

Dr. John Johnson
Sept 30 – Oct 1, 2006
Prayer – Does It Make A Difference?
John 16:23-24

Texts that illustrate and example prayer are all throughout the Bible. Also, there are places where God gives us some understanding on the realities of prayer and Pastor John is taking us there today. There is a tension between the promises of prayer in Scripture and the reality of answered and so called unanswered prayer. How do we live with that tension? What can we glean from the words of Christ that help us be okay with the constancy of the tension? Using three texts: John 14:13-14; 15:7; and 16:23 Pastor offered us four suggestions:

1. Prayer has to be a life priority. It is where God and man meet. It was exemplified as a priority in Jesus' life.
2. Prayer will make a difference. Receiving in prayer depends on us asking.
3. Answered prayer does depend upon conditions.
 - The condition of believing 14:12-13
 - The condition of abiding 15:7
 - The condition of being "in Jesus name" 16:23
4. Unanswered prayers may have nothing to do with these stated conditions but may have to do with:
 - The fact that we live in a flawed world
 - The fact that God may have a better way and that prayer itself is a mystery

Group Discussion:

1. All of us have prayed and possibly struggled with the outcomes of our prayers. How does the lesson by Pastor help you in dealing with prayer?
2. What are some elements of your prayer experience that have been beneficial in keeping it a priority in your life?
3. What has been an "unanswered" prayer for you that we could pray with you on?
4. Pray for the next minutes about these.