Daily Devotions

Day 1: You Have Direct Access

Reading: Hebrews 4:14-16

The ancient temple had walls, veils, and warnings that kept ordinary people at a distance from God's presence. Death awaited any Gentile who crossed the wrong boundary. Yet when Jesus died, the veil was torn from top to bottom. That tearing was not accidental. It was an announcement. You are welcome here. No priest required. No saint required. No intermediary required. The throne described in Hebrews 4 is called a throne of grace, not a throne of judgment, and you are invited to approach it boldly. Today, come to God directly, without hesitation, without shame, and without distance. What barriers, real or imagined, have kept you from approaching God with confidence in prayer?

Day 2: Pray With Your Mind Engaged

Reading: Matthew 6:5-13

Jesus warned against mindless repetition in prayer, the kind of babbling that mistakes volume and length for sincerity. He described a Father who already knows what you need before you ask. That truth should not discourage prayer but should transform it. If God already knows your needs, then prayer becomes less about informing Him and more about relating to Him. It becomes conversation rather than recitation. The disciples eventually understood Jesus more fully after the resurrection because the Holy Spirit illuminated what they had heard. In the same way, Spirit-empowered prayer is thoughtful, relational, and alive. Engage your mind when you pray.

Are there phrases or patterns in your prayer life that have become automatic rather than genuine?

Day 3: The God Who Likes You

Reading: Zephaniah 3:14-17

Most believers accept that God loves them in a broad, theological sense. Fewer have truly absorbed the idea that God has a personal, warm affection for them specifically. The word Jesus used in John 16:27 carries the meaning of friendship and deep personal delight. Zephaniah 3:17 captures a similar picture, describing God as one who rejoices over His people with gladness and quiets them with His love. This is not a distant, obligated love. It is the love of someone who genuinely wants to be near you. He knows everything about you, including every failure and every hidden struggle, and His affection has not diminished. Do you find it easier to believe God loves you in general than to believe He personally delights in you? What shapes that difficulty?

Day 4: Believing the Whole Story

Reading: John 1:1-14

Jesus made a remarkable statement in John 16:27-28. The Father's affection for His people is connected directly to their belief that Jesus came from the Father into the world. John 1 expands that truth in breathtaking terms, describing the Word who was with God, who was God, who became flesh and dwelt among humanity. This is not the story of a wise teacher or a moral example. This is the story of God entering His own creation in human form. What you believe about Jesus determines everything, including the nature of your relationship with the Father and the confidence with which you approach Him in prayer. In practical terms, how does your belief in who Jesus truly is shape the way you pray?

Day 5: Ask, Receive, and Live in Joy

Reading: Philippians 4:4-7

Jesus closed His teaching on prayer in John 16 with a promise that those who ask in His name will receive, and that the result will be abundant joy. Philippians 4 echoes this with a call to bring every anxiety to God in prayer and thanksgiving, followed by a promise of a peace that surpasses understanding. Prayer is not merely a spiritual discipline to be endured. It is the pathway to a joy and peace that the world cannot manufacture or explain. The invitation is open. The access has been granted. The Father is not reluctant. He is waiting. Ask, and let the joy follow. What specific burdens have you been carrying without bringing them fully to God in prayer?

First Plains

WE'RE SO GLAD YOU'RE HERE!

Sermon Notes and Daily Devotional

TODAY'S MESSAGE

Sending Kneemail

John 16:23-28

November 8, 2026

Sending Knee-mail

John 16:23-28

Today you can be anywhere in the world and send or receive messages digitally via email. Sending email has eclipsed traditional mail for years now. Sending knee-mail is similar (you can be anywhere)—but with better results! Before Jesus left His disciples, He wanted them to get "online" with the Father and stay connected through the simple yet powerful means of prayer.

1. **Be** _____.

2. **Be** _____.

> Prayer must never become a _____ activity.

3. **Be** _____.

4. _____

Scripture References (In order of use): Hebrews 4:16; Matthew 6:7-8
Reference Works: Addresses on the Gospel of John (H. A. Ironside); The Gospel of John (Jack Wilson Stallings); The Gospel of John, Volume 2 (William Barclay); John (Kenneth O. Gangel); John—That You May Believe (R. Kent Hughes)

Discussion Questions

1. Statistics tell us that the average Christian spends only 3 to 4 minutes per day in prayer. Does that number feel accurate to your own experience? What does your current prayer life actually look like on a typical day?
2. Read **John 16:23-28**. Is there anything from the sermon you would like to discuss?
3. Jesus tells His disciples in John 16:23-24 that they have direct access to the Father in His name. What barriers, real or perceived, have kept you from approaching God with confidence?
4. How does the image of the temple veil being torn at the moment of Jesus' death (Matthew 27:51) change the way you think about access to God?
5. Patrick said "*He loves you, and He knows everything there is to know about you. All your unfaithfulness, your critical spirit, your temptations, all your sin. But He still likes you.*" How does that truth affect you?
6. We tend to pray on autopilot. Can you identify any phrases or habits in your own prayer life that have become automatic rather than genuine? What would it look like to pray more relationally and conversationally?
7. John 16:27-28 ties the Father's personal affection directly to believing that Jesus came from the Father. That belief includes the incarnation, the death, burial and resurrection. How does grounding your prayer life in the Gospel change the way you pray, rather than treating prayer as simply a list of requests?
8. The disciples understood Jesus more deeply after the resurrection through the Holy Spirit than they did while walking with Him physically. What does that suggest about the role the Holy Spirit should play in guiding your prayers, and are you actively relying on Him when you pray?