

Prayer

[5th Edition – January 2010]

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Our Father in heaven

Lesson 1

A. Introduction

Read Matthew 6:9-13

"This then is how you should pray".

1. This passage of scripture has become known as the **Lord's Prayer**.
2. Many people use this as a prayer, praying it word for word.
3. There is nothing wrong with praying the Lord's Prayer word for word, but what Jesus was really doing was giving an **outline** for prayer.
4. Jesus is giving us some guidelines for making our praying more effective.
5. On another occasion, **Luke 11:1-4**, when the disciples asked Jesus to teach them how to pray, Jesus gave them this same outline again.
6. In these eight lessons we will be looking at the eight different sections that Jesus gave us in the Lord's Prayer to teach us how to pray more effectively.

B. The first topic

Read Matthew 6:9a

Our Father in heaven.

1. Each time we pray God wants us to recognise who we are praying to and the special relationship we have with Him.
2. We are praying to our Father.
3. We might wonder if such an awesome, powerful God who created the universe is concerned about us.
4. We might wonder if such a holy God will hear the prayers of sinful man.
5. Through the blood of Jesus we are God's children and He is our Father who loves us.
6. What a difference knowing this makes to the way we pray.

C. Our Father loves us

The parable of the Prodigal Son gives us a very good picture of the Father's love.

1. The effect of sin.

Read Luke 15:11-16

- a) Verse 13 – "He squandered his wealth in wild living". People always lose when they turn their back on God and go their own way.
- b) Verse 15 – "He hired himself out". Sin makes us a slave.
- c) Verse 16 – "He longs to fill his stomach". Sin promises satisfaction, but it only brings emptiness.

2. The remedy for sin.

Read Luke 15:17-20

- a) Verse 18 – "I have sinned against heaven and against you". The only remedy for sin is repentance.
- b) When we confess our sins to God, He promises to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:8-9.
- c) Verse 19 – "I am no longer worthy to be called your son". This is often the Christian's understanding of our relationship with God.
- d) Thinking that since we have sinned, even though we have repented, we have lost our privilege as God's children.
- e) Notice in the following verses that Jesus shows us how wrong we are to think as the lost son did.

3. The Father's unchanging love.

Read Luke 15:20

- a) Verse 20 – "While he was still a long way off his father saw him".
- b) The father never stopped loving the son. He was looking down the road longing for his son to return.
- c) There was no condemnation, no lecture, no hard feelings, only love, acceptance and blessing.
- d) The father embraced his son and kissed him, even though his son was probably dressed in rags and smelled of pigs.

4. The Father's unconditional acceptance.

Read Luke 15:21-24

- a) Verse 21 – "The son said I am no longer worthy to be your son".

- b) Even though the father has shown his love to his son, the son still thinks that he must come in as a slave and earn the father's acceptance.
- c) The father puts the signs of sonship on his son; the robe, ring and sandals.
- d) The father pours out blessings on his son with a feast and celebration.
- e) There is nothing that we can do to earn salvation. Titus 3:5-6.
- f) Having come to Christ there is nothing that we can do to earn God's acceptance and blessing. Galatians 3:1-5.
- g) Like the prodigal son, when we sin and go our own way, we remove ourselves from the Father's blessings.
- h) But the Father does not change. This parable portrays our Father's unchanging, unconditional love for us.

D. The privilege of calling Him Father

1. We are His children.

Read 1 John 3:1

- a) God doesn't say that we might be His children if we wait long enough and work hard enough. Everyone in Christ **is** a child of God. Galatians 3:26-27.
- b) God lavished His love on us through the death of His only Son. John 3:16.
- c) Having paid such a high price for our salvation, will He now desert us?

2. Our Father will care for us.

Read Romans 8:31-32

- a) We are co-heirs with Christ of all God's blessings. Romans 8:17.
- b) God does not have any favourite children. He loves us all the same with the love that He loves His Son Jesus. John 17:23.
- c) Our Father knows what is best for us and will give us every good thing that we need. Matthew 7:9-11.

3. We can come to Him in confidence.

Read Ephesians 3:11-12

- a) Knowing that our Father loves us and accepts us and desires the best for us, we can come to Him in "freedom and confidence".

- b) Notice that Jesus does not say that we should start praying with repentance.
- c) God wants us to repent of our sins, but that does not come till later in the outline of the Lord's Prayer.
- d) We are totally acceptable and righteous in the Father's eyes right now, not because of what we have done or not done, but only because of what Christ has done on the cross. Romans 5:1-2, 9-10, 17.
- e) By faith in Christ's righteousness we approach the Father in freedom and confidence.
- f) If we wait until we are good enough or have repented enough to come to the Father in prayer then we will never come to Him.
- g) We need to pray to the Father. We need His strength, help and provision.
- h) Let us remind ourselves that He is our Father, we are His children, He loves us, and we can come to Him boldly at any time, in any circumstance.

Memory verse

1 John 3:1, *"How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!"*

Teacher's notes

The Bible reveals to us the father heart of God.

