

Cicero Christian Church Men's Breakfast^{*} **The PAPA Prayer: Part One**

"The Prayer You Have Never Prayed"

We have been given a tremendous and joyful privilege as Christians to be allowed to come into the presence of the Heavenly Father. We go through our day-to-day activities and allow the world and its demands to consume every moment of every hour of every day and we disregard the great privilege that we have been given. We look up to the sky during brief periods of the day or the thought of Him might come to us for a glimmer of a second as we drive down the road or as we type at our computer. The same Father that created us, reaches out to us daily, longing to begin a steady relationship.

It is all about Relationship

- *What does it mean to have a relationship with the God?*
- *Why should Christians have a steady relationship with the Creator?*
- *Do most men in our churches have this steady relationship? Why does this even matter?*
- *How many men really long for this relationship? Why or why not?*

God desires to have a quality relationship with His creation. We were created to serve, honor, love, and worship Him but this can only be done through a meaningful relationship. We have heard sermons, been taught lessons, and even have read passages on the topic yet this "Relationship" with God still eludes us. Let us understand that the relationship that God desires is not ignored on His end but only our end.

It is the desire of the leadership at Cicero Christian Church to help each man enter into a quality relationship with his Heavenly Father. This lesson series focuses on giving us as men practical tools that will enable us to develop an open, honest, quality relationship with the Creator; one that will change our lives forever.

It all starts with the PAPA Prayer!

Present Yourself to God Without Pretense
Attend to How You Are Thinking of God
Purge Yourself of Anything Blocking Your
Relationship with God
Approach God as the "First-Thing" in Your Life

There are four basic stages of learning the PAPA prayer yet it is important to note that these stages are not meant to be a formula. These four stages are Biblical guidelines that guide you into developing a quality Relationship with your Heavenly Father.

- *What is the difference between petitionary prayer and relational prayer? Why does it matter?*

Stage #1 = Present Yourself to God Without Pretense

The first stage of the **PAPA Prayer** comes to us as we learn to present ourselves to the Heavenly Father without pretense. We live in a society where people are continually putting on a false front to protect themselves from others. We go to work and we present a different personality than we have at home. We go to church and we present yet another personality that may be different from the one presented at home or work. We guard our hearts and lives and many times we choose not even to be REAL with ourselves.

Presenting ourselves to God without pretense is simply being REAL with God!

There are two basic choices that we must make when consciously presenting ourselves to God without pretense. We must first choose to hold nothing back from God and present ourselves to Him just the way we are. We must choose to present the REAL us.

Read the next two passages and answer the questions

Romans 8:27 – And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will.

Hebrews 4:13 – Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

- *What do these passages say about being REAL with God?*
- *What does it mean to be REAL with God in practical terms? Give examples.*
- *Why is it so important to be REAL with God when attempting to develop a quality relationship with Him?*

Getting a Fix on Our Location

The second choice that we must make comes when we evaluate exactly where we are at in our lives. When we take the time to present ourselves to God just the way we are then we are taking the time to evaluate our exact location in our lives. This enables us to get a bearing on our current location so that we can move forward in God's direction and avoid the heartache of pursuing our own will and direction.

- *Why is it important for you to get a fix on your current location in order to follow God's direction? Explain.*
- *What does this type of thinking do for building a relationship with the Lord?*

Read the following passage and respond to the questions

Psalm 46:10 – "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth."

- *What does this passage mean?*
- *What are practical ways that we can "Be Still and Know that He is God...?"*
- *What does this do for our relationship with God?*

The fact is that if we truly desire to have a life-changing relationship with our Heavenly father then we must choose to "Be who we are, where we are" and not put up a false front. God desires to heal us, strengthen us, and fill us with His wisdom and the Holy Spirit but in order for this to be accomplished we must present ourselves fully to God just as we are. We must not attempt to hide anything from the Creator if we expect to have a life-changing relationship with Him!

Ponder these Questions this Week

What am I thinking and feeling right now...

- As I'm talking with this person?
- As I'm walking through this store?
- As I'm watching television?
- As I'm praying or reading my Bible?



** Lesson in Conjunction with Core Practice #9 = Equip the Head of the Household*