

Alone Time with God

Session 1

We have been created to know God.

This is all about relationship! Ps. 40:5; Jeremiah 29:11; Ps. 139:17-18.

Psalm 40:5, *“Many, O Lord my God, are Your wonderful works which You have done; and Your thoughts toward us cannot be recounted to You in order; if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered.”*

Jeremiah 29:11, *“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.”*

Psalm 139:17-18, *“How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they would be more in number than the sand.”*

Psalm 143:8, *“Cause me to hear Your lovingkindness in the morning. For in You do I trust; cause me to know the way in which I should walk, for I lift up my soul to You.”*

These Scriptures speak of relationship.

Psalm 34:8, *“Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good.”*

What’s happening with our kids today? Do they experience a personal relationship with the Lord?

Christianity is first and foremost a personal relationship with God. We’ve been called into fellowship with God Himself. (I Cor. 1:9)

The purpose of prayer is intimacy with God. Intimacy with God will always be found in a fresh, living relationship with the Father. *That relationship necessitates that we have a time and place to regularly and consistently meet with Him.*

Jesus is the way into communion with the Father. (John 14:6)

Prayer is the heart of man in communion with the heart of the Father. But there is **no instant fellowship** with God.

Waiting upon God recognizes **two** important truths from Scripture: **the helplessness of man and the sufficiency of Christ.**

A test to know if we truly believe this:

- 1. We were created to know and love God intimately. Relationship!** We will never come to know Him intimately without spending personal time with Him.
- 2. Purpose in life always dictates priorities in life.** We make time for things that are important to us. The disciples wanted to know how to make prayer a priority in their lives.
- 3. Just as purpose dictates priorities in life, priorities always produce a plan to fulfill our purpose.** Jesus’ plan for His disciples was to teach them to pray. Prayer ushers us into a loving, intimate relationship with the Father. **The plan is prayer.**

God is able to do far beyond anything that we can imagine. As much as we may love family members and friends, God loves them more. As much as we desire to help them, God can help them more. He can bring circumstances into their lives that will lead them to the cross. For the sake of our family and friends we must pray.

Ephesians 3:20-21, *“Now to him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.”*

Prayer is loyalty to God. Our dependency should be on God. What/who are you depending on?

Prayer intensifies our fellowship with God. It is in that fellowship that the believer experiences the height and depth of the love of God.

Prayer is not a time in which we come to receive something from God. Prayer is an encounter with a holy God. It is coming into His presence – entering into fellowship and a relationship with Him. It is a means by which we get to know Him.

We will begin to experience personal victory as we enter into the private chambers of prayer. We must enter regularly and consistently. We must long for fellowship with Him. To do otherwise is rebellion. In essence it is saying, “I don’t need You, Father. I can live today without Your strength and power.”

We were created to know and love God. Without daily communion with Him it is impossible to serve Him effectively. Many Christians believe that they can work *for God* without having been *with God*. To live without waiting on the Lord is to embrace humanism and wrap it in Christian trappings. The philosophy of humanism begins with man, continues with man, and concludes with man. But Christianity begins with God. God reaches down to man, and man finds his only hope in Him. Man does not find purpose, power, and direction for his life in himself; he finds everything that he needs in God through Jesus Christ. Man must learn to live in absolute dependence upon God.

He likes our time with Him more than we do. We shouldn’t think of this time with the Lord as devotions, but having a relationship with Him. How about “**devotedness?**” Are we devoted to God?

If we cannot say the greatest event in our life is meeting with God before we start our “day”, then we aren’t living as God has planned.

The disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray. (Luke 11:1)

Think about that; the disciples saw Jesus heal the sick, bring people back from death to life, feed thousands with little, miracle after miracle and yet, they wanted to be taught to pray. Amazing!

As we pray and read God’s word, we enter into fellowship with God.

How do we talk with God? Prayer is just talking with God; talking to Him about all the things that I am facing, all the things that are on my heart, all the things that are going on in my life.

How much time should be given to our alone time with the Lord?

How long should it be? The question is “How close do you want to be with the Lord of the heavens?”

God saved us supremely for a personal relationship with Him.

As we make the choice to wake early and come to Him, the Holy Spirit will then develop our time with the Lord.

This is about private prayer. In praying, the principal object to be sought is to be alone with God. Find a place where you can pour out your heart with the feeling that no one is listening to you but God.

These verses are few in number, and are soon read, but they are of immense importance.

No part of Scripture is so simple, yet so full, as the following Scriptures. The goal of our morning meeting with God is to understand God's heart and to share our heart with Him.

Matthew 6:5-8

V5 "And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward."

Hypocrites are basically those who play a role on the stage, who act, to be seen by an audience. They love to be seen praying and therefore speak to be heard by men and not by God.

