



STUDY GUIDE

PRAYER 03.04.2018

[start with prayer]

Begin with prayer, each person speaking a brief sentence expressing the following:

- Thank God for a grace and mercy in your life
- Praise God for who He is and what He has done
- Ask God to forgive your sins (a careful confession)
- Pray for a specific person that needs Christ

Missions Prayer Focus this week:
Frank Archer—Ghanaian Church Planter

[set up]

What has God been communicating to you this week that is related to prayer?

What did you hear Sunday in the message that you can recall?

What is the real level of prayer that you practice?

Since none of us are praying enough, how can we help each other to move forward in our life of prayer?

[digging deeper]

Jesus believed that prayer works.

Read aloud the following scriptures:

Matthew 21:22
John 14:13-14

Matthew 7:7-11
John 15:7

Mark 9:28-29
John 15:16

Mark 11:24
John 16:23-24.

We often read biographies of great people to learn the secrets of their lives. When you read the biographies of Jesus' life, the gospels, you learn one of his great secrets. Jesus modeled prayer. If he prayed, we need to pray. If he needed time alone with God, we need time alone with God. We need to emulate what he did.

Obviously and practically, Jesus believed that prayer works. Let me say it again, Jesus believed in prayer. Jesus knew the effectiveness and the power of prayer. Obviously, he had an intimate relationship with the Father, like we will never know or experience. Yet from Jesus' example we can still have the same motivation and desire to spend time with the Father. We, too, need to believe in prayer.

Sometimes our motivation to pray is quenched because we doubt that our prayers will work or make any difference. The evil one chides us into believing: "Prayer doesn't work, so why pray at all." We link, all too frequently, prayer requests and prayer answered and miss the main business of prayer and that is conversation, dialogue, the building and maintaining of a relationship with our Heavenly Father. If we reduce prayer to nothing more than asking for things, we are no different than the spoiled child that comes to their parent only to make demands.

Yet making requests is one of the needed aspects of prayer. One cannot ignore or take lightly the boldness and confidence with which Jesus spoke about prayer. Over and over again, he communicated the effectiveness of prayer.

Review these scriptures:

Matthew 21:22; 7:7-11

Mark 11:24

John 14:13-14; 15:7; 15:16; 16:23-24

Jesus taught that prayer works. But let's not interpret his words from an academic point of view. Let's also hear his words from a paternal point of view. Jesus encourages us to pray because God, like a father, is overjoyed to meet the needs and fill the requests of a loving and obedient child. Obviously, the positive answers to our prayers come when we are praying for his kingdom to expand, his will to be done, and his name to be glorified. In other words, God is most pleased and delighted to answer requests that see his family increase in size, his desires accomplished on earth, and his name promoted among the nations. Pray for family matters.

Jesus believed and acted on the confidence that God answered his prayers. We, too, can have that same confidence. Once we understand the mind and heart of Jesus and then pray accordingly. Then, when our prayers are being answered, it will only give us more confidence and boldness to pray for even greater things.

The first step to praying like Jesus is to believe in the incredible power of prayer. Do you believe in it?

[living it out]

[end with prayer]

Close your time together in prayer asking God to grant each the grace of greater faith and the desire to change, that each may be more like Jesus.