

## Homebuilder's Class

### Personal Spiritual Development (PSD): Part 5

#### The Nature and Mechanics of Prayer

**Text:** Matthew 6:5-13

Intro: there is such a thing as going through the motions of prayer and devotional life. We are aiming for meaningful communion with God.

- I. The limitless power of prayer. Jeremiah 33:3
  - A. God is infinite; humans is finite.
    1. God is without limitations.
    2. Humans' lives with definite limitations.
    3. Humanities' accomplishments are vast but limited.
    4. With all of humanities' accomplishments, we still struggle with limitations and the realities of war, hatred, murder, racism, violence, disease, and death.
  - B. There is one dimension that humans may enter outside of normal limitations: prayer!
    1. Limitless regarding space.
    2. Limitless regarding time.
    3. Limitless regarding influence.
    4. Limitless regarding subject matter.
    5. Limitless regarding results.
  
- II. The miraculous nature of prayer. Romans 8:26-29
  - A. Prayer fits under every proper definition of "miracle".
    1. "miracle" is from the Greek word *dunamis*.
      - a. It means power, work, and ability of a supernatural origin and character, such as could not be produced by natural agents or means.
      - b. A miracle is an event that is not governed by time and space.
      - c. A miracle is an earthly event with a heavenly explanation.
    2. Prayer fits under all these definitions.
    3. If there is no supernatural intervention, there is no prayer.
  - B. Man's need requires supernatural intervention.
    1. **Romans 8:26a** Our infirmities require supernatural intervention.
      - a. Infirmity has to do with our weakness, inability, and lack of strength.
    2. **Romans 8:26b** Our ignorance requires supernatural intervention.
      - a. We do not always know what to pray.
      - b. The Spirit makes intercession for us according to the will of God.
      - c. That is supernature intervention—a miracle.
    3. The Holy Spirit is the Supernatural Helper.
  
- III. We must be aware of siritual pride. Matthew 6:5-6
  - A. There are many types of pride
    1. For example, appearance accomplishment, ability, association, and aversion can all be sources of pride.
  - B. Spiritual pride is rooted in wrong motive.

1. The hypocrites loved to pray—their problem was their motives.
  2. A hypocrite is someone who pretends to be someone they aren't.
  3. Public prayer is not wrong.
  4. It is wrong to pretend to communion with God when one's only interest is to impress the hearers with the prayer.
  5. Do not use God to try to make yourself look good.
- C. Jesus' solution for spiritual pride was to pray in private. (Verse 6)
1. Can you express yourself to God with others but not alone?
  2. Do we pray alone and have communion with God, but find it unbearable that others do not know so they think well of us?
- IV. We must be aware of ritualism. Matthew 6:7-8
- A. The heathen believe they will be heard by their much repetition.
- B. Jesus' solution was to pray with simplicity and confidence.
1. Through Christ we have access to the Father. (Romans 5:1-2)
  2. Therefore, we may enter with boldness. (Hebrews 4:14-16)
- C. This truth helps us understand that why we pray has more to do with us than it does with Him.
1. Prayer helps us remember that our total dependence is on God.
  2. Prayer reminds us that God is not servant owing daily favors to us.
  3. It is spiritually healthy to express ourselves to the Father.
- V. We must consider the elements of prayer as taught by the Lord. Matthew 6:9-13
- A. Worship (Verse 9)
1. Consider His name
  2. Consider His attributes
  3. Consider His deeds
- B. Surrender (Verse 10)
- List areas you need to surrender:
- C. Dependence (Verse 11)
- List the things for which you are dependent on God:
- D. Confession (Verse 12)
- List areas you need to confess before God:
- E. Deliverance (Verse 13a)
- List areas you need God's deliverance:
- F. Praise (Verse 13b)
1. List reasons you should praise the Lord:
- G. Additional elements of prayer.
1. Waiting on God. (Isaiah 40:31)
  2. Praying His Word. (Nehemiah 1:8)
  3. Interceding for others. (1 Samuel 12:23; 1 Timothy 2:1-4)
  4. Singing. (Psalm 100)