

## Week Three Training Tips: Talking to the Trainer

*personal / group study for use with the message on January 30, 31, 2010*

Use these tips as a Monday through Friday study guide.

### Introduction.

**Prayer is a conversation with God. It can occur at any moment, during any situation of every day. It is like having direct, constantly access to your trainer. God is the One who is overseeing the spiritual growth process in your life.**

### Read.

1. Study the prayer life of Jesus in the following passages. What do you learn from His example? His patterns? His teachings on prayer?

Luke 3:21  
 Luke 4:1  
 Luke 6:12  
 Luke 9:18  
 Luke 9:28,29  
 Luke 11:1-13  
 Luke 18:1-8  
 Luke 22:32  
 Luke 22:40-46  
 Matthew 14:23  
 Matthew 19:13  
 Matthew 26:36-46  
 Mark 1:35  
 John 17:1

2. Look at the prayers of the apostle Paul, those recorded in his letters to the churches. What kinds of things did Paul pray for? What didn't he pray for? Anything you can learn from His example? (If you are in a group, have each person read one of the passages; then discuss.)

Ephesians 1:15-19  
 Ephesians 3:16-19  
 Philippians 1:9-11  
 Colossians 1:9-12  
 Colossians 4:12  
 1Thessalonians 3:10  
 2Thessalonians 1:11, 12  
 2Thessalonians 3:1, 2

### Questions.

#### ThinkAboutIt...

3. The “**Lord’s Prayer**” (Matthew 6:9-13) provides a very simple ‘pattern’ for prayer.

This, then, is how you should pray:

“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name (Praise and Worship)  
 Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. (Submission/Trust)  
 Give us today our daily bread. (Request for basic needs.)

Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. (Confession)  
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.” (Request for Protection)

Having a simple “pattern” or “template” for your praying DOES NOT MEAN that you fall into the habit of just reciting a set of words. It means that you follow basic patterns or categories to help you organize your prayer time. Here are some other patterns you might try:

**ACTS** – Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication.

**CHAT** – Confess, Honor, Ask, Thank.

**PAPA** – Present yourself to God without pretense.  
Attend to how you’re thinking of God.  
Purge yourself of anything blocking your relationship with God.  
Approach God as your first love, the Person you want to know above all else.  
(See Larry Crabb’s newest book: The PAPA Prayer.)

**ARMOR:** Pray through the various aspects of the Spiritual Armor (Ephesians 6:10-18).

**PRAY PSALMS:** Take a Psalm, any Psalm. Read it line by line, using each line to guide you in forming some prayer to God. Learning to “pray Scripture” is an excellent way to grow your prayer life. This also teaches you how to pray wisely!

\*\*\***One of the best ways to learn to pray is to ask someone to help you.** The disciples asked Jesus one day: “Lord, teach us to pray.” So, He did! Maybe you need to find someone who really seems to have a strong prayer life and ask them to teach you how to pray. Don’t be ashamed to do so. Every one of us started as babes in prayer, not know what to say or how to say it! You’ve got to start somewhere!

#### ReflectOnIt...

4. Look at all the various kinds of prayers in the Bible. Following are samples, taken from the Old Testament. Do you see how prayer can take almost any form of conversation between you and God, in any kind of situation?

A prayer of praise . . . .  
O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! (Psalm 8:1)

I will praise you, O Lord, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonders.  
I will be glad and rejoice in you; I will sing praise to your name, O Most High.  
(Psalm 9:1)

A prayer of trust . . . .  
You, O Lord, are a shield around me;  
You bestow glory on me and lift up my head.  
To the Lord I cry aloud, and He answers me from His holy hill.

I lie down and sleep; I wake again, because the Lord sustains me.  
I will not fear the tens of thousands drawn up against me on every side.  
(Psalm 3:3-6)

A prayer for protection . . . .  
O Lord my God, I take refuge in you; save and deliver me  
from all who pursue me, or they will tear me like a lion  
and rip me to pieces with no one to rescue me.  
(Psalm 7:1,2)

A prayer for forgiveness . . . .  
At the evening offering I arose from my humiliation, even with my garment and my robe torn, and I fell on my knees and stretched out my hands to the Lord my God; and I said, “O my God, I am ashamed and embarrassed to lift up my face to Thee, my God, for our iniquities have risen above our heads, and our guilt has grown even to the heavens” (Ezra 9:5,6).

