

St. John's Parish Church

Community Group on Prayer

Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God
by Tim Keller

Week 3- "Conversing With God" Study Guide and Discussions Questions

Week 3 (2/23)

Conversing With God (ch.4, pg. 50-65)

For this week's study please read chapter 4 in the book, "Prayer", by Timothy Keller. If you have any observations or questions regarding the reading please bring them to your Group.

Primary Bible Scripture for the week:

2 Samuel 7:11—14 (ESV)

11 ... And I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house. 12 When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. 14 I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son...

2 Samuel 7:27—29 (ESV)

27 For you, O Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, have made this revelation to your servant, saying, 'I will build you a house.' Therefore your servant has found courage to pray this prayer to you. 28 And now, O Lord God, you are God, and your words are true, and you have promised this good thing to your servant. 29 Now therefore may it please you to bless the house of your servant, so that it may continue forever before you. For you, O Lord God, have spoken, and with your blessing shall the house of your servant be blessed forever."

Ephesians 2:20—22 (ESV)

20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, 21 in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. 22 In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

1Peter 2:4—5(ESV)

4 As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, 5 you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

Main point for the Study:

"God speaks to us in his Word, and we respond in prayer, entering into the divine conversation, into communion with God. 9Keller, Prayer, pg.64)

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Reflection and Response Questions:

(It may help to read the full chapter of 2 Samuel 7 to give full context to the two 2 Samuel passages above)

1. In Chapter 7 of 2 Samuel, King David intends to build God a more permanent temple to replace the tent that, up to this point, has served as God's dwelling place among His people. Then through the prophet Nathan, the word of God comes to King David (read 2 Samuel:11—14).

- In this passage what is it that God is promising to King David?
- Do you think King David understood exactly what God was promising and what the ramifications would be?
- When have you ever felt like you knew what God was trying to tell you through his Word (the Bible) and the Holy Spirit only to find later that your initial understanding was not quite right?

2. In response to God's promise, King David speaks a prayer Him (read, 2 Samuel 7:27—29). Now read the second paragraph on page 64 in Keller's book, Prayer. This is an important observation to make in the 2 Samuel passage.

King David is praying in response to who God is and what God is speaking into his life.

- How are you taking the time to allow God to speak to you through the study of His Word and the working of the Holy Spirit within you?
- Reflection: lately, regarding God, have you been doing too much talking and perhaps not enough listening?

Primary question for the week:

Read Ephesians 2:20—22 and 1 Peter 2:4—5. Here in the New Testament we see the full and rich meaning of God's promise to King David coming to fruition some 1000 years later. We know that God did indeed build David's house (family) and it culminated with Jesus, the ultimate Son of David and Son of God.

- Now, what do these two New Testament verses reveal to us? What is God revealing to those who believe in Him? What amazing truth is revealed about the temple that God promised to build for David? (Answer key: see Keller, Prayer, page 65, last two chapters)
- How might this change the way you live, the way you pray?