

## **Session 1: “Always to pray and not lose heart” (Luke 18:1)**

### **1. Praying is hard!**

#### **Without Jesus, praying is impossible**

John 8:44, “You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father’s desires.”

#### **Jesus knows our weaknesses**

Hebrews 4:15, “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

Hebrews 5:7-9, “In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him,”

### **2. Praying is wonderful!**

#### **Adoption: the highest height of the Gospel**

John 1:12, “Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God”

Luke 15:20, “... But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him.”

Westminster Confession – “Adoption” (chapter 12) “All those who are justified God graciously guarantees to make partakers of the grace of adoption in and for his only Son, Jesus Christ. By this act they are taken into the number of God's children and enjoy the liberties and privileges of that relationship; they are given his name; they receive the Spirit of adoption; they have access to the throne of grace with boldness; and they are enabled to cry, “Abba, Father.” Like a father, God has compassion on, protects, provides for, and chastens them; yet, they will never be cast off, but are sealed to the day of redemption, and will inherit the promises as heirs of everlasting salvation..”

#### **Prayer = adopted children talking to their Father**

Romans 8:15, “For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!””

### **3. Praying changes the world**

#### **God's promises about prayer**

James 5:17 (see 1 Kings 17-18), "Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth."

2 Chronicles 7:14 "if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land."

2 Corinthians 1:8-11, "We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about the troubles we experienced in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired of life itself. Indeed, we felt we had received the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead. He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us again. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us, as you help us by your prayers. Then many will give thanks on our behalf for the gracious favour granted us in answer to the prayers of many."

#### **The power of God and prayer**

See 2 Cor. 1:10-11

#### **Priorities in prayer? Anything... *and* our Father's affairs**

1 Peter 5:7, "Cast all your anxiety on him, for he cares for you."

Matthew 6:9-13, "... hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done... Give us..."

#### **In response:**

What have you just heard that you want to tell yourself the next time you find it hard to pray?

What do you want to say to your heavenly Father? On your own talk to him now... or you could write down what you'd like to pray.

Thank you...

I'm sorry...

Please...