

CHAPTER ONE



The chapter starts with Tyler telling the story about a summer holiday he spent as a young teenager, praying each morning for all his school friends as he walked around the school building and grounds. He did this mostly as a challenge and as something to do, but something changed inside him during this time. He says "something happened to me that summer. I fell in love with the God I wasn't sure was listening".

"I discovered that I didn't just 'need' God in some ultimate sense; I liked God. I enjoyed his presence. I looked forward to his company". Tyler discovered something deep, mysterious, wonderful, confusing and breathtaking. That the God of eternity would involve himself in the awkward, stuttering and confused prayers of any of his children.

In his letter to the church in Phllipi, Paul writes "be anxious about nothing, pray about all things" - yet most of us experience this totally the other way round. We are anxious about almost everything and pray about very little. "I'm much more familiar with anxiety than I am with peace" writes Staton.

So - if it is true that we know prayer has the potential to be a wonderful thing, and may have even experienced it as so in the past, we are left with a question; Why don't we pray?!

WHY DON'T WE PRAY?

- We are busy - there is a lot which fills our daily life.
- We are distracted - the pull of the phone / social feed / Netflix is real!
- We have some fears about prayer which need to be named;
 - Fear of being Naive - what if we look silly? What if we are being foolish while the whole world progresses and we keep an ancient belief going, foolishly hoping?
 - Fear of silence - "In the quiet, what if there turns out to be very little to 'just us and God'?"
 - Fear of selfish motives - Are we "paralysed by self evaluation", and questioning our own words / motives / worthiness to pray?
 - Fear of doing it wrong - I am not very eloquent, good with words, confident or comfortable.



SO WHY PRAY?!

- Because you are overwhelmed by life
- Because *trust* comes before *faith*. It will be easier to have faith in God and his actions when we trust God's character.
- Capmplaints are welcome! - The Psalms and other prayers in the Bible are pretty shocking in their anger, frustration and raw emotion. God welcomes this!
- The only way to get prayer wrong, is to try to get it right! Honesty, familiarity and friendship are the goal, not professionalism and competence, as if either of these were possible.

START HERE

God is near! "The most important discovery you will ever make is the Father's love, and it's just that - a discovery. It cannot be taught. It has to be discovered, and everything else flows from this discovery"

"Pray as you can, and don't try to pray as you can't"

"If you can't pray with hope and faith, God isn't bothered. He wants you to tell hime about your doubt and disappointment. If you can't pray in phrases of praise and adoration, don't fake it. Pray your complaints , your anger or your confusion. And if you're more comfortable with cynicism than innocence, unsure about your motives, afraid of silence, afraid of an answer, or pretty confident you aren't doing it right, you're in the perfect starting place"