



Life Group Notes: 'Prayer Essentials' Tuesday 5th June 2018

READ MATTHEW 6: 5-15

5 "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. 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:

Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. 10 Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven. 11 Give us this day our daily bread. 12 And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors. 13 And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

14 "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

INTRODUCTION:

The Bible encourages us to pray and the importance of prayer in the life of a spirit filled believer cannot be underestimated.

Jesus taught his disciples how to pray and Matt 6:9-13 is often referred to as "the Lord's Prayer" - a prayer now recited by many (including non-believers) without the required understanding of the teachings of Christ on prayer.

Today, we focus on how Jesus advised us to approach prayer in order that we may also benefit from developing a fruitful daily relationship with God the Father.

QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE:

1. What is prayer?
2. What does it mean to give oneself to prayer and why is it important for Christians to do so?

(Explore Psalm 109:4...But I give myself to prayer").

3. Why is Jesus challenging believers on the specific danger of hypocrisy in relation prayer?
4. What reward do we think is being reserved for such people and why? Please discuss in relation to 1 Peter 4:7 who tells us to be serious and watchful in our prayers.
5. "When you pray..." shows believers have to make prayer a regular discipline of prayer. Can you discuss "fervency" in relation to the frequency and quality of our prayer life especially in the light of James 5:16 "The effective fervent prayer of the righteous man avails much"
6. Why is Christ asking us to go to our "our room", to "shut the door" before we pray and do you have a secret place? Discuss the importance and fruit of this...
7. What understanding do you have in relation to Paul's charge to Timothy that "...men pray everywhere" (1 Timothy 2:8 "I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting").
8. What is your understanding on the "reward" being talked about by Christ? Will believers be "rewarded" anytime they pray? Please, give your view.
9. Do repetitions in prayer matter to Jesus and does it mean one cannot repeat words ushered in prayer?
10. What understanding do you have in relation to Matt 26:44 "So He [Jesus] left them, went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words"
11. Unbelievers may ask us why we bother praying if God truly knows what we have need of before we ask Him. What is your understanding and how would you respond?

CLOSING REFLECTION & PRAYER

Take time to pray with each other that God will give a deeper desire for prayer and that we will further discover the true benefit from daily communication with God. Pray also for each others needs and learn to exercise the principle of being watchful in your prayers to believe that what you ask for will be given!