- | | | |
|----|--------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. | He comforts us. | 2 Corinthians 1:3-4. |
| 2. | He has compassion on us. | 2 Corinthians 1:3-4. |
| 3. | He protects us. | John 17:11. |
| 4. | He provides for us. | Matthew 7:11. |
| 5. | He disciplines us. | Hebrews 12:10. |
| 6. | He counsels us. | Psalms 16:7. |
| 7. | He helps us. | Psalms 46:1. |
| 8. | He instructs us. | Psalms 32:8. |
| 9. | He moulds us. | Isaiah 64:8. |

Because our Father is absolutely holy and His love is perfect, He is the complete Father for us.

Hallowed be Your name

Lesson 2

A. Introduction

Read Matthew 6:9b

"Hallowed be Your name".

1. First we recognize that through Christ we are God's children, He is our Father and He loves us.
2. Through the blood of Jesus we can approach our Father confidently.
3. Now Jesus says we need to praise and worship God.

B. Praise and worship

1. The way into His presence.

Read Psalm 100

- a) Verse 4 – "Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise".
 - b) His gates and courts speak of the Tabernacle in the Old Testament where God manifested His presence to His people.
 - c) In the New Testament we are the temple where God wants to manifest His presence. 1 Corinthians 3:16.
 - d) Jesus said that when we come before the Lord to pray Psalm 100:4 is still for us in the New Testament.
 - e) We need to spend time praising and worshipping God before we come with all our requests.
 - f) Verses 1 and 2 – Notice the joy that is to be in our praise and worship.
 - g) Verses 3 and 5 – The reason that we can come before Him with confidence is because we are His children, He is good and He loves us.
- #### 2. Developing our relationship with God.

Read Galatians 4:6

- a) "Abba Father" is the affectionate call of a child to its Father.
- b) God created us to have a love relationship with Him.

- c) Prayer is simply God's children enjoying the company of their Father.
- d) Before we come with all our requests, God wants us to tell Him how much we love Him and let Him express His love to us.
- e) As our love relationship with God grows stronger, the desire for the things of the earth grows less. Colossians 3:2.

3. To pray in faith.

Read 1 Chronicles 29:10-13

- a) Praise and worship is the language of faith.
- b) We declare the greatness, goodness and power of God and who we are in Him.
- c) Requests that will be answered are requests made in faith. Mark 11:24.
- d) If we start our praying with our hearts focused on all our problems, sin and defeat, we dig a big hole of doubt and unbelief for ourselves.
- e) Through praise and worship, we lift ourselves out of that hole of unbelief to a place of confident expectancy.
- f) Effective prayer is prayer from a heart of faith. How important it is that we pray according to Jesus' outline, starting with praise and worship.

4. God's presence manifest.

Read 2 Chronicles 5:11-14; 7:1-3

- a) God's glory was released when God's people praised Him and they fell at His feet and worshipped.
- b) In heaven, in the glorious presence of God, it is not difficult for people to worship.
- c) "Day and night they never stop saying: Holy Holy Holy", Revelation 4:8-11.
- d) Many people find it difficult to pray. Some get tired, bored or feel uninspired.
- e) How much more exciting and easier it would be to seek God if people were to release God's glory through praise and worship.
- f) That glory will change us and touch the world through us. 2 Corinthians 3:18.

5. God's power released.

Read 2 Chronicles 20:15-26

- a) The enemies of God's people were defeated as God's people praised.
- b) There are demonic forces that do not want the Christian to pray and are working to destroy the Church. Ephesians 6:12.
- c) When we praise, God's power is released to defeat the influence of Satan. Psalm 18:3.

Illustration: Many of God's people have praised and worshipped and they have experienced miracles, healing and deliverance without anyone praying for them. God's power has been released to defeat the works of the enemy as the people have praised and worshipped God.

- d) We need to release God's power in praise and worship to defeat demonic influences in our lives, our churches and our nations.

6. God is worthy to be praised.

Read Psalm 145:1-7

- a) We do not praise and worship God just because He has commanded us to or for the benefits we gain.
- b) We praise and worship Him most of all because He is worthy.
- c) What can compare to our glorious God? He deserves all the praise, honour and adoration.
- d) Before we pray, let us acknowledge that He is worthy and give Him the exaltation of our hearts.

Memory verse

Psalm 100:4, *“Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise; give thanks to Him and praise His name”.*

Your kingdom come, Your will be done

Lesson 3

A. Introduction

Read Matthew 6:10

1. **"Your kingdom come"**.

- a) God's kingdom is where God reigns.
- b) God wants to release His glory, power, provision and all that He has for us here on earth.
- c) God would not ask us to pray for something that is not possible.
- d) God wants to pour out His blessing on people's lives, but He wants us to ask Him. Matthew 7:7-8.
- e) What a privilege! We get to pray for the release of God's power in the earth.
- f) A lot of people pray "Your kingdom come" without realizing what they are praying.
- g) We need to pray "Your kingdom come" in faith. God says that when we pray He will answer.
- h) What could be more exciting than that?

2. **"Your will be done"**.

Read 1 John 5:14-15

- a) The power of God's kingdom is released when God's will is done.
- b) God's power was released through Jesus, because Jesus was always finding out the will of His Father. John 5:19.
- c) We need to pray prayers that are on the heart of God.
- d) Then we will pray in faith and we will see our prayers answered.
- e) Prayer needs to be a "two-way" communication. We need to find out from God what His will is, to pray according to His will.

