

The Journey of Faith

Session 6

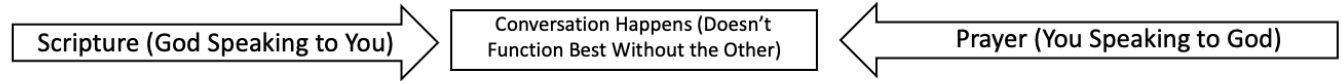


Prayer

Teaching Chart

DEVELOPING TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION

"...do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:6-7, ESV)



"Now Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.'" (Luke 11:1, ESV)

Attitudes of Prayer

Honest (Matthew 6:5)
Thoughtful (Matthew 6:7-8a)
Informed (Matthew 6:8b)

Actions of Prayer

Make Time (Matthew 6:6a)
Observe in Private (Matthew 6:6)
Forgive Others (Matthew 6:14-15)

Essentials of Prayer

Praise (Matthew 6:9)
Surrender (Matthew 6:10)
Dependence (Matthew 6:11)
Confession (Matthew 6:12)
Deliverance (Matthew 6:13)

Practical Advice on Prayer

Pray the Psalms
Start Prayer Conversations Without Expectations
Read <i>Valley of Vision</i> Prayers (online at Banner of Truth or purchase book)
Use the <i>Guide to Prayer</i> (pray based on Scripture)

Lesson

- Overview:** You have already realized that God speaks to us through the written words contained in the Bible and the leading of His Holy Spirit in your life; however, you may be asking, "How do I talk to God?" This is a fair and important question. God has given you direct communication with Him through the element of prayer. Prayer is simply words that you speak to God and He, in turn, hears and answers them. Prayer is the element used to praise, repent of sin, and express needs for yourself and others. When used properly, prayer can be one of the greatest joys of your Christian life.
- Purpose:** To instruct the believer in the basics of prayer and how he or she can communicate with God at any time
- Verses:** **Philippians 4:6 (ESV)**...do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. **7** And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

- I. What is prayer?
 - A. Prayer is communication with God using words.
(*Hebrews 4:16*)
 - B. Prayer is a means for us to verbalize our cares, confessions, praise , and concerns to God with the assurance that He is listening.
(*1 Peter 3:12*)
- II. Why should I pray?
 - A. Prayer is commanded.
(*Matthew 6:6*)
 - B. Prayer brings comfort to your heart and mind when you are worried.
(*Philippians 4:6-7*)
 - C. Prayer pleases God.
(*Proverbs 15:8*)
(*1 Peter 5:7*)
 - D. Prayer brings joy and happiness to your life.
(*John 16:23-24*)
- III. How do I pray?
 - A. Prayer should be observed in private.
(*Matthew 6:5-6*)
 - 1. The “hypocrites” in this passage are trying to impress others around them.
 - 2. You should never pray so others will think you are spiritual.
 - 3. Prayer should be between you and God alone.
 - B. Prayer should be from the heart.
(*Matthew 6:7*)
 - 1. Prayer should not be a mere reciting or reading of words with no thought behind what is being said.
 - 2. Prayer is not measured by the number of words, but rather the attitude of the heart.
 - C. Prayer can be done in any posture.
 - 1. You can pray while standing.
(*Mark 11:25*)
 - 2. You can pray on your knees.
(*Luke 22:41*)
 - 3. You can pray on your face before God.
(*Matthew 26:39*)
 - 4. You can pray with lifted hands.
(*Psalms 28:2*)
(*1 Timothy 2:8*)
 - a. Lifted hands can be symbolic of a clean life.
 - b. Lifted hands can also signify a heart that is dependent on God.

IV. How do I approach God in prayer?

- A. You should believe that God will hear and answer your prayer.
(*Matthew 21:22*)
- B. You should approach God with a forgiving spirit.
(*Matthew 6:12*)
 - 1. God is always willing to forgive us when we sin.
 - 2. Therefore, we must forgive others when they have sinned against us.
- C. You should approach God with a genuine heart and pure motives.
(*Hebrews 10:22*)
 - 1. Prayer should not be used to “get what we want.”
 - 2. Prayer should be an expression of our love and devotion to God.
- D. You should approach God with a willingness to submit to His Word and will.
(*Luke 22:41-42*)
- E. You should approach God continually about specific needs.
(*Luke 11:8-9*)
- F. You should approach God with boldness.
(*Hebrews 4:16*)
 - 1. God wants us to approach Him.
 - 2. Therefore, we can have confidence that He desires our prayers.

