

- I) V25-26 INTRO: And whenever *you stand* praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him
 - a) AS WE BEGIN: Notice with me that Jesus assumes that His followers pray

- II) FIRST: What is prayer
 - a) Prayer is a sincere, sensible, affectionate pouring out of the soul to God, through Christ, in the strength and assistance of the Spirit, for such things as God has promised.
 - 1) Prayer evidences dependence, faith, communion, love, and humility

- III) V2 SECOND: How then should we pray?
 - a) Some give special attention to a person's physical posture when they pray
 - 1) There is no standard for a certain posture when you are in a time of personal prayer

- IV) LIKE HERE, YOU CAN STAND: Looking towards heaven when you pray
 - a) Jn 17:1 After Jesus said this, He looked toward heaven and prayedYOU CAN LIFT YOUR HANDS
 - a) 1 Ti 2:8 I want men everywhere to *lift up* holy hands in prayerYOU CAN KNEEL
 - a) Lu 22:41 Jesus withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, *knelt down* and prayed Father if You are willing, take this cup from MeYOU CAN LIE FACE DOWN
 - a) Mt 26:38 Going a little farther, He fell with his face to the ground and prayedYOU CAN BE SEATED
 - a) 2 Sa 7:18 King David went in and *sat before the LORD*: and he said Who am I O Lord God

- V) SO: You can stand, lift your hands, kneel, lay on your face, or be seated before the Lord
 - a) KEY: The true posture is one of the heart and it is this that Jesus emphasizes
 - 1) KEY: *Sincerity* is the prime requisite in every approach to the God Who requires '*truth in the inward parts*' and who hates all hypocrisy, falsehood, and deceit.

- VI) V25 NOTICE: If you have anything against anyone forgive him that your Father in heaven may also
 - a) KEY: Effective prayer always presupposes a forgiving heart
 - 1) Mercy and humility provide for unity in our relationships: marriage, kids, friendships, church
 - 2) THE FACT IS: When you have been forgiven, it is easier to forgive others
 - 3) Eph 4:32 Be kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you.

- VII) THE FACT IS: *Humility* is required when we ask to be forgiven by God, and others
 - a) Jas 4:6 God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.

- VIII) V26 BUT: If you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your *trespasses*
 - a) KEY: This is something similar to what Jesus taught earlier in His ministry
 - 1) Mt 6:14-15 If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

- IX) TRESPASSES: Are missteps in your walk
 - a) If we have been forgiven, we will be humble and compassionate towards others
 - 1) This is the fruit associated with personally receiving forgiveness

- I) THE FACT IS: Unforgiveness reveals a heart that has not been touched by God's grace

- a) HIS POINT: To refuse to forgive others is to invite judgment on yourself
- 1) HIS WARNING: Every believer must seek to have a forgiving spirit
 - 2) IN REALITY: This is how the Lord has dealt with us (Mt 18:21-35)
 - 3) Jas 2:13 Judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.
- II) V27 THEN: They came again to Jerusalem. And as He was walking in the Temple
- a) People are busy approaching Him for ministry: He heals them and teaches them
 - 2) Mt 21:14 The blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them.
 - 3) Lu 20:1 He was *teaching* the people *in the temple courts* and *preaching* the gospel, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, together with the elders, came up to him.
- III) V27 WHILE HE IS *TEACHING AND PREACHING*: He is confronted by a group of religious leaders
- a) This would be the Sanhedrin, consisting of 71 men
 - 1) *Chief priests*: The present ruling High Priest, Caiaphas, those who formerly held the position of High Priest, such as his father in law Annas, and a select group of dignitaries
 - 2) *Scribes*: Teachers of the Law: (Experts on Jewish religion, students of the Law)
 - 3) *Elders*: Key leaders from the various key villages and towns in Israel
- IV) FACT: Israel had developed a religious council under Moses (1445 BC)
- a) Nu 11:16 (God said) Bring me 70 of Israel's elders who are known to you as leaders and officials among the people. Have them come to the Tent of Meeting, that they may stand there *with you*
 - 1) During the time of Ezra (500 BC), this system had evolved into a more formal council, helping the Exiles returning home to get situated in Israel
- V) DURING JESUS' DAY: They had *power* and enjoyed it
- a) They had become concerned with Jesus' popularity amongst the masses
 - 1) Jn 11:47-48 The chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, "What shall we do? For this Man works many signs. If we let Him alone like this, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation.
 - 2) IN ESSENCE: They are challenging Jesus to show them His credentials
- VI) V28 AND: They said to Him *By what authority* are You doing these things? And *who gave You*
- a) IMPORTANT: This is always asked of *moral leader*
 - 1) *By what authority*, and *who* gave it to you?
- VII) WHERE DID *YOU* GET THIS AUTHORITY: You never were recognized by approved means
- a) NORMALLY: Ordination occurred after serving an apprenticeship under a recognized Rabbi
 - 1) Because of abuses, the Sanhedrin had taken over the process of Ordination
 - 2) THOUGHT: You did not complete the necessary requirements to become a Rabbi
- VIII) WHAT: Gives You the right to do and say the things that you have recently said and done?
- a) IN THIS CHAPTER: Jesus had entered Triumphantly into Jerusalem and cleansed the Temple
 - 1) He also had been teaching, preaching and healing the sick
 - 2) In the cleansing of the Temple, He had railed against the abuse of power displayed
- i) FACT: Whenever people's actions are called into question, the carnal response is to attack
- a) They actually had done some personal research on Jesus, and had formed *a smear campaign*