Illustration: Many people talk to God like someone speaking on a pay telephone. However, they do not bother to put their money in, they just pick up the phone, make their requests known and hang up. When using a pay telephone you have to make contact first by putting your money in. We

make contact with God through praise and worship. Having made contact with God we need to have a two-way conversation. God shares His heart with us and we share our heart with Him.

B. Surrender to God

1. Christ our example.

Read Philippians 2:5-9

- a) If anyone could have felt the right to go His own way it was Jesus. He was a man but at the same time He was the Son of God.
- b) Jesus chose to empty Himself of all His rights and surrender Himself to the Father. John 12:49-50.
- c) Christ as a servant was obedient even to death on a cross.
- d) So God was able to use Him and exalt Him.

2. We are called to the same.

Read Luke 9:23-24

- a) "If anyone". Many may think that this lifestyle is for some super Christians called to a special ministry.
- b) Jesus said that **anyone** who followed Him must surrender all to Him.
- c) "Must deny himself". We all have a choice to go our own way or surrender ourselves to God.
- d) "And take up his cross". We are not called to carry the cross of anyone else. We need to find out what God has called us to do.
- e) "Daily". We cannot go on yesterday's experience. Each day we need to surrender our whole heart to God.
- f) This is very critical if we want to pray according to God's will.
- g) If our heart is full of our own selfish desires we will never hear clearly what the desires of God are.
- h) When we have surrendered everything in our hearts to God we are ready to hear and to obey.
- i) Take time as you start to pray to lay down everything and every desire that you have.
- j) Ask God to give you the power to surrender all to Him.

C. The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit will reveal God's will.

Read Romans 8:26-27

1. We do not know how to pray according to God's will.
2. We need the help of the Holy Spirit to reveal God's will to us.
3. The Holy Spirit will anoint our prayers so that they are according to God's will.
4. Invite the Holy Spirit to help you pray according to the will of the Father.
5. The Holy Spirit has been given to us for this reason, so you can trust that He will help you. John 14:26; 16:13-15.
6. Remember that the Holy Spirit will never force His way upon you.
7. The Holy Spirit will work together with you to the extent that you invite Him to and co-operate with Him. Ephesians 4:30.
8. As we co-operate with the Holy Spirit our prayers are given great power. Ephesians 6:18.

D. The Word

1. God's will revealed in His Word.

Read 2 Timothy 3:15-16

- a) God has already revealed His will to us through His Word.
 - b) If we want to pray "Your will be done", then we will have to pray according to God's Word.
 - c) It is important that we spend time reading all of God's Word so that we will know the complete heart of God.
 - d) Then we will not be led astray but will know what leading is of God, and what is not. Matthew 22:29.
 - e) As important as it is to pray we also need to read God's Word.
- ### **2. There is power in God's Word.**

Read Isaiah 55:10-11

- a) It is a good idea to pray with the Bible open in front of us.

- b) As we seek to pray in accordance with God's will, He may frequently direct us to a scripture that reveals His will about the very situation for which we are praying.
- c) As we pray with the scripture, we know that we are praying God's will and shall receive that for which we are praying. 1 John 5:14-15.
- d) God's power is released as we pray God's Word. Jeremiah 1:12.

E. Conclusion

1. To pray effectively we need to pray according to God's will.
2. To pray according to God's will we need to:
 - a) Surrender ourselves to God.
 - b) Pray with the anointing of the Holy Spirit.
 - c) Pray with God's Word.

Memory verse

1 John 5:14-15, “ ... if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us We know that we have what we asked of Him”.

Teacher's notes

Read John 10:27

Jesus said that His sheep would receive direction from Him.

Other ways that God will guide us in prayer besides through His Word:

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. | A strong impression | Acts 11:12 |
| 2. | A vision | Acts 10:9-18 |
| 3. | An audible voice | Acts 9:4-5 |
| 4. | A dream | Matthew 1:20-21 |
| 5. | A burden of the Holy Spirit | Romans 8:26 |
| 6. | A prophecy | 1 Corinthians 14:3 |
| 7. | A confirmation of others | Acts 15:28 |

On earth as it is in heaven

Lesson 4

A. Introduction

Read Matthew 6:10

God's will on earth.

1. God's perfect power, provision and will are experienced in heaven.
2. God would not ask us to pray for His kingdom to come and His will to be done on earth if it were not possible for it to happen.
3. God does not want us to fill up our time praying just for the sake of praying.
4. What God wants to do on earth, He will do through His Church.
5. We need to pray for His will to be done and to obey what He asks us to do.
6. What an awesome responsibility, but also what a privilege.
7. God has chosen to work together with us to release His power on the earth.

B. Five areas of prayer

1. Yourself.

Read Jude 20-21

- a) We are called to be partners with God, to see His kingdom come and His will be done on earth.
- b) We need to pray each day for God's anointing on our life and that we will be strong in faith.
- c) We need to submit our day to God, asking that His perfect will be done in us.
- d) Daily, give to God the decisions that you need to make and ask Him for wisdom and direction.
- e) Pray until God's peace and joy are reigning in your heart. Romans 14:17.

