

PRAYER

A Study of the Christian's Walk With God

Lesson Eleven

Memory Verse: *1 Corinthians 12:27*

Lesson Verses: *Psalm 116:1,2*

"I love the LORD, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications. Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live." Psalm 116:1,2

I. Introduction - How Important is *Prayer* in my Life?

- A. Someone once said a Christian is only as strong as his prayer life is. Think about that... because it is true!
- B. Your personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ... your spiritual maturity and stability... cannot grow without the proper reliance upon God that prayer enables.
- C. Leonard Ravenhill writes, "Poverty-stricken as the church is today in many things, she is most stricken here in the place of prayer. We have many organizers, but few agonizers; many players and payers, but few prayers; many singers, few clingers; lots of pastors, but few wrestlers; many fears, few tears; much fashion, little passion; many interferers, few intercessors; many writers, but few fighters. **Failing here, we fail everywhere.**"
- D. You were created to need God, and prayer is the only way to get every need met!
- E. The purpose of this lesson is to acquaint the believer with a powerful prayer life so he or she can effectively _____ "*with God*" (*Gen 6:9*).



II. Prayer Defined - *Hebrews 4:16*

- A. Prayer is seeking God. "*When thou saidst, _____ ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, LORD, will I _____.*" (*Psalm 27:8*) To seek God's face means, to seek His attention, like you would want someone to look right at YOU when you are talking to them.
- B. You seek God by simply talking with Him, sometimes for brief moments, and sometimes for extended periods of time. When you are reading the Bible, God is speaking to you; when you are praying, you are speaking directly to God.
- C. Prayer is the soul of man offering up the desires and burdens of his heart to God with humble confidence that we shall obtain the help we need because of Jesus (*Heb 4:16*).
- D. Prayer is our *worship* of God the Father, in the authority of the name of His Son, Jesus Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit (*John 16:23; Rom 8:26*).
- E. Finally, prayer is our source of confidence in God. By praying, we will know that we already have the answer to our need (*Mt 6:7,8; 1John 5:14,15*)!

III. What Prayer Is!

- A. Prayer is God's appointed way for Christians to get the things they need (*James 4:2*).
 1. God urges all believers to pray all the time for absolutely everything they need (*Luke 18:1; 1Thes 5:17; Philp 4:6; 1Tim 2:1; Eph 6:18*).
 2. God already _____ what you need (*Matt 6:7,8*)
 3. But God often waits for you to come to Him for those things by praying for them, instead of you just *expecting* things to happen in your favour.
 4. We won't get everything we ask for, obviously. That would only make spoiled brats out of us.
 5. We won't get all the things we think we need.

6. But if we ask according to God's _____, we can and will receive it (1John 5:14,15).
- B. Prayer is part of the process that God uses to give Christians the fullness of _____ (John 16:24). Just praying accesses the joy that Christ has!
- C. Prayer is the Christian's way out of all trouble, and the cure for all worry and anxious care (Philp 4:6,7; 1Pet 5:7).
- D. Prayer is the only way to get the power of the Holy Spirit in your life for God's work (Acts 4:31; See also 2 Chron 7:14).
- E. Prayer accomplishes **five** things:
1. Through it, we fight the spiritual warfare we are in (Eph 6:11-18)
 2. It is a spiritual watchdog against _____ (Matt 26:41; 1Cor 10:13)
 3. It _____ God (Heb 11:6).
 4. It changes the person praying! How?
 - a. By changing your focus of attention – from your need to your Supplier!
 - b. By changing your worry into faith and trust
 - c. By changing your goals – you may seek to change your situation, but when you pray, you will start to allow God to decide the outcome of every situation, even if it ends up hard on you. The goal will be to do the will of God, instead of YOU making God **do** the will of YOU! Ponder that for a moment!
 5. It moves the heart of God. Prayer not only moves us when we pray, but it also does cause God to respond to our need, and can do all the following (Eph 3:20):
 - a. Move any _____ (Matt 17:20).
 - b. Heal any disease (Psalm 103:3).
 - c. Turn the heart of _____ and despots away from doing evil (Prov 21:1).
 - d. Freeing believers from prison and persecution (Acts 12:5-7).
 - e. And save the most sinful person (1Tim 1:15)!

