

What Do We Believe?

Lesson 40

What Do We Believe?

Lesson 40: Prayer: Its Importance

Scriptures:

II Samuel 7:18-29; Psalm 16; Jeremiah 29:7; Matthew 6:5-15, 9:37, 38, 11:25-27, 14:23; Luke 5:16, 10:2, 11:41, 42; Acts 22:1-11; I Timothy 2:1-6; James 5:16; I John 5:14, 15

Lesson Goals:

To assist the learner in understanding that prayer is communication with the God of the universe
 To assist the learner to understand that prayer changes the one who prays
 To assist the learner to understand that we are responsible to pray for others

Scripture Memory:

Seek the Lord while He may be found, call on Him while He is near. Isaiah 55:6

The Lesson:

Many years ago, there were only a few phones and many people had to go to a neighbor's house or to a business in order to use the phone. Later, there were more phones, but many people were on "party lines," which meant that often when you wanted to use the phone, one of your neighbors was already on the line. Things have certainly changed! Many people have cell phones which means that you have a phone with you wherever you are and can call anyone, anytime. You are never out of touch.

It has always been that way with God. We can be in touch anytime, anywhere. It is instant communication. You don't even have to remember the phone number.

Now, prayer is a little different from calling your mom, your husband, your friend, or your doctor. When you pray, you address the God of the entire universe. This is not to say that you should disrespect anyone else you talk to, however, you owe total respect to God. You should talk to God even more carefully than you would talk to the most important person on earth. The words you use, the care with which you choose what you say, the reverent and courteous voice you use, should be of great importance. To enter into God's presence hurriedly, carelessly, or impolitely is rude. It is actually a sin.

Prayer is one of the most important things a Christian does. It is our direct connection to God. Jesus, God in the flesh, thought it important enough that He prayed often. Many times he went out by Himself to pray. Jesus believed that God heard Him. When He brought Lazarus back to life, He thanked the Father for hearing His prayer.

When we pray we should be prepared to be changed. We most often think of prayer as a way to get God to change things. However, sometimes we ourselves are that which needs changing. As our studies have taught us, God never changes. God's will never changes. However, things change when God is at work. Our prayer should always be directed toward asking God for His will to be done. Praying, which brings us closer to God, makes it possible for God to change us. The change may be in the way that we are seeing the situation. It may be the way we are behaving in the situation. It may be that something becomes clearer as we talk to God about it. So, when we pray, we should be prepared to be changed. Paul, who was actually called Saul at the time, was changed completely when he met Jesus on the road to Damascus. He prayed, "Who are you, Lord." And, from that moment, Paul was a different man.

It is a good idea, before you pray, to think about prayer concerns. In church, sometimes a leader will invite us to share our prayer concerns with one another so that we can all pray together for a need. In personal prayer, we should keep a prayer list: on paper, in the computer, on our phone or other communications device that we carry around with us. We will want to include family members and friends. We

will want to include those who have problems or are struggling with something in particular. We will also want to add situations in our community and our world.

Scripture, in Matthew 9, tells us that one of the most important prayers we can pray is for the salvation of others. Jesus told His disciples that they should look around them and see all who needed God in their lives, and pray that God would send a witness to tell them about God's love.

Prayer should be directed to God with the understanding that God is more seriously concerned about the things that trouble us than are we.

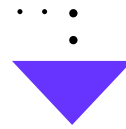
Life Application:

God has been seriously concerned about us from the beginning. God, who is all knowing, knew at creation that humans would turn away from Him and sin. God made provision for that sin, our sin. God loved us so much that He gave His one and only Son. What a gift! But that's not all. Whoever puts their trust in the one and only Son of God, Jesus, has eternal life. Do you have eternal life? If not, let the first prayer you pray be for your salvation from the sin that trips you up.

