. You know, Acts 2.42, before I went away, I preached about it, and I was like, are we devoted or are we dabbling? Are we devoted to what they were doing in the beginning, or are we just simply dabbling and then wondering why we're not growing, wondering why we're not known by the people, wondering why we're just not feeling that connection.

But maybe we should devote ourselves. And that's when we came across, in our minds, this idea, we need to devote ourselves to prayer. We need to devote ourselves to prayer. But then another thought came into my mind is actually, if I want all of us to have, if we want to be a praying church, and now my suspicion is around the world, we're a pretty prayerless church.

[3:20] And that's ironic, almost, because we say we're here to meet Jesus, but yet we don't talk to Jesus at all. And for me, I'm like, if we're going to have a praying church, we need to have praying people.

In order, if we're going to convince people that praying is important, not in the righteous, religious sense, but just in the sense of, hey, if we're here for God, then we should really talk to Him. We should really listen to Him.

Then I realized we can't really do that if we don't change the way we do our Sunday service. Not all the time, not forever. And actually, the team that came here, and there's a whole group that came here really early just to pray and dream this up with us.

We're like, hey, we're going to try this for one week. And if it's an absolute disaster, we'll just go back to doing, like, we're not afraid of trying different things. The last thing we want is to get so stuck into what we're doing that we actually forget why we're here.

And we're back to the memorial service. We're back to the birthday party, but ignoring the birthday boy. It makes me think, the early church, how did it start? And can we at least experiment and try with some of those things?

[4:19] So if you're here for the first time, bear with us. Thank you. I love that you're here. We don't always do it like this. But I hope you get a sense of at least what we're trying to do here. And we welcome you. And I truly believe that actually God's brought you here for a reason as well.

And if there's anything that He wants to say to you, I pray that you'll be open to it. I think about Acts. When Jesus flies off, ascends into heaven, and He says, I'll be back. And then the people who are watching Him fly off suddenly don't really know what to do.

Can you imagine that in Acts 1? You see Jesus fly off and says, the Holy Spirit will come upon you, and you'll be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. I'll be back. And then they just all stood there going, well, that's a bit strange.

We've never seen that before. What now? What do we do? What do they do? They did what I think what we would do after seeing something like that.

Oh, what should we do now? You talk to you. Oh, I guess we'll head back home. But we can't head home. It feels weird to head home having seen what we've just seen. We've got to do something.

[5:25] Oh, actually, there's a group there who are just going to go into someone's house over there. They have a big house, and they're just going to go over there, and they're just going to start praying. And so that's what we see, and that's what we read here in Acts 1, the upper room.

Because they didn't know what they were going to do. Jesus said He'll be back, but He didn't say whether it will be in seven days or whether it will be 2,000 years. So they don't know what to do.

And when in doubt, they did the thing that they thought best, which is they went to pray.

And I can actually imagine it's probably the size of a room like this, where there's a group of people who saw Him ascend, don't know what to do from this point because they can't act as though they've not seen it.

So then they said, you know what? Let's not go home just yet. Let's just go and pray. I would say that's the beginning of the early church. What was the early church started by?

It was started by a prayer meeting. It was started by a 10-day prayer meeting. People like you and I, about the same number of people here actually, gathered together because they couldn't unsee what they saw.

[6:33] They couldn't just go back to their normal lives. They're like, we just got to get together and pray. Somehow along the way in the 2,000 years, we've kind of lost our way a little bit.

And now we've ended up in a place where it's a show. It's a very slick performance of a show. There's certain parts to a service that we must follow because that's what church is, when in reality, it looked a little bit like this.

So we're going to try and do something here. And I'm going to try not to talk for too long, but I want us to be able to talk to God. And here it is. I want to encourage you. If you've never done this before, or if you don't even know what I'm about to ask you to do, and you're feeling a little bit nervous, don't worry.

I'm super nervous because I'm leading this, and I don't really know how it's going to end. And it's okay. But I'm like, if we're not even willing to try different things, then what are we here for?

