

A Study of Prayer

Lesson 11: Our Attitude in Prayer

I. Introduction

- A. We are aware of the uncertainty and fear that men face in the world today
- B. These conditions can lead to anxiety and frustration
- C. Men often fail to leave time in their lives for reflection and prayer
- D. Men throughout time have faced trials and the scriptures talk about a quiet time where we can reflect on what God has provided and how He is our strength –
“In quietness and trust is your strength” – Isa. 30:15
“Cease striving and know that I am God” – Psa. 46:10
“Come away to a secluded place and rest a while” – Mk. 6:31 (Jesus to His exhausted disciples)
- E. Do we afford ourselves of the opportunity to get away to a quiet place where we can reflect on the Lord’s blessings and go to Him in prayer?
- F. What attitude do we have in prayer and does it promote a close communion with our Lord?

II. Physical attitude in prayer

- A. Elijah, King David sat while talking to God – I Kings 19:4; I Chron. 17:16
- B. Hezekiah prayed from his bed – II Kings 20:1,2
- C. Jesus fell on His face to pray – Mt. 26:39
- D. Paul kneeled down and prayed with the Ephesian brethren – Acts 20:36

III. Mental attitude in prayer

A. Reverence

- i. Definition- Feeling of deep respect, love, awe, and esteem; to show feelings of respect and esteem
- ii. OT reverence comes from the word “yare” which refers to fear- Ps. 89:7; Lev. 19:30
- iii. OT reverence also comes from the word “Shadah” which refers to the idea of “falling down” as prostration of the body – II Sam. 9:6; I Kings 1:31; Esther 3:2
- iv. NT reverence comes from the word “aidos” which refers to modesty or proper behavior – Heb. 12:28; I Tim. 2:9; Tit. 2:3
- v. NT reverence also comes from “phobeomai” which includes the idea of fear or proper subjection – Eph. 5:33
- vi. NT reverence also comes from “entrepomai” which includes the idea of self-evaluation of inferiority – Mt. 21:37; Heb. 12:9

B. Humility

- i. Definition- Recognition of one’s true position before God
- ii. This attitude in prayer is highlighted in the publican’s prayer – Lk. 18: 13,14
- iii. Humility patterned after our Savior – Phil. 2:1-11, note vs. 3

C. Sincerity

- i. Definition- without deceit; genuineness
- ii. Joshua encourages Israelites to serve God in sincerity and truth—Josh. 24:14
- iii. Prayer of hypocrites rejected – Mt. 6:5-8

Questions for thought:

1. Why do we fail to spend time in meditation and prayer?
2. Do the scriptures specify the physical attitude we should take in prayer?
3. How do we show reverence in our prayers today?
4. How did the publican show humility in his prayer and how was that contrasted with the Pharisees prayer?
5. What was the purpose of the hypocrite's prayer and what did Jesus say about their result?