V. When should I pray?

- A. You should always be in an attitude of prayer.
(*1 Thessalonians 5:17*)
 - 1. This does not mean to pray without stopping.
 - 2. “Praying without ceasing” means to pray regularly, consistently, and readily.
- B. You should have a set time of prayer daily.
 - 1. Daniel prayed three times a day.
(*Daniel 6:10*)
 - 2. David prayed every morning.
(*Psalms 5:3*)
 - 3. The apostles had a set time for daily prayer.
(*Acts 3:1*)

VI. What should be contained in my prayers?

- (*Matthew 6:9-13*)
- A. Prayer should include praise directed toward God.
(*Psalms 100:4*)
 - 1. Praise Him for who He is.
 - 2. Praise Him for what He has done.
- B. Prayer should include submission to God’s will.
(*Romans 12:1-2*)

- C. Prayer should include asking for God to supply our needs and the needs of others.
(*Luke 11:8*)
- D. Prayer should include confession of sin.
(*Psalms 51:1-4*)
- E. Prayer should include asking for strength to resist temptation.
(*1 Corinthians 10:13*)

VII. Who should I pray for?

- A. Pray for those who are unsaved (specific rather than general).
(*Romans 10:1*)
(*1 Timothy 2:1-4*)
 - 1. Pray for the salvation of family and friends.
 - 2. Pray for the salvation of governmental officials.
- B. Pray for missionaries (Christians sent to share the gospel with a group of people).
(*Matthew 9:37-38*)
- C. Pray for the pastor of your church.
(*Ephesians 6:18-20*)
 - 1. Pray for his boldness and confidence to preach.
 - 2. Pray for his faithfulness in preaching the Word every week.
- D. Pray for your enemies.
(*Matthew 5:44*)

VIII. What things should I pray about for myself?

- A. Pray for the cleansing of all known and unknown sin.
(*Psalms 19:12-13*)
(*Psalms 51:2*)
(*Psalms 51:10*)
- B. Pray for the words you speak and the things you desire to be acceptable to God.
(*Psalms 19:14*)
- C. Pray for courage to face the circumstances of life.
(*Psalms 34:4*)
- D. Pray that you would live today committed to doing God's will.
(*Psalms 37:5*)
- E. Pray for understanding and obedience of the Word of God.
(*Psalms 119:18*)
(*Psalms 119:34*)
- F. Pray for sin not to have control of your life.
(*Psalms 119:133*)

- G. Pray for victory over temptation.
(*Matthew 26:41*)
 - H. Pray for wisdom in handling difficult situations.
(*James 1:5*)
- IX. What things can hinder my prayers from being answered?
- A. Unconfessed sin can hinder prayer.
(*Psalms 66:18*)
 - B. An unforgiving spirit can hinder prayer.
(*Matthew 6:14-15*)
 - C. Failure to ask can hinder prayer.
(*James 4:2*)
 - D. Asking with the wrong motives can hinder prayer.
(*James 4:3*)
 - E. Failure to respond to God's Word can hinder prayer.
(*Proverbs 28:9*)
- X. Will my prayers always be answered?
- A. There are two conditions to answered prayer.
 - 1. You must ask according to God's will.
(*1 John 5:14*)
 - a. Our prayers must not be according to what we want or what we think we need.
 - b. Our prayers must be in "tune" with His Word (which is His will).
(*John 15:7*)
 - 2. You must ask in faith.
(*Matthew 21:22*)
 - B. Your prayers will always be answered for your good and God's glory.
 - 1. God will sometimes say "yes" to our requests.
(*Psalms 84:11*)
 - 2. God will sometimes say "no" to our requests.
(*James 4:3*)
 - 3. God will sometimes say "wait" to our requests.
(*Luke 11:8*)
- XI. How do I organize my prayer life?
- A. Use a notebook or notepad.
 - 1. Make a list of people to pray for.
 - 2. Make a list of prayer requests and write down the date they are answered.
 - B. Write down all of the facts about prayer to help you remember the basics of prayer.

Review

1. Define prayer.
2. List four reasons why you should pray.
3. True or False. Prayer should be done in front of other believers (use scripture).
4. Can you pray in any posture?
5. Name three ways you should approach God in prayer.
6. When can you pray (use scripture)?
7. How often should you pray?
8. Prayer should include _____ directed toward God.
9. Prayer should include _____ to God's will.
10. List four people you should pray for.
11. List three things you should pray about for yourself.
12. _____ can hinder prayer.
13. What three answers does God give to your requests?
14. Briefly describe the purpose of this lesson.

False Teachings

Some churches, organizations, or groups are promoting the following false teachings:

- Believers cannot pray directly to God; however, they must use a priest to communicate with Him.
- Prayer is a tool to get what you want.
- God will answer your prayers the way you want Him to respond.