

Prayer: Conversations with God

What Is Prayer?

Lesson One

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Scriptures: Genesis 2, 3; Psalm 5:1-7; 19

Lesson Goal: To teach the basics of what prayer really is.

Memory Verse: “In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.” Psalm 5:3

What comes to your mind when you think about praying? Do you think of getting on your knees, bowing your head, closing your eyes and folding your hands? Do you think of a repetitive practice that you must accomplish every day? Do you wonder if anyone is really listening? Do you feel obligated to pray, since your pastor said that everyone should pray regularly?

Or, maybe you think that praying is something like dialing 911. You do it only when there is something that only God can change. You pray because the situation has gotten beyond your ability to deal with it.

Prayer is really talking to someone you love. Now, that is not necessarily like romantic love. It is talking to someone you know loves you unconditionally and who you love unconditionally. It may be like talking to a parent. It may be like talking to a best friend. It may be like talking to a teacher. It will be like talking to someone who knows you intimately, cares about everything you do, keeps up with your successes and failures, is ready and willing to get involved with you in anything in your life, is able to help you in any circumstance and will stick with you to the end.

One thing to always remember about prayer: it is talking to someone who is greater than we can imagine, someone who made everything that we know anything about, someone who is more important than any person on earth and someone who deserves our total respect.

Prayer is not something to be rushed into without taking these things into consideration. It is like having a conversation with someone like the president of the United States, or the CEO of your company. For the CEO, its like talking with the Chairman of the Board. If you had that opportunity, you would probably choose your words well and speak of things that really matter.

So, there is a balance toward which we work. We remember to whom we speak, and speak to Him like the one who loves us more than anyone else ever could.

Pray, Always:

To God
Through Jesus
By God’s Holy Spirit

In Thanksgiving
With Joy
For Others

For Forgiveness
For Salvation
To Confess

For Necessities
For Ability

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Some people pray like they shop for groceries. They carry around their prayer list and inform God regularly about what they want. But, prayer is more than giving God a list. It is a conversation. Don't pray without giving God an opportunity to respond. Actually, as in human relationships, refusing to wait for a response is rude. If you have a relationship where you refuse to listen to the other person...give them opportunity to respond...that is not a love relationship!

The Bible says a lot about prayer. The earliest prayer is recorded in Genesis 2:23. After God made Eve, unless Adam was talking to himself, he said to God, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man." That was a prayer. It was a statement of the obvious, but Adam must have wanted to thank God and assure God that he understood God's gift to him. The next recorded prayer is not so good. After Adam and Eve had disobeyed God and eaten of that which God had forbidden, God came to the garden for His regular visit. God went looking for Adam and Eve, calling out, "Where are you?" Adam prayed, "I heard you in the garden and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid." (Genesis 3:10)

Both of the statements are prayers, because they address God. One is thanksgiving, one is confession. Prayer includes both thanksgiving and confession, and much more. As the title of this lesson series indicates, prayer is our conversation with God, and that conversation can be about anything.

If you continue to read in the third chapter of Genesis, you will see that God spoke to both Adam and Eve. He let them know of his disappointment with them. He made provision for them as they left the perfect place that He made for them. When we really listen, when we expect God to lead us, when we look forward to His presence, He comes.

Jesus gave us good advice for healthy praying in Matthew 6:6. He said, "But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to our Father, who is unseen." Public prayer is good. However, private prayer is much more personal. Most often it gets us to subjects we most need to share with the Father.

*Underlined sentences in the Teacher's Guide appear in the Student Worksheet with blanks to be filled in by the student during the lesson. Words in the Student Worksheet may not appear exactly as printed in the Teacher's Guide.

Pray, like Jesus:

When Jesus was preaching the Sermon on the Mount, He said, "This, then, is how you should pray: 'Our Father in Heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.'"

Matthew 6:9-13

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Student Worksheet

What Is Prayer?

Memory Verse: “In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.” Psalm 5:3

>When you pray, do you wonder if _____ is really listening?

>Do you _____ obligated to pray?

>Do you only pray because the _____ has gotten beyond your _____ to deal with it?

>Prayer is talking to someone who _____ you intimately, cares about _____ you do, keeps up with your successes and failures, is ready and willing to get _____ with you in anything in your life, is able to _____ you in any circumstance and will _____ with you to the end.

>Prayer is talking to someone who is _____ than we can imagine, someone who made everything that we know _____ about, someone who is more _____ than any person on earth and someone who deserves our total _____.

>The earliest prayer in the Bible is after God made _____. Adam said to God, “This is now _____ of my _____ and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called ‘ _____,’ for she was taken out of _____.”

>In the third chapter of Genesis, you will see that God _____ to both Adam and Eve. He let them know of his _____ with them.

>When we really _____, when we expect God to _____ us, when we look forward to His _____, He _____.

How to begin a Personal Relationship with God:

First, believe that there is a God.

Second, believe that Jesus, God’s Son, was sent to earth to die so that you can have a relationship with God.

Third, ask God to forgive your sins in Jesus’ name. Jesus’ death on the cross paid the price of every sin you commit.

Fourth, ask Jesus to be your Savior and the Lord of your life.

Fifth, believe that He has answered your prayer and be ready to live for him all the rest of your life.