Hi there!  Here's the third Holy Habits weekly prompt on prayer (you're starting to get used to these now, aren't you!).

**How's it going?**

You've been listening to God, right? Well, at least I hope that, like me, you've tried!  Finding 10 minutes a day just to be still (whether it's before God or otherwise) isn't easy is it?  I confess I've only managed it a few times - but when I have it has made such a difference.  I can't say that I've heard anything specific from God as yet (I'm still tuning in!) but what I have gained is a real sense of peace and assurance as I have focused on Jesus, which has 'grounded' me as I have moved back into the world.  How's it been for you? I'd love to know!

**This part of the prayer life is really important, because it's all about developing your relationship with Jesus** (aren't talking and listening vital to every relationship?).  So, keep it up!  Don't worry if 10 minutes a day is a bridge too far.  It doesn't have to be 10 minutes, and it doesn't have to be every day (as long as it's more days than not!) - the important thing is to determine to zone yourself in on Jesus and let him 'do his stuff' with you.  As one of my correspondents has put it "**prayer is not so much about mastering techniques as it is practicing His presence**".

Jesus sums up that goal of oneness with Him in his great Garden of Gethsemane prayer - and note how it leads to unity in the church and witness in the world (so we are not seeking his presence just for selfish reasons!):

**"I have given them the glory that you gave me,**

**so that they may be one as we are one -**

**I in them and you in me -**

**so that they may be brought to complete unity.**

**Then the world will know that you have sent me**

**and have loved them even as you have loved me."**

**John 17:22-23**

**Let's move on**

There's been a good reason for beginning the prayer series with listening and being in God's presence - it's going to inspire us to make prayer much more central to everything we do in our lives!

**How much of your life functions without giving a thought to prayer?**  (Go on, be honest now!).  Taking the kids to school, sending those emails at work, doing your weekly shop, making the tea, cleaning the toilets - even attending a group in church - is Jesus doing this with you? (Well, yes, He is - even cleaning the toilets - but do you sense it?!).

**Prayer should be as natural to a Christian as breathing.**  Prayer sustains our spiritual life just as breathing does to our physical.  Prayer should be happening 'in the moment' - asking God for help first when you're facing a problem; sending an 'arrow prayer' when hearing of someone/some people in difficulty; blessing someone as you meet/leave them (yes, just to say 'God bless you' is a powerful prayer, if you really mean it).  And, prayer should be a vital element of the planning and activities of all our ministries, groups and committees - in short, everything we do as church.  Making prayer such natural (habitual) behaviour is surely what Paul meant when he urged us to **"pray without ceasing"** (I Thess 5:17).

So, **here's this week's challenge:** look back over the past few days of your daily life and consider areas/situations (both good and bad) where a moment of prayer might have made a difference.  **Look at practical, simple steps to start bringing God into your daily routine.**  Try to start developing that mindset of 'prayer as natural as breathing' so that your life is infused with prayer.  Gosh, there's a thought!

If that's not a holy habit I don't know what is!  Do let me know how you get on.

**What else can I expect?**

Next week - we'll take a look at God-centred prayer (it might surprise you to realise how much of it isn't!).

Finally, don't forget to set aside **Friday 19th October, 6.30-9.30pm** for our special Bents Green prayer evening at Whirlow Grange.  Yes, it's a prayer meeting, Jim, but not as you know it!\*  Ask the Planning Group (see note below) for further details.  And don't worry about transport - we'll get you there (and back 😊) if you want to go!

As before, do please give me feedback on these weekly prompts and, of course, let me know if you wish to unsubscribe.  Thank you so much for the encouragement I've been receiving in response to these mails - it really is valued.  Please do pray for me and all the Planning Group as we continue to set before you words to inspire us to be better disciples of Jesus (how about an arrow prayer right now, in fact!).

*Produced by Martyn Read on behalf of the Bents Green Holy Habits Planning Group (Debs Barnett, Glenn Evans, Martyn Read, Graham Wassell, Daphne Wilkins, John Wilkins), and based on the* [*Holy Habits*](http://www.holyhabits.co.uk/) *discipleship material supplied by Sheffield Circuit*

\* That one was for all you Star Trek fans out there!