

July 19, 2020
Christ Chapel of Bandera
Adult Bible Study

Not needed to follow this writing/lesson is a referenced Student Study Guide. An attempt has been made where anybody with a Bible will find easy reading.

Sunday July 19, 2020. *The Gospel Project*; Adult Daily Discipleship Guide ESV Volume 8; Number 4; Summer 2020; Session 3; “Jesus Teaches About Prayer”.

OPENING JOKE:

What is easy to get into, but hard to get out of? Trouble!

DISCLAIMER:

I am not seminary trained. Other than being a Christian, I do not claim any special relationship with God. Therefore, feel free to disagree with anything and everything I write/say.

OPENING PRAYER:

I pray for our congregation, each individual member of it, and all Christians everywhere. For those that do not know Jesus as their Savior and Lord, may they do so before it is too late. Amen.

THE LESSON:

On page 66 our Study Guide says: “Session in a sentence: Jesus taught His disciples to pray with faith, persistence, and dependence on God”.

To expand on the point our Study Guide on page 77 quotes a version of Luke chapter 11 verses 1-4.

However, in my opinion the Study Guide runs into a problem.

The unknown translation the Study Guide uses is not worded the same as the King James translation for the same passage.

For example the Study Guide entirely leaves out “Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth”.

It is also interesting to note that in the Gospel of Matthew chapter 6 verses 6-13 the New International version, the Revised Standard, and the New American Standard Bible translations all include the “Thy will be done” wording.

Why is this a problem?

Because the Study Guide on page 67 the first complete paragraph following the Bible quote in the second sentence says “His glory” meaning God’s glory.

Questions for thought:

Is God’s glory shown via satisfaction of His will?

In other words, does the idea that God’s will or what He wants or plans, is paramount and cannot be thwarted signifies His glory?

Continued Questions for thought:

While there are various reasons for the many differences in translations, does this issue indicate the importance of Christian awareness of translation and Gospel differences during Bible study?

For this reason, in the case of Luke chapter 11 verses 1-4, I personally prefer the King James translation.

Please read Luke chapter 11 verses 1-4 in the translation of your choice.

The Study Guide on page 67 the first paragraph after the quote of Luke 11:1-4 goes on to say: “When Jesus teaches His disciples how to pray, the first thing He tells them to do is to recall God’s glory and holiness, that He would be “hallowed.” God’s kingdom and His will, which reflect His glory and holiness, are foremost on Jesus’ mind, as they should be foremost on all of ours. Without a firm belief in the fact that God’s glory and holiness matter, our prayers are for naught.”

Questions for thought:

Are they?

Are prayers “without a firm belief in the fact that God’s glory and holiness matter” for “naught”? Does God pay attention to the prayers of a person who has yet to receive Christ?

A point is made by our Study Guide on page 67 the first sentence of the last paragraph: “Jesus’ model prayer teaches us that God is concerned with both our physical needs and our spiritual needs through three simple requests—for bread, for forgiveness, and for (spiritual) protection”. In the same paragraph in the last sentence our Study Guide says: “God cares intimately for each one of us in every minuscule aspect of our daily lives, both the physical and spiritual, so of course we can depend on Him”.

Questions for thought:

For what are Christians not dependent on God?

Our Study Guide on page 71 the second paragraph the last 2 sentences says: “We pray to a sovereign God whose soon-coming kingdom is advancing every day, and yet, even in the midst of His lofty, heavenly kingdom, He is concerned with forgiving us of our sins and growing us in His likeness as we forgive others. These simple words are the bedrock of our theology and practice, and as we pray them to the only One worthy of them, we end by asking Him to help us not be tempted to take our eyes off of Him”.

Using the Bible translation of your choice please read Luke chapter 11 verses 5-8.

Our Study Guide says on page 72 the third paragraph: “In Jesus’ story, though, it isn’t because of one friend’s love that he gives the other bread but because of the other’s persistence. Jesus uses this story to highlight the love of the Father, which is so great that there is no hour too late for Him to hear the cries of our hearts”.

Questions for thought:

Is God Hard-of-hearing?

Does God pay attention to our requests, petitions, prayers, and words of thanks the first time we make them or do we have to repeat them?

Who has something to learn from repeated prayer?