I'm here to want to hear from the Lord. I'm here wanting to have a connection, and I'm willing to try all kinds of different things, throw all kinds of things at the wall to see if it sticks.

[7:34] And if it doesn't, hey, we're going to come back next week. The seats will be in the normal place, and we'll all continue to do what we do. And that's okay, too. Do you hear my heart? Can I get a nod or an actual... Is that okay? Are you with me in just trying this?

Brilliant. That's good. So what we're going to do is we're actually going to switch the service around a little bit. So okay, next week I won't be doing this little spiel because I did want to at least kind of intro it. We're going to switch the service around.

The sermon isn't going to be the climax that we had because actually the sermon itself hasn't always been the climax or the kind of centerpiece of a church, which seems to be the case these days. It was only 500 years ago when a guy called Zwingli was like, we need to go back to preaching the word of God, and he moves the pulpit right into the center of church.

And it's from that moment the church service almost revolved around the service. The songs were to prepare you for the sermon. The song afterwards would prepare you to respond to the sermon, and everything was about the sermon.

Actually, for 1,500 years, it wasn't about that. It was about communion. It was about being together, praying together.

[8:34] So we're going to experiment that, and so we're going to follow the format of what maybe an early church service would have looked like, which is it would have started off with scripture reading. And then it would have been a short message about that, and then it would just be worship and prayer.

Now, don't worry. It won't be a 10-day one that we're trying to do. We will still get you to lunch on time. But my heart is this, and when we were praying as a group in the morning, I was like, you know what?

May we get to a place where prayers never have to start because they never stop? Does that make sense? Can we get to a point where prayers never have to start because it just never stops? So we're always – this is what we're striving for into being here.

So this is what we're going to try and do. Hey, kids have actually already started, so feel free to jump straight into the kids if you've just been able to join us. So we're going to do this. We're going to start with scripture.

I've decided for these next few weeks we're going to go through a very short passage of scripture each time, and it's going to be based on a set of psalms which are called the Songs of Ascent. I don't know if you know about these Songs of Ascent.

[9:35] These are short psalms. They're not like the super, super long ones. They were psalms that were sang by people back in those days as they were heading to Jerusalem to worship, to attend a festival, and groups of people, maybe smaller groups and bigger groups, they would start walking up towards Jerusalem, walking up the hill of Jerusalem, and they would start singing these songs together.

Think about football fans singing an anthem as they are supporting their team. It's that kind of – and, of course, the lyrics are easy to learn, easy to catch. Even kids will know them. Because when I think about prayer, what did Jesus pray?

Jesus would have prayed these psalms because he would have known these psalms. And so we're going to try and root ourselves in this, and we're going to start by simply just reading this scripture. I'm going to read it to us a few times.

And so I invite you, as I read it to you, we're actually going to try something that actually, again, is an old thing called Lectio Divina. Put your hand up if you've heard of Lectio Divina before. Brilliant. Lectio Divina actually just translated simply means divine reading.

Lectio being reading. And it's basically the idea of just, God, we're going to hear from you. And each time we read it, we're going to go through different phases. We're going to first, we're going to read it. And then we're just going to reflect on it.

[10:45] And then we're going to respond to it in our hearts. And then we're just going to rest in it. And so there's these stages that actually, the other thing is, I want us to be equipped with different tools to pray.

Because I find it hard to pray. Some of you find it hard to pray, especially on your own. Wouldn't it be great if, in a time like this, we can give each of the tools that actually help us when we go home? That's kind of the heart behind it.

So I'm going to read this to you. We're going to read it a few times. So maybe the first time we'll do it in the usual fashion that we do, which is, can I invite you to stand for the word of the Lord? Today I'm going to be reading from Psalm 131, a song of ascent of David.

So Lord, as we stand and we hear your word, we revere it. We hold it. With respect, with awe, with reverence.

Because these words give life. So would you prepare our hearts now as we receive your word.
Psalm 131.

[12:01] O Lord, my heart is not lifted up.

My eyes are not raised too high. I do not occupy myself with things too great and too marvelous for me. But I have calmed and quieted my soul like a weaned child with its mother.