2. Your family.

Read Acts 18:8

- a) A second focus area for prayer is to pray for your family.

- b) If God's will is not done in your life, as a parent, you are making it difficult for your children to find the way.
- c) If God's will is not done in your family, then it might hinder God's will being done in your life. 1 Timothy 3:4-5.
- d) If you are married, pray for God's kingdom to come and His will to be done in your spouse this day.
- e) Ask God to show you how to pray for your spouse, your children and other members of your family.
- f) Pray for your children's future as well as your future grandchildren. Declare that God's kingdom and will shall be done in their lives.
- g) Families are important to God. The family that is a part of God's kingdom and walks in His will shines as a lighthouse into the community.

3. **Your ministry.**

Read Romans 12:4-8

- a) Everyone in the church has a service that God has called them to.
- b) For God's kingdom to come and will to be done on the earth, you need to function in the service God has called you to, to your full potential. Ephesians 4:16.
- c) Pray for vision, direction and anointing for what God has called you to do.
- d) People will spend great time, energy and finances to develop their careers. How much more should we expend to develop in our highest of callings.
- e) If you are called to leadership in the church, pray for your different areas of responsibility and for the people that God has put under your care. Philippians 1:3-6.

4. **Your church.**

Read Ephesians 3:10

- a) What God wants to do on the earth, He will do through His Church.
- b) Pray for the leaders of your church – for God's anointing, faith, vision, provision and protection for them and their families. Ephesians 6:19-20.
- c) Expect the Holy Spirit to show you how to pray for individuals in the church.
- d) Every part of your body needs to be operating properly for you to function properly. 1 Corinthians 12:25-26.

- e) Pray for your church to be effective in reaching the lost. Pray for a release of people into God's kingdom.
- f) Pray for God's blessing upon, and unity among, the other churches in your area.

5. Your world.

Read Psalm 2:8

- a) In the outline of the Lord's Prayer, before praying for our own needs, ("give us this day our daily bread"), we are challenged to pray for God's kingdom and will on the earth.
- b) God's heart is for the nations of the world whose people walk in darkness.
- c) We need to pray firstly for revival in the nation in which we live.
- d) Pray for the government of your country that God would enable them to make righteous decisions. 1 Timothy 2:1-4.
- e) Pray for revival in the Church that God's glory would be seen in His body. 2 Chronicles 7:14.
- f) Break the power of demonic strongholds in heavenly places. Ephesians 6:12.
- g) Pray for workers to bring in the harvest of lost souls. Matthew 9:35-38.
- h) Pray for other nations in the world. Ask God to show you one nation each day for which you can pray.

Illustration: There are very few Christians in Thailand. The Christian workers who are there say that it is very difficult to bring even one person to Christ. There are millions of Buddhist monks in Thailand who pray continually, keeping a demonic stronghold over Thailand.

Korea is another Buddhist nation. However, in Korea there are millions of Christians who are praying continually and breaking the demonic strongholds over their nation. In Korea multitudes are coming to Christ daily.

God will use Christians from other parts of the world to pray for Thailand so that revival will also come to this nation.

- i) Expect the Holy Spirit to guide and inspire you to pray for other nations.
- j) God is bringing in a great worldwide harvest in these last days. He wants us to pray for this, His heartbeat. Matthew 24:14.

C. Conclusion

Your priorities.

1. This outline is not meant to bind us, but to keep before us the priorities that we have in prayer.
2. By following Jesus' outline of prayer, we will be kept from being distracted as we pray and will be guided to the next topic.
3. As we pray through this outline of the Lord's Prayer, being guided by the Holy Spirit, we know that today we have prayed according to God's plan.

Memory verse

2 Chronicles 7:14, *“If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and will heal their land”*.

Teacher's notes

The leader's top priority

There are great pressures on the Christian leader's time. Many things would try to absorb our time and distract us from God's purpose for our lives. Unless we determine to make waiting on God our top priority, we will wear ourselves out and become ineffective in the ministry.

1. Luke 10:38-42, “You are worried and upset about many things Mary has chosen what is better”. It does not matter how great the needs are, nothing is more important than sitting at Jesus' feet, listening to Him.
2. Isaiah 40:30-31, “Those who wait upon the Lord will renew their strength”. At the feet of Jesus we will find the emotional, physical and spiritual power to meet the demands of the ministry.
3. James 4:8, “Come near to God and He will come near to you”. If we will take the time to wait upon Him, He will touch our life and ministry with His life.
4. Jeremiah 29:12-13, “You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all of your heart”. Prayer cannot be a once-in-a-while, hit-and-miss occasion, but a consistent, daily, whole-hearted, vital encounter with God.
5. Job 42:5, “My ears had heard of You but now my eyes have seen you”. Let this be our testimony. As teachers we not only need to know **about** God, but we need to **know** Him.

Give us today our daily bread

Lesson 5

A. Introduction

Read Matthew 6:11

God knows your needs.

