



Heart of a Woman

Lesson Three Lecture: I Bow My Knees Before the Father

MAIN IDEA: If we have been raised with Christ, we must seek the things above by reading, meditating, and believing God's Word and we must set our minds on things above through prayers of praise, thanksgiving, confession, supplication, and intercession. By faith!

Part One: A Heart to Pray

Part Two: Why Pray?

Part Three: How to Pray



Hearts without Christ are dead because of sin.



The Holy Spirit brings life to our dead hearts.

Part One: A Heart to Pray

What kind of heart do we need to pray?

1. A new, living heart.

The Gospel and the Great Exchange.

Refer to the Stick Figure Gospel handout.

Have you considered the Great Exchange and by faith, surrendered to God all control of your life and given Jesus your sinful life and received His His righteousness and Holy Spirit in return?

2. A soft heart.

The Spirit of Christ Jesus, sits at His Father's right hand, but He is also present among His people by His indwelling Spirit which imparts ALL of His saving graces to them. So intimate is this relationship between the Spirit and the Son that the apostle Paul can say that the Lord is the Spirit (2 Cor. 3:17). John Calvin taught that the Spirit is the "bond of communion" between Christ and His chosen Bride, the One who gives to believers their covenant inheritance in Christ. The work of Christ for His people becomes His work in them by the operation of the Holy Spirit.

We must watch over our hearts with all diligence. When our hearts are hard, we don't want to pray, and we pray wrongly. We won't hear God or understand His Word.

Ask the Lord, is your heart hard? What do you need to confess to Him?

Part Two: Why Pray?

The two **most important personal spiritual disciplines** are the intake of God's Word and prayer.

We are commanded to pray. Don Whitney quotes James 5:16: *Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.* He emphasizes that one of the four chief characteristics of the church in Jerusalem after Pentecost was that "*they devoted themselves to . . . the prayers*" (Acts 2:42). Can anyone doubt that these corporate prayers included much prayer for each other?

For God to be glorified. In John 14:13 Jesus promised, "*Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.*" In every circumstance, it's appropriate to pray "*that the Father may be glorified*" in it.

Other reasons:

Listen to what God has to say about prayer in His Word (Prayer is mentioned in the Bible 693 times in 614 verses, only 10 here).

Find fullness of joy in me (Ps. 16:11)

Need a strong tower? Run to me (Prv. 18:10)

Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. (Mt. 7:7)

Come to me and I'll give you rest (Mt. 11:28)

This kind can come out only by prayer. (Mk. 9:29)

Get up and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. (Lk. 22:46)

If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer. (Mt. 21:22)

...they should always pray and not give up. (Lk. 18:1)

Come to me and be satisfied (Jn. 6:35)

Abide in me and bear fruit (Jn. 15:5)

If you need wisdom, ask me (Js. 1:5)

Part Two: Why Pray? continued

Undivided first and last: We want to give God our full undivided first and last of each day. Me must! Prayer is "as necessary to the spiritual life as air is to the natural life."¹

Why is it that Christians find it so hard to pray?

Author, President Emeritus, Thomas A. Tarrants of the C.S. Lewis Institute writes: If God is omniscient, doesn't he know everything we need? And if he is both omnipotent and good, won't he provide it whether we pray or not? Scripture clearly tells us that God is all-knowing: "Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give an account" (Heb. 4:13), and that he is all-powerful and "...does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him: 'What have you done?'" (Da. 4:35), and that "...the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations" (Ps. 100:5). However, to infer from these truths that prayer is unnecessary is to overlook the broader teaching of Scripture. The Bible does indeed teach that everything we need for life and godliness is found in God, who is willing and able to give it and knows our need before we ask. But it does not teach that he bestows these riches upon us automatically.

God teaches us, encourages us, and commands us to pray! Why don't we pray as we should?

Question for you:

Part Three: How to Pray

3 Musts

Make a plan. Form the habit of praying. By faith!

When? When you wake, as you walk, and as you lie down.

Where?

How?

Other?

Essential Components of Personal Private Prayer

Praise. Confession. Thanks. Supplication. Intercession.

