

Lesson 9

A Better Way to Pray

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VIDEO OUTLINE

Note: All scriptures used in this lesson are quoted from the *King James Version*.

- I. You don't have to pray for a person, but many times when you're ministering healing, you will be praying with them.
 - A. Peter and John didn't even pray for the man. They grabbed him by the hand and lifted him up.

Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour. And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple; Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked an alms. And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us. And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them. Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk. And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God. And all the people saw him walking and praising God: And they knew that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple: and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him. And as the lame man which was healed held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering.

Acts 3:1-11, KJV

- B. If anybody is sick, let him call for the elders of the church, and let them anoint him with oil and pray over him.

Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.

James 5:14, KJV

- C. You have to release your authority and believe, but many times you will be doing that as you pray.
- II. There are a lot of misconceptions about prayer, especially when it comes to receiving a manifestation miracle like a healing. I want to counter those misconceptions and help you to pray better.
 - A. Everything I'll be teaching against, I have done, and yet God loved me. I have loved God and God has moved in my life, but now I get better results because I've learned some things.
- III. Matthew 6 is where Jesus began to teach His disciples about prayer.
 - A. You can release the devil through your prayers. You can't ask for cancer without Satan taking advantage of it, but God's not the one responsible. The request may have been from good heart in the sense of being willing to sacrifice your life to be a blessing to others, but that's the wrong way to pray. Many times, the way we pray for people is actually doing them more harm than good.
 - B. Some people just pray so that they can be seen or get people's applause. You aren't going to get anything from God when you are praying to be seen and heard by people. Make sure that when you are praying, you are talking to God, not talking to the other people and using God as an excuse to preach.

And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

Matthew 6:5, KJV

- C. This isn't literally saying you have to go into a closet to pray. Jesus prayed openly. This is saying that you don't need to be praying so someone will hear you or to bring the praise and acclaim of men, but you should be praying to God.

But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

Matthew 6:6, KJV

- D. Vain repetitions are just reciting words over and over.

But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.

Matthew 6:7, KJV

1. There are people who pray the Lord's Prayer as a repetitious prayer, and I don't believe it was ever given to be recited (Matt. 6:9-13). It isn't even a New Testament prayer. It's in the New Testament, but Jesus hadn't died yet; He hadn't bought our salvation. New Testament prayer is prayed to the Father, in the name of Jesus, drawing on His goodness and on His holiness. I would call the Lord's Prayer a model prayer.
- E. Begin your prayer drawing on that relationship by calling God Almighty "Father." You're supposed to come and remind yourself that you have an intimate relationship with God. You don't have to approach Him as a beggar. You are now a son or daughter, and you can enter in.

After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

Matthew 6:9, KJV

- F. The way so many of us pray is to make up prayer lists and go through them, praying the same thing over, and over, and over. There may be some benefit to that in the sense that it causes you to focus on trusting God to meet a particular need. However, when it comes to communicating with God, what matters is not how long you pray, but the attitude of your heart. One of the best prayers that you can pray is just, "Help, in Jesus' name!"
 - G. The length of time you pray may benefit you if you are truly keeping your mind stayed upon God, but it doesn't earn you any favor with Him.
 - H. When you read the Lord's Prayer out of a different gospel, it's a little bit different than it was recorded in Matthew 6:9-13. Both of these are accurate, so again, praying the exact words is not what this is about.
- IV. Let's look at some passages that are often used to say that God isn't prone to answering your prayers quickly, that you have to demand, you have to grab hold of God and not let go, and you have to tell God to give you what you deserve or desire.

- A. This scripture is making a contrast, not a comparison. Friends treat you better than this. Even if it is inconvenient, if they are a true friend, that person will rise and give you what you needed. The point the Lord is making is that if a friend would treat you better than this, why do you think that He would be hesitant to give you what you need?

And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him? And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.

