

## **Prayer – Lesson 3**

### **Understanding the Five Basic Types of Prayer**

It is essential to understand and practice each basic prayer type on a regular basis. Each type has a unique and vital role in the believer's relationship with God. Let's look at them now...

#### **1. Praise and Thanksgiving**

Praise and thanksgiving are the primary ways we give daily adoration and worship to God. A balanced, biblical prayer life absolutely requires consistent time in deep praise and thanksgiving to God.

- We must make adequate space in our prayer time to experience genuine praise and thanksgiving to God.
- Our primary purpose is to praise and worship the Father.
- When we get our praise right, God is even quicker to answer prayer

#### **2. Confession**

Confession is the primary way we receive God's forgiveness and maintain a Spirit-filled life. A balanced, biblical prayer life requires significant time in regular confession to God. Only then can God keep us truly filled and empowered by the Holy Spirit.

- Consistent confession and cleansing represent the primary ways we grow and become conformed to the image of Christ. According to Psalm 66:18, failure to practice regular confession completely blocks the flow of answered prayer. "If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened."
- Confession must be thorough. Psalm 139, "Search me O God and see if there is any offensive way in me"

#### **3. Petition**

Petition is the type of prayer in which we present our individual needs and desires to God. A balanced prayer life is built on personal petitions that are biblically based.

- There is certainly nothing selfish about presenting our needs to God. He wants us to come to Him with every need and concern.
- It is critical that we learn to focus our personal petitions on God's greatest priorities for our lives, to ask petitions that bring the most eternal good.

#### 4. **Intercession**

Intercession is the type of prayer that focuses on the needs of others. A biblically balanced prayer life must include consistent intercession for our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ.

- Intercession is a broad category of prayer that covers anything from praying for the lost to praying for God's blessing on a great evangelist or pastor.
- God has ordained intercession as the *primary* way He works to save the lost and empower the church.
- God has called all believers to intercession.

#### 5. **Meditation**

Mediation is the act of reflecting on God's Word and quietly listening for His still small voice. A biblically balanced prayer life includes time to pause and listen for God's still small voice. He speaks most to those who consistently still their hearts to listen.

- A healthy relationship must be two-way! When we pray we talk to God; when we mediate He talks to us.
- In prayer time, meditation is the period in which you quietly reflect on your Scripture reading and the impressions God has given.
- Through meditating, you learn to hear God's leading.
- "Listening to God" is the fundamental key to an effective prayer life.

I strongly recommend that you keep a daily prayer journal. Write down any impressions or scriptures God gives you.

### **Why All The Prayer Types Are Essential**

A balanced, biblical prayer life requires making the daily choice and commitment to allow God to lead you in a full rich relationship with Himself.

The consistent practice of each prayer type is absolutely essential to a powerful well-rounded relationship with God. If you neglect regular time in adoration, praise and thanksgiving, you are neglecting personal worship which is the first and primary thing God desires. If you neglect regular confession and cleansing, God will not hear your prayers. When you neglect intercession, you are neglecting a primary command God has given to all believers.

Many people do not view prayer as a rich personal relationship with Christ, but more as a means to secure their own perceived needs or wants. In the lives of far too many, prayer consists of a few personal petitions with little or no intercession for larger, spiritual concerns.

A balanced, biblical prayer life does not happen by accident. To grow in prayer, a believer should understand two things...

1. All five prayer types need to be a significant part of their daily prayer life.
2. Believers must make the commitment to seek growth in the various types of prayer.