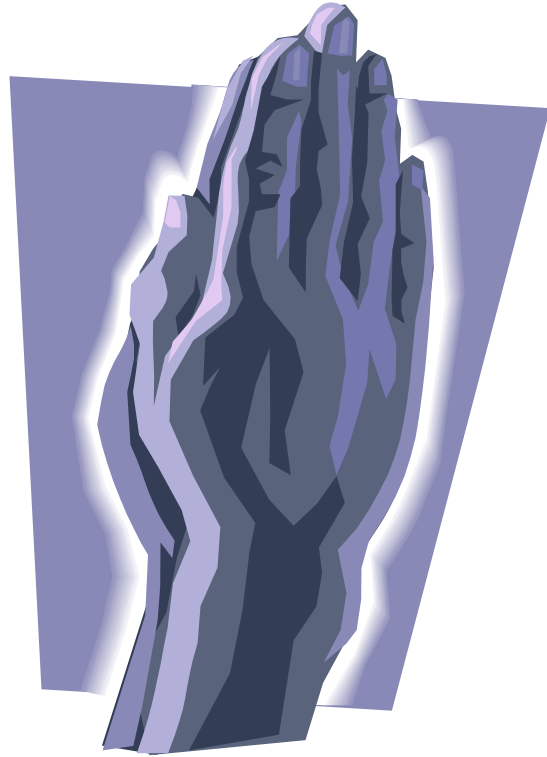
When you do pray, you become a child of God. A new and wonderful relationship begins, and prayer is a huge part of that. How would you feel if you knew you had a mom and dad, but never spoke with them? Well, you have a heavenly Father and prayer, along with listening, is how you communicate with Him. Won't you begin right now to make a habit of talking to your heavenly Father. He wants to hear from you!



Planning for Lesson 41
Prayer: The Way
We Pray



- ◆ **Memory Verse Activity** - Play “Hide and Seek” with the memory verse. Print the memory verse, word by word, on strips of paper. At the bottom of each strip, write hints to the next strip. Start your students off by verbally giving the first hint. Once they have retrieved all parts of the verse, encourage them to place the strips in order and practice the verse.
- ◆ Make prayer journals. Bring spiral notebooks. Instruct your students to make 4 columns down the first couple of pages. Begin with the memory verse as the heading. Label column 1 “Date,” column 2 “Prayer Request,” column 3 “God’s Answer,” and column 4 “Date.” Use this activity to share prayer requests. Pray for them together and encourage your students to pray during the week. Also encourage your students to bring their prayer notebooks with them each week.
- ◆ Read through the supplemental Scriptures listed on page 2. Make a list of the kinds of things we should pray for.
- ◆ Sing “Lord of this City,” “Sweet Hour of Prayer,” “Near to the Heart of God,” “Tell it to Jesus,” “What a Friend We Have in Jesus,” “In the Garden,” “Into My Heart,” “Rejoice Evermore, For This is the Will of God,” “Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying,” “Change My Heart, O God,” “Create in Me,” “Give Ear to My Words,” “If My People,” “A Simple Prayer,” and “I Waited for the Lord.”
- ◆ **Dig Deeper:** Read 2 Samuel 7:18-29. Talk about the tone of David’s prayer. This is a very real and honest prayer. Also look at Psalm 16. Discuss all that David mentioned and what can be learned from his prayers.
- ◆ **Dig Deeper Still:** Read Matthew 6:5-15. Contrast how you should pray with how not to pray. Is it enough to just recite the Lord’s Prayer? Is there something magical that happens just by repeating the words? No. Reread the beginning of the ninth verse. Is the Lord’s Prayer **what** we should pray or **how** we should pray?



**Seek the Lord while He
may be found, call on
Him while He is near.**

Isaiah 55:6

Word Works

We can be in touch with God anytime, anywhere. It is instant communication.
You don't even have to remember the phone number.



Use the cell phone as your guide. First find the correct number on the cell phone. Then, count over the correct number of letters to find the correct letter. Write that letter in the space. For example: for 5-2 you would find the number 5, then count two letters over to the letter "k".

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Word Search



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----- while -----.

----- 55:6

Word Search



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| E | C | E | V | H | D | N | A | M | A | D | A | I | A |
| L | M | O | D | S | I | W | F | O | E | G | A | S | S |

Seek the Lord while He may be found,

call on Him while He is near.

Isaiah 55:6