

Knowing and Following Christ – Prayer

What Are the Questions?:

Various Selections from Matthew, Mark, and Luke

LAUNCH

There are some key things that Jesus modeled in His life which are critical for us to learn from if we are to walk as Jesus did. One of those things is prayer. For Jesus, prayer was not just a religious activity, it was vital communication with His Father in heaven. In today's study, we'll look at what the Bible has to say about Jesus and prayer.

Do you have friends who live in a different city? How has communication had an effect on those friendships?

EXPLORE

Read the following verses:

Matt 4:1-2, Mark 1:35-38, Mark 6:45-46, Luke 5:15-16, Luke 6:12-13, Luke 9:28-29, Luke 11:1

- 1) If you were one of the disciples, what impact would seeing Jesus regularly withdraw to pray have on you?
- 2) What do you imagine was happening during his prayer times?
- 3) What would you be curious to ask Jesus on the topic of prayer?

45 sections of scripture covering 30 events record how Jesus would slip away to pray. Jesus consistently modeled a life of prayer to his disciples. His ministry begins in prayer with a forty day fast in the desert, and ends in prayer in the garden of Gethsemane before his crucifixion. Let's continue to read in Luke 11 to find out Jesus' response to his disciple's question.

APPLY

- 15) How are we doing with prayer? Are we making time for it in our lives?
- 16) What do you think would be the impact in our lives if we took prayer as seriously as Jesus?
- 17) As a group, could we set up a time to meet together for prayer, using Jesus' example as a starting point?

Read Luke 11: 1-4

- 4) What was Jesus' intention in giving this example?
- 5) What does 'hallowed' mean, and is there any significance in it being listed first?
- 6) What things could we pray for when thinking about God's kingdom coming?
- 7) What things might come under 'our daily bread'?
- 8) Why would Jesus have phrased it "forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us"?
- 9) How could we be lead into temptation?
- 10) How do the things we currently pray for line up with the things listed here?

Continue reading Luke 11:5-13

- 11) What is Jesus trying to teach us through this passage?
- 12) Why do you think God doesn't always answer our prayers immediately?
- 13) Are there reasons why God might not give us everything we ask for?
- 14) How could coming to God in prayer change our hearts?

For the Leader:

- The aim of this study is to learn about prayer from the example of Jesus, to see the Lord's Prayer as a framework for us to use in our prayer lives, and to see how important and necessary prayer is if we are to walk as Jesus walked.
- In the first question from Luke 11, 'What was Jesus' intention from giving them this example?', the important point is not mindless repetition of this specific prayer, but rather a good example of how we should spend our time praying.
- The word 'hallowed' indicates reverence and holiness towards God. A good way of thinking about it is to give God the praise and honour that's due to His name.
- With the question 'How could we be lead into temptation?', identify the fact that it's not only external influences that could lead us there (i.e., Satan), but also ourselves. Students may like to give examples of things they are tempted by.

What are the Answers?:

Questions 1-3 for group discussion

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| <p>4) It's a guide to help us pray through things which God values</p> <p>5) Hallowed indicates reverence and holiness towards God. A good way of thinking about it is to give God the praise, honour and worship due to His name. It could be listed 1st to indicate we should start prayer by thinking about God and who he is rather than ourselves</p> <p>6) Justice in the world, people coming to Christ, God having his way completely in our lives</p> <p>7) Any personal needs we have</p> <p>8) Perhaps to remind us that just as we're forgiven by God, he expects us to be just as forgiving to others</p> <p>9) Through our natural sinful desires that we are in conflict with each day</p> | <p>10) Let the group discuss</p> <p>11) Jesus is trying to teach us to persevere in prayer. Prayer is something we must practice in our lives consistently and never give up on. Jesus is also showing that prayer is a conversation, we talk to God and we also need to take time to listen to what he has to say to us.</p> <p>12) He knows what's best and the right time etc. We need to trust him that he loves us and has our best interests at heart.</p> <p>13) Yes. We ask with wrong motives (cf James 4:3 if needed), or we don't realize what's really best for us.</p> <p>14) Lots of ways. We remember who God is. It helps us to remember life is about God and not us. We remind ourselves to trust him with our burdens. As we see God answer our prayers, our faith increases, etc...</p> |
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What's the Big Idea?

Prayer is essential to our relationship with Christ. Learning to engage with Jesus in a meaningful way through prayer is a must if we are to mature in our Christian faith. What better way to learn about prayer than by going to Jesus himself to see how he did it and what he taught

What's the Problem?

"How do I talk with someone I can't see? Doesn't God know my thoughts anyway?" These thoughts can plague our minds when we think of prayer. But prayer is key to growing in our relationship with Christ.

What's Our Response?

We need to learn from Christ. Christ had a vibrant prayer life. It is where he cultivated his intimate relationship with his Father. When asked by his disciples "Teach us to pray", Jesus responded very directly and gave them some specific instructions. Our response should be to take notice of what he said, and learn to put it into practice in our lives. If we can learn the secret of prayer, we will become fruitful disciples of Christ. Our lives will be full of intimacy with our Father in heaven. But if we ignore this important part of our Christian walk, our faith in Christ will likely become dry and cause us to be unfruitful.