

March 21, 2010 - Lesson 5

## Prayer and The Bible



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1. *“Do not be anxious about anything. In every situation, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”* (Philippians 4:6-7)
2. *“The Lord said, “I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt, I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering.”* (Exodus 3:7)
3. *“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”* (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

### The Apostles’ Creed

#### Opening prayer

- Share Joys and Concerns
- Complete and turn in Homework Log
- Review Scripture Memory Verse options from above

The past few weeks we have been talking about God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. Now we are going to talk about two important ways we can grow in our relationship with God—Prayer and the Bible.

#### Why should I pray?

Prayer is a way to communicate with God. God is personal. You can’t have a strong relationship with anyone unless you spend time with them and talk with them. Prayer is sharing our heart with a Friend who understands.

**Martin Luther—who was a Protestant reformer—said this about prayer:** *“First, prayer is not telling God something God otherwise would not know. When we pray, we are not bringing God up to date on what is going on. As Jesus commented to His disciples, God knows what we need even before we speak. Prayer is not a means of forcing God to do something that God otherwise would not do. Prayer is not a leverage with God or a way to manipulate God. What God does, God does because of who God is, because of God’s gracious nature. Even Jesus prayed, “Not as I will, but as you will.” And in the Lord’s Prayer, He asks us to pray, “Your will be done.”*

### **ACTIVITY: Prayer is a Two Way Street**

- *What is the problem with this conversation?*
- *What happens when they are both talking at the same time?*
- *Were you able to listen to each other?*
- *How is this like our time when we pray to God?*

Many people say they don’t “hear” God talking to them. Maybe that’s because we don’t stop talking in order to listen to Him. Or, we are distracted by the things in our life—like our iPods, TV or the computer. So, we need to make sure and take time to be still and listen to God.

It is important to know that many people don’t actually “hear” God speak in an audible voice. His answers and words come to us through feelings, ideas or directions in the way we should go, if something is the right or wrong thing to do.

### **Nooma Video: “Open” by Rob Bell**

Many times we pray to God and don’t feel like He answers our prayers, and other times people pray and it seems like their prayers are answered. Does God answer our prayers? Is there more to praying than just asking God for what we want?

- *What are some of your road blocks to prayer?*

### **How am I to pray?**

It is important to know that there is no “right” way to pray. Think of different ways you can pray. Read Romans 8:26. What does this say about prayer? That if we don’t know what to pray don’t worry about it because the Holy Spirit intercedes for us.

1. **Intercessory Prayer**—meaning we pray for others or intercede on their behalf—like the Holy Spirit intercedes and prays for us. Read James 5:16. That is why we list Joys and Concerns in our group. It is our role as Christians to pray for each others’ needs.
2. **The Lord’s Prayer** – the model prayer that Jesus taught His disciples.  
Read aloud: Matthew 6:5-15; Luke 11:1-4
  - *Why do you think Jesus prays to our Father?*
  - *What does “hallowed” mean?*
  - *Thy Kingdom come?*
  - *Daily Bread?*
  - *Trespases?*

3. **ACTS** – this is one way of structuring your prayer

- **A**doration of God - *“You are an amazing God”*
- **C**onfession of sins and transgressions against others - *“Please forgive me for...”*
- **T**hanksgiving for God’s gifts and promises – *“Thank You for loving me, for...”*
- **S**upplication (petitions or requests) to God for special needs – *“Please be with me as I face...”*

Here are two other prayer models you might try implementing during your prayer time:

4. **ImPACT Model:**

- **P**raise— tell God directly what you like about Him. Be descriptive, use adjectives. He likes them! After all, which would you rather be told: “You are a great kid” or “\_\_\_\_\_ (insert name), you rock my world. I don’t know what I’d do without you everyday in my life. My life is beautiful because you are in it. “
- **A**sk—God cares about your needs. We can ask God to help us, our families, our friends and even people we don’t know with any problems they are experiencing. He wants everyone to ask Him for what they need. We can never overwhelm Him with our concerns. Tell God about these needs.
- **C**onfess— We all do things we wish we didn’t do. Sometimes our actions or words hurt someone and then we are sorry. Sometimes our actions or words hurt us. Sometimes our actions and words hurt God. Confess your sin to God and tell Him you’re sorry.
- **T**hanks—What are some things for which you’re thankful that God has done for you or has given to you? Mention them specifically and tell God “thank you” for them.