Luke 11:5-8, KJV

1. We often take Luke 11:9 out of context and just make it about asking God in general, but it was right after He gave this parable about the unjust friend, the friend who wasn't really a friend, and saying that He would treat you better. He says, "Ask me, and you shall receive."

And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

Luke 11:9, KJV

2. This is a contrast, and Jesus is saying, "You expect people to treat you better than this, so why would you think that you have to beg and plead with God? If people treat you better than this, don't you think that God Almighty will treat you better than a fallen human being would?"

For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

Luke 11:10, KJV

3. Luke 11:11-13 isn't comparing God to an evil father. He is contrasting an earthly father to our heavenly Father. If you expect your earthly father to treat you better than this, how much more should you expect your heavenly Father to treat you well? People would treat you better than this, so why do you think God would treat you worse?

If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

Luke 11:11-13, KJV

4. This has been misinterpreted and misapplied to where people say that God isn't prone to heal you, so you just have to beg Him, keep asking, and asking, and asking, over, and over, and over. He is making the exact opposite point. God wants to minister to your needs even more than you want it. God wants you healed. He wants other people healed more than you want them healed. You do not have to beg God!
- B. People will take Luke 18:1-8 and say, "God is like this unjust judge." That right there ought to tell you that something's wrong with your logic because God is not unjust. God is perfect. God is holy. This is not a comparison; it's a contrast.

And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.

Luke 18:1-5, KJV

1. Again, this a contrast. He's saying, "This is the way this unjust judge was. This woman just badgered him and finally he said, 'I better give this woman what she wants or she's going to wear me out,' and the unjust judge actually gave her justice. If that's the way that he did, how much more do you think God will avenge you?"

And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?

Luke 18:6-7, KJV

2. This is saying that you need to have such confidence in God that you don't have to badger Him. If you ask Him for something, you just know that He is willing to give it.

I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

Luke 18:8, KJV

- V. What is the purpose of intercession? Some see intercession as just badgering God, staying on Him, not letting go, grabbing hold of the horns of the altar and shaking it until God comes out. This type of intercession, trying to make something happen, is from the Old Covenant. There's a difference between the way we intercede and pray in the New Covenant and the way it was done in the Old Covenant.
- A. The Lord basically said, "Moses, I honor you. I have a relationship with you. I respect you so much that if you start pleading with Me, I'm not going to be able to release My full wrath." Now that's amazing to me, that God would honor any human being to the degree that that human being would have influence on Him, but that's exactly what God said.

And the LORD said unto Moses, Go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves: They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And the LORD said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people: Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation.

Exodus 32:7-10, KJV

- B. Moses is reasoning with God and pleading with God and trying to change His mind.

And Moses besought the LORD his God, and said, LORD, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power, and with a mighty hand? Wherefore should the Egyptians speak, and say, For mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth? Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people.

Exodus 32:11-12, KJV

- C. It's one thing to tell God to repent, but it's another thing that God actually listened to a man and repented. That's amazing.

And the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people.

Exodus 32:14, KJV

- D. This altar was an altar of incense that symbolized prayer going up to God continually. In a sense, Moses told Aaron, “You make prayer for these people.” God was venting His wrath, so Aaron took coals from off the altar and incense, which symbolized prayer, and ran and stood in between the people who had already died and the people the plague hadn’t come to yet. When the plague got to them, it stopped, so people use this as an example of intercession.

But on the morrow all the congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron, saying, Ye have killed the people of the LORD. And it came to pass, when the congregation was gathered against Moses and against Aaron, that they looked toward the tabernacle of the congregation: and, behold, the cloud covered it, and the glory of the LORD appeared. And Moses and Aaron came before the tabernacle of the congregation. And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Get you up from among this congregation, that I may consume them as in a moment. And they fell upon their faces. And Moses said unto Aaron, Take a censer, and put fire therein from off the altar, and put on incense, and go quickly unto the congregation, and make an atonement for them: for there is wrath gone out from the Lord; the plague is begun. And Aaron took as Moses commanded, and ran into the midst of the congregation; and, behold, the plague was begun among the people: and he put on incense, and made an atonement for the people. And he stood between the dead and the living; and the plague was stayed. Now they that died in the plague were fourteen thousand and seven hundred, beside them that died about the matter of Korah.