Sample prayer of praise, confession, and thanksgiving using Psalm 145.

PRAISE: We praise God by faith with Psalm 145.

¹ I will extol you, my God and King and bless your name forever and ever.,

² *Everyday* I will bless you and praise your name forever and ever.

Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised,
and his greatness is unsearchable.

⁴ One generation shall commend your works to another,
and shall declare your mighty acts.

⁵ On the glorious splendor of your majesty,
and on your wondrous works, I will meditate.

⁶ They shall speak of the might of your awesome deeds,
and I will declare your greatness.

⁷ They shall pour forth the fame of your abundant goodness
and shall sing aloud of your righteousness.

⁸ The Lord is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

⁹ The Lord is good to all,
and his mercy is over all that he has made.

¹⁰ All your works shall give thanks to you, O Lord,
and all your saints shall bless you!

¹¹ They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom
and tell of your power,

¹² to make known to the children of man your mighty deeds,
and the glorious splendor of your kingdom.

¹³ Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
and your dominion endures throughout all generations.

[The Lord is faithful in all his words
and kind in all his works.]

- ¹⁴The Lord upholds all who are falling
and raises up all who are bowed down.
- ¹⁵The eyes of all look to you,
and you give them their food in due season.
- ¹⁶You open your hand;
you satisfy the desire of every living thing.
- ¹⁷The Lord is righteous in all his ways
and kind in all his works.
- ¹⁸The Lord is near to all who call on him,
to all who call on him in truth.
- ¹⁹He fulfills the desire of those who fear him;
he also hears their cry and saves them.
- ²⁰The Lord preserves all who love him,
but all the wicked he will destroy.
- ²¹My mouth will speak the praise of the Lord,
and let all flesh bless his holy name forever and ever.

CONFESSION: You are great and greatly to be praised, and we are not. Your greatness is unsearchable, and we have only rags to offer, nothing worthy to be found at all.

We are sinners in need of your mercy, so we come to you this morning to confess that this week, Lord, we have not done what this psalm prescribes.

We have not declared your mighty acts; in fact, many of us have not spent one moment considering them at all this past week.

We have not commended your work to others; instead, we only talked briefly and purposely avoided discussing spiritual things.

We have not meditated on the splendor of your majesty; instead, we have forgotten, ignored, or been distracted by all manner of earthly things. Lord, forgive us.

This psalm says that all your works will praise you, and we confess that oftentimes, your inanimate creation—the rocks and the hills and the trees offer you more heartfelt praise than we do. Forgive us.

You are gracious and merciful, but we have been rude, inhospitable, self-indulgent, and slow to forgive. You are slow to anger, but we have been quick to anger, made excuses for our anger, or even tried to justify our anger.

You abound in steadfast love, but we have looked down on others and withheld our love. You are faithful and kind, but we are loose with our commitments and promises and unkind in our speech. Lord, have mercy on us and forgive us.

Not only that, Lord, but this week we have failed in the love of God and neighbor by viewing our sin lightly...

Some of us have categorized certain sins as private as if we could hide it from you, or as if its deadly effects would never harm those around us.

Some of us have compared the depth of our sin to others in an attempt to feel less guilty or to elevate ourselves above others and in doing that, we've been judgmental.

We've been proud to not have sinned like that person over there.

Some of us have made a truce with our sin, or minimized our sin, or tried to explain away our sin. Lord, forgive us.

(You may confess your specific personal sins here) ***Lord I confess:***

BY FAITH: Father, we come before you confessing these sins knowing that you have promised forgiveness and life in Jesus's name, knowing that you are able to do what you have promised, and knowing that you are faithful to keep your promises...

THANKSGIVING BY FAITH: we believe that your Son, Jesus himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds, we have been healed. For we once were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls. We thank you thank you thank you Lord for saving us from our sin, darkness, and eternal death. Thank you that you are with us now and forevermore. Thank you. Thank you for how you have protected and provided for us today. Thank you. Lord, we want to live with grateful hearts by faith. (You may express your thanks to God here) Lord, ***I thank you for:***

In Jesus' good and faithful name, Amen.