Is it wise for Christians to ask Jesus into their hearts just once or is it wise to make it a daily request?

Is it hard to live for Christ daily?

Is actually practicing Christianity the easiest or the hardest thing you've ever done?

How hard is it to tell yourself "No"?

Therefore, again who has something to learn from repeated prayer?

Using the Bible translation of your choice please read Luke chapter 11 verses 9-13.

Just after the Bible quotes on page 68 our Study Guide reads: "Prayer is not a passive activity but an active one".

Our Study Guide continues on page 68 within the paragraph just after the Bible quote: "Prayer, then, makes us active participants in the plan that God has for us, not just wide-eyed bystanders. But the act of prayer also requires faith in our good God to know what is best for us, whether that is what we ask for or not. When Jesus taught His disciples to pray, He taught them to address God as Father. This was not an afterthought but an encouragement to see God as just that: Father and Sustainer".

Worth repeating: "The act of prayer also requires faith in our good God to know what is best for us".

Question for thought:

What is faith?

Our Study Guide states on page 68: "The supreme gift He (God) gives is Himself through the presence of the Holy Spirit".

Questions for thought:

What does the Holy Spirit do for Christians?

What does the Holy Spirit do for those who have not accepted Christ yet?

What does the Holy Spirit do for those that fail to accept Christ?

Our Study Guide reads on page 72 the last 4 sentences of the last paragraph: "Notice that Jesus refers to God as *Father* here (Luke 11:9-13). And just like a father, God sometimes has to tell His children "no" when they make a request. Like pouting two-year-olds or petulant teens, we may not always like the answer that God gives us, but the point Jesus was driving home is that God *will* answer. Because of His love for us, we can trust whatever His answer might be".

Questions for thought:

What is trust?

Does it take trust in God to have faith in God?

Now the Study Guide jumps to Luke chapter 18 verses 1-8.

Using the Bible translation of your choice please read Luke chapter 18 verses 1-8.

The Bible states that He (Jesus) told them a parable, which is a story with a moral teaching.

The Bible also states the reason for the parable, the lesson to be learned is to "always to pray and not lose heart".

In other words constantly pray with trust exhibiting faith, persistence and total dependence on God.

Our Study Guide says toward the top of page 73: “Again Jesus was teaching His listeners a lesson in persistence. God is not a cruel judge whose arm has to be twisted in order to do right by us. He is an all-wise Father who delights in caring for His children, but our persistent prayer is a way for us to grow more and more in reliance upon God. It constantly refocuses our hearts as we cry out to Him, keeping His name on our tongues and His promises on our minds. It increases our faith by consistently reminding us whom we serve and to whom we are to submit every desire of our hearts”.

The Study Guide continues: “As we pray and read God’s Word, these heart desires become more and more in line with God’s will for us. Through prayer, we are reminding ourselves to endeavor to understand and appreciate the will of God”.

Lastly, using the Bible translation of your choice please read Matthew chapter 6 verses 5-8.
Worth repeating: “Your Father (God) knows what you need before you ask Him”.

Questions for thought:

How would God know what you need before you ask?

Does Matthew chapter 10 verse 30 “And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered” indicate that God knows every little minute detail about you?

Can anyone hide anything from God?

In the New International Version of the Bible, Proverbs chapter 16 verse 2 reads: “All a man’s ways seem innocent to him, but motives are weighed by the Lord”.

Motives: why we do what we do.

Our Study Guide on page 73 in the last complete paragraph the last 3 sentences say: “ Jesus was telling us to guard our motives when we pray, whether we’re in public or in private. Our goal is not to be seen for our eloquence or piety but to communicate with God in a way that blesses His name and blesses those who might hear us. We are not praying for the earthly reward of a pat on the back but to communicate with the Father who has already secured our eternal reward in Jesus”.

Worth repeating: “the Father who has already secured our eternal reward in Jesus”.

Questions for thought:

What must Christians do to accept their secured eternal reward?

Must Christians accept Jesus Christ into their lives, their hearts?

What will you do with Jesus, my friend?

Should Christians pray to God through Jesus with faith and persistence acknowledging total dependence on God?

Thank you for paying attention to my ranting. I pray it has brought you closer to Jesus, closer to God.

Joe Huth