

PRAYER

Everyone knows how to pray, do they not? Let me ask you this - does everybody know how to talk at birth? No! They must learn and be taught. Even so, in the Christian life, we must be taught how to pray properly.

Prayer means “ask”. John Bunyan said, “Prayer will make a man cease from sin as sin will entice a man to cease from prayer.” Matthew Henry said, “Prayer is the key to the morning and the bolt for the evening.”

The only thing recorded in Scripture that the disciples ever asked Jesus to teach them was to pray. They did not ask Him to teach them how to preach, teach, do miracles, walk on water or raise the dead - but how to pray. What impressed them most about Jesus was His prayer life!

NOTICE SCRIPTURES ABOUT JESUS’ PRAYER LIFE

Matthew 14:23: *“And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone.”*

Mark 1:35: *“And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.”*

Luke 5:16: *“And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed.”*

Luke 6:12: *“And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.”*

Luke 9:28: *“And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray.”*

There are many examples in Scripture of great prayer warriors. You may want to study the lives of Moses, Joshua, Samuel, or Daniel (who prayed seven times a day), David (who prayed evening, morning and noon), Elijah, Elisha, and Nehemiah.

WHY PRAY?

1. It is commanded. (Luke 18:1)
2. It is God’s way of meeting our needs. (Matt. 7:8-9)
3. It produces fullness of joy. (John 16:24)
4. It gives us peace instead of worry. (Phil. 4:6-7)

THE "LORD'S PRAYER"

Jesus gave to us the following prayer as an outline or things to include in our daily prayers. It is not a prayer to be recited mechanically, but a help to remind us of what to ask. This is not the prayer Jesus prayed. His prayer is in John 17. This prayer Jesus gave to us to use. It is our Model prayer.

Matt. 6:9-13

v. 9 *"Our Father"*

Think about the day you were saved.

Think of your relationship as a child to God, your Father.

Wait until you have His attention and He has yours.

"which art in Heaven,"

Meditate on Heaven and what is eternal.

"Hallowed be thy name."

Thank God for His holy character.

Think of His long-suffering, mercy, love, grace, etc.

Think on His names...Saviour, Comforter, Advocate, Friend, Intercessor, Strength, Light,

etc.

v. 10 *"Thy kingdom come."*

Let God be on the throne of your life.

Long for God to rule on earth.

Pray for unsaved people you know.

"Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven."

Lord, have your will in my life today.

Let me forget what I want to do and BE ONLY INTERESTED IN YOUR PLAN. I must read the Word of God to know your will.

Pray for others.

v. 11 *"Give us this day our daily bread."*

Pray for wisdom, strength, and power, which are needs for today.

List all other needs and wants.

v. 12 *"And forgive us our debts,"*

Confession of sin.

Confess in detail - call them by name.

"as we forgive our debtors."

Pray for those that have hurt you.

Do not let bitterness creep in.

v. 13 *"And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:"*

Ask God to give you victory over sins and habits you need to conquer. Ask for His protection from Satan and sin for the day.

"For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever."

Praise God for blessings and answers to prayer.

"AMEN"

Purpose in your heart to pray for situations as God lays them on your heart, and continue your prayers throughout the day as you ask God for help and strength, praying without ceasing.

WHAT ARE YOU TO PRAY FOR?

(Please open your Bible to Luke 11)

1. Basic needs (Luke 11:3) 8 words
We are commanded to pray for food and clothing when we have a need.
2. Forgiveness (Luke 11:4) 16 words
God wants us to acknowledge our sin, confess and forsake it.
3. Others (Luke 11:5-10) 235 words
God wants us to ask for our needs first and then quickly get our mind on others. Depression comes from thinking about ourselves. The key in praying for others is importunity (not quitting until we get it).
4. Power of the Holy Spirit for witnessing (Luke 11:11-13)
Praying for others and the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8) ought to take up a majority of our prayer time.

PRAYER IN THE BOOK OF JAMES

In James Chapter 5, there are three things mentioned we are to pray for. Some of it could be included in the previous prayer.

1. FOR THE AFFLICTED
James 5:13 says: *"Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms."* Afflicted means "in trouble or a difficult situation". Prayer either removes the trouble or gives grace to endure it. (Read II Cor. 12:7-10)
2. FOR THE SICK
James 5:14-16 says: *"Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."*
3. FOR THE STRAYING
James 5:19-20 says: *"Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."* James also gives two qualifications for the one praying. He is to be righteous (saved) and his prayer is to be fervent (boiling). God pays no attention to ritual or insincere prayers.

