

Prayer: Study #12

Praise

It's always a joy to be able to share the Word of God with you, and I'm glad you've joined me once again today for "It's a Good Life." We've been going through our study on "Prayer: Supernatural Contact" for several weeks now. Today, we will end our study on prayer by looking at a subject that I'm sure it may surprise you; it may not; and my prayer for you is that you are having a private time with the Lord, that you are being alone with him. Now it's good to pray with your family, but it's also good for you to have a personal, private time with the Lord.

Today, we're going to look at our twelfth subject today on how to approach God, how to have this private time with the Lord. And let me say that, if you look at these twelve subjects that we've gone through, twelve aspects of prayer of your private time with the Lord, if you will only spend five minutes each on these things, it may surprise you to find that you will spend an hour alone with the Lord.

You say, "Well, I don't have an hour to spend with the Lord." Well, let me invite you to get up a little bit early or let me invite you to stay up a little later at night and spend this time with the Lord. Start out with these twelve things, even if you just spend two minutes each, training yourself, that you spend this time alone with the Lord, I believe that you'll find that, as you pray, the more you pray, the longer your prayer time is going to be with the Lord and you can't go wrong when you're talking with our Heavenly Father.

Now, up to this point, we've looked at praise, confession, waiting, Scripture praying, intercession, supplication, personal needs, thanksgiving, singing, meditation, listening, and last time, we talked about the Psalms, reading the

psalms back to the Lord. Now, today, we want to look at something that we started out with. Now, you started your prayer time with praise, and there's no better way to end your prayer time than with praise. In Psalm 50 and verse 23, it says, *Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God.* In our private time with the Lord, we need to praise Him. We started out with praise in our prayer time, and we need to end our prayer time with praising the Lord.

Someone has asked what is the best time to pray. When should we pray? When should we have a private time with the Lord. Well, I personally think it's good to start your day with prayer. James Hudson Taylor said this: "Do not have your concert first and then tune your instrument afterwards. Begin the day with the Word of God and prayer and get, first of all, into harmony with Him." And I believe that a good way to start our day is to maybe get up just a little bit early and have that private time with the Lord. There's something about the quietness of the morning that will bring us close to the Lord.

J. Hudson Taylor mentioned about reading the Word and prayer. Well, if you'll notice through our study on "Prayer: Supernatural Contact," the Word of God is there. As you're praying, you do read the Word of God back to the Lord and you're reading it to yourself and your singing psalms to Him, hymns, psalms, and songs, and you're talking to the Lord. And you need to start your day with that.

But what is the best time to pray? Well, the best time to pray is in the morning, midmorning, at noon, afternoon, late noon, at night, midnight, whenever you pray is the best time to pray and

talk to the Lord. It's when you talk to the Lord. That is the best time....is when you are praying and talking to the Lord.

In Psalm 145, and we're going to read verses 1 through 13, it says:

¹*I will extol thee, my God, O king; and I will bless thy name for ever and ever.* ²*Every day will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name for ever and ever.* ³*Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is unsearchable.* ⁴*One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts.* ⁵*I will speak of the glorious honour of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous works.* ⁶*And men shall speak of the might of thy terrible acts: and I will declare thy greatness.*

⁷*They shall abundantly utter the memory of thy great goodness, and shall sing of thy righteousness.* ⁸*The LORD is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy.* ⁹*The LORD is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works.* ¹⁰*All thy works shall praise thee, O LORD; and thy saints shall bless thee.* ¹¹*They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power;* ¹²*To make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom.* ¹³*Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations.* Psalm 145, verses 1 through 13.

You know, as Jesus was riding into....we call it the triumphal entry.... as He went forth, some of the Pharisees and Sadducees and all those people who were standing around, they said, "Why don't you tell these people to be quiet?" And you remember they were saying, "Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna, praise God," and they were just praising God to the highest. And these Pharisees told Jesus, "You need to tell these people to be quiet." And Jesus said, "If they are quiet, if I tell them to be quiet, if they're quiet, even the stones would cry out."

Well, why is that? It's because He was God, because you cannot keep the glory of God quiet. The glory of God will come out. Whether we praise Him or not, He will be praised, and we have such a great privilege of being able to go to God and praise Him for His mighty works, for His graciousness towards us.

