

Your personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ cannot grow without having proper communication. The two basic elements of spiritual survival for a Christian are the word of God and prayer. God speaks to you as you read the bible, and you speak to God through prayer. Your relationship with God will only be as strong as your dependence upon prayer.

The key word of this lesson is:

COMMUNICATION

The key question this lesson answers:

How important is prayer in my life?

The key purpose of this lesson:

To teach you how to cultivate an effective and intimate prayer life.

The key point of this lesson:

Prayer is the communication from the heart of a believer to God.

Memory Verses:

*“And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.” – **John 14:13-14***

*“Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” – **Philippians 4:6-7***

WHAT IS PRAYER?

THE KEY POINT OF THIS LESSON...

Prayer is the communication from the heart of a believer directed to God. We have bold access to God's throne through our relationship with Jesus Christ.

"In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him."
– **Ephesians 3:12**

"Let us come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." – **Hebrews 4:16**

A. Prayer can be spoken audibly and silently.

"I have called upon thee, for thou wilt hear me, O God: incline thine ear unto me, and hear my speech." – **Psalms 17:6**

"Now Hannah, she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard:" – **1 Samuel 1:13**

B. Prayer can be spoken publicly and privately.

"And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all."
– **Acts 20:36**

"But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." – **Matthew 6:6**

WHY SHOULD YOU PRAY?

The topic of prayer can be overwhelming. Many believers are missing out on the blessings that God promises because they do not spend time with God in prayer. God is interested in every intimate detail of your life, and he promises to hear your prayers no matter how large or small they may be.

A. God answers prayer.

1. You should be confident when you pray, knowing that God hears your prayers

Psalms 86:6-7; Psalms 145:18-19

2. You should be confident when you pray, knowing that God will answer your prayers according to his will.

John 14:13-14; 1 John 5:14-15

B. Prayer produces a change in you.

1. Prayer produces peace within your heart and mind.

Philippians 4:6-7

2. Prayer conforms you to the will of God. It does not conform God to your will.

Matthew 26:36-39; Colossians 1:9

3. Prayer changes your perspective in the midst of your circumstances.

2 Corinthians 12:7-10

C. Prayer draws you close to God so that he alone can prove his sufficiency for your every need.

“And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God;” – 2 Corinthians 3:4-5

1. God knows exactly what you need even before you ask.

Matthew 6:8

2. God allows needs to come into your life so he can draw you closer to him.

Psalms 50:15

3. You must recognize that you have needs in your life. It is dangerous to convince yourself that you do not need anything.

Revelation 3:16-17

DISCUSSION:

Are you sometimes afraid to pray in front of others?

Do you ever doubt that God is really listening to your prayers?

Has your attitude ever changed after spending time with God in prayer?

WHEN SHOULD YOU PRAY?

A. God desires that you continuously communicate with him in prayer.

Luke 18:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:17

B. God desires that you give thanks in every circumstance in your life.

1 Thessalonians 5:18; Ephesians 5:20

Learn from the many examples in scripture of individuals with a consistent lifestyle of prayer:

1. Nehemiah prayed instantly when he had an immediate need.

Nehemiah 1:4; 2:4

2. Daniel continued to pray even when a law was passed forbidding it.

Daniel 6:4-10

3. David maintained a lifestyle of prayer at all times.

Psalms 5:3; 55:17

HOW SHOULD YOU PRAY?

A. You do not need to go through any other person to talk to God. You have direct access to God personally.

1 Timothy 2:5; Ephesians 2:18

B. Talk to the Lord as a friend.

John 15:13-15; Exodus 33:11

C. It is not necessary or biblical to use repetitious prayer.

Matthew 6:7

D. Pray specific prayers. The prayers of many believers are wasted because they are too general and are not biblically based.

Philippians 4:6

DISCUSSION:

Do you find that your prayers are sometimes vague and sound repetitious?

What are you specifically trusting God for in your life right now?

WHAT SHOULD YOU PRAY?

There is not a special “formula” to follow when you pray. However, the word of God does mention and demonstrate different types of prayer throughout the bible. You will not have an effective communion with God without spending careful and committed time with him in four major areas of prayer.

“I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men;” – 1 Timothy 2:1

A. SUPPLICATIONS – *These are earnest and fervent requests for God to move.*

Psalm 6:8-9; James 5:16

B. INTERCESSIONS – *These are specific requests on the behalf of others.*

Romans 15:30-32

C. PRAYERS – *These are communications with God that are based in his word.*

Psalm 145:18-19

D. THANKSGIVINGS – *These express gratitude to God for his wonderful works.*

Psalm 100:4

IMPORTANT NOTE:

God wants you to live in complete fellowship with him in prayer. Many believers choose not to pray because they do not believe that God is interested in working in their lives or their specific circumstances. When believers fail to pray, they will fail to see answers to prayer. God commands you to watch with expectation to see how he will answer your continuous prayers.

“Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving.” – Colossians 4:2

“Our praying needs to be intense and fervent with an energy that never tires. It must have a persistency that will not be denied and with a courage that will never fail. The praying Christian is like a brave soldier who, as the conflict grows more severe, exhibits a more superior courage than in the earlier stages of the battle.” – E.M. Bounds

DISCUSSION:

How often do you pray?

Can you share a recent example of how God answered your prayer?

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

1. List three ways that prayer will change you.

2. Use scripture to describe why prayer is important to you.

3. When is the best time for a believer to pray? Why?

4. What can we learn from the following verses about how to pray?

1 Timothy 2:5

Matthew 6:7

5. List the four major areas of prayer and a scripture reference for each.

- A. _____
- B. _____
- C. _____
- D. _____

6. What is the key purpose of this lesson, and what has it taught you?

PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY

Explain in your own words what *1 Timothy 2:1-2* teaches you concerning prayer.

Describe the hindrances to prayer mentioned in the passages below.

Psalms 66:18; Isaiah 59:1-2

Proverbs 28:9

Matthew 6:14-15

1 Peter 3:7; Colossians 3:19

James 4:2

James 4:3

Proverbs 21:13

Describe in your own words what Jesus was teaching His disciples about prayer in *Matthew 6:9-13*.
