

DISCIPLESHIP. LESSON 7

1	PRAYER
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Pray for God's guidance through his Spirit, for awareness of his presence and for listening to his voice.
Dedicate this lesson about disciple making to the Lord.

2	WORSHIP (20 minutes)	<i>[CHARACTERISTIC OF GOD]</i> GOD IS HOLY
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Definition.

What is "worship"? Worship is:

- *an attitude* of awe, adoration, submission and dedication to God,
- *expressed* in various kinds of prayer and the way we live every day (lifestyle).

In order to worship God, we need to get to know "the God of the Bible".

During every worship time we will learn one characteristic (attribute) of God for which we worship him.

Meditation.

Worship is to submit to God.

Theme: God is holy.

Read the Bible passages and the explanation or explain it in your own words.

Read Exodus 34:6-7; Isaiah 1:15-17; Isaiah 6:1-8.

1. The meaning of "holiness".

The word "holy" includes two aspects:

- to separate from what is wrong and evil and worldly.
- and to dedicate or devote or commit to what is right and good and godly.

"Holiness" means "perfection of character and behaviour". Character and behaviour are "holy" not only when they are separated from what is wrong, evil and worldly, but also when they are dedicated or devoted or committed to what is right, good and godly. The first aspect without the second aspect is not yet "perfect"! Perfection of character and behaviour must include both aspects of "separation" and "dedication"!

2. Holiness and God.

God is holy. He is perfect in character and behaviour.

On the one hand, God is *separated* from evil in all its forms. He hates evil in every one of its forms; he hates much wickedness (unholiness) and he hates a little wickedness (unholiness).

On the other hand, God is *dedicated or committed* to all his divine attributes. He is dedicated to what is absolutely right, good and godly. That is, he is perfect in righteousness and he will continually promote things that are right, good and godly. He is dedicated to what is just and fair. That is, he is perfect in justice and he will punish injustice and reward justice. There is absolutely no corruption in God.

Another example. God is dedicated to what love is and what promotes love. That is, he is perfect in his love and all his words and acts are motivated by love. He is dedicated to accomplish his wonderful plan with the world and the whole universe. That is, he is perfect in accomplishing his will. The angels in heaven, who see God's character and behaviour, praise his holiness and say "Holy! Holy! Holy is the Lord God Almighty!"

3. Holiness and fellowship.

When Isaiah comes into the presence of the holy God, he especially becomes aware of his own wickedness (unholiness). He exclaims, "I am unclean, and I live among unclean people!" The holy God cannot and will not have fellowship with unholy people! Yet, the holy God desires to have fellowship with people! The only thing that will make fellowship with God possible is to remove the wickedness (unholiness) of man. Man cannot remove his wickedness from himself. Only God can remove his wickedness. God removes Isaiah's wickedness (unholiness) by making atonement for his sins. This atonement was done symbolically by a live coal from the heavenly altar that touched Isaiah's uncleanness.

“Atonement” in the Bible means

- to pay the penalty for sins and thus to appease God’s holy and righteous indignation against sin
- and to reconcile the offender with God.

Because Isaiah’s sins are atoned for, he can now stand in the presence of the Living God without fear and have fellowship with God.

Likewise, if we desire to have fellowship with the holy God, we must allow God to make atonement for our sins.

4. Holiness and service.

God has used worldly people like Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus to accomplish his plans in history. But the holy God will not use an unholy person in his spiritual service! An unholy prophet cannot represent a holy God before the people. But now that God has made atonement for Isaiah’s sins, God wants and can use Isaiah as a prophet in his service. God actually used the prophet Isaiah in his service! Likewise, if we desire to serve the holy God, we must allow God to make atonement for our sins.

Worship.

Take turns to worship God (in one or two sentences) in his characteristic as being holy.

3	SHARING (20 minutes) <i>[QUIET TIMES]</i> MATTHEW 22:1 – 25:13
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Take turns and **share** (or **read** from the notes of your personal time with God) in short what you have learned from one of your quiet times out of the assigned Bible passages (Matthew 22:1 – 25:13).

