

# THE HEART of PRAYER

## Foundational Practice: Celebrating the Work of God

This month, we are focusing on our foundational practice of celebrating the work of God (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18). We mark moments, make memories, and joyfully delight in life with God! We call out God's work in one another's lives and praise the One who created us and delights in us. Take a few minutes for people to share their responses to the following questions: What is something that you have watched God do in your life, or around you, that you can celebrate from this past month? How does celebrating the work of God encourage your heart and point you back to the gospel?

1. **Read 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 and Psalm 16:11 out loud.** As you listen, what stands out to you and why? What thoughts, questions, encouragement, and/or challenges come to mind? Where does your heart go as you hear those passages—will-less, will-full, or willing? Wherever you are at, offer yourself to the Lord.
2. When you think about prayer, what comes to mind? Who taught you how to pray and how has that shaped how you pray and view prayer? What have you learned from Scripture that has impacted your prayer life?

“Prayer is not a place to be good, it is a place to be honest. Prayer is not a place to perform, it is a place to be present. Prayer is not a place to be right, it is a place to be known. Prayer is not a place to prove your worth, it is a place to receive worth and offer yourself in truth.”

KYLE STROBEL AND JOHN COE, *WHERE PRAYER BECOMES REAL*

3. Brad described what prayer is and what prayer is not:
  - **Prayer is receptive**
  - **Prayer is a response to love**
  - **Prayer is not magic**
  - **Prayer is not performative**
  - **Prayer is a place to be honest, not perfect**

Which of the descriptions above caught your attention and why? After hearing the message from Brad, what are you processing and how do you see God with you in this?

### CLOSING CHALLENGE

TAKE A FEW MINUTES TO PRACTICE ONE OF THE PRAYERS BELOW

**Prayer of Examen** (Psalm 139:23-24): “Lord, what’s happening in my heart that is not like you? Is there any work the Gospel needs to have in my heart because I’ve drifted from you?”

**Prayer of Recollection** (Psalm 63:6-8. & Ps. 145): Opportunity to recount what God has done. Before you go to bed, stop for 5 minutes and think about how you’ve seen God today.