IV. The Place of Prayer - Where Should a Christian Pray?

- A. **Privately most of all!** Christians are *not to pray as a public show*, but rather in a " _____ " (Mt 6:5,6). The principle is, have a special place of prayer in your home (the *closet* is as good as any), as well as everywhere you go, but not for show!
- B. **Pray in church** (Matt 21:13; Acts 12:5), with other believers in the meetings.
- C. **Everywhere** (1Timothy 2:8). Don't limit your prayer life to the church house only! Wherever you are, if you have a need, or are thankful, pray!

V. How Does a Christian Pray?

- A. Pray like you were speaking *directly face to face* with your best Friend (Jn 15:15,16)!
- B. Pray with the following ingredients:
1. **Praise** – Start off with worship and adoration of the Lord God of heaven and earth, just worshipping who He always is (Ps 95:6; 34:1). Prayer starts with loving God and worshipping first!
 2. **Repent**. Repent from every known sin (Ps 32:5). Make a list and agree with God about them (confess them to Him alone) so that you can actually get right with the people you have sinned against right after you have prayed!
 - a. *Be humble before God* (2Chr 7:14). Pray as a nobody, with no means of making God do what you want Him to do – just trust He will do right (Gen 18:25).
 - b. Pray *honestly*. Be totally real before God. He knows you through and through, so make sure you thoroughly repent of any and all sin in your life before asking God for anything (Psalm 51:1-4). And then you can talk straight with God!

3. **Believe.** Pray *believing* (**Heb 11:6**)! You have to believe God can and will answer ALL your requests! Know that God hears you, and **believe** He will answer you.
4. **Ask.** It sounds obvious, but a lot of people forget to ASK for what they need! Jesus said you can “*ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you*” (**Jn 15:7**)! Jesus uses three words to describe HOW to ask in prayer for what you need (**Matt 7:7,8**):
 - a. *Ask* - never *demanding*, but just “*asking*” (**John 16:24; Matt 21:22**).
 - 1) Never be afraid to ask God for things that you believe you need.
 - 2) Be *specific* about what you need. If you want God to answer your needs specifically, then you need to be specific with Him about your needs. So, give God all the details, burdens, and needs.
 - 3) Never use “*vain repetitions*” (**Matt 6:7**) which are prepared prayers that people repeat over and over thinking that they will be heard if they just keep repeating themselves! Well, it won’t help! Just simply ask for what you need from the heart, using as few or as many words as you feel like saying.
 - b. *Seek* (**Heb 11:6**). Seeking is when we LOOK for the answer to come from God instead of from our parents, our friends, or from the government. Be fully committed to getting GOD to supply your need (**Jam 1:5-8**).
 - c. “_____” (**2Cor 12:7-9**). It often seems like the door to God is closed when we pray. So Jesus invites us to be persistent and to keep knocking on heaven’s door until we know God has answered us (**Luke 11:1-13; 18:1-8**)! If at first God does not seem to answer your request, keep “knocking” on heaven’s door, asking until either He answers the need, or tells you NO, or tells you to WAIT. All three are good answers!
5. **Listen.** Pray *listening* (**1Kings 19:11,12**). This is VERY important! When you pray, every once in a while STOP, and just be quiet – let God calm your heart when you are anxious, and then see if He speaks to your heart right then and there!
6. **Yield** - Accept God’s will in the matters you have prayed about (**Jam 4:13-15**). *Accept* God’s answer. This is very important! God always answers us when we pray, but sometimes He answers with a YES, sometimes with a NO, and sometimes with a WAIT. So, two-thirds of all God’s answers are hard to accept!
7. End every time in prayer being _____ (**Philp 4:6**). Be thankful even before you have received your request. Just trust that God is going to take care of the need!
8. **Always.** Pray *all the time* (**1Thes 5:17**). At every opportunity, have a mind to pray.

