



DATE	October 18, 2015
SPEAKER	David Smith
TITLE	Dependent
SERIES	What is wisdom? When is it apparent? How is it gained? Jesus answers these questions when He says wisdom begins with good character. Join us as we look at the character traits Jesus identifies as building blocks for wisdom.

This Sunday's sermon addressed a major spiritual dilemma we all struggle with: if prayer is so important, why do we fail to prioritize it as highly as we should? As you discuss the lesson about being dependant on God with your small group, ask the Lord to open your eyes to areas where you need to surrender your will to His.

1. From the workplace to the household, our culture values independence. Yet, instead of promoting self-reliance, Jesus teaches us to be dependent on Him in all circumstances. How have you seen independence promoted in today's world? Do the attitudes being promoted conflict with or coincide with the Bible's guidelines? How do you reconcile these differing principles in your life?
2. Is being dependent on God the same as being needy or incapable of action? How would you explain full reliance on God to someone who sees it as mental or emotional weakness?
3. When was the last time you genuinely, earnestly prayed to God? Did you receive a response from Him, and was it the response you wanted? Did it cause you to deepen your trust in Him or harden your heart? Why?
4. In Matthew 6:26, Jesus assures us that our heavenly Father provides for even the smallest creatures, so He certainly cares for us, too. But if God already knows what we need, then why pray? Do you truly believe that God knows and is attentive to all of your needs?
5. Think of some of the most famous prayers in the Bible and look up these passages. How did these speakers pray and how did God respond to their prayers? Which, if any, of the principles of prayer that Pastor David shared do these prayers incorporate? If you need inspiration, start at Jonah 2, Genesis 18:16-33, Ezra 9:5-15, Psalm 51, or 1 Samuel 2:1-10.
6. What do you think of Pastor David's point that prayer is surrendering to God's will rather than swaying His hand to accommodate your will? Read Matthew 26:36-42 and Luke 5:16. How can we learn from Jesus' example, both in his attitude toward God the Father and how he isolated Himself when he prayed?
7. Did you know that there is a reward for prayer? In Matthew 6:5-6, we learn that God will reward you with peace and calm through prayer. What in your life is robbing you of peace and calm? Does knowing this compel you to make changes to your prayer life?
8. Review the principles of prayer that Pastor David shared. Identify which of these qualities your prayer life is lacking the most. Then, spend some time in prayer asking God to show you how to deepen your dependence on Him. Share your plan with your group so they can keep you accountable in the coming weeks. Spend time in isolation earnestly talking to God each day. During your group's next meeting, share how your efforts have changed your perspective on your circumstances and relationship with God.

Prayer is crucial to maintaining a healthy, effective relationship with our Heavenly Father. Without genuine communication through prayer, we are preventing Him from effectively moving in our lives. Continue your development of godly character traits by making prayer a priority in your life.