1) Pr 16:27-28 An ungodly man digs up evil, And it is on his lips like a burning fire. A perverse man sows strife, and a whisperer separates the best of friends.

II) THEY QUESTION: His *education, birth, friends, and spirituality*

a) *EDUCATION*: Jn 7:14-15 Now about the middle of the feast Jesus went up into the temple and taught. And the Jews marveled, saying, "How does this Man know letters, having *never studied*?"

b) *BIRTH*: Jn 8:41 You do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, *We are not born of fornication*; we have one Father, even God.

c) *FRIENDS*: Lu 15:1-2 All the tax collectors and the sinners drew near to Him to hear Him. the Pharisees and scribes complained, saying, "This Man receives sinners and eats with them."

d) *SPIRITUALITY*: Mt 9:34 The Pharisees said He casts out devils through the prince of the devils

III) INTERESTINGLY: They spoke this with conviction, as if it were *common knowledge*

a) This is generally how a person's character is attacked, smeared and ultimately destroyed

1) This is their desire: To destroy His ministry effectiveness and undermine Him

IV) IF JESUS ADMITTED TO HAVING NO CREDENTIALS: The people might lose respect for Him

a) These men desired to embarrass Him, in order to undermine His ministry impact

1) SO THEY ASK HIM: Who gave You the *right* to do what You have done?

V) THE ANSWER: He had the authority of heaven and did not need recognition from them

a) Jn 12:49 For I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak.

1) PEOPLE STILL: Reject Heaven's authority

2) If the Bible says something they disagree with, they simply reject the Bible

VI) V29-30 BUT JESUS ANSWERED AND SAID: I will also ask you one question

a) He was not evading their question: He had already answered it several times in the past

1) HIS POINT: Are you willing to recognize *Heavenly authority*?

VII) V30 JOHN'S BAPTISM: Was it from heaven or of human origin?

a) John's ministry: Was it of *God*, or of *man*? Jesus drove them into a corner

VIII) V31 IF THEY SAY: From Heaven they would have to recognize that John pointed to Jesus

a) This was John's message: To receive it would be to receive Jesus

1) Jn 1:1:26-27 John said I baptize with water: but there stands one among you, whom you know not; He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose.

2) Jn 1:29-30 The next day John saw Jesus coming to him, and said, Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. This is he of whom I said, After me comes a man who is preferred before me: for he was before me.

IX) V32 BUT: If we say from men they feared the people for all counted John to have been a prophet

a) The people were convinced John was from God: Rejection would have been dangerous

1) Lu 20:6 If we say, 'From men,' *all the people will stone us*, because they are persuaded that John was a prophet."

I) V33 THEIR ANSWER: We do not know

a) BECAUSE THEY WILL NOT ANSWER HIM: Jesus refuses to answer their question

1) They were guilty of rejecting the light, and He would not continue giving them opportunity

2) Jn 12:48 He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him--the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.

II) THIS QUESTION: Is still being asked

a) Do you need to receive Jesus? Was He from heaven?