

Senior Pastor

By Brandon Lemons, Senior Pastor

Gospel-Centered Prayer

I've heard it said many times that if you want to see a person's priorities, look at their checkbook (or more accurately for many in today's world, look at their credit card statements); the way we spend our money says a lot about our priorities. I've also heard it said that you can tell a lot about a person's priorities by looking at their daily calendar (assuming their calendar accurately reflects their activities).



It would be also be enlightening to take an inventory of the topics we pray about as a way of assessing our priorities. For I am convinced that our prayers reveal our priorities. More accurately, the content of our prayers reveal our priorities.



The list below is a sample of the prayer requests we often bring before God. Are these valid topics for prayer? For the most part. (I personally don't pray any longer for sporting events; before I began following Christ, I prayed often for Kansas City Chiefs victories, but I no longer pray for the outcome of games.) While most of the requests on the sample list are valid, and God calls us to cast all of our anxieties on Him (1 Peter 5:7), where is the "eternal perspective" in these requests? Notice that all of these prayer requests are for topics that are a part of this lifetime; where are the prayers for people's spiritual growth and their eternal destiny? It is so easy to get wrapped up in praying for our personal desires and other people's comfort and health that we neglect praying for things that matter far more in light of eternity. A friend's knee pain or financial struggles pale in comparison to them spending eternity separated from God.

Today's Prayer List:

Aunt Helen's knee pain
My son's grades at school
That it won't snow again
My friend's job
A Packers victory
My neighbor's sick dog
That my boss will be nicer
My friend's cancer

tional, financial, or relational. Rather, let's make sure we are praying with an "eternal perspective," which means that we also pray for people's spiritual growth and their eternal destiny. A very practical way to do this is that every time we pray for someone, we make sure to pray for their spiritual growth, even if that isn't their main prayer request. This is a way to not simply be praying, but to pray with a Gospel-centered mindset (remember, Friedens is a "Gospel-centered community," which should impact how we pray).

Is this convicting to you? I know it is for me. But what a privilege to be able to pray for the spiritual growth and eternal destiny of those around us!

To help us focus on praying for the spiritual growth and eternal destiny of people around us, we are embarking on the "40 Days of Prayer." It will start on Sunday, March 13, and conclude on Easter Sunday. During this time, we will ask you to pray for 5 people each day for the next 40 days. This prayer will specifically be focused on their spiritual growth and that they will commit their lives to Christ if they aren't currently Christ-followers. So I invite you to be praying about which 5 people you should pray for during the "40 Days of Prayer," and we will have a special ceremony during the services on March 13 to kick off this time of devoted, Gospel-centered prayer for our family, friends, neighbors, and co-workers.

Examples of Gospel-Centered Prayer

- ♦ *That God will open their eyes to the Gospel (2 Cor. 4:6)*
- ♦ *That the Holy Spirit will convict them "of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment" (John 16:8)*
- ♦ *That God will show them the truth (John 14:6) and love (Rom. 5:8) of Jesus*
- ♦ *That God will cause spiritual growth in their life (1 Cor. 3:6)*
- ♦ *That we will be wise in our interactions with others, making the most of every opportunity (Col. 4:5-6)*
- ♦ *That we will share the Gospel fearlessly (Eph. 6:19-20) and clearly (Col. 4:4)*
- ♦ *That God will give us a deep compassion and love for others (Rom. 10:1)*

I don't want to discourage us from praying for people's needs, whether they are physical, emo-

To learn more about prayer at Friedens, please see page 6.