

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION & SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

—We've had a short break in our study series focusing specific attention on prayer. Here's a brief review of some of the truths we emphasized in our initial study. It might be helpful to start by looking at each of these ideas and asking a question related to each one of them.

Prayer is ACKNOWLEDGING our DEPENDENCE of God!

—We all have some routines, habits, or activities that are a regular part of our lifestyles that we use to eliminate stress or to help us to relax and unwind. How can we determine whether these have become a substitute for spending time in prayer? Why is it beneficial for us to honestly acknowledge our dependence on God by asking Him to show us the idols we worship?

Prayer RE-DIRECTS our ATTENTION toward God!

—What are some steps we might take to eliminate the distractions that pull our focus away from the priorities God wants us to have?

Prayer RELIEVES our ANXIETIES!

—How can we recognize when anxiety is becoming a problem?

Prayer RENEWS our ATTITUDE!

—How can we best recognize when our attitude needs an adjustment? How do we react when someone suggests to us that we might need an attitude check?

—**These initial questions are designed to stimulate our thinking and prepare us for what we'll find in this lesson.**

- 1) Can you remember a time when you (also, maybe a family member or a close friend) were frustrated or disappointed by what seemed like an unanswered prayer request?
- 2) Why is it important for us to recognize the difference between our wants or wishes and our needs?
- 3) How do you determine the difference between a desire that's driven by temptation and one that's based on a need?
- 4) When is knowing God's will easiest to determine?

—**Discussion questions that relate to various points & applications given within the sermon:**

Please carefully read and observe Matthew 6:5–10; Luke 22:39–42; John 17:1–5; and 1 John 5:14–15.

- 1} In Matthew 6:5–10, what is Jesus teaching about the importance of our motives when we pray?
- 2} In that same passage, how would you describe Jesus' warning about long prayers that are flowery and colorful, but void of any valid requests?
- 3} One of the applications given in the conclusion of this sermon was, "**Prayer is TRUSTING that Our Father ALWAYS KNOWS what's BEST.**" What personal thoughts do you have about this idea?
- 4} What Jesus taught wasn't a **memorized** prayer, but a **model** prayer providing a **method** for us to follow!
—We **ADDRESS** our Father in Heaven, whose name should be respected and revered!
—We **ASK** according to God's will!
—Our **ACCESS** is through the provision made for us by Jesus Christ!
Please take some time to consider the importance of these ideas and possibly discuss them with someone else.
- 5} Noting what Jesus prayed on the night before He was crucified (see Luke 22:39–42 & John 17:1–5). What does this teach us about being open and honest with God in our prayers? What does this teach us about praying that we would be able to follow/fulfill God's will?
- 6} Please pause and ponder the reality that prayer is a **PERSONAL INTERACTION** with Our Heavenly Father. What impact does that truth have on your relationship with God?

Parents: Here are some simple suggestions about teaching your children about prayer. —1— Using Matthew 6:7, help them see that prayer should be a natural and normal communication with God. —2— Model prayer for them by praying with them. —3— Celebrate times when God answers prayer! —4— Be spontaneous with prayer!