HINDRANCES TO PRAYER

1. LOVE OF SIN
Ps. 66:18 says: *"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me:"*
2. UNFORGIVING SPIRIT
Mark 11:25-26 says: *"And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses."*
3. IMPROPER HUSBAND-WIFE RELATIONSHIP
I Pet. 3:7 says: *"Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered."*
4. COLDNESS TOWARD THE BIBLE
Prov. 28:9 says: *"He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination."*

NO CHRISTIAN EVER RISES ABOVE HIS PRAYER LIFE!

Do you ever wonder why it is so hard to maintain a consistent prayer life? Does your mind ever drift while praying? Our lives are geared toward busyness. Our mind thinks the body ought to always be busy doing something. PRAYER IS NOT a waste of time. Vance Havner said, "He who waiteth on God loseth no time."

HOW DO I GET STARTED?

1. CHOOSE A DEFINITE PLACE
Matt. 6:6 says: *"But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly."* Thy closet refers to a definite place of prayer. Choose a quiet, uninterrupted place. The living room, an office, or back porch may be a good place. Some people choose to walk around the block while praying. But do make sure you have a place.
2. BEGIN YOUR MORNING WITH PRAYER
Matt. 6:33 says: *"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."* God wants the first of your day.
3. BE YOURSELF
God is not impressed with big words nor thee's and thou's when praying. God is concerned with your heart. Talk to him as you would a father or best friend. Praying out loud will help you make your prayers more definite.
4. BE DEFINITE
Call people's names out in prayer. Name their definite need. Ask for certain amounts when praying for finances. "God bless everybody I know. Amen" Those types of prayers need to be deleted. Be definite!
5. PRAY ABOUT EVERYTHING
Mark 11:24 says: *"Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them."*
John 15:7 says: *"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall*

be done unto you.”

Ps. 37:4 says: *“Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.”*

Phil. 4:6-7 says: *“Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”*

6. PRAY ALL THE TIME

I Thess. 5:17 says: *“Pray without ceasing.”* We are always to have a prayer on our heart. It is to be as natural as breathing. Franklin Field said, “The great dividing line in success and failure is five words, “I did not have time.”

The letters on a church sign said, “WHY PRAY WHEN YOU CAN WORRY?” People began phoning the church to tell them they got the words backwards. The pastor replied, “We printed it the way people practice it.” Pray for burdens as they arise and you will avoid much time in stress and worry. David said he “poured” his heart out to the Lord. A Christian needs to do that daily.

SOURCES:

Power Through Prayer; E. M. Bounds, Whitaker House

The following poem sums up the reason and purpose of real prayer:

THE SECRET

I met God in the morning
When the day was at its best,
And His presence came like glory
Of the sunrise in my breast.

All day long the Presence lingered,
All day long He stayed with me,
And we sailed in perfect calmness
O'er a very troubled sea.

Other ships were torn and battered,
Other ships were sore distressed.
But the winds that seemed to drive them,
Brought to us a peace and rest.

Then I thought of other mornings,
With a deep remorse of mind,
When I too, had loosed the moorings
With the Presence left behind.

And I think I know the secret,
Learned from many a troubled way:
You must seek God in the morning
If you want Him through the day.

NAME _____

REVIEW PRAYER - STEP 4

1. Prayer means to - _____.
2. What was the only thing the disciples ever asked Jesus to teach them? _____
3. Give the four reasons to pray:

4. In your own words, tell what the "Lord's Prayer" is: _____
5. Name two things you are to pray for - (for yourself)

6. What is emphasized more - prayer for ourselves or prayer for others? _____
7. What is importunity? _____
8. Name the three people James encourages us to pray for:

9. What are the two qualifications for the person praying?
R _____ F _____
10. Name four hindrances to prayer:
L _____ U _____ I _____ C _____
11. No Christian ever rises _____.
12. What does Matt. 6:6 call the definite place where a Christian prays? _____
13. What part of the day is best to give to God? _____
14. True or False: A Christian should only pray when there is a major problem.
15. What is "the secret" in keeping God's presence all day? _____
16. Where will you be meeting God tomorrow morning? _____
17. How much time will you be spending with Him? _____
18. Have you removed all hindrances to your prayer life? _____

19. What is the most important fact you learned from this booklet?

20. List at least one definite prayer request you want the Pastor to be praying with you about.
