LESSON 21

Prayer

Read: Matthew 6:5-15; Luke 11:1-13; Romans 8:26

A Pastoral Message

Prayer proceeds from a high view of God. The God to whom we pray is majestic and great. In His marvelous condescending mercy, He has provided a place of refuge, a throne of grace. To this wondrous throne He welcomes the poor and the needy, the helpless and the oppressed, the lonely and the wretched, the vile and the guilty.

No case is too desperate for the One who sits on this throne. His mercy is higher than the very heavens. Christ, the crucified and risen Redeemer, is the new and living way of approach to the throne of grace. Guilty sinners should approach God only through the blood of God's dear Son.

God the Holy Spirit is the secret of all true prayer. He instills desire in the heart. He convinces the sinner of his deep need. He discloses to the heart and mind the wonder of God's mercy in Christ. God only hears and answers prayer for Christ's sake and the Holy Spirit teaches to pray from the heart.

In order to pray aright, we must pray for light to discover and know our true state and condition before God, so that we may humbly plead with Him for mercy. We need such light as only the Holy Spirit can provide.

Therefore, strange as it may appear, we must pray before we begin to pray.

I. What Is Prayer?

1. What is prayer?
   (a) Prayer is the humble expression of our sincere desires and is directed to God who hears and answers only for Christ's sake.
   (b) Prayer is the acknowledgement of our absolute dependence on God.
   (c) Prayer is the breathing of a soul that humbly trusts in God for all its needs.
2. Q. To whom should we pray?
   A. To God alone, Who can help us and will hear us for Christ's sake.
3. Q. How should we pray?
   A. In sincerity and with childlike humility and trust.

4. We speak of prayer as talking to God or communing with God.

   How is prayer described in:

   (a) 1 Samuel 15:11c? "And he _ _ _ _ _ unto the _ _ _ _ all night."

   (b) 1 Samuel 1:15c? "But have _ _ _ _ _ _ out my soul before the _ _ _ _ ."

5. Which three things did the children of Israel do that caused God to remember His covenant with Abraham and have respect unto them? (Exodus 2:23-25)

   (a) Israel _ _ _ _ _ _ by reason of their bondage,

   (b) And they _ _ _ _ _ , and their _ _ _ came up unto God…

   (c) And God heard their _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ .

When we read the Bible, God speaks to us. When we pray, we speak to God. Prayer is a duty we should be constantly active in. In 1 Thessalonians 5:17 Paul writes, "Pray without ceasing." We often read of Jesus praying. Sometimes He arose early in the morning to pray. Sometimes He prayed all night.

If Jesus, God's Son, felt the need of communing with His Father, how much more should we be in prayer!

II. To Whom Should We Pray?

1. Q. To whom may we pray?

   A. We ought to pray to the one true God only.

   (a) "I am the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: _ _ _ _ thy _ _ _ _ _ wide, and I _ _ _ _ fill it" (Psalm 81:10).

   (b) "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ thou serve" (Matthew 4:10b).

2. We ought to pray to God only. He has manifested Himself to us in His Word. He alone is everywhere present, and He alone is almighty.

   (a) Therefore, He alone can h _ _ _ and a _ _ _ _ _ prayer.

   (b) "He that planted the _ _ _ , shall _ _ not _ _ _ _? _ _ that formed the _ _ _ , shall _ _ not _ _ _?" (Psalm 94:9)

   (c) "And _ _ _ _ upon _ _ in the day of _ _ _ _ _ _ _ : I will _ _ _ _ _ _ _ thee, and thou shalt _ _ _ _ _ _ _ me" (Psalm 50:15).

   (d) "He shall _ _ _ _ upon _ _ , and I will _ _ _ _ _ _ him" (Psalm 91:15).

III. The Elements of Prayer

(1) Worship

When we come to God in prayer, we should never omit to worship Him. He means so much to us. God is our glorious Maker; He made us in such a wondrous way. God is our daily Provider; He cares for us each moment. God is the most gracious Redeemer from sin. God is so worthy of our adoration and worship.

"O come, let us _ _ _ _ _ _ and bow down: let us _ _ _ _ _ before the LORD our _ _ _ _ _ " (Psalm 95:6).

(2) Confession

No one can approach God without being aware of his sin. We must always confess our sins when we pray. Unconfessed sin causes a barrier between God and us so that He will not hear. In what words is this taught?

1. (a) "If I regard _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ in my _ _ _ _ _ , the _ _ _ _ will not _ _ _ _ me" (Psalm 66:18).
   (b) "He that covereth his _ _ _ _ shall not _ _ _ _ _ _ _ : but whoso _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ and _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ them shall have _ _ _ _ _ " (Proverbs 28:13).
2. What promise is given to all who sincerely confess their sins? "If we _ _ _ _ _ _ _ our _ _ _ _ , he is faithful and just to _ _ _ _ _ _ _ us our sins, and to _ _ _ _ _ _ _ us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

(3) Thanksgiving

1. "It is a good thing to give _ _ _ _ _ _ unto the _ _ _ _ " (Psalm 92:1a).
2. "In every thing _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ " (1 Thessalonians 5:18a).
3. In Luke 17:12-19 we read about Jesus healing the ten lepers.
   Q. How many returned to the Saviour to give thanks? A. O_ _ _ _ _ _ .
   Q. How many failed to return and give thanks? A. _ _ _ _ .

(4) Supplications

Supplications are humble, sincere, and urgent petitions for those things which we and others need. Remember, the sinner's most urgent need is mercy!
Without God's mercy you are most miserable and will be lost forever! Plead and plead for mercy. Pray for acceptance in God's sight. Plead the sacrifice of Christ's amazing love. Pray until the Lord hears your urgent cry:

"Mercy, good Lord, mercy I ask,
This is the total sum;
For mercy, Lord, is all my suit;
O let Thy mercy come!"

1. What did Jesus promise in Matthew 7:7?

   “A _ _ , _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ .”

   “S _ _ _ , _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ .”

   “K _ _ _ _ , and _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ .”

2. Q. What did the Saviour promise in John 16:23b?

   A. “Whatsoever ye _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ the Father in _ _ _ _ _ _ , _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ it _ _ _ .”

3. May we pray to God about all our cares, even the smallest matters? (1 Peter 5:7, 8)

   (a) Yes.

   (b) No.

   Underline the correct answer.

4. Q. How did the Apostle Peter answer this question in 1 Peter 5:7?

   A. “Casting _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ upon _ _ _ ; for _ _ careth for _ _ _ .”

1. Prayer is the soul’s sincere desire,
Unuttered or expressed;
The motion of a hidden fire
That trembles in the breast.

2. Prayer is the burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear,
The upward glancing of the eye,
When none but God is near.

3. Prayer is the contrite sinner’s voice
Returning from his ways,
While angels in their songs rejoice,
And cry, “Behold, he prays!”

4. O Thou, by whom we come to God,
The Life, the Truth, the Way!
The path of prayer Thyself hast trod;
Lord, teach us how to pray.

by James Montgomery

Evaluator: ___________________________