



When You Pray: Be Specific

Jamie's message on Sunday is well worth watching again with your Bible & notebook to hand and your finger on the pause button so you can stop and reflect. It was so rich: from Solomon's specific prayer and God's specific response, to us as God's temple because of Jesus, discussion of us as "Israel" which means "wrestles with God", Abraham's three visitors, a Rublev icon, and a Søren Kierkegaard quote.

Jamie pointed out that Solomon's prayer was very specific, and God's answer to Solomon's prayer was equally specific.

Being specific in prayer:

- is a **demonstration of our dependence** on God, acknowledging that by ourselves we cannot accomplish/provide the thing we're praying for, and further develops intimacy in our relationship with God
- **makes us more alert to answers**. If we pray "bless my neighbour" it is harder to see if that prayer is answered, but if I pray more specifically for healing or patience or peace, not only will it be easier to recognise, but it's harder to pass them off as "we they just happened, it wasn't necessarily God answering my prayers"
- **increases our faith**

Revisit the story of Bartimaeus in **Mark 10:46-52**.

Q: What you notice about Jesus' response to Bartimaeus? [he asks Bartimaeus to be specific]

Discuss:

“Solomon prayed the things God already had on His own agenda, and which He placed on Solomon’s heart” - Jamie Sawtell

- What’s on your heart? What do you find yourself praying about regularly, repeatedly, most passionately?
- How might God want you to be the answer to your prayers?

Changing God’s Mind

- Abraham - pleading for Sodom & Gomorrah and negotiating with God
- Jamie said Abraham didn’t change God’s mind as He already knew what He was going to do
- If God is unchanging (Micah 3:6) can we change God’s mind?
- See Numbers 23:19, Exodus 32:7-14

Discuss:

“The function of prayer is not to influence God, but rather to change the nature of the one who prays.” - Søren Kierkegaard

Q: What did you make of the Rublev Icon - a picture of the Trinity?

- Jamie said as you reflect on the picture, there is an invitation to join the party at the table and if you’re part of the party at the table, you join the conversation with the Trinity

