

Jesus As Our Model

“Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, that one of His disciples said to Him, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.” (Luke 11:1)

Introduction

1. Throughout this study we will explore both doctrinal and practical aspects of prayer.
2. We do not presume that the student does not know how to pray, but that through a deeper study we may enrich our prayer life and our relationship with God.
3. The Jews were a praying people, and yet the disciples of John and Jesus recognized something profoundly different about the prayer life of these two great figures (compare Matt. 6:5 with Matt. 23:14 and Luke 20:47)
4. As the disciples did before us, let us earnestly call to our Master, “Lord, teach us to pray” and learn from His teachings and His example.

Discussion

I. Luke’s Gospel Draws Attention to the Prayers of Jesus

- A. 3:21: At His baptism.
- B. 5:16: Often during His ministry.
- C. 6:12: All night.
- D. 9:18: Alone.
- E. 11:1: While disciples waited.
- F. 11:2, 18:1, 10; 21:36: Taught His disciples to pray.
- G. 19:46: Zealous for prayer.
- H. 22:32: For Peter’s faith.
- I. 22:42: Before suffering.

II. What We Learn from Jesus

- A. John 8:29: God is with and hears those who heed His word and do His will.
 1. John 15:7: When Jesus’ words abide in us AND we abide in His words, we will ask and it will be done.
 2. 1 John 3:22: We receive because we do those things that are pleasing in His sight.
 3. 1 John 5:14-15: We know He hears us as we ask according to His will, because we receive the things we ask.
 4. Matt. 26:53: Be mindful not to ask what does not serve God’s purposes.
- B. God cares for us and wants to give His children good things.
 1. 1 Peter 5:6-7: *“Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.”*
 2. Matthew 7:11: *“If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!”*

- C. But we must avoid the temptation of treating God like a vending machine.
 1. We go to the vending machine because we want something from it. When we insert our money, enter our selection, and expect to get what we want. When it gets stuck, we get angry or frustrated and bang on the machine. Sometimes, we treat God the same way.
 2. James 4:2-3: Learning to pray isn't about learning the trick to get what we want to satisfy personal desires and pleasures. *"You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures."*

III. Matthew 6:9-13: Learning to Pray is First and Foremost About Seeking God.

- A. We seek His glory: *"Hallowed be Your name."*
- B. We seek His dominion: *"Your kingdom come."*
- C. We seek His will: *"Your will be done."*
- D. We seek His provision: *"Give us this day our daily bread."*
- E. We seek His forgiveness and mercy: *"Forgive us our sins as we forgive others."*
- F. We seek His protection and strength: *"Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil (or the evil one)."*
- G. Again, we seek His glory: *"For yours in the kingdom and the power and the glory forever."*
- H. Hebrews 10:19-22: And through the blood of Jesus Christ, we seek God's presence. *"Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus...22 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water."*

Conclusion

1. In future lessons we will explore the technical and practical aspects of prayer in its various forms.
2. Jesus helps us understand that form and formality in prayer is not the main focus.
3. God desires our hearts and prayer that flows from a thankful heart that earnestly seeks Him.

DISCUSSION

What actions can we take today to begin implementing what we have covered in this lesson?

- Focus our attention on God and His will.
- Approach God with humble and thankful hearts.
- Focus on God's will over our own.
- Strive for simplicity.