Read Matthew 6:8

1. Your Father loves you and knows all your needs.
2. This same God wants you to be in a place of communion and dependency upon Him. Matthew 7:11.
3. God wants to supply and has the ability to supply our every need. Psalm 132:15.
4. James says that we do not receive because, "you do not ask God". James 4:2.
5. Bread is symbolic of our most basic needs.
6. God wants us to recognize that He is the one who supplies our every need.
7. God knows our needs but He wants us to ask Him each day for the things we need.

B. God desires to meet our needs abundantly

God's plan for you.

Read Jeremiah 29:11

1. God's plan for you is to prosper you.
2. To prosper is to have all of your needs met abundantly. Deuteronomy 28:8-11.
3. And even beyond our own needs to be able to give to the needs of others. 1 Corinthians 16:2.
4. Poverty is not God's plan for us. The devil is the one who comes to rob us of God's blessings. John 10:10.
5. God's plan is to bless us by meeting every need abundantly. Deuteronomy 8:18.

C. First meet God's requirements for receiving

1. **The need to work.**

Read 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12

- a) God cannot bless idleness.
- b) God does not want us to be dependent on anyone. Our dependency is only on God.
- c) When we work hard and trust in God, He will meet our needs abundantly.
- d) God wants us to pray, asking Him for our daily needs.
- e) First we need to be sure we are being diligent in all our work. Colossians 3:23.

2. The need to give.

Read Luke 6:38

- a) The world's plan for prosperity is to keep as much as you can.
- b) God's plan for prosperity is to give as much as you can. Malachi 3:8-10.
- c) We can pray all we want, but God will not go against His Word.
- d) God will multiply back to us according to the measure that we give. 2 Corinthians 9:6.
- e) When we give generously, we can trust God's generous supply. Proverbs 3:9-10.

3. The need to put God first.

Read Matthew 6:31-33

- a) There is a contrast here between those with Christ and those without Christ.
- b) Those without Christ are anxious and strive for things of the world.
- c) Jesus says that our Father who loves us knows everything that we need.
- d) We should not strive after these things, but rest and trust in our God.
- e) God says that if we will put His will first in our lives, He will meet all our needs.

D. Ask in faith

1. Not according to your circumstances.

Read Philippians 4:19

- a) If we choose to do things God's way, then we can expect God's supply.

- b) God's supply is much greater than we can ever imagine. Ephesians 3:20.
- c) Let us not ask God for our needs according to our own circumstances.
- d) Let us ask God in absolute faith according to His glorious riches.

2. Believe you have received.

Read Mark 11:22-24

- a) We need to believe that we have received what we have asked for, even before it can be seen.
- b) If we can believe in our hearts that we have received, God says it will be ours.
- c) For this reason we need to be specific in our prayer requests.
- d) Many people just pray general prayers like – "God bless me".
- e) If you are going to receive in your heart what you are asking for, then you need to know exactly what it is you are praying about.

Illustration: One of the students at All Africa Bible College and his wife were down to their last R20. In their natural minds they could not see any income for some time, so they wondered how they would make this R20 stretch to cover their many needs. As they prayed for these needs, faith began to rise in their hearts. They added up all of their needs, which came to exactly R1000. As they prayed specifically for the R1000, the husband felt God say, "I am putting that exact amount in your bank account". When the R20 was used up they went to the bank and found exactly R1000 in their account. They knew that it was a miracle from God as they had told no-one of their need or their prayer.

- f) God delights in answering specific requests made in faith.

3. Do not give up.

Read Luke 18:1-8

- a) Some of our prayers get answered quickly, others seem to take time.
- b) Jesus gave us this parable to show us that we need to keep on praying and not give up.
- c) Doubt will rob us of the answer to our prayers. James 1:6-7.
- d) We have a just God who loves us and desires to meet all our needs.
- e) How much more can we expect God to answer our prayers!

- f) Luke 18:8 – will Christ find this kind of faith on earth – that prays through until the need is met?

Memory verse

Mark 11:24, *“Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours”.*

Teacher's notes

James 1:5. Five things to help us walk in faith.

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| 1. "If any of you lacks ask God....". | If you have a need, ask God. |
| 2. "Who gives generously". | God is an abundant God. |
| 3. ".... to all". | God does not have favourites. |
| 4. ".... without finding fault". | God believes in you. |
| 5. "It will be given to him". | Trust in God's promises. |

Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors

Lesson 6

A. Forgive us our debts

Read Matthew 6:12

1. We all sin.

Read 1 John 1:8-10

- a) We all sin daily and consequently need to repent daily.
- b) Sin is anything in us that does not conform to Christ.
- c) The closer we get to Jesus the more we will see how different we are to Christ.
- d) Even as a mature Christian we will make mistakes, but we need to recognize our mistakes and be quick to repent.
- e) As we are quick to confess our sins, God is quick to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

2. Repentance is not first on the prayer outline.

Read Ephesians 3:12

- a) Jesus said to start prayer with praise and worship, not with repentance.
- b) We do not come into God's presence on the basis of our righteousness.
- c) It is not on the basis of our faults, failures or good works that we can come before the Father.
- d) We can come in freedom and confidence before the Father, because we are in Christ Jesus.
- e) We enter God's presence on that basis alone. We can praise and worship Him and draw near to Him at any time.
- f) Many pull away from God in condemnation because of their sin.
- g) When we sin it is time to draw near to God in repentance; to pray and draw strength from Him. Hebrews 4:16.

