

Excuses and Hurdles to Prayer

A Call to Spiritual Reformation, Week 7

Chapter 7 Overview

- I. I Am Too Busy to Pray (111-14)
- II. I Feel Too Dry Spiritually to Pray (114-17)
 - 1. Two presuppositions behind this excuse
 - 2. Two parables apply
- III. I Feel No Need to Pray (117-19)
- IV. I Am Too Bitter to Pray (119-20)
- V. I Am Too Ashamed to Pray (120-21)
- VI. I Am Content with Mediocrity (121-22)

Chapter 8 Overview

- I. Introduction (123-24)
- II. Paul Prays for What Is Excellent (124-33)
 - 1. 3 clues about the excellent/distinguishing things are
 - 2. Putting the three clues together:
 - 3. Practical examples
 - 4. A word to clergy
- III. Paul's Prayer Is Tied to the Long View (133-37)
 - 1. Long-term goal of love abounding leading to discernment: transparent purity, utter blamelessness, and a life full of righteousness.
 - 2. Explanation of two expressions
- IV. Paul's Prayer Is Not Idolatrous, but Praises God (137-143)

Discussion Questions

Chapter 7

- 1. What excuses, other than the ones mentioned in this chapter, are sometimes used to justify prayerlessness? Critique them from a biblical perspective.

- 2. Do you ever appeal to any excuses to justify your own prayerlessness? Which ones? Are they any good?

3. Does God accept us on the basis of whether or not we feel like praying? If not, on what basis does he accept us? How should this affect the priority we assign to prayer?

Chapter 8

1. Enlarge on the connection between growing in love shaped by knowledge and moral insight ... and approving what is best.
2. Enlarge further upon the nature of the best things for which we should be praying.
3. What percentage of your praying is for things of eternal value? Do you think your prayers should change? Why or why not?
4. How does Paul avoid making the pursuit of what is excellent an idolatrous exercise? How should his example apply to you?