



THE HOUSE OF PRAYER

This is part 13 of the PrayER – Learning From Jesus How To Pray sermon series

SUMMARY

God knew that as we make our way through life that there would be certain elements and circumstances that would come into our life that were simply greater than we are. His solution to the problems of our life was to make Himself and His resources available to His people. The means by which we can tap into the presence, the provisions, and the power of God is prayer, and yet, most of prayer lives are struggling to show any signs of life. In this series of thoughts, we are taking our prayer life to the emergency where we will learn from the Great Physician how to pray.

REVIEW

In this series on prayer, we have been attempting to learn from Jesus to pray. We began by looking at the example of Jesus' prayer life and then we listened to the instructions of Jesus about prayer.

- 1) The first thing that we saw was the **FORM** of prayer.

We considered the model prayer in which Jesus said, "*After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts,*

as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen."

We found that we have been given incredible and immediate access into the presence of God, through which...

We are to **GIVE** God glory by recognizing His holiness,

We are to **DESIRE** that God's will would be done on earth as it is in Heaven,

We are to **LEAN** on God in the details of our life and for the day-to-day realities of our life.

We are to **EXAMINE** our heart, our mind, and our life for things that aren't pleasing to God, which in turn should be confessed and repented of so that we can be restored in our fellowship with the Lord and our function before the Lord.

We are to **EXPRESS** heartfelt gratitude for the **GRACE**, for the **GREATNESS**, and for the **GOODNESS** that God pours into our life.

2) The second thing that we saw was the **FUEL** of prayer

We found that **FAITH** is the fuel to a strong prayer life, and we found that **FASTING** is the means by which strong faith is produced.

3) The third thing that we saw was the **FREQUENCY** or the **FERVENCY** of prayer

We found that we are to **PRIORITIZE** the **PRACTICE** of prayer daily and we must **PASSIONATELY PURSUE** the **PROMISES** of prayer.

4) The fourth thing that we saw was the **FRIENDSHIP** of prayer

Jesus established the church to carry out His commission, but He also established the church as the place where His family could do life and tackle life's problems together. We're to **WORSHIP** together, **SERVE** together, **REJOICE** together, **WEEP** together, and we are to **PRAY** together.

We are to pray **FOR** each other, and we are to pray **ABOUT** each other. We found that this type of praying should be **PERSONAL**, it should be **PRECISE**, it should be **PERSISTENT**, and it should be **PROFITABLE**.

MESSAGE

In this thought, we want to move back to the book of Matthew, and we want to move forward in the earthly ministry of Jesus where Jesus makes another statement about prayer. We call it Palm Sunday.

Jesus had instructed his disciples to go into the next village where they would find an ass and a colt. They were to loose them and bring them to Jesus. Jesus sat on them and as they made their way into the city of Jerusalem a great multitude spread out their garments, and they cut down branches from the trees and they lined the way with them. As they entered the city, the people cried out saying, *"Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest"* (Matthew 21:9).

Matthew 21:10-17 says, *"And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee. And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves, And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves. And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple; and he healed them. And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David; they were sore displeased, And said unto him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise? And he left them, and went out of the city into Bethany; and he lodged there."*

If you're in the habit of marking things in the Word of God, I'd like to draw your attention to verse 13 where Jesus says, *"...It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer..."*

For a few moments, I'd like to consider this thought: **THE HOUSE OF PRAYER.**

When we come to this portion of Jesus' earthly ministry, we are often focused on the wrongs that were taking place in the house of God. Now, that isn't wrong, because there is absolutely a need for that. There were a lot of things taking place in the house of God that were making it more difficult for the people to get to God and there were a lot of people in the house of God who were more focused on their own personal profit than they were actually focused on the true worship of God.

So, Jesus went in, and Jesus **CLEANED** house. For the first time in a long time, God was the center focus of the house of God, and, as a result, the power of God was clearly put on display (vs. 14-15).

What I want you to notice is that Jesus didn't just **CLEAN** house, but He also gave some **CLEAR INSTRUCTION** to His followers – His house is to be known as the house of prayer. He was referring back to the book of Isaiah.

Isaiah 56:7 says, *"Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people."*

Jesus said that His house was to be a house of prayer. Not a party place and not a place for performance. It is to be a house of prayer. But what does it mean to be a house of prayer? It

means that prayer isn't just supposed to be a part of what we do here, and it does not mean that praying is just something that we tag on to certain portions of a church service. Being a house of prayer means that the people of that place make prayer such a vital and obvious part of that place that people could correctly be called "...*the house of prayer*..."

Now, the truth of the matter is that the first century church had that down pat. Their places of worship were indeed places of prayer because they were people of prayer. When you move over to and make your way through the book of Acts, you find some twenty to thirty times where the church was praying. Of those times, the majority of them were groups of people praying together up to the whole assembly of believers praying together.

Acts 1:14 says, "*These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.*"

I'm convinced that today's church has lost its power because it has laid down its responsibility to pray together. Somebody said it this way: "There are many who are quick to ask for prayer from people in the church and who will even pray for others in return, but who will not commit themselves to pray with these same brothers and sisters."

There is something **PERSONAL** and there is something **POWERFUL** about the people of God praying together. It **STRENGTHENS FAITH**, it **INCREASES UNITY**, it **DEEPENS RELATIONSHIPS**, it **ENCOURAGES PARTICIPATION**, and it **FOCUSES OUR HEARTS ON THE WILL OF GOD**.

The reality is that some of the greatest revivals and some of the most powerful mission's movements have been birthed out of corporate prayer.

Acts 4:24 says, "*And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord...*"

Now the reality is that not everything is a matter that is right for public prayer, but there are a lot of things about the church and about the people of God that are public matters, and the church family should meet together in prayer for these needs.