**Prayer Makeover -- Class #7**

**Order & Argument Makeover**

**LAST WEEK’S ASSIGNMENT**

1. You were assigned to focus your petitions on Colossians 1:9-12 and also to pray for God’s will to be revealed to you based on 1:9. What happened?

2. (Review) What’s the difference between “praying” and “wishing?” \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**LESSON OVERVIEW**

I would lay my case before him and fill my mouth with arguments. (Job 23:4)

1. Petitionary prayer is best understood as a courtroom argument.

2. We “order” our prayer by maintaining a heart attitude of awe in coming before God.

3. We present “arguments” as a basis for God granting our petition.

4. We argue God’s attributes, promises, name, sorrows of his people, past provisions and the finished work of Christ on our behalf.

5. Writing out a prayer with the six arguments, after thorough study, generates faith and assurance in an affirmative answer.

**INTRODUCTION**

1. Based on a sermon by Charles Spurgeon July 15, 1866 at the Metropolitan Tabernacle.

2. Personal courtroom illustration

3. “Prayer” as a legal term: n. the specific request for judgment, relief and/or damages at the conclusion of a complaint or petition . . . A prayer gives the judge an idea of what is sourght, and may become the basis of a judgment if the defendant defaults. ([www.law.com](http://www.law.com) dictionary)

**“ORDERING” PRAYER**

1. “Ordering” refers to how you approach God. Christians approach God two ways:

a. Familiarity – asking “Grandpa” for a piece of candy

b. Awe – overwhelmed with who he is

2. Is there a biblical basis for each of these approaches? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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The ancient saints were wont, with Job, to order their cause before God; that is to say, as a petitioner coming into Court does not come there without thought to state his case on the spur of the moment, but enters into the audience chamber with his suit well prepared, having moreover learned how he ought to behave himself in the presence of the great One to whom he is appealing.  In times of distress we may fly to God just as we are, as the dove enters the cleft of the rock, even though her plumes are ruffled; but in ordinary times we should not come with an unprepared spirit, even as a child comes not to his father in the morning till he has washed his face . . . God forbid that our prayer should be a mere leaping out of one’s bed and kneeling down, and saying anything that comes first to hand; on the contrary, may we wait upon the Lord with holy fear and sacred awe.

**IS IT OKAY TO “ARGUE” WITH GOD?**

1. What first comes to mind when I talk about arguing with God? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2. What would you think if an earthly judge granted a petition without first hearing an argument?

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3. Why would God require arguments for our petitions? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**#1 ARGUING GOD’S ATTRIBUTES**

1. Read Psalm 99:1-5. How does the Psalmist begin his prayer? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2. How do the attributes of God affect our prayer petitions? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

3. Let’s say you want to petition God regarding a health problem. What attribute(s) would you base your appeal on? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**#2 ARGUING GOD’S PROMISES**

1. Why should you search for an applicable promise of God for your petition? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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2. Without an applicable promise are you “wishing” or “praying?” \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

My brother, if you have a divine promise, you need not plead that with an “if” in it; you may plead with a certainty.  If for the mercy which you are now asking, you have God’s solemnly pledged word, there will scarce be any room for the caution about submission to His will.  You know His will:  that will is in the promise; plead it.  Do not give Him rest until He fulfill it.  He meant to fulfill it, or else He would not have given it.

**#3 ARGUING GOD’S NAME**

1. Read Exodus 32:11-12. What is the concern that Moses voiced? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2. How does caring about God’s reputation change our prayer life? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**# 4 ARGUING THE SORROWS OF GOD’S PEOPLE**

1. Read Psalm 39:2 & Psalm 34:18. What do these verses teach us about how God looks at our problems? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2. In what kind of a situation might this appeal be particularly appropriate? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Nothing is so eloquent with the father as his child’s cry; yes, there is one thing more mighty still, and that is a moan, — when the child is so sick that it is past crying, and lies moaning with that kind of moan which indicates extreme suffering and intense weakness.  Who can resist that moan?

**#5 ARGUING GOD’S PAST PROVISIONS**

1. Read I Chronicles 16:11-13. Why are God’s people so often called to “remember” his past works? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2. What about God’s past provisions in your life experience? How should that impact your prayer petitions? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Brethren, we have to deal with an unchanging God, who will do in the future what He has done in the past, because He never turns from His purpose, and cannot be thwarted in His design; the past thus becomes a very mighty means of winning blessings from Him.

**#6 ARGUING THE SUFFERINGS, DEATH, MERIT AND INTERCESSION OF CHRIST**

1. What does it mean to “pray in Jesus’ name?” Does it mean you just say, “In Jesus’ name” at the end of your prayer? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2. In prayer we either come in **our** name or in **Jesus’** name? What’s the difference? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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3. Illustration from Pastor Ron Dunn

Brethren, I am afraid we do not understand what it is that we have at our command when we are allowed to plead with God for Christ’s sake . . . Supposing you should say to me, you who keep a warehouse in the city, “Sir, call at my office, and use my name, and say that they are to give you such a thing.”  I should go in and use your name, and I should obtain my request as a matter of right and a matter of necessity.  This is virtually what Jesus Christ says to us, “If you need anything of God, all that the Father has belongs to me; go and use my name . . . When thou pleadest the name of Christ thou pleadest that which shakes the gates of hell, and which the hosts of heaven obey, and God Himself feels the sacred power of that divine plea.

**EXAMPLE OF A PRAYER ARGUMENT**

**ASSIGNMENT**

1. This week, consider what is your most significant prayer petition need. Prepare – order it by considering seriously who you are coming before. Think it through before just blurting something out. Prepare your heart.

2. Sit down, preferably with a journal (to learn how to journal, read my book Face to Face) and write your prayer petition using the six arguments. This will require some time and Bible study.

3. Report your experience at our next class.