Like a weaned child is my soul within me. O Israel, hope in the Lord. From this time forth and forevermore.

Please take a seat. So we've read it the first time. I don't know if there's anything that jumped out to you. I'm going to read it a second time now.

Actually, Charlotte's going to put it on the screen for us. As I read it a second time, again, I encourage you. So we've just read it. Now what I want us to do is to reflect on it.

[13:03] As I read these words to you, what jumps out? What does it make you think of? Psalm 131. Oh Lord, my heart is not lifted up.

My eyes are not raised too high. I do not occupy myself with things too great and too marvelous for me.

But I have calmed and quieted my soul. Like a weaned child with its mother. Like a weaned child is my soul within me.

Oh Israel, hope in the Lord. From this time forth and forevermore. So now we've read it for the first time.

We've reflected on it on the second time. The third time I read it, let's ask the question, Lord, how can we respond? Is there anything that you want us to do to respond to this?

[14:40] Or why did certain lines pop up? What do they mean? What's he trying to say? So now we read it for a third time. Oh Lord, my heart is not lifted up.

My eyes are not raised too high. I do not occupy myself with things too great and too marvelous for me.

Like a weaned child with its mother. Like a weaned child is my soul within me. Oh Israel, hope in the Lord from this time forth and forevermore.

And now I'll read it one final time and this is the final bit where we just rest in it.

O Lord, my heart is not lifted up.

[16:19] My eyes are not raised too high. I do not occupy myself with things too great and too marvelous for me.

Like a weaned child with its mother. Like a weaned child is my soul within me. O Israel, hope in the Lord from this time forth and forevermore.

Lord, we seek to hear from you.

We seek to meet you. Commune with you. Speak with you. Be with you.

So would you be with us. So now we've done that.

[17:46] That's some, we did that in five minutes but if you're wanting to try different things at home, that's something that you can do over let's say 30 minutes, take a short passage like that, read it, reflect on it, respond to it and then rest in it.

That's Lectio Divina and this is a new thing. This has been around for hundreds and hundreds of years and it's just a great way for me that I found to help still my mind, to root my prayer in the word of God and that's been super helpful for me.

And I hope that helps you. It reminds me of the quote that I shared from Pete Gregg last week which was, pray what you've got. CS Lewis says, let's lay before the throne not what ought to be in us but just lay before the throne what is in us.

Just pray what you've got. Keep it simple. The Lord's Prayer that I shared about last week, the Matthew version, before Jesus prays, teaches them how to pray, he tells them, hey, there's some of you who have made prayer too complicated.

You're standing on your street corners, you're using the longest words that you can find and you're praying as loud as you can because you want people to see how good you are at praying and that you know what the word sanctification and justification mean.

[19:00] We get it, you're smart but do you have a connection with God and Jesus says when you pray just go into your room and just quiet and just say the simplest of prayers. And that's what really resonated with me this week because actually we all come from very different levels of prayer.

There's some of you here who have come here to church this morning and you've already done a two hour prayer service at home and there's the rest of us who actually we've struggled to pray this week for two minutes a day.

So the first week I wanted to focus on is just this idea of simple prayer that you pray what you've got and that we're all very different. God created us all very differently so don't look to the person next to you and go oh well they probably like that that's how I should pray because we're all so different. We were created different from the moment we were born. My wife and I had a funny conversation yesterday because MJ's been in this kind of five, six month period and apparently there's a six month sleeping regression that is similar to the four month sleeping regression that is a little bit different than the eight month sleeping progression and the idea and it was funny she was laughing because when you read okay of course she's sleep deprived so mums who have done this through the nights will know this she was like you know what when you're reading these kind of oh why is my baby doing this doing that and then you read these articles online and they'll tell you Rocky's just like I know he's like why is my baby doing this and the article will say well you know some babies most babies will have this happen to them at six months and this will happen and this will happen unless it doesn't and then this will happen unless it doesn't nearly all babies do this unless they don't and then you finish reading the article you're like you know what you guys don't know either you're literally just making it up and every baby is different so by that definition every prayer is different as well because we're all created to speak to him in different ways but one thing that I have learned is that we have to pray what we've got you look at this prayer here that they would have sang it's a simple prayer and it starts with this oh lord my heart is not lifted up my eyes are not raised too high what is that that's the same thing from last week's prayer the lord's prayer it is humility that is just kind of going

