

FOLLOW CURRICULUM

LESSON ONE

Falling on My Knees in Prayer Regularly

INTRODUCTION (10 minutes)

Each person to read a paragraph

Today we're going to discuss the 1st mark of a follower of Jesus. A follower of Jesus falls on their knees in prayer regularly. Ask yourself this: why is it so difficult for many Christians to have a rich, consistent prayer life? Prayer is the topic of many studies and seminars because many believers want to learn how to pray or how to do so more effectively. But we may know more about prayer than we realize. After all, isn't prayer just conversation with our perfect Heavenly Father? With that in mind, consider conversations between children and loving parents. What principles can we observe in those conversations and how can we apply those principles to prayer?

First, children are dependent upon their parents and express their needs to their parents. Likewise, we are totally dependent upon God. Jesus taught us in His model prayer to ask the Father for the very essentials of life – “give us this day our daily bread”. Just as children acknowledge their total dependence upon their parents, in prayer we should acknowledge our total dependence on God.

Next, in healthy parent-child relationships, conversations naturally include praise and gratitude. Similarly, Scripture says that God inhabits the praises of His people. Therefore, as we pray, we should praise and thank God for His provisions. Though it may not be natural, it is also appropriate to thank God not only for His provision, but for His discipline (Hebrews 12:1-12).

Additionally, in healthy child –parent relationships there is natural and sincere adoration. “Daddy I want to be just like you” is a line in a popular song. Parents readily express adoration for their children. Is adoration for God the Father and Jesus a part of our conversation with Him? If not why not? Expressions of adoration for His being, character, and attributes should fill our prayers.

Conversations between children and parents also include times of asking. In prayer, this is definitely an aspect in which many excel. In Scripture we are told to ask, but our requests are not to be for our own gratification. We will discover this later in the study. Also, we often observe children asking parents for mercy when confronted with disobedience. Perhaps we also ought to plead for mercy as we are convicted of and confess our sin.

Listening is an essential aspect of any conversation. Do we regularly focus quietly on the Lord and listen for His still small voice? He calls us to “Be still and know I am God” (Psalm 46:10). We should not hastily say “in Jesus name, amen” and move on to other things. Being quiet and listening may be the hardest aspect of prayer, but it is an absolutely worthwhile one.

Finally, for a child, the power to accomplish tasks often comes by asking the stronger and more capable parent for help. Likewise, the supernatural power of God is necessary for us to be on mission and live boldly for Him. This power is only released when we confess our inadequacy and ask Him to unleash His power through the Holy Spirit in us. The Bible says that the same power that raised Christ from the dead is available to us, but pride and self-sufficiency can hinder this – for God opposes the proud (James 4:6). Jesus says pride defiles us (Mark 7:20-23). We should ask God to reveal if pride is stifling our walk and ministry. If so, we should confess, repent, and ask God for his supernatural power to work through us to accomplish His desires.

These parallels between children and parents can certainly help us put the awkwardness and mystery of prayer behind us. We can be thrilled to have conversations with our Heavenly Father and speak with Him as naturally and freely as we would speak with a parent. It is an awesome privilege to communicate directly and intimately with the holy, all powerful, all-knowing Creator and Sustainer of all.

“Prayer is not overcoming God’s reluctance. It is laying hold of God’s willingness.”

George Mueller

“If we do not yearn and pray and expect God to stretch out His hand and do the SUPERNATURAL, it will not happen. That is the simple truth of the matter. We must give Him room to operate. If we go on week after week, filling the time with religious lectures and nothing more, God has little opportunity in which to move.”

Jim Cymbala

BIBLE CONVERSATION (40 minutes)

- 1) Open to these passages describing the prayer life of Jesus: Mark 1:35-39, Luke 5:15-16, Luke 6:12-16. What do each of the passages tell us about prayer? How might Jesus’ practice of prayer impact your own prayer habits?

Read Ephesians 1:1-20 and Ephesians 3:14-20.

- 2) The Apostle Paul frequently prayed for fellow believers in various churches where he ministered. What specific things does Paul pray? Why would he pray for these things?
- 3) How might these types of prayers contribute to the accomplishment of the mission to help others say “yes” to Jesus? How is this prayer similar to (or different from) the way that you pray for your Christian friends?

Read Acts 4:23-31

- 4) The early Christians faced many trials, rejections, and persecutions as they shared the Good News of Jesus. Were these threats real or imagined? What threats do we face today?
- 5) How did the church pray and what did they pray for? What happened as a result of their prayers?
- 6) Read Colossians 4:2-4. How did Paul ask believers to pray for him as he spread the Gospel?
- 7) How could we apply these prayer principles at RBC for both personal and corporate prayer times?

PRAYER (10 minutes)

- 1) Praise God for His grace in your life and that he hears us when we pray.
- 2) Pray that God will shape RBC into disciples who pray often and in every situation.
- 3) Pray for someone who needs to hear and believe the good news of Jesus.