Numbers 16:41-49, KJV

- E. Abraham bartered with God.

And the men rose up from thence, and looked toward Sodom: and Abraham went with them to bring them on the way. And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him. And the LORD said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know. And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before the LORD. And Abraham

drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein? That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? And the LORD said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes. And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes: Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: wilt thou destroy all the city for lack of five? And he said, If I find there forty and five, I will not destroy it. And he spake unto him yet again, and said, Peradventure there shall be forty found there. And he said, I will not do it for forty's sake. And he said unto him, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Peradventure there shall thirty be found there. And he said, I will not do it, if I find thirty there. And he said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord: Peradventure there shall be twenty found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for twenty's sake. And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for ten's sake. And the LORD went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place.

Genesis 18:16-33, KJV

- F. Moses was a mediator (Ex. 32:12). A mediator is a person who stands in between two parties that are opposed to each other and tries to reconcile them and bring them back into harmony. So, it was appropriate for Moses to be a mediator because God had not sent His Son; Jesus had not died for our sins. They were living under the Old Covenant where the wrath of God was poured out, so it was appropriate for Moses to pray that way.
- G. In the New Testament it says that there is one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. When Jesus came, He ended all of the mediation performed the way Moses and Abraham did it in the Old Testament.

For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.

1 Timothy 2:5, KJV

- H. You shouldn't intercede the way that Moses and Abraham did. If you do, you are saying that Jesus's mediation isn't enough or there's more than one mediator.
- I. The only mediator is Jesus, and the way that we pray as New Testament believers isn't to beg God, "Oh God, please heal this person." It isn't to beg and plead and if

that doesn't work, to get a hundred or a thousand people on a prayer chain to beg and plead. That's one of the worst things you can do.

- J. We need to stand and say, "Father, thank You that by Your stripes, they've already been healed. It's not You who hasn't healed them; it's either them, us, something, but Father, You've already done it." Then you stand there and instead of begging Him to do something that He's already done, you enforce what He has done.

Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

1 Peter 2:24, KJV

- K. You've already got it. God has already placed raising-from-the-dead power on the inside of you. We've got to get rid of this antagonism that most people feel between themselves and God, where God's hands are folded and He's saying, "No, I'm not moving until you pray harder, until you live holier, until you get more people to pray." God's not like that. His hands are opened wide. He's trying to get His power out, but He has to flow through people.

The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places.

Ephesians 1:18-20, KJV

- L. It's wrong to say, "God can do exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think, period." No, it's according to the power that works in us. If God isn't healing people, it's not because God hasn't already healed them; by His stripes they *were* healed. It's because people aren't receiving for a multitude of reasons: feeling unworthy, not knowing the truth (Hos. 4:6), strife, unforgiveness, bitterness, on and on it goes. There's a lot of potential reasons, but it's not God who hasn't healed.

Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.

Ephesians 3:20, KJV

M. You don't need to somehow or another get Jesus touched with the feeling of your infirmity. The scripture says that He's already touched with the feeling of our infirmity. He became a man. He knows exactly what we're going through.

For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

Hebrews 4:15, KJV

VI. God has already done it. You need to start finding out what's already been done and then release it.

A. Paul prayed a prayer for his friend Philemon. The way that your faith becomes effectual is by acknowledging what Jesus has already done.

That the communication of thy faith may become effectual by the acknowledging of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus.

Philemon 1:6, KJV

B. Jesus has already reconciled us unto God. I don't have to beg and plead, I don't have to get a hundred or a thousand other people pleading. I just need to stand on what He's already done, believe it, and release it. It is so much easier to release something that you believe you have than it is to go get something that you don't think you have.

And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation.

2 Corinthians 5:18, KJV