

Prayer is Essential

(Adapted from a lesson by Linda Poitras)

“Exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men” (1 Timothy 2:1).

INTRODUCTION

We *must* pray. It is impossible to please God without talking to Him. It is as important to know *how* to pray as it is to know that we *must* pray. Prayer is the way we communicate. However, communication is not all about me. Communication is a two-way conversation. It involves both talking and listening. It has my ideas, feelings and needs, and the ideas, feelings and needs of the other person. Without communication, there is no relationship.

WORSHIP

Every time we pray, we are worshipping God. Worship is putting ourselves under the will of God and obeying. Without obedience, there is no worship. One of the easiest ways to worship is to praise. Praise means we tell someone how good they are or what a wonderful thing they have done. It is giving compliments.

Remember to give God compliments for all He is and all He has done for us. What are some good things we can say *about* God? Below are a few suggestions:

- He is worthy.
- He is awesome.
- He is powerful.
- He is loving.
- He is kind.
- He is patient.

What (compliments) can we say about the *good things God does* for us? Here are some ideas:

- He is the captain of our salvation.
- He is our redeemer.
- He is our healer.
- He is our soon coming king.
- He is our deliverer.
- He is our defender.

- 1) Take time to speak these to God as a prayer.
- 2) Each quality or compliment listed should be spoken aloud three times in a row.

- 3) Continue until everything listed has been spoken to God. By this time, you should be really feeling the presence of the Lord.
- 4) Prayer should always begin and end with praise, because praise takes you right into the courts of God (Psalm 100:4).

Prayer is not the only way we worship. Worship is the way we live our lives for God. Everything we do and say should have His will and plan at the foundation. Worship is our lifestyle – giving glory to God daily.

KINGDOM PRAYING

Who do we pray *for*? If we are honest, most prayers are personal. We pray for loved ones, food, all our needs, and about every problem. We are so busy praying for ourselves, we forget a basic principle of prayer – put God’s kingdom first, and He will add all these things to us.

“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Matthew 6:33).

We must learn to pray for others. Jesus had only one prayer request, and it was about His main purpose on earth – reaching lost souls. It was not about His needs, or the suffering He would endure. He wanted us to help Him pray for workers to reach out to others.

“Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest” (Matthew 9:37-38).

Learn about the needs of others.

- Look around in your village, town, or city, and see what is happening that needs prayer.
 - Do you know anyone who has a neighbor or friend with a need or problem?
 - Those who are alone or have no one to care are especially needy – widows and orphans are in every village or town.

Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world” (James 1:27).

- Work from there into the region you live in.
 - Are there natural disasters (such as floods, earthquakes, storms, fire, etc.) that have caused trouble?
 - Are there political problems?
 - Are there churches in every village?
- Then, pray for the needs of your nation.
 - Always pray for your leaders.

- Ask God to grant them wisdom and understanding in their decisions.
 - Ask God to give them patience and love for the people they are leading.
- Be sure to pray for needs outside your nation.
- What are some needs of your continent?
 - What are some needs that affect your nation? (This could include famine, disease, financial difficulties, etc.)
 - Who are the people who need Jesus most? Find out the most difficult people groups to reach with the gospel and pray for God to reveal himself to them.

SCRIPTURE PRAYERS

If you ever feel like you do not know how to pray, get your Bible and pray the Scripture. Reading and thinking about the Scriptures is important. But when we speak God's eternal word aloud, something happens in the spirit realm. The spoken Word of God is powerful when mixed with faith. Praying God's Word increases our faith that our prayer will work. Scripture praying is speaking out the will of God for all things because His Word is never wrong and is eternal. The book of Psalms is a great prayer book. Any Scriptures that give blessing and praise to God are also good to use (the book of Job, Proverbs, and many of the Epistles offer the sacrifice of praise).

"O Praise the Lord, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people. For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the Lord endureth forever. Praise ye the Lord" (Psalm 117:1-2).

"Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? Declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? Or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? Or who laid the corner stone thereof; When the morning stars sang together; and all the sons of God shouted for joy? (Job 38:4-7).

"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths" (Proverbs 3:5-6).

"But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God" (1 Corinthians 2:9-10).

Learn to pray using God's Word. It is full of hope and help.

PRAY IN THE SPIRIT

"For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful.

What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also” (1 Corinthians 14:14-15).

Pray all the time, everywhere. Talk to God every time possible, and listen when He speaks back to you. Give Him a chance to talk through His Word. He has a lot to say when you pray and communicate with Him.

“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me” (John 10:27).

Study Questions

1. Describe what worship is and tell what it does. _____

2. Describe “kingdom praying.” Support your answer with Scripture. _____

3. Why is it necessary to pray for others? Support your answer with Scripture. _____

4. What happens when we pray the Scriptures? Support your answer with Scripture. _____

5. What does it mean to “pray in the Spirit?” Support your answer with Scripture. _____