C. Now, List those eight things above, and try to memorise them in order:

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 2. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 4. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 7. _____ | 8. _____ |

VI. What Should You Always Pray For?

- A. *Wisdom* – ask God for the ability to make right decisions (**Jam 1:5**).
- B. For *courage* to be bold as a Christian in the world around you (**Acts 4:23-31**).
- C. Pray for *all people in authority* over us (**1Tim 2:1-3**), that they obey God.
- D. For *people who are serving the Lord, that they would be greatly used of God and always protected*. People like your Pastor and his family, Missionaries, Bible Teachers, Deacons, and people who volunteer in your church to serve others.
- E. For *every need* you know about (**Philp 4:6; 1Pet 5:7; Ps 34:6; 55:22**)
 1. It is okay to pray for things YOU need. Just not the whole time!

2. A Christian is someone who has discovered they are totally dependant upon the Lord for everything! There is nothing too big, or too small to pray about.
3. Pray for the needs of others – starting with your own family!

F. Think... What if all you get tomorrow depended upon what you pray for today?

VII. There are Eight Important Conditions for Answered Prayer

- A. You have to be a child of God (**Prov 15:29**), and you have to be right with God.
 1. God answers the prayers of His children first! All religions pray, but prayers are vain unless they come from believers in Christ.
 2. Make sure you are not in rebellion to any of God's commands or will for your life (**1John 3:22; Ps 66:18**).
 3. Is there any _____ (sin) in your life that you won't let go of (**Ps 66:18**)?
 4. These two things stop almost ALL prayers from ever getting heard in heaven: people being **unconverted**, and being **ungodly**.
- B. Get rid of any unforgiving attitude towards others. You must make sure that you first _____ others their sins against you before you ask God for things (**Mark 11:24-26**). Do you have such an attitude? Do you have wrong attitudes (constant anger, hatred, bitterness, disrespect, etc) towards others like your wife, or your husband, or your parents, or your employer, or your pastor, or other Christians, or even your enemies (**1Pet 3:7; Eph 4:26,27; Col 3:19**)?
- C. Seek God's _____. Ask for things according to God's _____, and not yours (**Matt 26:39**). Are you asking _____ (i.e., for the wrong things, **James 4:3**)? Do you have only selfish reasons for praying and not for others?
- D. Pray in _____, believing (**Mark 11:24; Heb 11:6; James 1:6,7**) – not flippantly. How is your confidence in God's sufficiency? Are you uncertain, or hesitant about what you are praying for? If so, you are hindering it's answer.
- E. _____ with Christ (walk with Him throughout each day) as opposed to only coming to God when you are in trouble or in desperate need (**John 15:7**).
- F. Make sure you pray to the right Person... Pray to God the Father, with the help of the Holy Spirit, in the _____ of Jesus Christ (**John 16:23,24**). You cannot approach God and make requests without *Authority* - **Jesus** is our Authority for getting everything!
- G. Is your life over-scheduled – prioritize your time putting God first. If you don't, then God feels no obligation to answer your prayers right away!
- H. Are you lazy? Make every **effort to pray** instead of complain, or get upset!
- I. If after you have evaluated all these things, nothing happens, then God actually HAS answered – just not the way YOU wanted Him to: He has just said 'No', which is just as good as if He had done what you thought needed done.

VIII. Will you right now make a promise to God that you will spend **at least 10 minutes** in heart-to-heart prayer **every day** before the throne of God, and then walk with Him throughout each day, always leaning upon Him for every need?

Yes

No

Signed _____ Date _____

Date Lesson Completed _____

Discipler _____