3. Unrepented sin is dangerous.

Read Hebrews 3:13-19

- a) Unrepented sin hardens our hearts making it easier for us to sin again.
- b) Unrepented sin robs us of the freedom that we have in Christ Jesus, making us a slave to sin. Proverbs 5:22.
- c) Unrepented sin kills the work of the Spirit in our lives. Romans 8:5-6.
- d) The guilt of unrepented sin, robs us of peace with God. Hebrews 10:22.
- e) Unrepented sin robs us of God's abundant blessings in our lives. Proverbs 28:13.
- f) We cannot afford to give in to sin, but must be quick to repent and walk in the victory that is ours in Christ Jesus.

B. As we forgive our debtors.

1. The forgiveness we receive depends on the forgiveness we give.

Read Matthew 6:14-15

- a) At the end of the outline that Jesus gives us for prayer, He re-emphasizes one of the topics.
- b) Of all the things in the outline that He could have reminded us of, the point He selected for further highlighting must be very important.
- c) Because forgiveness is so critical for effective prayer and for a victorious life in Christ, He emphasizes this point.
- d) The only thing that will keep us from God's forgiveness is our unforgiveness towards others.
- e) We will be forgiven by God and man according to the measure that we are willing to forgive others. Luke 6:37-38.

2. Unforgiveness will prevent our prayers from being answered.

Read Mark 11:22-25

- a) Jesus said that if we pray in faith we will receive what we have asked for.
- b) At the same time, Jesus says that we should not have any unforgiveness in our hearts toward anyone.

Illustration: One night a man came forward at the end of a meeting to be prayed for, as he had a severe sickness. The man had been prayed for many times but instead of getting better he got worse. This night those praying for the man challenged him – did he have any unforgiveness in his heart? The man confessed that he had been mistreated years ago, but that he would never forgive the person that had so abused him. Those praying for the man encouraged him with God's Word to repent of this unforgiveness and so receive God's forgiveness and healing. The man asked for God's help to forgive and repented of his unforgiveness. Immediately, as they prayed, the man was healed.

- c) This is not to say that it is always unforgiveness that hinders our prayers being answered or from our receiving healing.
- d) Many times though, forgiveness is the key to receiving God's answer to our prayers.

3. We can choose to forgive.

Read Matthew 18:21-35

- a) Verses 21 and 22 – Jesus said that we need to forgive one another at least seventy times seven because God never stops forgiving us.
- b) Verses 24 and 28 – the amount that was owed to the servant was a few cents compared to millions of dollars of debt that he owed to the king.
- c) We owe a debt of sin we can never repay, but God cancelled that debt with the blood of Jesus Christ.
- d) How much more should we be willing to forgive the insignificant debt of someone who has sinned against us?
- e) We do not always feel like forgiving, but when we consider how much God forgives us, we need to choose to forgive others. Ephesians 4:32.
- f) Verses 34 and 35 – Jesus said that the Father will allow us to be punished until we forgive from our hearts.
- g) Any time that our heart may want to dwell upon some wrong that has been done against us, we need to be quick to repent and forgive from our heart.
- h) We need to make it our purpose not to give in to unforgiveness but to bless those who mistreat us. Proverbs 19:11.

Memory verse

Mark 11:25, *“And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins”*.

Teacher’s notes

In this lesson from God’s Word, we have seen the danger of holding any unforgiveness in our hearts. Yet there are many Christians who are still not totally free of unforgiveness.

Unforgiveness can be seen in our lives by the sign of any resentment or bitterness over anything someone may have done to us in the past.

Some signs are:

- Rehearsing in our minds some hurt done to us in the past.
- Anger or resentment toward others.
- Telling others about a wrong done to us in the past.
- Bitterness toward others.
- A hurt in your heart when you think of certain people or situations.

If you suspect any unforgiveness in your heart, be zealous to deal with it. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you any hurt that you have failed to forgive from the heart.

1. Ask the Lord to forgive you for holding on to resentment and bitterness.
2. If the other person is aware of your attitude then you need to tell them that you forgive them and ask them to forgive you.
3. If thoughts of resentment come back concerning this person, determine not to give in to these thoughts but rather bless them in all your thoughts and speech.

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one

Lesson 7

A. Power to resist temptation

Read Matthew 6:13

1. We are all tempted.

Read James 1:13-15

- a) It is not a sin for us to be tempted.
- b) Sin occurs when we give into the temptation and respond in a way that is not pleasing to God.
- c) It is not God who tempts us nor is it His desire that we give in to temptation.
- d) It is our own self-centred carnal nature that wants to give in to temptation. Romans 7:21-23.

2. God has called us to resist.

Read 1 Corinthians 10:13

- a) Jesus broke the power of sin over us at the cross. Romans 6:6-7.
- b) By faith we can walk victoriously over sin. 1 John 5:4-5.
- c) If we put our lives in God's hands He will not allow us to be tempted beyond what we are able to bear.
- d) Remember that God is sovereign and able to control every detail of our lives.
- e) God provides a way for us to resist every temptation.