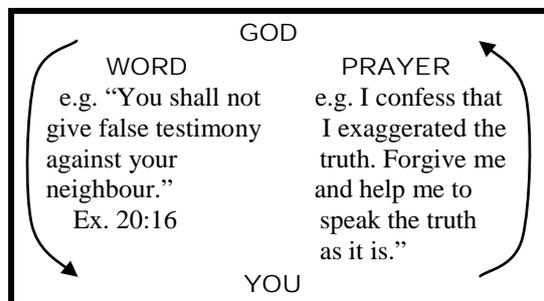
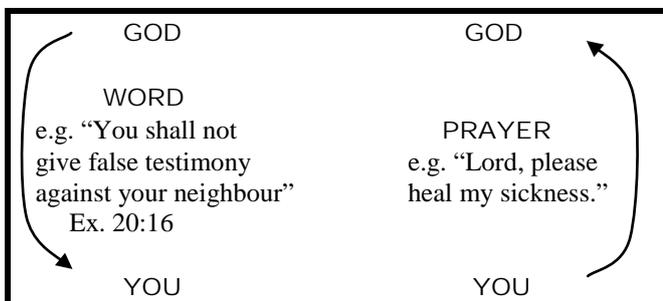
Listen to the person sharing, take him serious and accept him. Do not discuss what he shares.

4	TEACHING (70 minutes) <i>[PRAYER]</i> PRAYER IS TO RESPOND TO GOD’S WORD
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A. WHAT IS PRAYER?

1. Prayer is a two way conversation with God.

(1) What is the difference between the following two pictures?



Notes.

This is a one-way conversation.
You do NOT respond in prayer to what God is saying to you (in the Bible).

This is a two-way conversation.
You respond in prayer to what God is saying to you (in the Bible).

(2) How often did God and Abraham speak to one another during this one prayer?

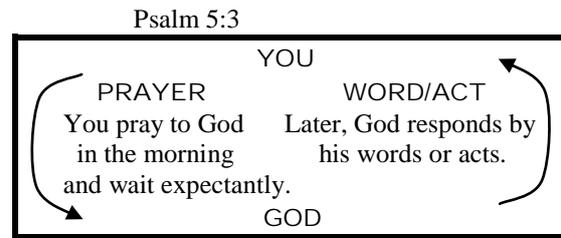
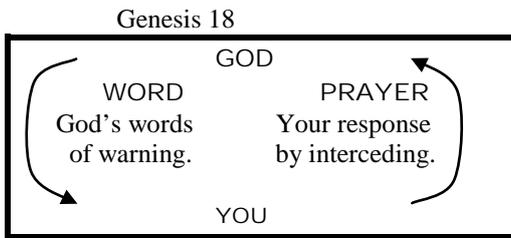
Read Genesis 18:17-33.

Notes. During this one prayer, God spoke 7 times and Abraham spoke 6 times. This prayer shows that prayer is a *conversation* between God and man, in which both speak alternatively to one another.

(3) Who may begin the two-way conversation?

Read Psalm 5:3.

Notes. Either God or you may start the two-way conversation. In Genesis 18, God first revealed to Abraham what he was going to do with the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorra. Then Abraham responded by praying for the righteous people in these cities. In Psalm 5, David first prayed to God. Then he waited expectantly for God to respond to his prayer. He expected God to respond to his prayer! He looked forward to what God was going to do!



Summary.
 Prayer is a two-way conversation between God and you.
 Prayer is a response to God's Word.
 Either God or you may take the initiative

2. Prayer is different kind of responses to God's Words and deeds.

What does God say or do? And how do people respond?

Read the Bible passages below.