God I'm not going to keep my I'm not going to keep my eyes focused on these high things here how I'm going to change the world up here I'm not going to think about trying to become the CEO of this and trying to be the best of this this prayer is just one that just completely strips you down to the humblest level going God my heart is not lifted too high my eyes are not raised too high man I do not occupy myself with things too great and too marvelous for me don't we do that sometimes that we occupy ourselves of things too great and too marvelous we're trying to solve the world's problems our young life staff and I this week during our meeting I felt compelled to buy a couple of newspapers and take them to the office and before we started we just all grabbed a newspaper and read a newspaper and actually a lot of my staff which are who are millennials and gen z's they're like I've never touched a newspaper before what are you doing there's so many parts to it and I was like hey let's let's just read what's happening in this city and let's not be consumed with thinking that we can solve it but let's just pray for the different parts of this city for the rental market for the gambling for the mental health for the suicide rates for the guys in Mira let's pray for them because everyone cares about them let's pray for Anson

[22:36] Lowe and Gungthal those are the only two I know and the other guys who all look very similar to them but let's pray and so we did that and actually that's us going God we don't occupy ourselves with things too great for us we don't understand what's happening but we will pray and so there's that sense of humility that sense of just being simple and then it goes into the second part which is an interesting one which actually took me a while to really understand it said this but I have calmed and quieted my soul like a weaned child with his mother like a weaned child is my soul within me what does that mean what does that mean for those who have nursed a baby I've calmed and quieted my soul and I think there's a contentment there there's a I just sit and I'm just content which is so different to the city of Hong Kong people just being restless wanting the next thing right but like a baby like a weaned child so this isn't a baby like

MJ our baby just goes nuts when he's hungry for milk and he can't shut him up it's just but a weaned child is someone who doesn't need milk anymore who just sits and you know what's interesting when a baby cries for mum like a nursing child they're crying for milk they're just going for that's what they want something that's why they're crying but a weaned child when they're crying for their parent what are they doing they just want company they just want a hug they just want to rest on your lap and not worry about a thing they don't need anything from you they just want to sit with you I've calmed and quieted my soul like a weaned child I'm just going to sit which brings me to my question for us today as we pray what we've got are our prayers childish prayers or childlike prayers your prayer if I snuck into your prayer life is it a childish prayer or is it a childlike prayer

what's the difference

I'm going to ask the question just to keep us awake a little bit because it's getting quite warm in here what's the trait of a childish prayer what's the trait of a childish prayer you don't really know what you're talking about you don't even know what you want so you're just like God I need this but you don't really know that's definitely a part of it what else is there Mel what's a childish prayer for you a needy one like just God all I need is this this is what I need like I know that you've given me eternity with you and complete satisfaction but I just need a girlfriend I know that I'm going to spend eternity just being completely fulfilled but could you just give me that job the one that I won't be able to take into heaven but I just want it now I'm just needy that's all I want what's a child like prayer Kelly what's a child like prayer a prayer where you're really seeking just to be with the father where you want to be with him where you want to sit on his lap it's the prayer that let's say my daughter gives to me when I say hey do you want to go here can you come with me that's it that's the child like prayer it's where she's not asking for anything that don't don't get me wrong she asks for tons of things but a child like prayer is like

God I don't actually I don't really know what I want I don't really know but I just want to be with you and then there comes a point where you can ask for things as well that's what the Lord's prayer showed us right when you seek communion with him there are moments where God can I just have some bread today I need something today I need this today but let's not have our prayers be childish prayers let's have them be childlike prayers where we are not afraid to go to God I really need this God I'm really angry right now because that person is really frustrating me God I'm actually really struggling right now because mentally emotionally I'm just not there I don't even know what I'm trying to ask for I don't even know what I need and I guess I can come to you with that yes you can praying for childlike prayers and not childish prayers we call them simple prayers is what Richard Foster calls them and I love it so actually my favorite book on prayer if you're wondering I'm eager to read about prayer Richard Foster book on prayer is my personal favorite and he talks about different kinds of prayers and the first one is simple prayer where you simply just go he says it's the most common prayer in the