When prayer is for the purpose to show how spiritual one is, then it is wrong. It is being a hypocrite. To pray to be seen by people is wrong. Praying to draw attention to oneself is wrong.

The warning is certainly clear enough; do not pray for human recognition, do not practice your prayers or pray to impress others.

Jesus was not forbidding public prayer.

Do I pray to be seen by people or to be heard by God?

V6 "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."

'Your room'... 'shut your door'; find as private of a place as you can.

- A place where you can shut out the world.
- A place where there is no temptation to be distracted from God.
- A place where you can easily give your full attention to Him.
- A place that will minimize distractions.
- A private place. A place where you won't be overheard.

One of the reasons for a private place is that prayer is not a monologue, just me talking to God. It is a dialogue, whereas God is also speaking to me.

Prayer is a form of worship. It demonstrates dependence upon God and acknowledges His preeminence above all other authorities, circumstances, relationships.

Private prayer allows us to bare our souls and to be completely honest and open with God without fear of what others might think.

Pray to be heard by God, not man. God is omnipresent.

Both Jesus and His disciples prayed publicly, but their public prayers were an expression of their private devotion to God.

The key thing about getting up early in the morning is simple; go to bed early at night.

Early in the morning is getting up before you *have to*, so that you can spend time with God before the day starts.

Some people say that they are more alert at the end of the day than at the beginning. It's been said, *"Why tune up the fiddle when the concert is finished."*

A good question to ask is: "Why does God want to spend time with us?" The answer is because He loves us. He wants to meet with us more than we want to meet with him.

Our God, the One who created everything in the world; wants to meet with us. He wants to hear our concerns, our dreams, and our fears. He will give us words to encourage people, warnings to curb our wayward actions, and wisdom for daily life.

John 16:27, *"For the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God."*

We are not to consider our time alone with the Lord to be our "devotions", but that **we have a relationship with each other.**

John 3:16, *"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."*

Jeremiah 31:3, *"The Lord has appeared of old to me, saying: Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you."*

Psalm 139:17-18, *"How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they would be more in number than the sand."*

Psalm 40:5, *"Many, O Lord my God, are Your wonderful works which You have done; and Your thoughts toward us cannot be recounted to You in order; if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered."*

Singing to the Lord: "Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints of His, and give thanks at the remembrance of His holiness." (Psalm 30:4)

What a great way to praise the Lord.

"Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." (Eph. 5:18-19)

Seeking the Lord -

Thus says the Lord: *"Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, let not the mighty man glory in his might, nor let the rich man glory in his riches; But let him who glories glory in this, **that he understands and knows Me**, that I am the Lord, exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth, for in these I delight, says the Lord."* (Jeremiah 9:24)

As you spend time with the lord, it can be good to journal what He says to you.

*V7 "And when you pray, do not use **vain repetitions** as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words."*

"...do not use vain repetitions..." In church Matthew 6:9-13 is often recited without meaning, just vain repetition.

Some think that longer prayers are better, or that many words are needed in order to get through to God. Some believe that prayer is a way to get God's attention. Not so.

We don't have to wake up our God. We always have His attention morning, noon, night, and anytime. We never cease to be the object of His attention in this world. We never have to motivate Him to do good for us. He is always eager to do something good for us.

What is important is that our prayers are sincere.

Jesus intends our mind and hearts to be involved in what we are saying.

Sometimes we can think that if we pray long or pray often that God then owes us and has to respond to our prayers.

We try to earn something from God by doing these things. He has to do what I ask Him, since I prayed for an hour a day for two weeks.

Prayer is not a way to manipulate God. It is not that longer prayers are better than shorter prayers. The key is sincerity.

Peter is a great example: "Save me Lord", was a three word prayer.

Sometimes it's going to be one or the other. Remember how Jesus prayed all night in the garden of Gethsemane before He went to the cross. There's nothing wrong with long prayers, but they shouldn't be long out of *vain repetition*, trying to earn something from God or to be seen by men.

It's not the length of the prayer that matters, it's the sincerity of our heart.

Repetition is not a problem if you mean it. Jesus prayed three times. Paul prayed three times and meant it every time he said it.

V8 "Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him."

There are many reasons I should pray; to acknowledge my need and my dependence on Him. I also pray because Jesus told me to pray.

No relationship is stronger than it's communication. And what is true in a human relationship is also true in our relationship with God.

And that is what prayer is, and what we have been called to as Christians; a relationship with God Himself.

Prayer is simply talking to God, and is the basis of our communication with God.

God is attentive to the needs of His children far more than human fathers are attentive to their children's needs.

Matthew 7:11, *"If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!"*

Ezra 7:10, *"For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach statutes and ordinances in Israel."*

How do you prepare your heart to seek the law of the Lord?

Answer: We prepare our heart through **prayer, meditation, and commitment.**