3. Only with God's power.

Read Philippians 2:12-13

- a) The walk that God has called us to is impossible in our own strength. Matthew 5:48.
- b) Yet many will try to walk as Christ has called us to in their own power and so they become discouraged.

- c) In Philippians 2:12 we are commanded to work out in our lives the salvation that has been given to us in Christ.
- d) To do that, we will have to resist temptation and walk in obedience to God's Word.
- e) But in verse 13, we are told how we can do this work. It is through drawing upon God's power working in us.
- f) God has called us to walk in complete dependence upon Him.
- g) When we co-operate with His power we will walk victoriously through every temptation. Colossians 1:29.

4. **The need to pray.**

Read Mark 14:37-38

- a) Our spirit wants to obey God but our body is crying out for its own desires to be met.
- b) God's power to resist temptation is released when we pray. Luke 22:46.
- c) If we could resist temptation without prayer then Jesus would not have commanded us to pray this way.
- d) Each day we need to pray and ask for the release of God's power in us to resist every temptation we face.
- e) Considering Jesus' question in verse 37, perhaps at least one hour of prayer is necessary each day to walk victoriously and see God's provision.
- f) By learning to use the Lord's Prayer outline, one hour of prayer is not really difficult. In fact it becomes a great delight and one hour seems too short a time to pray.

Illustration: If you catch a fish and put it on the land it will continue to move its mouth and gills. It will continue to go through the motions of swimming, moving its fins and tail. Little does the fish realize that even though it is going through the motions, it is slowly dying.

Many Christians are like a fish out of water. Though they go through all the right motions, if they are not praying, they are slowly dying spiritually.

We need to pray for our spiritual health as much as we need to breathe to stay healthy physically.

B. Power to resist Satan

1. **We have an enemy.**

Read 1 Peter 5:8-9

- a) When you accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour you step into warfare. Ephesians 6:10-12.
- b) Satan, the thief, will try everything he can to destroy you. John 10:10.
- c) Satan wants to prevent God's Word from bearing fruit in our lives. Mark 4:4, 15.
- d) Besides many other names, Satan is called the "tempter" in scripture. Matthew 4:3; 1 Thessalonians 3:5.
- e) Satan knows the power of sin and how it will bind us and so one of his plans is to try to lure us into giving in to sin. Genesis 3:1.

2. God's power will protect us.

Read Psalm 91

- a) Verse 3 – Satan is the fowler who wants to trap us in sin.
- b) Verse 5 – his are the flaming arrows that seek to destroy our faith. Ephesians 6:16.
- c) Verse 13 – he is the serpent out to deceive us. Genesis 3:14-15.
- d) Verses 4 and 10 – God's power working in us is greater than all the power of our enemy. 1 John 4:4.
- e) Verses 1 and 2 – we can rest in absolute confidence in God's power to protect us.

3. The promise has a condition.

Read Psalm 91:1, 9

- a) Verse 9 says "if".
- b) This promise of protection is not for those who just know about God.
- c) The Bible tells us about people who thought they had power over Satan just because they knew about Jesus. Acts 19:13-16.
- d) It isn't good enough just to know about Jesus, we need to know Him. Daniel 11:32.
- e) Knowing Jesus comes first by repenting of our sins and asking Jesus into our hearts. 1 John 1:9; Revelation 3:20.
- f) Having accepted Christ, we need to develop our relationship with Him each day in prayer.

- g) God has tremendous promises for those who will “make the Most High your dwelling”, verse 9.

4. Prayer releases God's protection.

Read Job 1:6-10

- a) Verse 10 – Satan could not touch Job because God had put a hedge around Job and his family.
- b) God put a pillar of fire between Israel and Israel's enemies in the wilderness. Exodus 14:19-20.
- c) In the Lord's Prayer, Jesus said that we need to pray for that hedge of protection against the enemy.
- d) Each day we should ask God to put a hedge around ourselves and our families and everything that we have.
- e) As we pray for power to keep us from temptation and from the evil one, God will protect us.

Memory verse

Mark 14:37-38, *“Could you not keep watch for one hour? Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing but the body is weak”.*

Teacher's notes

1 Timothy 6:11

1. **Flee** – We need God's power to resist temptation, but we need to cooperate with Him by fleeing from those things that are not of God. Like Joseph we cannot begin to entertain evil, we need to run. Genesis 39:12.
2. **Pursue** – In the positive we are to zealously seek after:
 - a) Righteousness.
 - b) Godliness.
 - c) Faith.
 - d) Love.
 - e) Endurance.
 - f) Gentleness.
3. **Fight** – We are in warfare. There is an enemy to resist and stand firm against
4. **Take hold of** – If we will flee, pursue and fight we will take hold of all that God has for us.

For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Lesson 8

A. Introduction

Read Matthew 6:13b

End your prayer with praise.

1. We started our prayer with praise and worship.
2. This brought us into God's presence and helped us to get our hearts focused on the greatness of our God.
3. As we finish bringing all of our requests to God in prayer, our hearts may become weighed down with many concerns.
4. Remember unbelief will rob us of the answer to our prayers. James 1:6-7.
5. We need to finish our praying with praise, lifting our hearts up in confident expectancy to God.

