



## Brown Community Group Discussion Guide

“Prayer” Series Lesson 8 – April 3, 2016

Praying With Forgiveness and Humility

### I. Lesson Starters:

Do we consider “confessing our sins” a pre-requisite for effective prayer? Do we typically put “forgiving others” at the top of our prayer list? Do we generally follow the route of “making ourselves low” through humility to be lifted up? Where does pride enter the equation for destroying our effective 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. Confession of Sin and its Importance to Effective Prayer:

#### Matthew 6:12-15

***12 And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. 13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. 14 For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.***

#### 1 John 1:5-10

***5 This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. 6 If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. 7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. 8 If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us.***

Since our obedience to God can never be perfect to the point of being sinless, we continually depend on His forgiveness of our sins. Confession of our sins is therefore necessary in order for God to “forgive us”, which is essential to restore a “deep and loving” relationship with God.

- This applies to our own personal sin and forgiving others
- Daily the relationship must be restored due to our sin and displeasing God
- If there are those whom we have not forgiven, then we are asking God not to restore a right relationship with Him in the same way we have refused to do so with others!
- Grieving of the Holy Spirit inhibits a right relationship with God; God declares that he will distance himself from us until we forgive others.

So it is not only good to pray to God for forgiveness of ourselves and others, it is essential to a healthy Christian life and relationship with our God. We need to pray for forgiveness of “all known sin”, but in doing so and

waiting on the Lord, he will typically also reveal “hidden sin” in our lives. Sins we do not remember, have conveniently forgot or ones that we may not even be aware of.

### **Psalms 19:9-13**

**9 The fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever. The decrees of the Lord are firm, and all of them are righteous. 10 They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the honeycomb. 11 By them your servant is warned; in keeping them there is great reward. 12 But who can discern their own errors? Forgive my hidden faults. 13 Keep your servant also from willful sins; may they not rule over me. Then I will be blameless, innocent of great transgression.**

### **James 5:16**

**16 Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.**

- Sometime confessing our sins to other trusted Christians will bring an assurance of forgiveness and encouragement to overcome sin as well, both the shame and support.

## **III. Humility and its Importance to Effective Prayer**

### **James 4:6-10**

**6 But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: “God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.” 7 Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8 Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. 9 Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. 10 Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.**

### **1 Peter 5:5-6**

**5 In the same way, you who are younger, submit yourselves to your elders. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, “God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.” 6 Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.**

- Humility is the correct and only attitude to have in praying to God
- Pride is the ultimate sin that kills our ability to grow in wisdom and right relationship

### **Luke 9-14**

**9 To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable: 10 “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11 The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. 12 I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.’ 13 “But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner.’ 14 “I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”**

- God is rightly jealous for His own honor
- Pride causes honor on self rather than giving “Glory to God”
- True Humility before God and others is essential for effective prayer

## **IV. Group Questions:**

1. When typically pray for “confession of sin” and cleansing before we lay out our request list to God? Why?
2. Why is it essential that we forgive others first before we can take step one to God forgiving us? What does God’s word say happens if we do not forgive others?
3. Discuss how pride affects our heart and an inner spiritual capability to know our own sin?
4. Discuss what it means to “humble ourselves”?