Bible where it's basically the prayer of whatever you have on your heart you say to God you look in the Bible that's how people pray just here it is sometimes as overzealous Christians keep wanting to try move beyond that simple prayer so we're not just asking for things but Richard Foster says the only way you move beyond simple prayer is if you move through it where you do acknowledge God actually I know what Pastor James said but I am yearning for a spouse I am yearning for a girlfriend or a boyfriend I am worried about my job situation I don't want to but I am so I am going to pray what I have got and I am going to start there so there is something to that that that is why today I wanted to focus on that simple prayer what simple prayer do you have in your heart before we try and consider all the other kinds of ways we talk to

[28:21] God let's start with where we man God I'm just worried that I'm not in the right place that I'm not in the right relationship I'm just worried for my adult child who no longer goes to church that's the thing that's on my mind a lot what's your simple prayer what's the prayer that you have and as we seek to be calmed and quieted in our souls as we seek to have child like prayers!

this psalm 131 is one of the shortest psalms but Charles Spurgeon said this it's one of the shortest psalms to read but it's one of the longest psalms to learn to learn to be children of God who are content who are calmed and quieted within the soul like weaned children are who just want to spend time with their parents and not need milk just to hold their hands that's what we're praying for but to get there we have to move through the simple prayer and start with hey what have I got in my heart that actually I do want to ask God about God why is there so much evil in the world I look at the leaders around the world and politics and I'm just confused just like they are and we can take those prayers!

there's a type of prayer that we've been trying with some of our teams here and it's called ABC prayer it's not a new thing everyone calls it different things it's popcorn prayer it's basically when a group of people get together and want to pray but we don't want that long winded person to take over the prayer and completely dominate and the rest of us switch off we've been in those prayers where there's that person who just uses long words and prays a long time so we call it ABC prayer because we start off wanting to keep it simple A stands for authentic I'm going to test you on this so remember A stands for authentic let's just be real if you're not feeling it then just say God I'm not feeling it but I'm here because I'll tell you even whatever your certain place is just show up and

that's the main thing so first thing just be authentic A number two is be brief so when we do this kind of prayer that we're going to try and practice as a community just one line just one line I've had people who have struggled with this sometimes because they use more words so I've had a little polite bell on the side where just as they head into the fifth sentence I'll do a thing it's okay you could pray again in a minute but just let's keep it going together because we're trying to practice this together okay what's A stand for authentic be real brief one sentence of course you get to put another sentence later okay so let's just keep the just like at a dinner table or a coffee shop we just all are those kinds of prayers too but right now let's start with a simple prayer God I'm so tired I'm so worried about the thing that I'm trying to do let's just be conversational with how we do it A authentic B C conversational so that's what we're going to do and yes just to prepare you give you maybe 10 minutes of mental emotional preparation we're all going to try this with the people next to us so you either got really lucky today or you are lucky but we're going to try it no matter what okay we're going to try and do that but before that I want to invite some of my friends up to come and share with you a little bit first!

[32 : 26] so! there's three friends I wanted Wes where are you Wes Wes is over there Wes give them up we're all going to stand and some of you are going to see some of us maybe we'll stand so that at least people can see people just FYI I asked these people to do it a few days ago and I haven't given them much prep after that so they're a little bit anxious just as I am!

