

Experiencing the New Life in Christ Through Prayer

Paul was a member of the Jewish sect called the Pharisees. They were extremely religious, but they thought God could be pleased by outward standards of righteousness or rule keeping rather than being clean on the inside.

Paul would have grown up praying at least 3 times a day. 9, 12 and 3pm.

A Pharisees' prayer was selfish and self-righteous. This is what Jesus was teaching against in the gospels.

Luke 18:11 The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men — robbers, evildoers, adulterers — or even like this tax collector. 12 I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.'

13 "But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.'

14 "I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

Matthew 6:5 "And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full.

The Pharisee's Prayer had the following qualities.

- Only focused on himself and not God.
- Compared himself with others instead of God.
- Competed with others instead of loving them.
- Consumed with the sins of others.
- Continually bragging about his outward appearance.

What is Prayer

- Prayer is not a performance but it is heartfelt communication with God.
- Prayer is not just about you. It is honoring, acknowledging who God is and praying for His kingdom agenda to be done in our lives and the world.
- Prayer is not a one-way conversation but we must learn to listen to what God is saying to us. God can speak in different ways and in His own timing.

What Changed Paul's Prayer Life?

- Salvation Experience **Acts 9:1-6**

Acts 9:1 Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples. He went to the high priest **2** and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem. **3** As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from

heaven flashed around him. **4** He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?”**5** “Who are you, Lord?” Saul asked.

“I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,” he replied. **6** “Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.”

- Paul saw himself as a helpless sinner.
- Paul saw Jesus as the Ascended Lord & Savior.

- Sanctification Experience **2nd Corinthians 12:7-10**

2Cor. 12:7 To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. **8** Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. **9** But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. **10** That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

- Pain & Brokenness
- Patience. Waiting on God
- Dependence
- Provision
- Exalting Christ in your weakness.

What a Maturing Prayer Life Looks like

Eph. 1:17 I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. **18** I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints,**19** and his incomparably great power for us who believe. **3:16** I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, **17** so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, **18** may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, **19** and to know this love that surpasses knowledge — that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

- Pray that God will open your eyes.
- Praying for others spiritual and physical needs.
- Pray for Spirit of wisdom and revelation so that one can know God better.
- Pray for an enlightened heart so that believers can fathom the hope God has called believers to.
- Pray that believers can understand the great power that is at work in all believers.
- Pray for spiritual strength for believers.
- Pray that Christ will grow in all believers. He must increase, but I must decrease.
- Pray that believers grow in love.
- Pray that believers fathom the love that God has for them.