

ARMED FOR WAR Discipleship Course

SECTION 5 – Intimacy With God

Lesson 20 - Prayer

Many people struggle to pray. Many people struggle to hear the voice of God. Many cannot understand what it is like to pray for hours at a time. Even some ministers struggle with this. Part of the reason we struggle in prayer is because we don't understand how Jesus taught us to pray.

James 4:2-3 *You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. 3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.*

What is one reason from this scripture that people struggle getting prayers answered?

One of the reasons why many people struggle in praying and getting their prayers answered is because they pray their way.

God taught us how to pray, and understanding this may help you greatly in your prayer life. We are not to pray our way. We are to pray His way.

James says you are praying amiss. You are praying off. The way you're praying doesn't get the answers. The way your praying doesn't get the breakthrough. God didn't leave that up to us. You don't get saved your own way. You get saved only by giving to Jesus Christ the legal right of authority over your life, by confession with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and believing in your heart God raised Him from the dead. Then ye shall be saved.

We need to learn to pray God's way. And if we will learn to pray His way, then we will get our prayers answered. He said, "Ask and ye shall receive. Seek and ye shall find. Knock and the door shall be open." (Matthew 7:7) He said there is a way to pray, and Jesus actually made this very simple. If you will learn this pattern of prayer, you will never struggle again in your prayer life.

Matthew 6:5-9 *And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. 6 But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. 7 And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words.*

ARMED FOR WAR Discipleship Course

SECTION 5 – Lesson 20

8 Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him.

9 In this manner, therefore, pray:

Jesus said to pray “*in this manner*”. In verse 7 He warns against vain repetitions; simply repeating the words. He gave us a pattern of prayer. There are six principles of prayer here that Jesus is teaching us. We are not to be like the hypocrites and religious folks. It’s not about praying lengthy prayers for the sake of praying long, or about praying specific words over and over. That is not going to get your prayers answered. Jesus was teaching us the pattern of prayer, the principles of prayer, that will ignite our prayer life and get our prayers answered.

Key 1: Come before God worshipping and honoring Him for who He is. “Our father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.”

Matthew 6:9 *In this manner, therefore, pray:*

Our Father in heaven,

Hallowed be Your name.

What is the first thing you do when coming to God?

The first thing you do when you come before God is to come exalting and magnifying His name.

Right there is where most people’s prayer life dies. They come to prayer and begin by asking God for stuff like He’s a spiritual Santa Claus. They act like He is a spiritual ATM. They approach prayer their way instead of His way and expect to get their prayers answered. Jesus is teaching us that when we come before the Father, we are to come honoring and worshipping and magnifying Him.

I am not talking about if you are going down the street at 65 miles an hour and a truck jumps the road and you have a split second to cry out to God. You can just say “JESUS!”. That’s alright, that’s cool. Don’t get religious on me. But what I am saying is that when we approach God, we are to approach Him properly. Just as there is a proper way to approach natural authority like a queen or president, there is a proper way to approach God. God said we are to enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise.

If we want our prayers answered, we are to come before Him worshipping Him. We are to come exalting Him. We’ve all done it wrong at some point. Too often we come before God with only our “needs” and then we wonder why don’t we get what we are asking for.

ARMED FOR WAR **Discipleship Course**

SECTION 5 – Lesson 20

Kids are smart. They have learned that if they really want something, they don't just come up and simply ask for it. They know they will be told no. They know to come expressing their love and try to buddy up a little bit, praising you a little bit.

God wants us to praise Him. He wants us to come honoring Him and lifting up His name. He wants us to bless Him for Who He is.

In 2 Chronicles chapter 20 Jehoshaphat, when the armies of Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir were coming against him, turned to God and praised Him. He then began to remind God who He is and what He has said. Jesus is teaching us this principle here. "I worship Your name, who You are. You are Jehovah Jirah, my provider. You are Jehovah Shalom, my peace. You are Jehovah Shitkanu, my righteousness. You are Jehovah Raffa, my healer."

