

Clive Wissmann: Learning to Pray Like Jesus (11/8/18)

Review:

Over the last few Sabbaths we have been studying the Sermon on the Mount, the revolutionary teaching of Jesus to his Disciples from a mountaintop. Jesus has spoken of his kingdom as being present now, (Grace), and also to be fulfilled more fully in the future (Glory). We have seen what the citizens look like, [their character] and the necessity to be citizens of the Kingdom of Grace now, if we are to be citizens of the future Kingdom of Glory.

This Kingdom is eternal, and its laws are also eternal. Jesus plainly stated that he did not come to change the law, but to fulfil. He certainly enlarged the law to show that citizens of the kingdom display the spirit of the law in their lives and actions, and that spirit is the main characteristic of God – Love for others. Loving enemies and doing acts of kindness to those who bitterly oppose you is a reflection of the way God loves us.

Warnings on Attitudes and Motives

Matthew 6:1-4

- Act humbly - don't blow your own trumpet!
- Compare verses 3 & 4 to Matthew 5:16
 - Matthew 5:16 - Good works are to bring glory to God
 - Matthew 6:3,4 - When it could bring glory to us we should do it privately
- Compare this with Matthew 25:31-40
 - This is the way we should render service. It should be the outflow of the love of God in our heart.

Matthew 6:16-18

- Prayer is not about self or status, but deepening our relationship with our heavenly Father.

Matthew 6:5,6

- "you" when "you" pray. This is talking about private prayer.
- Hypocritical prayer is Pharisaical in nature

Matthew 6:7,8

- Using "vain repetitions" is heathenistic in nature. It does not bring us closer to God.
- Using "many words" is unnecessary in prayer.
- Compare this concept with the following statements:
 - *"Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend. Not that it is necessary in order to make known to God what we are, but in order to enable us to receive Him. Prayer does not bring God down to us, but brings us up to Him."* Ellen White, Steps to Christ, pg 93
 - Philippians 4:6 - 'Just tell God about what threatens to stress you out. He will take care of it for you without your worrying.'
 - John 16:23,24 - Jesus says "ask!"

The Lord's Prayer

Matthew 6:9-13

- vs 9
 - "ye" and "our" = plural
 - Clive believes that this is talking about public/corporate prayer
- vs 10
 - Pray for the kingdom of grace to come here and now, and the kingdom of glory to come with the return of Jesus
 - God's Will = the will of the kingdom
 - John 6:39 - God's will = eternal life!!
 - John 3:40 - God's will = eternal life!!
 - 2 Peter 3:9 - God's will = eternal life!!
 - My Will = naturally out of harmony with God's will
 - Matthew 11:28,29 - God invites us to unite our will with His will!
 - Revelation 22:17 - God invites us to unite our will with His will!
 - Hebrews 2:3 - God invites us to unite our will with His will!
- vs 11
 - "Our daily bread" = our basic daily needs.
 - This is not necessarily our wants...

- "Give us this day" = reminder of God's provision!
- vs 12,14,15
 - Our forgiveness is conditional - it is dependent upon our having a forgiving spirit towards others.
 - If we do not forgive we demonstrate that we are not yet yoked up with Christ - not yet citizens of God's kingdom!
- vs 13
 - We need not fear hard trials...
 - God will provide! (1 Corinthians 10:13)
 - "Deliver us from the evil one" = snatch us away.
 - This is talking about God's protection and rescue from evil.
 - "Yours is" = we can trust God when we recognise that He takes responsibility for His kingdom.

The Lord's Prayer is an example of corporate prayer. Let's have a look at a couple of examples of personal prayers in Scripture:

1. John 17 - Jesus' prayer for His disciple and the church
2. Daniel 9 - Daniel's prayer of repentance and confession for himself and Israel
3. Psalm 51 - David's prayer of repentance, confession and desire for restoration

Key to pure personal prayer is having an attitude of transparency and authenticity. We also see clearly demonstrated that a heartfelt desire for connection and relationship with God is a large part of personal prayer.

Conclusion:

Jesus warns us against the attitude and motives of the Pharisee and encourages us to check ours. Do we have an open, honest, connecting prayer life? Or are we just seeking attention through prayer?