

WEEKLY REFLECTION

The Prayer of Supplication is a tricky one. On one hand, we acknowledge that we are sinful, fleshly beings with an inclination to ask for things that benefit us and not others. On the other, we see in Scripture that we are allowed to ask, and that God wants us to ask. However, many of us hesitate to ask. The apostle Paul tells us otherwise. In his letter to the Philippians, Paul encourages his readers not to be anxious about anything (Phil. 4:6a), but to make their requests known to God by prayer and supplication (v.6b). *Just ask!*

The Prayer of Supplication comes in two forms: Petitionary Prayer and Intercessory Prayer. In Petitionary Prayer, we ask for ourselves. In Intercessory Prayer, we ask on behalf of others. Petitionary Prayer can look like the various prayers that we've practiced on previous Sundays: the Simple Prayer, the Prayer of Surrender, and / or the Sorry Prayer. For the Intecessory Prayer, we remember that we are called to look beyond ourselves. Paul charges his mentee Timothy with praying "for all people" (1 Tim. 1:1-2). We can follow Paul's command by praying firstly for our enemies, secondly our leaders, thirdly for sinners, and lastly for our family and friends before we even focus on ourselves.

The Prayer of Supplication is tricky because it requires us to have a self-awareness of where we are at. Why are we withholding our prayers? Do they align our hearts with His and glorify God? It's also tricky because sometimes our prayers go unanswered, and we don't know why. Let those moments shape and form your relationship with Him as you go to Him with raw, unfiltered honesty. At the same time, know and remember that your help "comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth" (Ps. 121:2), and He who is faithful will continue to "keep you from all evil; [He] will keep your life." (v.7)

QUESTIONS

QUESTION ONE:

What is the smallest / most trivial request that you've gone to God for? What led you to make that request? Describe your heart posture and how you felt when you were going to God in that moment.

QUESTION TWO:

Whatever the prayer, it can be hard when God's response looks like silence.

Whether it is for something recent, or a long-unanswered prayer that you have continued to persevere in—take a moment now to be silent and still. Reflect on that prayer request, and surrender it to God anew. Instead of asking why, ask instead where you can find or see Him in this situation. Ask what His heart is for you, or for the people that you're praying for.

Share with the rest of your group when you're ready

QUESTION THREE:

One of the beauties of Intercessory Prayer is the encouragement that we can receive as we engage in prayer for others. Take the time now for all members of the group to engage in intercessory prayer for one another.

As you pray, leave room and space for the Holy Spirit to speak through you. Incline your ears towards the encouragement or words that God might want to give to the rest of your group. Leave space for God to speak to us, as we make our requests known to Him.