SOME QUICK THOUGHTS ABOUT PRAYER

1. We are WIRED to pray.

   Ecclesiastes 3:11 "Yet God has made everything beautiful for its own time. **He has planted eternity in the human heart**, but even so, people cannot see the whole scope of God's work from beginning to end." (NLT)

2. We're not VERY GOOD at prayer and we know It.

   Romans 8:26 "And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, **we don't know what God wants us to pray for**. But the Holy spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words." (NLT)

   Luke 11:1 "Once Jesus was in a certain place praying. As He finished, one of His disciples came to Him and said, "**Lord, teach us to pray**, just as John taught His disciples to pray." (NLT)

   Luke 5:16 "But Jesus **often** withdrew to the wilderness to pray." (NLT)

3. Our frustrations with prayer are caused by MISCONCEPTIONS about prayer.

   1) Prayer is not a MAGIC WAND.

   2) Prayer is not a FIRE EXTINGUISHER.

   3) Prayer is not a TUG OF WAR.

   4) Prayer is not a ritual to RELIEVE GUILT.

   Matthew 6:7 "When you pray, don't babble on and on as the Gentiles do. They think their prayers are answered merely by repeating their words again and again." (NLT)

PILLARS OF PRAYER

1. God LOVES for me to talk to Him.

   Psalm 103:13 "The Lord is like a father to his children, tender and compassionate to those who fear Him." (NLT)

   - Prayer is a CONVERSATION, not a ceremony.
   - Prayer is a RELATIONSHIP, not a ritual.

2. God listens to prayers that are SINCERE and SIMPLE.

   - LONGER is not stronger in prayer.

   Matthew 6:5-8 "5 When you pray, don't be like the hypocrites who love to pray publicly on street corners and in the synagogues where everyone can see them. I tell you the truth, that is all the reward they will ever get. 6 But when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private. Then your Father, who sees everything, will reward you." (NLT)

   Hebrews 10:22 "So let us come near to God with a **sincere** heart and a **sure faith**, with hearts that have been purified from a guilty conscience and with bodies washed with clean water." (GNB)

3. God likes to show His GRACE by answering prayer.

   James 4:1-3 "1 What is causing the quarrels and fights among you? Don't' they come from the evil desires at war within you? 2 You want what you don't have, so you scheme and kill to get it. You are jealous of what others have, but you can't get it, so you fight and wage war to take it away from them. Yet **you don't have what you want because you don't as God for it**. 3 And Even when you ask, you don't get it because your motives are all wrong—you want only what will give you pleasure." (NLT)

ANSWERS TO PRAYER
- YES
- NO

- NOT YET
- YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING ME? YOU'RE ASKING FOR THAT?

ANSWERS TO PRAYER (2.0)

- GO
- NO
- SLOW
- GROW

Jeremiah 33:3 "Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know." (NIV)

Matthew 7:11 "So if you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good gifts to those who ask Him." (NLT)

4. God longs to be CLOSE TO ME.

Isaiah 30:18 "So the Lord must wait for you to come to Him so He can show you His love and compassion. For the Lord is a faithful God. Blessed are those who wait for His help." (NLT)

Hosea 6:6 "I want you to show love, not offer sacrifices. I want you to know me more than I want burnt offerings." (NLT)

Psalm 25:14 "The Lord is a friend to those who fear Him. He teaches them His covenant." (NLT)

BOTTOM LINE

James 4:8 "Come close to God, and God will come close to you. Wash your hands, you sinners; purify your hearts, for your loyalty is divided between God and the world." (NLT)