Well, let me give you a few ideas for praise. Praise the Lord for the time you have been able to spend with Him in prayer during this private time. Just thank Him. Praise Him for the time you've been able to spend with Him. Praise Him for being there for you, that He, the Creator, would be there for you for Him to listen to you. And praise Him for the thoughts He has given you while you've been having this private time.

In Psalms chapter 40 and verse, it says, *Many, O LORD my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered.* Psalm 139:17 says, *How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!* We need to praise Him for the time we spent with Him and that He's taken time to spend with us. But we also need to praise Him for the thoughts that He has given us during this time of praise and prayer.

And I see something else. We need to praise Him for the requests He has brought to our attention. In II Timothy chapter 1 and verse 3, Paul the apostle says this, *I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day;*

As you pray and talk to the Lord, and I've found this in my prayer time with Him, I can be praying for specific things in my life and for others, but there are times when God will recall something to my mind and my heart that I need to be praying for. I wasn't even thinking about, maybe a

specific person that I need to be praying for. He will bring requests to your attention as you are praying, and we need to thank Him for that. We need to thank Him that He thinks enough of us that He will call this person or this need to our attention and that we can ask Him to take care of that need, to take care of that person, save that person who needs to be saved, whatever that request that He may call to our attention is, we need to thank Him for that, and we need to praise Him for that.

Well, as I said before, if you take five minutes of your time on each one of these subjects that we've listed in our prayer time, you will spend one hour with the Lord in prayer. Only five minutes each on each one of these twelve things that we've talked about during our study of prayer.

Well, why spend an hour in prayer? In Matthew chapter 26, verses 20 through 46, we read an account of the Lord that, after the Lord's Supper was instituted, He took His disciples and went down into a place called Gethsemane. And He left some of the disciples there and He walked a little further with three other of His apostles, and He said, "I want you to wait here. Wait here because I'm going just a little further." And it says in verse 37 of Matthew 26, *And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy.*

Well, why should we spend an hour alone with the Lord in prayer? First, I see that we are to tarry and watch. According to Matthew chapter 26 and verse 38, the Bible says, *Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.* We are to tarry and we are to watch with the Lord. Christ wants us to pray. In Matthew 26 and verse 40, it says, *And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour?*

And I submit to you today and I ask you, could you not spend one hour alone with the Lord? Possibly not every day. I pray that you would. Maybe one time a week you would take time to spend at least one hour alone with the Lord in prayer because He wants us to.

And I see also that we are to pray so we will not enter into temptation. Matthew 26:41 speaks of this, and then we are to pray because the flesh is weak, also Matthew 26 and verse 41.

I Peter 4:7 says, *But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.* First Thessalonians 5:6 says, *Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.* In Luke 12:37, it says, *Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.*

We are to pray. We are to seek the Lord. And I believe that we should pray at least one hour. One hour, and if you can't do that every day, try at least once a week to spend one hour alone with the Lord.

Do you know Him today as your Savior? Have you trusted Him? Do you know Him? If not, may I invite you to receive him into your heart right now. The Bible says to as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, the children of God. To those people who will call upon His name, for whosoever shall upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. If you'll trust Him today as your Savior, He'll make it possible for you to go to Heaven. You could say something like this, "Lord Jesus, come into my heart. I receive You as my Lord and Savior." If you'll do that and if you ask Him and if you mean it in your heart, the Bible says that He will save you and make it possible for you to have eternal life. Won't you do that today?

If you are saved and you've turned away from Him and you're not serving Him, may I invite you to bow your head and say, "Lord, forgive me. Cleanse me from all the things that have been in my life. I dedicate myself anew to You today." And if you'll pray that, God's waiting for you and He wants you to be able to serve Him and bring honor and glory to Him.

Well, it's been good being with you today. Let me remind you that you can look at our website, www.LRWM.org and download a transcript of this program and other programs of "It's a Good Life." You can also write to me: Lewis Woodard, 497 Judith Avenue, Fruitland Park, FL 34731, and I'll be glad to send to you free of charge a transcript of this program, "It's a Good Life."

May the Lord bless you richly is my prayer.