

"LORD, TEACH ME TO PRAY" (Lesson 3)

Introduction: [Generally speaking, when you are involved in a conversation, do you tend to do more of the talking or more of the listening? Are you realizing some struggles with praying? What are they?]

In this lesson we will be talking about what prayer is, why it is necessary, and some of the conditions and suggestions for praying.

I. THE NATURE OF PRAYER – COMMUNICATION

A. First, God speaks to man through His Word

B. Second, man responds to God in prayer

II. HOW DID JESUS PRAY? SOME CLASSIC EXAMPLES.

A. Early in the morning - Mark 1:35 “Very early in the morning, While it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where He prayed.”

B. For extended periods of time - Luke 6:12 “One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God.”

C. At a time of great decision - Luke 6:13 “When morning came, he called his disciples to Him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles.”

D. Luke 11:1-4 - His model prayer

1. "A-C-T-S"

- a. A – adoration
- b. C - confession
- c. T - thanksgiving
- d. S - supplication

E. Hebrews 7:25 - and He's still praying!

III. WHAT KINDS OF THINGS SHOULD I PRAY ABOUT?

A. Hebrews 4:16 - the need for prayer "Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need."

- 1. Philippians 4:6,7 - to combat anxiety
- 2. James 1:5 - to obtain wisdom
- 3. Romans 10:1 - to see people we love saved
- 4. James 5:14 - to see Christians who are sick healed
- 5. Colossians 4:12 - to discover God's will for our lives
- 6. Matthew 9:37,38 - to raise up workers for God
- 7. Matthew 17:20,21 - to meet many other situations which Christ likens unto "mountains"

III. WHY DOES IT SEEM THAT MY PRAYERS ARE "BOUNCING OFF THE CEILING"? ARE THERE SOME CONDITIONS REGARDING PRAYER?

A. A right relationship with God - Psalm 66:18

B. A right relationship with others - Matthew 5:23,24

C. Pray as specifically as you can about a situation

- Philippians 4:6

D. Claim the promises of God for you personally

Illustration: Like cashing a check at the bank that is written to you and also endorsed by you (you claim it... it's for you; it's yours) e.g. - James 1:5-8 "wisdom"

E. Praying unselfishly - for others (intercession) - those who do not know Christ

- pastors, spiritual leaders

- missionaries

- government leaders

- sick, elderly, shut-ins

- those with special needs; jobs, school, death, divorce, etc.

- even our enemies (Luke 23:24)

F. Live in an attitude of prayer

1. "practicing the presence of Christ;" living in the spirit of prayer

2. 1 Thessalonians 5:17 - "pray without ceasing"

3. God wants us to support everything with a spirit of prayer that allows Him to influence and control our thoughts, words, and actions

G. Praying in faith that God will answer - James 1:6,7

[Illustration] A woman prayed for \$337.00 to pay her utility bill... soon the mailman delivered a check from the IRS for exactly that amount...the lady lifted her eyes toward heaven and prayed, "Lord, remember that prayer request I made for \$337.00? Well, never mind. Someone else provided it!" She didn't expect God to answer and when the answer came she was blind to it!

H. Asking according to God's will - James 4:3

I. Sometimes the answer is "no"

1. Luke 22:42 (Jesus asking the Father to forego his suffering)
2. 2 Corinthians 12:7-10 (Paul requesting that the painful "thorn in the flesh" be removed)
3. We need to pray in submission to God's will; acceptance without bitterness

IV. ANY PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS ON PRAYER?

- A. You learn to pray by praying
- B. Pray about little things as well as big
- C. Develop a prayer and answers list
- D. Make it a regular part of your life if it already isn't