

Women & More

Feed on Sacred Fuel

September 20, 2012

On Sunday, September 16, 2012, each family in our church was given a copy of the book, *Forty Days of Seeking God*, by Dr. Gregory Frizzell dealing specifically with prayer, just days before our lesson on the topic. This is just like our God! Today's lesson focuses on praying Scripture—feeding on it and then speaking this 'sacred fuel' back to God in faithful, fervent prayer.

Dr. Frizzell wrote on pages 32-33 of his book: "It is God's will for every believer to saturate his mind with key Bible verses. In Matthew 4:4, Jesus said we are to *'live by every word that comes from God's mouth.'* In other words, we are to treat God's word like essential food! I wonder how many of us would go several days without food or eat only a crumb or two. Obviously, we would never so neglect physical food. Yet, countless believers neglect reading and meditating on God's word. It is little wonder so many are powerless and vulnerable."

I was thrilled with the opportunity to include this learned man's words, because they affirm the simple statement planned in this lesson: That just as we cannot live physically on past feasts of food, we cannot be long spiritually sustained on past ingestion of God's word. It will take 'daily' consumption of both to be fully fit and fortified. See, we can feed on sacred fuel—that's God's Word—or feast on fateless fancy which represents anything else. And it's our choice!

Mrs. Charles E. Cowman: "We may lay it down as an elemental principle of religion that no large growth in holiness was ever gained by one who did not take time to be often and long and alone with God...Every life that would be strong must have its Holy of Holies into which only God enters"

Familiarity with God's word will allow us to pray to Him, using His very own words—prayer saturated with the sacred fuel of Scripture prayed back to God. Remember that **prayer is not a last resort, it is a first response**, because the more we have prayed, the more God has heard! "Prayer is the talking part of a relationship," said Stuart Briscoe. "Relationships that don't talk don't grow."

Jesus set the example in Matthew 14:23. He sent the crowds away so that He could pray, and remember how He loved and had compassion on those crowds? But prayer—conversation with His Father—was paramount. And in Luke 6:12 He prayed all night long. Jesus had His priorities straight. Charles Spurgeon—"If ever one of woman born might have lived without prayer, it was our spotless, perfect Lord, and yet none was ever so much in supplication as He!"

And He laid out His expectations of us: “*when*” you pray, he said, not “*if*” you pray! The Lord’s prayer was given to us by Jesus in response to His disciple’s request: “*Teach us **how to pray***” and **NOT teach us a prayer**. It is a model and not a mold, and He wants us to pray earnestly, fervently, and continuously.

As children, we learned to include: 1) Please prayer—the ask; 2) Thank You prayer—the praise, and 3) Sorry prayer—I repent of my sin. And we learned to thank God for our food: “God is great; God is good, and we thank Him for our food. Amen!” And the “Now I lay me down to sleep” prayer, and that was all good. Psalm 141:2 “*May my **prayer** be set before you like incense; may the lifting up of my hands be like the evening sacrifice.*” As we mature in the Lord, we learn from Jesus’ prayer model in Matthew 6:9-13 that we also are to pray that:

God’s **name** be respected (v 9) “*Our Father in heaven, **hallowed be your name**, In our first lesson, we also learned that *Greater than Great; ‘Gooder’ than Good* is true for His character, and *His Name*.*

God’s **kingdom** be completed (v 10) “*your kingdom come—that as His kingdom people, we are to be thoroughly involved in His kingdom work on earth.*

God’s **will** be done (v 10) “*on earth as it is in heaven.*” Just as Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane: “*nevertheless, Your will be done*”—that God’s will, word and way be done throughout the earth.

- He will supply our physical needs starting with (v 11) “*...our daily bread.*”
- He will meet our social needs of giving and then getting forgiveness (v 12)
- He will provide our spiritual needs: deliverance from *temptation* and *the evil one* (v 13)

And for all of our prayer and petition, verse 14 gives the contingency of personal forgiveness—an ‘if’ you, ‘then’ you promise: “*For **if** you forgive men when they sin against you, (**then**) your heavenly Father will also forgive you. **15**But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.*”

Another ‘if’ you, ‘then’ you verse prepares us to pray and promises results:

2 Chronicles 7:14 “***If** My people who are called by My name, will humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, **then** will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.*”

That **if** Christians—believers in, and followers of, Christ—**will**
Humble themselves and pray

Seek My face

Turn from their wicked ways...

That **then**—our Great and Good God **will**

Hear from heaven

Forgive their sin

Heal their land.

Someone has said, “Prayer, it’s not just for dinner.” Pastor Joe Williams in a 2012 sermon encouraging us to pray, said: “Prayer can do anything God can do, but we must have a ‘right’ heart attitude toward God. Prayer travels at the speed of thought. And it hits its target every time! So there’s no defense against it.”

