"Prayer projects faith in God, and God on the world... Only God can move mountains, but faith and prayer move God" (E.M. Bounds, *The Necessity of Prayer*, p10).

Most of us would consider the above quote to be correct-- and it is. In this section of our lesson(s) on prayer (learning, again, 11 different aspects of prayer that if prayed for 5 minutes apiece-- praise being prayed twice, once as the opener and once as the closer-- such that we can pray for one hour each day), we deal with the practical source of that faith-- and what can be much of the fuel for that prayer.

We have looked at prayer as the first __________:

- Praise
- Waiting
- Confession
- Praying Scripture

Now, we look at prayer from the angle of the ___________, praying Scripture. This is an important aspect of prayer-- one of the most important-- because...

- God's Word is ____________-- so we know that these prayers are given by His Holy Spirit (as opposed to prayers that ramble, etc.).

- God's Word speaks of His ____________-- so we know that we are not overlaying our will, and putting "his name" on it. If we pray Scripture, we know that we are always praying what God has already said that He wants.

- God's Word is the primary source of ____________-- particularly if we pray out loud (which, remember, I mentioned was important to do during confession, too-- in fact, most praying is best done out loud rather than silently. Somehow, in the church we have concocted the mis-blown notion that prayer should be quiet-- Biblically, the opposite is true).

  - Note what the Bible says about faith and Scripture:

    - Romans 10:17, "So then, faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (note, the out loud nature of this faith-building venture!).

    - God’s Word is a constant ____________ of the prayer warriors in the Bible (notice Psalm 119, the theme of that psalm being the Scripture itself):

      - Psalm 119:42b-43, "For I trust in Your Word. And take not the Word of truth utterly out of my mouth..."
Psalm 119:172, "My tongue shall speak of Your Word, for all Your commandments are righteousness..."

God's Word is given to us to ___________ Jesus-- to help us know Him better. This, of course, is also the first purpose of prayer-- to know God. Notice what Jesus Himself said of this, that Scripture was not given to us to simply impart information, but to grip and change our hearts, so that we might know Him:

John 5:39-40, "You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are them which testify of me. But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life!"

Others have spoken about the _______________ of knowing God's Word-- and specifically how this relates to prayer:

- "There are only 3 classes of people in the world today: Those who are afraid, those who do not know enough to be afraid, and those who know their Bibles" (unknown source, quoted in Dick Eastman, The Hour that Changes the World, pp53-54).

- "The degree to which we believe in God's Word and apply it to prayer is the degree to which God will pour out His power in our prayer" (Eastman, 54, emphasis added). Notice the theme here of actually using the words of Scripture as part of our prayer-- and compare, again, with Romans 10:17.

- "One of these days some simple soul will pick up the Book of God and read it, and believe it. The rest of us will be embarrassed. We have adopted the convenient theory that the Bible is a book to be explained, whereas first and foremost, it is a book to be believed (and after that to be obeyed)" (Leonard Ravenhill, Why Revival Tarries, p59).

- "Fasting and long hours of prayer do not build faith. Reading books about faith and men of faith and their exploits stirs in the heart of deep passion for faith, but it does not build faith. The Word is the source of faith" (E.W. Kenyon, In His Presence, p32).

- "Little of the Word with little prayer is death to the spiritual life. Much of the Word with little prayer gives a sickly life. Much prayer with little of the Word gives more life, but without steadfastness. A full measure of the Word and prayer each day gives a healthy & powerful life" (Andrew Murray, The Prayer Life, p107).

Notice the schematic in Murray's quote:

- Little Word + Little Prayer = _________ (which is an obvious point)
• Much Word + Little Prayer = ______________ (i.e., this is often people who become legalistic, etc., and use the Bible as ammunition-- they have the head knowledge, but no heartfelt intimacy).

• Little Word + Much Prayer = __________ __________. That is, more than the above options-- but without spiritual stamina, for there is no foundation.

• Much Word + Much Prayer = _____ __________. And, here, we are trying to mesh these two ingredients together, not seeing them as two distinctive activities... That is, we do not want to neglect either one.

One of the best ways to blend the Word and prayer is to actually pray the Scriptures, in addition to your intellectual study of them.

• As we do this we want to take God's Word and:
  • Learn it, as well as _________ it.
  • Read it, as well as hear God __________ to us in it.
  • Read it, and ________ _________ to God using it (this third point is where we rarely land-- and we want to do all three of these things).

• "When we neglect the daily quiet, meditative reading of God's Word, we block the life-line to God's throne of grace. Our abiding in Christ through the Word is a lie process that must never cease" (Lehman Strauss, Sense & Nonsense About Prayer, p65).

God's Word provides us with:

• God's ____________.

• God's ____________ -- also known as His way (the general direction in which He desires for all people to go).

• God's ________________ (this is not a typo-- the same word is used in two different ways. Here, we are speaking of the specific details He has for each of us individually).

God's Voice.

• Define the terms:
• __________. God appeared and interacted with humans in the past.

• __________. He relayed to them what He wanted them to write, regarding His interaction with them. These writings became the Scriptures.

• __________. Copies of the stories needed to be made- to provide others with copies (there were no printing presses), as well as to translate to different languages.

• __________. When we read the Word, God reveals Himself to us through it, causing us to see Him in a new way.

• The Bible speaks of each of these terms-- here, when we talk of the Scripture as being God's voice we are centering in on the word "inspiration," meaning that the Bible was "breathed" by God (this is different than the vague use of the word "inspired" that we often use to refer to a painting, a play, or a poem).

