

Practical Christianity

by Tony Edwards

Lesson Five Notes: "Prayer"

- + If there was ever a need in the life of a Christian it is prayer.
- + This lesson will focus on the importance of prayer and how to utilize it in our lives.
- + Lesson Text

- o Philippians 4:4-6

I. What is Prayer?

A. Webster (New Webster Dictionary of the English Language)

1. An address (as a petition) to God or a god in word or thought
2. A set order of words used in praying
3. An earnest request or wish

B. The Biblical meaning of prayer is to "wish towards."

C. Therefore, when we think of praying we think of God as being the object.

D. And as the object we in a sense make our wish or petition towards Him.

E. Prayer is not limited to asking for things but also consists of just thanking for the things that we already have.

II. God Encourages Us To Pray

A. If God did not pay attention to our prayers then He would not encourage us to pray.

B. However, because God knows the importance of us expressing ourselves to Him, we are urged to pray.

1. Luke 18:1 "Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart."
2. Romans 12:12 "Rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer."
3. Colossians 4:2 "Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving."
4. 1 Thessalonians 5:17 "Pray without ceasing."

III. God Urges Consistency In Prayer

A. Look at the Luke 18:2-8.

B. What is the purpose of Jesus telling this story? Write your answer below.

1. _____

C. How often should we pray?

1. Psalms 5:3 "My voice You shall hear in the morning, O LORD; In the morning I will direct it to You, And I will look up."
2. Psalms 88:1 "O LORD, God of my salvation, I have cried out day and night before You."
3. Psalms 55:17 "Evening and morning and at noon I will pray, and cry aloud, And He shall hear my voice."

D. There should be no area of your day where God is absent in your thoughts.

E. You may ask, "How do we keep God in our thoughts at all times?"

1. Philippians 4:8 “Think on Godly things”

F. You don't have to always kneel in prayer to have a prayerful mind.

G. Just acknowledging God throughout the day and thanking Him for the small things that we sometimes take for granted is part of what it means to have a prayerful mind.

IV. God Will Answer Our Prayers

A. We should never feel like our prayers go unanswered.

B. God will and does answer our prayers!!!

1. Psalms 91:15 “He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honor him.”

2. 1 Peter 3:12 “For the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their prayers...”

3. James 5:16 “...The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.”

C. However, we must live faithfully before Him.

1. 1 Peter 3:12 “For the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their prayers; But the face of the LORD is against those who do evil.”

2. Isaiah 59:1-2 “Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear.”

D. Don't expect God to give you the answer YOU ARE LOOKING FOR.

1. Moses- Deut. 3:23-27

2. Mary and Martha- John 11:1-57

3. Paul- 2 Cor. 12:7-10

E. Sometimes people lose hope in prayer because God does not give them the answer they seek.

F. Well, God knows what's best for us.

G. This is why we have the aid of God's Spirit.

1. Romans 8:26-27

H. DON'T EXPECT YOUR ANSWER, EXPECT THE RIGHT ANSWER.

In Conclusion

How lacking is the life of a little child when every morning they wake up with no father to say hello to. How much joy is taken for a child when daddy is not there to fix the bicycle or bring in the little puppy through the door they've always wanted. How many requests are shattered because daddy is not there for the child to say “Can I Have?” Oh how sad!

Be thankful. Though many may lack an earthly father, Christians gain a heavenly father. We have someone to wake up to every morning. We have someone to thank for the blessings of life. We have someone to ask for the things we want. His name is “Our Father Who Art in Heaven.” Talk to your father while you can. Thank Him. Pray to Him. It is the least you can do.

Discussion Question

Does God answer the prayers of sinners?