

Lesson 7: Prayer

"How Important is Prayer in My Life?"

It's safe to say that your personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ cannot grow without proper communication. So prayer is pretty important! The purpose of this lesson then is to acquaint you with the basics of a profitable prayer life. Our specific goals are twofold. 1. To make sure that you understand what prayer is and why prayer is important for Christians. 2. To encourage you to begin praying as a regular part of your Christian life.



God's Invitation to Prayer

Look up Jeremiah 33:3 this is just one of many invitations to prayer. You will note that it is also in the form of a command. Or in other words, prayer is not optional for the believer.

What is Prayer?

Prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God (Psalm 62:8), for things that are agreeable to his will (1 John 5:14), in the name of Christ (John 16:23).

Prayer is simply talking with God. Specifically, it is asking God. The Greek word for prayer means, "to ask." Note: *it does not mean to demand!*

Prayer is one of our privileges as children of the loving Heavenly Father.

Prayer is NOT meant to be a "Christian Wish List", as though God were a genie in the bottle. Instead, prayer is splicing our limp wire to the lightning bolt of heaven.

How Do I Pray?

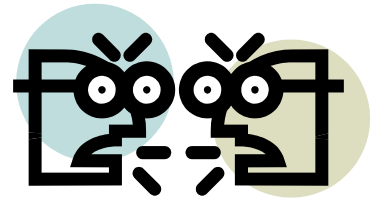
Praying, for new Christians, can be intimidating. We may be afraid of saying the wrong thing or saying something the wrong way. Please understand this, Romans 8:26-27 makes it clear that we don't always know how to pray, or what to pray for. That is why the Holy Spirit who lives inside you intercedes for you in prayer. Here are some basic guidelines for praying.



1. Pray always — develop a lifestyle of prayer. Luke 18:1
2. Don't repeat the same words over and over. Matthew 6:7
3. Talk to the Lord as a friend. He is your friend! John 15:13-14
4. Realize that you have DIRECT access to God personally. You do not need to go through any man to talk to God. I Timothy 2:5

5. Be sure to keep your basic relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ proper. There are some things in your life that will hinder your prayers.

- a. Un-confessed sin — Isaiah 59:1-2; Psalm 66:18
- b. An unforgiving spirit — Matthew 6:14-15
- c. Bitterness toward your mate (as well as others) I Peter 3:7
- d. Not asking — James 4:2
- e. Asking with selfish or other wrong motives. James 4:3
- f. Insensitivity to the word of God — Proverbs 28:9



The Disciples asked the Lord to teach them to pray. This is Jesus' outline for our prayer. Use this as a guide to help you pray.

This prayer is taken from Matthew 6: 9-13.

"Our Father which art in heaven," We come as children to our loving Heavenly Father that is able and ready to help us.

"Hallowed be thy name," teaches us to draw near to God with a holy reverence and with a sense of awe.

"Thy kingdom come," we pray that Satan's kingdom may be destroyed, and that the kingdom of grace may be advanced. We also pray that the final kingdom of glory may come quickly. This also means that we pray that God will rule in **my** heart.

"Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven," we pray that, by His grace, God would make us able and willing to know and submit to His will in all things, as the angels do in heaven.

"Give us this day our daily bread," we pray that we may receive the necessities of our daily life.



"And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors," encouraged by God's grace, which makes it possible for us to sincerely forgive others, we pray, for Christ's sake, that God would freely pardon all our sins.

"And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil," we pray that God would keep us from being tempted to sin, and support and deliver us when we are tempted to sin.

"For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen," teaches us to rely on God with our prayers, and trust Him to always do what is best.

There are Four Basic Types of Prayer. I Timothy 2:1

Adoration (Worship) — giving the Lord the glory He deserves. Psalm 29:2 says, "Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness."

Confession ("Confess" means to "agree, or to say the same thing.") — confession means to agree with God about your sin, or to say the same thing about your sin that God says about it. (Psalm 32:5; I John 1:9)

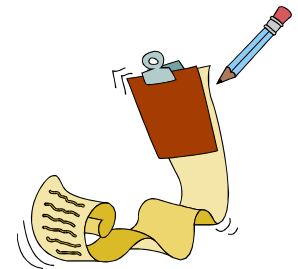


Thanksgiving — the expression of the gratefulness in your heart to God for His wonderful works. (I Thessalonians 5:16-18)

Supplication — We are to make specific requests of God. Philippians 4:6 says to "... let your requests be made known unto God." Too many prayers are ineffective because they are too general. (For example: "God, please give me a blessing." "Which one? How do you want me to bless you?") Specific requests made on behalf of other people are referred to in scripture as "intercessions." (I Timothy 2:1)

Keep Track of Your Prayer Requests.

Making a list will help you remember what to pray for. This will be a tool to help your prayer life to be consistent. Keeping a list of answered prayers is vitally important to reinforce your faith in God's promise to answer prayer.



Difficult Times and Prayer

1. A dangerous time in your life can be when it seems every need is met, and you are tempted to think that you have need of nothing— including God. (Revelation 3:16-17)
2. God allows difficulties to come into your life so He can draw you to Himself. (Psalm 50:15) Difficulties should drive you to prayer.
3. God uses difficulties to put you in a place where He can teach you and reveal to you that your **only** real need is the Lord Jesus Christ and His grace. The classic example of this tremendously important principle is Paul's thorn in the flesh. (II Corinthians 12:7-10)

Basic Questions.

1. Does God answer all my prayers?
 - Yes, but not always the way we may want Him to (look up I John 5:14), or at the time you want Him too. God is our Heavenly Father and all His ways are perfect. There will be times, when in His infinite wisdom, the best answer to

our prayer will be "NO" or "NOT YET." In those times, simply trust Him.

2. How important is it to pray for others?

- Paul prayed for others continually, (Romans 1:9) and requested prayer on many occasions. (II Thessalonians 3:1)
- An example of effectual prayer for others is how a preacher from England named George Mueller prayed for the salvation of several people for up to 60 years. When he died, some were still unsaved. However, there were some saved at his funeral, and many others were saved within the next year. The full results of your prayers will never be known completely in this life.



HOMEWORK

1. Prayer is an offering up of our _____ unto God (Psalm 62:8), for things that are agreeable to his _____ (1 John 5:14), in the _____ of Christ (John 16:23).

2. Why do people always end their prayer with the words, "in Jesus name, Amen."?

3. Romans 8:26-27 says that we have help with our prayers. Who is the believers' Helper?

4. What are the four basic types of prayer?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

6. What should be your first reaction in a tough situation?

7. Write out the Lord's Prayer in your own prayer to God

Example: "Dear Lord I come before you knowing that you are the almighty God

who delights to hear from me.”

Key memory verses:

Psalm 66:18

Our next meeting will be: _____

Daily in the Word

It is important to spend time reading and meditating on the Word of God. Read each day's passage and answer the two questions for each day. As you read these passages, remember that these are God's words to YOU and that He wants you to learn more about Him by reading His Word.

DAY 1 Luke 11: 1-13	What is the Word saying?	How does this apply to me?
DAY 2 Luke 18: 1-8	What is the Word saying?	How does this apply to me?
DAY 3 Romans 8: 26-30	What is the Word saying?	How does this apply to me?

DAY 4 Matthew 7: 7-12	What is the Word saying?	How does this apply to me?
DAY 5 John 15: 1-7	What is the Word saying?	How does this apply to me?
DAY 6 II Samuel 7: 18-29	What is the Word saying?	How does this apply to me?
DAY 7 Ephesians 6: 10-19	What is the Word saying?	How does this apply to me?