PRAYER

This series of lessons will cover the following areas relating to prayer:

I. THE ESSENCE OF PRAYER (answers the question what is it?)
II. THE NECESSITY OF PRAYER (why pray)
III. THE PREREQUISITES TO PRAYER (who can pray)
IV. THE PATTERN FOR PRAYER (how to pray)
V. THE PROMISE OF ANSWERED PRAYER
VI. THE RESULTS OF PRAYER

Prayer is often the first area in our Christian life that gets neglected. (and yet it is the most important)

I. THE ESSENCE OF PRAYER (what is it?)

God created man to fellowship with Him (Sin has broken that fellowship; but the Grace of God in Christ restores that fellowship)

Man's communication with God. He communicated to us in His Word - the Scriptures (written Word), and by His Son - Jesus Christ (incarnate Word) (Heb.1:1-ff).

Prayer is simply: "Asking, seeking, and knocking" Mt.7:7

Different types of prayer: Asking for self; asking for others (intercession); praise & worship, thanksgiving etc.

Prayer is not:

1) Reciting memorized poems or Scripture (with vain repetition)
2) Reminding God of that which He already knows (the prayers of many people seem to be sermons at God or reminding Him of things He already knows)

II. THE NECESSITY OF PRAYER (why pray?)

When we pray we are not telling God or asking God for something He is not aware of already - so why pray?

Basically for 3 reasons: 1) **it pleases God**, 2) **it glorifies God**, and 3) **it benefits us**.

A. IT PLEASES GOD (He desires it)

Prov 15:8 -The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD: but the prayer of the upright is his delight.

1. IT IS THE WILL OF GOD

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

1 Tim 2:8 - I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.

2. IT IS A COMMAND OF GOD

Ps 27:8 - When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto
thee, Thy face, LORD, will I seek.

Luke 18:1 - And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men
ought always to pray, and not to faint;

Col 4:2-3 - Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving; Withal praying also for us

1 Pet 4:7 - But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober,
and watch unto prayer.

Rom 12:12 - Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing
instant in prayer;

1 Tim 2:1 - I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers,
intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;

Eph 6:18 - Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the
Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication
for all saints; (note: the word "all")

If it is a command to pray then not to pray is **sin!** and a lack of prayer is **sin!**
(Samuel said to Israel: 1 Sam 12:23 - Moreover as for me, God forbid that I

should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way:)

B. **IT GLORIFIES GOD** (He is shown (proven) to be mighty, sovereign, faithful, etc.)

1. **IT REVEALS <u>GOD'S GREATNESS</u>**

Jer 33:3 - Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.

ex. Christ's prayer before raising Lazarus (Jn.11:39-42).
The lost (skeptical) world needs to see a God who is alive, and a
God who responds. (ex.Elijah I Ki.18:36-39)

2. **IT REVEALS <u>MAN'S DEPENDANCE</u>**

We are dependant, limited in what we know and can do. We need
supernatural power!

Technological advances today can tend to make us:

a) Proud - <u>I</u> can do it!

b) Independent - I can do it <u>without God</u>!

(My observation: Prayer has always been an activity men struggles with (ex. Disciples <u>sleeping</u> in the Garden of Gethsemany) Yet today it appears that it is done <u>less</u> frequently than ever before in history, although tons of books have been written on the subject.

Your prayer life actually reveals how <u>humble</u> you are.
In prayer (worship, praise) you are acknowledging God for who He is.

In prayer (asking forgiveness) you are acknowledging your own sinfulness and need for forgiveness.

In prayer (making personal requests known) you are acknowledging your dependance. (ie. that you do not know all, nor do all - that is we can't do that which is of eternal worth by ourselves)

In prayer (intercession) you are acknowledging that the world does not revolve around only you; that others have needs that God is interested in meeting.

C. IT BENEFITS US

1. PRAYER IS GOD'S APPOINTED WAY FOR HIS CHILDREN TO RECEIVE THINGS

The world expects to get things solely by work, planning, scheming or by accident. "Ye have not because you ask not" Ja.4:2 (not b\c you work not, plan not etc.)

Our needs are met by prayer:
God wants to give guidance (An ability to <u>know</u>)
Prov 3:5-6 - Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

Ex. Joshua & the Gibeonites -
Joshua 9:14 - And the men took of their victuals, and asked not counsel at the mouth of the LORD.

God wants to give us an ability to <u>do</u> that which we (by ourselves) cannot.
Matt 17:21- Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.

God wants to give us gifts (blessings) to <u>have</u> that which we do not have the ability acquire for ourselves

Song: "My Father is rich in houses & lands, He holdeth the wealth of the world in His hands; Of Rubies and diamonds, of silver & gold, His coffers are full - He has riches untold."

2. PRAYER IS GOD'S WAY FOR CHRISTIANS TO HAVE FULLNESS OF JOY

How happy is a child who never asks & receives from his parents. Prayer is the secret to gaining real joy!
Jn.16:24 - "that your joy may be full"

3. PRAYER IS NEEDED TO GIVE US SPIRITUAL REVIVAL

"It is foolish and wicked to try to do God's work without God's power"
2 Chron. 7:14 - If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

The power of the Holy Spirit is vital! Cp. the book of Acts - the power & boldness of the disciples because of prayer. See Acts 6 - the results of the apostle's praying. Cp.Eph.3:19

We are always looking for better methods (programs); what we need is better men.

Concl. Prayer is a necessity ("don't leave home without it")



PRAYER (part 1)

I. THE ESSENCE OF PRAYER (what is it?)

God created man to _____ with Him
Communication is two way. (God speaks to us through _____and we speak to Him through _____)
Prayer is simply: "_____, _____, and _____" Mt.7:7
Prayer is not:

1) _____ memorized poems or Scripture (with vain repetition)
2) _____ God of that which He already knows

II. THE NECESSITY OF PRAYER (why pray?)

When we pray we are not telling God or asking God for something He is not aware of already - so why pray?
Basically for 3 reasons:
1) **it_____God**, 2) **it_____God**, 3) **it_____us**.

A. IT _____ GOD (He desires it) Prov 15:8

1. IT IS THE _____OF GOD 1Thes 5:17-18; 1 Tim 2:8

2. IT IS A _____OF GOD
Ps 27:8; Luke 18:1; Col 4:2-3; 1 Pet 4:7; Rom 12:12; 1 Tim 2:1; Eph 6:18
If it is a command to pray then not to pray is **sin!** and a lack of prayer is **sin!**
1 Sam 12:23

B. IT _____ GOD (He is shown (proven) to be mighty, sovereign, faithful, etc.)

1. IT REVEALS GOD'S_____ Jer 33:3

2. IT REVEALS MAN'S_____

The Technological advances and materialism of the 20th century tend to make us:
a) _____ - I can do it!
b) _____ - I can do it without God!
Your prayer life actually reveals how _____ you are.

C. IT _____ US

1. PRAYER IS GOD'S APPOINTED WAY FOR _____ TO _____ THINGS

Our needs are met by prayer:

God wants to give guidance (An ability to _____)
Prov 3:5-6

God wants to give us an ability to _____ that which we (by ourselves) cannot. Matt 17:21

2. **PRAYER IS GOD'S WAY FOR CHRISTIANS TO HAVE _____**

3. **PRAYER IS NEEDED TO GIVE US _____**2 Chron. 7:14

We are always looking for better _____ (programs); what we need is better _____.

Prayer is a necessity ("don't leave home without it")

I. THE ESSENCE OF PRAYER (what is it?)

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Communication is two way. (God speaks to us through THE BIBLE and we speak to Him through PRAYER)

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