

## **Esther and Emmett and Short Prayers**

Esther: Hi Emmett. What are you doing?

Emmett: Hi Esther. I'm trying to make a list.

Esther: What kind of list?

Emmett: I'm trying to make a list of really, really short prayers.

Esther: A list of really short prayers!

Emmett: Yeah. Right now I'm working on prayers that are just one word long!

Esther: One-word prayers! What have you come up with so far?

Emmett: So far, I've come up with. "Thanks." That's just one word!

Esther: 'Thanks'. That's a good prayer because we say thanks to God for all sorts of things – for friends, and the food we eat, and flowers...

Emmett: And jelly beans!

Esther: And jelly beans! Do you have any other one-word prayers?

Emmett: How about, "Huh?"

Esther: Huh????

Emmett: 'Huh'? That's what I say when I don't understand something – 'huh?' I figure it's a good one-word prayer- it's my way of saying to God, "I don't get this God! Can You please help me understand!"

Esther: Wow!

Emmett: Are you saying 'wow' because you think I'm amazing?

Esther: No, I'm saying 'wow' because that's another one-word prayer. When I see a beautiful sunset, or light reflecting off a river, or geese landing on the pond – I might say 'wow'! It's another way of saying, "Thank you God for this amazing world."

Emmett: Wow! I like that. I'll add it to my list of one-word prayers.

Esther: Huh?

Emmett: Are you praying?

Esther: No, I'm just thinking that I don't get why you are making a list of one-word prayers?

Emmett: Oh, it's because I was reading in the Bible that Jesus told his disciples to look out for people who say long prayers.

Esther: Huh?

Emmett: Are you praying again?

Esther: No – I don't remember Jesus saying that we can't have long prayers.

Emmett: It was when he saw someone dressed really fancy, in long robes – kind of like my housecoat I guess, although I don't think my housecoat is all that fancy!

Esther: What did Jesus say.

Emmett: Oh, right – Jesus said that this guy likes to get all the best seats at dinner parties and that they eat houses – which is kinda weird – and that they say long prayers!

Esther: Oh, I know that story...but Jesus didn't say that the person eats houses. Jesus said that he devours widows' houses.

Emmett: Like I said, the guy eats houses.

Esther: Jesus meant that the man didn't care about other people. He might have loaned money to a widow who had little income, and then if the woman couldn't repay the loan, he would take over possession of the woman's house and leave her with no place to live.

Emmett: Ouch! That's another prayer! It means, "That's not nice. God, help that woman keep her home!"

Esther: Or help that man care about people. Jesus said that the person could take someone's house, but he appeared to be a good friend of God's because whenever he was around other people he would say long prayers, to make sure that other people heard him praying.

Emmett: But God wouldn't want someone to lose their home. Saying a loooooong prayer doesn't mean you are loving people the way God loves them.

Esther: Right. What really matters is not how loooong or short our prayers are, but whether we love people the way God loves them. After all, Jesus taught his disciples a prayer that was long.

Emmett: Really...oh ya...I remember...Our Father...that's two words...who art in heaven....that's one, two , three, another four words...hallowed be...you're right. That's more than one word.

Esther: So we can pray in lots of ways with one word or many, but both our prayers and our actions should express our love for God and others.

Emmett: Hey, I just thought of another one-word prayer.

Esther: What's that?

Emmett: AMEN!

Esther: AMEN!