



Brown Community Group Discussion Guide

“Prayer” Series Lesson 7 – March 20, 2016

Praying With Faith And Obedience

I. Lesson Starters:

How do we get to the place God calls “blessed assurance” in our prayer requests? What do we need in our relationship with God for the type of assurance that He has agreed to answer our prayers? Can we actually create hindrances that prevent “answered prayer”?

We will break the series into multiple lessons/subject matter:

1. Why Does God want us to Pray?
2. The Effectiveness of Prayer
 - a. Does Prayer Change the Way God Acts?
 - b. Effective Prayer made possible through Jesus
 - c. Who are we supposed to pray too?
 - d. Role of Holy Spirit
3. Important Considerations for Effective Prayer
 - a. Pray “According to God’s Will”
 - b. Praying with Faith and Obedience**
 - c. Forgiveness and Humility
 - d. Praying Continually and Earnestly
 - e. Waiting on the Lord, What about Unanswered Prayer?
4. Praise and Thanksgiving

II. Faith and its Importance to Effective Prayer:

Mark 11:24

24 “Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours”

Translations vary, but the original Greek actually says, “believe that **you have received it**”. Later scribes who copied the Greek manuscripts and some commentaries have taken it to mean “believe that your will receive it”.

- Jesus says when we ask for something, the kind of faith that will bring results is a settled assurance that when we pray for something, God agreed to grant our specific request
- This “type” of faith in our personal communion with God in genuine prayer can only come as God gives us a sense of assurance
- We cannot “work” ourselves up to that point of assurance by “praying hard” or “great emotional effort” to make ourselves believe
- This is something that only God provides with time, relationship and trust
- This may or may not happen each time we pray
- Assured faith will often come when we ask God for something and then quietly wait before him

Hebrews 11:1

1 “Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen”.

- Biblical faith is never a kind of wishful thinking or a vague hope that does not have any secure foundation to rest.
- It is a trust in a person, God himself, based on the fact that we take Him at His word and believe what he says.
- Trust or dependence on God, when it is based on assurance or confidence, is genuine biblical faith.

Matthew 21:22

22 “Whatever you ask in prayer, you will receive, if you have faith”.

James 1:6

6 “Ask in faith, with no doubting”.

- Prayer is never wishful thinking, mind games or an act to make us “feel better”
- Prayer springs from our Trust in the Living God, who trust according to His Word

III. Obedience and its Importance to Effective Prayer

Psalms 66:18

18 “If I had cherished iniquity in my heart, the Lord would not have listened”

Proverbs 15:8

8 “The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, but the prayer of the upright is his delight”.

Proverbs 15:29

29 “The Lord... hears the prayer of the righteous”

Proverbs 28:9

9 “If anyone turns away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer is an abomination”

1Peter 3:12

12 “The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayers”

Since prayer is a relationship with God, anything in our lives that displeases Him is a hindrance to answered prayer.

- The Bible directly challenges good and holy conduct from us for “effective prayer”
- God says many times over that He hears and answers the prayers of those who live lives of obedience
- This teaching should not be misunderstood to mean that we have to be “**totally free of sin**” before God will answer our prayers; that will not happen on this earth
- Biblical emphasis is clearly on personal holiness in our lives; Prayer and holy living go together
- All things above, this teaches us that more obedience and holy living will lead to increased effectiveness in our prayer lives

IV. Group Questions:

1. What does “blessed assurance” mean to you personally in your prayer life?
2. Is it hard for you to have “assurance or confidence” that God will answer your prayers?
3. Discuss the important integration of “waiting on the Lord” and “assurance prayers will be answered”?
4. Why do we not tend to focus on our own holiness or lack thereof when our prayers are not answered or addressed by God?
5. Have you personally felt the effectiveness of your prayers slip when your relationship with God was not strong? During these times, have you continued to expect “God” to answer your prayers, but we have not done our part to remain “holy and set apart” in our personal lives?