If you will stop right there and spend just a little bit of time worshipping Him before you start asking Him for stuff, and just spend time worshipping and magnifying Him for who is, then the presence of God begins to come. God becomes enthroned and established in your midst. But also your faith level begins to rise.

You have these circumstances and you come to God, you need an answer, but you bother to stop and magnify Him. "Lord, are you not the creator of the universe? Are you not the one that owns the cattle of a thousand hills? Are you not the God that created all things and said 'Let there be light and there was light.'? You are the God who hears and answers prayer. You are the God who answers by fire. Your glory shall be my rear guard." When we approach God this way He is lifted up. It will magnify the Father, it will draw His presence, and it will build your faith.

We should stop and approach Him His way instead of coming before Him our way and asking Him "Why?". You are not coming and blessing Him. You are not hallowing His name and honoring Him. You know what you are doing? You are coming and accusing Him. You may think you are only asking a question, but you are accusing Him through your question. "Oh God why did you let this thing happen?" You are blaming Him for it. You are blaming Him for the problem.

"Oh God, why am I in such debt?" Well, maybe because you can't control your spending. "Oh God, why am I so sick?" Well, maybe because you don't know how to eat healthy. "Oh God, why, why, why?" Maybe because if you would get before His presence and honor Him and worship Him and lift up His name, you might actually hear His voice and know what to do before you get yourself into so much trouble.

As a society we are always blaming God. It's God's fault for everything. Even when a disaster comes we call it an "act of God". It's a result of sin, not an act of God. Chaos in the weather is a result of sin, it is a result of the curse.

ARMED FOR WAR Discipleship Course

SECTION 5 – Lesson 20

Key 2: Establish the authority and rule and reign of God here on the earth as it is in heaven.

Matthew 6:10a *Your kingdom come.*

Your will be done

On earth as it is in heaven.

After we have finished worshipping, magnifying, and lifting Him up, and your faith has been built up, now you are to pray for His kingdom and His will. It is not yet time for your stuff.

The words “come” and “be done” are like stomping your foot down. They are forceful words. They are command words. *Thy kingdom COME. Thy will BE done.* It is speaking things into existence.

Jesus said to first come honoring and worshipping the Father, secondly pray the will of the Father before you ever pray for your stuff. You establish God’s will, God’s plan. The will of God is the Word of God. You pray the Word. Jesus prayed the Word. You take the Word of God praying. Jesus prayed the Word. You pray the will of God.

“Father, Your Word says that you were wounded for my transgressions, bruised for my inequities, the chastisement of my peace was laid upon Him, and by His stripes I am healed. Father, I pray Your will for divine healing to break loose into my family. I pray your will. I pray your kingdom come, your authority over sickness and disease.” You pray over yourself and over your family the will of God. “God, lead me and guide me in Your ways. Your Word says that the steps of a righteous man are ordered of the Lord. You will make my path straight, God.” You begin to declare to God what He said, and you begin to pray the will of God.

You can’t pray the will of God if you don’t know the Word of God. Begin to pray the will of God. “Your kingdom come, Your authority, Your rule, and Your will be done. Your kingdom come in my life. Your kingdom come in my family. Your kingdom and will be done in my country. Your kingdom and will be done in my government. Your kingdom come and your will be done in the world.” You begin to pray over every element of life and begin to declare the kingdom of heaven come, the will of God be done.

You are engaging in spiritual warfare praying this way. You are establishing the will of God. You are establishing the purpose of God. And you are also establishing in yourself the purpose and plan of God, so that when you begin to pray for what you need, you have already lined yourself up with Him. You have already lifted Him up. You have already magnified Him. Your faith has risen because you have recognized who He is. Your will is lining up with His will so that when you pray for your stuff you will be praying according to His will. And when you pray according to His will, that is how you know that what you pray will come to pass.

ARMED FOR WAR Discipleship Course

SECTION 5 – Lesson 20

When I first started praying this way I often found myself running out of time to pray for my stuff. I prayed for my stuff real quick because I spent so much time praying the first parts and I got more breakthroughs and more touches from God and more things happen. I put Him first and worshipped Him, and I put His will first.