Wes is a dear friend I've known Wes since him and Nathan have been family friends all the way from Leicester we knew your family before you were even born Wes is also my physio just to shout out there now if anyone needs a physio he's right here and he's also single so just in case just in case he's a good guy sorry I told you I wouldn't embarrass you but he's definitely handsome right right definitely handsome you see not quite the person you want shouting it but it's still good he has a market he has a market oh my goodness okay change stop okay next

Rachel Rachel is one of again her and Sam are one of the first people that we met when we first moved to Hong Kong one of the best things about Rachel is she is just so real and she won't be afraid to let you know like she is just very!

and how! the reason why I brought Wes up here not just to make fun of him I watched this young man grow in how he speaks to God I hope it can be an inspiration to someone here Rachel again I know she speaks to God I know she rebukes God and complains to God about all kinds of things and her relationship with him is real!

that's why she's here and of course Trevor Dr. Trevor Chan here again real just has this fire for God that passed from his family nurtured and disciplined through his family and always eager to hear from him he'll be like let me pray about it let me ask God let me see whether he wants me to do this and so I admire these people maybe just to start off so everyone else gets to know you a little Wes what's your journey with prayer been like how would you describe it praying is honestly praying is kind of boring sometimes I think growing up we used to have to pray as a family sometimes and I used to try and pray first or like maybe after Nathan so I could sleep when my mom prays because she prays for so long don't tell my mom if you know her yeah but it's now shorter so it's but yeah praying just used to be really boring but now it's just kind of growing into more like a conversation with

[36 : 14] God yeah what do you think changed what was the switch for you I think definitely attitude like and how you perceive God because God when you're younger I think God's kind of like Santa right like kind of equivalent because you just don't know if he's actually there or and I think as you grow or as I grew up it's you kind of realize actually this is real this is so real and like he wants to talk to you and like you want to just be in constant conversation together usual kind of lingo prayer. And then the guy just hit me with some real prayer. And I'm like, whoa, what just happened? This guy knows God. This guy is speaking to him in a way he actually knows him.

That's different. And so that's why you're here. Rachel, like describe to us your relationship with God and how you speak to him. So for me, I think prayer for me is very conversational.

So I think prayer for me is a lot of times is on the go where I would just be kind of having a conversation about what I'm thinking about. And so prayer, a lot of times I pray in the shower or on my way to work. And a lot of times it's very like I'm thinking about something, something's on my heart and then I would pray about it. And so, yeah. So for me, I think it's more conversational. Conversational with God. Conversational, of course, when we're talking about conversation, there's two ways in the conversation. There's talking and there's listening, right? And actually a lot of us

have this question, which is like, well, how do you hear from God? And actually I've heard you speak, share multiple times, oh man, God told me this and it was a, it was a hard word to hear, but it was so true. Like, how do you hear from God when you talk to him?

Um, this is, I, so for me, I hear from God through a voice and I, I, and I understand that not everybody experiences that. Um, but for me, I think, uh, that was just the way that I was able to communicate with God. Like, and, and the way that I was taught that I could communicate with God. Um, my mom had always taught me that like, yeah, like you pray to him, but you also leave room to listen to him.

[38:56] And so I guess that's how I've always, yeah. Experience that. Yeah. No, that's cool. Thank you. Thank you. Trevor, like, again, I've, I've heard you talk about prayer a lot. I know that you pray a lot, but what's one of the like biggest challenges for you when you pray? Like, like what's, what do you find the hardest? The hardest thing is probably believing that it's powerful.

Sometimes you pray and it seems like things don't change. Yeah. You don't change. The situation doesn't change, but to have the perseverance and to realize God is listening.

And sometimes his answer, whether it's a yes, no, maybe, or something more complex, isn't always in line with what you want. It's just what he wants to tell you. And just to have the patience to still go to God and realize he still cares and he still listens.

And for things that you do want to change, to continue to pray and to see that maybe God is trying to change your desire instead, instead of trying to change the situation, or maybe he is trying to change the situation. It just takes more time. Yeah. That's good. Actually, we're going to, we're going to jump into some prayer, but maybe one thing that, uh, I've just been reminded of is the three of you stand here with me, whether your parents were boring in prayer or not, you three come from families. Actually, I would dare say the three of you have stood here, the four of us have stood here because we've had praying parents. Yeah. And just if you're a parent in the room and again, every child is on a different journey, uh, but to never stop praying because I think there's children, uh, the next generation that need our prayers. Uh, and this is a testament to that and the different journeys we've taken to get there, but man, they're powerful and man, they work. Um, so just let's, let's bear that in mind as we, as a family figure out what praying even means. Um, we're going to try it out.

