

## A LESSON ON PRAYER

--MARK 11:22-25--

### INTRODUCTION:

Jesus uses the discovery of the withered fig tree to teach His disciples the goodness that God shows by giving access to His power through prayer. Why would Jesus choose this discovery to insert this lesson on prayer for His disciples? This lesson came at an important time since in just a few short days Jesus Christ, God in human flesh would no longer be physically present with the disciples. That familiar experience of always having Jesus with them was about to change in a very drastic way, they would go from always having Him with them to not having Him present with them at all. Because the disciples would become completely dependent on one whom they could not see, this in itself would be a huge change for them, and they needed to know that the Lord Jesus would sustain them through the means of prayer.

#### I. PRAYER'S HISTORICAL ELEMENT (Mark 11:20-21)

- a. As Jesus and His disciples made their way back to Bethany on Tuesday evening in the darkness they did not notice the fig tree that Jesus had \_\_\_\_\_ that morning. (Matthew 21:20)
- b. The disciples remembering and making reference to the miraculous \_\_\_\_\_ of the fig tree demonstrates for us the historical element or foundation of effective prayer.
- c. There would little or no motive to call on God in prayer for help in the present or the future if He had not shown His power in the \_\_\_\_\_. (Deuteronomy 4:10; 5:15; 7:18; 8:2, 18; 9:7; 15:15; 16:3, 12; 24:9, 18, 22; Isaiah 46:8-10; Psalm 77; Psalm 105:5; Psalm 143:5)

#### II. PRAYER'S THEOLOGICAL ELEMENT (Mark 11:22)

- a. Peter stated that the tree which the Lord had cursed had withered. In response to Peter, the Lord Jesus said, "*Have \_\_\_\_\_ in God.*" (Mark 11:22b, NASB95)

- b. If you desire to have an effective prayer life, then you must understand that it requires \_\_\_\_\_ God's power, purpose, promise, plans, and will. (James 4:3; 1<sup>st</sup> John 5:14; Philippians 1:12-14)

#### III. PRAYER'S SPIRITUAL ELEMENT (Mark 11:23)

- a. Trusting God is very \_\_\_\_\_ and practical, and Jesus shows us this in verse 23.
- b. The \_\_\_\_\_ that Jesus is referring to is not a particular mountain, but He was using the term in a hypothetical sense.
- c. Jesus is saying that when someone is confronted with an overwhelming issue that appears to not have an apparent human \_\_\_\_\_, if a believer does not doubt in his heart, but believes what he says is going to happen, his prayer request will be granted him. (James 1:6-8)
- d. It does not require a lot of \_\_\_\_\_ for God to act on our behalf with His power. (Matthew 14:28-31; Mark 9:22-27; Matthew 6:30; 16:8-10; 8:24-26; 17:19-20)

#### IV. PRAYER'S PRACTICAL ELEMENT (Mark 11:24)

- a. The only way to receive the "all things" of which Jesus promises in verse 24 is through prayer in which one \_\_\_\_\_ for them. (James 4:2; Matthew 7:7-11)
- b. Jesus' promise here is not a blank check in which He guarantees to grant all the greedy, selfish \_\_\_\_\_ that you may bring Him. (James 4:3; Mark 14:36)
- c. Jesus spoke of this truth and stressed that our prayers must be \_\_\_\_\_ with God's will when He was with His disciples in the upper room. (John 14:13-14; 15:7; 15:16; 16:23-24)
- d. As followers of Jesus Christ, we have the awesome privilege and responsibility to pour out our hearts to God in persistent, passionate \_\_\_\_\_.

#### V. PRAYER'S MORAL ELEMENT (Mark 11:25-26)

- a. Jesus made one final statement concerning \_\_\_\_\_ prayer. (Matthew 6:14)

- b. The Lord Jesus added a command to this final statement on prayer, He said, “ \_\_\_\_\_, *if you have anything against anyone,*” this gives us the moral element of prayer. (John 13:6-10)
- c. Trying to \_\_\_\_\_ while holding on to an unforgiving attitude against another person is self-defeating. (Ephesians 4:32; Psalm 66:18)

#### CONCLUSION:

Do you want an effective prayer life? Jesus in these few short verses gave us the elements that make for an effective prayer life. An effective prayer life begins with remembering how God has displayed His power in the past, when we do this we will have confidence in prayer. The second element of an effective prayer life is faith or trust in God, and this means that our trust is in the character of the living God, this means our trust is in God's power, purpose, promise, plans, and will. Third, an effective prayer life does not doubt God's nature or power, even when we are confronted by something that seems impossible to solve. No one's faith is perfect, unmixed with doubt. But even weak but confidently prayerful faith in the person and power of God is enough to God to act in power on our behalf. Fourth, an effective prayer life is one that all the requests that are made are consistent with God's will. Finally, the last element of an effective prayer life is keeping short accounts with God, to forgive those you may have something against. To attempt to pray while harboring an unforgiving attitude against another person is self-defeating. In other words, one cannot accept the full, gracious forgiveness of God and then be unforgiving to someone else. Incorporating these elements into your prayer life will make you an effective prayer and God's power will be seen in the prayers He answers on your behalf.