5. **PRAY Model:**

First things first, right? The first thing you need to do is worship and honor God for being God! If you went in to talk to a rich and powerful king, you wouldn’t just barge in and start asking him for stuff, would you? No, you’d bow and show him honor!

So when you pray:

- **P**raise God for the awesome, amazing, holy God He is.
- **R**ecognize the wrong things we do and ask God to forgive us for these things. After praising our Father for His wonderful qualities, we recognize the wrong that we’ve done and
- **A**sk for forgiveness. After you ask forgiveness for yourself, you need to agree to forgive others. Jesus said you should tell God that you promise to forgive others. That isn’t always easy, so you can ask God for help! You can also ask God for other things, like your daily needs, and protection from being tempted to do things that are wrong. But remember, you aren’t just giving God a list of things you want; you’re talking to Him. And as you’re asking for God’s help and protection, should you just ask for yourself? No, of course not! When you talk to God, you can pray for your family, your friends, kids in your class, missionaries, even people you don’t know personally but need to be lifted up in prayer—all kinds of people. The pray for
- **Y**ourself and others!

## **Does God answer my prayers?**

- God's answer may be yes, no, or wait.
- Just because God doesn't give you what you want, doesn't mean He didn't hear you or answer your prayer. He knows what is best for you. His will vs. our will.

## **Another Way that God communicates with us is through the Bible.**

### **What is the Bible?**

- The Word "Bible" means book.
- The Bible is God's self-revelation (through inspiration) through Scripture that guides us through life.
- Here are some facts we know: (*from "Claim the Name" teaching plans, pg. 155*)
- The Bible was written:
  - in three languages, Aramaic, Hebrew and Greek
  - on three continents: Asia, Africa and Europe
  - by over 40 people
  - over the course of 1,600 years and 60 generations

**What is God's role in writing the Scriptures? Did He dictate it word for word? Or did He just guide those who wrote it?** United Methodists believe that the Bible is "the inspired Word of God." In Latin, the word "inspire" means to "breathe into"—meaning that we believe that God "breathed into" the writings of the Bible. We believe that it not only reveals God, but shows God's will to us.

The Bible gives us different kinds of truths such as:

- Who God is
- Who we are and what it means for us to be human
- Moral issues of what is right and wrong

Without understanding the Bible, we can't apply what it says to us. So, let's look at the different parts of the Bible together:

- Table of Contents
- Maps & charts
- Footnotes
- Concordance
- Glossary
- Old Testament – 39 Books written over a period of 1,000 years.
- New Testament – 27 books written in Greek over a period of about 60 years

You might notice that each of us might have a different version of the Bible. Different words affect our understandings. There is value in reading different translations or paraphrases. Translations are directly from Hebrew and Greek. Examples of these are the NLT (New Living Translation) and the TNIV (Today's New International Version) Bibles. Paraphrases are from English—such as *The Message Bible*.

### ***Closing prayer***

# Homework

Pick one of the following Scriptures to memorize for next week's lesson, write it on a note card and put it somewhere you can see it and reflect on it daily:

1. *"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."* (Romans 3:23)
2. *"For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."* (John 3:16)
3. *Out of His fullness we have received grace in place of grace already given."* (John 1:16)

## **Journaling:**

Read Matthew 6:5-15 and answer these questions:

1. *Why do you think Jesus taught us how to pray?*
2. *When I pray I have problems with. . .*
3. *Jesus spoke and taught in parables. Look up the word "parable" in the dictionary. Read The Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard (Matthew 20:1-16) How is this a parable? What does this parable mean to you as a Christian?*

Take time to look over the Overview Books of the Bible on pages 47-49 of your student guide. While reading the descriptions of each book, pick one book from the Old Testament and one book from the New Testament that interests you and flip through it. Read a few passages from the book. *How did God speak to you through these books?*

## **The Journey continues next week: Lesson 6— Sin and Salvation**

*In preparation for next week, read **The Ten Commandments on pages 53-54.***

## **Family Homework:**

Take time during the beginning of this week to have each family member list 3 Joys in their life and 3 Concerns on a sheet of paper. Then have family members switch sheets and spend time each night praying for the other family members' Joys and Concerns. By the end of the week, discuss how it felt to know that someone was praying for you. Did God answer your prayers in the ways you expected?

\* **Reminder:** NEXT Sunday, March 28, families are invited/encouraged to join their students in Kirsch Hall at 12:10pm (after the 11:00 worship service) to watch *"The Amazing Softball Story"* video.