

The Science of Prayer

Its ABC's

By Glenn and Ethel Coon

Name: _____

Date: _____

LESSON 10:

How to Establish a Prayer-Life Pattern

Introduction

When my brothers and I reached the age of 16 and were leaving home for boarding school, Father suggested we take one hour each day for private devotions. Father stated that he had no fear for any son of his who would spend one quiet hour each day with God, spending the time in Bible reading, other spiritual study, meditation, and prayer.

We decided to take that hour with the Lord in boarding school. But we all took full school work, and were also working practically our entire way through school, which meant from 40 to 60 hours each week in physical labor. Farm work called us to begin chores at the barn at 4:30 each morning. Therefore, we decided to take the hour from 3:30 to 4:30 in the early morning for our personal devotion with our Lord.

The daily devotional hour was spent first in reading for approximately 40 minutes. Then we made a list of things for which to be thankful, things to pray about in our personal life, and last of all, dear ones for whom we were to pray. We took this list, fell on our knees, asking God's blessing on each request item, and thanking Him for each praise item. Years later it was our privilege and honor to baptize one of the brothers for whom we had prayed for many years.

Not only did our father play an important part in our prayer life program, but also our mother helped and guided us. Often we went to a distant berry patch where we filled our pails full of berries. As we left this berry patch, Mother suggested that we kneel down beside a crooked tree. There we poured out our thanks to our Lord for His blessings and besought His continued mercies.

Later, when Mother was not with us, we boys fell on our knees beside that same old crooked tree. Other prayer sanctuaries we had were a cornfield, a haymow, and a spot beside a rippling brook.

We solicit your prayerful consideration in forming a similar prayer pattern.

1. Jesus set us the example in prayer.

"And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed." Mark 1:35.

The authors of these lessons make it a practice to take the first hour of every morning for personal devotions to our Lord.

Science of Prayer

Although our children are now grown, we conducted short, interesting worship periods for them when they were small. They usually would consist of a chorus or two, a verse or two from Holy Scripture or quoting some Scriptural verse, and prayer. The entire family would participate in the prayer. All prayers were short, beginning with the husband and father usually.

When children are in the family, we should do more than have personal devotions and family worship. We should take time every day to tell our children Bible stories. This not only answers their heart's longings for stories, but also gives the children the adult companionship which they crave and which they equate with love. At the same time, their moral characters are formed by telling, for the most part, character-building stories right out of God's Word.

2. God's men have been men of prayer.

"... men ought always to pray, and not to faint." Luke 18:1.

George Whitefield of England is said to have preached 18,000 times in his 34 years of ministry to audiences numbering up to 20,000 and 30,000. He related that for many months he was almost constantly upon his knees in study and prayer. He declared that as he watched, prayed, and read the Holy Scriptures, the Holy Spirit led and directed him, even in the minutest details of life, as plainly as the Urim and Thumim on the priest's Breast directed the Israelites.

Christmas Evans, a powerful Welsh preacher, could neither read nor write at the age of 17. But he became such a man of prayer and Bible study, God quickened his mind, soul, and body to such an extent that he became well versed not only in his native tongue but also in Hebrew and Greek. The Holy Spirit so abundantly blessed his labors that at the height of his ministry, no church in Wales was spacious enough to accommodate the thousands who came to hear his messages.

Thomas Chalmers, a Scotsman, was called "the greatest Presbyterian" preacher of his age. He spent, we are told, five and six hours a day in prayer and Bible study, beside incidental readings during the afternoon and evening. The Lord used him so mightily that at times the multitudes from the street in their surging broke down heavy doors, and climbed over the backs of benches to get seats near the pulpit where he preached the Word of God.

George Muller cared for 2,000 orphans at one time; received \$7,500,000 in answer to prayer during his ministry; assisted as many as 189 missionaries; operated 100 schools with around 9,000 scholars; gave away 4,000,000 tracts and tens of thousands of copies of the Holy Scriptures. This man stated that he spent hours every day in prayer. He said thousands of souls had been saved in answer to his prayers, and he expected to see tens of thousands of them in heaven.

Of Martin Luther it is said: "From the secret place of prayer came the power that shook the world in the Great Reformation. There with holy calmness, the servants of the Lord set their feet upon the rock of His promises. During the struggle at Augsburg, Luther did not pass a day without devoting three hours at least to prayer, and they were hours selected from those the most favorable to study." The Great Controversy, p. 210.

3. It is well to set apart a specific time for the Lord.

"To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: ... He hath made everything beautiful in his time." Ecclesiastes 3:1, 11.

4. Particularly we should ask of the Lord the rain of His Holy Spirit.

"Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain; so the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain, to everyone grass in the field." Zechariah 10:1.

"Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth." Hosea 6:3.

A PERSONAL MESSAGE:

Dear Student:

We suggest that your personal prayer life consist of visualizing solutions. If your problem is temper, then instead of praying again and again about temper, pray about peace of mind. It is promised by our Lord. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee." Isaiah 26:3.

Visualize the peace of Christ filling the mind. But more than this as you realize what it is that is bringing worry and temper, claim a promise of God for the solution over that which is bringing the temper, or the worry, or fretfulness.

If peace of mind is not present because of financial problems, then it would be well to claim a Bible promise for wisdom (James 1:5), and the promise of Philippians 4:19 which says, "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

Since our lives are dedicated to unselfish ministry to others we can fix our minds on the solution. (You might wish to review Lesson 1.)

To spend time each day in sweet communion with God means that we are determined that our lives will be brought into harmony with His lovely character of honesty, purity, courtesy, and unselfish ministry to others.

Cordially yours,

Glenn Coon, Sr.

Glenn Coon, Jr.

QUIZ ON LESSON 10:

1. Jesus arose to pray "a great _____ before day." Mark L 35.
2. "Men ought _____ to pray, and not to faint." Luke 18:1.
3. "To everything there is a _____ " Ecclesiastes 3:1
4. "Every thing is beautiful in his _____." Ecclesiastes 3:11
5. We are to _____ of the Lord. Zechariah 10:1.
6. Have you set aside some time in the morning for communion with Jesus? Yes_ No_ .
7. Do you know family worship should be a pleasant time? Yes _ No _ .

Correct Answers on Answer Sheet.