B. Declare the greatness of God

1. Yours is the kingdom.

Read Hebrews 12:28

- a) We have been brought into a kingdom that cannot be shaken but will endure forever.
- b) The kingdoms of this world will all pass away.
- c) Let us take our eyes off the concerns of this world and declare the greatness of our God.
- d) It is not Satan or men that are ruling. Our God is King and sovereign over all of the affairs of this world. Daniel 5:21.
- e) Declare His sovereignty over your life and all of the things you have prayed for.

2. Yours is the power.

Read Psalm 68:32-35

- a) God's power is greater than all powers.

- b) God created this world with a word and holds the world together by His word. Hebrews 1:3.
- c) This same power is released when we pray. Acts 4:31.
- d) We need to praise God for His power. Psalm 150:2.
- e) We need to reject the power of our circumstances and declare with our mouths God's power to move in our lives. Proverbs 18:21.

3. Yours is the glory.

Read Revelation 4:11

- a) It is good for us as we finish praying to give glory to God.
- b) All of the glory belongs to Him. It is His power and life working through our lives.
- c) As we learn to pray effectively, God will do glorious things in our lives.
- d) We dare not take any of the glory for ourselves. James 4:6.
- e) Keep lifting God up and giving Him glory. He alone deserves all of the praise. Psalm 96:7-8.
- f) As long as our focus is on God we will walk in faith. Matthew 14:29-31.

4. Forever and ever.

Read James 1:17

- a) Our God does not change. He is the same yesterday and today and forever. Hebrews 13:8.
- b) God is not like shifting shadows that are always moving and fading. Shadows are only the outline of something, but have no real substance.
- c) God's kingdom, power and glory are forever and ever.
- d) We cannot trust in the temporal things of this world but we can put absolute confidence in our God. 2 Corinthians 4:18.
- e) We will finish praying with faith when we remember and declare with our lips that our God does not change but is faithful to all His promises. Hebrews 11:11.

5. Amen.

Read Revelation 1:5-6

- a) "Amen" comes from a Greek word that means firm or trustworthy.
- b) The same Greek word is interpreted as, "I tell you the truth", a sentence that Jesus used at the beginning of many of His statements. John 8:34.
- c) Jesus was emphasizing a truth that He was teaching by saying, this is trustworthy and you can count on it.
- d) Many times we finish praying today as Christians by saying, "amen", without realizing what we are saying.
- e) We are making a declaration of faith. We are declaring "amen", He is trustworthy, so what we have prayed shall be done.

C. Walk in victory

1. Rejoice in the Lord.

Read Philippians 4:4

- a) People who have learned to pray effectively can rejoice always. Isaiah 56:7.
- b) These people are not affected by their circumstances. They know that as they pray God will move in their circumstances. Habakkuk 3:17-19.
- c) People who do not pray daily are limited by what they see.
- d) If things are going well for them, then they are glad but if things are not going well then they are sad.
- e) The Bible says that the joy of the Lord is our strength. Nehemiah 8:10.
- f) As we finish praying, let us rejoice in God with praise.
- g) As we go out into our day, let us face every challenge with joy. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18.
- h) We have prayed and submitted our day to the Lord. The power of God's kingdom shall be released into our day.
- i) Rejoice and be glad and walk in God's victory in you.

2. With thanksgiving.

Read Philippians 4:6-7

- a) Anxiety robs us of faith.
- b) Anxiety robs us of strength and makes us ineffective.

- c) Do not give in to anxiety but fight it through prayer with thanksgiving.
- d) Thanksgiving is the language of faith.
- e) We can always find something to thank God for, even when things seem completely hopeless.
- f) Give thanks to God for the good things He has done in your life.
- g) As you give thanks, you take your eyes off the negative and your heart begins to rise in faith.
- h) Give praise to God, rejoice in Him, and give thanks that He will answer your prayers.
- i) Close your time of prayer with a heart filled with faith and walk in the victory that is yours in Christ Jesus! 2 Corinthians 2:14.

Memory verse

Philippians 4:6-7, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus".

Teacher's notes

Jesus tells us in Matthew 6:9-13 how to pray, but He also tells us in Matthew 6:5-8 how not to pray.

1. Matthew 6:5.

If our motive in prayer is to impress others, then that is the only reward we will receive.

Perhaps our prayers are not being answered because the reward we are actually seeking is the admiration of others.

Let us live to impress God, not other people.

2. Matthew 6:6.

Jesus is not saying that we should never pray publicly. Christ and His disciples prayed publicly.

Not only is Jesus teaching us not to pray to impress others, but also that we might develop a personal prayer relationship with God.

Our spiritual lives cannot depend upon the times we get together with God's people to pray. We need to be praying daily ourselves in communion with God on our own.

3. Matthew 6:7.

We are not to weary God with a lot of words to somehow fill up time and impress others.

Our prayers are not to be aimless, but right on target. Christ teaches us how to be on target with the Lord's Prayer.

As leaders we need anointed prayers that get results. Let us ask God right now to help us pray more effectively that we might teach our people how to pray.