

PRAYER

"The great people of the earth today are the people who pray. I don't mean those who talk about prayer; nor those who can explain about prayer; but I mean those people who take time and pray. They have not time. It must be taken from something else. This something else is important-very important and pressing, but still less important and less pressing than prayer."

S. D. Gordon

Why Is Prayer Important?

- Christianity is a relationship, and at the core of a relationship is communication.
- It shows that we believe God is All-Powerful.
- We are commanded to devote ourselves to prayer. (Colossians 4:2)
- God moves when people pray.
- Prayer is the open admission that without Christ we can do nothing. (John 15:5)
- Prayer humbles us as needy and exalts God as all-sufficient. (I Corinthians 15:10)
- God is greatly glorified through the prayer of His people. The Giver gets the glory in prayer. (John 14:13)
- God delights in our prayers. (Proverbs 15:8)
- The Power of the Word is released when people pray. (Romans 1:16; 2 Thess. 3:1; Ephesians 6:17-19)
- Prayer reveals that we believe that we are in a war. (Luke 21:34-36)

Prerequisites To Answered Prayer

1. Must have forgiven others.
Mark 11:25 (Psalm 66:18)
2. Must be no unconfessed sin in your life.
I John 1:9 (Isaiah 59:2; Psalm 32:5)
3. Must pray in Jesus' name.
John 14:13 John 16:24
"Now when I come to God and pray in Jesus' name, I'm coming first of all in His merit. There is absolutely no reason within me why God should answer any of my prayers . . . I have no credit with God. But I'm not coming as myself. I'm coming as a representative of Jesus Christ."
Jerry Bridges
4. Must pray in faith.
Matthew 21:22 Mark 11:24
Hebrews 11:6 James 1:6, 7
5. Must pray in accordance with God's will.
Matthew 26:39 I John 5:14, 15
6. Must be practicing an attitude of obedience.
I John 3:24
7. Must ask with the right motives.
James 4:3
John 14:13, 14
- Your motive should be God's glory.
7. Must be abiding in Christ and His Word.
John 15:7

Different Types of Prayer

Adoration – Praising God for who He is.

(Psalm 6:9; 146:1,2; 150; I Chronicles 29:11)

Confession – Agreeing with God about your sin.

(I John 1:9; Proverbs 28:13)

Thanksgiving – Expressing gratitude to God for what He's done.

(I Thessalonians 5:18; Colossians 4:2)

Supplication – Praying for personal needs.

(Philippians 4:6; Psalm 62:8; Matthew 7:7)

Intercession – Praying for the needs of others.

(I Samuel 12:23, 24; Ephesians 6:18; James 5:16)

Prayer Is Learned – Luke 11:1

- By Praying.
- By meditating on Scripture.
 - Meditation is the missing link between Bible intake and prayer.
 - After the input of a passage of Scripture, meditation, allows us to take what God has said to us and think deeply on it, digest it, and then speak to God about it in meaningful prayer.
- By Praying With Others.
- By Reading About Prayer.

Example of Jesus

Early in the Morning
- Mark 1:35

Amidst a Busy Schedule
- Luke 5:15-16

An Entire Night
- Luke 6:12-13

After a Busy Day
- Matthew 14:23

During His Last Hours

- Luke 22:41; Matthew 26:39, 40

Hindrances to Prayer

- Not saved
- Sin in your life
- Pride – Always breeds independence and disobedience.
Realize the truth of Exodus 33: 15, 16
- Lack of faith. Prayer is an act of faith.
- Underestimating the weakness of the flesh.
Your flesh will never urge you to pray.
If you're waiting on the desire from the flesh, you'll go to your grave without ever having prayed.
- We are not desperate. Realizing the truth of John 15:5.
- Our walk with God is not important.
- We fail to understand the war or battle which we are in.
Satan is out to destroy our faith (I Thessalonians 3:5)

All of life is war! (2 Corinthians 10:3-5; 1 Timothy 1:18; 2 Timothy 2:4; Ephesians 6:12-18)

Other Key Principles

- God calls us to pray about anything.
1 John 5:14 – “for anything”
Philippians 4:6, 7 – “for everything”
- God calls us to pray any time.
Psalm 5:3 – “in the morning”
Psalm 55:17 – “evening, morning, noon”
Psalm 88:1 – “day and night”
- God calls us to pray any place.
Matthew 18:19, 20 – “with others”
Mark 1:35 – “alone”
- Prayer requires patient persistence.
Luke 18:1-5
Luke 11:5-9
- We can approach God with freedom and confidence.
Ephesians 3:12; Hebrews 4:15, 16
- God delights in our prayers.
Proverbs 15:8
- God hears our prayers.
Psalm 34:15, 17
- God answers prayers in one of three ways: Yes, No, or Wait.
1 Samuel 1:11, 29, 30 – Hannah’s prayer for a son. God said yes and Samuel was born.
Deuteronomy 3:23-26 - Moses prayed with God to let him go into the Promised Land. God said no.
Genesis 15:2-5 – Abraham asked God for a son and God said yes – but it was many years before Isaac was born.

OTHER HELPFUL RESOURCES:

A Passion for Prayer by Tom Elliff

Pray by Warren Myers

Spiritual Disciplines of the Christian Life by Don Whitney, pages 65-83.

Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire by Jim Cymbala

George Mueller by Roger Steer

The Autobiography of George Mueller

“The Weapon of Prayer” tape by Howard Hendricks

“Prayer” tape by Jim Peterson

Let the Nations Be Glad! By John Piper (pages 41-70)