**Connect Study: Three Dimensions of Prayer and the Orphan Spirit**

There are three dimensions of prayer that we need to understand:

**The First Dimension—Father**

Scriptures: Luke 11:2-3, Matt 6:6

The first dimension is seeking God as the Father. This takes place in the secret place. Matt 6:6 says “But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who *is* in the secret *place;* and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly”.

He is a good, good Father, who already knows all that we need. We call Him our “Abba Father”. He loves to meet our needs. However, as a good father, he also disciplines us and trains us for maturity.

**The Second Dimension—Friend**

Scriptures: Luke 11:5-8

In Luke 11:5-6 (NIV), Jesus says, “Suppose you have a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have no food to offer him*.”*  Here, Jesus painted the picture of a man who had a friend in need but couldn’t help him, so instead he went to another friend. This is the position of intercession where we go to our friend, Jesus, to help others whom we can’t help with our own natural resources.

**The Third Dimension—Judge**

Scriptures: Luke 18:1-8

The third dimension of prayer is approaching God as the judge. Jesus spoke of a widow who came before an unjust judge and wanted justice from her adversary. He granted her justice because of her persistence. Our God is not an unjust judge. The point in this story is if an unjust judge can be persuaded, how much more will our righteous Judge in heaven render justice to his people who cry out to Him day and night.

The Bible is clear that there is a court in heaven. Dan 7: 9-10 says “He sat on a fiery throne with wheels of blazing fire, and a river of fire was pouring out, flowing from his presence. Millions of angels ministered to him; many millions stood to attend him. Then the court began its session, and the books were opened”.

There’s also a prosecutor. Satan as the accusers of the brethren looks for legal rights in our lives then goes to the court in heaven to gain permission to attack us. Spiritual warfare takes place in the court of heaven.

In approaching God as the Father, we must have a revelation of his Father love. The Bible tells us that we are adopted into His Family. But in our culture, adoption is often viewed in a negative sense. In Roman times, adoption was common and powerful, and the adopted children were given the same rights as the biological children. Today, many struggle with the Orphan Spirit in the family of God as they do not understand the adoption of God.

* The orphan spirit operates out of insecurity and jealousy. The spirit of sonship functions out of love and acceptance.
* The orphan spirit serves God to earn the Father’s love. The mature son serves God out of a sense of divine acceptance and favour
* The orphan spirit tries to medicate its deep internal alienation through physical stimulation. The mature son walks in the joy and presence of the Lord for comfort.
* The orphan spirit is driven by the need for success. The Spirit leads the mature son into his calling and mission
* The orphan spirit is always in competition with others. The spirit of sonship is always blessing others.
* The orphan spirit lacks self-esteem. The spirit of sonship walks in the love and acceptance of Father God.
* The orphan spirit receives its primary identity through material possessions, physical appearance and activities. The spirit of sonship is grounded in sonship and the Father’s affirmation.

**Discussion questions:**

The first thing a believer needs to learn in prayer is seeking God as the Father in the secret place. What are the struggles you experience in this dimension of prayer?

Share a testimony as to how God has answered your prayer for another friend/family members/others who was in need.

Discuss in pairs of two or groups of three if you can see signs of the orphan spirit in you. What negative impacts does this orphan spirit have in your life? How can we grow in the spirit of sonship?