



Discipleship 101
New Believer Lesson #6
Prayer
With Him, Like Him



By Andy Madonio
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Introduction:

Whenever the insistence is on the point that God answers prayer, we are off the track. The meaning of prayer is that we get hold of God, not of the answer.

Oswald Chambers, *Run Today's Race*

Prayer – The Only Way of a Disciple:

This lesson is the finale of the foundational first six because it tells of the only way, *the only way*, a believer, follower, and disciple of Jesus can succeed. What is success? Simple - being like Jesus in everything, we do. Here are the foundational first six in review, culminating in today's lesson on prayer.

[Creation](#) tells us that God is the author of all life, of everything, and that His original creation was perfect in every way.

[Sin and the fall](#) tell us that because God gave man free will, because He loved him to the uttermost, man did what free moral agents always do – they make mistakes.

[Atonement and redemption](#) tell us that God made a way out of sin, and that He alone had the resources to pay the price to redeem us from the curse of sin. It is here that Jesus steps into the sinners life to save them from the penalty of sin – death.

[Salvation and repentance](#) are at the disposal of the penitent humble sinner because of Jesus.

[Sanctification](#) is a lifelong process that a disciple walks, a process that slowly, steadfastly turns the disciple into the likeness of Christ, but he will only succeed and bear fruit for the Kingdom of God if he spends time in the presence of his Savior – only prayer accomplishes that.

Prayer – The Life of a Disciple:

In the introduction, Oswald Chambers tells a truth that many in the Christian church do not know, or do not believe, and would get angry about if you told them. You, disciple, in spite of opposition from others must learn this and never forget it. Yes, God delights in answering prayer as much as a parent delights in providing for their child; but just as the child doesn't receive everything they ask for, so too it is with the believer.

Why don't we always receive what we ask for in prayer? The bible gives several specific and general reasons, but they can all be wrapped up in this: We don't always receive what we ask for in prayer because we are not of the same mind as God. We are not asking or living according to His will. Sometimes we must trust His judgment simply because He is God.

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD. "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts." ([Isaiah 55:8-9 NIV](#))

He is grace, love, justice, and wisdom, and guess what – sometimes we are not! However, if we spend enough time “face-to-face” with Him, we will take on His likeness. God’s real delight is in the time He gets to spend with you as you pray. Our likeness slowly transforms into His during the time that we pray. My friend, [Pastor Ron Auch](#) of Kenosha Assembly Prayer House Assembly of God in Kenosha, Wisconsin, says it this way:

God is more concerned with who the pray-er is than the answer to the prayer. There are times when God will not answer a certain prayer until He has shaped us into what He wants us to be. That is why some situations take much prayer, others don't.

[Ron Auch, Prayer & Medication Devotional](#), June 3, 2009 (no link for that date available)



Think of a time when you asked God something in prayer and did not receive what you asked for. Does it make more sense now? Can you see how God desires you more than anything, and that answering your prayers, although not unimportant, are not primary in your life with God? How will you approach prayer differently knowing this?

Time in His presence - that is the essence and power of prayer. Jesus made a habit of spending time with His heavenly Father, sometimes leaving while others were still seeking Him. Read [Matthew 14:23](#), [Mark 6:46](#), [Luke 6:12](#), [Luke 22:39-41](#), [Hebrews 5:7](#). The apostle Paul also said much about your life of prayer. Read [Colossians 4:2](#), [Ephesians 6:18](#), [1 Thessalonians 5:17](#). The disciple John sums it up nicely in the following passage that is one of my favorites (I know, I said this in lesson #5. What can I say? It’s simply great!).

*Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall **see** him as he is.*
([1 John 3:2 NIV](#))

The word “see” I colored red in the passage above is important. It’s Greek root word gives us optical, optometrist, and other similar words with “opta” as a base, all of course relating to seeing or vision. This “see” is special, meaning to gaze, as with wide-open eyes, as at something remarkable. It is not plain old voluntary observation; or merely mechanical, passive, or casual vision. It is a “seeing” that transforms.

How could we “see” Jesus? He is in Heaven, seated to the right of God, so how is it possible? God gives us several clues in His Word, here are two of them:

So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, "It is because I saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared." ([Genesis 32:30 NIV](#))

The LORD would speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks with his friend. ([Exodus 33:11 NIV](#))

In the devotional story, [How Long Shall I Practice Master?](#), a music student is learning a beautiful and difficult piece. The “music” is an allegory for prayer. Read this short story, and answer the questions below.



What was the student focusing on? What was his master focusing on? What are you focusing on as you pray? Are you “seeing” as in the description of 1 John 3:2, or are you kind of fuzzy in your “vision”? What will improve your “vision”?

I heard a radio interview recently with Christian music artist Natalie Grant. She said something about our life with God that was on the mark. She said that Jesus placed His life inside us (the Holy Spirit) so that we could be Him to those who needed Him – the hurting, the sick and wounded, those empty in spirit and searching for something. We are Jesus to them.

If you get nothing else out of this lesson on prayer, may it be this; Jesus’ life is in every believer, every follower, and every disciple of His. He placed it there so we could be like Him to this world. Prayer not only brings our lives in-line with His, prayer also strengthens our relationship with Him, allowing us to “see” Him clearly and imitate His life. Others “see” this as well; they know if you have been with Jesus.

When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus. ([Acts 4:13 NIV](#))

We never get to a “resting” point where we have a “stockpile” of prayer stored up, because our sin nature ([Lesson #2](#)) constantly drains us of His life in us. Others have thought they could be reservoirs without need of continual refilling; they were wrong and sinful in thinking so highly of their own abilities.

My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water. ([Jeremiah 2:13 NIV](#))

It makes no sense to try and pray just a little, or pray a certain amount and then stop. What if you told a loved one – your spouse or girl/boy friend or parent – that you had said enough for a while and they wouldn’t need to hear from you for some time. Would they be pleased? Would they be happy? Of course not, yet this is how we treat time with Jesus; this is our attitude towards prayer.

Jesus learned to do, say and act on only that which His heavenly Father showed Him. Read [John 5:19](#), [John 5:30](#), [John 8:28](#), [John 8:38](#), [John12:49](#), and [John 14:24](#). When did He learn all those things from His Father? In prayer! If Jesus needed to pray so often, disciple, how much do you think is necessary.

This lesson on prayer is foundational, but there will be more prayer lessons in the future. Keep praying. Pray continually.

See you in Lesson #7!

[Note – This lesson can be downloaded in PDF format for printing or sharing]