



## AT THE TABLE

A BIBLE STUDY TEACHING SERIES ON PRAYER

### SESSION 5

# Friendship and Listening

John 15:15 • AMPC

IN HIS PRESENCE

CROWN CODE • REAL MAN CODE • MOM CODE

#### AT THE TABLE

Session 5: Friendship and Listening

#### OUR TEXT

John 15:15 (AMPC)

*"I do not call you servants (slaves) any longer, for the servant does not know what his master is doing (working out). But I have called you My friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from My Father. [I have revealed to you everything that I have learned from Him.]"*

## 1 WHAT THIS PASSAGE MEANS

We are in a loving relationship with God the Father, Jesus our Savior, and the Holy Spirit our true companion. Because it is a relationship, prayer was never meant to be a one-way transaction — a list handed up and an answer handed down. Jesus tells His disciples plainly that He no longer calls them servants, who simply follow instructions, but friends, who are let in on what the Father is doing. A friendship requires more than asking. It requires conversation, presence, and listening.

## 2 WHAT IT MEANS IN THE BIBLE / CONTEXT

Jesus says this to His disciples on the night before His death, in the middle of His longest recorded teaching on what it means to remain close to Him (John 15:1–17). A servant carries out commands without needing to understand the reasoning behind them. A friend is trusted with the reasoning itself — "I have made known to you everything that I have heard from My Father." Jesus is describing a shift: from distant obedience to intimate disclosure. And that shift changes what prayer is for.

Throughout Scripture, the people who knew God best were not always the ones who talked the most in prayer — they were often the ones who learned to sit quietly and let God speak first. Samuel, as a boy, had to be taught how to respond to God's voice: "Speak, for your servant hears" (1 Samuel 3:9–10). And David, after receiving a staggering promise from God through the prophet Nathan, did something remarkable: he did not immediately respond with a list of requests. "Then King David went in and sat before the Lord" (2 Samuel 7:18, AMPC). He sat in awe and wonder, letting the weight of who God is settle over him, before he ever opened his mouth to ask for anything.

## 3 ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES (ESV)

Psalms 46:10

*Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!*

1 Samuel 3:9–10

*And the Lord came and stood, calling as at other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant hears."*

James 4:8

*Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.*

## 4 TEACHING

David's posture in 2 Samuel 7:18 is worth slowing down on. He had just been given one of the largest promises in the Old Testament — an everlasting house and throne — and his first response was not petition. He "went in and sat before the Lord." He simply stayed there, in awe, letting the reality of who God is and what God had said sink in, before he finally spoke: "Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that You have brought me this far?" David's prayer that follows is full of wonder before it is full of words.

This is the piece so often missing from our own prayer lives. We ask, we intercede, we bring our lists — all good and necessary things — but we rarely sit. We rarely allow silence in the presence of God to be enough. David shows us that awe is not wasted time in prayer; it is often where the deepest conversation begins, because it starts by remembering who we are actually talking to.

Samuel's story adds the other half of this relationship: listening. As a boy serving in the temple, Samuel heard God's voice three times before he understood what was happening. Eli finally taught him what to say: "Speak, Lord, for your servant hears." Notice the order — speak first, then I will listen. Prayer, for Samuel, began with making space to hear rather than filling the space with his own words.

Put together, John 15:15, David's stillness, and Samuel's listening give us a fuller picture of prayer as relationship: we are friends, not servants, which means conversation goes both ways. We bring our requests, yes — but we also sit in wonder, and we also grow quiet enough to hear. A friendship where only one person ever speaks is not really a friendship. The same is true of prayer.

## 5 PONDER

- Does my prayer life feel more like a servant delivering a list, or a friend having a conversation?
- When was the last time I simply sat in God's presence in awe, the way David did, before asking Him for anything?
- Am I comfortable with silence in prayer, or do I feel the need to keep filling it with words?
- What might God be trying to say to me that I have not yet made space to hear?

## 6 PUT IT IN ACTION

- This week, begin one prayer time not with requests but by sitting quietly in God's presence for several minutes, the way David did in 2 Samuel 7:18.
- Practice Samuel's prayer — "Speak, Lord, for your servant hears" — as an opening line, then stay silent for a few minutes and simply listen.
- Reflect on one thing Jesus has "made known" to you recently through His Word, and thank Him specifically for including you as a friend.
- Journal one thing you sense God may be saying to you this week, even if it feels uncertain — practice noticing, not just asking.

## 7 CLOSING PRAYER

Let us pray

*Father, thank You that we are not servants but friends — that Jesus has made known to us everything He heard from You. Teach us to bring our requests, yes, but also to sit in Your presence the way David did, in awe and wonder, before we ever open our mouths. Teach us to listen the way Samuel learned to listen — speak, Lord, for we are listening. Draw near to us as we draw near to You, and let our prayer lives become a true conversation, not a one-way list. In Jesus' name, Amen.*

IN HIS PRESENCE

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