This is the bit where I'm probably the most anxious about because what I wanted us to do is all of us to do this kind of ABC prayer in small groups, but I wanted us to do it here first to show you. But I was asking Christine, I was like, is this going to be cringe and weird that we're like pretending?

Well, not pretending because we're real. We are praying to God, but you guys are all listening in anyway, but I'm just going to do it anyway, because I know some of you like it. ABC prayer sounds logical, but I don't know what it looks like. I don't know how it sounds. And just like how we talk, teach babies to talk, you have to hear it first. So bear with us, please be gracious to us. We're going to pray in an ABC prayer and lead us all together to pray together in this way.

And we want, I invite you to come to us, to God together with us, bearing in mind that later we'll, we'll, we'll split into smaller groups to do this ourselves. Is that okay? Does that make sense? Um, so we're going to start a, just be real, authentic B. Let's just be brief in one sentence and we'll just fly it around and then C. Let's be as confrontational as, as we can be. Is that good? I'll start us and I'll, um, maybe Trevor, you can wrap us up at the end.

[42:01] So everyone, would you join us in, join us in prayer? God, we're so glad that you're here. We come to you together.

God, thank you for your goodness and your faithfulness in all of our lives. Um, and I just, uh, pray that we would, um, seek you more, um, and that we would, um, that would be reflected in our prayer life.

Especially when we're not even feeling it. Lord, we want to seek you. We want to hunger for you. We're grateful for the small little things in life that we get to enjoy.

Father, thank you for the sun. Thank you for shade and air con. Thank you that we just get to be here today. God, I thank you for who you are. Thank you that, um, that you were good all the time. And God, um, when times in times we can't see it, God, I just pray that you would, uh, reveal more of yourself to us. So we pray what we've got. Um, I'm anxious. I'm nervous.

[43:13] Yes. Hong Kong life is stressful. Would you give us peace that surpasses understanding? We pray for those who are mentally drained. Um, who just, who just feel tired and fatigued.

We ask for, uh, rest and, uh, wholeness. Lord, also please teach us to number of days, um, that we might get a heart of wisdom.

Help us to fix our eyes and our minds on things that are important, the things that are on your heart, not just things that we want ourselves. But I thank you too that you care about the things that we want as well.

Yeah. Lord, you are the main thing. Help us keep us having you as the main thing.

God, I pray that you help us forgive one another. I pray that you help us forgive those who trespass against us and choose to love one another, even when it's hard.

[44:26] Yeah. Father, thank you that none of us are here today without reason.

You've handpicked each and every one of us to walk through these doors, to be here today. And I ask that you deepen us and you transform us to be more like Jesus every single moment.

And we love you and we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you, friends. Um, I'm going to invite Kelly to jump on the keys for us.

We're going to jump into a time of prayer, but, uh, the early church would have, would have jumped into the time of prayer, but also coupled it with worship, with song. Sometimes worship, not karaoke worship, but sometimes, I mean, this song of ascent was a song.

They would have sang it. I don't quite know what the melody would have been, but they would have sang it because there's something about music that is just like this low hanging fruit of intimacy that helps gives you words that, that maybe you find hard to actually express.

[45:31] And music does that to you. That's why people cry at Taylor Swift concerts. Um, but music gives you that space to move into. Okay. Uh, so we're going to, we're going to, Kelly's going to lead us in a song.

Uh, feel free to engage with it. If you're sat and you're, you're not facing the screen just, and it's hard, just, just listen, just, just to be blessed by it, just be ministered by it.

And then we'll go from there and then we'll break into some time of prayer. Is that good? Lord, we need you every hour, every day, even when we don't realize we need you.

And so we come to you as your children, as your family, as one body, and we pray what we've got. Help us pray the simplest, deepest prayers of our hearts.

Amen.