

“THE DISCIPLINE OF PRAYER”

Text: Luke 11:1-13

Introduction

Question: What is the discipline of prayer?

Prayer is...

1. The greatest **privilege** of the Christian.
2. An **attitude** more than an act.
3. Conversation of my **soul** with God.
4. The channel of **power** and chalice of blessing.
5. Taking hold of God's **strength** and willingness to do.
6. My **spirit** panting after God.
7. Connecting my **need** with God's spiritual storehouse.
8. The road to tranquility and **peace** of mind.
9. What releases the **resources** of the Almighty.
10. My most effective **weapon** to achieve God's will.
11. A **virtue** that prevails over sin and satan.
12. What creates and calls God's **intentions** into existence.

“Of all the spiritual disciplines, prayer is the most central because it ushers us into perpetual communion with the Father. Meditation introduces us to the inner life, fasting is an accompanying means, study transforms our minds, but it is the discipline of prayer that brings us into the deepest and highest work of the human spirit.” (Richard Foster)

Question: How does prayer work? Simply...

Answer: The closer we come to the heartbeat of God, the more we see our need and the more we desire to be conformed to Christ!

Question: How does prayer effect us?

Answer: In prayer, real prayer, we begin to think God's thoughts after Him, to desire the things He desires, to love the things He loves, to will the things He wills!

(This my friend is real prayer)

1. We begin to think God's thoughts!
2. We begin to desire what God desires!
3. We begin to love what God loves!

Question: Why did the disciples ask Jesus, “Lord, teach us to pray?”

Answer: Because they realized that all spiritual success and progress depends on **union** with the Lord.

Question: Why are answers to prayers recorded in Scripture?

Answer: To teach us all that we are working with God to determine the **future!**

- Moses prayed boldly because he believed his prayers could change things, even God's mind.

Question: How does prayer protect us from inner destruction and unhealthy attitudes?

Answer: The prayer of relinquishment enables us to let go of our will whenever it conflicts with the will of God. We learn to pray like Jesus in Luke 22:42; **“Not my will, but Thine be done.”**

Question: What prepares us to pray effectively?

Answer: 1. **Quiet** our fleshly activity.
2. **Listen** to the impressions upon our spirit.
3. **Attune** ourselves to Divine breathings of the Lord.

Question: Why do many fail to pray (or quit too early)?

Answer: Because we forget that units of prayer combined, like drops of water, make an ocean which defies resistance!

- In prayer we **fight** against principalities and power.
- In prayer we **overcome** the resistance that enslaves our lost loved ones.
- In prayer we **surround** ourselves with the life and spirit of Jesus.
- In prayer we **enforce** the four weapons of our warfare, which are:
 1. The name of Jesus (which gives us our **assurance**).
 2. The word of God (which gives us our **authority**).
 3. The blood of the cross (which gives us our **access**).
 4. The Holy Spirit (which gives us our **anointing**).

Some Hindrances to Prayer

1. **Sin** (Psalm 66:18)
2. **Pride** (Luke 18:10-14)
3. **Selfishness** (James 4:3)
4. **Unforgiveness** (Matthew 6:12-15)
5. **Disobedience** (Proverbs 28:9)
6. **Unbelief** (James 1:6,7)
7. Out of God's **will** (I John 5:14,15)

(The Three Basic Types of Prayer)

1. Worship and Praise and Thanksgiving

- This results from a conscious awareness of God's presence in my life.
- I see God's greatness and respond to Him for who He is and for what He had done.
- I worship God from the depths of my heart and soul with praise, thanksgiving and adoration.
- I proclaim, *“Hallowed be Thy name”* (Luke 11:2)

“O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.” (Psalm 96:9)

“Enter into His gates with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise; be thankful unto Him, and bless His name.” (Psalm 100:4)

“Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name.”
(Psalm 103:1)

“Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men.” (Psalm 107:8)

“Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised.” (Psalm 48:1)

“The Father seeketh such to worship Him.” (John 4:23)

2. Petition and Confession

- This is when I bring my personal needs to the Lord, who waits for me to ask.
- I come boldly in faith, praying for wisdom, guidance, strength and provisions.
- I pray for forgiveness, healing, finances, a job, boldness to witness, pure motives for service, pure attitudes towards all people, etc.
- This is not being selfish at all, but very spiritual and commanded of the Lord.
- He wants me to voice my petitions, align myself with God’s purpose in prayer, so when the answer comes, I will recognize who gave it.
- If we fail to ask, we fail to receive, so “please ask” says Jesus in John 16:24.

“Give us this day our daily bread.” (Matthew 6:11)

“Let your request be made known unto God.” (Philippians 4:6)

“Ask and it shall be given you.” (Matthew 7:7)

“Ask and you shall receive.” (John 16:24)

“Ye have not because ye ask not.” (James 4:2)

3. Intercession and Supplication

- Worship and petition are easy in prayer.
- Intercession is hard work!
- Intercessory prayer is when I reach out beyond myself and pray; not for my own needs, but for the needs of those around me.

(Why all the difficulty in intercession?)

- It is in intercession that I engage in the spiritual battle or warfare taking place in the unseen world.
- In intercession, I confront the enemy’s strongholds and demolish the grip he has in the lives of individuals.
- It is only through intercessory prayer that I can defeat the forces of evil.

Paul said, “***The weapons of our warfare are not carnal***” (II Corinthians 10:4) because we are not in a physical battle. We are in a spiritual battle, so our weapons to win the victory are spiritual.

- It is in intercessory prayer that I enlist God’s Divine power to pull down the strongholds of the enemy.
- It is in intercessory prayer that I literally pray people out of satan’s power and see them born into the kingdom of God. Prayer is where the battle is won or lost.

Satan’s Highest Priority...

- Is to keep you, me and the church from praying.
- He knows he is defeated when believers take authority in Jesus' name against his spiritual forces.
- This is why he does everything to get believers to do everything but pray.
- He will do his utmost to keep us rushing around, active and busy and keep us from the place of prayer.

Satan is crafty and sly, he is not stupid.

- Let's recognize his tactics and do battle God's way, winning the battle in a spiritual way, through intercessory prayer.
- Purpose today to lay aside anything that keeps you from your place of prayer.

When you do, you'll be amazed at the results and wonder why it took you this long to experience the power and victory in Jesus.

Never forget!

My greatest outlet of spiritual power is prayer. I can do more for God through prayer than any other means. **In prayer I bind the strong man of the house, and in service I just go in and take the spoil.** What results can be accomplished, when a man or woman will live in prayer and close fellowship with the Father.

(Lord remind us)

1. Prayer enforces on earth what God has willed in heaven.
2. Prayer enforces in the present what God has purchased in the past.
3. Prayer enforces in my heart what is already on God's heart.
4. Prayer enforces the power of God, which overcomes the power of evil.

Question: What makes prayer effective?

Answer: *"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit."* (Ephesians 6:18)

1. A ready heart
 - **"Praying always"** means: to be ready to pray at all times with a mindset stayed upon God.
2. A communing heart
 - **"With all prayer"** means: to live in a spirit of prayer and communion, reaching upward to God.
3. A focused heart
 - **"And supplication"** means: to focus on those special times of need and urgency.
4. An empowered heart
 - **"In the spirit"** means: under the influence and energy of the Holy Spirit.
 - It is the spirit that enables us to pray apart from our natural ability and strength.

Amen
Bill Kirk