Some major barriers to prayer include: first and foremost, **1) prayerlessness!** Proverbs 15:8 “*The LORD detests the sacrifice of the wicked, but the prayer of the upright pleases Him.*” Next is **2) un-confessed sin;** and then a **3) lack of urgency for lost people**—understanding their desperate situation—and **4) failure to petition God to open our eyes** to what He wants us to ‘be’ and to ‘do’ for His kingdom. Psalm 119:18-20 “*Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law. 19I am a stranger on earth; do not hide your commands from me. 20My soul is consumed with longing for your laws at all times.*”

Page xx of Dr. Frizzell’s book contains: *Our Covenant to Seek God’s Face*, for each sincere believer to claim and commit to personally, as he warns and then encourages us: “Only a massive God-sent awakening can reverse today’s unprecedented darkness! We are far past being much helped by anything less...We may very well be entering just the kind of darkness that gets people desperate enough to seriously seek God. In very real ways, today’s crises may actually be a part of God’s answer to decades of prayers for revival. **Sometimes God has to shake us to our core to get people broken enough to truly return to Himself.**”

Example: On Friday evening, September 14, 2012, at the GLBA Women’s Retreat, Mark Elam, a pastor from Claremore, and one involved with the FBI as a member of OATH—*Oklahomans Against Trafficking Humans*, spoke. He told us how Oklahoma is rated at the top in the nation for human trafficking, because we’re in the middle of the U. S. where major Interstates intersect, and we’re one of the poorest states with poorer states around us.

He told about the kidnapping of young girls 12 to 13 years of age, and even as young as 5 and 6, to be beaten into submission and forced to prostitute themselves at major Truck Stops. They are dressed provocatively and, in the midnight hours to dawn are sent out through the acres of parked trucks and forced to meet exhausting quotas, bringing all the money to their captors.

OATH has been able to speak at Truckers Unions and conventions, urging ‘good guy’ truckers to call a number if they see this occurring where they’re stopped. Many of these truckers said that they saw the young girls out and assumed they were there because they wanted to be. But now that they know the situation would be vigilant and report incidents. And they’re calling!

Mark further told us about the mounting incidents of child pornography being made, usually in a home video setting, using babies and toddlers. Are we concerned yet? Young women from Asia are being brought in to slave in various industries, even nail salons, and bring all their monies to their captors. They live in dilapidated and unsanitary conditions, and are prisoners. I don't know about you, but I was so upset Friday night that I had trouble going to sleep. I cried out to God asking Him what He wanted me to do about it all.

Scripture has our answer; it is our source of guidance and its view is clear!

The synoptic gospels share about Jesus and little children: **Matthew 18:6-7** and **Mark 9:42** say about the same thing—*“But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.*

7“Woe to the world because of the things that cause people to sin! Such things must come, but woe to the man through whom they come.”

And **Luke 17:1-2** says, “Jesus said to his disciples, *“Things that cause people to sin are bound to come, but woe to that person through whom they come. 2It would be better for him to be thrown into the sea with a millstone tied around his neck than for him to cause one of these little ones to sin.”* And in **Mark 10:13-16** Jesus meets with children.

*“People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. 14When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, **Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them,** for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. 15I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.’ 16And **he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them.**”*

There is a time when reading and studying and meditating on God's word can be done, and when prayer to Him must be done. It is now—today! **Isaiah 55:6**

*“Seek the LORD
while he may be found;
call on Him
while he is near.”*

We need to pray to our God through our Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit:

♦**Friend to Friend**—**John 15:15-16**—*“I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, **I have called you friends,** for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. 16You did not choose me, but **I chose you, and appointed you to go and bear fruit**—fruit that will last. **Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.**”*

♦**Servant to Master**—**Colossians 3:23-24**—*“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, **as working for the Lord,** not for men, 24since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. **It is the Lord Christ you are serving.**”*

♥**Bride to Husband**—Romans 7:4-5 (previous verses about a woman being bound to her husband by law until he dies)—“*So, my brothers, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit to God.*”

Scripture is clear on the issue of God listening and hearing our every prayer: The question is not does God hear; the question is do we faithfully pray? When we become sure—assured—that God is listening, why would we not break out in praise and petition at every point and place in our lives? James 4:8a says, “*Come near to God and he will come near to you....*” Imagine a God who will come near us in response to our coming near him. **And we come near Him by knowing His word, following His way, and doing His will!**

Pastor Joe again: “Everything that we pray about, God has a will about!” And if we ask anything according to His will, we know He hears and answers us. If we don’t pray, then God won’t hear. Notice in Psalm 91:15 Scripture says of us first: “*He will call upon me—and then God says of Himself—and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him.*” And in Matthew 7:7, three times in a row Scripture says if we do the ask, seek and knock, then God will do the giving, causing us to find, and the opening of the door: “*Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened.*”

Samuel Chadwick—“The one concern of the devil is to keep Christians from praying. He fears nothing from prayerless studies, prayerless work and prayerless religion. He laughs at our toil, mocks at our wisdom, but he trembles when we pray.” See, we need God more than we need each other, and we need God more than God needs us! One should never initiate anything that she cannot saturate with prayer. Victor Hugo said, “Certain thoughts are prayers. There are moments when, whatever be the attitude of the body, the soul is on its knees.” Read through James 5:13-16—

1. Is any one in trouble—she should pray!
2. Is any one happy—she should sing.
3. Is any one sick—she should call the elders of the church, have them pray over her and anoint her with oil (OT ceremony; NT Good Samaritan applied a healing medicinal oil to the wounded man), in the name of the Lord.

And the prayer of faith **will make the sick person well...!**

“Prayer is not only motivated by the Word of God and measured by His will, but it is also manifested in our walk with God,” said David Jeremiah. The best way to apply a study on prayer is to pray; and we should pray as if our lives depend on it, because they do!