

Victoria Fellowship Church
International & Interdenominational
Bible Study Worksheet – October 11, 2020

Theme: Spiritual Discipline for Christian Growth. Topic: Spiritual Discipline: Prayer

Main Text: Matthew 6:5-15; 26:36-46; Luke 6: 12-19.

Key verse: Matthew 6:6 *“But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.”* (NKJV)

INTRODUCTION: As we highlighted last week, spiritual discipline refers to the rigorous spiritual training required to imbibe godly habit patterns which are necessary for victorious Christian living. The spiritual discipline of prayer compliments the discipline of the word. And with all disciplines, it needs to be taught, practiced; and takes time to nurture. In the Luke account of Jesus’ teaching about prayer, we are told that the teaching was in response to a request by one of His disciples *“When Jesus had finished praying, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his followers to pray.”* (Luke 11:1 CEV). Since prayer is conversing with God, then Jesus was teaching His disciples how to have a conversation with God. Good and regular conversation is vital for building and sustaining any meaningful relationship with family and friends. It is equally important in cultivating a close relationship with God.

1. (a) Identify some dos and don’ts of prayer as recorded in Matthew 6:6-13. (b) How will you use these guidelines to help someone who tells you that (s)he does not know how to pray (c) Jesus said, ‘But when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private’ (Matthew 6:6 NLT). Do you think this is against public and corporate prayer? Why or why not?

When we look at Jesus’ teaching on prayer, we see that attitude and practice are both important components of effective prayer. Praying is not supposed to be repetitious chants, nor should it be an occasion to impress others with our religious fervors or diction or oratory skills. Jesus said, *“In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven...”* (Matthew 6:9a). He then went ahead to give some broad outline of what our prayers should focus on.

2. (a) Read Matthew 6:9-13 and identify at least 6 broad areas we should focus our prayer. (b) Jesus taught that prayer is approaching our Father in heaven. How helpful is this knowledge in the practice of prayer and in the things we pray for? (c) If we are to focus prayer on these 6 or more broad areas, what is the implication when we do not pray or when we pray only for personal needs?

Jesus taught how to pray. He also modelled it. Prayer was an integral part of His life while on earth in human form. He prayed for different things, different occasions and in various contexts. He prayed for Himself as well as for others and for His ministry. And as has been said, every discipline makes demands on those who seek it. It is no different for the spiritual discipline of prayer. One classic example of the discipline of prayer is on the night of His arrest. Jesus had gone with His disciples to a usual quiet place. Needing encouragement, He invited Peter, James, and John to keep watch with Him. But they had difficulty staying awake. (Matthew 26:38-45)

3. (a) What do we see in Matthew 26:38-41, 43; Luke 6:12 to suggest the effort required to attain the discipline of prayer? (b) What are some reasons why we should seek to cultivate the discipline of prayer? See Matthew 26:41; Luke 21:34-36; Ephesians 6:18-20, Philippians 1:19, etc. (c) What adjustments do you need to make to be more disciplined in prayer?

Prayer: Lord Jesus, thank You for teaching us to pray. Please help us to identify and overcome those things which keep us from being disciplined in the place of prayer so that we can become more victorious in our Christian walk in Jesus Name, Amen.