• Several of the Scriptures that refer to this are the two following which capture this concept quite well.

  • 2 Timothy 3:16-17
  • 2 Peter 1:16-21

God's Will (the general direction in which He desires for all people to go).

• The New Testament gives us 6 verses that use this phrase "the __________ of God." Basically, it is God's will that we are saved, that we are spirit-filled, that we are sanctified, that we serve, that we are submissive to authority, and that we are willing to suffer for the Gospel.

• The Old Testament uses the term "the __________" (as in "here is the way, walk in it" and "do not get of the path, neither to the left nor to the right... but walk in the way"). This might be why the first followers of Jesus, historically, called themselves "followers of the way" until they were labeled as Christians at Antioch (by outsiders-- see Acts 11:21).

• Speaking of this aspect of prayer, one pastor writes,

  • "My brothers, see to it when morning breaks you go to God for sustenance for your spiritual life. That will make you strong against the allurements of the Devil. So many people turn out to face the temptations of the day spiritually hungry, and therefore they are attacked by the enticements of the enemy. IT is the man fed by God, spiritually and
physically, who is likely to overcome the hour of temptation" (G. Campbell Morgan, in *The Practice of Prayer*, p150).

- Notice that Jesus overcame temptation with the use of ____________ (and notice, too, that Satan actually tried to pervert the words of God to Him, just as he had done to Eve previously. Be careful that you do not fall victim to this, as many well-intentioned people do!).

God's Will (the *specific ____________* He has for each of us individually).

- The hard part of using this term is that it doesn't appear in Scripture as we might often think that it does-- when we see the term "God's will" it is usually referring to the general things that He holds to be true for all of us. However, His Word will give each of us specific details on the specific aspects of each of our lives.

- George Mueller, a man who ran multiple orphanages without ever asking for any money (yet people still sent it in!), actually declared, "I have never had an unanswered prayer!" His secret, he said, was the following:
  - He always prayed using the Scriptures, applying them to his specific circumstance.
  - He never prayed, asking God for anything, until he has Scripture to confirm that it was God's will.
  - When he prayed, he stood on that Scripture.
  - He never started praying until he had first read the Bible for a season, thereby preparing his heart.

  - "The first thing I did, after having asked in a few words the Lord's blessing upon His precious Word, was to begin to meditate on the Word of God, searching as it were into every verse to get a blessing out of it; not for the sake of the public ministry of the Word, nor for the sake of preaching on what I meditated upon, but for the sake of obtaining food for my own soul. The result I have found to be almost invariably this, that after a few minutes my soul has been led to confession, or to thanksgiving, or to intercession, or to supplication; so that, though I had not, as it were, given myself to prayer, but to meditation, yet it almost immediately, more or less, turned into prayer."
• In addition, Mueller speaks repeatedly of applying these Scriptures to the very needs he was facing-- and voicing them back to God, much like the Early Church (in Acts 4, for instance) prays God's words back to Him (they quote Psalm 2, amidst persecution).

Pray the Scriptures, applying them to your life-- whether "__________" or “__________"

• "Every promise of Scripture is a writing of God, which may be pleaded before Him as a reasonable request, 'Do as Thou has said!' The Creator will not cheat the creature who depends upon His truth; and far more, the Heavenly Father will not break His Word to His own child" (Spurgeon, in E. M. Bounds, *The Possibilities of Prayer*).

• 1 Thessalonians 2:13, speaks of God's Word "working effectively" in us.

• Psalm 119:93 speaks of the Word "giving life."

God's Words are more inspired than other words (our own) that we might pray. Remember,

• God's Word is His ____________ (He is speaking).

• God's Word declares His ____________ (what we know He wants to be true-- in ____________ the general and specific sense of our lives).

• God's Word is the source of ____________ (per Romans 10:17).

• "The Word of God is the fulcrum (support) upon which the lever of prayer is placed, and by which things are rightly moved. God has committed Himself, His purpose, and His promise to prayer. His Word becomes the basis, the inspiration of our praying, and there are circumstances under which by important prayer, we may obtain an addition or an enlargement of His promises" (E. M. Bounds, quoted by Jack Taylor, in *Prayer: Life's Limitless Reach*, p109).

• "The Scriptures are rich in material to feed and stimulate worship and adoration-- especially in the Psalms, which are God's inspired prayer books. As you read them, turn them into prayer. Vast tracts of truth await our exploration. Great themes abound-- God's holiness, sovereignty, truth, wisdom, faithfulness, patience, love, mercy-- all of which call forth our worship" (J. Oswald Chambers, *Prayer Power Unlimited*, p9).

Other resources you should consult to do this, to get started praying the Scriptures:
• Bible promise books
• Books that teach you how to pray the Scriptures
• Charts in your Bible that tell you "what to search when..."
• Also, notice the extra charts/ pages given with these notes

STUDY QUESTIONS

What is the difference between God’s will (general) and God’s will (specific) as outlined in the lesson above?

What are the general “will” of God points that were discussed above? What do each mean? And, how might they enrich your prayer times?

What was George Mueller’s strategy in prayer? How did he always end up with an “answered prayer,” as opposed to an unanswered one?

List three things you are praying about right now- three real requests.

Find a concordance, or a Bible promise book, or a list from another resource and write verses that address each of the concerns you have.

Pray God’s Word over each concern.