Key 3: Pray for your daily needs.

After we have worshipped Him, after we have magnified Him, after we recognize and remind ourselves of who He is and remind Him of who He is, after we have prayed His Word, after we have prayed His will, after we have established His kingdom to come and His will be done, then Jesus said to pray for yourself.

Matthew 6:11 *Give me this day our daily bread.*

This is not just talking about money. This is talking about every area of provision from natural, physical, financial, emotional, and spiritual. Ask God to give us this day what we need today.

Did you notice that He didn't say "Give us this month our monthly provision, or yearly provision."? He wants to give you daily provision. He will provide for you each and every day. He wants you to be dependent on Him each and every day. "Father, now that I have worshipped and exalted you, now that I have prayed that your kingdom come and your will be done, now give me today what I need today."

At that point you are lined up with the will of God. You are so full of faith. You are no longer praying all the self focused prayers. You took care of that attitude when you started praying His kingdom come and His will be done. Your focus is now on Him and His will.

Key 4: Daily forgive others and receive forgiveness of your sins.

Matthew 6:12 *And forgive us our debts,
As we forgive our debtors.*

Are we to extend forgiveness or receive forgiveness first?

If every day you are forgiving others, then your Father can forgive you.

Every day you come before God, and every day you get cleansed. Every day you repent. We come every day because we get polluted. Every day there is some level of mistake we make. Even when we are living as holy as we can, there are things that we have fallen short on. All us sinners have fallen short of the glory of God.

ARMED FOR WAR Discipleship Course

SECTION 5 – Lesson 20

Every day we are to come and do two things: receive forgiveness AS we forgive our debtors. Every day you must forgive. You must release every day everyone that has done you wrong, everyone that has hurt you. Every day you are to release them, because when you have unforgiveness the devil has an access to you and a stronghold, and that can shut down the work of the answers to prayer in your life. It can shut down the work of God in your life.

Key 5: Daily pray to be delivered from temptation and the influence of the evil one.

Matthew 6:13a *And do not lead us into temptation,
But deliver us from the evil one.*

Then we are to pray to not be led into temptation, but delivered from the influence of the evil one. How much stronger I think we would be if we would spend time in prayer every day according to this pattern: establishing and worshipping Him, honoring Him, focusing on Him, establishing His kingdom, then praying for our needs, operating in forgiveness, and then asking God to deliver us from the influence of the evil one. If we truly did that every day we wouldn't be succumbing to temptation. We wouldn't be having preachers falling into immorality. We wouldn't have all this pornography grabbing people.

This stuff never happens overnight. It happens progressively. It's step by step because we are allowing the influence of evil to work on us, instead of asking God to not lead us into temptation and to deliver us from the power of the evil one. When we spend time and intimacy with Him and have honored Him and our ear is open to Him and we are cleansed and forgiven because we have forgiven, then we will be very sensitive to the Holy Spirit. You would be sensitive to Him and you could avoid temptation, and you could be delivered from the power of the evil one.

Key 6: Magnify Him, worship Him, and recognize it is God's kingdom.

Matthew 6:13b *For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.*

After we have done all of this, then go back and magnify Him, worship Him, and recognize it is God's kingdom. "Everything I am going to do today, everything I am going to say today, everything I am going to think today is for Your kingdom. Yours is the power and Yours is the glory. God, let my life glorify You, let my life magnify You, let everything I say and do today, everything that happens to me bring glory to You. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever, Amen."

Jesus said that if we want our prayers answered we are to pray in this manner, according to these principles. You worship Him. You magnify Him. You exalt His name. You recognize who He is. Then you declare His kingdom to come and the Father's will be done. Then you ask for your daily needs to be met. Then you repent and receive forgiveness as you forgive others. Then pray to be delivered from temptation and the influence of the evil one. Then once again worship and magnify Him recognizing His kingdom.

ARMED FOR WAR **Discipleship Course**

SECTION 5 – Lesson 20

For Further Study:

Matthew 21:22 *And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.*

Ephesians 6:18 *praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints*

Philippians 4:6 *Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God*