Hello again!  Here's the second Holy Habits weekly prompt on prayer.

**How's it going?**

I hope you found the first one helpful (I know some people did - thanks for the encouragement!).  It's good to recognize the real opportunity we have here to grow in our faith through exploring more deeply the 'Habits' that are vital to our life as a Christian.  And to be willing to change what we are now to achieve this - after all, who doesn't want a more exciting life?!

So, through this week, let's keep affirming this desire.  I've suddenly found the words of this song from my early years as a Christian coming to mind - maybe God put them there for you to use!

**Jesus, take me as I am,**

**I can come no other way.**

**Take me deeper into you,**

**make my flesh life melt away.**

**Make me like a precious stone,**

**crystal clear and finely honed,**

**life of Jesus shining through,**

**giving glory back to You.**

*Dave Bryant ©1978 Thankyou Music, based on Rom 8:3*

**Let's move on**

Before we can get more out of prayer we need to be clear what it is - and what it isn't.  What's the first thing that comes into your head when you hear the word 'prayer'?  Go on, you know it is 'asking for something'.  That might be for yourself or someone else, but basically it is setting God a target to give you what you want, as soon as possible.  Put like that, it doesn't sound very pleasant, does it!

Trouble is, God might have different ideas! He might have a different answer to the one you expect or hope for, and He might even want you to be asking for something else entirely!  How do we know?

I'm reminded of 1 Kings 19:11-13. You know, the bit about the still, small voice after the earthquake, wind and fire.  Most (me included) live our lives amid the earthquake, wind and fire - lots going on, clamour for attention from many different voices, rushing from one place/task to another.  So, we miss the 'still, small voice' of God speaking into our innermost need.  (Hey. so that's why we feel stressed then!).

**It's time to get listening to God!**  He's your Father, remember; he wants a close relationship with you, where you can talk and listen together and you can get to know what He really wants for you.  Well, you've mastered the talking bit: now let's try listening!

So, **here's this week's challenge: try to find 10 minutes each day to focus yourself entirely on God, and listen out for what He might say to you.**  Yes, I know it's not easy - but, hey, 10 minutes, come on! It might not be the same 10 minute slot each day - you will need to work around your commitments, I know.  And, for some, 10 minutes entirely on your own might be near impossible (although there is the toilet 😷!).  But, get creative, you'll find a space - it will happen if you want it to!

To start each 'quiet' time use a short verse to zone you in on God - breathe it in and out until you get centred.  You could try **"Be still, and know that I am God"** *(Psalm 46:10)* (or one of Jesus' '**I am**' sayings would be just as good).  The important thing is to get focused on our wonderful Lord Jesus, in all his majesty, grace and love.

… and be sure to make notes of what comes to you in these times - it will be too important to forget!

Let me know how you get on!

**What else can I expect?**

Next week - let's wait and see what God has in store (yes, I'm still working on it - you can pray for inspiration for me if you like 🙏).

Looking ahead, Graham has set up this **special event on prayer** - just for Bents Green!  **Friday 19th October, 6.30-9.30pm**, an evening of quiet prayer at Whirlow Grange, led by Rev Joy Adams. Cost £3, including refreshments. Ask the Planning Group (see note below) for further details.  A real opportunity to explore the joy and peace of resting in God's presence - do join us if you can!

As before, do please give me feedback on these weekly prompts and, of course, let me know if you wish to unsubscribe.

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