

LESSON # 23
THE CHRISTIAN LIFE AND EXPERIENCE
PART 2: PRAYER

As we move towards the end of the Sunday School year, for the next four weeks we will discuss “the Christian Life and Experience.” As usual, we turn to the Bible to discover what the normal Christian experience looks like.

Our passage of scripture for the next four weeks will be from the Book of Acts 2:42 – 47:

“They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. [43] Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. [44] All the believers were together and had everything in common. [45] Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. [46] Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, [47] praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.”

This passage defines the practice of the early church directly after it was founded by Jesus Christ on the day of Pentecost (fifty days after His resurrection.)

The four key elements of the practice of the early Christians in the early church were:

- 1) “They devoted themselves to the apostles “teaching **(The Bible)**”
- 2) “They devoted themselves to **“fellowship”**
- 3) “They devoted themselves to **“prayer”**
- 4) “They devoted themselves to the breaking of bread **“worship”**

Each week for the next four we will look at one of these aspects of the Christian life and experience.

THIS WEEK WE LOOK AT: PRAYER

Everyone engages in prayer at one time or another. Even that person who says "I don't believe in God," cries out when the crisis looms, "Oh God, help me!" We are all acquainted with prayer to some extent or another. Prayer is one of the greatest privileges God has given man. We can come into the presence of God, the Creator of this universe, and talk with Him. And what's more, He always listens! Effective Prayer life (Chuck Smith - Pg.43) WE tell new believes that prayer is simply talking to God.

Look up the following scriptures and answer the questions about prayer.

(I) WHAT IS PRAYER?

(II) WHO SHOULD PRAY?

(A) Psalms 32:6

Psalm 32:6

⁶ Therefore let everyone who is godly pray to you while you may be found; surely when the mighty waters rise, they will not reach him.

(III) WHO SHOULD WE PRAY TO?

(A) Matthew 6:6, 9

Matthew 6:6

⁶ But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Matthew 6:9

⁹ "This, then, is how you should pray: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,

(IV) WHAT SHOULD WE PRAY FOR AND ABOUT?

(A) Philippians 4:6

Philippians 4:6

⁶ Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

(B) Matthew 6:10

Matthew 6:10

¹⁰ your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

(C) Matthew 9:38

Matthew 9:38

³⁸ Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

(D) 2 Thessalonians 3:1

2 Thessalonians 3:1

¹ Finally, brothers, pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honored, just as it was with you.

(E) James 5:13-16

James 5:13-16

¹³ Is any one of you in trouble? He should pray. Is anyone happy? Let him sing songs of praise.

¹⁴ Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord.

¹⁵ And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven.

¹⁶ Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.

(F) Ephesians 3:14-19

Ephesians 3:14-19

¹⁴ For this reason I kneel before the Father,

¹⁵ from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name.

¹⁶ I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being,

¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love,

¹⁸ may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ,

¹⁹ and to know this love that surpasses knowledge--that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

(V) WHERE SHOULD WE PRAY?

(A) 1 Corinthians 1:2

1 Corinthians 1:2

² To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ--their Lord and ours:

(B) Luke 19:46

Luke 19:46

⁴⁶ "It is written," he said to them, "'My house will be a house of prayer'; but you have made it 'a den of robbers.'"

(C) Matthew 6:6

Matthew 6:6

⁶ But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

(VI) WHEN SHOULD WE PRAY?

(A) Luke 18:1

Luke 18:1

¹ Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up.

(B) 1 Thessalonians 3:10

1 Thessalonians 3:10

¹⁰ Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you again and supply what is lacking in your faith.

(C) Psalm 61:2

Psalm 61:2

² From the ends of the earth I call to you, I call as my heart grows faint; lead me to the rock that is higher than I.

(VII) WHY PRAY?

(A) Luke 22:40

Luke 22:40

⁴⁰ On reaching the place, he said to them, "Pray that you will not fall into temptation."

(B) Ephesians 6:10-12

Ephesians 6:10-12

¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.

¹¹ Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.

¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

(C) **Ephesians 3:20**

Ephesians 3:20

²⁰ Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us,

(D) **John 15:5**

John 15:5

⁵ "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

(VIII) **HOW SHOULD WE PRAY?**

(A) **Romans 8:26**

Romans 8:26

²⁶ In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.

(B) **1 John 5:14**

1 John 5:14

¹⁴ This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.

(C) **Matthew 6:5**

Matthew 6:5

⁵ "And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full.

(D) **Jude 20**

Jude 1:20

²⁰ But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit.

(E) **1 Corinthians 14:15**

1 Corinthians 14:15

¹⁵ So what shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my mind; I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my mind.

(IX) **HINDERANCES TO PRAYER**

(A) Isaiah 59:2

Isaiah 59:2

² But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.

(B) 1 Peter 3:7

1 Peter 3:7

⁷ Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

(C) James 1:6-8

James 1:6-8

⁶ But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind.

⁷ That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord;

⁸ he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does.

(D) Luke 18:9-14

Luke 18:9-14

⁹ To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable:

¹⁰ "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.

¹¹ The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men--robbers, evildoers, adulterers--or even like this tax collector.

¹² I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.'

¹³ "But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.'

¹⁴ "I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

