

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON FOR THE MONTH OF JANUARY 2015

What the Bible Says About Prayer

(Matthew 6:5-8)

Sunday, January 4, 11, 2015

If prayer is every Christian's vital breath, how would you describe your prayer life? Is it strong or weak? Do you really pray as you should and as you would like? Most of us are not happy with the way we pray. We are aware that real joy and peace cannot be ours until prayer becomes a vital part of our lives.

From the teachings of Jesus on prayer, we can find the help we need in learning to pray.

I. When you pray, pray sincerely (Matt. 6:5).

Jesus was aware that many had problems in learning to pray because they did not pray sincerely. They were making a stage production out of prayer, praying to be seen by others. As a result they knew nothing of true prayer.

- A. Be truthful in prayer. There is no place for untruthfulness in prayer. Paul urged Christians, "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth" [Eph. 6:14]. We do not pray to fool God but to have communion with Him.
- B. Be thankful in prayer. As Christians, we are to give thanks always for all things. The Psalmist said, "Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise; be thankful unto him, and bless his name" [Ps. 100:4].
- C. Confess your sins in prayer. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" [1John 1:9].
 1. Open sins are those known by others.
 2. Hidden sins are those known only by God and us.
- D. Ask of God in prayer. James 4:2 says, "ye have not because ye ask not." In prayer, we are to let our requests be made known to God.
 1. We are to ask of God on behalf of others.
 2. We are to ask of God for ourselves.

Sunday, January 18, 2015

II. When you pray, pray secretly (Matt. 6:6)

Jesus taught us to pray in secret, or solitude, that we would:

- A. Keep prayer from becoming a show. Prayer can be reduced to a mere show. This is what happened to the praying of the hypocrites. Prayer can become:
 - 1. A show of false piety.
 - 2. A show of false concern.
- B. Shut out the thoughts of the world. Every Christian has to face the problem of shutting the thoughts of the world out of his prayer time.
 - 1. Thoughts of the world cause distractions in our praying.
 - 2. Thoughts of the world destroy the urges of our praying.
- C. Have Communion with God.
 - 1. Communion that helps us to know God better.
 - 2. Communion that enables us to do Christian service.

Sunday, January 25, 2015

III. When you pray, pray simply (Matt. 6:7-8).

The hypocrites of Jesus' day tried to make prayer complex and difficult. Jesus taught that we are to pray simply.

- A. In words. Prayer is not the grouping of idle words that impress others; it is simple language that comes from the soul. Prayer is simply talking to God; you can't impress Him. We are to talk to God in words that:
 - 1. Reveal love.
 - 2. Reveal need.
 - 3. Reveal commitment.
- B. In Faith. Without faith, prayer is meaningless.
 - 1. In faith, we believe God.
 - 2. In faith, we obey God.
 - 3. In faith, we serve God.

Through prayer, we will be able to gain the spiritual strength and wisdom we need for living and serving. As Jesus taught others to pray, so will He teach us to pray. May we like the disciples say, "Lord, teach us to pray."