A prayer for guidance . . .  
Teach me your way, O LORD; lead me in a straight path because of my oppressors (Psalm 27:11).

From the ends of the earth I call to you, I call as my heart grows faint; lead me to the rock that is higher than I (Psalm 61:2).

A prayer of a broken spirit . . . .  
Hear my cry, O God; give heed to my prayer.  
From the end of the earth I call to Thee, when my heart is faint;  
Lead me to the rock that is higher than I  
(Psalm 61:1,2).

The point is: You can pray about anything, anytime, in any way to the Father. There is really no limit to how you can talk to God. Furthermore, the psalms show us that emotion should be involved in our prayers. We need to be honest with God about how we are feeling, even as we ask Him for help with a spirit of reverence.

5. A lot of people have trouble understanding the promises of prayer in the Bible. Certain passages seem to say that if you want anything, then all you have to do is ask in faith and you'll get it. This sort of thinking has formed the basis of much "name it and claim it" theology (which is really bad stuff). I want you to take a close look at some passages of Scripture. I want you to answer the questions as I pose them after each passage:

Ask, and it shall be given to you. Seek, and you shall find.  
Knock, and it shall be opened to you. For every one who asks receives,  
and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it shall be opened (Matthew 7:7,8).

What does this tell you about prayer? If the verbs "ask, seek, knock" are all in Present tense in Greek (signaling ongoing, continuous action), then what does this tell you about Jesus' main point in this section on prayer? Is it about getting anything? Or, is it about persistence in making the ask?

If you abide in Me and My words abide in you,  
ask whatever you wish, and it will be given to you (John 15:7).

What condition does Jesus place on prayer in the above passage? What does it mean to "abide in Christ?" To have His words "abide in us?" Look up "abide" in a dictionary.

And whatever you ask in My name, that will I do,  
that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you  
ask Me anything in My name, I will do it (John 14:13,14).

What is the goal of answered prayer, according to John 14:13? It's in the middle!

Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God. And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight (1John 3:21,22).

What does obedience have to do with the expectation that our prayers will be answered?

And this is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him (1John 5:14,15).

Does the above passage teach us that we can ask for absolutely anything, and God is expected to give it, if we just pray in faith? Or, is there a condition?

### **RespondTolt...**

What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel

and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures (James 4:1-3).

James is telling people why many of their prayers go unanswered. Why is that?

So, you see, the simple “name it and claim it” formula is not scriptural. We need a balanced approach that mingles great faith in God to do anything WITH great sensitivity to the will, desire and heart of God, rather than our own desires. Real prayer has a lot to do with living in close fellowship with our Father.

Following are some great quotes from Andrew Murray, a spiritual giant who wrote much on Prayer. I think he brings together the balance between living in fellowship with God and asking God for pretty much anything.

It is only when the whole life, in all its parts, is given up to God’s glory, that we can really pray to His glory too. “Do all to the glory of God, “ and, “Ask all to the glory of God.” These twin commands are inseparable: obedience to the former is the secret of grace for the latter. A life to the glory of God is the condition of the prayers that Jesus can answer, “that the Father may be glorified.”

What is the true child-life? The answer can be found in any home. The child that by preference forsakes the father’s house, that finds no pleasure in the presence and love and obedience of the father, and still thinks to ask and obtain what he will, will surely be disappointed. On the contrary, he to whom the feelings and will and honor and love of the father are the joy of his life, will find that it is the father’s joy to grant his requests.

The childlike privilege of asking all is inseparable from the childlike life under the leading of the Spirit. He that gives himself to be led by the Spirit in his life, will be led by Him in his prayer, too.

Live as a child of God, then you will be able to pray as a child, and as a child you will most assuredly be heard.

*\*All scripture taken from the New International Version (NIV) unless otherwise noted.*

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