



PrayER – INTRODUCTION

This is part 1 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.

MESSAGE

Luke 11:1-4 says, *“And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.”*

If you're in the habit of marking things in the Word of God, I'd like to draw your attention to verse 1 where the Bible says, *“...Lord, teach us to pray...”*

For a few moments, I'd like to consider this thought: **Prayer - INTRODUCTION.**

This evening, we're beginning an in-depth study of one of the most familiar portions of what many have called The Lord's Prayer (I'll come back to that in a little bit). This particular portion of Scripture is found in the Gospel Record of Matthew (chapter 6) and in the Gospel Record of Luke (chapter 11). This evening, our focus is primarily going to be within the Gospel Record of Luke where we find our key statement for this entire study – *"Lord, teach us to pray."*

To begin this thought, I think that it is important for us to establish who Luke was. In the book of Philemon (24), Paul identifies Luke as a *"...fellowlabourer..."* and, in Colossians 4:14, Paul identifies Luke as *"...the beloved physician..."* As a physician, we find that Luke was focused on the details, especially the details of the life and healing ministry of Jesus.

As I began to dig into this particular passage, I came across a statement that was made about the Gospel Record of Luke that intrigued me. This individual, a man by the name of Alfred Plummer, called the book of Luke "The Gospel of Prayer." When I read that, my initial thought was this: "That's interesting!" And so, I stepped back from Luke chapter 11 to gain a bigger perspective of the book, and he's right. The Gospel of Luke is indeed The Gospel of Prayer. Of each of the Gospel Records, Luke places a greater emphasis on prayer than any of the others. Throughout the book of Luke, we find that there are eleven references to Jesus praying, nine of which are unique to the Gospel of Luke,

In Luke chapter 3, we find Jesus praying in the Jordan River at His baptism.

Luke 3:21-22 says, *"Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased."*

Now, this was very interesting to me. When John was baptizing individuals in the Jordan River, they prayed a prayer of repentance. They confessed their sins and then they were baptized. Jesus could not pray that prayer because Jesus had no sin to confess. So, what was Jesus praying? It appears that this was a prayer of submission and dependence, hence the Father's delight. What an example for us! Our prayer life should be one that declares our surrender to the will of our Father and our dependence on the help of our Father.

In Luke chapter 5, we find Jesus praying in the wilderness.

Luke 5:16 says, *"And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed."*

In this particular passage, word was spreading throughout the land and many people made their way to Jesus to hear Him and to be healed of their infirmities by Him. The word *prayed* here is a very interesting word. It carries with it the idea of a continual or repeated action. Throughout His earthly ministry, Jesus repeatedly withdrew to a secret place where He spent time communing with His Father, and so should we.

In Luke chapter 6, we find Jesus praying in the mountain all night long.

Luke 6:12 says, "And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God."

In this particular instance, we find that Jesus was getting ready to make a major decision – who would serve as His twelve apostles. Now, I would submit that Jesus, since He indeed is God, already knew which disciples that He was going to choose, but what I find interesting is that Jesus spent the entire night praying for those disciples that He would choose. We should spend time in prayer when we are getting ready to make big decisions and we should spend time in prayer when our decisions impact others.

In Luke chapter 9, we find that Jesus was praying alone.

Luke 9:18 says, "And it came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him: and he asked them, saying, Whom say the people that I am?"

In this particular passage, Jesus was getting ready to give some very difficult news to His disciples – He was going to suffer many things, He would be rejected of His own, and He would be slain. Before breaking the news to His disciples, Jesus spent time praying. While we're not told what Jesus prayed, I think that we can confidently assume that Jesus' prayer was focused on the disciple's reception of the news that He was getting ready to give them. We too should spend time in prayer when we are given the responsibility of bearing huge news (good or bad) to someone.

In Luke chapter 9, we also find Jesus with His inner circle of disciples praying on the mountain top.

Luke 9:28-29 says, "And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray. And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistering."

We often refer to this as Jesus' transfiguration. Later on, John would write about this particular instance that they "...beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father..." (John 1:14). It was while Jesus was praying that His countenance was changed. Again, what a tremendous example. Our countenance too can be changed for the better when we make the decision to spend quality time in prayer with our Heavenly Father.

In Luke chapter 10, we find Jesus rejoicing in and giving thanks to God in prayer.

Luke 10:21-22 says, "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him."

Jesus, back in Luke chapter 3, acknowledge His dependence on His Father, and now, that He has seen the results of His Father's works, He gave God praise. Prayer isn't just a wish list of what we want from God; prayer is the acknowledgement that God is working and that God has been good.

In Luke chapter 11, we find that Jesus was praying in a certain place and His prayer life moved the disciples.

Luke 11:1 says, "And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples."

While we do find Jesus praying in Luke chapters 22 and 23, it appears that there is a shift in focus here – not just on Jesus' practice of prayer, but on how Jesus' practice should be a pattern in our own life. This prayer that we have recorded here, that is wrongly called the Lord's prayer (because Jesus could not pray this prayer), but it is to become a pattern for our prayer life. Now, can we call this prayer a pattern for us to pray? When ask to teach them how to pray, this is the instruction that Jesus gave them, and yet, we don't have one single record of the disciples praying this prayer. However, we do find them praying powerful prayers and imploring us to be prayer warriors.

Romans 12.12 says, *"...continuing instant in prayer..."*

Ephesians 6:18-19 says, *"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel."*

Philippians 4:6-7 says, *"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."*

Colossians 4:2-3 says, *"Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving; Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds."*

1 Thessalonians 5:17-18 says, *"Pray without ceasing .In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."*

James 5:16 says, *"Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."*

The disciples of Christ learned to place an emphasis on prayer in their daily life, but why? Because they learned that God expects them and us to be people of prayer.

Matthew 6:5-7 says, "And **when thou prayest**, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, **when thou prayest**, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. But **when ye pray**, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking."