



*Saint Mark's Church
Sunday School*

The Lord is our teacher and example of prayer

Code: 9/NT/3

1. General Aims of the unit

Better Understanding of the teachings in the gospels and the basics of the spiritual life.

2. Special aims of the lesson

1. To explore the teaching of our Master about prayer; as
 - a. In His sermon on the mountain
 - ✓ It is to the Father (Matt. 6:5-6)
 - ✓ It is in secret (Matt. 6:5-6)
 - ✓ It is not in vain repetition (Matt. 6:7)
 - ✓ The model of prayer (Matt. 6:9, Luke 11:2)
 - ✓ It needs forgiveness for the others (Matt. 6:14-15, Mark 11:25-26)
 - b. On other different occasions
 - ✓ Faith and prayer (Matthew 21:22)
 - ✓ Persistence in prayer (Luke 18:1-8)
 - ✓ Guarantee of acceptance (John 16:24; Luke 11:9-10)
 - ✓ The way to receive the Holy Spirit (Luke 11:13; John 14:16)
 - ✓ Power of prayer in casting out Demons (Mark 9:29)
 - ✓ In times of disasters and hardships (Matt. 24:20; Mark 13:33; Luke 21:36)
 - ✓ A call to pray (Luke 18:1)

2. To highlight how the Lord practices the life of prayer in different aspects of His life on earth:
 - a. In His normal life
 - ✓ He used to pray always (Luke 9:18; 11:1)

 - b. Before taking important decisions
 - ✓ Choosing His disciples (Luke 6:12-13)

 - c. Before and during disastrous situation
 - ✓ In Gethsemane (Mark 14:32-40)

 - d. In His glorious events
 - ✓ Baptism (Luke 3:21-22)
 - ✓ On the transfiguration mountain (Luke 9:28-36)

3. Outcomes

By the end of this lesson the teens are able to:

1. Summarise the teachings of the Lord about prayer

2. Make a commitment to practice some of teachings of the Lord about prayer in his/her personal life.
3. Have a prayer meeting to apply the teaching of the Lord every period of time in the class (may be 2 weeks) and weekly in their homes at certain day and time.

4. Verses:

Luke 18:1 , 9:28 ; John 16:23-24

5. References

Attached articles from Hayford Bible Handbook; Thomas Nelson Publishers 1995

Lesson Material

1. To explore the teaching of our Master about prayers; and to learn from his examples.

Activity: Break the class up into 6 groups and tell each group to give a brief explanation of what they learnt about prayer from the teachings of our Lord in the following sections in the Gospels.

1. **Group 1 – (Read Matt 6:5-15)**

Sermon of the mountain

- ✓ It is to the Father (Matt. 6:5-6)
- ✓ It is in secret (Matt. 6:5-6)
- ✓ It is not in vain repetition (Matt. 6:7)
- ✓ The model of prayer (Matt. 6:9, Luke 11:2)
- ✓ It needs forgiveness for the others (Matt. 6:14-15 , Mark 11:25-26)

2. ***In other different occasions (allocate between 3 groups)***

- ✓ Faith in prayer (Matthew 21:22)
- ✓ Persistence and faith in prayer (Luke 18:1-8)
- ✓ Guarantee of acceptance if we *ask* in His Name (John 16:24 ; Luke 11:9-10)
- ✓ The way to receive the Holy Spirit (Luke 11:13 ; John 14:16)
- ✓ Power of prayer in casting out Demons (Mark 9:29)
- ✓ In times of disasters and hardships (Matt 24:20; Mark 13:33; Luke 21:36)
- ✓ A call to pray (Luke 18:1)

3. ***Allocate between 2 groups the following sections on important events in Jesus' Life; To examine and highlight how the Lord practices the life of prayer during different aspects of His life on earth:***

- a. In His normal life
 - ✓ He used to pray always (Luke 9:18 ; 11:1)
- b. Before taking important decisions

- ✓ Choosing His disciples (Luke 6:12-13)
- c. Before and during disastrous situation
 - ✓ In Gethsemane (Mark 14:32-40)
- d. In His glorious events
 - ✓ Baptism (Luke 3:21-22)
 - ✓ On the transfiguration mountain (Luke 9:28-36)

2. The where and when of personal prayer.

Discuss the concept of having a main meal and having snacks, ie when we eat throughout the day we may have breakfast, lunch and dinner. These are our main meals, however throughout the day we may have a snack such as an apple or chocolate.

It is the same with prayer. We should consider having at least two main prayers a day (morning and night) with numerous short prayers or “snacks” throughout the day.

The main prayers would be the type of prayers where we close the door on ourselves and uplift our hearts to spend some personal, quiet time with God undistracted.

However the snack prayer may be the type of prayer one may do on the bus or whilst walking down the street or before a meal. It follows the command of St Paul to pray without ceasing (1 Thes 5:17) and to pray everywhere (1 Tim 2:8) however it does not follow the command of the Lord to go into the inner room and speak to the Lord secretly (Mat 6:6).

The beauty of the secrecy is one can really open his heart before the Lord and essentially let out all there pains, sins, heart aches, desires, weaknesses, wants and needs. It's a feeling of standing naked before the Lord, and this is the sort of relationship the Lord wants to have with us. An open line of communication whereby you can say anything to him, more than you would ever tell your best friend or family.

Here lies the mistake many Christians may fall into. They may say to themselves that I pray on the train or as I'm driving but during these times your not completely giving yourself over to prayer. You might be praying but there are always distractions, noises, people, traffic etc that make you loose your concentration and therefore these prayers cannot be considered as the “main meal” type prayer.

Note: It is worth making mention of the benefit of using the agpeya as part of one's prayer routine. However, the hours of the Agpeya is for another whole dedicated lesson on its own.

3. The key sections of the fervent prayer.

It may be worthwhile handing out paper and pens an asking the class to take notes or maybe a print of the following ten points for the class to take notes against them as you go through them (see as an eg Annexure “A”, below).

- a) Thanksgiving – One must always begin by thanking God for everything he/she has. When we read the miracle of feeding the 5000 it says the Lord began by giving thanks, even though he had very little.
At this stage ask the class to give examples and write them on the board.
Explain that in Australia we have so much more and are far luckier than the majority of the world. (In 2008-2010 whilst many people were losing their jobs and their homes in most countries around the world, in Australia, this effect was hardly felt). Giving thanks should cover a multitude of things inc health, wealth, clothes, food, money, house, parents, friends, family, our freedom, our religion, our church, education etc
- b) Confession and repentance – One must always pray to the Lord to forgive them for their numerous sins. We need to ask the Lord to grant us a repentant heart so we can actually feel sorry for our sins. One should always make mention of their sins to the Lord and offer up a confession in their **PERSONAL** prayer asking for strength to overcome their sins. *(Ensure the class is aware that we don't want them blurting out their sins in class prayer)*
- c) Faith and weakness – One should always ask the Lord to increase their faith, by helping him or her to learn, memorize and understand the Bible, church rites, history etc. Also asking the Lord to give him or her strength in the face of adversary whether it be fighting against a particular temptation or speaking up for the Lord.
- d) Worship – In worship we tell our Lord that nothing is more important or valuable in our lives than Him. Not ourselves, family, friends, money etc, only the highest divine God deserves our highest respect and we should tell Him that. Remembering always the actions of the angels and the Cherubim who are constantly praising Him hiding their faces and saying, "Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of Hosts."
- e) Praying for others – The church fathers tell us that before we pray for ourselves we should learn to pray for other, especially our enemies. By doing this we soften our heart as we show the Lord how we think of others before our selves. These prayers should inc the poor needy, sick, family, friends, priest, **Sunday school teachers**, and our enemies.
- f) Adoration – The greatest desire of God is that we love Him with all of our being (Mat 22:37). In our prayers we should say to Lord "I LOVE YOU," and if as you pray you find you don't mean it then we should be asking the Lord to teach us to love him and others.
- g) Praying for oneself – Unfortunately this is the section of prayer most of us a very good at! When praying for oneself, one should always pray for spiritual gifts first. These could include loving others, asking the Lord to teach you to pray, granting you wisdom, or the fear of God etc. We can then follow these by materialistic requests such as assistance with studies and exams, new "whatever" etc etc.
- h) Praises – It's always good to inc some sort of praises or hymns within your prayer. This has a two fold benefit. One it reiterates adoration or worship, and two it changes the tone of your prayer which prevents it from being monotonous or boring.
- i) Intercession – Asking for the intercession of the saints to pray for you is very important. It's like making friends for the afterlife as well as having an extended family that will pray for you. Everyone should have some intercessory saints which should always include St Mary, St Mark the class Saint and Archangel Michael.

- j) Conclusion – Always end by asking the Lord peace and blessings in your day and or night and finish up with the Our Father...

4. Why we worship (offer metanias) during prayer.

The early fathers say that metanias are like shooting fiery arrows at the devil. Along with the psalms metanias are a very powerful tool to strengthening yourself against temptation and therefore should always form part of you daily payer routine.

The teacher should go through how a metania is done in case someone in the class is un sure.

The number of metanias completed daily is a personal matter that should be discussed with the student's confession father, on average 5-10 to begin with, increasing as they go.

4. TIPS on Prayer.

- a) If your mind wanders try praying aloud, not too loud, but enough so if someone was next to you they would hear you.
- b) Even if you don't feel like praying, force your self to stand up before the Lord in prayer. (Read Luke 18:1)
- c) Every once in while kneel while praying. It's a good habit to get into as it shows humility before the Lord.

ANNEXURE 'A'

The 10 Points To Remember When Praying.

a) Thanksgiving

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b) Confession and repentance

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c) Faith and weakness

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d) Worship

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e) Praying for others

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f) Adoration

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g) Praying for oneself

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h) Praises

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i) Intercession

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j) Conclusion

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