

Sermon Title: Praying Boldly
Scripture Used: Hebrews 4:14-16

Sermon Discussion Guide (5/12)

The logo for Canton First Methodist Church is a blue rectangular box with the word "CANTON" in large, white, sans-serif capital letters at the top, and "FIRST METHODIST CHURCH" in smaller, white, sans-serif capital letters below it.

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Begin the discussion by checking in with each person present and share prayer requests/praises with the group. Then, have one person offer a prayer for the group making sure to include any prayer requests that were mentioned earlier.

Scripture

Read Hebrews 4:14-16 out loud. Discuss any initial thoughts you have about these verses.

Observation

What is the significance of Jesus's ascension into Heaven? How is this significance magnified by Jesus being both fully God and fully human?

What does it mean to "hold firmly to the faith we profess"? How does this Scripture from Hebrews instruct us to live out our call to "hold firmly to the faith we profess"?

In verse 16, what does it reveal to us about the nature of God that when we draw near to His throne, we are promised that He will provide us with mercy and grace to help us in our time of need? How does this verse show us that prayer is not transactional but that it is transformational?

Read Matthew 6:9-13. What does this prayer that Jesus taught His disciples to pray reveal to us about the way that we are called to pray? How does this prayer challenge previous ideas that you might have had about the nature of prayer?

Application

In the present time, Jesus sits at the right hand of God the Father and intercedes for us. How does knowing that Jesus is always interceding for us alter the way that you approach challenges in your own life?

Our authority to pray does not come from who we are or what we can do. It comes from who Christ is and the sacrifice He has made for us. What would it look like for you to live your life truly believing that Christ has given us the authority to pray with boldness?

One of the biggest temptations of prayer is that we put off praying in the present because we think our prayer time will be more fruitful in a future season of our life. When are you most likely to fall into this temptation of putting off prayer in the present time? Why do you think we can be reluctant to embrace the gift of prayer during certain seasons of our lives?

In the sermon, we heard three steps we could take to pray boldly. A) We begin with the posture of our heart and not the words of our mouth. B) We pray expectantly but without placing limitations on God. C) We entrust the outcome to God. Which of these steps is most challenging for you to do? Why do you think this is? What is one step you will take this week to more fully live into our call to pray with boldness?

Prayer

Conclude your time by offering a prayer to God. Praise God for His willingness to grant us the ability to draw near to Him in prayer. Ask God for forgiveness for the times that we have misunderstood the nature of prayer and reduced its power to only performing transactions in our lives. Thank God that He desires for us to be transformed so that we can be more like the One who gave His life for us. Ask God to show us how we can more fully live as people who are called to build our lives upon a foundation of prayer.

Meditation Prayer for the Week: "Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need." (Hebrews 4:16)