GOD SPEAKS OR ACTS	WE RESPOND IN PRAYER
<p>(1) Psalm 33:1-4. God's Word is right and true. God's deeds are faithful.</p> <p>(2) Psalm 51: Title words + 4,10-12. God's Word through the prophet Nathan judges sin.</p> <p>(3) Psalm 119:33-37. God speaks his words in his law, commands, statutes and promises.</p> <p>(4) Genesis 18:17,20-26. God reveals the needs of other people.</p> <p>(5) Psalm 107:4-15. God saves from distress.</p>	<p>(1) Praise God by praying, by making music and by singing.</p> <p>(2) Confess sin to God and ask for forgiveness and cleansing.</p> <p>(3) Ask personal requests from God. Ask for right understanding, direction in your life and help to turn away from sin to God.</p> <p>(4) Intercede with God to meet the needs of others.</p> <p>(5) Thank God for his unfailing love and wonderful deeds.</p>

Summary
 Prayer is a response in 5 different forms to God's words and God's deeds.
 Prayer is a response of praise, confession, petition (asking), intercession and thanksgiving.

3. In prayer the emphasis may be on different persons.

Read the Bible passages below.

Notes.

<p>Psalm 77:7-14,19. This prayer focuses on GOD, on his character, words and deeds.</p> <p>Colossians 1:9-12. This prayer focuses on OTHERS, on their needs and interests.</p> <p>Psalm 31:2-5. This prayer focuses on SELF, on your personal needs and interests.</p>	<p>GOD</p> <p>↑</p> <p>OTHERS</p> <p>→</p> <p>YOU</p> <p>→</p> <p>SELF</p>
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Summary.
 Prayer may focus on God, his character, words and deeds.
 Prayer may focus on other people, their needs and interests.
 Prayer may focus on you, your own needs and interests.

B. IMPORTANT ATTITUDES IN PRAYER

Discover and discuss. Which attitudes are very important when you pray?

1. Humility.

Read Proverbs 3:5-6; 1 John 5:14.

Notes. Submit your mind (thoughts, motives) to God's mind.
 God resists the proud who rely on their own understanding (1 Peter 5:5-6).

2. A forgiving spirit.

Read Mark 11:25.

Notes. Forgive whoever wronged you. Do not become angry or revengeful.

If you don't forgive him, God will also not forgive you (Matthew 6:14-15, Psalm 66:18).

3. Integrity.

Read Matthew 6:5-8.

Notes. Resist the temptation to impress people with your prayers.

If you like to be seen and heard praying, then you will not receive a reward from God.

C. PRACTICAL. DIFFERENT WAYS OF PRAYER IN RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD

1. Prayer as a response to God's Word during your personal time (quiet time) with God.

After you have meditated on your favourite truth, pray your favourite truth as a response back to God. Pray your favourite truth (1) for yourself, (2) for someone in your family, (3) for someone nearby and (4) for someone far away. When you pray together with a friend, then you can also pray your favourite truth for one another.

2. Prayer as a response to God's Word during your Bible Study.

After you have studied a Bible passage, pray the important truths God has taught you as a response back to God. Pray especially about how God wants you to apply the truth of this Bible passage to your life.

3. Prayer as a response to God's Word during your Bible reading.

After you have read a Bible passage and understood its meaning, then pray the truths from each verse, verse by verse, as a response back to God. This is called 'Scripture prayer'.

5	PRAYER (8 minutes) <i>[REACTIONS]</i> PRAYER IN RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD. PSALM 34:1-23
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Divide the group in small groups of three persons each. Take turns to **read** one or two verses from Psalm 34:1-21 and then **immediately pray** a very short prayer in response to those verses before the next person reads and prays.

6	PREPARATION (2 minutes) <i>[ASSIGNMENT]</i> FOR NEXT LESSON
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(Group leader. Give the group members this preparation for at home in writing or let them copy it down).

1. **Commitment.** Make a commitment to respond to God in prayer when he speaks to you.
2. **Personal time with God.** Have a quiet time from half a chapter from Matthew 25:14 - 28:20 each day. Make use of the favourite truth method. Make notes.
3. **Bible study.** Prepare the next Bible study at home. (4) Ephesians 4:17 - 5:17. Theme: Why am I here? Make use of the five steps method of Bible study. Make notes.
4. **Prayer.** Pray for someone or something specific this week and see what God is doing (Psalm 5:3).
5. **Update your notebook** on making disciples. Include the worship notes, the notes on your personal time with God, the teaching notes and this preparation.